



**BUSITEMA  
UNIVERSITY**  
*Pursuing Excellence*

**FACTORS AFFECTING PASTURE CONSERVATION PRACTICES AMONG DAIRY  
CATTLE FARMERS IN NAMUTUMBATOWN COUNCIL, NAMUTUMBA DISTRICT**



**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

I Kiirya Aggrey hereby declare that this dissertation is out of my original concept and has never been submitted to any University or institute of higher learning for any academic award.

Signature.....  ..... Date 2<sup>nd</sup> / 9 / 2015 .....

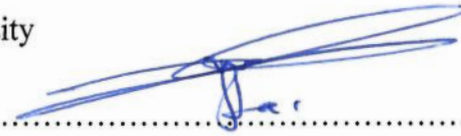
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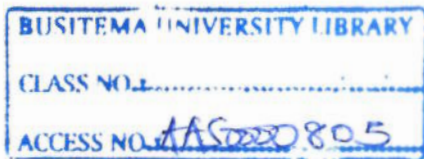
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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Baziriyo Zirigwa, mother, Naigaga Elizabeth and brother, Ndifuna Salleh.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IFAD	International Funds for Agricultural Development
NARO	National Agricultural Research Organization
NGOs	Non Government Organizations
FAO	Food Agricultural Organization
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
GDP	Gross Domestic Products



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## ABSTRACT

Dairy production across the East African sub-region is characterized by a critical challenge of feed inadequacy quantitatively and qualitatively which would have alternatively been tackled by pasture conservation in times of plenty. A study was carried out in Namutumba town council to establish factors affecting pasture conservation practices among dairy cattle farmers with special emphasis on the factors and relationship between education levels and gender of household heads with pasture conservation practices. The data on the major challenges to pasture conservation included; 21% respondents lacked advisory services and support policy, finance and age (8%) and land, labor and household size (71%). One hundred (100) respondents were purposively selected using closed ended questionnaires and statistical package for social sciences used as analytical tool. It was noted that standing hay (81% of the respondents) obtained from natural pastures (54% of the respondents) was the major conservation form. The study found out that there is no significant relationship between pasture conservation and the gender of the respondents ( $p>0.05$ ) and no significant relationship between pasture conservation and the level of education of the respondents ( $p>0.05$ ). Some cultures not allowing some genders like women to do particular activities and a gap for accessing assets were considered as major reasons for lack of relationship between gender and pasture conservation. Poorly educated people are limited in terms of access to information that could help them implement new practices and primary education being the elementary Level of education could not allow them to understand the existing problem and then think about the solution were the reasons cited for lack of relationship between level of education and pasture conservation. More women should be encouraged to get involved in pasture conservation, practice and use of baled hay, silage and industrial by-products in addition to standing hay to overcome land shortage, need for a policy to regulate pasture conservation and broadened content and coverage of extension service especially, trainings to address issues about pasture conservation are the recommendations that were put forward.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1 Background

Small-scale dairy production system, all over the world, is primarily based on pasture. Grazing lands cover small area of the earth's surface mostly during the crop season and rarely provide adequate in both quantity and quality year-round feed to support highly productive livestock. This is particularly true of the grasslands of the seasonally-dry tropics, where annual rainfall may be concentrated in a few days of the hot season and the mature forage is of low nutritive value (Suttie, 2000, Sidahmed, 2001).

Provision of feed for deficit seasons is always made to improve agricultural production. When livestock are adequately fed in the dry season, their output increases, they are fit for draught and more dung is available for fertility recycling. For example, United States manages pasture scarcity during the dry season by feeding one-third of the daily dry matter of long-stem grass hay before grazing (Rinehart, 2008) and Ethiopia feeds dairy cattle on conserved natural pasture hay (Feyissa *et al.*).

Dairy production across the East African sub-region is characterized by challenges of feed inadequacy (quantity and quality) which is the most critical. Almost year round, it relies heavily on low quality feeds. The dairy sector in Eastern Uganda is composed of smallholder farmers who keep about 1-3 head of cattle on small pieces of land, usually about 2 acres and often under a mixed crop-livestock production system. Smallholder farmers own over 90% of the national herd of about 7.5 million cattle. These farmers are mainly characterized by mixed crop-livestock farming (Wozemba & Rashid, 2008). Uganda has attained visible impressive GDP growth rates averaging to about 7% per annum since the 1990s in terms of economic performance, remaining the main source of employment to nearly 66% of Uganda's labor force. It has also contributed a constant positive growth rates, averaging 3% per annum, partly driven by the dairy sector. Dairy contributes about half of the total livestock GDP, which in turn contributes nearly 20% of the total agricultural GDP (Mbowa *et al.*, 2012). However, in Uganda, particularly Namutumba, smallholder dairy farming is affected by poor quality and quantity of feeds as impeding variables for high productivity (Mwamuye, *et al.*, 2013).

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