Effects of Transition of Early Childhood Education on Lower Primary schooling in Uganda-Mayuge district Imanyiro subcounty.

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Abstract— The study was conducted in Mayuge District and the purpose of this study is to establish the "Effects of Transition of Early Childhood Development on Lower Primary Schooling in Mayuge District". The research design to adopted was a cross-sectional survey design. 70 respondents were sampled to take part in the study and data was collected using questionnaires and interview guides and later analyzed quantitatively and descriptively. This research will guide decision makers on the undoubtedly demonstrated educational Early Childhood Development policy and also about issues related to the transition of children from nursery to lower primary schooling and hence address the issues of setting up a nursery school in every government aided school with a separate policy area, which would be systematically and comprehensively be monitored and evaluated, a systemic model for assuring quality in education especially at Early Childhood Development levels. The findings will inform the parents and communities to be aware of the importance of Early Childhood Development so that they can support the programs fully by constructing ECD classrooms and support the promotion of ECD programs for the benefit of their children since it's a basis of the foundation of children's education for better future progress in the primary section.

Key words— Transition, Early Childhood Development, readiness, lower primary.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background to the study, problem statement, purpose and objectives, research questions, scope of the study, significance and the conceptual framework of the study.

Early childhood Education is dated back to work of Jean Piaget (1978) among other authors. Kamerman (2007) states that Early Childhood Education (ECE) is largely a post-colonial development but its semblance is traced way back in the colonial era were kindergarten and infant classes (nurseries) consisted of children considered not yet ready for primary education cycle. Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes are started to lay a good foundation for physical, social, emotional, moral spiritual, intellectual and aesthetic development of the child especially. (Young & Mustard, 2009).

Over decades, ECD has been taped on a series of global commitments to high-quality education for all in many countries in Africa to strive keep all children learn. History reveals that rapid expansion of ECD enrollments in the 1990s in the past

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has not been matched with concomitant increases in per-pupil funding, preparation and hiring of teachers, or development and distribution of teaching and learning materials. In response to these challenges, many governments and their donor counterparts, including the U.S Agency for Internation to al Development (USAID) and World Bank increased efforts to improve learning of children in lower primary in Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda (World Bank, 2016). According to Calman & Tarr-Whelan, (2005), Early Childhood Development (ECD) is in three dimensions which include being a product, process and developmental stage. This is in line with the Uganda ECD learning Frame work (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2007). ECD programmes enable children join school when they are ready, and are less likely to drop out and can have improved behavior and academic performance. Furthermore, in the past decade, implementing ECD programs by RTI identified that, to be effective, programs must comprehensively address the "5 Ts" to inform instruction and monitor system improvement (Bulat et al., 2017).

UNESCO (2014) report states that experiences in ECD have long-term effects on brain function, cognition and psychosocial functioning and exposure to disadvantaged environments in early years of life predicts lower IQ and academic achievement, increased antisocial behaviour, and poor health and chronic disease in adulthood. Child characteristics of behaviour and self-control as early as age 3 years predict psychopathology, health, wealth and convictions in adulthood. ECD

in lower primary has gained much concern in government aided primary schools in African countries because the quality of parenting of young children is evidenced with negative effects on child. The quality of the early childhood classroom environment is also a risk and protective factor for child behaviour and adjustment (Walker, Grantham-McGregor et al., 2011).

ECD transitions are started in lower primary for disadvantaged children to enable long-term benefits to child schooling trajectories, cognitive development, antisocial behaviour, depression, economic productivity and/or health risk behaviours (Campbell et al., 2002). Although most Local District Governments have achieved near-universal primary enrollment, many face challenges in providing high-quality learning opportunities in lower primary classes. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimates that 250 million children in sub-Saharan Africa in lower primary are not learning basic skills of reading and writing. The introduction free education programmes have subsequently led to enrollment increase with larger class sizes, teacher shortages and inadequate teacher preparation.

Effective implementation of efficient ECD programmes in Uganda relies greatly on a comprehensive ECD policy. The policy is meant to guide different service providers on their roles, coordinate actors and guarantee government support for ECD. It is established that childcare and development during pupils' transitions have shifted from being a family and community responsibility to more formal methods of caring for children (MoES, 2007). ECD is seen in existence to only few pre-primary schools in Uganda in urban than in rural areas. Most of the nursery schools countrywide are neither licensed nor registered with inadequate supervision and inspection by the inspectorates (MoES, 2007, UCRNN, 2010).

1.2 Theoretical Background

Cognitive Theory of Jean Piaget (1978) will be adopted in this study. The theory says that cognitive development in children is proposed by their cognitive skills progress through a series of stages in which new information from experiences is taken in and understood. The stages in early childhood development include the sensori-motor (ages birth to 24 months) and pre-operational (ages 2–6 years) periods. In the sensori-motor period, children learn to coordinate and repeat actions which are pleasurable. In the preoperational period, language becomes the hallmark of development. Piaget also adds that caregivers can facilitate children's learning by providing them ample opportunities to explore and by monitoring them to keep them safe (Vygotsky, 1978). Parenting styles theory of Diana Baumrind (1966) and Maccoby and Martin (1983) will be adopted to explain the degree to which caregiver's guides community members be involved in responding to their children's needs, disciplinary strategies they use, parental expectations for ma-

turity and control, and child's development (Guzell & Vernon-Feagans, 2004). The parenting style theory adds that there are four styles of parenting: authoritarian, permissive, authoritative and uninvolved. Various researchers supported the authoritative parenting style as being the most beneficial towards raising happy, confident, and capable children (Neary & Eyberg, 2002).

1.3 CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

Early Childhood Development is a process through which young children grow and thrive physically, mentally, socially, emotionally and morally (MoES, 2005). The process begins from conception and extends up to 8 years of age. ECD involves a set of actions and behaviours that support the child's development in a holistic manner like feeding and clothing.

Early childhood development that is also referred to as pre-primary education in Uganda has arms in other related sectors like Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development, and Ministry of internal affairs.

Dunlop and Fabian (2002), define transition as "the passage from one place, stage, state, style or subject to another over time". The definition encompasses the development of all the domains which include physical, social, emotional, cognitive, language and spiritual. The early years of a child are critical as they lay the foundation for children's cognitive, personal, social, emotional and physical development. As they develop, children transition from one stage of learning to another. Transitions offer opportunities for children to learn how to manage change in a positive way. Docket and Perry (2007) see transition from Early Childhood Development (ECD) to primary school as an important challenge for children and that their successful passage will bring with it an opportunity for children to grow, learn and equip them to be more resilient in the future.

1.4 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

Uganda has had Early Childhood Education Policy Guidelines on curriculum development, teaching and learning. Effective implementation of efficient ECD programmes relies greatly on a comprehensive ECD policy. It was these convictions that inspired the development and launch of the Ugandan Education sector ECD policy in 2007 (MoES, 2007). It is now five years since the ECD policy was launched. Simply looking at one aspect and determining the success or failure of the policy would yield insufficient results towards findings steady headways to improve ECD in Uganda. Following these pursuits, this study set out to assess the effectiveness of the ECD policy in promoting quality early childhood service provision

in Uganda as envisaged in the policy objectives. In Mayuge district, ECD programmes have been are put in place by government in partnership with NGOs (Ejuu, 2012). ECD programmes have been started in Uganda to strengthen the transition rate in which children from lower primary acquire knowledge and skills. Apolot, (2014) argues that ECD programmes are run with greater expectation of children's mastery of reading and writing skills at an early stage.

Since the late 1990s, Uganda's education system underwent a tremendous transformation, tripling the number of primary students to 8.6 million and increasing net enrolment to 92% (Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports, 2016). In 2007, the focus shifted to improving learning through a thematic curriculum and local language instruction starting (National Curriculum Development Centre, 2017). Yet poor outcomes persisted, as evidenced by low levels of reading achievement (Uganda National Examinations Board, 2016). Uganda to boost ECD has come up with various intervention design such as the School Health and Reading Program and the Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity (LARA; 2015–2020) are two early-learning programs implemented by Research Triangle Institute, which also provides technical assistance to the Uganda Teacher and School Effectiveness Program (UTSEP; 2015–2019) implemented by the ministry with support from the Global Partnership for Education.

These three programs, with a major (but not exclusive) focus on early grade reading, support 80% of public primary schools, reaching 6 million students in 9,750 schools. Through ministry systems, the programs support development of reading materials; methods and training for teaching reading; development of a literacy framework; incorporation of reading methods into the pre-service teacher training curriculum; education finance reform; and periodic Early Grade Reading Assessments. Outputs of the three programs as of mid-2017 included development of 104 titles (teachers' guides and pupil books) for grades 1–4 in 12 local languages and English, distribution of 5.18 million pupil books and teachers guides to schools, and training for 53,000 teachers.

ECD inception in government aided primary schools in Imanyiro show that since 2016, teachers are changing their approach to teaching literacy and numeracy. Classroom observations found that 95% of learners are reading from printed material during the reading lesson in program schools compared to only 11% in control schools. Moreover, 43% of the teachers are guiding learners to make correct letter sounds (RTI International, 2017a). Program teachers are also more likely to prepare lesson plans and learners more likely to be reading from printed material and coming to school with pencils (RTI International, 2017c).

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The government of Uganda in a bid to improve on its education status introduced the ECD policy where by every government aided primary school in the country is supposed to have a nursery section and to promote education as a basic human right that is to be provided to all children or citizens of a country (National Development Plan II). The government of Uganda has made an effort to make education accessible to all and improve the quality of education at all levels by revising the curriculum, availing teaching and learning resources and recruiting and staffing of qualified teachers (UNESCO, 2004).

However, despite these efforts, there are still factors affecting performance of children at lower primary during ECD Transition in Imanyiro primary schools. For instance, lack of qualified ECD teachers interfere with the smooth transition of children, low parents and communities' involvement, lack of material and financial resources, long distances travelled by children and poor health and above all there is no policy on transition. In Imanyiro sub county schools, because of the lack of a transition frame work to guide stakeholders control over nursery education with regard to the content and quality of the curriculum, teaching methods, facilities, entry age to primary one and quality of teachers and their training programs (MoES, 2007). This situation needed to be changed to provide a conducive environment for laying a firm foundation for the nation through ECD in Imanyiro sub county.

It is against this background that this study is being conducted on the effects of the Transition of Early Childhood Development to Lower Primary schooling on the Performance of Pupils in Imanyiro sub county - Mayuge District.

1.6   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To assess the effects of the transition of Early Childhood Development on lower primary schooling in Imanyiro sub county, Mayuge District.

1.7   Objectives of the Study

i)   To establish the core objectives of Early Childhood Development.

ii)   To find out how transition of Early Childhood Development affects performance in lower primary schooling.

iii)   To examine other factors affecting the transition of learners from ECD centres to Lower primary scholing in Imanyiro sub county.

iv)   To suggest strategies to factors affecting the transition of Early Childhood Development in lower primary in Imanyiro sub county.

1.8   Research Questions

i)   What are in the core objectives of Early Childhood Development?

ii)   What is the effect of Early Childhood Development on the transition of Learners to lower primary schooling in Imanyiro sub county?

iii)   What other factors affect Early Childhood Development on the transition of learners to lower primary schooling in Imanyiro sub county.

iv)   What are the strategies to the factors affecting the transition of Early Childhood Development in lower primary schooling in Imanyiro sub county?

1.9   SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study will include; the geographical, contextual and time scope.

1.10   GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

The study will be conducted in Imanyiro Sub County in Mayuge District in Eastern Uganda, Busoga Region. Five (05) Government aided schools will be selected in the whole sub-county, and the schools should be having nursery schools operating or ECD centres attached to them as community early childhood centers

1.11   Content scope

This study will be conducted to assess the effects of the Transition of early childhood development to lower primary schooling in Imanyiro sub county - Mayuge district.

1.12   TIME SCOPE

The study will be conducted for a period of one year from February 2019 to January 2020.

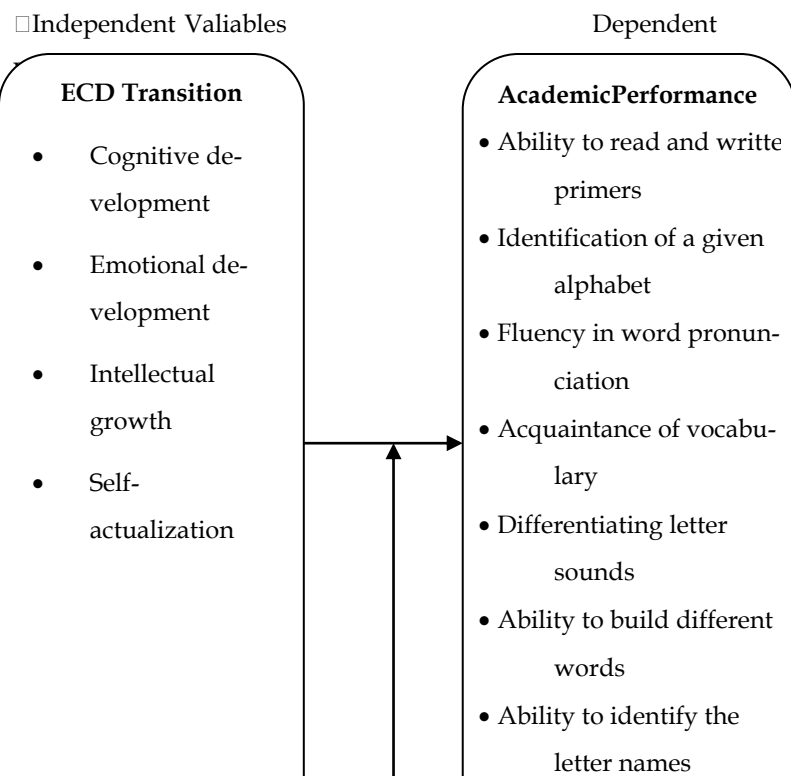## 1.13   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Policy makers will be guided on the undoubtedly demonstrated educational ECD policy about issues related to the transition of children from nursery to primary school and hence address the issues of setting up a nursery school in every government aided school with a separate policy area, which would be systematically and comprehensively be monitored and evaluated, a systemic model for assuring quality in education especially at ECD level.

The study findings will inform the parents and communities to be made aware of the importance of ECD so that they can

support the programs fully by constructing ECD classrooms and support the promotion of ECD programs for the benefit of their children since it's a basis of the foundation of children's education for better future progress in the primary section.

Other researchers would venture into the same area of research may use these study findings to build on their literature and also enable the researcher to graduate.

1.14   Conceptual Framework

Independent Valiables

ECD Transition

- Cognitive development

- Emotional development

- Intellectual growth

- Self-actualization

Dependent

AcademicPerformance

- Ability to read and writte primers

- Identification of a given alphabet

- Fluency in word pronunciation

- Acquaintance of vocabulary

- Differentiating letter sounds

- Ability to build different words

- Ability to identify the letter names

implies that what has been acquired by the child at one level of education will be carried over to the next level of education. Thus, it is the task of the teacher to give children work founded in their earlier experience and to create connections to the new one. This suggests that the curricular for early learning and Grade One should have a link so that there is continuity in learning by the child and this can ensure smooth transition from one level to another. Only then will new experiences become educational.

This theory is relevant because it emphasizes on the links and relationships between school levels. Based on Bronfenbrenner's model, Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta (2000) proposed the Ecological and Dynamic Model of Transition as a theoretical framework in which Early Childhood Development can be framed in order to understand and analyse the interactions and relationships occurring during the transition period (Stormshark and Goodman, 2002).

Dockett and Perry (2001) posit that in an ecological model, a child's transition to school is understood in terms of the influence of contexts (for example the family, school, community) and then connections among these contexts (e.g. family-school relationships) at any given time. Early Childhood Development children experience a physical change when entering the first grade of the primary school. This represents a major challenge, not only because they are no longer in a familiar environment/setting and have to adapt to a new one, but because the interrelations they used to have completely change.

Theory also contends that children's relationships change when they leave the social connections they used to have (for example group of friends and teachers) in preschool. In addition, by the end of the Early Childhood Development year, they have already established a close relationship with the teacher who has become a significant figure. Moreover, a home-school link already established may be strained. Thus, in this model, it is implied that there is discontinuity in learning by the child and this is likely to negatively affect the child's transition.

Intervention Valiables

This theory will be chosen because it emphasizes on the importance of links and relationships within contexts and their impact on the transition of the child. Essentially, the two theories do appreciate that knowledge and skills cannot be acquired in a social vacuum but through a web of relationships or context in which the child finds him/herself in. Given this understanding, it can therefore be safely argued that the said theoretical frameworks meaningfully inform this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with literature review. The chapter first deals with the theoretical framework, and then provide the reviewed literature on each objective of the study as reviewed from textbooks, magazines, and journals as articulated in details below.

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Dewey's theory on continuity of experience in education and the Ecological and Dynamic Model of Transition. According to Dewey, what the child has learned in the way of knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situations which follow. He also claims that every experience takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after. The theory

During the transition period, children can face new challenges. They need to adapt not only to a new physical environment but also make new friends and establish a new relationship with the new teacher and adults involved. In addition, they no

longer have the opportunity to play. Instead, they have to show and use their academic skills to fulfill the requirements of an outcome-based pedagogy (Docket and Perry, 2007).

In addition, a new parent-teacher relationship will have to be established because parents are the first and natural teachers of their children. A parent and a teacher in the transition of a child from ECD to primary school, by way of an analogy should be like the left and right hand, both needs to know what is happening. These are not easy tasks (arguably they are not easy for parents and teachers either) and require a set of cognitive, social and emotional skills that children may or may not have depending on a number of variables such as early educational experiences and family background (Arnold et al., 2008).

2.2 CORE OBJECTIVES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Research shows that the core objectives of Early Childhood Development establishment is to clarify roles of government in the provision of and support for Early Childhood Development services and indicate its commitment to the welfare of children. The Early Childhood Deveolpment policy states that the government of Uganda in conjunction with the Education Reforms for Uganda, will try to clarify the role of the implementation of Early Childhood Development programs through a multi sectoral approach. The policy identifies the different government departments, key stakeholders and assign them roles and responsibilities in promoting ECD in the country (Draft ECCE Policy, 2020).

ECD helps education managers/officials from education related government departments like DEOs, ECD focal point officers, and District Inspectors of Schools such as to become aware of their roles. It also enables other stakeholders such as welfare, Community Development and caregivers are aware of their roles though this is not easily realized in most government aided primary schools because the ECD policy of the establishment of nursery section in every government aided primary school is not yet effected in these schools even in Mayuge district (World Bank, 2017).

The researcher greatly concurs with the World Bank report, (2017) because while there is ECD policy, at the national level, the policy stipulates responsibilities of different departments, and the dissemination is done only with the education development partners such as (UNICEF) United Nations International Children Emergency Fund, Uganda Teachers School Effectiveness Project (UTSEP), Plan International Uganda, Save the Children Uganda and Literacy and Adult Basic Education.

According to New Vision Uganda (2012), Early Childhood

Development core objectives is to promote the wellbeing of a child. There is a positive link between early childhood learning and future holistic development of a child which, however, has not been clearly understood as revealed by Uganda's policy on ECD.

Jiménez and O'Shanahan (2008), the purpose of starting Early Childhood Development in government aided primary schools is to develop pupils' literacy skills like phonemic awareness—focusing on, manipulating, breaking apart, and putting together sounds orally; phonics or "alphabetics" linking written letters to their sounds and forming spelling patterns; fluency—achieving speed, accuracy, and expression in reading; vocabulary—knowing words both oral and written, and their meaning; and comprehension—understanding the concepts read or heard".

The researcher greatly agrees with Jiménez and O'Shanahan (2008), because even in some government aided schools in Mayuge district where other programs such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/ Uganda School Health and Reading Program (SHRP) are started with the core values of supporting and promoting reading achievement among primary school learners. For example, the MoES partnered with USAID to support EGR efforts under USAID/Uganda SHRP. This five-year initiative (2012–2017) was being implemented by RTI International in Uganda and in the same vein, ECD core values have no significant difference with the above (World Bank, 2017).

Arnold et al., (2008) reveals that the overall goal of setting ECD programs in government aided schools is to increase literacy and health-seeking behaviors of children and transition to English". The aim is to support the Government of Uganda in developing, implementing, assessing and bringing to scale a successful approach to reading instruction and delivering the MoES's stated goal of producing a "Ugandan-led reading policy.

UNESCO (2007) suggests that ECD schools are formed in order enable many poor children enter school, perform well, attain high grades and even reduce on drop out of school. This also helps in planning related to reading, develop local language and English pedagogy and materials to support ECD, develop and support teacher training and on-going support supervision, increase advocacy and support for reading at all levels and use data to inform programs and policies.

Furthermore, Nakijoba (2013), argues ECD is stated in schools in order to enable children lean to answer perceived questions and answers in a correct manner, apply the right answers and hence explaining extra competencies like intelligence perform better. National Curriculum Development Centre developed programs and materials in government aided schools with aims at increasing reading in local languages through the ministry's scale-up of the program supported by funding from the

Global Partnership for Education so that children can easily lean though play.

Research motivates early childhood education and other disciplines (e.g. child development, psychology, educational psychology, other related fields) to continue changing.

2.3 How transition of Early Childhood Development affects Learners' lower primary schooling in Malongo sub county schools

According to Lippman (2010), transition of Early Childhood Development in government aided schools improves children's early childhood intellectual, social, emotional, and dispositional performances throughout their schools in areas of; learning; reduced need for placement in special education classes in later childhood; higher school achievement and commitment in early adolescence; lower rates of high school incompletions, juvenile arrests, and welfare assistance as an adult; and higher instances of wealth in later adolescence and early adulthood.

ECD impacts on a child's entry into formal schooling, and performance in kindergarten paves the way for future academic success or failure. The relation between children's performance during early elementary school and their later academic achievement has been well documented. Recognizing the importance of early school success, the vast majority of schools in the United States implement policies and practices to ease children's transition to kindergarten, but in varying degrees. Commonly used transition practices include meeting with parents, phoning or sending home information about the kindergarten program, and inviting parents and children to visit the kindergarten classroom prior to the start of the school year. These policies are implicitly designed to nurture parental involvement, especially for disenfranchised families.

However, in Imanyiro sub county schools, despite the widespread, use of transition practices, at present, there is no empirical evidence linking such practices to improve child cognative development. Children leave this transition period when their rate of academic performance in terms of reading and writing is too low as compared to other privately-owned schools. Therefore, the purposes of this study were to examine whether transition practices have an incremental effect on child outcomes during kindergarten; whether this effect varies across socioeconomic groups; and how this effect is mediated.

The transition to kindergarten can be challenging as it represents a shift on many fronts. Children are moving from a preschool, daycare center, or their own home, where different rates of development had been acceptable, to an elementary school requiring mastery of specific academic skills by predetermined deadlines. These deadlines are becoming increasingly inflexible in this era of heightened school accountability. Under the recently adopted No Child Left Behind Act, children must meet the academic expectations of each grade level by the end of the school year or face sanctions that include summer school and retention.

Furthermore, against the recommendations of early childhood educators, children are being tested as early as kindergarten and preschool in preparation for the high-stakes testing required by the No Child Left Behind Act. In addition to the pressure of academic deadlines and future high-stakes testing, children must also adjust to the formal instruction and behavioral expectations of kindergarten, which often differ from those in the preschool and home environments.

Not all children are successful in making the transition to formal schooling. National survey of problems identified by teachers during the transition to kindergarten revealed that teachers reported that 48% of children had difficulty adjusting to school. Approximately one third (32%) of children were reported to have "some problems" during the transition, and 16% of children were identified as having a "difficult or very difficult" entry into kindergarten characterized by "serious concerns or many problems". In addition, over one third of teachers reported that problems such as difficulty following directions, difficulty working independently, and a lack of academic skills characterized over half the students in their class.

Although teachers in this study reported an alarmingly high rate of transition difficulties in the general population of kindergartners, problems during the entry to kindergarten are even more prevalent among children of low socioeconomic status (SES). Children from low SES backgrounds have more difficult transitions to school characterized by early and persistent school failure, behavior problems, low levels of parental involvement, and a widening gap between their academic achievement and that of their more affluent peers.

According to Sara Rimm-Kaufman (2017), Children's transition to kindergarten and their skills at school entry forecast long-term school success. In the United States, the primary objective of Goals 2000 set by the National Education Goals Panel was "to ensure that all children enter school ready to learn". Nearly two decades later, the U.S. early childhood education system has undergone substantial growth in investment, enrollment, and workforce development in an effort to foster readiness. Most recently, the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act reemphasized the importance of readiness by requiring states to document ways in which pre-kindergarten programs cultivate early skills (Sabol, 2012). Countries around the globe are investing to improve and expand early childhood education, as evidenced by the 16% increase in worldwide pre-kindergarten enrollment between 1990 and 2014.

Furthermore, there is no single indicator of kindergarten readiness. Readiness involves a range of skills and developmental domains. Presently, the U.S. Department of Education defines

the "essential domains for readiness" as language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge (e.g., early mathematics, early science), approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social-emotional development (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Research suggests that children's school outcomes, especially achievement, remain remarkably stable after the first years of school, Further, there is evidence that interventions are more likely to be successful in the early school years. As a result, researchers, policy-makers, educators and parents grapple with what it means for children to be "ready" for school. This brief report summarizes evidence on school transition and readiness with the goal of describing stakeholders' definitions of readiness, characteristics of child readiness, and readiness as an outcome of early childhood experiences (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2017).

Kiran Grover, (2015), agreed that transition of Early Childhood Development affects pupils' performance in lower primary in government aided schools because Children's development and readiness at the level of the child for school are determined and influenced by surrounding environment factors which may include socio-economic status, home learning environment and schools' readiness for children. The socioeconomic status of the family affects children's health, intellectual capabilities, academic achievement and behavior positively or negatively. In Imanyiro sub county, very many children come from poor families the many poverty rates end up leaving school going children being malnourished and such children are less engaged in their environments, less active and have shorter attention span than their well-nourished counterparts (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2007).

2.4 OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PUPILS IN GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS

Literature reveals that factors that affect academic performance of pupils in government aided schools range from teachers academic and professional qualifications, teaching and learning strategies, government policies guiding school operations, and the nature of the school curriculum (Ampofo & Orodho,2014, Bizimana & Orodho,2014; Ibrahim & Orodho,2014;).

With regards to teacher academic and professional qualifications, the literature notes that teaching involves sharing of knowledge between a teacher and a learner (Ampofo & Orodho, 2014). The teacher co-ordinates the teaching and learning process through appropriate teaching and learning activities (Ndegwa, 2005). To be able to co-ordinate the learning process, the teacher must have the right skills and masterly of the content for the correct level of learners and at the stipulated time as outlined in the curriculum, that is, the school syllabus (Bizimana & Orodho, 2014).

According to Ndichu & Nthinguri (2014), the teacher's level of formal education is very important as this determines the quality of work he/she has to do. A teacher who is well-qualified academically is deemed to be knowledgeable and expected to guide his/ her learners well during teaching and learning activities. On the other hand, professional knowledge provides teachers with the necessary skills and etiquette necessary for his/ her day-to-day teaching and learning activities.

Ndegwa (2005) asserts teachers who are professionally qualified are favorable to child-centered teaching methods. This implies that teachers who are professionally qualified use child-centered techniques and these are techniques whereby the learner is the one who is actively involved such as discovery method.

Kingshorn et al. (2004) point out that theoretical training should be enforced with practical training to increase the teacher's confidence. It is necessary for all teachers to have academic and professional qualifications. With regards to teaching and learning strategies, it is widely documented that teaching is an art that requires those who have the ability, skill, knowledge and the interest which would act as the spring board for success to be realized (Orodho, 2014).

Orlich et al., (2001) state that teacher artistry does not just happen, teachers develop their art by using carefully planned fine-tuned lessons that reflect on an understanding of many different teaching strategies. Each teaching technique is skillfully applied to gain the desired intellectual, social, affective or kinesthetic skills. The best teachers know their tools of the craft, when and how to use them. Teachers' main tools are: schemes of work, lesson plans, progress records, teaching and learning resources and appropriate teaching and learning strategies.

Dale (1969) says that helping students to remember is one of the problems of teaching and learning. Certainly, every teacher often asks 'why don't my students remember what l teach them?' and a pupil will search his/her mind for lost information and ideas that he/she thought he/she had learned. This implies that some strategies do not help the learner to remember what he/ she had learned for a long time.

With respect to government policies, the growing body of literature indicates that the type of government in power at a given time or period influences the type of education to be adopted and hence the type of educational curriculum to be developed for learners (Republic of Kenya, 2012a, 2012b; Republic of Kenya/UNESCO, 2012).

World Bank (2007) notes that universal enrollment clearly takes a political will, no country has achieved 100% enrollment without the government's commitment from initial position of low enrollment levels, has achieved its goal overnight. Prior to the Second World War, it may have been that the greatest barrier to universal global education was political will. Since then, the greatest barrier has become time, the time

to take to expand demand fast enough to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of universal primary completion by 2015, but still at a historical unprecedented pace. The time for ensuring universal access to quality education may be long.

Sandi (1997) notes that academic performance of pupils in government aided schools is influenced by the extent to which educational change is driven by 'external', economic and social factors, and 'internal', specific education factors, is due to the lack of in-depth policy analysis and research which remains an open question and varies from country to country. Nevertheless, one important aspect of transition in Central Eastern European countries is the interdependence between economic and structural reforms on one side and reforms of public services on the other side.

UNESCO, Education for All global monitoring Report (2007) emphasizes the importance of the intensive early childhood educational intervention as the most effective vehicle for securing sustainable educational success and for eroding the disadvantages of poverty, marginalization and the impact on parents with poor educational backgrounds. The government selects educational content, suggests teaching and learning strategies, objectives and lays policies to guide those who disseminate and implement the educational curriculum.

The committees and commissions that have been formed previously to look into some aspects of education, show how the government has been committed into the search for relevant education that will satisfy the needs of the learners and the society (Odhiambo, 2012; Republic of Kenya,2012a. It is the government that: formulates educational policies; designs, develops and implements the curriculum; supervises delivery of the curriculum and evaluates the curriculum of education. All these activities are carried out by various agencies assigned by the government and the activities are geared towards improving the quality of education. Education cannot be separated from political governments in place. Education empowers people to live better lives free from disease, poverty and insecurity (Ibrahim & Orodho, 2014).

Regarding teaching and learning resources, Kirisikoi, Wachira and Malusu (2008), have aptly argued that teaching and learning resources are all materials and equipment used to enhance effective learning. A teacher selects, develops and reorganizes teaching and learning resources for effective teaching. A teacher is, therefore, the most important teaching and learning resource. Kiruhi, Githua and Mboroki (2009) contend that: the systematic design and selection of learning resources presupposes two important criteria, namely: a) That learning resources are appropriate for the purpose and group for which they are intended. b) That they are evaluated to make sure they work effectively.

The teaching and learning resources make a learning environment more realistic and interesting. Resources foster understanding of the content being learned. The teaching and learning resources therefore, enhance pupil performance and

hence the transition from one educational level to another, less difficult. Mbithi (2007) says that just as well-trained personnel are important for the success of schools, so are equipment and supplies. An educational curriculum will be meaningless without teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, chalk, visual aids, maps, charts and other supplies. Improving quality of education should be a priority even where enrollment has not reached universal levels.

Filmer, Hassan and Pritchett (2006) note that the global policy agenda for primary education is no longer on quality teaching but is on more schools or more learners. With respect to the concept of school curriculum, there has been no consensus regarding the definition of curriculum resulting into the term being variously defined by different educators. Kirisikoi, Wachira, and Malusu, (2008) adds that curriculum includes all the learning experiences planned or unplanned for the learners to acquire and develop the desired knowledge, attitudes, values and skills. The school curriculum is not made up of the following elements: i. Objectives, ii. Learning experiences/ activities, iii. Content/ subject matter and iv. Evaluation/ assessment procedure.

Shiundu and Omulando (1992) notes that curriculum is Latin word, "curere", meaning to run a course. Therefore, curriculum represents a course of subjects covered by students and for which they receive a certificate at end of it. From the definitions, we note that a school curriculum is a means through which educational goals are achieved. It specifies what should be taught, when it should be taught, who should be taught, how it should be taught, how it should be evaluated and how much time should be taken to teach, learn and evaluate. It is through the school curriculum that the desired values, knowledge, skills and attitudes are acquired and developed for the benefit of the individual and the society. A good curriculum should meet the needs of the learner and his/her society.

The rise of the private educational sector has implications for educational quality and equity. They appear to fill gaps the public sector has failed to fill but deny opportunities for learning, those who are not able to pay fees. These are examples of challenges that impact on educational transition in Hungary (HECD, 1996).

2.5 STRATEGIES TO FACTORS AFFECTING THE TRANSITION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN LOWER PRIMARY IN GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS

According to the ECD Policy, a comprehensive ECD policy has many potential benefits for Uganda that include: to regulate the provision of services for infants and children, to harmonize different sector-based ECD policies to operate in a coordinated manner, to provide guidance to stakeholders on their roles and responsibilities in ECD service provision, it is an instrument for advocacy, for ensuring provision of quality services and for harnessing resources and other

support for young children, it is a legal instrument that all persons providing services for young children must adhere to and it guides the Government on how to commit resources to programs for young children.

Johnson (2003) says measures to factor affecting pupils transitions in ECD need maximum emphasis on the General Achievements of ECD Policy such as the recognition of pre-primary as the first level of education in Uganda, increased funding to ECD from government, stimulated the need to a comprehensive ECD policy, improved coordination, increased awareness on the importance of ECD, more funding from private practitioners, uniformity in ECD provision, and catering for children with special needs.

According to the ECD Policy, the government need put emphasis on the training and recruitment teachers who are skilled and equipped to handle ECD children so that they could transition from ECD to primary one successfully. In 2013, an ECD curriculum was developed which combined and created a gap for a smooth transition because most ECD teachers failed to interpret the curriculum. They could not grade the activities according to ECDA and B classes.

Kenya Educational Commission Report (1964) blames the drill method of teaching, neglect of activity and pupil participation. The commission advocates for activity-oriented methods which help the learner to learn more and sustains his/ her interest throughout the learning session. National Commission on Educational and Policies (1976) points out that the basic requirement of making education relevant to day-to-day problems and enabling the students to observe phenomena of the environment is to gather data about them, interpret the data and use them to solve problems. This is the whole essence of an appropriate teaching and learning strategy when it is correctly used.

Some of the strategies that may be used are: inquiry approach, field trips, resource persons, discussions, dramatization, story-telling, lecture, question and answer, demonstration, group work, explanation and experimentation. Leinhardt (1989) and Westermann (1991) argue that expert teachers know and recognize pupils experiencing difficulties diagnose sources of problems in their learning and identify strengths on which to build. Teachers should use the experiences their learners are undergoing to lead them to the new learning experiences they are about to introduce to them.

Literature also suggests that since poverty is one of the factors that impends learners' achievement in government aided schools in ECD transition, parents should find ways to give their children a healthy and good start in their early years. Schools that are ready for children provide an environment in which all children are able to learn.

Research has suggested that children's initial academic and social success at school can lay the foundation for their long-term adjustment and progress, leading to a cycle of achieve-

ment success (Fabian, 2007).

According to UNESCO Report (2007), government should deploy enough staff officers in schools with appropriately qualified teachers to teach ECD children and that the school heads should declare the rightful person needed for the ECD post and not get general teachers for this programme. There should also be need to mount refresher courses for teachers so that they are capacitated to teach ECD effectively.

Other strategies for improved academic performance is to cut distance walked by children to school. The government should regulate how fees are charged in some centers since high fees deter parents from sending ECD children to school. The community should mobilize resources for the school and for children and locally available materials such as thatching classrooms with grass instead of using asbestos; making toys from locally available materials, using charcoal or leaves as paint; using clay in place of play dough; using gum trees to make play equipment; using old car tires for ECD play centres and parents can be involved in toy production and molding of bricks for the construction of the ECD classrooms (UNESCO, 2007).

According to Wachira (2010), Teachers develop artistry by being aware of both what they are doing and how what they do affects their learners. This means that teachers must know their learners as individuals, know their abilities and weaknesses so that they may plan various learning activities that the learners would be able to deal with for maximum achievement in the learning process. Teachers should constantly be aware that what they do affect the intellectual, attitudinal and psychomotor skills of their learners.

Literature shows that child factors, such as academic skills, behavior patterns, and maturity, have been found to play a role in children's adjustment to kindergarten and in subsequent performance. The developmental model of transition and the ready schools construct provide theoretical support for transition policies that reach out to families prior to the beginning of the school year to support a positive home-school relationship in order to increase kindergarten success. However, to our knowledge, there is currently no empirical evidence linking transition policies to improved child outcomes during kindergarten. Given the widespread use of such practices, it is important to determine whether the transition policies used by schools and teachers have a positive impact on kindergarten outcomes (World Bank, 2016).

2.6 LITERATURE GAPS

The ECD policy does not declare pre-primary education as compulsory preparatory stage for all children before they enter primary one, does not make provisions for implementation by the local government Act at district level. There are no particular coordination mechanisms to unite the stakeholders

willing to do their part. The ECD policy has not been able to identify funding targets, or sources of funding for ECD related activities either at national or local level. The literature also indicates that there is a gap in terms of development in the other domains which included emotional, intellectual and spiritual development, thus transition from the ECD settings to Government aided primary schools lacked continuity and development of school readiness on the side of the child. The transition period was again not recognized as very critical at this point because semi-skilled teachers would man the classes. Generally, government aided primary schools in Imanyiro sub county are not ready for the ECD children with respect to classrooms, toilets, furniture and appropriately qualified teachers. The environment is unfriendly to ECD children and this may affect the smooth transition from ECD to primary.

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research design, the population under study, the sampling procedure, and data collection instruments, measures, procedure, quality control in which validity and reliability of the research instrument, data analysis, ethical considerations and study limitations.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Amin (2005) defines a research design as a series of advanced decisions that are taken to make up a master plan for a research study.

A cross-sectional survey design will be used to conduct this study. The design will enable the researcher to collect data mainly using questionnaire as the major instrument and the interview guide. This method will specifically be used because the researcher wants to collect opinions of the respondents using questionnaire. Cross-sectional design also facilitates in determining correlation analysis between variables observation yields of direct and first-hand information obtained from questionnaire and interview guide.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies will be employed to explore individual respondent perceptions. Qualitative research will describe and analyze specific phenomenon underlying problem rather than worrying about general issues and will fit well in this research framework.

3.2 LOCATION OF THE STUDY

The study will be conducted in Imanyiro sub county schools,

in Mayuge District Eastern Uganda. The area will be chosen because of its attempt to evaluate ECD transition and pupils' academic performance in lower primary classes.

3.3 TARGET POPULATION

According to David, (2006), population is the broader group of people to whom you intend to generalize the results of your study. In this study, a total population of 87 people will be used as shown in the table below.

Table 3.1: Target Population

TABLE 1: SAMPLE SIZE OF THE STUDY

Category of Respondents	Target	Sample Size	Sample techniques
Headteachers	01	01	purposive
Teachers	03	02	Purposive
Pupils	65	60	Random
MOES Officials	03	02	Purposive
PTA/SMC	10	03	Random
Opinion leaders	07	02	Random
Total	**89**	**70**	

Source: Primary Data

3.4 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLE TECHNIQUES

3.4.1 SAMPLE SIZE

Sample is the group of individuals who actually participate in your study. In this study, the sample size will consist of a total of 70 respondents.

3.4.2 SAMPLE TECHNIQUES

Osso and Oneni (2009) defines "Sampling techniques as the description of the strategies which the researcher uses to select representative respondents from the target population". The researcher will use purposive sampling and random techniques to select the respondents who included the 1 headteacher, 2 MOES Officials, 3 teachers, 60 pupils, 3 parents, and 2 opinion leaders.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Data will be collected using two methods i.e. the questionnaire and interview guide. The questionnaire will be used to collect information from the targeted respondents. It will have designed in a way that will allow collecting data using both open and closed ended questions. The question-naire will be used because will allow enormous amount of data be collected in the shortest time possible. In addition, guided interviews will also be applied, and here the researcher will have face to interaction with the respondents so that first-hand information is captured. This will be mostly designed for parents because some of them cannot read and write. They will also be applied to stakeholders as they may not have time to answer the questionnaire. The selection of these tools will be guided by the nature of study objectives of the study. Observation checklists will be used to check on how teachers will handle lessons.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

3.6.1 VALIDITY

To ensure validity of data, a set of questions will be designed to collect some information but with questions paraphrased differently. The questionnaire will be piloted on selected respondents as in the sample size. Care will be taken to ensure that the selection of respondents in the sample is not biased and validity will be measured using five point likert-type scale with one alternative (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Not sure, 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree). The researcher will therefore get experts or supervisors and three others to conduct the instrument to see if it can bring out through an assessment what it intends to measure the formula below will be used to test the validity index.

CVI= <u>No of items regarded relevant by judges</u>

     Total no if items judged

Adjustments on the questions will be made until validity is achieved

3.6.2 RELIABILITY

Mathias B. (2012), the reliability of an instrument will be ensured by using the inter-rater reliability index (IRRI) using the following formula.

To ensure consistency of data generated using the tool, reliability test is done. This will be through the Test-Retest method, the content reliability of the questionnaires will be done dur-

ing pilot, and appraised accordingly, again with technical support of the supervisor

3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Upon obtaining permission, and a letter of introduction from Kampala University to the District authorities and the study respondents, the researcher will identify and orient three research assistants on the research topic, design and study tools, including research ethics. Thereafter, the researcher with the help of the research assistants will pre-test the study tools using a separate population selected outside the proposed sample/study areas. After the pre-test, the researcher will make relevant adjustments where necessary to enhance on the validly and reliability of the study instrument. Research assistants will then be engaged in data collection exercise.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Given that the study will be both qualitative and quantitative in nature, the information will be organized by category to ease analysis. Quantitative data after being collected will be coded, edited and tabulated using computer statistical package for social scientists to allow easy synthesis, and computation of the values; means, frequencies, and percentages as may be applicable. While the descriptive information will also be categorized, tabulated and synthesized for ease deduction of descriptive inference.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The procedure of data collection will involve getting an introductory letter from Kyambogo University to undertake research on community involvement and quality teaching in Early childhood development institutions in Mayuge District. This procedure of getting clearance will be followed all through the field work period by getting permission from the authorities before distributing the questionnaire.

During the research process, the participant will be assured of confidentiality by the researcher and the research assistant to safe guard the information obtained. For the purpose of anonymity, the respondent will not be asked to disclose their names. Finally, informed consent will, as an ethical consideration will be handled by first explaining the respondents what the research is about so that they willingly and knowing participate in research.

3.10 Study Limitations

The main limitations and delimitations of this study may in-

clude the following:

There will be inadequacy in literature on ECD transition. The researcher therefore, may undertake a global perspective in reviewing literature and also gather through available relevant studies.

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