

**PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE EFFECT OF THE PARISH
DEVELOPMENT MODEL (PDM) ON CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT IN
NSUUBE-KAUGA PARISH, MUKONO MUNICIPALITY, MUKONO DISTRICT**

CHRISTOPHER SSEKITO

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
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DECLARATION


I affirm that this dissertation titled “*Parents’ perspective on the effects of the Parish Development Model (PDM) on children’s development in Nsuube-Kauga Parish, Mukono Municipality, Mukono District*” is my original work and has not been presented in any other University/institution for the consideration of any certification.

Signature:  _____ Date: 5th May 2026

SSEKITO CHRISTOPHER

APPROVAL

This dissertation titled “*Parents’ perspective on the effects of the Parish Development Model (PDM) on children’s development in Nsuube-Kauga Parish, Mukono Municipality, Mukono District*” has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor

Signature:  Date: 0 5 / 0 5 / 2 0 2 6

MADAM MERCY AMANIYO

ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR

DEDICATION

This dissertation is a great dedication to my mother, Miss. Proscovia Namiro and a great friend, Mrs. Lillian Businge, it has been a great moment to walk this entire academic journey with you as you inspire me towards great success in this world.

To my wonderful wife Christine and children: Christephern and Christrevlin, may this achievement continue to keep us together as we walk towards our goal of serving the vulnerable people in our communities.

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to look at the parents' perspectives in relation to what the Parish Development Model (PDM) has been able to contribute towards their children's development since the parents had joined this program. This study focused on the understanding of the two major development indicators or aspects, that is, education and Health. This study was also based in one of the Parishes in Mukono Municipality, known as Nsuube-Kauga Parish, and to get in-depth views from the parents, I considered using a qualitative data collection method by administering an interview script with open-ended questions to give their respective contributions towards the effect PDM has made in their children's lives. This also looked at 20 respondents in the data collection.

According to the research findings, PDM has led to a growth in household income, which has created a positive impact on their children's educational achievements. Some parents shared that they can now afford to pay school fees on time, provide necessary scholastic materials, and ensure their children attend school regularly, which contributed to a better academic performance in their education. Additionally, the survey revealed that the same increase in income also led to an improvement in the children's access to better healthcare services, by allowing families to seek immediate treatment, buy medications, and meet essential needs like nutrition. However, some respondents mentioned some challenges they have encountered, like delays in fund disbursement, inadequate funding, and limited project sustainability, which hindered their ability to get timely and meaningful positive results from their intended project investments.

From the analysis, it was realized that PDM is a good economic empowerment that significantly enhances children's overall development through its effort to enhance the household income capacity. And this growth in incomes can also support the general development and well-being of children in these families. The study also gives recommendations for enhancing its implementation through timely and sufficient funding, better monitoring and supervision, and offering financial literacy and mindset change programs. In regard to this study, we see that Social Workers play a great role in making sure that vulnerable groups of people are linked to economic benefits like PDM that contribute lasting improvements in their well-being as a family, including the children.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
APPROVAL	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1.0. Introduction	1
1.1. Background of the study	2
1.2. The statement of the problem.....	3
1.3. Objectives of the Study	3
1.4. Research Questions	3
1.5. Significance of the Study	4
1.6. Scope of the Study.....	4
1.7. Justification	4
1.8. Theoretical Framework	5
CHAPTER TWO	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.0. Introduction	6
2.1. Theoretical Literature Review.....	6
2.2. Empirical Literature Review	7
2.2.1. The Economic Empowerment Programs on Children’s Education Opportunities ...	7
2.2.2. The Economic Empowerment Programs on Children’s Health Opportunities.....	10
2.3. Summary and Research Gap	12
2.4. Effects of the Parish Development Model (PDM).....	13
2.5. Conclusion.....	14
CHAPTER THREE	15
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	15
3.0. Introduction	15
3.1. Research Design.....	15

3.2.	Qualitative Case Study Research Design	16
3.3.	Rationale for Qualitative Case Study Research Design	16
3.4.	Area of study	17
3.5.	Study Population	17
3.6.	Sources of Information.....	17
3.7.	Population and Sampling Techniques	18
3.8.	Sampling Techniques	18
3.9.	Procedure for Data Collection.....	19
3.9.1.	Preliminary Meetings and Permission	19
3.9.2.	Main Data Collection.....	19
3.9.3.	Data Handling	19
3.10.	Data Collection Instrument.....	20
3.11.	Instrument Credibility and Reliability	20
3.11.1.	Credibility of the Instrument.....	20
3.11.2.	Dependability of the Instrument.....	20
3.12.	Data Processing and Analysis.....	21
3.12.1.	Thematic Analysis.....	21
3.13.	Ethical Considerations	21
3.13.1.	Informed Consent.....	21
3.13.2.	Confidentiality and Anonymity.....	21
3.13.3.	Voluntary Participation	22
3.13.4.	Respect and Cultural Sensitivity	22
3.14.	Methodological Constraints.....	22
3.15.	Budget.....	22
CHAPTER FOUR.....		24
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION		24
4.0.	Introduction	24
4.1.	Respondents' feedback.....	24
4.2.	Thematic Analysis of Findings	27
4.2.1.	Improvement in Children's School Attendance.....	27
4.2.2.	Academic Performance and Learning Outcomes	28

4.2.3.	The Role of PDM in Supporting Education.....	29
4.2.4.	Household Food Security and Nutrition	30
4.2.5.	Access to Healthcare Services	31
4.2.6.	The role of PDM in Healthcare and Nutrition	32
CHAPTER FIVE		34
5.0.	Introduction	34
5.1.	Parents’ perspectives on the changes in children’s educational opportunities.....	34
5.2.	Parents’ perspectives on the changes in children’s health opportunities	36
5.3.	Summary of Discussion	38
CHAPTER SIX.....		39
CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS		39
6.0.	Introduction	39
6.1.	Conclusion.....	39
6.2.	Recommendations	39
6.3.	Areas of Further Research.....	40
REFERENCES		42
ANNEXURES		45

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Estimated Research Budget.	23
Table 2.	The Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.....	25

CHAPTER ONE

1.0. Introduction

The topic of this study is the parents' perspective on the effects of the Parish Development Model (PDM) on children's development in Nsuube-Kauga Parish, Mukono Municipality, Mukono District. This particularly emphasizes educational and health opportunities as vital aspects of child development. Good child development is very important in human development as it covers everything from our physical health to our emotional and social well-being, in becoming a productive individual in the future who can contribute to social development. Research shows that the conditions we experience in early childhood play a significant role in shaping our future, influencing everything from our education to our health and productivity (UNICEF, 2019). However, in many developing countries like Uganda, poverty severely hinders child development, making it tough for children to access vital services like education, healthcare, and proper nutrition.

According to UNICEF (2023), millions of children face different life challenges that put pressure on their cognitive and physical growth. This shows that many children around the world are facing child poverty, which causes poor child development. UNICEF (2024) also states that 44% of Children in Uganda are living in multidimensional poverty with a serious lack of basic needs for good, healthy development. With the lack of good health needs, it can also lead to poor education outcomes, frequent sickness, and long-term development challenges or child deaths. Therefore, good child development is linked to a good socio-economic status of the family, whereby low-income households will always struggle with poor learning opportunities, leading to poor school attendance trends and inadequate healthcare opportunities. For example, according to the UNICEF (2023) report on child poverty, over a third of children in Uganda are stunted due to malnutrition, and this has negatively affected brain development and learning abilities. And also, financial constraints frequently hinder the timely access to healthcare, later compromising children's physical and cognitive growth (UNICEF, 2019).

Understanding the need to boost household welfare to foster child development, the Government of Uganda rolled out PDM in 2022. The model is designed to economically empower households, with the hope that a boost in income will lead to better access to education, nutrition, and healthcare services for children (Government of Uganda, 2022).

However, even with the rollout of PDM, there's still not much evidence showing how these economic gains actually impact children's development. It's important to understand this connection because just having more money doesn't automatically mean that children will thrive. Parents, who are the main caregivers, have a significant influence on how resources are distributed and how children develop.

1.1. Background of the study

Efforts to boost child development outcomes have increasingly turned their attention to address household poverty, understanding that a child's well-being is deeply influenced by their socio-economic surroundings. Over the years, governments from developing countries and development partners have rolled out various poverty alleviation programs like National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and Emyooga in Uganda, which are aimed at improving access to essential services like education, healthcare, and nutrition. Yet, child poverty continues to be a persistent issue, especially in developing countries where structural inequalities hinder the effectiveness of these initiatives (UNICEF, 2019; UNICEF Data, 2023). In the past years in Uganda, a number of policy initiatives have been launched to bring down poverty and enhance livelihoods, including the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA), National Development Plans (NDPs), that is, NDP I, II, III, and the current NDP IV, and social protection programs. Despite these efforts, many of these interventions have struggled to effectively reach the poorest households or bring about lasting improvements in their social welfare. As a result, a significant number of children still face deprivation in crucial areas like education and health (UNICEF, 2024).

According to the Government of Uganda (2022), A well-established economic empowerment initiative was established to improve subsistence household income to a good money flow economy by 2025. This PDM initiative aimed at financial support activities, small enterprise development that could boost household financial ability by being able to access the different family needs with ease in the different parishes, and this would also promote better school access for children and improved healthcare access. Currently, there is no empirical evidence about the effect of PDM regarding its goals, and therefore, this calls for the need to gather information about the PDM's real impact at the household level, especially when it comes to children's well-being. Most discussions have centered around economic outcomes, with less emphasis on how these changes actually improve children's educational and health opportunities.

1.2. The statement of the problem

According to UNICEF (2024), 44% of children in Uganda are considered multidimensionally poor, meaning they lack access to crucial services like education, healthcare, and proper nutrition. Because of this significant number, the deprivation of basic needs puts a large number of children at risk for poor physical, cognitive, and social development. The poor nutrition and educational challenges remain major problems in the child's development in Uganda, as these are major determinants of their future lives. From the Child Poverty report (UNICEF) 2023, approximately 29–30% of children under five are stunted, which can severely hinder their brain development and learning abilities. Additionally, many children from low-income families encounter obstacles to education, such as not being enrolled in school or dropping out due to financial difficulties (UNICEF, 2019). These challenges together restrict children's prospects and overall well-being.

With the initiative of PDM that was designed to empower families to better support their children's growth, there is still limited evidence on whether it's genuinely making a difference in the vulnerable children's development, as we focus our study on the educational and health outcomes, bringing Nsuube-Kauga as the case study.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

To understand how parents describe changes in children's educational opportunities since the introduction of PDM?

To explore how parents describe changes in children's health opportunities since the introduction of PDM?

1.4. Research Questions

How do parents describe changes in children's educational opportunities since the introduction of PDM?

How do parents describe changes in children's health opportunities since the introduction of PDM?

1.5. Significance of the Study

To the policymakers and government stakeholders, especially those who are involved in designing and implementing the PDM, the research will bring insight into whether the PDM is truly turning households towards the money economy, as it was intended by the government. This will also inform whether the growth in household has also contributed towards the children's development by improving their educational and health outcomes. For future purposes, the research study findings will support the formulation of other policies in economic empowerment, enhance implementation strategies, and ensure that there is inclusivity of child-focused strategies of benefit in these poverty alleviation programs. In this way, this will show that the efforts put in by the government not only boost incomes but also play a significant role in fostering holistic child development.

The research findings can also be used by social workers, community development practitioners, and NGOs who are dedicated to supporting children's and families' well-being to deepen their understanding of how initiatives aimed at economic empowerment impact children's development from their early development stages. The findings can be used to guide the creation and execution of more effective, child-centred programs like child development centres, enhance community outreach efforts, and support advocacy initiatives for the rights of children, and call for inclusivity in all development programs in Uganda's

1.6. Scope of the Study

This study was also carried out in Nsuube-Kauga Parish, where PDM has been implemented from 2022 to 2025. The research focused the study on concerns that affect child development and how an initiative like PDM has contributed to the two major development aspects in children's lives, namely, education opportunities and health opportunities. These aspects were studied through getting the parents' perspectives on how PDM has influenced their ability to provide school fees and other school-related requirements, improvement in children's feeding, and access to medical care.

1.7. Justification

The government had projected that by 2025, the PDM would have made significant changed lives through better income and financial inclusion (Government of Uganda, 2022). Therefore, there

was a need to assess this projection and get parents' perspectives on how these financial gains have also contributed to the children's development.

This also showed a gap between what policies may aim to achieve and what is happening on the ground in the communities.

This will guide the policymakers, Social Work practitioners, and development partners, providing evidence that can help shape more child-focused approaches in poverty alleviation programs.

1.8. Theoretical Framework

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) mentions that a child's development is influenced by various environmental systems and how they interact with each other, including the microsystem being the family, mesosystem being the family relationship with the community, exosystem being parents' work or business, and macrosystem being cultural beliefs, policies, and laws. The microsystem looks at the family structure, how parents play an important role in shaping their children's access to education and health opportunities through their choices and priorities. Within the framework of PDM, parents who secured loans and invested in progressive businesses were able to boost their household income. However, how much children actually benefit depends on their parents' perspectives, attitudes, and how actively they engage with these resources to support their children.

The exosystem included external structures like the PDM initiative, which indirectly impacts children by offering financial support to their parents. The mesosystem illustrated the connections between home, school, and healthcare services, which could be enhanced when parents make good use of PDM resources. Lastly, the macrosystem includes the cultural beliefs and norms that shape how parents view education, health, and financial choices.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

This chapter is organised into two main parts, that is, the theoretical literature review and the empirical literature review, as it looks at the s existing literature that is in line with exploring the parents' perspective on the effect of PDM on their children's development, particularly in terms of education and health. This will help to deeply understand the relationship between growth in household income and child development.

2.1. Theoretical Literature Review

According to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), a child's development is made possible by various environmental systems that interact with one another in complex ways, and these include the Micro, meso, exo, and macro systems. So, the microsystem, which is at the center of this development, includes the family as the closest environment impacting the child. Also, Bradley & Corwyn (2002) suggest that a parent's socio-economic status plays a crucial role in determining a child's access to vital resources like education, nutrition, and healthcare. Therefore, the household's ability to grow in its income positions it in a good situation for creating enriching environments, in order to provide quality education and ensure proper healthcare.

From the Ecological Systems Theory, the mesosystem shows that a family's life interacts with other settings, such as schools and the community, which brings an impactful development in a child's life. Epstein (2011) says that when parents are actively involved in their children's education through being financially stable and paying for the school-related costs, it leads to better academic performance and higher school retention rates among the children. Therefore, as a result of economic initiatives like the PDM improving household income, they also strengthen the relationships between parents and schools, and eventually improve the educational outcomes of their children. The government plays an important role in developing institutions and policies at the exosystem level, with programs like the PDM that have a significant impact on family income and access to essential services. As noted by Yoshikawa et al. (2012), social protection and economic empowerment initiatives can greatly enhance child development outcomes by

improving the resources available to households. Looking at the macrosystem, this includes the wider socio-economic and cultural contexts that shape people's lives. The UNICEF (2019) report on multidimensional child poverty indicates that children's development patterns in Uganda are greatly undermined by poverty, inequality in resource distribution, and lack of public services in some communities.

2.2. Empirical Literature Review

2.2.1. The Economic Empowerment Programs on Children's Education Opportunities

Most research shows that students thrive more when their household's income is high, especially in lower-income areas. According to Becker (1993), when the parents can have an extra income, spending often goes toward learning materials like textbooks, enrollment costs, and even clothing for school. Across many Sub-Saharan countries, such as Uganda and Kenya, attendance declines because family expenses are stretched beyond what they can afford at the moment. Because of poverty, it becomes so hard for many children to go to school and attend classes without missing any day of the week. The governments in the respective countries have tried to bring a change in their citizens' lives by introducing economic empowerment programs, such as cash transfers, youth livelihood initiatives, agricultural support, or savings association schemes are put in place. Therefore, investments keep going on, with small incomes coming in, which allows payment of school fees for the children's education.

In Sub-Saharan countries, what individuals earn shapes how often children attend school classes. According to the previous findings, Case et al. (2002) reveals wealthier households send their children to school more regularly. Meanwhile, World Bank (2020) reports point toward one thing: when homes get increased incomes, the number of school dropouts reduces and improves access to essential educational needs. This is more profound in rural areas where there are financial constraints to buy for other family needs. Therefore, the findings suggest that economic empowerment programs are beneficial in removing those structural barriers that could affect the education opportunities of many children.

Most Ugandan families find school costs hard, even when tuition is free. Even though there is Universal Primary Education (UPE), school uniforms, meals during the day, and transport, and other additional requirements add pressure which keeps some children away from school, Nannyonjo (2007). Incomes coming into a household shape whether children stay enrolled in

school because of the ability of the parents to have a stable business for income growth, or being able to receive financial support, which slowly reduces daily life challenges. Fiszbein and Schady (2009) confirmed what seemed obvious: giving financial support to economically disadvantaged households reduces the scale of missing out on school. Hidden school expenses weigh less when someone helps the parents to cover them.

From Uganda's program called Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE), a financial aid program for the elderly, which tends to raise household expenses, yet also increases funds directed toward children's education. When low-income households receive any financial growth, their priority is always linked to better school attendance for their children. When financial empowerment programs begin, many families adjust their routines and expenses around new resources. This is seen in several African countries. Gilligan and Roy (2014) mentioned these shifts through detailed home surveys across different regions. Bastagli et al. (2019) also add to Gilligan and Roy that increased earnings reshape domestic priorities. In Malawi, school attendance grew fast when the government started to provide financial support to households. Baird et al. (2013) in Malawi, girls who frequently miss out on school were able to attend regularly when household incomes were increased. This is because of better household incomes, whereby those students who would usually miss school were able to get support and stay in school. Therefore, these economic empowerment programs are relevant in enhancing the learning outcomes of children in many low-income countries.

It is noted that any increase in household income changes in what it can do in children's lives. In a rural community where parents find success in agricultural programs, classrooms fill up more with the improved attendance of children. And not only that, food is always available, and the stress of buying household requirements is removed. Bastagli et al. (2019) noted that parents used these added incomes mostly on education requirements for the children, particularly in rural areas. UNICEF (2020) says that in rural communities, Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and other financial support programs allow members to get small loans just for costs like school fees/tuition for their children, and because of that, learning stays continuous.

Although the increased income is not the ultimate driving factor in the children's educational success, as it could be seen by some individuals. The parents' beliefs about education and their involvement often contribute much to the outcomes. Money might cover school requirements or

transport, yet daily habits like helping with homework, attending school meetings, and others hold equal weight. Stable income flow won't fix gaps in education if there is no parents' involvement and a good attitude towards the children's education. Epstein (2011) states that parents' engagement in monitoring school attendance, supporting the children in homework assignments, and putting value on education significantly influences the children's educational success.

According to Conger et al. (1994), in the Family Stress Model, the explains that financial strain reshapes caregiving and affects children's development. Even with higher income, challenges such as stress, sudden needs like death or illness, or poor awareness may stand between families' good financial decisions and affect the children's education opportunities. Also, the World Bank (2020) notes that earning more means little when someone does not have knowledge of budgeting, access to markets, or support structures. Baird et al. (2011) highlighted that even though increased income improves school attendance, it does not necessarily lead to improved academic performance. The parents' abilities to make good decisions in the allocation of resources guide whether the household income growth also lifts the quality of education of their children. Many students may enter schools and overcrowd them, but the absence of books and crumbling roofs can still hinder academic performance, even when there is an increase in student enrollment.

The UNICEF (2023) report reveals that poverty cuts deep into the education chances of many children in Uganda. Although economic empowerment programs bring relief, they do not provide full solutions. Therefore, better schools bring good results: buildings need to be in good shape, teachers need appropriate training, and learners should have access to the relevant scholastic materials like textbooks, exercise books, calculators, pens, and pencils. When these elements are misaligned, improvement in education remains at stake, regardless of household income growth.

Numbers dominate most studies, looking at enrollment rates, how often students show up, and expenditure on education, with no evidence from the parents' perspectives, yet parents make key decisions towards the children's education. Their views guide where finances are allocated. The priorities they carry might be what lets learning continue with effect in children's lives - or stops it from having an impact. One reason children attend school more regularly comes from economic empowerment programs, which help ease family resource allocation, according to research across Uganda and neighboring regions. Yet success often depends less on funding and more on parental beliefs about involvement, timing of choices, and daily routines, alongside the education needs.

2.2.2. The Economic Empowerment Programs on Children's Health Opportunities

Healthier children usually come from homes where household economic status is fairly stable, which makes raising incomes key in developing countries. Because when the incomes grow, families find it simpler to visit health centers, pick nutritious foods, and give children proper nourishment, these steps are closely aimed at achieving good health. According to Currie (2009) when incomes grow, medical access widens, eating habits shift upward, and living conditions turn less risky. In Uganda, high expenses limit the seeking of the appropriate medical care on time, leading to poor food supply, as the focus is shifted to looking for better income-generating opportunities. In many households, income means missing medical examinations or hindering proper medical care as people resort to cheaper alternatives. Economic empowerment Initiatives like PDM that boost income growth play a key role in changing the children's health outcomes.

According to previous research, the World Health Organization (2021) reports that children in poor households run into problems related to malnutrition and limited health care in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, including Uganda. In the event of not having enough income often means children miss proper meals and medical treatment. Illness strikes harder where incomes are lower, and treatment gaps stay wide open. UNICEF (2023) highlighted stunting growth patterns among many children in Uganda, which was linked to limited food access and limited access to medical care. It is said that when nutrition is reduced, and medical treatment is not given, bodies do not build strength, making them weaker to be attacked by many sicknesses that come around. Raising family earnings seems one way forward in reducing the barriers to childhood health.

Fiszbein and Schady (2009) found that parents who receive support usually schedule more checkups, and nutrition improves too, simply because budget stress is reduced. Therefore, economic empowerment, such as cash transfers and business loan empowerment to low-income households, contributes to stronger children in many households. In Uganda. Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2026) reveals that children from wealthier families face fewer illnesses and are able to eat balanced meals, unlike children from poor households. Also, Seidenfeld et al. (2014), mentioned that in Zambia, with the cash transfers from the government, many families were able to have better meals and have some money to seek medical care whenever children fell sick. Handa et al. (2018) also add that in Kenya, increased income enables many households to acquire medical care, and the high levels of sickness among children were reduced. Therefore, economic support

initiatives like these lifted many parents' cost burden in catering for their children's health, such as being able to afford transport costs to hospitals, and medical prescriptions became easier to afford. And in the long run, households were able to seek medical care more often without much delay, which helped in preventing the sicknesses from worsening. Income stability changed how easily wellness fit into people's daily lives.

From the above earlier research, we have seen that healthy children benefited from cash transfers, like in Malawi and Zambia, but also job-related support plays a good role, like providing farmers with seedlings or seeds, animals or birds to rear in order to start up their farming projects and agricultural training. This enhances the farmers' ability to grow extra food at home, improving the diet of the family members because of the seeds, seedlings, and training received. Bastagli et al. (2019) noted that an increase in household income opens doors to nutritious groceries at home rather than leaving gaps on the table and also does the same to medical care, as the family can seek medical care as soon as possible and not later. A good diet does as much as medicine to keep households happy without stressing sicknesses. When there is a stable income in the household, it brings good health, energy, and resistance to sicknesses, leading to good sleep patterns and strong, healthy bodies, thus leading to proper living conditions.

It is also important to note that a growth in the household income does not automatically lead to better health among the children. WHO (2021) The parents' involvement and contribution towards the daily actions planning for better meals, follow-up on medical care schedules, or the way hygiene is handled at home. All these depend mostly on the parents' or caregivers' decisions at home. There is a need to have a good health awareness mindset at home because small acts like washing hands before eating are more likely to become routine and help in preventing the spread of diseases. But when parents lack awareness or insight, added funds may do little good over time. How people think about well-being often weighs more heavily than how much they earn.

The financial burdens can also overwhelm the parents and do not lead to automatic health wholeness among the children in the household. According to Conger et al. (1994), the Family Stress Model states that financial struggles can overwhelm the parents in the event of concentrating on getting a good income in order to cater to other needs at home, making it harder to care well for children. When family income grows, relief does not always follow right away, as stress may stay around. This is because expenses may often shift to pressing parents' needs like getting new

gadgets, clothing, alcohol, leaving little improvement in the daily lives of children. World Bank (2018) mentions that higher income alone doesn't remove deep gaps at home without added skills like financial management, investment behavior, or accessing community support. Without these skills or behaviors, even stable businesses will fail to lift the financial standards of the households. Therefore, one missing part throws off the whole effort towards children's health conditions.

Challenges in the health systems may also hinder a good financial state of the household and prevent it from achieving its health goals. Across Uganda and parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, medical centers often sit miles away, with poor infrastructure, few medical workers, or long walks through bad roads. Even when a person earns slightly more each month, yet is still stranded without treatment, the improvement does not bring change. Stronger health centres and skilled personnel become just as vital as added income in order to have a lasting health impact.

In Uganda, the government's efforts aim to boost household income, with hopes that better household income flow will improve the well-being of children. The government of Uganda (2022) suggests that increased household income should lead to smooth access to healthcare services, plus improved nutrition. However, there is no real evidence examining the suggested outcomes from the parents at the household level. Therefore, findings from Uganda and nearby parts of sub-Saharan Africa pointed plainly to how income growth leads to healthier outcomes for children. When households earn more, access to health centres becomes easier, diets improve, and well-being improves. However, these improvements are guided by the parents' perspectives and their children's health, and the decision-making in allocating the resources rightly to improve the children's health.

2.3. Summary and Research Gap

Looking into past research reveals how household income shapes children's learning and health opportunities in Uganda and other African nations. When households earn more through aid like cash handouts, economic empowerment projects, or saving groups, parents often manage to cover school fees and medical care. Evidence shows that higher earnings help clear challenges to attending school regularly, paying for school-related requirements, even getting medical check-ups, proper food, and meals at home. Benefits come in various ways, not just incomes, but also less strain on families, stable homes, and a greater focus on raising children well. Still, extra

income alone cannot ensure progress; the choices adults make, the standards of schools, or medical centres play key roles too.

Even with current knowledge, key questions still go unanswered in published work. While numbers dominate most findings, little evidence is given on what parents actually experience and their perspectives. Because they are the ones who are deeply involved in managing home life and guiding their kids' futures. How households make sense of income and put it to use regarding children's education and health opportunities, especially when conditions differ so widely between different households. Why certain households gain more advantage remains unclear. In Uganda, few efforts have been taken to gather evidence about the Parish Development Model for children's development from the parents' perspectives. Therefore, by centering parent views, this research explores intimate details of economic shifts and how such changes affect access to education and health opportunities from the local context.

2.4. Effects of the Parish Development Model (PDM)

PDM has raised the household income through the loan funds given out to support income-generating activities like farming, livestock rearing, and small businesses. This support has helped families diversify their income sources and strengthen their economic status. As research indicates that having access to financial resources is crucial for improving household livelihoods and alleviating poverty (Fiszbein & Schady, 2009). Therefore, it's important to note that income improvements can differ from one household to another, being influenced by factors like financial management skills, market access, and sufficient running capital. In the end, this will show that everyone will get different levels of returns from their businesses. According to the Government of Uganda (2022), the PDM initiative calls for beneficiaries to form SACCOs specifically for households in rural areas so that they can be engaged in savings and credit services and also seek more government support in these SACCOs in order to bring sustainable development. According to the World Bank (2018), with better financial inclusion opportunities, many households can invest more effectively for better benefits, manage risks, and maintain their income-generating activities for sustainable development in order to enhance their household incomes. And it is added by the World Bank (2020) that with increased income and better financial access, households can more easily cover school-related costs and medical expenses, leading to an overall enhancement in their quality of life.

2.5. Conclusion

In reference to the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), highlights the importance of economic empowerment initiatives like the PDM increase household incomes which changes the children's welfare development, however the Family Stress Model of Conger et al. (1994), explains that children development patterns are primarily influenced by the conditions at home and the choices made by parents to prioritize children's needs alongside other family needs or stressors in the family. The other research also points out that even when there is an increase in household income that can enhance access to better children's education and healthcare, it doesn't automatically guarantee improved outcomes for children. This improvement largely depends on how families choose to allocate their resources. And to others, their financial stability is affected because every household grows their incomes in different levels.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter explains the methods that were used in the research study to produce the empirical data. This looks at the research design, the study population, sampling strategies, data collection methods, and the tools that will be used to guide the study. This explains how the data was processed and analyzed to ensure that the findings are meaningful and align with the study objectives of the study. Important issues like validity, reliability, and ethical considerations were also addressed to understand the credibility, consistency, and integrity of the research findings.

3.1. Research Design

According to Kothari (2004), a research design guides the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to address the research problem and answer the study questions. Serving as a clear roadmap in ensuring that the study is conducted in a systematic, logical, and scientifically valid way. The researcher used the Qualitative research design to explore the parents' perspectives on the education and health opportunities regarding PDM. The choice of this design is based on the nature of the research problem, which aims to understand the subjective experiences, meanings, and interpretations deeply, rather than just quantifying relationships between the variables. This will allow to explore how parents view the changes brought about by the PDM, how they make sense of these changes, and how their perceptions shape decisions regarding their children's well-being.

With this research design, the research student was able to have an opportunity to visit the community and see the physical environments of the respondents, ensuring that the findings truly reflect the real-life situations in Nsuube-Kauga Parish. This gave a clear understanding of the relationships between household dynamics, socio-economic factors, and community contexts.

3.2. Qualitative Case Study Research Design.

Looking at the nature of the research topic, which aims to examine the parents' perspective on the effects of the PDM on children's development in Nsuube-Kauga Parish, Mukono Municipality, this required having a good interaction with the parents to get their direct views on their experiences with the PDM effects in their households on a broader scale. Therefore, qualitative research was appropriate to present the findings of this study. And a case approach would also allow getting the relevant data for the research, and also, the PDM initiative works with parishes, so it was appropriate to have a specific parish for my case study. This would allow getting a good, detailed contextual understanding of how incomes from the PDM-supported projects have an influence on the children's development in their households.

The case study approach provided a good understanding of the parents' perspectives regarding access to education and good health opportunities due to the income changes experienced through the engagement with the economic empowerment program. This required exploring their real-life experiences and their involvement in the children's lives in making good decisions for their children's education and health access.

3.3. Rationale for Qualitative Case Study Research Design

A qualitative case study design could explore more deeply the parents' perspectives in this study than just measuring the variables. This allowed a better understanding of the phenomenon of parents' views and the relationship with the effects of PDM, as it brought changes in their children's education and health development. The qualitative case study approach was able to look at a specific location to get real-life socio-economic experience and cultural beliefs of the parents, which could help understand their reasons for decision-making regarding the education and health needs of their children. These parents' perspective was on how they got involved in the children's lives and allocated resources accordingly, alongside other household constraints, which called for a qualitative approach.

And these perspectives could not be adequately captured using standardized or purely quantitative methods; therefore, a qualitative approach would definitely allow respondents to express their views in their own words, providing deeper insight into their interpretations of the PDM and its effects on their children. Also, the relationship between the PDM and children's development is

multidimensional and context-dependent, bringing out the policy relevance in the findings to guide policymakers and practitioners.

Looking at the community setting of Nsuube-Kauga Parish, Mukono Municipality, where social, economic, and cultural factors like attaching the initiative to the ruling political party would uniquely shape the outcomes of the PDM, whereby some people would attach the benefits to political issues. A qualitative design was therefore particularly effective in capturing such context-specific realities, ensuring that the findings are relevant and grounded in the lived experiences of the community.

3.4. Area of study

Nsuube-Kauga Parish was chosen for this research study because it's one of the communities where the Parish Development Model (PDM) is being implemented, in increasing low-income households to stable income households. This community is located in Mukono Municipality, Mukono District, in Central Uganda. characterized by mostly peri-urban areas, with residents involved in small-scale businesses, informal jobs, and subsistence farming. The presence of low-income families with children in school and access to basic education and health services made it an ideal community to explore how the PDM affects children's educational and health opportunities. As per the findings, this community provided valuable and context-specific insights for the research.

3.5. Study Population

In this research, the focus is on PDM beneficiaries living in Nsuube-Kauga Parish, Mukono Municipality. These parents were chosen as the main population because they had received PDM economic empowerment loans, and also, they are the key decision-makers in their households in the distribution of any acquired incomes to also meet their children's needs, such as education and health. So, this particular study population was found to be necessary to get feedback from.

3.6. Sources of Information

The source of information was both primary and secondary sources of information. In this way, the researcher was able to gather firsthand data information from the field while also leaning on existing literature and documented evidence that backed up and gave context to the findings.

The PDM beneficiaries were the primary source of data in this study because they were able to share their personal experiences regarding how the PDM initiative had influenced their children's education and health opportunities. This data was collected through interview scripts with open-ended questions, which allowed the respondents to share their thoughts in detail, capturing the rich, qualitative depth of their experiences. Their insights were therefore important in understanding the real-world effects of economic empowerment initiatives at the household level. Also, secondary sources include government reports on the PDM's implementation and outcomes, especially those released by the Ministry of Local Government, and other literature like academic journals and books that focus on child development, poverty reduction, and social protection programs to gain theoretical and empirical insights relevant to our study. This information enhanced the primary data by providing essential background knowledge, theoretical frameworks, and statistical evidence. Both data sources validated the findings, giving a strong conclusion about the study topic.

3.7. Population and Sampling Techniques

The target population was purposefully selected from 20 PDM beneficiaries in Nsuube-Kauga Parish who had invested the money into their businesses for household income growth. This population included parents of children of various ages, genders, and school levels to provide rich in-depth information that could be well analyzed and interpreted. By focusing on these parents, the researcher directly explored how managing household income, parental involvement, and child development outcomes are interconnected, as this would provide good responses to answer research questions.

3.8. Sampling Techniques.

This combined combination approaches that ensured a balanced sample population that captured both the relevance of parental experience and the fairness of random selection, enabling the study to gather reliable and generalizable data.

Through purposive sampling, the researcher was able to specifically identify those parents who had received and actively invested in PDM loans in their businesses. These individuals were chosen because they had firsthand experience and insights into how the program affects household finances and their children's development. By using purposive sampling, it ensures that the data

gathered was both authentic and valuable, as only those who have engaged with the PDM program could offer meaningful insights.

3.9. Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher considered preliminary preparation in order to make a good start to enter the community, and then the main data collection took place to gather accurate and relevant information from the respondents.

3.9.1. Preliminary Meetings and Permission

The researcher first obtained an introductory letter from Uganda Christian University to get permission from the local authorities in the Nsuube-Kauga Parish community. The Community Leaders included the Community Development Officer (CDO) at Mukono Division Offices, who is the custodian of the beneficiaries' data and manages the development projects in the area and the PDM Community group leaders. Engaging with authorities and community group leaders paved the way for easier access to parents and created a collaborative research atmosphere by building credibility and trust with the respondents and explaining to them very well the study's purpose and scope.

3.9.2. Main Data Collection

This was through structured interview scripts that were given to parents to collect qualitative data regarding their views on the PDM initiative. While in the field, these scripts facilitated the collection of data about how they utilize loan resources and the effect of the income growth on their children's education and health. These interview scripts were composed of both closed-ended and open-ended questions, allowing for clear, measurable responses while ensuring they were easy to complete as the respondents were guided by the researcher. This well-guided flow of the questions was relevant for the researcher in making sure that the respondents are asked the same questions in a well-chronological manner in order to provide the relevant responses.

3.9.3. Data Handling

There was a successful process of data collection, and thereafter, the interview scripts with the data from the respondents were well organised according to the logical sequence of responses. In order to ensure data security, accuracy, and confidentiality, the data from scripts was transcribed

into the computer using the Microsoft Excel computer program in order to have a soft copy to work with in the analysis and to keep the data safe and confidential.

3.10. Data Collection Instrument

The researcher used an interview script with both closed-ended and open-ended questions to ensure the in-depth capture of parental perspectives about how the children's development has been affected by PDM initiative projects in their households. This tool allowed the researcher to ask the relevant questions for the required data with going astray from the research objectives, which included understanding the business investments made with PDM loans, children's school attendance, and access to healthcare services. This format made it easy to compare responses across different respondents and identify relevant themes in the responses for the data analysis.

3.11. Instrument Credibility and Reliability

This seeks to understand how the data collection tool was able to give out trusted data, which is not biased and manipulated by the respondents or the way in which the interview questions are set.

3.11.1. Credibility of the Instrument

The well-structured interview script guided all interviews in a consistent manner, which allowed the respondents to freely give their experiences regarding the effect of PDM on children's education and health opportunities. The open-ended questions that all respondents to provide detailed explanations on how PDM income support, savings, and investment activities influenced their children's development. This instrument was also reviewed by the supervisor to evaluate the questions for clarity, relevance, and to provide the necessary feedback to allow proper collection of data. This ensured that the data collected reflected the true lived experiences of respondents regarding PDM and children's education, rather than assumptions or researcher bias.

3.11.2. Dependability of the Instrument

The interview script was easy to use as they allow a good interaction with the respondents and won their trust after explaining the relevance of the research, so as to provide the data freely without any bias and with openness. All respondents were guided by a standardized core set of questions, ensuring a good understanding of the same core areas, such as household income changes, schooling decisions, and children's health. Therefore, the same interview framework, with the

same core questions asked consistently in all interviews, reduced variation in data collection and ensured that responses were based on comparable themes, such as income use, children's school participation, and health improvement.

3.12. Data Processing and Analysis

3.12.1. Thematic Analysis

The responses from the interview scripts were carefully studied to bring out those key themes that stand out in their responses to help in bringing out a good analysis of the results.

3.13. Ethical Considerations

These guided in building trust, ensuring confidentiality, and upholding integrity throughout the research journey, while upholding the rights, dignity, and well-being of the participants in the research study.

3.13.1. Informed Consent

Through clear guidance about the purpose of the goal and objectives of the study from the researcher. This gave the respondents a choice to participate or not in the study. And after this, they confirmed their willingness to engage in the research and provide the relevant data. This allowed the something running of the research to run smoothly with accurate data from the respondents.

3.13.2. Confidentiality and Anonymity

At the time of collecting data, the respondents were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and also serve the study's purposes. This gave them the confidence to share their perspectives, knowing that their responses would not be used for any other purpose. And also, the interview scripts did not include the names of the respondents, which confirmed to them that their responses would be anonymous. The filled interview scripts were then safely kept from the researcher's access only. This protected the respondents' identity and the improper usage of their responses

3.13.3. Voluntary Participation

The parents had the right to participate freely in the study without any coercion by the researcher, giving them the free will to withdraw at any point when they felt uncomfortable with the study. Thus, being able to hold the ethical standards that social research requires during this research.

3.13.4. Respect and Cultural Sensitivity

Using a thoughtful approach not only fostered cooperation but also built trust between the researcher and the community. The researcher took priority to engage with respondents in a language and manner that is respectful, polite, and culturally aware, taking into account the social norms and traditions of Nsuube-Kauga Parish.

3.14. Methodological Constraints

The limited financial and logistical resources hindered the researcher's ability to connect data from some respondents in Nsuube-Kauga Parish because some respondents wanted to receive some money in order for them to engage in the research, which was not planned for, and affected the timely collection of data and comprehensiveness of the study, as the researcher had to look for other parents who were willing to freely participate.

Response bias, as some respondents might have given responses that they thought were more pleasing to give, especially when asking if PDM loans had increased their incomes to be able to support their children's education. Another bias was that some respondents thought that I was from the government under the PDM committee, and I had come to track them so that they could pay back the loan, since some parents were in their period of paying back the loans. Also, environmental factors, like frequent rains, also interfere with the planned data collection period.

3.15. Budget

The budget included costs for transportation, stationery, communication, printing, and data collection, as well as allowances for a research assistant or someone who will guide in reaching out to the respondents and minor contingencies. Transportation costs account for field visits to reach parents across the parish, while stationery and printing cover the printing and photocopying of interview scripts. Communication expenses included phone calls and internet costs for coordinating with respondents and local authorities. Data collection required the support of the

research assistant, who helped to accompany the researcher in the community to reach out to the right beneficiaries of PDM and get responses from them. Minor contingencies were included to cover any unforeseen expenses, such as additional transport or replacement of materials during fieldwork.

Table 1. Estimated Research Budget.

No.	Item	Description	Estimated Cost (Ugx)
1.	Transportation	Field visits to households and local offices	20,000
2.	Printing	Interview scripts, Introductory Letter	13,000
3.	Communication	Phone calls, internet for coordination	10,000
4.	Research Assistant	1 Assistants for data collection	50,000
5.	Refreshments	Drinks and Snacks while in the field	20,000
6.	Contingencies	Miscellaneous/unforeseen expenses	10,000
		Total	123,000

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.0. Introduction

After the data was collected through the use of interview scripts, a descriptive approach was used in the analysis to summarize the data with frequencies and percentages, which helped in bringing out the key trends and themes in the study. And analyzed the qualitative responses thematically to bring out major areas of focus in this study in a narrative way, backed up with the statistical summaries on frequencies and percentages.

4.1. Respondents' feedback

All the 20 respondents who were targeted as the sample size were able to participate and give relevant feedback. With this high response rate of 100%, the researcher was able to get deep, relevant data about the parents' perspective on the study topic.

Table 2. **The Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

RESPONDENTS ID	Sex of respondent	Age group	Marital Status	Number of children	Project	Period in PDM?
Rpd-1	Female	41 - 50	Divorce/Separated	4	Food Market Stall	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-2	Male	18 - 30	Divorce/Separated	1	Poultry	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-3	Female	18 - 30	Married	4	Roadside Fast-food Vendor	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-4	Male	41 - 50	Married	11	Food Market Stall	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-5	Female	31 - 40	Married	0	Poultry	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-6	Female	51 and above	Married	9	Cattle	More than 2 Years
Rpd-7	Female	41 - 50	Married	8	Piggery	1 - 2 years
Rpd-8	Female	51 and above	Divorce/Separated	5	Piggery	1 - 2 years
Rpd-9	Female	41 - 50	Married	8	Poultry	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-10	Female	51 and above	Single	3	Food Market Stall	More than 2 Years
Rpd-11	Female	31 - 40	Single	4	Piggery	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-12	Male	41 - 50	Married	5	Piggery	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-13	Male	31 - 40	Married	1	Piggery	More than 2 Years
Rpd-14	Female	41 - 50	Single	6	Poultry	1 - 2 years
Rpd-15	Female	31 - 40	Married	1	Piggery	1 - 2 Years

RESPONDENTS ID	Sex of respondent	Age group	Marital Status	Number of children	Project	Period in PDM?
Rpd-16	Female	31 - 40	Married	4	Poultry	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-17	Female	41 - 50	Married	5	Poultry	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-18	Female	41 - 50	Widower	3	Piggery	Less than 1 Year
Rpd-19	Female	31 - 40	Married	6	Poultry	1 - 2 Years
Rpd-20	Female	51 and above	Separated	7	Poultry	More than 2 Years

Source: Primary Data 2026

From the table above, the distribution showed that more women were able to engage in the research study (n=16) compared to the men (n=4). Eight respondents were between 41 - 50 years, three from the 18–30 years category, five respondents aged 31–40 years, and four were aged 51 and above. The marital status distribution showed that twelve respondents were married, four had divorced/separated, three were singles, and one respondent was a widow. Twelve respondents had children in the range of 1 to 5 years, and seven respondents had children between 6 to 11 years, whereas one respondent did not have a child. The respondents had also invested the money received from PDM in different projects, and the distribution indicates that eight respondents have invested in poultry, seven in piggery, three in food market stalls, one was engaged in roadside fast-food vending, and one in cattle rearing. The period spent in the PDM program showed that fifteen respondents had so far spent 1 – 2 years in the program, four respondents had spent more than 2 years, and 1 respondent had spent less than a year.

4.2. Thematic Analysis of Findings

Major themes were highlighted in the data, significant patterns offering a deeper understanding of how parents perceive the impact of the PDM on their children's development. And these came from the qualitative data that was collected from the respondents' shared experiences.

4.2.1. Improvement in Children's School Attendance

According to the analysis of the data, twelve respondents reported better attendance after their involvement with PDM, two had a moderate improvement, four respondents had no change, and two didn't respond to this. The effects of PDM on school attendance differed from one household to another, even though the largest group had noticed a change in the children's attendance. There are those who saw a slight improvement or no improvement at all due to the challenges of inconsistent or low income from PDM projects. One parent mentioned that, "*There is still a challenge in the attendance for some children because my income has not yet changed to pay the school fees on time*" (Rpd-7). And another mentioned that "*the attendance has remained unstable since my income has not yet grown as I expected*" (Rpd-14).

Those parents who noticed a change in their children's attendance attributed it to their increased ability to pay school fees and buy other school requirements on time. From the two parents' responses, one shared that, "*the child could now attend school regularly without being disrupted*

to go back home to bring the remaining school fees balance” (Rpd-1). And another parent mentioned that, “Before joining PDM, the children were not in school, but now they are able to go to school with being able to pay for the school fees and buy the necessary school requirements” (Rpd-3). This shows that PDM has significantly helped to overcome some financial challenges that could affect the children’s school attendance.

Also, this financial growth from PDM allowed parents to enroll their children in better educational settings, like boarding schools, which further improved attendance. As one respondent noted, “Their attendance is good since the school stopped chasing them from school when they had not yet paid the full school fees. They are now in Boarding school, which also stabilizes their concentration and attendance in class” (Rpd-11). Thus, giving credit for the impact PDM has brought to many children’s lives. These highlights showed that while PDM shows promise in boosting attendance, its success really depends on how well families can sustain their income-generating activities and get the best out of them.

4.2.2. Academic Performance and Learning Outcomes

The findings showed that eleven parents reported better performance, two noticed a moderate improvement, and four did not notice any change, whereas three didn’t respond to this. From the above findings, many parents notice an increase in their children’s performance, which they connected to the better school attendance and more time for learning. One of the parents shared, “There is a better performance now since the child can go to school regularly” (Rpd-1), while another mentioned, “Their performance is much better now because they are in boarding school, so they get enough time to read and concentrate on their books” (Rpd-11). Therefore, this showed that consistent children’s attendance in school and a good supportive learning environment can boost the academic success of children.

Some parents also linked the improvements to their ability to pay for better educational opportunities, for example, moving their children to better schools. “Since the change to a new and better school, there is a good performance in my child's academic life” (Rpd-15). Others noted gradual progress, saying, “two children are now improving on their academic performance” Rpd-12 and another saying, “it's her first year in school, but her performance has already started well” (Rpd-13).

However, not everyone reported positive changes. Some parents noticed a slight improvement in the children's school performance, and others noticed that their performance did not change. One of the parents mentioned that, *"Their performance is fairly the same as not much has changed from how it was before"* (Rpd-17). while another said, *"There is no positive change in their performance as of 2025; they were promoted to the next classes, but they were still striving through because their attendance in class was sometimes disturbed with not being able to pay the school fees in time"* (Rpd-14). This implies that irregular school attendance and other challenges are still affecting the academic performance of many children.

4.2.3. The Role of PDM in Supporting Education

The results showed that seventeen of the respondents had positive views, one was neutral, another one had negative opinions, and one respondent did not respond to this question.

From the seventeen respondents who had positive perspectives about PDM, many of them pointed out that the program has improved their financial situation, which has allowed them to cover essential school expenses on time. As one of them mentioned, *"Through the financial growth in the family, the child can concentrate on his school life through being able to pay the school fees and other requirements as needed"* (Rpd-1). And another said that, *"It is a good government program in enhancing children's education, and therefore it should continue and support more families"* (Rpd-6). These perspectives highlighted how PDM is helping many households to overcome the financial challenges that hinder the children's access to quality education.

Beyond just meeting basic school needs, some parents reported enhancements in the quality of education their children are receiving. As a parent said, *"I was able to take the older children to boarding school, which has boosted their learning. And also, it is increasing my ability to cater to their school needs"* (Rpd-8), while another expressed plans of enrolling the child in a better school in the near future because of the increased income. *"I will be able to take her to a fairly good school, buy the school requirements. I will even get time to come back home early enough to support her in her homework"* (Rpd-2).

Another respondent mentioned the growth in social networks and institutional benefits, mentioning that *"It has also helped in forming groups with like-minded people in which we form SACCOS and be able to attract government support to assist in their incomes and also in seeking other loans to*

boost our children's educational life” (Rpd-12). These overall positive reactions clearly show that PDM has played a good role in supporting the children’s education, as it has boosted the household incomes to allow timely payment of school-related costs.

4.2.4. Household Food Security and Nutrition

The study revealed that ten of the respondents noticed an improvement in their food provision abilities, five reported moderate improvement, four saw no change, and one chose not to respond. The results from this study showed that the PDM program has generally had a positive effect on families' capacity to provide food, although the level of improvement varies from one household to another.

From the respondents, financial gains and successful business ventures have improved food availability in several homes, as one parent shared that, *“Since I operate a food market stall, I can be able to even buy food cheaply at wholesale price and enable my children to get the required food as necessary” (Rpd-1).* Another parent pointed out a noticeable increase in meal frequency: *“Before, they were eating once per day, but now they can eat two meals a day, lunch and supper” (Rpd-2).* From the parents’ insights, the growth in household incomes led to better feeding of the children, which improved their nutrition.

But not every household saw positive changes in their feeding patterns, especially those whose businesses were still in the early stages. As one respondent noted, *“Abundant food provision is not yet very well, because the business has not yet grown much” (Rpd-3).* Others mentioned that they are still relying on various income sources to maintain food security: *“I can afford to buy food from the same income I get in the other businesses, selling firewood and making juice” (Rpd-18)* and *“The manure from the chickens has helped us to grow more food in our garden and hence enabled us to have enough food at home” (Rpd-20).* These respondents demonstrated the stressful ways families use to ensure that their children get food in circumstances when they are not able to get better yields from the project.

Despite the PDM’S efforts to improve the children’s welfare, there is still a notable number of families who are still experiencing a small impact in their lives from this initiative. This is because some families were completely still depending on other sources of money to cater for their children's meals. Therefore, this shows that as PDM progressively improves the family’s food

provision, there is a need to make additions to the money given out to beneficiaries in order to have significant incomes and create lasting improvements in many households.

4.2.5. Access to Healthcare Services

The findings showed that nine of the respondents reported better access, two had moderate improvements, six experienced no change due to the different circumstances, and three chose not to respond. These numbers indicate that while almost half of the households had noticed benefits from the program, others are still struggling to get the medical care needed in time due to financial limitations or insufficient financial growth from the initiative.

There are some respondents who reported moderate improvements, especially regarding access to private healthcare and preventive care. One mentioned, *“I can now contribute to their medical needs when they get sick, and be able to take them to a private medical facility for better services than what is provided at the government hospital”* (Rpd-16). Another parent reflected on their changed approach to health: *“Before I started PDM, I used to delay treatment, but now I make it a priority to seek care right away”* (Rpd-9). These perspectives showed that even a little financial support could motivate families to seek timely healthcare for their children, which is important for keeping them healthy and avoiding complications for proper growth and development in their lives.

The research noted some challenges associated with the PDM initiative, as many respondents mentioned that the financial support from PDM just isn't enough to contribute significantly to the healthcare expenses, particularly when it comes to serious illnesses. One of the respondents shared, *“PDM income is too small to cater to medical bills; when the children get sick, I get money from other sources to take them to the hospital”* (Rpd-12). Another participant mentioned that *“I still have a challenge with seeking professional treatment since I have not yet started to get good profits out of the project, and the government hospital does not provide some treatments for free”* (Rpd-19). These perspectives showed that while PDM helps with improving healthcare access, it is still challenged when it comes to covering high medical costs or emergency care.

Good perspectives were also shared on how the increased household income, primarily from PDM-enhanced businesses, had made it easier to access healthcare. Some parents mentioned that improved nutrition and financial stability have led to fewer illnesses and allowed for the timely

seeking of medical care. A parent shared that, *“Because of the ability to get enough nutritious food as required, the children don't easily get sick, and when it happens, I can afford to pay for the right medication as soon as possible”* (Rpd-1). Others highlighted their enhanced ability to seek out better medical services: *“Before I could not take my child to a big hospital, but now I can afford to take her when she is sick”* (Rpd-2) and *“I could not afford a good medical facility before, but now I can take my children to seek proper medication”* (Rpd-3). These responses showed that PDM has indirectly enhanced access to healthcare by increasing household income and the ability to pay for services.

4.2.6. The role of PDM in Healthcare and Nutrition

The research findings showed that eleven of the respondents are benefiting from the program, whereas the others are still facing challenges, and responded differently as follows: two of them noted moderate improvements, three said there was no change, one respondent experienced negative effects, and three did not respond to this, which points out that the initiative has both strengths and some struggles.

These responses shared by respondents highlighted that the increased household income from PDM allowed families to provide healthier meals and address basic medical needs, which in turn supported child health and helped in disease prevention. These personal accounts demonstrate how financial assistance enhances dietary quality and access to healthcare, which aligns with social work principles that bring out the importance of economic empowerment in boosting family well-being. This is mentioned by one of the parents that, *“They can have good meals and medical needs when necessary, and there is no major sickness registered among my children so far during this period in PDM”* (Rpd-1). Respondent two mentioned that, *“PDM increased my income, hence providing enough food to improve my child's health and nutrition”* (Rpd-1).

The same data also presented some challenges that the parents experience, as a few respondents pointed out that the PDM funds aren't enough to fully cover their healthcare and nutritional needs. One of them mentioned that, *“PDM money has not made much of an impact on catering for my children's health conditions, but only in affording daily meals for them. But I suggest the government should increase the money given per individual”* (Rpd-12). Another respondent expressed concern about the stress of repayment of the loan: *“PDM support had given us hope that things would get better, but now that hope is not there, and yet we have to return this money*

after 2 years. This has brought stress to all of us as a family, which I would say has affected my children's health negatively, with stress for their mother's business" (Rpd-14). From the different perspectives of the parents, PDM has played a quite good role in improving access to health care and nutritious food, although there are also some challenges that it has encountered in achieving this goal, because of the financial burden of repaying the loan and insufficient funding, which have challenged the positives it creates in other children's lives.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.0. Introduction

In this chapter, it looks into what was discovered during research, with the Parents' views, understanding their thoughts on how the PDM has influenced their children's access to education and health opportunities in Nsuube-Kauga Parish. Looking closely at previous evidence and the responses from this study for any relationships or differences in the findings. This also looks at the objectives of the study.

5.1. Parents' perspectives on the changes in children's educational opportunities

One aim of the research was to understand how the parents describe the changes in their children's educational opportunities since joining the PDM initiative. This study gave out clear findings about this objective, as it was noted that when households earned more income, school life got easier in different ways. Parents were able to cover school fees without delay, buy scholastic materials like books, pencils, uniforms, and even some parents took their children to better schools, which showed a good effect of the PDM business loan initiative on the children's education. Many Parents mentioned that before this financial support, they had a hard time handling some of the educational costs for their children's learning, especially paying for the school fees on time. This sometimes resulted in missing school on some days, which threatened their children's academic performance, and if this problem persisted, it was a sign of dropping out of school.

These research findings connect very well with previous research regarding the relationship between family income and how children get into and stay in school. Becker (1993), in his research using the idea of Human Capital Theory, mentioned that Parents decide whether to pay for education based on the financial situation in the household. Because of this view, it brings out a good picture that when a household earns more, school-related requirements like books, fees, Pens, and safe transport to school become easier to manage. Also, according to Case et al. (2002), it was noted in their research that children from financially stable households can go to school at all levels, and their attendance is always more regular than that of children from low-income households. The findings from the parents in Nsube-Kauga also explain this behavior, of how the increased household income brought a significant change to their children's learning outcomes.

Nannyonjo (2007) mentions that the government of Uganda provides tuition-free education to primary school children under the Universal Primary Education (UPE) program so as to lift the burden of school fees from the parents. This study showed that even when the school fees and waivers were provided, many parents still find challenges with catering to other school-related requirements like uniforms, books, school bags, shoes, and others. From the parents in the study, households earning more income tend to be able to handle those costs better. Income changes how families manage other school-related costs, beyond just removing official tuition charges. Therefore, with the Government's initiative to enhance household incomes, it fills the financial gap that remains available even when the school fees are waived off in UPE schools.

There is also a good relationship with the findings from Fiszbein and Schady (2009) and Bastagli et al. (2019), who mentioned that when financial barriers are reduced or removed completely, by uplifting the financial status of low-income households through cash transfers and income-generating programs, many children can stay in school with better school access and focus on their educational development. Here, earning a bit of extra income reduced the parents' burden of school-related fees, so children get the opportunity to attend classes and focus on their studies.

The research also shows that when children attend school regularly, they are able to improve their academic performance because they spend more time learning and finish their class work on schedule, or even get time for discussion with their peers, demonstrating steady progress. Therefore, academic progress becomes clearer under conditions that favor the students' learning. This is a bit contrary to earlier findings that do not bring out the aspect of academic progress regarding school attendance. Baird et al. (2011) found that improved household income helps in improving school attendance, but did not show how it improves performance. Therefore, from this study, even though sometimes the attendance was changing, regular attendance is also linked to the level of school performance. On the other side, it might be true that irregular school attendance hindered progress for many children in the research area. Bringing to a close that, with more regular class time, academic grades began to rise.

The study findings also showed that financial support or higher incomes do not automatically guarantee better school attendance by themselves for every child. This is seen where joining the PDM income-generating project brought little or no visible shift in learning access because the businesses did not break even, produced low profits, or other urgent household demands arose.

Therefore, the money directed to school costs remains low. This connects with Conger et al. (1994), mentioning that financial strain and limited resources tend to wear down parental choices, slowing progress in children's growth. He continues to say that, even when incomes increase, other daily struggles can still block spending on the children's education as the parents would have wanted.

Therefore, the parents' perspectives on the income made through the PDM financial support are more influential in bringing a change in the children's education involvement. Parents did not just receive incomes, but also made choices about where, when, and how to spend the profits. One family might choose to buy the scholarly materials like books and school fees first, while another might struggle when rent or food pulls attention away from school. These results align with Epstein (2011), showing that parents' decisions and involvement influence the education outcomes of children. So even if household income grows, the children's learning outcome depends largely on how much value parents place on the children's education. This study adds more knowledge to the earlier studies by mentioning that children's educational development isn't just about financial growth, but instead, it flows through the choices parents make, how they handle finances, and what families value most. Because of this, earlier research gains depth when we see how relationships and daily decisions shape how household income affects children's education opportunities.

5.2. Parents' perspectives on the changes in children's health opportunities

The parents' experiences showed changes in children's health as they engaged in PDM economic empowerment programs. Because of income growth, some parents had real differences in seeking medical care, eating habits, food quality, and the general well-being of the children. In this situation, getting to medical centres became easier because the costs could be easily managed. Medical checkups could now happen sooner without delays, medicines were easily bought, and meals became much better in these households. It was mentioned by the parents that before these income improvements, many households had stretched budgets, forcing tough choices on them by delaying medical care, using lower-cost alternative medications, and feeding on low-nutritious foods for survival. Since these changes happened, there are now better health conditions and nutrition in these households. This study strongly showed that better household incomes meant quicker medical access. It turned out parents were able to take their children quickly to health facilities once their incomes were more stable. Because children were treated faster when any

symptom showed up. That timing mattered more than expected, stopping small problems before they grew serious illnesses.

This is justified by the earlier studies; it was mentioned that income shapes how healthy children turn out. This was pointed out by Currie (2009), that when families earn more, their children tend to see doctors more easily, eat better meals, leave in safer homes. And, WHO (2021) mentions that poorer households often struggle to feed their children well, seek medical attention at an early stage, and prevent some preventable diseases due to limited access to health services.

This also aligns very well with other studies about cash transfer initiatives in Zambia. Seidenfeld et al. (2014), Cash transfer initiatives helped many families to have better meals, plus care more for their children's nutrition. According to Handa et al. (2018), the statistics showed that many people utilized medical facilities, and they were able to take their children for medical treatment when households received stable incomes across the Sub-Saharan region. This means that the availability of a good income shifts the health habits of many people and promotes nutritious eating among household members. Bastagli et al. (2019) concluded that economic empowerment programs like Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), Agricultural support, positively enhance the health status of individuals through improving their nutrition and health care access. This study confirms that improved household income levels promote positive changes in children's health care.

Despite good results from the conducted research, there were some circumstances that limited the health opportunities among children. As some children got healthier, other parents did not see changes like that. Their incomes from some businesses remained unstable and unprogressive for a few households, which made paying for medical needs a struggle at times. Getting medical care has become hard because of extra costs, including consultation and medication costs. These findings say that increased income alone is insufficient in contexts where structural barriers like poor infrastructures long distances within the health system remain unresolved.

This therefore supports the World Bank (2018) report that emphasizes that in order for economic empowerment to yield much lasting impact in the health lives of individuals, the other social service institutions should be strong enough to back it up. When health care systems fall short, higher incomes might not lead to better well-being of citizens, including children. So even though income helps in shaping living conditions, people still need reliable medical care services nearby

just as much in order to have smooth access to their Children's health. What stands out also is how parents make decisions regarding their children's health. What parents decide to spend on the increased income determines whether their children can have better health services. This calls for their good prioritization of nutrition, cleanliness, and timely medical treatment.

5.3. Summary of Discussion

This study is properly aligned with the literature from other studies, concluding that the increased household incomes greatly help children go to school more often and get medical care when needed, as households with a good income tend to spend it on books, uniforms, meals, and medical visits. But also, just having a stable income does not guarantee that the child's education and health will automatically progress. Therefore, what parents prioritize shapes much on how the available income is spent on the children's development needs alongside other household needs. How families make choices matters as much as the income itself. Economic empowerment programs work best when they account for daily realities, not just assuming stable conditions. But also, even when there is a good household income, it can become meaningless if medical facilities stay far away or schools lack the basics resource like textbooks and classrooms to facilitate the children's learning.

This research contributes new knowledge to the broad field of social services by putting parents' perspectives at the center of understanding how economic empowerment to low-income households contributes to the children's development outcomes. Although financial empowerment can open doors for income growth among households, it is parents who ultimately determine how those opportunities are converted into real improvements in children's education and health status.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0. Introduction

The chapter draws a conclusion of this study in answering the research questions in Chapter 1. It offers practical recommendations intended to promote the effectiveness of PDM and enhance its role in improving child development outcomes. And provides suggestions for further areas of research in line with social service policies and their implementations.

6.1. Conclusion

The findings revealed that a family's economic strength provides a conducive, nurturing environment that enhances the children's physical and cognitive development. Economic development initiatives like PDM can incredibly reduce poverty levels in the community and improve children's well-being by being able to access quality education and healthcare services.

Social workers' efforts to advocate for inclusivity and being a bridge to families' essential needs are therefore important in helping families make the most out of their resources, offering financial literacy training and ensuring that children's needs are put on the priority list of the family.

6.2. Recommendations

The government and policymakers should follow up and make sure that the beneficiaries receive the full loan amounts on time, as some respondents mentioned that they received less loan amounts, and that's why their businesses are struggling to break even. This will allow disbursing the money on time and promote quick investments, as some business maybe seasonal, so they require the right time investments. And also, it will allow transparency and fairness in the amounts given to the beneficiaries.

The PDM monitoring team and the Local leaders should monitor the beneficiary business to see their progress and offer the support that might be needed. This will ensure that the PDM is used efficiently to avoid any misuse and even track down the defaulters of the loans for the effective program impacts.

Social Workers should support the beneficiaries by offering financial literacy training, mindset change seminars, project planning, and investment sessions that will enhance people's capacity to have successful businesses and improve their families' standards of living. And creating awareness about the intentions of PDM and change of behaviors so that they use the employment funds with the rightful intentions and responsibly for long-term development in their families and children's lives.

The beneficiaries should also make sure that they manage their incomes very well and prioritize the children's needs because they put them in a state of child poverty, since children do not have an income to cater to their needs. This will enhance the children's welfare, and we see that they will be able to get better education and receive quality medical services. This will also promote long-term success in children as the parents' income stabilizes.

6.3. Areas of Further Research

The long-term impact of PDM on child development: A longitudinal study should be carried out to understand how children from beneficiary families of PDM are benefiting from the program for several years. This will check whether improvements in school attendance, academic performance, health, and overall well-being are well maintained after a couple of many years or the impact it creates in their future lives, this is finishing studies, at workplaces, or in marriage. This study would tell if these projects are breaking the poverty cycle in the earlier beneficiaries.

The effectiveness of small-scale income-generating projects in alleviating poverty in rural areas: A more comparative study that looks at how different PDM-supported projects, like poultry farming, piggery, and other small businesses, benefit the beneficiaries to reduce poverty in their lives. The research should bring out which projects provide a more sustainable income, require manageable resources, and are less prone to risks for a good yield of profit. Having an understanding of these differences will help to identify the most profitable livelihood project options that can consistently support children's development patterns.

The contribution of financial management training in sustaining PDM projects in rural areas. The research will seek to understand the significance of financial management training, such as financial literacy, entrepreneurship training, and mindset change programs, on how they can improve the success of PDM projects. This evaluates whether households that received this

training are better equipped to sustain their projects and manage their incomes towards sustainable income growth.

The socio-economic factors that contribute to the success of PDM projects in urban areas versus rural areas. This research will compare how the success of PDM projects differs in both urban and rural settings. This will examine the different socio-economic factors like the road infrastructure, cost of living, market access, availability of social services, and job opportunities. This research will guide in designing proper implementation strategies that meet the specific strengths and needs of each community, in order to allow equality and equity in the distribution of services under the PDM initiatives.

The Social Workers' influence on the economic empowerment programs. Social Workers play a very important role in the social welfare programs of vulnerable populations. Therefore, this research will explore exhaustively how social workers' interventions, such as raising community awareness, facilitating training sessions, supporting families, monitoring child well-being, and linking families to essential services, will lead to a high success rate and impact of economic empowerment programs like PDM towards the change of welfare for the beneficiaries.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1: RESEARCH INTERVIEW SCRIPT FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS

Study Title:

Parents' perspectives on the effects of the Parish Development Model (PDM) on children's development in Nsuube-Kauga Parish, Mukono Municipality.

Instructions:

This interview script is for parents/guardians participating in the Parish Development Model (PDM). Please answer each question honestly. Your responses will be kept confidential and used for academic purposes only. There are no right or wrong answers.

SECTION A: Background Information

1. Sex of respondent

Male Female

2. Age group

18 - 30 31 - 40 41 - 50 51 and above

3. Marital Status

Single Married Divorced/ Separated Widowed

4. Number of children in your household: _____

5. Are you a beneficiary of the Parish Development Model (PDM)?

Yes No

6. In which project or business did you invest the money you got from PDM?

7. How long have you been participating in PDM?

Less than 1 year 1-2 years More than 2 years

SECTION B: Parents' perceptive on Education Opportunities since joining PDM

8. Are all your school-going children currently attending school?

Yes No

9. Since joining PDM, how has your ability to pay school-related costs changed?

10. How has your child's school attendance changed since your household joined PDM?

11. Have you noticed any change in your child's academic performance because of the change in their school attendance?

12. What are your views on the role of PDM in supporting your children's education?

SECTION C: Parents' perceptive on Health Opportunities since joining PDM

13. Has PDM-related income support improved your household income?

Yes No Not sure

14. Can you describe how your ability to provide food for your children has changed since your household joined the Parish Development Model (PDM)?

15. How many meals do your children usually eat per day?

One Two Three More than three

16. Can you describe how the income from the Parish Development Model (PDM) has affected your ability to access health services for your children when they are sick?

17. In your own words, explain how PDM income has affected your children's health and nutrition.

SECTION F: Consent

By signing below, you indicate that:

- You have participated in the research voluntarily.
- You understand that the information provided above will be kept confidential.
- The data will only be used for research purposes.

Sign: _____ Date: _____

Researcher Name: _____

Sign: _____ Date: _____