

Factors contributing to school dropout in Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Namalemba Sub -
County, Iganga District-Uganda

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Abstract

The study investigated the factors contributing to school dropout in Namalemba Sub-County and focus was on school, teacher and family related factors. The study specifically compared the perceptions on three factors known to contribute to school dropout (i.e. family-related, teacher – related and school - related factors). The study used a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods of collecting and analyzing data. The study employed a cross-sectional descriptive study design and used both qualitative and quantitative techniques in data collection. The sample included 44 pupils, 43 class teachers and 14 key informants. The analysis of the various coefficients was done across dimensions. The results showed the insignificance of school related factors and teacher related factors in influencing dropout of pupils thus showing family related factors as those that have had profound impact on pupils' dropout in UPE schools. The study concluded that family related factors, specifically the economic activities at home, level of education of the parents have a significant contribution to the dropout of UPE school children. The study finally recommends; people in the community should keep a keen eye on parents who keep their children at home during school time since that has the potential to increase the dropout levels, particularly in rural areas; roll-out adult education across the entire country so as to ensure that the parents too can be able to appreciate the value of education and therefore keep their children in school; schools should identify children who are most at risk of dropping out and develop programs to keep them in school. Other recommendations included an improvement in school infrastructure, sensitization of parents about the value of education and refresher courses for teachers to address the challenges of school dropout in Namalemba Sub-county and in Uganda.