

**STUNTING AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AMONG DAY PRIMARY SCHOOL  
CHILDREN AGED 6-13 YEARS IN MUKONO DISTRICT**

**INVESTIGATOR:**

**DR. TENYWA EMMANUEL, MBChB (Mak)**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF MEDICINE  
IN PAEDIATRICS AND CHILD HEALTH OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

**2013**

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Background**

Stunting is among the leading causes of death in children under five years in Sub-Saharan Africa. However little is known about stunting in children over five years of age.

Lack of meals in schools has been cited as one of the most pressing challenges. There is evidence that hunger negatively impacts on child's school performance. However there is paucity of data on the magnitude of stunting in school going children and its relation to school performance in Uganda.

### **Study objective**

To determine the prevalence of stunting and its relationship with school performance among day primary school children aged 6-13 years in Mukono district.

### **Methods**

A multi stage cluster sampling of a total of 963 school children aged 6-13 years were studied from eight day primary schools in Mukono district during the study period 8<sup>th</sup> February to 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013. Eligible children were between 6-13 years, who assented and whose caregivers provided consent for participation in the study. Anthropometric measurements were obtained using standardized methods. We used semi- structured questionnaire to conduct interviews. Participant characteristics were described using summary statistics. Prevalence of stunting and confidence interval were determined using Cohen's method. Associations with stunting were assessed using prevalence ratios obtained using a modified Cox regression methods

We used a significance level of 0.05.

**Results:** The overall prevalence of stunting among the children was 21.6% and 7.9% for severe stunting. The age specific prevalence was 15.2% for 6-9 years and 25.7% for 10-13 years. The prevalence of stunting among males was 25.6%, compared to 17.4% among females on multivariate analysis, the variables that were independently associated with stunting were; gender (0.66, 95% CI 0.49-0.88) among females versus males), age among children (1.07, 95% CI 1.01-1.23) for every 1-year increase, income level (0.54, 95% CI 0.37-0.80) were independently associated with stunting. No significant association was found between stunting and age of the caregiver, number of household members, child hunger and adult hunger. There was no association between stunting and school performance (P value 0.34).

**Conclusion:**

One in every five children attending day primary schools in Mukono district is stunted. Income level, age and gender of the child are factors independently associated with stunting.

There was no association between stunting and school performance in our study population.