

**EFFECTS OF FEES PAYMENT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
AMONG LEARNERS IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
SIRONKO DISTRICT**

BY

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND
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DECLARATION

I Ouma David declare that this report is my original work and has never been submitted to any university for any award. Whenever the works of others have been cited, acknowledgement has been made.

Signature:  Date: 19th April 2025

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APPROVAL

This work is pupil's own effort done under my supervision and it is therefore ready for submission to the Faculty of Science and Education of Busitema University.

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Date: 19/04/2025

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(SUPERVISOR)

DEDICATION

I Ouma David do dedicate this research to my mother Ms. Alice Mid Nambudye and wife Ajambo Ritah for their continuous sacrifice and support towards my academic struggle which has exposed me to the world of intelligentsia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In a such vast undertaking of this nature, it is impossible to acknowledge the contribution of all. However, the temptation to acknowledge the role of the following is irresistible. The first is God whose guidance, love and grace has made the writing as well as typing and bidding a successful venture.

I would be very unrealistic to ignore the role played by my colleagues, pupils and friends who offered me guidance and counsel.

Great thanks are to Almighty God for sustenance and strength; He has accorded me to develop this report. The researcher acknowledges all scholars whose works have been UPed in this study. I also extend thanks to my family members, Ms. Alice Mid Nambudye and wife Ajambo Ritah for supporting and praying with me tirelessly towards my success.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IMF	:	International Monetary Fund
MOE	:	Ministry of Education
UNICEF	:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UPE	:	Universal Primary Education

ABSTRACT

This project was conducted for roughly five months from the time of proposal designing up to data analysis and presentation; it employed descriptive research design which involved stratified sampling method. The objectives of the project were: to investigate the effect of Fees payment on academic performance of learners in selected primary schools to identify the challenges faced by the teachers involved in the program and to create awareness on the effects of fees payment on the learner's performance. The research was conducted in Uganda as a case study of selected primary schools in Sironko district. Questionnaires and interviews were used as research instruments among the head teachers and teachers for collection of data. Some of the major conclusions made were that academic performance has deteriorated since the introduction of universal primary education. This was attributed to a huge shortage of teachers due to the large increase in enrolment, inadequate funds provided by the Government and which were not disbursed in good time, increase in indiscipline due to poor class control by the teachers and inadequate facilities which were to be shared by the large number of pupils. Due to the large numbers, most teachers gave fewer examinations. It therefore calls on the government to employ more teachers, increase the amount of funding to these schools and provide more facilities for teachers and learners.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Millions of children around the world are deprived of the right to education. The result is that one out of three children who finish P.L.E does not proceed to primary. It is for this reason that the government of Uganda came up with the fees payment program, but with it came numerous challenges.

1.1 Background of the study

The Ministry of Education in Uganda has always advocated education for all children at the primary level. In line with this the Ministry of education implemented the policy of fees payment January 2007 in order to enable all learners to access primary education.

With the introduction of fees payment there have been a number of challenges that came with it, mainly due to the unprecedented high enrolment that has stretched the human resource to its limits. This has resulted in many challenges in the implementation of the school curriculum, as written by D.N. Sifuna in his book, 'Development of Education in Africa.

Fees payment in Uganda was one of the key pre-election promises led the current government to win the 2006 general election led by president Yoweri Kaguta Museveni since then an estimated 1.5 million children, who were previously out—of—school, have turned up to attend classes. "We will not be contented until every child of primary school age is enrolled for primary education; the children we are investing in are the future of this country. In the long term, educating children is one way to eradicate poverty.

Free fees payment in Uganda has yielded mixed results in 2007, Uganda became the country in sub Saharan Africa to introduce universal primary education coming to 10 years after it introduced

UPE, it represented a bold step by President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni's government background at the time of UN report said Africa had the worst primary school enrollment rates in the world.

Only 34% of primary school age children were enrolled in class, girls and poorer young people comprised the bulk of those locked out of school by financial and cultural constraints.

Under the primary scheme, pupils who get specific grades in each of the four primary school leaving exams study free in public schools and participating private schools. The government pays the schools an annual grant of up to Ushs 141,000 (\$52) per pupil spread over three school terms, parents though they have to provide the pupils uniform, stationery and meals.

Parents and children alike have greeted the move with euphoria, according to government reports.

At the same time, however, the reality of delivering on the pre—election pledge made before politicians had time to consider the costs and logistical challenges involved is becoming more and more apparent. While the government and donors are scrambling to find money to pay for new classrooms, teachers, and other facilities, and while local authorities are rushing to compile statistics on Uganda's hundreds of thousands of new school goers, classrooms are building like never before.

Many schools are coping with a 100% or more increase in numbers. Average class sizes have risen from 50 to 60 and 70, with one teacher per class, while facilities remained the same. Many rural schools also lack even the most basic amenities such as toilets, and running water to ensure that basic sanitary standards are met.

There are mixed views about the impact of universal primary education. On the one hand, there is consensus that education quality had improved because of the provision of learning and teaching materials and because of the fact pupils are no longer missing lessons due to lack of fees. On the other hand, it is reported that quality has gone down due to large numbers of pupils in classes that make it difficult for the teachers to provide attention to all learners. Teacher shortage and

enrolment of average learners are cited as other factors that have affected the quality of education. Teachers no longer give adequate assignments to the pupils because they cannot cope with the marking and teaching workload, as within the fees payment particularly noted that the implementation of the program Without prior consultation or preparation of teachers and lack of regular communication to sensitize the various stakeholders on their roles are highlighted as hampering the smooth implementation of fees payment program. There is general misconception about the meaning of fees payment with parents taking the view that they are no longer required to participate in school activities. Matters are made worse by the political leaders, who were sending conflicting signals about parents' and communities' participation in universal primary education. They have given indication that funds drive r voluntary contributions are not acceptable.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Fees payment is one of the inconveniencing factors to learners' classroom attendance both to the school administration, pupils, teachers and parents. Well academically endowed learners may miss many lessons due to being chased for school fees. This may result into school dropout, poor academic performance and early pregnancies, not forgetting marriages for some pupils.

The government instituted UPE, however, at the same time privatization of education institutions was put in place. Therefore, some schools entirely depend on fees collection, while others have some fees levied for feeding, PTA and others. So, every school has some form of fees collected which creates a sour environment for learners cradling from low-income families.

For there to be meaningful teaching and learning in school, the fees payment policy must be implemented taking into account the challenges come with the large enrollments. Measures must be put in place to make sure that the large numbers do not negatively impact, on curriculum implementation. This study tried to establish the effect of the fees payment on learners academics, which is evaluated through academic performance.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 Purpose-of the study

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of the fees payment on academic performance of learners in selected primary schools

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- i. To compare the fees collection impact on academic performance before and after the implementation of the universal primary education.
- ii. To identify the challenges faced by the teachers involved in fees collection in universal primary education schools of Sironko district.
- iii. To determine the ways of overcoming challenges faced by teachers in fees collection on the learners' academic performance in universal primary schools.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the relationship between fees payment and academic performance among learners in primary schools?
- ii. What are the challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of universal primary education?
- iii. What are the possible solutions to the challenges faced by teachers on the learner's academic performance?

1.5 Scope of the study

1.5.1 Geographical scope

Sironko district is located in Eastern Uganda and populated area with many schools. The schools included in the study were Pato PS, His grace PS, and Nalusaala PS.

1.5.2 Content scope

The respondents to the research were teachers and educational administrators within the district. The study was based on the effect of fees payment on the academic performance of learners in selected primary schools.

1.5.3 Time scope

The study took five months from December 2024 to April 2025.

1.6 Significance of the study

At the conclusion of the study the various stakeholders will derive benefits from it as they consume the findings.

The findings will be utilized to inform the education policy makers on how to effectively implement the school curriculum.

The findings may also help the teachers in coming up with new ways of coping up with the large number of pupils in the classroom. The teachers will benefit by becoming aware of the challenges facing fees payment and come up with ways to overcome those challenges, such as over-enrolment.

This opens room for further research on fees payment and other related subjects.

1.7 Justification of the study

The rationale for this study was to analyze the effects of fees collection on the academic performance of pupils which is at high level caused by distinctive factors of pupil's attendance, teacher attendance and syllabii. Scanty research has been made in relation to these factors and the need to create a new knowledge to curb the accruing situation. Furthermore, no study presented in the literature review applied descriptive survey as propose in this study.

1.8 Definition of Operational terms

The following terms have been uniquely used by the researcher. They are hereby defined as follows;

Performance – Performance can be defined as the observable and measurable behavior of a pupil in terms of Grade Point Average score in Primary Leaving Examination.

Attendance has been UPE in this study to mean duty consciousness of pupil's, teachers and administrators.

1.9 Conceptual Frame Work

The frame work diagrammatized below has been suggested to help conceptualize the independent variable and dependent variable and their relation.

Independent Variable

The effects of fees Collection

Dependent Variable

Academic performance

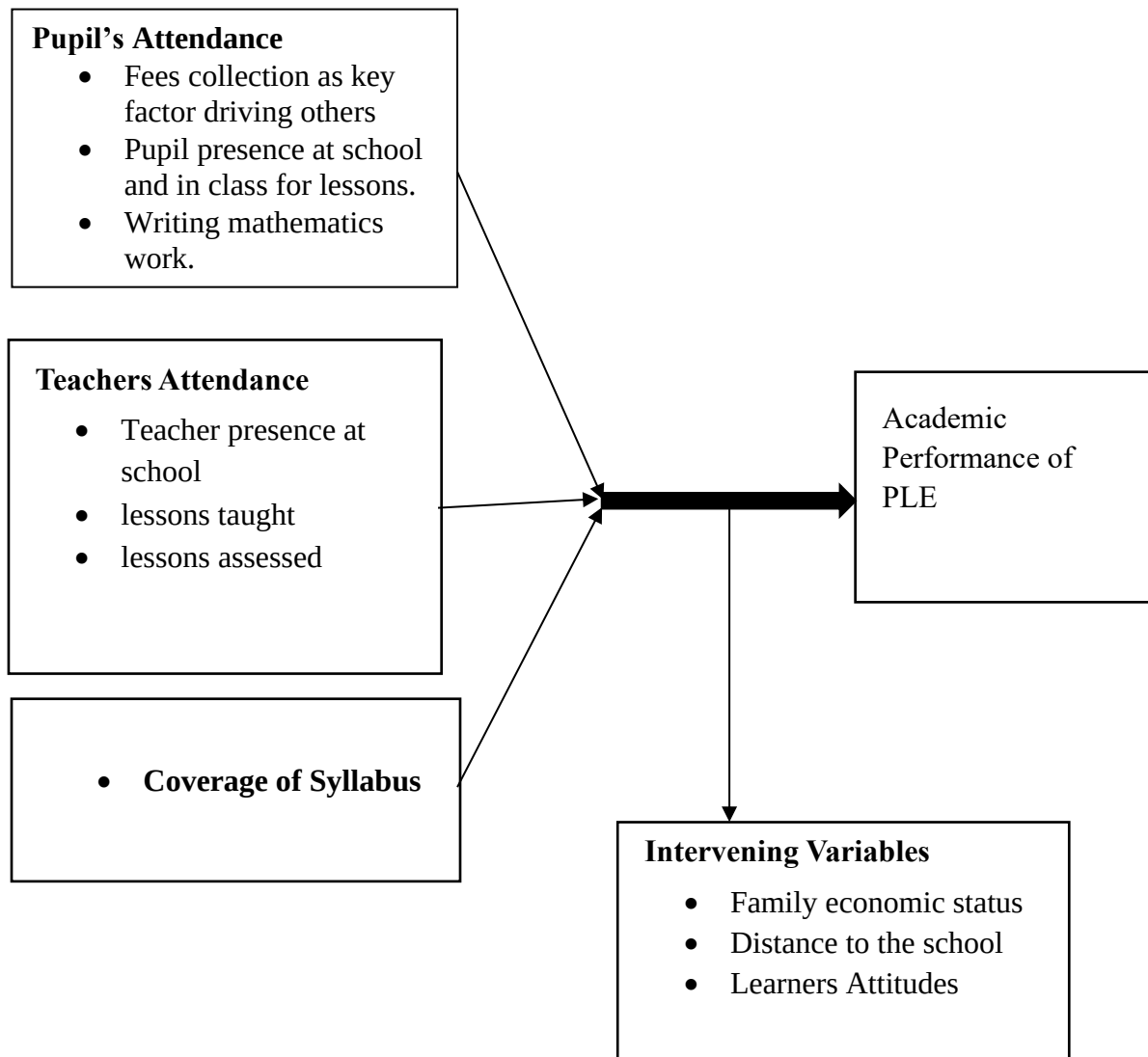


Figure 1: Conceptual Frame work

Narrative of the conceptual framework

The researcher structured the independent variable as the impact of fees collection on attendance of pupil's, attendance of teachers, and syllabus coverage. The dependent variable, academic performance which was structured into poor academic performance of in PLE. These factors are hoped to result an organized school, lesson presentation and active learning if they are enhanced at school leading to better performance. The gaps that prevail in fees collection methods are probable caUPEs the poor performance of mathematics in Buwalasi Sub County, Sironko District. However, there are factors that may caUPE poor academic performance, but they are not within the scope of this study like the location of the school, the type of the school and teacher qualification

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter gives reference to what other scholars have written on the effect of fees payment on academic performance of learners in primary schools. The literature review will help the researcher with data compilation, statistics analyses as well as understanding of the problem

The materials used in the review included journals, newspapers articles books on education and other Internet sources.

Fees and levies for tuition primary education were abolished as the government and development partners were to meet the cost of basic teaching and learning materials as well as wages for critical non-teaching staff and co-curricular activities. The government and development partners were to pay in that year. The fees payment did not require parents and communities to build new schools, but they were to refurbish and use existing facilities such as community and religious buildings. If they wished to charge additional levies, school, heads and committees had to obtain approval from the ministry of education. This request had to be sent, to the District Education. Board by the Area Education Officer, after a consensus among parents through the divisional Director of Education, a fairly lengthy and tedious process.

2.1 Over-enrolment

According to Dr. Yusufu Nsubuga, director of basic and primary education at the ministry of education, before the primary scheme barely 50% of primary school leavers went on to primary' education annually, within a year of the scheme being introduced that figure rose to 69%.

Similarly, the number of O' level candidates in the country rose from 172000 in 2006 to almost 26500 last year an increase of 54%.

Nsubuga says the government has increased funding for primary schooling which has meant more teachers being recruited, more classrooms and labs being built, and more textbooks. The government policy is to build at least one public primary' school in each sub country.

There is a gender dynamic, too. Recent study found that the primary school scheme had particularly increased public-school enrolment for girls from poorly UPE holds. The proportion of girls in sample area attending public schools increased from 10.6% in 2005 to nearly 15% in 2009. At the same time the scheme appears to have increased the migration of pupils from village school to better performing urban ones, which has resulted in some rural schools barely being able to find enough pupils.

However, while fees payment has increased participation, it has at the same time created considerable problems. It has exacerbated the problem of teaching and learning facilities. As a result of the high influx of new pupils' classrooms are congested. Many of the preliminary surveys seem to show that the existing facilities make a mockery of the fees payment program.

Ironically, these problems are contributing to high school dropout rates, just as they did during the 2005 UPE intervention. They have also seriously affected the inflow of pupils in primary education in the second year of fees payment implementation. Districts that registered over 20% increase in enrolment in 2003, hardly recorded more than 5% of standard one enrolment this year. Most of the logistical problems be leveling the implementation of free primary education intervention, such as lack of facilities and teachers, are well known to the educational administrators in the country. But due to the "culture of fear and silence" inculcated by the former NRM regime, coupled by an inept administration at the MOE headquarters, the official rhetoric is that the UPE is working smoothly.

According to UNICEF, in an assessment report titled "Challenges of implementing free primary education in Uganda" (March. 2010), most schools do not have adequate classrooms to accommodate the large numbers of pupils enrolled under UPE. The classrooms were generally congested and there is hardly space for movement. The classrooms are in poor condition.

Lighting is poor as many classrooms depend only on sunlight since little money is collected from fees and consequently the resources are limited for such procurements. It was noted, though, that with JSE, many schools had started doing repairs on classrooms using the money given for maintenance. Chalkboards are being given fresh paint coats and windows and doors fixed especially in classes where books and other teaching and learning materials are being kept. The study found that the teachers, parents, school committee members and pupils learnt about UPE through the media Education.

According to NETWAS in its online journal, www.netwas.org/2010 many schools are coping with a 100% or more increase in numbers. Average class sizes have risen from 50 to 60 and 70, with one teacher per class, while facilities remained the same. Many rural schools also lack even the most basic amenities such as toilets, and running water to ensure that basic sanitary standards are met.

2.2 Shortage of trained teachers in government employment due to less fees collected and many defaulters

There has been a freeze in the mass recruitment of teachers since 1998, when the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommended restructuring in public institutions to streamline efficiency. Additionally, the methods used for collection of fees don't give room for the government to collect funds and use for recruitment.

The new government has been gradually retraining teachers, but the first full recruitment of teachers (around 40,000) was recently proposed for the next fiscal year. It is estimated that there

is a shortage of 60,900 primary school teachers in Uganda attributed to low fees collection and poor financial status of the schools as cited by Kemei (2005) As a result of the universal primary education, the situation of the teaching force in most of the districts is generally bad Teachers complain of increase pupil's teacher ratios Many. ay schools are understaffed as a result of the fees payment program. According to the UNICEF assessment report (2009) due to the large pupil's influx, schools Nere facing a serious teacher shortage.

Most classes were too large to be handled by a single teacher and were from financially hardened environment where fees of any amount is hard for them to pay. On average, the teacher-pupil ratio in most schools was 1:50. This has a lot of implication on teaching and learning. The teachers were not able to give individual attention to the learners, especially to the slow), and this made it difficult for schools to offer quality education. Teachers were also unable to take care of this large number of pupils. This has also led to cases of indiscipline in UPE due to lack of class control. This does not augur well for the quality of education being delivered.

2.3 Funding of universal primary education

The aim of the UPE program was to provide more school opportunities, especially for the poor communities. The argument was that the payment of school fees tended to prevent a large proportion of the children from attending school. Apart from to the logistical problems in the implementation of UPE, the key question remains: is the program sustainable.

In the 2008/09 financial year, the government increased its education budget by 17.4% to ushs 300 billion, with over ushs 29 billion specifically allocated to the UPE program. The donor community, which received the PPE policy with high enthusiasm, was quick to assist the government. The World Bank, for example, gave a grant of ush 7.85 billion, while the British government through Department for International Development gave shs 4.6 billion. Other donors included the organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) ush 3.7 12 billion, the Swedish government, ushs 120 million and UNICEF ush 780 millions. It goes without saying that

such donor funding is usually temporary. Some donor countries delay in disbursing their funds, thus causing shortfalls in the purchase of equipment and learning materials in schools. To make up for these shortfalls, the government has been pooling resources from other ministries, which interferes with their budgetary allocations and Research analysis, 2010.

The current cost of free universal Education is way beyond the normal education budget allocation. It is also a fact that the country's economy has not been performing well in recent years and cannot support the realization of the goals without the infusion of outside funds.

For the country to sustain universal access there will be a need for economic growth to generate public funds for education. Otherwise, prioritizing UPE is most likely to take away from the provision for other sectors of education as well as from the health sector.

According to The Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis, the allocation of resources within the education sector seems to be ineffective as the increasing expenditure on education goes to recurrent expenditure (to pay teachers' salaries). Uganda's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the Economic Recovery Strategy. for wealth arid Employment Creation (ERS) outlines education targets of reaching fees payment by 2015. The Government is faced with budget constraints and therefore the available resources need to be allocated efficiently in order to realize the education targets.

2.4 Shortage of facilities as one of the effects of undercollection of school fees

Most schools do not have adequate classrooms to accommodate the large numbers of pupils enrolled under UPE. The classrooms were generally congested and there is hardly space for movement. There is a serious shortage of desks and learners in some schools have to sit on the ground. The classrooms are in poor condition, Lighting is poor as many classrooms depend only on sunlight. UNICEF has continued to help by providing funding and materials for pupils.

Because of inadequate infrastructure, schools, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, the government has patterned with about 640 private schools, but the system is fraught with problems. Inadequate teaching space and late disbursement of government funds.

Academic performance standards are deteriorating and education being universal, pupils are just pushed through "Wanyama says",

Examination results give a hint of his decline: in 2006, nearly 95% of O' Level candidates achieved at least the minimum pass rate to qualify for a national certificate. Last year with 54% increase in candidates, 80% qualified for the certificate,

Nsubuga admit that there are challenges but he says the government with support from donors such as the African development bank and World Bank is addressing them. This may be true but the government only seems to target public schools, even though private schools host a substantial proportion of pupils from the scheme.

Nsubuga argues that only loss in quality is inevitable, but temporary, consequence of expanding access, a globally whenever there is a mass education.

In first years, you have to face challenge of quality, for instance, recruitment of teachers cannot grow at the same time pace with increase in a number of pupils. You can only catch up later" for Fagil Mandy, a consultant and former commissioner for inspectorate in the education ministry', the most pressing concern is not just academic.

Primary education is to be focused on passing exams at the expense of crucial life and social skills, things like respect for work and despite.

Like Kenya, Uganda which introduced universal primary scheme four years ago is also facing similar challenges, a shortage of classrooms and teachers as well as belated disbursement of government grants are reportedly undermining the quality of education yet, reportedly many seem to agree with Nsubuga that you should start, and improve along the way.

Another risk, which is already becoming apparent in Uganda, is having a two-tier school system with the majority in underperforming, mostly rural universal primary schools and are minority in better private schools "off course we have some really good pupils, but many of them have very low academic motivation," said Wanyama.

"Their parents pay nothing, there do not know government gets the money, and frankly do not care".

2.5 Quality of education from schools with poor fees collection

According to various analysts, quantity has been achieved in terms of explosive enrollment -ates, yet the quality of pupil's performance remains doubtful. Quality could be anything Nithin the processes of going through basic education. However, overcrowded classrooms and poorly trained teachers are contributing factors to poor pupils throughout. After the initial euphoria of FP which saw the fall of many private schools (especially the 'mushrooming" academies), the parents have pulled their children out of public schools and returned them to private schools where they perform better. The national ranking of schools in national examinations by the national Examination board revealed that the private schools perform better, something attributed to the small classes in these institutions.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explains research design, target population, sample size, description of research instruments, sampling technique, data collection instruments to be applied, validity and reliability of research instruments, data collection procedure, data source, description of data analysis procedure and ethical consideration that was employed in the field study.

3.1 Research Design

The design used in this study was descriptive survey. It was applied because it permitted the researcher to study small sample and later generalized the findings to the whole population. Osuala, (2001) was of the view that in survey research small sample is studied and the findings generalized to the population.

3.2 Area of Study

Sironko District is within Sironko district and it is made up of 20 sub counties. The district is bordered by Bulambuli in the North, Mbale district in south, Kenya in the east, and Bukedea district to the west district. The District has been preferred in this study as most as most pupils are performing poorly in PLE. However, the sub county under study is Buwalasi and of which data was collected from primary school.

3.3 Target Population

The research study targeted a population of 3523 in 7 government primary schools in the sub county. The population of teachers and pupils were obtained from respective schools present in Buwalasi Sub County Sironko District as shown in the table below;

Table 3:1 Target Population

Government Primary Schools Buwalasi Sub County	Head teacher	Teachers	Pupil's	TOTAL
School A	1	18	1239	1258
School B	1	15	907	923
School C	1	17	1141	1159
School D	1	13	578	592
School E	1	10	580	191
School F	1	15	533	548
School J	1	10	325	335
TOTAL	7	98	3403	3523

3.4 Sampling Size

The sample size was selected basing on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size as shown below;

Table 3:2 Sample Size

Government primary schools in Buwalasi Sub County	Head teacher	Teachers	Pupil's	TOTAL
School A	1	7	78	86
School B	1	8	65	74
School C	1	7	80	88
School D	1	8	57	66
School	1	6	45	52
TOTAL	5	36	327	368

3.5 Sampling Technique

Both simple random sampling and stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting the sample for this study. This is because it permitted the researcher to have representation from both the teachers and the pupils. The head teachers were automatically selected to participate in the study.

3.6 Research Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires as instruments for the collection of data for this study. The questionnaire comprised of demographic questions and questions on variables of the study. The questions asked were both closed and open ended.

Document analysis was carried out in this study. The researcher analyzed administrative record pertaining pupil's performance, attendance of teachers, pupil's, the head teachers and the current coverage of the mathematics syllabus.

3.7 Reliability of Research Instruments Results

To measure the reliability of the data collection instruments, an internal consistence technique using Cronbach's Alpha was applied. The coefficient difference of less than or equal to 0.1 was considered reliable. In Table 3.3, the Cronbach alpha test showed values ranging from as low as 0.821 to as high as 0.912. These results showed that instruments had a high reliability standard and therefore data collected from pilot study were reliable and obtained acceptable values of internal consistency.

Table 3.3 Reliability Values for the Research

Reliability Aspects	Cronbach's Alpha
Pupil's Attendance	0.821
Teachers' Attendance	0.912
Inaccurate fees collection	0.881
Average Value	0.871

3.8 Validity of Research Instruments Results

Validity of a research instrument is the appropriateness of the research instrument to measure what is intended to establish results given the context in which it's applied. The instruments were amended according to the experts' comments after the pilot study and recommended dates before being administered. In this study the researcher sought help from the supervisor specialized in this particular area of assessment to weigh in possible improvements and thus covering the required content in the study. Then pilot test was conducted on a population similar to the target population in Buwalasi Sub County to test the validity of the instruments.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Department of Education, Faculty of Science and Education, Busitema University to obtain permission of the respondents in the schools chosen through their respective head teachers. Thereafter, permission was granted, she visited and explained the purpose and benefits of the research to the respondents from respective schools. The researcher requested the respondents to provide responses voluntarily which are relevant to the study and informed them of voluntary withdrawal from the study in case of any misunderstandings. Questionnaires were completed by teachers and pupil's while the interview schedule was be completed by head teacher. Thereafter, the researcher perused through school documents like registers, approved record of schemes of work and lesson plan, teachers' attendance books and pupil's attendance books. The researcher spent at least three days in each school collecting data from the respondents and document reviews.

3.10 Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected was analyzed using frequency and simple percentage. The data was presented in tables and pie charts.

An SPSS version 21 was used to analyze the data.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The researcher observed and adhered to standard ethics as set by the university research committee; considered helpful for smooth process in data collection in this study. The researcher considered the followings ethics in order to establish rapport with the respondents:

Informed Consent. In doing research, the researcher ensured that she seeks permission from the respondents to participate in her research. The researcher picked an authorization letter from the university (Busitema University) permitting her to collect data in the field. The respondents received clear information about the purpose of the study to voluntarily accept or refuse to participate and or withdraw at any stage.

Confidentiality and Privacy. The researcher observed respondents' confidentiality during the data collection process. The researcher didn't allow the respondents to mention their names and the data obtained from the respondents were treated purely for academic purposes.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter an attempt is made to interpret and explain the findings. Key information enables to relate the specific objectives and give a clear picture of the results.

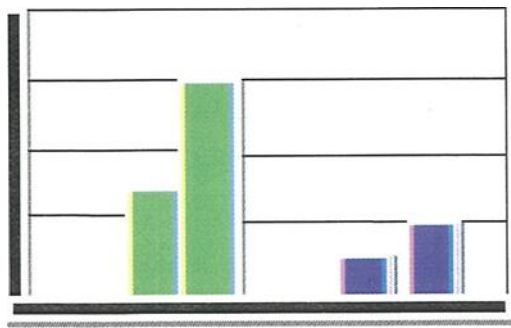
4.1 Data analysis and processing response rate

Out of the expected thirty respondents, twenty two were able to give feedback The shortfall was due to some problems like unwillingness by some respondents to provide information that will be regarded as confidential. Other respondents feared victimization by their seniors.

Table 1: Response rate

Type of response	Planned response	Actual response	Non response
Head teachers	10	7	3
Teachers	20	15	5
TOTAL	30	22	8

Figure 2: Representation of the above data



$$\text{Response rate} = \frac{\text{Actual response}}{\text{Planned response}} \times 100$$
$$\frac{22}{30} \times 100 = 73.3\%$$

4-1.2 Response by head teachers

Response by the Head teachers on the school enrolment in the year 2007.

According to the response, 71.4 % of the schools had pupils between 201 to 300, 14.3 % between 101 to 200 and 14.3 % between 301 to 400, while no schools had pupils between either 0 to 100 or 401 and above.

Table 2: Response on the school enrolment in the year 2007

Response	Frequency	Percentage
0—100	0	0%
101—200	1	14.3%
201—300	5	71.4%
301 —400	1	14.3%
401 and above	0	0%
TOTAL	7	100%

Response by the Head teachers on the school enrolment in the year 2008

42.8% of schools had pupils between 301 to 400 marks, 28.65 between 201 to 400 and 401 and above while none recorded below 200 pupils.

Table 3: Response on the school enrolment in the year 2008

Response	Frequency	Percentage
0—100		0%
101—200	1	0%
201—300	5	28%
301 —400	1	42.8%
401 and above	0	28.6%
TOTAL	7	100%

Responses by Head teachers on the school enrolment in the year 2009 57.17% of the schools had pupils 201 to 300, 28.6% had 401 and above while 14.3% had between 101 to 200 pupils.

4.3.2 Effects of Pupil's Fees payment on academic performance in Primary Schools.

Table 4.4: Results for Pupil's Fees payment

Challenges	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
Missed lessons hence low performance	41	100
Difficulty in attempt assignments	39	95.12
Failure to conceptualize content	41	100
Failure to express in all subjects offered in PLE	35	85.37

According to the table above on pupil's fees payment is very high with 41(100%) hence leading to poor academic performance in Buwalasi Sub County as compared with other divisions in the District. The findings are in relation with Bamuhair et al. (2016) who observed that Class attendance has an encouraging impact on pupil's' academic achievements, and therefore, a mandatory attendance policy plays a significant role in accelerating academic success among the pupils.

The findings from the field also revealed that as learners continue absenting, they tend to experience difficulties in attempting all subjects offered in PLE assignment 39(95.12%). This makes them to obtain results that are relatively low.

The research also found that learners' fees payment leads to failure of content conceptualization 41(100%).

Failure to express in all subjects offered in PLE 35(85.37%) was due to rampant fees payment among pupils. This makes learners to get low grades since they can't read understand concepts during exams. Similarly, Alghamdi et al., (2016) their study showed the performance GPA mean is influenced by low attendance rates.

4.3.3 Effects of Teacher Fees payment on academic performance in Primary Schools.

Table 4.5: Results for Teachers Fees payment

Challenges	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
Teachers report of fees payment cases negatively affect all subjects offered in PLE regularly	34	82.93
Inadequate assessment leading to low academic performance	40	97.56
Un stead progress of academic performance	41	100
Low grade score obtained		
	40	97.56

According to the table above teachers report of fees payment cases negative affect all subjects offered in PLE regularly was rated 34(82.93%). Similar findings are of Miller, Murnane, & Willett, (2008) who concluded in their study that when elementary school teachers miss 10 or more days of instruction per year, pupil's suffer a significant loss in achievement (Miller, Murnane, & Willett, 2008).

To confirm effects of teacher's fees payment, it was found that inadequate assessment leading to low academic performance 40(97.56%) of the respondents. Generally, teachers do not assess all subjects offered in PLE regularly indicating that pupil's miss most of all subjects offered in PLE concepts required to be achieved. Similar findings are those of Lilian, (2013) who asserted that only 28% of teachers were available/ready/willing to give and mark the assignment always, and

only 43.5% of pupil's would have their homework/assignment marked, the probability that a teacher will give and mark assignment and, a pupil's will have his/her assignment marked always is $0.28 \times 0.435 = 0.1218$ (that is, only 12.18% of pupil's will get and do assignment, and have it marked always).

For teachers report on un stead progress of academic performance school to regularly to monitor pupil's learning in all subjects offered in PLE was rated never by 41(100%). The findings are in line with Nithya et al., (2014) who found that chronically absent teachers, were defined as teachers who miss 18 or more days per year, account for 16% of the teaching workforce but account for 33% of total teacher absences.

Generally, the study shows that teachers' fees payment has indeed led to low grades as reported by 40(97.56%) of the respondents.

4.3.4 Effects of all subjects offered in PLE Syllabus Completion academic performance in Primary Schools

Table 4.6: Results for all subjects offered in PLE syllabus Completion

Challenges	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
Pupils' come to school daily enabling them to learn All subjects offered in PLE	24	58.5
Teachers cover termly syllabus hence steady progress	32	78.05
Low content coverage leads decreased performance	41	100
pupil's attend all subjects offered in PLE remedial to gain lost opportunities for performance elevation	32	78.05
Wide content coverage for increased performance	41	100

According to the table, pupils come to school daily enabling them to learn all subjects offered in PLE was rated by 24(58.5%) of the respondents. The results indicated that little is achieved by learners due to their fees payment and steady teaching-learning process.

For teachers cover termly syllabus hence steady progress was reported by 32(78.05). The results showed that learners failed to benefit from recommended syllabus. The findings are in line with, Bishop (1985), who found that integrated all subjects offered in PLE syllabus is too wide hence most teachers lack sufficient time for studying and examining aspects of all subjects offered in PLE and literature in a more practical way.

From the above, low content coverage leads decreased performance was disclosed by 41(100%). This indicates that teachers that pupil's low performance is highly affected by partial syllabus coverage in most schools in the division.

Pupil's attendance to all subjects offered in PLE remedial classes to gain lost opportunities for performance elevation was reported by 32(78.05). The pupil's academic performance have been affected since pupil's fail to turn up for organized remedials.

Wide content coverage for increased performance was reported by 41(100%) the record of work covered to disclose systematic coverage of the all subjects offered in PLE syllabus leads to higher achievement in all subjects. The findings are related to Lilian, (2013) who asserted that only 28% of teachers were available/ready/willing to give and mark the assignment and record always, and only 43.5% of pupil's would have their homework/assignment marked, the probability that a teacher will give and mark assignment and, a pupil's will have his/her assignment marked always is $0.28 \times 0.435 = 0.1218$ (that is, only 12.18% of pupil's will get and do assignment, and have it marked always).

4.3.5 Pupil's Response on Causes of Poor Academic performance

Table 4.7: Results for Pupil's rating of main variables

Challenges	low	average	High
Level of academic performance	101(31.57%)	200(62.50%)	19(5.93%)
Learners' attendance at school	10(3.13%)	153(47.81%)	157(49.06%)
all subjects offered in PLE Teachers' attendance	7(2.19%)	153(47.81%)	160(50%)
Performance of all subjects offered in PLE teacher			
	50(15.63%)	120(37.50%)	150(46.88%)

In table 4.6 above, the rating of academic performance was 101(31.57%) as low, 200(62.50%) and low 19(5.93%)high respondents, learners' attendance at school was rated 10(3.13%) low 153(47.81) average and 157(49.06%) was rated high, all subjects offered in PLE teachers' attendance was rated 7(2.19%) low, 153(47.81%) average and 160(50%) high and performance of all subjects offered in PLE teacher.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Most of the main outcomes of the study is that the introduction of Free Primary Education, though increasing enrolment in schools, has had a negative impact on the academic performance of the learners in the selected schools, 71.4% of the respondents felt that the quality of education had deteriorated and the number of pupils scoring 250 marks and above, which is the average score Uganda certificate of education (UCE) had gone down from between 61-90 in 002(57.1%) to 42.8% for the same range in 2009

This agreed with the UNICEF report, assessment of free primary education in Uganda (2008) Commissioned by the Ministry of Education in Uganda.

Most of the teachers interviewed felt that they have a heavy workload, with a majority of them aching between 35 to 40 lessons per week, which left them with little or no time for lesson Preparation.

The high enrolment in the schools has made it difficult for the teachers to have individualized attention, UPE some of them handle more than 60 pupils per class, represented by 263% of the respondents in the research. Only 6.7% handled less than twenty pupils per class. This means that the teacher-pupil ratio is very poor.

The large number of pupils also made it difficult for the teachers to have proper class control, with most of the teachers admitting that they handled increased number of indiscipline cases per day, thereby taking their time away from teaching in the study, the head teachers felt that the amount of money given by the Government, which is ug shs 3040 approximately US \$ 14 per year was quite inadequate to cater for the pupils needs. Furthermore, the money is disbursed very late in the term when most of the programs are already in progress, thus hindering effective teaching and learning.

The head teachers and teachers said that both the physical and human resources had been strained to the extreme, and in some cases pupils had to be taught in the open ground or under trees pupils had also been congested in classes meant for 35 pupils thereby increasing the chances of infecting others with transmittable diseases, especially in the lower classes.

The head teachers felt that their effort has been moved more to management matters than the implementation of the curriculum. This has lead to less supervision on teachers.

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

From the findings of the first objective, the study concludes that pupil's attendance has a relation with performance of Mathematics. The low academic performance was as a result of low fees collection from by pupils.

According to the second objective, there was habitual absenteeism realized among teachers as a cause of low academic performance.

From the findings of the third objective, administrators were found to irregular session of close supervision due absenteeism cases among them leading to low academic performance.

Finally, the findings of the fourth objective, syllabus coverage variable was the lowest rated in the sampled schools where the respondents participated in the study. This was due absenteeism of teachers and administrators hence leading to poor academic performance.

5.2 Implication of the findings for research and theory

This study will have a direct impact to the Ministry of Education, The Teachers Service Commission and the head teachers and teachers in Uganda.

5.2.1 The Ministry of Education in Uganda

The Ministry of Education in Uganda must find a way of increasing the amount of money allocated to each pupil either by increasing the funds from the treasury, or by looking for donor agencies that can support the program. The largest of the Free primary education is funding.

If enough funds are found, the schools will have adequate resources such as desks and classrooms for the large number of pupils. The Ministry should also provide the required funds in good time, probably before the opening of the schools so that the head teachers can have time to budget and source for necessary resources.

The ministry should also allow for a recommended policy to be instituted for fees collection and implement it. The schools will therefore, develop mechanisms of better handling fees and put in place guidelines for the expenditure and remittance of some percentages for running of the ministry.

The Ministry of Education should also conduct frequent inspection of the schools to assess the shortfalls in the implementation of the program and to have remedies in good time.

5.2.2 The teachers service commission

The Teachers' services Commission is charged with the responsibility of employment and deployment of teachers across the country. The Commission has the responsibility to ensure that enough teachers are hired and posted to the schools to take care of the high number of pupils, most teachers handle 31-40 lessons per week therefore leaving them with little time for lesson preparation.

5.2.3 The head teachers and teachers

The head teachers and teachers should find ways of raising funds and coming up with income generating activities. They have traditionally depended on school fees and levies paid by parents, which are no longer there. This money can be used for purchase of resources and building of more classrooms.

Teachers can also find ways improvising during their teaching in cases where teaching and learning resources are not available.

5.3 Suggestion for further research

Due to funding and logistic limitations, this project was conducted as a pilot study that utilized a small sample size, relatively short time duration and a convenient technique. I suggest that a follow up study should be carried out over a longer time span and the study should use a larger sample size, and if possible, adopt randomization procedures in sample composition. This will make it possible to collect enough data which will give a clearer picture on the effect of free primary Education on academic performance in schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

Kindly answer all the questions by ticking in the appropriate box or filling in the spaces provided.

1. Identify your gender

Male () Female ()

2. What is your age range?

15-20 years () 21-30 years () 31-40 years () 40 years and above ()

3. Education level

Grade three () diploma () degree () masters ()

4. How long have you served as a head teacher.

1-5 years () 6-10 years () 11-15years () 16-25years ()

Section B: Questions on independent variables

5. How has pupil's fees collection affected their learners attendance in primary schools in Buwalasi Sub county, Sironko district?

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6. What are the effects of fees collection on teachers' attendance in primary schools in Buwalasi Sub county, Sironko district?

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7. How has mathematics syllabus coverage affected the performance of pupil's in primary schools in Buwalasi Sub county, Sironko district?

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APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Kindly answer all the questions by ticking in the appropriate box or filling in the spaces

Section A: Personal Profile

1. Identify your gender

Male () Female ()

2. What is your age range?

15-20 years () 21-30 years () 31-40 years () 40 years and above ()

3. State your designation

Classroom teacher () senior teacher () deputy head teacher ()

4. Education level

Grade three () diploma () degree () masters ()

Section B: Questions on independent variables

5. How has fees collection from pupil's affected their attendance in school?

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6. What are the collection of fees and other school dues affect teachers' attendance to pupil's in primary school?

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7. How has fees and dues collection affected the academic performance of pupils?

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APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPIL'S

Kindly answer all the questions by ticking in the appropriate box or filling in the spaces provided.

1. Identify your sex

Male () Female ()

2. What is your age?

.....

3. Which class are you?

P.5 () P.6 () P.7 ()

4. State when your parents pay your school fees in the term?

Early () Middle () End ()

5. What is your attendance level at school?

Low () average () high ()

6. What is the attendance level of your teacher in terms of teaching?

Low () average () high ()

7. Rate the performance of your mathematics teacher in terms of completion of fees by all pupils

Low () average () high ()

8. Suggest what can be done to help you improve in academic performance?

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APPENDIX IV: KREJCIE AND MORGAN SAMPLING TABLE

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

APPENDIX V: A MAP OF UGANDA SHOWING SIRONKO DISTRICT

