

A Gender Analysis of Youth Household Expenditures in Uganda

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Abstract

The Youth are an integral component of the development process. Therefore require sustainable development initiatives with a gender perspective. This requires a clear understanding of the status of the household expenditures of youth by gender. But it is very important to note where to find these youth and identify areas on which they spend. Data on male and female headed households were analysis of household expenditures was done at the household level. The mean expenditure by the households and in particular the 2 group mean comparison test was used. The mean expenditure of both male and female headed households, their difference and p-values were tabulated. Then the mean differences for item categories were tested for significance at a 5 level.

The findings indicated a general significant difference between the expenditure by MHHs and FHHs for both age categories and for all item categories except for education. The MHHs expenditure was higher than the FHHs with a statistically significant level of below 5% in these item categories. However for the youth category the significant difference occurred in food expenditure. Since most of the categories of the items studied indicated that there was a significant difference between the expenditure made by youth MHHs and FHHs. This can therefore be concluded that the MHHs expenditure is higher than FHHs. This is due to the fact that women have disproportionately less income as compared to men, from which they derive their expenditures. Therefore it was recommended that development programmes should target at creating income generating activities for the youth specifically including the women. As this would create an opportunity for women to have access to sustainable income and even create an additional income for those women already earning. Furthermore this variation in expenditure hence income should be reduced by increasing the opportunity of women to participate in development programmes such as vocational training, credit access and commercial trade.

Key words: spend, age, mean, male, female

1. Introduction

The Youth are the country's most valuable asset and therefore are an integral component of the development process. They may not be employed or even earn a wage or salary but expenditure is inevitable. There has been a persistent increase in the number of youth in the country. As one of the strategies to address youth issues, the government of Uganda has made available a venture capital fund to be used to support the youth in the private sector. While poverty alleviation remains a key priority on the country's agenda there is one measure of poverty that is the welfare of the household. Development efforts should have a gender lense for effectiveness since men and women are affected and impacted differently in any results oriented outcome hence the need for a clear understanding of the status of the household expenditures of youth by gender. The objective of the research is to find out whether within the youth the MHHs spend more than FHHs and on what.

The UNHS data of 2009/10 was obtained then re grouped into item groups of specific interest. The mean expenditure by the households and in particular the 2 group mean comparison test was used. The mean expenditure of both MHHs and FHHs, their difference and p-values were tabulated. Then the mean differences for item categories were tested for significance at a 5 level. Descriptive statistics were presented on household headship, sex and age category and region. The findings of the research indicated a general significant difference between the expenditure by MHHs and FHHs for both age categories and for all item categories except for education. The MHHs expenditure was higher than the FHHs with a statistically significant level of below 5% in these item categories. However for the youth category the significant difference occurred in food expenditure. Since most of

the categories of the items studied indicated that there was a significant difference between the expenditure made by youth MHHs and FHHs. This can therefore be concluded that the MHHs expenditure is higher than FHHs. This is due to the fact that women have disproportionately less income as compared to men, from which they derive their expenditures. Therefore it was recommended that development programmes should target at creating income generating activities for the youth specifically including the women. As this would create an opportunity for women to have access to sustainable income and even create an additional income for those women already earning. Furthermore this variation in expenditure hence income should be reduced by increasing the opportunity of women to participate in development programmes such as vocational training, credit access and commercial trade.

There is a persistent increase in the number of youth in the country. As one of the strategies to address youth issues, the government of Uganda has made available a venture capital fund to be used to support growth of viable and sustainable SMEs by the youth in the private sector. While poverty alleviation remains a key priority on the country's agenda there is one measure of poverty that is the welfare of the household. Consumption and expenditure data are used in monitoring living standards of Ugandans. Therefore this necessitates gearing efforts towards having a gender perspective to ensure that these development efforts are not thwarted since men and women are affected and impacted differently for any new approach. Therefore there is need to have a clear understanding of the status of the household expenditures of youth by gender. But it is very important to note where these youth spend most. This will as a result provide adequate information to Government on where to find these youth, what they spend on their priorities. The objective of the research is to find out whether within the youth the MHHs spend more than FHHs and on what.

2.Data analysis and presentation

In this section a detailed explanation of the research design, type of data and data sources used and how data was analyzed are mentioned. The Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS) data of 2009/10 on household characteristics and consumption expenditure was obtained. The data set covered a sample size of about 6,800 households this was considered in totality due to the fact that consumption expenditure affects each individual household irrespective of geographical sub divisions or income group though giving specific attention to the youth category. The raw data set was re grouped into item groups of interest such as food, education, health & medical care and non-durable goods & frequently purchased services. The component items under certain item groups were aggregated/grouped and there after the summation of all individual household expenditure was obtained from which an average for all male and female headed households were computed for youth and adult categories. To achieve the objective of the study the analysis was done at the household level which is the unit of analysis. To determine the nature of gendered inequalities on expenditure by value and household headship by sex the analysis was carried out by Stata software. The mean expenditure by the households and in particular the 2 group mean comparison test was used. The mean expenditure of both male and female headed households, their difference and p-values were tabulated. Then the mean differences for item categories were tested for significance at a 1, 5 and 10% level.

Presentation of findings

This section presents the analyzed data on male and female headed household expenditure in tables. The various item categories on which household expenditure was made include food, education, health & medical care and non-durable goods & frequently purchased services.

Descriptive statistics

These statistics are used to describe the basic characteristics of the households to provide simple summary and measures

Table1: Statistics on household headship for the different age categories

Age category	Frequency	Mean age	Standard deviation	Minimum age	Maximum age
Youth (12-30)	2046	26	3.368	14	30
Adults (>30)	4729	48	13.756	31	98

The table above shows that the mean age of the youth and adults is 26 and 48 years respectively

Population age categories by sex

Table 2: Distribution of age categories by sex of the household heads

Age category	Sex		Total
	Male Headed Households (MHHs)	Female Headed Households (FHHs)	
Youth	1526	520	2046 (30.2%)
Adults	3166	1563	4729 (69.8%)
Total	4692 (69.25%)	2083 (30.75%)	6775

The table 2 shows that there are more male headed households (MHHs), these are more than twice the female headed households (FHHs)

Household headship by region and sex of the age category

Table 3: Distribution of households by region and sex of the age category

Age category	Region							
	Central		Eastern		Northern		Western	
	MHHs	FHHs	MHHs	FHHs	MHHs	FHHs	MHHs	FHHs
Youth	543	179	318	74	344	168	321	99
Adults	845	419	709	305	926	518	686	321
Total	1388	598	1027	379	1270	686	1007	420

The table 3 above shows that majority of the youth headed households are found in the Central region while the majority of those headed by adults are in the Northern region.

Household headship by residence and sex of the age category

Table 4: Distribution of households by residence and sex of the age category

Age category	Residence			
	Rural		Urban	
	MHHs	FHHs	MHHs	FHHs
Youth	1164	345	362	175
Adults	2728	1318	438	245
Total	3892	1663	800	420

Table 4 above indicates that majority of the households for both the youth and adults are found in the rural areas and that the households residing in urban areas are four times those in the rural areas.

Analysis of youth headed household expenditure

Table 5: Youth consumption expenditure on the various items

Item category	Mean Expenditure		Difference in mean	P-value
	MHHs	FHH		
Food	31308	26011	5297***	0.00
Education	338991	317483	21508	0.377
Health and medical care	23917	21437	2480	0.216
Non-durable goods & frequently purchased services	35942	36680	-738	0.607

Note *** represents 1% level of statistical significance.

Table 5 indicates that on the overall youth MHHs spent more on food, education, health and medical care than FHHs by a margin of 5297, 21508 and 2480 mean values respectively. This was moreover statistically significant for MHHs as compared to FHHs at less than 5% level for the item food.

The expenditure on education, health and medical care and non-durable goods and frequently purchased services was however insignificant at more than 5% level. FHHs may have spent less on food basically because in some Ugandan cultures the males assume the role of a bread winners and are therefore charged with the responsibility of ensuring that food is available for their wives to be able to prepare meals which may also be the case for FHHs with grown up sons or relatives. Further still most women are involved in subsistence agricultural production especially in rural areas than men who mostly practice commercial agriculture where most of their farm produce are not for food consumption but for the market yet females deal mainly in subsistence farming from which they feed their families. It is also possible that due to the fact that the majority of men earn a disproportionately higher income than women, therefore even when they give generously towards the purchase of food items, female contribution will still show that they spend less on this item compared to MHHs.

Analysis of household expenditure by the entire population

Table 6: Household expenditure on various item categories

Item category	Mean Expenditure		Difference in mean	P-value
	MHHs	FHHs		
Food	38043	29298	8745***	0.00
Education	536891	471335	65557	0.105
Health and medical care	30923	25425	5498***	0.004
Non-durable goods & frequently purchased services	36966	31755	5211***	0.00

Note *** represents 1% level of statistical significance.

Table 6 above shows that the household expenditure on all the 4- item categories the MHHs spend more than FHHs. The mean difference in expenditure on food, health & medical care and non-durable goods & frequently purchased services was 8745, 5498 and 5211 and all these 3 p values show that the difference in mean expenditure was statistically significant at less than 5% level.

3. Conclusions

The findings of the research indicated a general significant difference between the expenditure by MHHs and FHHs for both age categories and for all item categories except for education. The MHHs expenditure was higher than the FHHs with a statistically significant level of below 5% in these item categories. However for the youth category the significant difference occurred in food expenditure.

Since most of the categories of the items studied indicated that there was a significant difference between the expenditure made by male headed households and female headed households. This can therefore be concluded that the MHHs expenditure is higher than FHHs. This is due to the fact that women have disproportionately less income as compared to men, from which they derive their expenditures.

It was realized that in general male headed households spent more on household consumption expenditure compared to the female headed households. Since one can not spend what they have not earned income affects expenditure, this clearly indicates that women have less income from which they derive their expenditures.

This variation in income between males and females may be due to the subordination, discrimination, segregation and exclusion of females from income generating and credit access opportunities. Therefore it was recommended that development programmes such as the youth fund should target at creating income generating activities for the youth specifically including the women. As this would create an opportunity for women to have access to

sustainable income and even create an additional income for those women already earning. Furthermore this variation in expenditure hence income should be reduced by increasing the opportunity of women to participate in development programmes such as vocational training, credit access and commercial trade.

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