

Introduction: Universal Primary Education in Uganda has increased the public primary school enrolment, but the dropout number from public primary schools is continuing to increase, which predicts high poverty levels and poor health outcomes in the country.

Objectives: The major objective of this study was to assess the prevalence and the factors associated with dropout levels in public primary schools in Banda sub-county in Namayingo District in Uganda.

Cross-sectional survey of 316 randomly selected children 6 - 16 years who had dropped out of school was carried out using structured questionnaires. Out of the 316 respondents interviewed, questionnaires for 291 respondents were usable and 25 were rejected and couldn't be used due to missingness of important information.

Most (93%) of the households in Banda sub county had 1 to 3 school age going children not attending school, 6% had 4 to 6, 4% had 10 to 12 and 1% had 7 to 9 school age going children not attending school as shown in table 8 below. It was also revealed that more males (54%) had dropped out of school compared to the females who were 46%. Most (68%) of the dropouts were in the age group of 11 to 15 years, 22% were between 16 to 20 years and 9% were between 5 to 10 years.

The major factors for dropping out of school were mainly socio economic reasons which included poverty (34%), 19% due to parents' influence into marriage for dowry, 11% because the parents thought the outcome wasn't immediate, 8% had sick parents and 7% because the costs were high and personal reasons which included repetition (19%), 16% due to poor performance, 10% due to pregnancy, 8% due to lack of interest in education while school environment related factors did not play a big role on the levels of dropout