

**INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES ON FINANCING UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION SCHOOLS IN UGANDA: A CASE OF LIRA MUNICIPALITY, LIRA DISTRICT.**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study focus was to investigate the influence of school-based Income Generating Activities on financing Universal Primary Education schools of Lira Municipality. Specifically, the study hinged on the investigation of three issues; to determine the role of school income generating projects in financing Universal Primary Education schools, to find out the challenges encountered in implementing school income generating projects in Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools, and to find out the extent to which school income generating activities influences financial performance of Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Lira Municipality.

Cross-sectional survey research design was utilised with mixed methods of data collection, including questionnaires and interview guides and analysis was done descriptively. The results of the study clearly indicated that, to a larger extent school income generating activities play great roles in financing UPE schools, despite the numerous challenges encountered during the implementation of school income generating activities in UPE schools. The study concluded that, income generating activities are useful sources of additional income in UPE schools of Lira Municipality. The study recommended that the government should formulate a national framework for policy planning and administration of IGAs, creating the post of production unit, initiate capacity building programs for school managers to be equipped with entrepreneurial skills and infused entrepreneurship into teachers' training curriculum to enhance their capacity as future leaders of IGAs in the country.

**KEYWORDS: School Income, Finance, Universal Primary Education, Lira District, and Lira Municipality**

## Background

Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Uganda, and Lira Municipality in particular, face serious financial difficulties for operations, much as the Government of Uganda and other players, like nongovernmental Organisations and parents through their Parents' Teachers' Association (PTA) programmes, provide funds for paying the salaries of teachers to these UPE schools, and also to help facilitate scholastic materials like teaching/learning materials, physical infrastructure, and the necessary indirect costs to education at large, (MOEST, 1996) most UPE schools seem to be peddling with high level of underfunded budget in Lira Municipality in particular. National Planning Authority, Uganda vision 2040 reports (2015), pointed out that lack of financial resources in UPE schools were demonstrated by low learning achievements (school outcomes); where literacy and numeracy proficiency at Primary six classes were below average at 40.15% and 41.40% in 2013 respectively, (EMIS, 2014) thus more than half of the class are illiterate; Low- Survival rate to P.7 which stands at 32.1%; Repetition at 10.19% (EMIS, 2014) and teacher, pupils and Head teachers' absenteeism is estimated at 20-30%. Inadequate qualified teachers in Government aided primary schools yet the targeted Pupils Teacher Ratio is 45:1, giving an estimated qualified teacher gap of 27,003 in government schools alone, (Gongera, E. & Okoth, O.N., 2014); Inadequate instructional materials and school facilities for instance, the target Pupils Classroom Ratio (45:1), implies that there is a classroom shortage of 55,145 for 8,485,005 pupils, high population growth rates coupled with budgetary constraints.

Above all, (ESSAPR, 2013/2014) analysis of the allocation trend to the Education Sector clearly shows a steady decline from 16.85%, 15%, 14.61, and 13.65% over the last four financial years, ( FYs 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 respectively), (EMIS, 2014). This was also contrary to the recommendation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, (UNESCO, 2002) which confers that, every nation of the world should allocate at least 26% of its annual budget to education sector; Limited Community Participation as the policy stems on the political ground, and a misconception that being a publicly funded program, only government is responsible for its' implementation and outcome, Uganda National Planning Authority, (2015). Absence of school feeding programmes in most UPE schools as decried of by MOES, (2016) greatly affected the ability of children to engage effectively in the teaching and learning process and thereby, not only hampering the achievement of desired school outcomes, but also exacerbates into UPE school dropouts. Therefore there was need to explore other viable sources to finance primary education through initiating school income generating projects such as school buses, farms, hiring of classroom or School halls, horticulture, clubs and societies among others, to better the financial challenges facing these Schools. The district has only one municipality; Lira Municipality. Education issues especially those concerned with primary education have been challenging, especially in the financial sector, hence constituting the basis of this study.

During the pre-colonial and pre-missionary era in Uganda, there was no formal education and indigenous learning was mainly aimed at inculcating morals and virtues such that children would grow up to promote harmony in society, promote cultural heritage, develop character and respect for elders, and learn to be self sufficient and productive citizens, (Astiz, *et al*, 2002). Learning during that period was facilitated through folk tales, songs, story-telling, observation, and instruction by peers and elders. Therefore, it was less costly.

However, formal education was introduced in Uganda by the European missionaries mainly for the children of traditional chiefs, and to provide for functionaries needed by the British colonial government, (Aguti, 2002). So right from the onset, this school system was not for all and it therefore grew to become highly selective and competitive with fewer and fewer students continuing to the next level of education. As a result, many Ugandans remained illiterate with literacy rates standing at only 65% with the primary education 'reaching only 50% of the age group,' (Ministry of Education and Sports, 1999:7).

Consequently in 1997 postcolonial period, Universal Primary Education (UPE) was introduced and implemented with the intent of broadening access to primary schooling, largely through reducing the costs of schooling for the poor. The effects of implementing UPE were dramatic. The primary school enrolment which was about 3.1 million in 1996 rose to 5.2 million in 1997, an increase by about 68%, (Stasavage, 2005). Uganda Government's initiative to provide formal primary education as a public good was informed by the publication in 1922 of the 'Education in Africa' Report by the Phelps-Stokes Commission Fund, which highlighted the benefits of education for Africa's social and economic development, (Office of the Prime Minister Draft Report, 2016). It was against this background that the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy was launched in 1997 by the government of the Republic of Uganda following the recommendations of the Education Policy Review Commission, (MoES: 1992), The Government of Uganda White Paper, (MOES, 1992) and The Development of Children's Statute (1996), which all came as a result of democratization and open elections, backed by great popular support for free education, (Stasavage, 2005). Through this policy, the nation was driven towards achieving the goals of Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by providing relevant education and enhancing efficiency, and strengthening partnerships in the education sector, (UNESCO, 2008). However, government was to provide 'free' education to a maximum of four children from each family. This has now changed because the Government of Uganda has now said that 'all children of school-going age should benefit from Universal Primary Education (UPE), (Olupot, 2002).

Despite its promising boosts in enrolment, issues with funding and organization have continued to plague the UPE. For instance, when the new policy was executed, schools experienced a massive influx of pupils and the demand for learning materials, teachers, and infrastructure became a challenge to the education system, (Ngaka, 2006). Ngaka further argues that, the UPE resulted in costly consequences, including but not limited to a poor quality education, low pupil achievement, untrained teachers, improper infrastructures and classroom settings. For instance, in 1999 there were six million pupils receiving primary education, compared to only two million in 1986. In the same vein, Makaaru, *et al.*, (2015) advanced that, UPE system is still marked by high primary dropout and repetition, high pupil to teacher ratios, and glaring rural-urban differences in the quality of infrastructure, teaching, and learning materials that are detrimental to teaching, learning and achievement. Thus, financial constraints stand to be the major impediments towards the realization of quality primary education in the country which need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

Therefore, one of the major contradictions in Uganda education system is financing. Although the budget for education in Uganda has increased nominally over the last few years, in real terms there has not been significant increase, (Mayanda, 1996). This is because the budgeting process

does not allow room for “special financing” and above all, a significant portion of the budget goes to recurrent and not developmental activities, (Leftwich, 1993). The Education Act, (2008) stipulates that “financing of education shall be through fees, grants, donations, training levies, education tax, and any other means as deemed appropriate by government”. With UPE and USE, government abolished school fees and government has since mainly supported schools through capitation grants and school facilitation grants (SFGs) which take into account school differences based on population and the economic base of the area (Amos, O. & Koda, G.M., 2018). The SFGs government enables schools to expand classrooms, build teacher houses, and other facilities needed to improve hygiene and children safety.

Sources of finances for education reform in Uganda have been government and international donors through budget support and programmatic funding, (Makaaru, 2015). Because funds for budget support are channeled directly into the national treasury, budget support funds are difficult to track with regards to sectoral outputs and outcomes. To overcome these challenges, various initiatives have been taken by the government of Uganda through the Ministry of Education and Sports so as to facilitate the achievement of Universal Primary Education (UPE), (Nambalirwa, 2010). Among them include, the initiative to support girl child, initiative to provide instructional materials to schools, the comprehensive programme to improve quality in primary schools and the initiative to improve education in hard to reach areas among others, (Nambalirwa, 2010). Arguably the above initiatives indicate that Primary Education has been a priority in the Ministry of Education and Sports but much effort should be put on financing.

However, the form of educational financing advocated for by the Education Act, (2008) suggests that the financial participation of different stakeholders is important in addition to government financing. This reaction by the government to enable schools and parents cope up with financing difficulties is also in line with World Bank recommendations for alternative sources of education financing, emphasis has been put on setting up Income Generating Projects to cope with financing difficulties (World Bank, 1990). In this regard educational institutions, Universal Primary Education schools inclusive have been urged to initiate income -generating projects to support their budget deficits (Ndolo, 2011). The Income Development Projects are expected to help schools generate additional resources, cut down operational costs, and finance other projects at the school level. It was also expected to reduce the burden of education financing on the part of parents, by enabling schools to finance part of their operational costs from self-generated funds without necessarily passing the burden to parents, (Adan, *et al*, 2017).

In view of this, the idea of school-based Income Generating Projects becomes necessary for schools to cope with macro-economic dynamics, without necessarily passing down budgetary adjustments to parents, (Omukoba, et al., 2011). It was against these backgrounds that the researcher wish to explore whether Universal Primary Education schools engaged in entrepreneurial activities generated enough funds to cushion school budget, supplement the fees paid by the government per child and some small contributions made by the Non – Governmental Organizations or parents to facilitate the learning of their children in UPE schools. Hence, the study focused on the influence of school income generating activities on financing primary education in selected UPE schools in Lira Municipality in terms of contribution, challenges and financial performance.

This study pivots on Adolph Wagner Public Expenditure Theory of 1855, and Resource dependency theory of Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik 1970s. Public Expenditure Theory hold the views that there are inherent tendencies for the activities of the different layers of government (such as Federal, the State governments) to increase both intensively and extensively. Therefore, government alone cannot shoulder the responsibility of funding education as a result of its limited resources compared to the increasing demands of other sectors of the economy, such as health, agriculture, power, infrastructure, urbanization among others, it is imperative for managers of education to look for other modalities of funding education in the country, Lira Municipality inclusive.

Resource Dependency theory originated in the 1970s with the publication of *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective* by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik, (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). RDT is underpinned by the idea that resources are key to organizational success and that access and control over resources is a basis of power. Resources are often controlled by organizations not in the control of the organization needing them, meaning that strategies must be carefully considered in order to maintain open access to resources, (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Organizations typically build redundancy into resource acquisition in order to reduce their reliance on single sources for instance, by liaising with multiple suppliers.

Again, Resource Dependency Theory confers that, even though all organizations, Universal Primary Education schools inclusive, have internal resources, most of them are not self-sufficient and therefore, must depend on external resources to support their operations and aspirations, (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). This clearly indicates that, deficiency in resources is perceived as the key force driving Universal Primary Education schools in Lira Municipality to initiate income generating activities to reduce uncertainty and risks of bankruptcy.

School income generating activities is conceptualized as those projects which can be undertaken by the school so as to raise revenue to enhance school finances, (Mayora, 2010). Onsomu, *et al.*, (2004) concurs that, the main types of income generating activities in schools, tertiary institutions, universities and primary schools inclusive are; school buses, farms, hire of classroom for use by churches and other social activities like ceremonies or crusades, horticulture where some schools raise vegetables and fruits for use, within and outside the school, clubs and societies among others. However, the authors did not mention enterprising activities such as canteen, art and craft, parking yards, rental, water bottling, making of liquid soap, baking and short training to the community which the researcher believes could raise revenue in public primary schools.

Primary education is conceptualized as the first phase of 7-4-2-3 formal education system and serves pupils between the age of six and twelve years, (Aguti, 2002). The main purpose of primary education is to prepare pupils to participate in the social, political and economic well-being of the country and prepare them to be global citizens, (Education Act, 2008). *Primary education is universal, free and compulsory in Uganda*, (Syngellakis and Arudo, 2006). Ogbonnaya, (2012) conceptualizes financing as a sum of money saved or made available for a particular purpose. It could be called money or material resources meant for the facilitation of an activity. Adesua, (2000) argues that funding is the act of providing resources usually in form of money or other values, such as effort or time, for a project, a person, business or any other

private or public institutions. Adesina, (1999) viewed funding as a grant of authority to an agency, department, or unit to incur monthly obligations and to pay for them. It can also be viewed as a catalyst, which accelerates the development of any project.

The researcher believes adequate funding is a basis for effective functioning of every aspect of education, including Universal Primary Education sub sector. It is against this valuable contribution that ignited the researcher to carry investigation on the influence of school income generating activities on Universal Primary Education schools of Lira Municipality as a viable source of funding.

Quite evidently, Ugandan government has made enormous progress in improving access, equity and quality of primary education through the introduction of Universal Primary Education. However, financial constraints are threatening its implementation. This was manifested in low teachers attendance due to lack of motivation, absenteeism, inadequate and overcrowding classrooms, un-institutionalized school feeding programme, inadequate scholastic materials, low parents support among others which have resulted into myriads of problems such as low contact of teachers-pupils hours, un-conducive learning environment, starving of pupils, loss of concentration and attention span by pupils, declining pupils performance, and managers operating schools under stress of borrowing. Hence, inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the Universal Primary Education programme particularly in Lira Municipality.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Role of school income generating projects in financing Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Lira Municipality?**

Basing on this research theme above, eight items were used in Table 1, and the responses were classified as Agree (A), Strongly agree (SA), Not sure (NS), Disagree (D) and Strongly disagree (SD). The results were presented and analyzed using descriptive statistics as shown below;

**Table 1: Income Generating Activities and Financing UPE Schools**

S/ N	Item	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev
1.	Income generating projects raise funds to develop physical facilities in your school.	06 (3.8%)	07 (4.5%)	03 (1.9%)	34 (21.7%)	106 (67.9%)	2.275	1.295
2.	Income generating projects raise funds to support academic activities in your school.	52 (33.3)	12 (7.6%)	02 (1.3%)	11 (7.1%)	80 (51.3%)	3.715	1.201
3.	Income generating projects raise funds to purchase instructional Materials for teaching and learning in your school.	08 (5.1%)	07 (4.5%)	03 (1.9%)	16 (10.3%)	122 (78.2%)	1.117	1.181
4.	Income generating projects raise funds to motivate teachers in your school.	05 (3.2%)	11 (7.1%)	07 (4.5%)	40 (25.6%)	93 (59.6%)	2.682	1.213
5.	Income generating projects raise funds to support pupils' enrolment/retention in your school.	21 (13.5%)	23 (14.7 %)	11 (7.1%)	71 (45.5%)	30 (19.2%)	3.504	1.191
6.	Income generating projects raise funds/food to support your school feeding program.	16 (10.3%)	10 (6.4%)	06 (3.8%)	20 (12.8%)	104 (66.7%)	2.177	1.204
7.	Income generating projects raise funds to support pupils through giving them bursaries in your school.	30 (19.2%)	12 (7.7%)	16 (10.3%)	32 (20.5%)	66 (42.3%)	4.158	1.228
8.	Income generating projects employed and raised funds to pay workers in your school.	06 (3.8%)	07 (4.5%)	03 (1.9%)	35 (22.4%)	105 (67.3%)	2.129	1.199

The findings in Table 1, illustrate the perceptions of respondents towards different items on the role of School Income Generating Activities on Financing Universal Primary Education in Lira Municipality. In item one when the respondents were asked whether it's possible for the income generating projects to raise funds to develop physical facilities in school, 140 (89.6%) respondents agreed mean while only 13 (8.3%) respondents disagreed. This implies income generating projects raises funds that can be used to develop physical facilities like classrooms, latrines and teachers houses in UPE schools of Lira Municipality. In UPE schools the grant sent by government has strict guidelines which does not support the development of school infrastructures hence it is possible for schools which are practicing IGAs to raise money for such development. The results were backed by the respondents on the interview as they replied as follows: One female Member of School Management Committee from UPE School in Lira Municipality remarked;

*“We were able to construct girls’ latrine, renovates classrooms and teachers houses with money obtained from the proceeds of school IGAs.” (Interviewed on 01/May/2019).*

While another male committee member replied;

*“Our trees supplied timbers that were sold to the school neighborhoods and the money got was used in the construction of head teacher’s office and making of office furniture.” (Interviewed on 21/May/2019).*

In item two when respondents were asked whether income generating projects raise funds to support academic activities in school like assessment of pupils 91 (58.4%) respondents agreed while 64 (40.9%) respondents disagreed. This implies that in the absent of UPE funds, IGAs money can be used to support pupils assessment activities which are part and parcel of learning in schools. This finding was also backed by the interview results when they were asked whether IGAs play some roles in teaching and learning of pupils. They replied; *“Our teachers of candidates’ class normally carry out weekly test typed using materials purchased with IGAS money.” (Interviewed on 29/09/2017).* Another male SMC member remarked;

*“We use citrus fruits to motivate pupils who have performed well in both monthly and midterm examinations and they enjoy such days hence making them not to fear any test or exams.” (Interviewed on 20/May/2019)*

In item three when the respondents were asked whether income generating projects raise funds to purchase instructional Materials for teaching and learning in their school, 138 (88.5%) respondents agreed while only 15 (9.6%) respondents disagreed. The implies that funds obtained from IGAs play a great role in purchasing instructional materials which promote effective teaching and learning since the ratio of textbooks for instance is very high where you can find 1textbook being shared by eight pupils. This does not allow concentration and comprehension which are key in teaching. During the researcher’s interviews with some respondents, a male SMC member deliberated;

*“It is my pleasure to announce that we have acquired enough text books, relevant charts and other teaching apparatus with money got from school IGAs.” (Interviewed on 30/May/2019).*

Another male chairperson SMC within Lira Municipality's UPE School conferred;

*"It is not easy to be in UPE schools were the grant just come once in a term, sometimes chalks get finished and even teachers have no pen to plan their lessons but we are able to overcome these with the harvest from School IGAs." (Interviewed on 30/May/2019).*

In the fourth item, when respondents were asked about whether income generating projects play any role in motivating teachers in UPE school of Lira Municipality, 133 (85.5%) respondents agreed but 16 (10.3%) respondents disagreed. This implies that teachers in UPE schools of Lira Municipality get motivated with the money or produces generated from IGAs. Motivation is the magic ingredients or a catalyst which the manager has to add to the work situation to generate efficient results and increase productivity. Some of the excerpts from the respondent in relation to this finding were recorded during an interaction with a male SMC member, from one of the UPE School in Lira Municipality said;

*"We were able to keep our teachers on tasks through giving them monetary and material produces obtained from school IGAs because government salary normally delays making teachers and their dependants to suffer." (Interviewed on 03/10/2019).*

Another female SMC member said;

*"Teachers enjoy staying in our school because they reap a lot from the school Projects, they get take home, weekly allowance and milk every Friday which are all meant to motivate them." (Interviewed on 29/09/2019).*

In item five, when the respondents were asked whether school IGAs could generate some money to help in improving pupils' retention rate and increase their enrolment in UPE schools, 101 (64.7%) respondents agreed while 44 (28.2%) respondents disagreed. In the same vein in item six when the respondents were asked whether income generating projects raise funds/food to support school feeding program, 122 (79.5%) respondents agreed and 26 (16.7%) respondents disagreed. Again in item seven when the respondents were asked whether IGAs raise funds to support pupils in terms of bursaries, 98 (62.8) respondents agreed while 42 (26.9%) respondents disagreed. This clearly implies that UPE Schools in Lira Municipality embraced IGAs as an opportunity to improve pupils' enrolment and retention, support school feeding programme and offer bursaries to needy pupils. Interaction with the respondents enabled the researcher to capture direct statements that the respondents made as they were responding to this study. Some of these statements were also very supportive to the study findings. For example one of the SMC a male member from UPE School in Lira Municipality said;

*"The produces and money from income generating activities of this school has been very helpful in providing midday meals and offering bursaries for needy pupils." (Interviewed on 29/09/2017).* Another female respondent said;

*"Yes, yes, our school has the greatest enrolment in the Municipality because of the presence of school feeding programme supported by the crop harvest from our school garden." (Interviewed on 18/09/2019).*

The implication here is that offering bursaries and school feeding to needy pupils will increase access, ensure retention, enhance completion rate and reduce disparities and inequalities in the provision of primary education within Lira Municipality.

In item eight, when the respondents were asked whether income generating projects provide employment and raise funds to pay such workers in their school, 140 (89.7%) respondents agreed while only 13 (8.3%) respondents disagreed. This implies that IGAs projects greatly provide employment to the community around the school and generate enough funds to pay these workers. Interaction with the respondents enabled the researcher to capture direct statements that the respondents made as they were responding to this study. Some of these statements were also very supportive to the study findings. For example one of the male SMC members from UPE School in Lira Municipality said;

*“We have employed the herdsman to take care of our dairy cows” (Interviewed on 01/10/2019).*

Another female SMC member said;

*“We have secretary and school hall attendant.” (Interviewed on 26/09/2019).*

Again a female SMC member said;

*“The school management has been helpful in making payments to the non-teaching staff since they are not on government payroll. Revenue from income generating activities has made this possible.” (Interviewed on 30/09/2019).*

In summary, the school income generating projects play a great role in raising supplementary funds to support school activities like; developing physical facilities, supporting pupils' assessment, purchasing instructional materials, offering bursaries to needy pupils, supporting school feeding programme, employing and paying workers which in turn increase pupils enrolment, retention and completion rate of primary education cycle as clearly shown by the greater percentage of the descriptive statistics.

### **Challenges encountered in implementing school Income Generating Projects to finance Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Lira Municipality?**

The findings and perceptions of respondents were in response to the above objective. Basing on this, eight items were used and the responses were classified as agree, strongly agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree. The results are presented in frequency counts and percentages using descriptive statistics in Table 2 below;

**Table 2: Challenges encountered in implementing IGAs in UPE Schools**

S/N	Item	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev
1.	Your school has adequate land to operate income generating activities.	106 (67.9%)	20 (12.8%)	05 (3.2%)	10 (6.4%)	15 (9.6%)	2.274	1.326
2.	Your School Income Generating Activities are heavily hit by weather changes, pest and diseases.	10 (6.4%)	45 (28.8%)	20 (12.8%)	76 (48.7%)	4 (2.6%)	3.712	1.251
3.	Your school faces high cost in maintaining school projects.	18 (11.5%)	07 (4.5%)	07 (4.5%)	26 (16.7%)	98 (62.8%)	2.113	1.162
4.	Your school projects managers keep proper records of projects transaction.	124 (79.5%)	16 (10.3%)	02 (1.3%)	10 (6.4%)	04 (2.6%)	1.683	1.008
5.	Your School Income Generating Activities products are so competitive in the market.	85 (54.5%)	22 (14.1%)	04 (2.6%)	04 (2.6%)	41 (26.3%)	3.501	1.380
6.	There is high rate of tear/wear of the project facilities and equipment in your school.	32 (20.5%)	08 (5.1%)	02 (1.3%)	12 (7.7%)	104 (66.7%)	2.172	1.224
7.	Your school managers had adequate skills in managing school Income Generating Activities.	97 (62.7%)	20 (12.8%)	06 (3.8%)	24 (15.3%)	9 (5.8%)	2.154	1.129
8.	These challenges could be solved by recruiting skilled personnel, training managers, sensitization, and used of modern agricultural inputs.	04 (2.6%)	06 (3.8%)	05 (3.2%)	25 (16.0%)	116 (74.4%)	1.127	1.173

The findings in Table 2, illustrate the perceptions of respondents towards different items on the challenges encountered in implementing school Income Generating Projects to finance Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Lira Municipality. In item one when the respondents were asked whether their school have adequate land and finance to operate income generating activities, 126 (80.7%) respondents disagreed while 25 (16.0%) respondents agreed. This implies that there is inadequate land and finance to operate IGAs in Lira Municipality due to its urban setting there is competition for space. Financially, UPE grants are also released once yet IGAs like any other business venture needed enough capital for daily operation and expansion where possible. Some of the excerpts from the respondents in relation to these findings were recorded during an interaction with a male SMC member who said;

*“Most schools in Lira Municipality are disadvantage in terms of land including ours because our school started late when people are crowded in town so we lack enough land for IGAs.” (Interviewed on 15/10/2019).*

Another female SMC member said;

*“Financially we are constraint because the main source of money in the school that could help us managed the projects effectively were UPE grants and PTA funds but UPE comes with strings attached and that of parents is unreliable because of rampant poverty among the populace.” (Interviewed on 11/10/2019).*

The implication is that most UPE schools are financially constraints to operate genuine IGAs. Above all limited land yet it is a prime factor of production in any enterprise.

In item two when respondents were asked whether IGAs in their school were heavily hit by weather changes, pest and diseases, 80 (51.3%) respondents agreed while 55 (35.2%) respondents disagreed. This implies that most IGAs in Lira Municipality are seriously hit by weather changes, pest and diseases. This finding also conferred with interview recorded from some respondents. A Female SMC member narrated;

*“The weather these days is not predictable... The rains are no longer there and when they come, they cause floods. This affects our crops... Diseases and pest affect our crops greatly. NAADS seeds have to some extent been helpful but not so much.” (Interviewed, 01/10/2019).*

In item three when the respondents were asked whether they encountered high cost in maintaining school projects, 124 (79.5%) respondents agreed and 25 (16.0%) respondents disagreed. This implies that UPE Schools encountered high cost of maintenance as results of tear and wear and in terms of workers’ wages. This finding is also in line with what the researcher quoted from a male SMC member who said;

*“We are almost being defeated with maintenance cost because some assets need to be replaced regularly and paying wages for our herdsman is burden too... Buying crop pesticides and paying labour for spraying crops is becoming tiresome” (Interviewed on 20/09/2019).*

In item four when the respondents were asked whether their school Project managers keep proper records of project transactions, 140 (89.8%) respondents disagreed while 14 (9.0%) respondents

agreed. This implies that there is poor record keeping in UPE Schools by the project managers. This may also aggravated financial loses and corruption in the project operation. Some of the excerpts from the respondents were supportive to these findings were recorded during oral interview with SMC executive members of UPE Schools within Lira Municipality. For instance one female SMC member said;

*“Since the establishment of the school PTA projects, some of the parents and teachers have developed fear that their money will be stolen like the money from other SACCOs they hear of due to poor record keeping” (Interviewed on 04/10/2017).*

Another one said;

*“We are always suspicious on our Head teacher and the teachers in charge of the dairy farm, because their records are normally not clear when it comes to the time of accountability.” (Interviewed on 03/10/2019).*

The implication is that there was a challenge of poor record keeping for the different activities that were carried out in the projects (IGAs) by the UPE schools. This was a serious challenge since it is linked to the other challenges especially when it comes to gathering money for replacement of the assets used in the income generating activities (projects). Hence, project managers lack the basics of business financial management which entails up to date record keeping of the project transactions.

In item five when the respondents were asked whether their school IGAs products is so competitive in the market, 107 (68.6%) respondents disagreed whereas 45 (28.9%) respondents agreed. This implies that school IGAs products is not competitive in the market at all because they lack financial support to improve the business. This result was also supported by the interview extract from some respondents recorded below:-

A female SMC member from one of the school said;

*“Though we engage in computer training, we do not have modern computers like the ones in Kampala. We however manage like that.” (Interviewed on 29/09/2019).*

Another male member explained;

*“We engage in hiring of our main hall but because of competition from other good halls in the municipality, we are forced to charge less money compared to what we would have earned” (Interviewed on 27/09/2019).*

The implication here is that UPE Schools produce less competitive products and they are forced to charge less money for their goods and services because they are substandard compared to others of good qualities in the Municipality market.

In item six when the respondents were asked whether there is high rate of tear/wear of the project facilities and equipment in their schools, 116 (74.4%) respondents agreed while 40 (25.6%) respondents disagreed. This implies that there is high rate of tear/wear leading to depreciation of

project facilities since there are not enough funds to replace the worn out part of the machines or facilities. This challenge were further aggravated by the financial challenges that the UPE schools have been facing as well as fast depreciation of the farm tools making it difficult to carry out the food cultivation projects. The findings were supported by records from the interview as noted below;

A female SMC member once said;

*“Our computers and spray pump is down because of mechanical problem caused by tear and wear.” (Interviewed on 01/10/2019).*

Another one said;

*“Our wheelbarrow tire is worn out need replacement but no money” (Interviewed on 19/09/2019).*

The implication is that, the entire project facilities are being utilised in their poor infrastructural state hence making productivity and marketability very low.

In item seven when the respondents were asked whether school managers had adequate skills in managing school IGAs, 117 (75.5%) respondents disagreed but only 33 (21.1%) respondents agreed. This implies that those involved in the management of IGAs lack adequate skills for managing entrepreneurships. This discovery is also supported by extracts from the interviews as follows; A male SMC member from one of the school in lira municipality asserted;

*“Really our teachers assigned to manage poultry project has lack knowledge on entrepreneurship management because he has no clear records wherever we call for.”(Interviewed on 20/09/2019).* While another female respondent said;

*“It is true even our head teacher lack business skills otherwise we would be excelling by now.”(Interviewed on 24/09/2019).*

The implication is that it will be hard for the school projects to shoot up, because these managers have many responsibilities besides their lack of technical skills to manage these school projects.

In item eight when the respondents were asked whether these numerous challenges could be solved by recruiting skilled personnel, training managers, sensitization, and used of modern agricultural inputs; 141 (90.4%) respondents agreed and 10 (6.4%) respondents disagreed. This clearly implies that recruiting specialized skilled personnel, training managers, sensitization and used of modern agricultural inputs can be employed as remedies to these challenges. These findings agreed with the results obtained during the interview, where one of the female SMC members remarked;

*“We need to recruit an accountant not a teacher or Head teacher to manage our projects” (Interviewed on 24/09/2019).*

Another male SMC member narrated;

*“The school management committee members need to ensure that the Head teacher puts aside money for pests and diseases. It is very important... Effective spraying is necessary in this school. It will help to save our food cultivation project” (Interviewed on 29/10/2019).*

Again a male SMC member remarked that;

*“There is need for the school management to think of contacting the government for better seeds” (interviewed on 27/09/2017)*

While another female SMC executive member from UPE School in Lira Municipality said;

*“There is need for modern agricultural techniques to be considered in the food cultivation project in this school.” (Interviewed, 30/09/2019).*

The implication here is that the use of modern agricultural techniques, the findings indicates the need to sensitize parents as well as the school management committee members together with the other key members in IGAs. This is suggested to take place alongside the hiring of trained personnel to help in steering the IGAs forward. The sensitization is expected to help change the perception of the stakeholders while the trained staffs are expected to help in enhancing the overall performance of the IGAs.

In a nutshell therefore, the UPE schools operating IGAs are mired with a number of challenges as revealed by a greater percentage of the descriptive statistics notably; inadequate land finances, weather changes, pest and diseases, high cost of maintenance, poor record keeping, less competitive products, tear and wear, lack of skills and knowledge to operate the projects. Therefore, UPE schools operating IGAs should recruit skilled personnel, trained project managers, sensitized and used modern are agricultural inputs so as to reap big from the enterprises.

### **School income generating activities and financial performance of Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Lira Municipality?**

The results of respondents were in response to the above objective. To test this objective, Eight items were developed and the responses were classified as agree, strongly agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree and analysis was done descriptively. The respondents' results were presented in frequency counts and percentages in **Table 3** below;

**Table 3: Income Generating Activities and Financial Performance of UPE Schools**

S/N	Item	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Mean	St Dev
01	The government releases enough funds to run your UPE school.	82 (52.56%)	26 (16.67%)	48 (30.77%)	2.596	1.319
02	The primary school income generating activities help in the financial performance of your primary school.	40 (25.64%)	31 (19.87%)	85 (54.49%)	3.442	1.331
03	Income generating activities improve on workers' and pupils' welfare in your UPE school.	46 (29.49%)	31 (19.87%)	79 (50.64%)	3.333	1.438
04	Income generating projects help your schools to gain control of the learning environment; Concentrating resources and efforts on providing pupils with challenging curriculum and high-quality instruction.	52 (33.33%)	39 (25.00%)	65 (41.67%)	3.071	1.340
05	Returns from income generating activities investments enable your UPE school to expand its' assets base.	36 (23.08%)	37 (23.72%)	83 (53.21%)	3.397	1.200
06	Funds raised from income generating activities help your UPE school managers to meet their administrative costs effectively.	43 (27.56%)	45 (28.85%)	68 (43.59%)	3.212	1.234
07	Your school income generating activities act as a source of employment to the school community.	39 (25.00%)	34 (21.79%)	83 (53.21%)	3.417	1.353
08	School income generating projects enable your UPE school to manage their liabilities.	56 (35.90%)	36 (23.08%)	64 (41.03%)	3.038	1.418

The findings on this table 3 Show that, a big number of respondents on different items had strong opinions about the extent to which income generating activities influence the financial performance of UPE schools in Lira Municipality. However, in item one the respondents were asked whether they agreed that the government releases enough funds to run UPE schools, 82 (52.56%) respondents disagreed, while 48 (30.77%) respondents agreed. This implies that government is not interested in funding UPE programme in Lira Municipality primary schools. The above quantitative findings are also in agreement with the qualitative findings in which some respondents were not comfortable with issues of financial status and performance in their

UPE schools. For example, one SMC member from one of the school in Lira Municipality in the age bracket of 41 and above replied;

*“There is totally low government support and the financial performance of our school has been boosted by the income generating activities operational in this school, without which all school activities would come to a standstill” (Interviewed on, 03/10/2019).*

In the second item when the respondents were asked whether the primary school income generating activities help in the financial performance of primary schools in Lira Municipality, 85 (54.49%) respondents agreed, while 40 (25.69%) respondents disagreed. This implies that IGAs influence the financial performance of UPE schools to a bigger extent since UPE grants just come once in a term all other activities are funded by money received from IGAs. The above quantitative findings are also in agreement with the qualitative findings in which some respondents agreed that IGAs has the biggest influence on the financial performance of UPE Schools. For, example, SMC member from the age bracket of 35 said;

*“The money from income generating activities of this school has been very helpful in purchasing desks, books for needy pupils and renovating classrooms.” (Interviewed, 29/09/2019).*

Another male school management committee member from one of the UPE School also said,

*“The school management has been helpful in making payments to the non-teaching staff since they are not on government payroll. Revenue from income generating activities has made this possible.”(Interviewed, 30/09/2019).*

The implication here is that without money school activities would be in operational. Therefore stable sources of income play a great role in shouldering different UPE schools' expenses.

In the third item, the table indicates that when respondents were asked whether income generating activities improve on workers' and pupils' welfare in UPE schools of Lira municipality, 79 (50.64%) respondents agreed, while 46 (29.49%) respondents disagreed. This clearly implies that to a great extent money received from IGAs improve on pupils and workers' welfare through motivation, offering bursaries and enhanced school feeding programme which enable both teachers and pupils to act proactively towards the achievement of UPE goals. The above quantitative findings are also in agreement with the qualitative findings in which some respondents noted during an interview. For example one noted;

*“The school management has been helpful in making payments to the non-teaching staff since they are not on government payroll. Revenue from income generating activities has made this possible.”(Interviewed, 30/09/2019)*

Another respondent remarked;

*“We are able to provide diet to our children using the harvests from school gardens; we also sell milk to buy pupils textbooks, and motivate the best performers.” (Interviewed on, 01/10/2019).*

Again one said;

*“We are able to meet other school expenses like pupils' assessment and first aid items using money got from school IGAs.” (Interviewed 03/10/2019).*

The implication is that, income generating projects led to high enrollments, reduced dropouts, high classroom attendance, high completion rates, average retention and improved teachers' and pupils' attendance in schools.

In the fourth item, when respondents were asked whether Income generating projects help schools gain control of the learning environment; Concentrating resources and efforts on providing pupils with challenging curriculum and high-quality instruction in UPE schools of Lira municipality, 65 (41.67%) respondents agreed and 52 (33.33%) respondents disagreed. This implies that IGAs has a big influence on the financial performance of UPE Schools in Lira Municipality to a bigger extent because money obtained from IGAs are used in the purchased of the learning materials, improving learning environment and curriculum implementation to the best standard. The essence of the above argument was supported by the oral interview guide when respondents were asked whether school income generating projects play some roles in supporting/development of education resources like land, classroom, fields, text books, library, latrines, accommodations, performance, management among others for effective teaching and learning; and one respondent noted;

*“We have realized a tremendous improvement in teaching and learning since the initiation of IGAs which have played a leading role in the acquisition of teaching aids, practical teaching, and improving the learning environment.”* (Interviewed on, 24/09/2019).

In the fifth item, the findings shows that the respondents when asked whether returns from income generating activities investments enable UPE schools of Lira Municipality to expand their assets base, 83 (53.21%) respondents agreed, while 36 (23.08%) respondents disagreed. This implies returns from IGAs investments enable UPE schools to acquire more assets like land, classrooms, play equipment among others. These findings were supported by the excerpt from the interview where a SMC member said;

*“We have benefited a lot from IGAs investments and we are now relieved from the burden of carrying materials for teachers the construction of teachers ‘accommodation infrastructure. IGAs returns has made this possible by generating money to purchase building materials.”* (Interviewed on, 24/09/2019).

Another one female SMC member concurred,

*“Our school has acquired a new computer set and office furniture using returns from school IGAs”* (Interviewed on, 24/09/2019).

In the sixth items when the respondents were asked whether funds raised from income generating activities help UPE school managers to meet their administrative costs effectively, 68 (43.59%) respondents agreed and 43 (27.56%) respondents disagreed. This implies that funds raised from the IGAs help managers meet their administrative cost to a larger extent. This quantitative data was also supported by qualitative data obtained from interview guides during an interaction with one of SMC member who said;

*“Our Head teacher is working willingly and without reserved knowledge because he has the necessary facilitation for transport and allowances which normally come from IGAs projects and we also get allowances wherever a meeting is called.”* (Interviewed on, 24/09/2019).

The implication is that where there is enough financial support, school managers can willingly serve the UPE schools to realize efficiency and mobilization of school stake holders towards UPE schools development is made simple.

In item seven when respondents were asked whether school income generating activities act as a source of employment to the school community, 64 (41.03%) respondents agreed while 39 (25.00%) respondents disagreed. On the other hand, in item eight when respondents were asked whether school income generating projects enable UPE schools to manage their liabilities, 64 (41.03%) respondents agreed whereas 56 (35.90%) respondents disagreed. This implies that IGAs act as a source of employment to the school community and help them managed their liabilities. Hence, reducing the burden of borrowing from suppliers. This quantitative data was also supported by qualitative data obtained from interview guides during an interaction with a female SMC member who said;

*“We are relieved now from the burden of borrowing unlike in the past where our head teacher has debts in every book shop but IGAs money has saved us.” (Interviewed on 04/10/2019).*

Another female SMC member from the age bracket of 45 and above asserted,

*“We have reap a lot from IGAs investments and we are now relieved from heavy debts from book shops and food suppliers.” (Interviewed on, 24/09/2019).*

Another male SMC member said;

*“We have employed one security personnel and paid him fully using money generated from IGAS.” (Interviewed on 30/09/2019).*

The implication is that school IGAs can be a very useful source of employment to people and empower school to purchase learning materials on cash. This enable school Head teacher and their teachers to structure the learning environment in a comprehensive and effective manner.

In conclusion, school income generating activities have big influence on the financial performance of UPE schools in Lira Municipality as evidenced by a greater percentage of the descriptive statistics particularly through; improved workers and pupils' welfare, controlled the learning environment, expanded school assets, fulfilled administrative cost, created employment to people, and managed liabilities by school managers. However, the government of Uganda is not interested in funding UPE schools programme adequately. Therefore, UPE school managers in Lira Municipality in particular should broaden their vision and creativity to embrace IGAs as a reliable funding source.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the above discussion, the research concluded as follows;

First, largely, income generating activities play a great role in financing universal primary education activities, notably; development of physical facilities, supporting pupils' assessment, purchasing instructional materials, motivation of teachers, support school feeding program, enhanced pupils retention, offer bursaries, employ and paid workers which promote effective teaching and learning in the schools. For that matter it acts as substitute of UPE grants which

come once hence, leaving primary schools administrators peddling with daily operation expenses.

Second, there are numerous challenges encountered by UPE schools when implementing IGAs these ranges from inadequate land and finance, weather changes, pest and diseases, high cost of maintenance, poor record management, market competition depreciation and lack of skilled man power. This has hampered the operation of school IGAs and the returns lowered. Therefore, UPE Schools should recruit specialized skilled personnel, train managers, sensitize and use modern agricultural inputs to manage these challenges.

Third, to a big extent, IGAs influence the financial performance of UPE schools although the government of the Republic of Uganda releases less funds to operate in Schools. This is evidence through improved pupils and teachers' welfare, purchased learning materials, improved learning environment and curriculum implementation, expanded school assets and management of liabilities, among others. This means that without a stable source of income, primary schools in Lira Municipality cannot operate effectively because of the daily expenses encountered by the school administrators. This is the reason why school income generating activities is very important in cushioning school budgets besides UPE government capitation grants.

### **Recommendations**

The study made the following recommendations;

That if the contribution of income generating activities is to be sustained in UPE schools, the government through the Ministry of education must formulate policies that will require schools to come up with alternative sources of financing Universal Primary Education in order to break the overdependence on free primary funding which is very little from the findings of the study. In addition, the Ministry of Education and Sports through National Curriculum Development Centre should ensure entrepreneurship courses are included in the Teaching Curriculum of Primary Teachers Colleges. This will help to bring to the attention of future school administrators of the need for starting up, enhancing of Income Generating Activities as a supplementary fund to effectively execute school budgets. UPE schools managers should venture into more lucrative and enterprising ventures which serve the needs of the urban population namely: parking yards, hostels, constructions of building for office space and residential infrastructure. This will make their products and services more competitive in the urban setting.

With regard to lack of requisite skills needed to undertake these income generating activities aggressively and manage them professionally, the Ministry of Education and Sports must mount training programmes in entrepreneurial skills for school managers in order to empower them to run these income generating activities. To avoid role conflicts in Enterprise Management, the Ministry of Education and sports should create the post of Production Unit Managers who will run the school Income Generating Activities and be answerable to school stakeholders when need arises. Schools Managers must solicit funds from NGOs and well-wishers to facilitate the initiation and acquisition of necessary facilities to IGAs. UPE School managers must purchase higher crop which are resistance to weather changes and pest and diseases as well as quality animal breeds to improve production. Head teacher and SMCs must ensure proper record management of Income Generating Activities by keeping separate books of accounts for Income

Generating Activities and employ specialized skilled personnel in order to check on their progress.

That Government should release enough UPE grants to support UPE Schools in offering primary education. UPE Schools must embrace IGAs which has proven to very prominent in supplementing school budget, creating employment, motivating teachers and paying non-teaching staff. UPE Schools' managers must recruit specialized skilled personnel, train managers, sensitize and use modern agricultural inputs to help in curving IGAs challenges. The government and other stakeholders must step in and increase their funding as well as assist in initiating income generating activities to enable the UPE Schools operate efficiently.

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