



**BUSITEMA  
UNIVERSITY**  
*Pursuing Excellence*

**FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL  
SCIENCES**

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**DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL PRODUCTION AND  
MANAGEMENT**

**DETERMINING THE PREVALENCE AND CAUSES OF SCOURS  
IN SUCKLING KIDS IN SOROTI DISTRICT**

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## ABSTRACT

Goat farming plays a crucial role in rural livelihoods, providing meat, milk and income to farmers. However, diseases such as scours pose a significant challenge to productivity, impacting both animal health and profitability. This study aimed to assess the prevalence of scours, identify associated microbial and helminthic agents, and examine the management practices employed by farmers. A total of 300 respondents participated in the study, providing insights into scours occurrences, parasite infections, and management challenges. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including chi-square tests, to determine patterns and associations in the findings.

The results showed that 51% of the respondents had experienced scours in their suckling kids, while 49% had not, with no significant difference from a random distribution ( $\chi^2 = 0.06$ ,  $p = 0.80$ ). The most prevalent helminthic agents identified were *Trichostrongylus* (25.7%) and *Haemonchus* (20%), though 45% of farmers reported no helminthic infections, suggesting effective deworming practices among some farmers. *Staphylococcus* (31.3%) and *E. coli* (27.3%) were the leading microbial agents associated with scours. Most farmers observed scours quarterly (70.4%), with diarrhea (96.3%), lethargy (70.4%), and loss of appetite (85.2%) being the most common symptoms. However, limited access to veterinary services compelled many farmers to rely on traditional remedies, revealing gaps in disease management practices.

Based on these findings, the study recommends improved access to veterinary services, increased outreach, and enhanced farmer education on disease control. Regular deworming schedules and hygiene practices are essential to managing helminthic infections and bacterial diseases effectively. Encouraging farmers to adopt modern treatment protocols and forming cooperatives to access affordable veterinary supplies will further strengthen disease prevention efforts. This study provides a foundation for developing targeted interventions to promote healthier goat herds and improve productivity in the study area.

## DECLARATION

### **DECLARATION**

I Opio Moses, declare that this piece of work is original, developed as my research proposal for an award of a degree in animal production and management of Busitema University and has not been submitted to any other institution for any similar award.

Signature.....

Date.....07/11/2024.....

APROVAL

**APROVAL**

This research dissertation is submitted with the approval of my research supervisor,

Dr. Hellen Kisakye

Signature..... *Hellen Kisakye*

Date..... *07/11/2024*

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this piece of work to my family especially my brother Omara Denis Elvis for his tireless support throughout my university education. To my supervisor, Dr Hellen Kisakye for her selfless efforts in ensuring optimum support and guidance in the development of this proposal.

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## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	i
DECLARATION .....	ii
APPROVAL .....	iii
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	iv
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b> .....	v
TABLE OF CONTENT .....	1
List of tables and figures .....	4
<b>1.1 Background</b> .....	5
<b>1.2 Statement of the Problem</b> .....	6
<b>1.3 Objectives of the Study</b> .....	6
<b>1.3.1 General objective</b> .....	6
<b>1.3.2 Specific objectives</b> .....	7
<b>1.4 Research Questions</b> .....	7
<b>1.5 Scope of the study</b> .....	7
<b>1.5.1 Geographical scope</b> .....	7
<b>1.5.2 Content scope</b> .....	7
<b>1.5.4 Time scope</b> .....	8
1.6 Justification .....	8
<b>1.7 Significance</b> .....	9
<b>CHAPTER TWO</b> .....	10
<b>2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	10
<b>2.1 Some of the enteric pathogens in the etiology of neonatal diarrhea in goat kids</b> .....	12
<b>2.3 Research gaps and future directions:</b> .....	12
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b> .....	14
<b>METHODS AND MATERIAL</b> .....	14
<b>3.1 Study Design</b> .....	14
<b>3.2 Research approach</b> .....	14
<b>3.3 The study area</b> .....	14
<b>3.4 The study population</b> .....	14
<b>3.4.1 Inclusion Criteria</b> .....	15
<b>3.4.2 Exclusion Criteria</b> .....	15
<b>3.5 Sampling size determination</b> .....	15

3.5 Sampling Techniques .....	16
3.6 Data Collection Methods .....	17
3.7 To determine the microbial and helminthic agents responsible for causing scours in suckling kids: .....	17
3.7.1 Microbial Analysis: .....	17
3.7.2 Helminthic Analysis: .....	18
3.7 Data collection tools .....	18
3.7.1 Observational Checklist: .....	19
3.7.2 Fecal Sample Collection: .....	19
3.8. Data Analysis .....	19
3.8.1 To identify potential risk factors associated with the occurrence of scours in suckling kids	19
3.8.2 To determine the microbial pathogens and parasites responsible for causing scours in suckling kids .....	20
3.9 Data processing, Analysis and presentation .....	20
3.9.1 Data quality control .....	20
3.9.2 Ethical Considerations .....	20
3.9.3 Study limitations .....	21
3.9.4 Strategies to Minimize Limitations: .....	21
4.0 RESULTS .....	23
Table 4.1: Presence of Scours in Suckling Kids .....	23
Table 4.4 Frequency of Observations of Scours in Suckling Kids Over the Past 12 Months .....	26
Table 4.5. Common Signs and Symptoms Observed in Suckling Kids with Scours .....	27
5.1 Prevalence of Scours .....	28
5.2 Helminthic Agents Identified .....	28
5.3 Microbial Agents Identified .....	28
5.4 Frequency and Symptoms of Scours .....	29
5.5 Management Practices and Access to Veterinary Services .....	29
5.6 Implications for Goat Health Management .....	29
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION .....	31
6.1 CONCLUSION .....	31
6.2 RECOMMENDATION .....	31
3.9.5 References: .....	33





## **List of tables and figures**

Table 4.1: Presence of scours in suckling kids in Soroti district.....	19
Table 4.2: Helminthic agents I identified.....	20
Table 4.4: Frequency of observation of scours in suckling kids in the past 12 months...	22
Table 4.5: Common symptoms and signs observed in suckling kids with scours.....	23
Fig 4.3: Microbial agents identified in affected goats.....	21

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Goat farming, also known as caprine husbandry, has been practiced for centuries and plays a significant role in agriculture worldwide. Goats are valued for their versatility, as they provide meat, milk, fiber and other by-products, making them an important source of livelihood for millions of people, especially in developing countries (Byaruhanga, Oluca and Olinga, 2015).

The health and well-being of goats, particularly kids (young goats) are paramount to the sustainability and profitability of goat farming enterprises. Kids represent the future of the herd, and their health status directly influences productivity, reproduction and overall herd performance (Sargison, 2020).

Kids are particularly vulnerable to various health challenges due to their immature immune systems and susceptibility to infectious diseases (Ahmed, 2011). One of the most common health issues affecting kids is scours, or diarrhea which can have significant economic and welfare implications for goat farmers (Esmaili *et al.*, 2024). In Soroti District, the prevalence of scours in suckling kids has emerged as a concerning issue among livestock farmers (Debele and Duguma, 2013). Scours characterized by diarrhea in young goats, poses significant challenges to the health and productivity of these animals, leading to economic losses for farmers and potential food security concerns in the region (MUHAMMAD MOHSEN RAHIMOON *et al.*, 2023).

The causes of scours in suckling kids are multifaceted and often interconnected. One primary factor is poor sanitation and hygiene practices in goat-rearing environments (Engering, Hogerwerf and Slingenbergh, 2013). Inadequate housing conditions, contaminated water sources, and improper waste management contribute to the proliferation of pathogens such as bacteria, viruses, and parasites, which can trigger diarrheal illnesses in young goats (Esmaili *et al.*, 2024). Additionally, nutritional deficiencies and imbalances play a crucial role in the development of scours (Sharif, Obeidat and Al-Ani, 2005). Inadequate access to quality feed especially during critical stages of growth and development, can weaken the immune system of suckling kids making them more susceptible to gastrointestinal infections (Esmaili *et al.*, 2024).

Furthermore, the lack of proper veterinary care and disease management strategies exacerbates the problem (Sharif, Obeidat and Al-Ani, 2005). Limited access to veterinary services, diagnostic tools

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