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**Relationship between partnership and the sustainability of
institutionalized child care in Lira City, northern Uganda**



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Abstract

Purpose: This study assessed the relationship between partnership and the sustainability of institutionalized child care in Lira City, northern Uganda. Specifically, three objectives guided the study, namely; to examine the relationship between networks and sustainability of institutionalized child care, to examine the relationship between coordination and sustainability of institutionalized child care, and to determine the relationship between collaboration and sustainability of institutionalized child care. As a consequence, the paper reverts to three selected variables of partnership, that is, networks, coordination and collaboration vis-à-vis sustainability of institutionalized child care.

Methodology: A mixed approach was used and data were collected using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale and an interview guide. The study was based on Forebelian principles and attachment theory. Statistical data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (linear regressions). Thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data.

Results: The study established a positive and significant relationship between networking and sustainability of institutionalized children's care ($R^2 = .362$, Coef. $= .425$) as it increases the sustainability of institutionalized child care by 36.2%. Further, the findings revealed that coordination increased sustainability of institutionalized children's care by 47.7% since it produced an adjusted R^2 of .477. The regression coefficient of .477 suggested a strong and positive correlation. Finally, it was established that a significant correlation exists between collaboration and sustainability.

Unique contribution to theory, policy and practice: The study recommended that the government should partner with institutionalized children's homes since partnership is one of the fundamental mechanisms in promoting sustainability. Also, there is need for capacity building through trainings on partnerships organized by either the government or NGOs, and further studies may be conducted to examine other factors that affect the sustainability of institutionalized children's care apart from partnerships. Consequently, the results contribute to the national policy on child care centers seeing that they are becoming more instrumental in caring for the vulnerable children.

Keywords: *Partnership, sustainability, networks, coordination, collaboration*

INTRODUCTION

Children reared in institutions experience severe psychosocial deprivation, resulting in lasting consequences for social and emotional development. In the past, institutionalized children's homes have been associated with a consistently high risk of persistent cognitive, academic, and social-emotional problems among orphans under institutionalization or orphanage. Therefore, this chapter presents the relationship between partnerships to the sustainability of institutionalized children's care in lira city.

Across the world, there are more than 163 million orphans, and over eight million live under institutionalized care (Whitney & Basloe, 2019). The main goal of institutionalization of orphans is to create a safe and beneficial environment for children besides provision of basic needs such as food, shelter, education, clothing, and social protection. The Report from UNESCO reveals that approximately 63 million orphaned children are out of school and of these, 75% are malnourished, which exposes them to a number of health-related risks (Lindgren & Sjöstrand, 2019). The African region is called the home of many orphans as a result of the conflicts as well as the high burden caused by HIV and AIDS, which killed many parents, thus widening the path for orphans. At least 12.3% of all children in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) [about 43 million] are orphans (Ntshuntshe & Taukeni, 2020). In the African traditional culture, there were no orphans as parentless children were cared for within kin systems, but due to poverty and other strains, families increasingly became less willing or unable to take care of orphans while others started taking advantage of them (Pollack & Fishman, 2020). In addition, African researchers indicate that HIV and AIDS besides wars worsened the devastation of African families, hence creating the necessity for orphanages in addition to national and international adoptions in the 20th century (Ogina & Ramare, 2019).

In Uganda, more than 2 million children have become orphans over the past decade (between 2010 and 2020) as a result of war and the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS in the country (Divon & Owor, 2021). The UNICEF Report demonstrates that children with disabilities and orphans are at a higher risk of dropping out of school or being excluded from education due to lack of adequate scholastic materials and financial support to facilitate their studies (Kjær & Muwanga, 2019). Yet, every child, orphaned or not, has a right to education as a basic human right as an essential asset in confronting the many future challenges as well as an attempt to attain the ideals of peace, freedom, and social justice. Accordingly, the provision of basic education in SSA has shown remarkable improvements ever since 164 governments met in Dakar, Senegal in 2000 and committed to the goal of Education for All (EFA). Since then, school enrolment has increased by 36%. The effectiveness in the management of institutionalized children's homes ensures maximum educational achievement for the children under their care, especially with the involvement of both the teaching staff and the non-teaching staff, in supervising orphaned learners' education. To support that, children in the institutionalized homes need to be supported through the help of staff and the general community so as to neutralize their living situations.

In Lira city, the influx of street kids has largely been attributed to a high increase in the number of orphans as a result of the Kony liberation war of 1994 to 2004 and the consequent deaths of parents due to HIV and AIDS (Duckworth et al., 2021). The Orphan Education Aid Trust, with funding from the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda/USAID, has been implementing programs that aim to improve the lives of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in and out of school, their parents, guardians, and caretakers through the provision of scholastic materials, counselling services, health services support, and economic support. The government of Uganda provides free education to all children in the country, both at the primary and post-primary levels. However, the National Constitution of 1995 does not cater for the welfare of orphans, including their education, food, clothing, shelter, and health, leaving a huge burden on non-governmental organizations, community, and religious foundations. The Constitution of 1995, which recognizes the rights of the child specifically providing for children's rights to health, education, and protection from exploitation, has failed to guarantee that the needs of orphans are catered for.

Furthermore, the institutionalized children's homes are provided both as a home and a school for the many orphans and other vulnerable children under the care of adults, through which they access and utilize all the available services. According to the Care Reform Initiative (2018), the poor management of institutionalised children's homes negatively affects the academic success of orphans because the duties within the institution overtake their academic commitments, which in turn leads to poor academic performance. In contrast, good management of orphans' welfare can, through the provision of all the scholastic materials, food, clothing, and shelter, make orphans to forget about their past bad experiences, and this can lead to academic excellence. While this may be true sustainability of those homes remains a point of concern since several factors either enhance or derail them hence this study.

Statement of the Problem

Institutionalized children's (Orphans) care has continued to deteriorate despite the efforts of the government and non-governmental organization to support orphans and other vulnerable children in Lira City. The number of orphans in Uganda keeps increasing every year. In 2000, there were 12.5 million orphans in Uganda while in 2020, there were over 2 million orphans (UNICEF, 2020). Their number is growing because the kinship system is dying and there are very stringent adoption policies. The effects of the Kony War of 1987 to 2007 in Northern Uganda and the encroachment of HIV and AIDS in the community worsened the vulnerability of children and orphans (Duckworth et al., 2021). Much as the Children's Act of 2016 (as amended), advocates for the right of children to health, education, as well as right to protection from exploitation, the orphans and other vulnerable children are still having challenges. As a way of helping the vulnerable children, the non-governmental organizations have sought to provide services to orphans in institutionalized homes (Care Reform Initiative, 2018) however, these depend on charities drawn from different partners and face issues of sustainability. Despite the fact the government continues to partner with a number of agencies and non-state actors, there is limited research regarding the sustainability of such institutionalised homes. While there are a range factors, which may contribute to sustainability,

partnerships appear to be central. Based on this backdrop, this study aimed to analyse the relationship between partnerships and sustainability of institutionalised children's care.

Purpose of study

The purpose of this study was to analyse the relationship between partnerships and sustainability of institutionalized children's care in Lira city. Specifically, three objectives guided the study, namely: (a) to determine the relationship between networks and sustainability of institutionalised children's care in Lira City; (b) to examine the relationship between coordination and sustainability of institutionalised children's care in Lira City; and (c) to determine the relationship between collaboration and sustainability of institutionalised children's care in Lira City. It was thus hypothesised that 'there is no significant relationship between partnerships and sustainability of institutionalized children's care in Lira city.

This study was aimed at analysing the relationship between partnerships and sustainability of institutionalized children's care. It focused on three levels of partnerships, namely networks, coordination and collaboration. This study was conducted in Lira City, Uganda, one of the very interesting cities in Uganda, if not the most interesting city of them all. Lira City is located in the Northern region of Uganda. It is located approximately 110 kilometres by road to the southwest of Gulu, the largest city in the northern region, and 124 kilometres northwest of Soroti. Lira City is located approximately 337 kilometres (209 mi) north of the city of Kampala, the capital and largest city in the country. The coordinates of Lira City are 2°14'50.0"N 32°54'00.0"E (Latitude: 02.2472; Longitude: 32.9000). The city lies at an average elevation of 1,063 metres (3,488 ft) above sea level. The latest census held in Lira in August of 2014 showed the Lira Populous to be at 108,600, around a 28-thousand increase in the population in over 4 years. These were further subdivided into 28 sub-counties. Of the 28 sub-counties, four are municipal divisions. There are a total of 192 parishes with 2,247 villages, and it is neighboured by the Lira District. (Lira district, Uganda, 2021). This study considered a period of 16 years from 2006 to 2022. This was because a number of the institutionalised children's homes were established around this period when the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) conflict ended in northern Uganda. As a consequence, this study is significant to a number of stakeholders, for instance;

METHODS AND MATERIALS

According to Creswell (2014), research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. This study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional research design with both quantitative and qualitative methods. It was chosen because it is powerful when understanding the details of the study topic, the need, and the real context of the study based on its descriptive and statistical forms (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019). The study was conducted in Lira city located in the centre of Lira district and is bordered on the west by Kole district and on the north, east, and south by Lira district. The main administrative and commercial centre in the district, Lira City, is located 110 kilometres (68 mi) southeast of Gulu, the largest city in Northern Uganda. The coordinates of the city are: 02 20N, 33 06E (Latitude: 02.3333; Longitude:

33.1000) and covers approximately a total area of 1326 km², of which 1286.22 km² is land area suitable for human habitation and agricultural production, while the rest is open water and wetlands. This study was conducted in the registered institutionalized children's homes in Lira City and such as Saving Grace in Uganda, God-Helps- Uganda, Adina Foundation and Children of the Nations (COTN). Lira City was chosen as the study area because of having many organizations providing services to Orphans in an institutionalized setting (home). In addition to that, Lira city has high number of street kids and many organizations are now rehabilitating them in an institutionalized home.

The study participants were the different stakeholders who contribute to the welfare of institutionalized homes like the care givers, teachers who teach/taught the students and pupils, Probation Officers, CDOs, Local leaders, religious leaders, Head teachers, Administrators. According to the study design, institutionalized teachers constitute the quantitative participants and, care givers (Wardens, Mothers and Uncles), and administrators and the community will constitute the qualitative participants. Accordingly, probability sampling techniques using lottery (picking without replacement) was employed to select the institutionalized children where codes were assigned to them and then the procedure was performed. Also, purposive sampling was used to select qualitative participants such as care givers, teachers, head teachers, and administrators based on their daily contacts with institutionalized children and wider knowledge about the subject under investigation. The sample size was estimated using the Krejcie and Morgan's table (1970); the researchers chose this sample size determination formula based on the fact that the original categories of the study participants was well known.

Data Collection

The questionnaires were used because they give in-depth information in terms of feelings, background, and decisions and are easily administered (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). Therefore, closed-end questionnaires were developed on a five-scale Likert to collect data from the respondents seeing it is used to collect primary data and, notably, to discover large volumes of data within a specified period of time. Therefore, during the process of data collection, the data was collected using self-administered questionnaires. The teachers and head teachers constitute those to whom the questionnaires were administered on. Further, the key informant interview was recommended in a qualitative study in order to collect sufficient and meaningful data from the respondents (Johnson 2019). In this study, the interview lasted for 35–40 minutes for each key informant in order to collect sufficient data on the analysis of the significance of partnerships to the sustainability of institutionalized children's care in Lira city. During the process of the interview, the participants were informed two days prior to the study, time and venue in which the interview took place, and then during the interview, each of the respondents signed an informed consent and an audio recording consent form to allow voice recording. The key-informant guide developed based on the research objectives in order to supplement the qualitative findings. The Administrators, Probation officer, Child development officers were key informants. And, according to Creswell & Creswell (2020), the data collection involved collecting information from secondary data or existing data. A documentary review was used to find out some of the services provided at the institutionalized children's homes including

records of their academic performance like termly report cards, test, and final exams, the partnership plans towards sustainability, reports from the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development and Lira City Probation Office. The researcher used this method to obtain additional information to supplement the information obtained from quantitative and qualitative research.

Reliability and validity

The researcher conducted test-retest at Children of the Nations Uganda (COTN) in Lira city twice. Questions was administered to ten (10) ten teachers for the first time and then later given to another ten (10) ten second time. The interval between the first and second test was calculated using Stata version 16 to estimate the Cronbach alpha value. After testing the questionnaires, the Cronbach alpha value was found to be at 0.901, which portrays that the tested questionnaire was highly reliable basing on the facts that the results brought from two different testing intervals were consistent. The researchers performed face-validity to assess the validity of the questionnaire. To ensure face validity, the researcher presented the structured questionnaire to Lira University Research Committee who are experts in research for editing and review to ensure that all items constructed can help to achieve the aim of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics are vital in scientific research (Vilma, 2022) and so the following ethical considerations were pertinent: approval from the Faculty of Management Sciences of Lira University. Further, the researchers did not use identifiers like names, actual place of residence, and phone numbers in questionnaires and Interview guides. The information gathered in the field was coded and fed into a computer with passwords. The confidentiality of participants was considered through keeping their autonomy and privacy. Also, the attention of the participants were drawn to the purpose, methods, and duration of the project and to any potential harm that might come to them. Before obtaining information, the researcher explained to the study participants all the necessary information for them to make informed decision. A consent form was then given to each one of them for signing voluntarily. And, the privacy of every participant was assured by interviewing them in private places so that they were protected from exposure to others.

Data processing and analysis

Research data processing is a term that describes the organization, storage, preservation, and sharing of data collected and used in a research project. Data was coded for meaningful classification, entered in SPSS version 20 and Stata version 16 and kept on a personal computer before analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response rate

As manifested in this study, out of the 70 questionnaires distributed, 60 were completed and returned. This represents an 85.7% response rate. As argued by Mugenda and Mugenda

(2003), for a study to be successful, any response rate above 50% is significant enough to accomplish the study objectives. This significantly indicated that most of the targeted participants participated in the study.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Background characteristic is defined as the general characteristics of an individual in the population. It includes age, marital status, residence, subnational region, education, and occupation. In this study, socio-demographic characteristics of respondents were assessed in terms of age, gender, marital status, educational level, religion and Occupation. The age of the respondents was categorized as follow: 20-25 years, 26 – 30 years, 31-35 years, and 36-40 years, 41 and above. Majority of the study respondents were aged between 26-30 years (34.4%), this was followed by those aged between 31-35 years and the least were those aged 20-25 years (8.2%). This average age of the respondents who participated in the study was between 26-35 years. This portrays that most of the respondents were youth and they were willing to take part in the research. Majority were male (58.3%) compared to female (41.7%). This implies that more male participated in the study than female. The married dominated the study (67.8%). This was followed by single respondents (31.2%) and the least divorced (1.0%). The significance of being married indicates that they have children and carry more responsibilities. Most of the respondents were diploma holders (49.6%), followed by certificate holders (36.2%), and the least were bachelor holders (14.3%). This conveys that most of the respondents who participated in the study were diploma holders. Education is an opportunity for development which enables members to acquire knowledge and skills that they can employ in business and, thereafter, improve performance in their activities.

Analysis of the relationship between networking and sustainability of Institutionalized children care

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between networking and sustainability of institutionalized child care. Both quantitative and qualitative designs were employed to gather the information from the study participants as shown on Table 1 below:

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on the significance by Networking

Statements	Freq	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Partnership by networking Promote professional competencies and skills in the workforce.	60	1	5	4.50	.701
It is an effective way of achieving the greater development of an institutionalized children care since it's the direct objective of civil and government society.	60	1	5	4.58	.617
Partnership is also critical to organization sustainability	60	1	5	4.53	.675

In an institutionalized children home, partnership by networking reduce cost sharing and increase service delivery hence avoid duplication of the services.	60	1	5	4.36	.843
Networking allows expansion of the organization through linking different stakeholders, foreign agencies and governmental organization with similar goals	60	1	5	4.66	.628
In this institution, we always share ideas together so that we all acquire skills and experience	60	1	5	4.58	.618
Partnership by networking provide support for tacking challenges within the institutionalized children home	60	1	5	4.43	.789
Most of the support within this Institution we acquired them through strong working partnership	60	1	5	4.46	.853
Overall				4.51	.715

Legend: 4.21-5.0 (Strongly agree); 3.41-4.20 (Agree), 2.61-3.40 (Moderate); 1.81-2.60 (Disagree); 1.00-1.80 (Strongly disagree).

Source: Field data (2022)

The results in Table 1 above indicate that the majority of study participants strongly agreed that partnership by networking promotes professional competencies and skills in the workforce (Mean = 4.50, SD = .701) and that partnership by networking is an effective way of achieving the greater development of institutionalized child care since it is a direct objective of civil and government society (Mean = 4.58, SD = .617). The study respondents reported that partnership through networking is critical to organizational sustainability (Mean = 4.53, SD = .675), that partnership through networking reduces cost sharing and increases service delivery, avoiding service duplication (Mean = 4.36, SD = .843). Furthermore, the study respondents strongly agreed that networking allows expansion of the organization through linking different stakeholders, foreign agencies, and governmental organizations with similar goals (Mean = 4.66, SD = .628), it allows sharing ideas (Mean = 4.58, SD = .628), and partnership by networking provides support for tacking challenges within the institutionalized children's home (Mean = 4.43, SD = .789). Finally, the majority of support within this institution is obtained through strong working partnerships, according to the respondents (Mean = 4.46, SD = .853). Generally, the overall mean of 4.51 and standard deviation of .715 implies that the study participants strongly agreed that partnership by networking was important to the sustainability of institutionalized children's care.

Regression analysis to determine the relationship between Networking and sustainability of institutionalized children care

To determine the relationship between partnership by networking and the sustainability of Institutionalized children care, a simple linear regression was performed to find out the relationship and its contribution in the sustainability of institutionalized children care. The summary of model and coefficients are presented in Tables 2 below.

Table 2: Summary of model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.475	.475	.362	6.931

The model summary of the regression test in Table 9 produced an adjusted R^2 of .213, which means that partnership by networking contributes to 36.2% in the sustainability of Institutionalized children care. The coefficient of the regression between partnership by networking and sustainability of Institutionalized children's care also provides details on the strength of the relationship. The distribution is shown in the Table 3 below.

Table 3: Regression coefficient

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized			Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-1.090	8.996		-.121			
Partnership by networking	1.019	.248	.425	4.115	.000	1.00	1.00

The results in Table 3 above reveal that partnership by networking strongly correlates with the sustainability of institutionalized child care based on the regression coefficients of .425. This indicates that partnership by networking significantly contributes to the sustainability of institutionalized children's care. This could be due to the promotion of a competent workforce, bringing different stakeholders together, the sharing of ideas and knowledge among different people, and the expansion of the organization. The results in Tables 2 and 3 provide an answer to the objective of the study on the significance of partnership by networking to the sustainability of institutionalized children's care since it contributes to about 36.4% of the sustainability of institutionalized children's care. This finding is consistent with the qualitative partnership through networking, which contributes significantly to the sustainability of institutionalized care. It was noted by one of the key informants that networking creates more opportunities, increases funding, encourages friendship between

national and international organizations, allows sharing of ideas and promotes the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. The following were noted during key informant interviews:

"Getting funding from international charitable organizations is very difficult without networking. All the properties that we have are through partnership by networking with some government or scheming for funds". (KII, September 2022)

"I have realized that quality services provided by institutionalized children's homes always depend on strong networks between the managers of the institutions and government or other organizations". (KII, 2022)

This finding is in line with studies on strategic networking for sustainability, pointed out that partnership by networking accelerates mutual learning, sharing of problems, understanding, joint development of the organization and exchange of ideas or solutions. This implies that partnership through networking enhances effective development, implementation, adaptation, and quick recoveries from any catastrophe. Another study done by Leite et al. (2004) on community innovation and networking in Canada revealed that partnership by networking promotes the development of the organization through the enhancement of economic, social, political, and cultural capabilities; the creation, provision, and use of community-oriented learning opportunities; and the development of community-oriented cultural content, open source software, learning tools, and broadband infrastructures. These findings supported the Forebelian principles that highlight the importance of family and community, Postulated by Kambouri, (2022). The principle shows that partnership significantly contributed in enhancing community development.

The relationship between coordination and sustainability of institutionalised children's care

This is the second objective of the study. It examined the significance of partnership by coordination to the sustainability of institutionalized children's care in Lira City. Quantitatively, the respondents were assessed with numerous questions to find whether partnership by coordination contributes to the sustainability of institutionalized child care. The items 1–8 in table 4 present the respondent's views on partnership by coordination to the sustainability of institutionalized child care. Respondents' views were rated on a scale of 1–5 based on the level of agreement.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics on partnership by coordination

Statements	Freq	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Partnership by coordination promote professional competencies and skills in the workforce.	1	5	4.36	.822	
Partnership by coordination is critical to organization sustainability	1	5	4.30	.847	

It is an effective way of achieving the greater development of an institutionalized children care since it's the direct objective of civil and government society.	1	5	4.30	.765
In an institutionalized children home, partnership by coordination reduce cost sharing and increase service delivery hence avoid duplication of the services.	1	5	4.13	.853
Partnership by coordination bridge gaps between the international agencies, community and government agencies with the institutionalized children care	1	5	4.48	.873
Ensuring more representatives at all level promote active coordination, more financial supports and institutional sustainability	1	5	4.45	.699
Orphanage without effective coordinator chain are no longer functioning	1	5	4.43	.961
Partnership through coordination is essential enough and allows the organization to share knowledge, skills and other resources	1	5	3.47	0.991
Overall			4.24	.851

Legend: 4.21-5.0 (Strongly agree); 3.41-4.20 (Agree), 2.61-3.40 (Moderate); 1.81-2.60 (Disagree); 1.00-1.80 (Strongly disagree).

Source: Field data (2022)

As manifested in Table 4 above, respondents strongly agreed that partnership by coordination promotes professional competencies and skills in the workforce (Mean = 4.36, SD = .822) and that partnership by coordination is critical to organization's sustainability (Mean = 4.30, SD = .847). They also reported that partnership by coordination reduces cost sharing and increases service delivery, hence avoiding duplication of the services (Mean = 4.30, SD = .865). The study participants strongly agreed that partnership by coordination bridges gaps between the international agencies, community and government agencies with the institutionalized children's care (Mean = 4.48, SD = .873), it promotes financial support and institutional sustainability (Mean = 4.45, SD = .699), and partnership by coordination bridges gaps between the international agencies, community and government agencies with the institutionalized child care (Mean = 4.13, SD = .853). Furthermore, participants in the study reported that partnership through coordination is sufficient and allows the organization to share knowledge, skills, and other resources (Mean = 3.47, SD = .991). Generally, the overall mean

of 4.24 and standard deviation of .851 implies that the participants strongly agreed that partnership by coordination enhances the sustainability of institutionalized child care.

The relationship between collaboration and sustainability of institutionalized children care

This was the second objective of the study. The main focus was to determine the relationship between partnership by coordination and sustainability of institutionalized children care. A simple linear regression analysis was employed to determine the significance of partnership to the sustainability of the institutionalized children care. The summary of model and the regression coefficients is presented in the table 5 and table 6 below.

Table 5: Summary of the model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.675	.56	.477	6.931

The model summary of the regression test in Table 5 produced an adjusted R^2 of .477, which means that partnership by coordination contributes to 47.7% of the sustainability of institutionalized child care. The coefficient of the regression between partnership by coordination and the sustainability of institutionalized child care also provides details on the strength of the relationship (see table 6 below).

Table 6: Regression coefficient

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized			Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.226	1.365		9.334			
Partnership by coordination	.657	.047	.765	25.87	.000	1.00	1.00

The results in table 6 above reveal that there is a strong and positive correlation between partnership by coordination and the sustainability of institutionalized child care (Coeff = .765). This provides an answer to the research question two of the study: "What is the significance of partnership by coordination to the sustainability of institutionalized child care?" Significantly, partnership by coordination bridges gaps between different parties, ensures cost reduction, increases competency and the quality of services delivered by the organization, and allows knowledge sharing. This finding is supported by the qualitative results, which indicate that coordination plays an important role in the development and sustainability of institutionalized child care. The following are the participant's views:

Respondent reported that "we have faced a lot of challenges in the operation of the institutionalized children's home during the COVID-19 pandemic since coordination was not easy. I think that partnership by coordination is the only tool to bridge gaps between the international agencies, community and government agencies with institutionalized child care ". (KII, 2022)

"Let me tell you why our institution is growing fast is because of coordination. We have some of our partners in Canada, Germany, and the United States of America ". (KII, September 2022)

Interestingly, these study findings are supported by Kahle, (2018), in a study on strategic networking for sustainability, pointed out that partnership by networking accelerates mutual learning, sharing of problems, understanding, and joint development of the organization and exchange of ideas or solutions. This implies that partnership through networking enhances effective development, implementation, adaptation, and quick recoveries from any catastrophe. Leite et al (2004) on community innovation and networking in Canada revealed that partnership by networking promotes the development of the organization through the enhancement of economic, social, political, and cultural capabilities; the creation, provision, and use of community-oriented learning opportunities; and the development of community-oriented cultural content, open source software, learning tools, and broadband infrastructures. This is based on the fact that in networking, qualified personnel are always brought on board to manage the organization. No wonder, the global university partnership on the environment and sustainability reveal that partnership by networking promotes participation of different stakeholders, builds employees' capacity within the organization, and enhances financial sustainability within the organization. This study findings is in line with forebrain principles which cited partnership as a fundamental tool in enhancing project sustainability.

The relationship between collaboration and sustainability of institutionalised children's care

This is the third objective of the study. It was set to investigate the significance of partnership by collaboration to the sustainability of institutionalized children's care in Lira city. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed. Quantitatively, the respondents were asked numerous questions to rate their understanding of the significance of partnership by collaboration to the sustainability of institutionalized child care. Respondents rated their views on a scale of 1–5 based on their level of agreement.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics on collaboration

Statements	Freq	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Partnership by collaboration promote sustainability of the institutionalized children home	60	1	5	4.45	.723

Collaboration enhances active involvement of different partners in planning, budgeting, accountability and implementation of orphan's project.	60	1	5	4.26	.880
Partnership by collaboration allows expansion of the organization through linking different stakeholders, foreign agencies and governmental organization	60	1	5	4.41	.845
Partnership by collaboration promote financial stability within an institutionalized children home	60	1	5	4.50	.791
It pave ways of attracting other donors effectively and rapidly within the institution	60	1	5	4.11	.865
Partnership by collaboration gives more opportunities for institutionalized children home to nonprofits to improve their services and mission.	60	1	5	4.40	.763
Collaboration can help strengthen an organization's programs by combining existing programs or building new ones.	60	1	5	4.00	.783
When two (or more) organizations come together to achieve a common goal, the chances of achieving that goal is more effectively, and even in a timelier manner, are much higher.	60	1	5	4.23	.671
Overall				4.29	.778

Legend: 4.21-5.0 (Strongly agree); 3.41-4.20 (Agree), 2.61-3.40 (Moderate); 1.81-2.60 (Disagree); 1.00-1.80 (Strongly disagree).

Source: Field data (2022)

The results in table 7 above reveal that the majority of the study participants strongly agreed that partnership by collaboration promotes sustainability of the institutionalized children's home (Mean = 4.45, SD =.723); collaboration enhances active involvement of different partners in planning, budgeting, accountability, and implementation of the orphan's project (Mean = 4.26, SD =.880); partnership by collaboration allows expansion of the organization through linking different stakeholders, foreign agencies, and governmental organizations (Mean = 4.41, SD =.841). They also strongly agreed that partnership by collaboration promotes financial stability within an institutionalized children's home (Mean = 4.50, SD =.791), it paves ways of attracting new donors effectively and rapidly within the institution (Mean = 4.11, SD =.865), and partnership by collaboration gives more opportunities for institutionalized children's homes to nonprofits to improve their services and mission

broadly and widely (Mean = 4.40, SD = .763). Furthermore, the statistics show that collaboration can help strengthen an organization's programs by combining existing or building new ones (Mean = 4.00, SD = .783) and they agree that if two organizations come together, they can easily achieve common goals (Mean = 4.23, SD = .671). Generally, the overall mean of 4.29 and standard deviation of .778, indicates that the respondents strongly agreed that partnership by collaboration contributes a lot to the sustainability of institutionalized child care.

Regression to investigate the relationship between collaboration and sustainability of Institutionalized children's care

To determine the relationship between partnership by collaboration and the sustainability of Institutionalized children care, a simple linear regression was employed to find the association and its magnitude. This was intended to provide answer to the research question "What is the significance of partnership by collaboration to the sustainability of Institutionalized children's care". The summary of the model and coefficients are as shown in Tables below.

Table 8: Summary of model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.487	.273	.268	6.88

The model summary of the regression test in Table 8 produced an adjusted R^2 of .268, which means that partnership by collaboration contributes to 26.8% to the sustainability of Institutionalized children's care. The coefficient of the regression between partnership by collaboration and the sustainability of Institutionalized children care also provided details on the strength of the relationship (see table 9 below).

Table 9: Regression coefficient

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized			Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	8.460	6.492		1.303			
Partnership by collaboration	.781	.184	.387	4.242	.000	1.00	1.00

The results in table 9 produced a standard coefficient of .487 of the regression between partnership by collaboration and sustainability of institutionalized children's care. This implies that collaboration has a strong and positive correlation with the sustainability of institutionalized children's care. Therefore, an organization must focus on collaborating with

another organization having the same goals and vision so that they can produce better quality goods and services. This study's findings are supported by the qualitative results, which show that partnership by collaboration allows achieving of goals, ensuring high production and sharing of ideas and resources. As noted in the key-informant interview:

"When two (or more) organizations come together to achieve a common goal, the chances of achieving that goal more effectively, and even in a timelier manner, are much higher. I believe collaborating is a key even from homes". (KII, September 2022)

The above findings are in line with a study conducted by Graci (2013) pointed out that moving toward the sustainability of the organization needs partnership and most organizational leaders who lack collaboration with other leaders always fail to achieve their agenda. Collaboration, specifically through multi-stakeholder partnerships, has been seen as an effective way to support initiatives in tourism development. The partnership that has been developed, called the Gili Ecotrust, provides an example of successful collaboration, leading to the implementation of innovative sustainability initiatives on the island. After all, Jamal and Stronza (2009) found out that partnership by collaboration is the validity of organizational sustainability. Therefore, implementation of the partnership by collaboration promotes the development of the organization since different brains are always brought together. Brown (2018) found out that partnership by collaboration increases efficiency and growth of the organization. This shows that information transparency, information immutability, accountability, and smart contracts significantly affect partnership growth and have marginal effects on the partnership.

CONCLUSION

The research was set to assess the significance of partnership to the sustainability of institutionalized children care in Lira City. It was found that partnership by networking has a strong and positive correlation with the sustainability of Institutionalized children's care since it contributes to about 36.2%. This portrays that partnership by networking significantly enhances the sustainability of Institutionalized children care if properly employed by the administrators. Partnership by coordination accounts for 47.7% to the sustainability of Institutionalized children's care. This shows clearly that coordination directly contributes to the sustainability of Institutionalized children care. Partnership by collaboration contributes to 26.8%. This indicates a positive correlation between the two variables.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study, it was recommended that:

- a) The government should partner with institutionalized children's homes. Partnership is found to be a critical tool in the sustainability of institutionalized children's care.
- b) There should be more capacity-building training for employees and the directors of institutionalized children's care on partnership and its benefits.

- c) Lira city authorities should conduct regular monitoring of institutionalized children's homes. Regular monitoring will allow easy tracking of financial malpractices among the managers in the institutionalized children's home in Lira city.
- d) The institutionalized children's care homes should develop synergies of raising local capital. This will help to supplement the donor funds that are often sent by the partners of these institutions.

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