

**SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS  
IN SELECTED EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTRES IN  
KAMPALA CITY**

**BY**

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### **Declaration**

I, **Namuyaba Robinah Beatrice**, declare that this research report titled, “*Support systems and Education of Children with Special Needs in Selected early Childhood Education Centres in Kampala City*” is my original work which has never been submitted to any institution for any award.

I am now submitting it to the Faculty of Education, Graduate Board of Kyambogo University with the approval of my supervisors.

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### Approval

This research dissertation titled, “*Support systems and Education of Children with Special Needs in Selected early Childhood Education Centres in Kampala City*” completed by Namuyaba Robinah Beatrice has been developed with our guidance. It is now submitted for examination with our consent as supervisors.

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**Dr. EVANGELISTA BUSINGYE (Supervisor)**

### **Dedication**

This research report is dedicated to my dear sons: Sam Lubwama and Cohen Kisakye for the precious companion, encouragement and support while I pursued this study. To my beloved son, Kaddu-Mukasa Sydney (RIP), you deserved to have lived to have a glimpse at this work. Your efforts were indispensable.

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### **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

<b>CVI</b>	Content Validity Index
<b>CWDs</b>	Children with Disabilities
<b>CwSNs</b>	Children with Special Needs
<b>DRC</b>	Document Review Checklist
<b>ECLAC</b>	Early Childhood Learning and Assessment Centre
<b>FGDs</b>	Focus Group Discussions
<b>KCCA</b>	Kampala Capital City Authority
<b>KIRs</b>	Key Informant Respondents
<b>KSPH</b>	Kampala School for the Physically Handicapped
<b>MoES</b>	Ministry of Education and Sports
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Government Organization
<b>PSS</b>	Physical Support System
<b>SBPSS</b>	School-Based Physical Support Systems
<b>SHPSS</b>	Self-Help Physical Support System
<b>SSS</b>	Social Support Systems
<b>TSSS</b>	Transition School Support system
<b>UNCRPD</b>	United Nations Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>UNISE</b>	Uganda National Institute of Special needs Education
<b>USA</b>	United States of America

## **Abstract**

The study was undertaken to establish the effect of School Support System on Education of Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Education (ECD) Centres. Focus was on two (2) schools: ECLAC–Early Childhood Learning and Assessment Centre in Kyambogo University and Kampala School of the Physical Handicapped in Kampala City. The study sought to establish the effect of Physical support system on Education of Children with Special Needs Education in ECD centres, find out the effect of Social Support System on Education of children with Special Needs in ECD Centres and to examine the effect of Transition Support Systems on the Education of children with special needs in ECD centres. A qualitative approach of inquiry was adopted and a case study design adopted for this study. A total of 28 individuals participated, selected by purposive and simple random sampling techniques. These included: Administrators, Teachers and Children in ECD centres. Interview guides and Documentary review guides were used to collect data, and thematic data analysis was utilized. Results show a significant effect of Physical Support System on Education of Children with special needs in aspects of enrollment, attendance, learning and motivation of children with special needs. Social Support Systems also supported team learning, motivation, skill transfer, as school environment social aid and means for sharing skills and abilities to children with special needs in ECD centres. Though with the least effect, transition support system prepared children for educational progress, enriched their learning, and supported practical, academic and behaviour change. Conclusively, the school support system had profound effects on education of children with special needs in ECD centres in Kampala City. Thus, there is need to provide new and rehabilitate existing special needs physical facilities according to different disabilities, available human resources in ECD and transition facilities in ECD centres. NGOs, donors and special needs experts ought to support education of children with special needs facilities in ECD centres. Finally, the effect of parental involvement in the education of children with Special Needs Education in ECD centres needs to be studied. A replicate of this study in other districts in Uganda is also vital for purposes of ascertaining a national position on the effect of school support system and education of Children with Special Needs.

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the background to study regarding the effect of Support systems on Education of Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood education centres. It also includes statement of the problem, research objectives, questions, scope, its significance, conceptual framework and operational definitions of key used terms.

#### **Background to the Study**

Education of children with Special Needs is not a new practice. This is because as early as 1578, Special Needs Education had been given attention in France (Temperally, 2013). Despite this early recognition, education of children with special needs has remained unemphasized in many countries (Miles & Singal, 2015). This attracted the attention of different international efforts to improve on the education of children with special needs. For instance, in 1948 Universal Declaration of human rights recommended that “everyone has a right to education, right to standard of living including access to rightful social services in event of disability or circumstances beyond his control” (Universal Declaration of Human rights, 1948, article 25, 26). This clearly paves room for the basis of global concern on education of children with special needs like other children.

The perspective in the 1948 declaration of human rights is later re-affirmed by issuing of the Salamanca Statement in 1994 (United Nations Scientific & Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, 1994), United Nations Convention for Rights of Persons

with Disabilities (UNCRC 2006), and Education for All of 2005 supportive frameworks for education of children with Special Needs.

With these global interventions, many countries like Denmark, Sweden, USA, Britain, Russia, China, Jordan and Canada have prioritized education for Children with Special Needs (CwSNs), although ECD remained unattended to. Evidence over years, show there have been improvements in education of Children with special needs, the numbers of CwSNs enrolling in primary schools remain low in many African countries and ECD schools are still few (Lundqvist, 2016). Lundqvist (2016) report that by the end of 2009, 67% of the children with special needs were still studying in hardships in Sub-Saharan Africa and partially getting support at their Schools. In Nigeria, need for pre-primary education in the country was given official recognition in the National Policy on Education (1977), but education of CwSNs became a priority later in 2012 (Obiweluzor, 2015). This is not so much different from the position in Kenya, Uganda and in Tanzania.

In Uganda, Ejoo (2012) reveals that education of CwSNs needs attracted government interventions for the first time from 1960 to 2011. Nevertheless, Pre-primary and nursery education programme had started by Goans in early 1930s (Malinga, 2000; Ejoo, 2012). From these periods, traces of an early structure system of education for children in nursery and primary were framed (Malinga, 2000), although a consistent support system for this education level was not well developed.

The government of Uganda picked interest in education of the children of 0-8 years later after 1987 after serious recommendations by the Kajubi Commission on Education that provided a framework for pre-primary and primary background system for learning (Ministry of Education & Sports, MoES, 1992).

While there as a notable change in enrollment of children in pre-primary schools and number of pre-primary schools in Uganda there after 1992, education of Special needs children in pre-primary schools remained less a priority until establishment of the Uganda National Institute of Special Needs (UNISE). This became a national centre and a link for special needs education in the country.

By 1998, the number of Schools that enrolled persons with disabilities had increased in Uganda especially at Kyambogo. In line with the Constitution of Uganda's support for education of children with disability, the National Policy on Disability in Uganda, and the UNISE Act of 1998, UNISE was established to provide access and equal opportunities in education to persons with special needs at various levels of Education. By 2017, Uganda had over 60 Special Needs Education schools (MoES, 2016), of which 13 are in Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA, 2018). However, only a few of these offered pre-primary Education. Additionally, 60% of children with special needs in Pre-primary schools do not complete education cycle neither do they transit to higher levels of learning like ordinary children. This could be associated with the education system in the country.

An education system is a collective integration of activities, processes, facilities and procedure upon which the school operates (Russell, 2016). In any education setting, a system defines education activities. Support system is an integration of efforts to improve the existing facilities, infrastructures, and components in the system for purposes of meeting needs of learners (Reimiers & Chung, 2016). This support system integrates different components from physical structures, human resources, operation system, and how learners utilise these facilities in their day today learning experiences. Advocacy should be on working

towards providing physical, legal, financial, human resource and user facilities in ECD centres. Although this is the ideal, a few schools provide this support system out of need to offer special education for children with special needs.

Specifically support systems help learners to achieve their objectives, when these systems are credible, reliable and dependable. Anne-Marie & Zahra (2013) advises that each school especially at early learning stage should provide a good support system that can motivate learners with special needs to enroll and remain at school until they move to another level of learning. This may not be realized for all school levels, and ECD section is greatly constrained in this area. Children with special needs require special attention, facilities, system curricula, and human resources. Thus, due to support systems rigidities, a number of them at ECD do not study and transition to primary level, they do, it out of hardships (Elimu, 2013). Therefore, there is need to match school system with education needs of learners, and where possible enrich the support system to provide services.

Achieving success in education of children with special needs requires having necessary facilities and operating a support system that provides a conducive environment (Russell, 2016). The support systems are described in terms of physical, social, infrastructural and materials needed for special needs children. Schools need to develop and promote an educational support system which facilitates learning outcomes for CSNs like ordinary children.

Unlike other areas in the country, Kampala, being the capital city has better education facilities, and it would be expected that the education for children with special Needs education is at its best. Also, Kampala City has the highest number (13) of Schools providing ECD programmes at pre-primary and lower primary levels

(MoES, 2016), some of these are special schools while others are inclusive UPE schools. Case of these schools include Kampala School for the physically handicapped (KSPH) is one of the oldest schools with the education for CWDs in KCCA and ECLAC (Early childhood learning and assessment centre) Kyambogo.

Despite different backgrounds, and years of existence, Kampala School for the physically handicapped (KSPH) and ECLAC Kyambogo, experienced closely related challenges especially in reduction of children enrollments in the recent past. Between 2015 and 2018, the enrollment of CwSNs at KSHP reduced by 8% from 167 to 154 especially among female children (Kampala School of the physically Handicapped school records, 2018). Similarly, the enrollment reduced by 25% at ECLAC Kyambogo from 8 to 6 children between 2015 and 2018 (ECLAC School Records, 2018). The numbers of children transiting to higher levels of education in these schools and retention tenure at school is low. There is possibility that enrollment of children at KSPH and ECLAC Kyambogo could reduce further given the current trends, if no efforts are undertaken. While this has not been examined by any recent study, it could be associated with the environment in which children study and relate with the school support systems in place.

Just like Kampala School for the Physically Handicapped, ECLAC Kyambogo seem to be running on a less functional support system, this challenge may not only be in these two schools but in a number of ECD centres in KCCA. As a parent to one of the children with special needs for the last 28 years, I observed this while looking for placement of my child. I tried hard to get a school with good systems which could support education of my 28-year-old son in vain. In addition to this experience, and the records from Kampala School for the physically



handicapped and ECLAC Kyambogo, I became motivated to conduct this study so as to examine the School Support system in place and how they affect the education of children with Special Needs in Kampala City.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There has been emphasis on providing children with special needs an opportunity to access formal education in Uganda in recent years (MoES, 2017). With such efforts, a number of schools have been put in place including Kampala School for the physically handicapped and ECLAC Kyambogo to provide Early Childhood Education (ECE) to these children. More so, the number of children enrolling for ECE is anticipated to rise with in these schools, if necessary facilities are provided (MoES, 2016). Children with special needs require a good physical, social and transition facilities to motivate them enroll and keep at school.

However, children with Special Needs Education attending school remain low and their numbers are persistently declining in ECD centres in Kampala (United Nations Children Fund, UNICEF (2018). While children enroll in Kampala' ECD centres, most of them subsequently leave school before completion of education cycle (MoES, 2017). For instance between 2016 and 2018, the enrollment at Kampala School for the physically handicapped reduced by 8% while that ECLAC Kyambogo reduced by 25% (KSPH School Records, 2018; ECLAC School records, 2018). This is an indication that the Education of children with special needs is on gradual declining trend.

ECD centres are expected to provide these support systems exist, although these systems are still poor. Several ECD centres emphasize the provision of

compound and academic friendly support school system for Children with special needs. Unfortunately, these facilities and systems are not fully equipped to support education of Children with Special needs in selected ECD centres in Kampala city. Given this trend, there is possibility of enrollment at KSPH and ECLAC to reduce further.

No recent research has focused on examining school support systems and education of children with special needs in ECD particularly for Kampala City. Indeed little has been documented on this aspect. Owing to this, the researcher was motivated to conduct this study and investigate the effect of Support systems on education of Children with Special Needs at Kampala School for the physically handicapped and ECLAC Kyambogo.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of Support systems on Education of children with Special Needs in selected ECD centres in Kampala City.

### **Objectives of the study**

- i. To establish the effect of Physical support systems on the education of children with special needs in ECD centres in Kampala city
- ii. To find out the effect of Social support systems on the education of children with special needs in ECD centres in Kampala city
- iii. To examine the effect of Transition support systems on the education of children with special needs in ECD centres in Kampala city.

## Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following questions:

- i. What is the effect of Physical support systems on the education of children with special needs in ECD centres in Kampala city?
- ii. What is the effect of social support systems on the education of children with special needs in ECD centres in Kampala city?
- iii. What is the effect of transition support systems on the education of children with special needs in ECD centres in Kampala city?

## Significance of the Study

The study and its findings may be used in a number of ways, including:

**Policy Makers:** The study findings may expound on the different Physical Support systems that are not only relevant but available for children with special needs in ECDs. This may be a basis for policy makers especially MoES, stakeholders in Early Childhood Education and school proprietors to provide support systems in ECD centres.

**Teachers:** Findings provide the relevancy of social support systems for children with Special Needs. This base on status of Social Support Systems in ECD centres. These findings are helpful to teachers, parents, and other Special Needs Educationists to contribute such social support to ECD centres.

**Parents:** The findings contribute new and update information on transition requirements that systems should have for Children with Special Needs. This finding is a landmark for parents when selecting ECD centres for their children with Special Needs.

**Researchers and Scholars:** The study is a source of up-to-date literature on Support system, Education of children with Special Needs and Early Childhood Education Centres. This information is useful for future researchers and scholars. It is also a fundamental source of information for publications on Special Needs Education.

### **Limitations and Delimitations to the study**

#### ***Limitations***

The researcher faced a challenge of scanty published information on operations and status of the education Support systems at KSPH and ECLAC Uganda. This was however minimized through reading on the concepts from public libraries and on-line resources.

There was a requirement for special needs assistant for each category of disability since the ECLAC Kyambogo has children of different special needs and disabilities. The researcher hired a research assistant to assist in sign language and translation.

There was poor co-operation from some children who had a challenge of not opening up their interests and discussions with the researcher in the first time encounters. The researcher utilised her experience in handling ECD children to establish a good rapport. This later motivated these children with Special Needs to participate in the study.

***Delimitations of the Study***

The study was delimited to the activities regarding School Support system and education of CwSNs in early childhood Education centres. This was a new area of inquiry in Uganda, especially at KSPH and ECLAC. The focus was also delimited to specifically to Children with special needs, as these required a supportive school system environment. All this was purposed to generate information that can enhance special needs access by CwSNs in ECD Centres in Kampala District.

**Scope of the study****Geographical scope**

The study was conducted at Kampala School for the Physically Handicapped (KSPH) and ECLAC Centre Kyambogo ECD centres in Kampala City. Selection of these centres premised on their background in terms of foundation body, and duration spent providing education to children with special needs. Thus, was a credible source of information for this study.

**Content scope**

The study concentrated on Support Systems and education of children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Education. Attention was on physical, social and transition support systems and education of children with Special Needs in ECD at Kampala School for the physically handicapped and ECLAC Kyambogo centres.

### **Time scope**

The study focused on information about Support system and education of children with special needs in selected ECD centres for the last 4 years (2015-2018). This is a period in which KCCA emphasized ECD learning, with special attention to Children with Disabilities (KCCA, 2018). This duration was a basis for the researcher to express the findings, and suggest possible improvements in Support system and Education of children with Special needs in selected centres in Kampala City.

### **Theoretical framework**

This study was guided by Vygotsky's theory *on dysontogenesis* developed in 1993. The theory put focus on disability issues especially on Education of Children with disabilities. The theory reveals that owing to one's abnormality, all children should all be catered for equally with additional support extended to disadvantaged children (Gindis, 2003).

By formulating this theory, Vygotsky focused on the needs of CWDs to enroll, pursue and continue education in a given school setting. Achieving this requires having necessary facilities, and operating support systems that can provide a conducive environment for CwSNs as they study.

In recognition of this theory, support systems are described in regard to how it sets out and defines physical, social, infrastructural and material system needed for special needs children. Schools need to develop and promote an educational support system which facilitates learning outcomes for CwSNs like ordinary children. The system has to be tailored to meet physical, social and transitional needs of all children including those with Special Needs.

Consequently, having an inclusive facility where there is emphasis on providing social, physical facilities that provide cordial support to the children with special needs is ideal. However, a few schools provide these facilities at ECD levels. Basing on the view of Vygotsky, this study specifically based on the Vygotsky's *theory on dysonogenesis* to investigate the Support system and their effects on Education of children with special needs aiming at ECD centres in Kampala City.

### **Operational Definition of Terms**

In this study, the following operational terms were used as defined:

**Early Childhood Education** – a level of education covering education activities for children between 3-8 years.

**University** – the highest level of learning with mandate of running programmes that result into the confirmation of a diploma, degree or postgraduate qualification.

**ECLAC**- An early childhood learning and assessment centre established in Kyambogo University to provide education to children with special needs.

**Support Systems**-is an integration of all different components from physical structures, human resources, operation system that can be used in day-to-day activities to facilitate learning experiences.

**Special Needs** – these are physical, social, mental and academic needs children may possess owing to their nature of disability. They are peculiar requirements children may have to make them study and cope up with school like other children.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the literature reviewed about support systems and education of children with SNs in Early Childhood Education centres. Basically, the literature review is on physical, social and transition support systems and their effect on education of children with Special needs.

#### **Physical Support systems and Education of children with Special Needs**

Education of children with special needs is a core area of interest for many countries, and as revealed by Peters (2009) Education for CWDs has its basis on the Dakar Framework and World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) in 2000. Although this can be traced differently in many countries, the disclosure on efforts about education for children with special needs has a history constrained by inadequate support facilities, and systems in most countries in the world.

To note, physical support systems includes tangible facilities that children need to participate actively in during learning sessions. As part of an inclusive programmes, schools are encouraged to have in plan and in place different physical facilities that help learners with disabilities (LWDs) to cope up with learning experiences like ordinary children (Najjingo, 2009). However, Eileen & O' Raw (2010) reveals that three-quarters of each 100 schools with CwSNs do not provide desired physical support, which has kept these children out of school. Though this may not be uniform for all schools and countries, it can have a substantial influence on overall education of children with special needs.



In other studies, especially (Kane, 2010; Teresa, 2013) physical support to children with special needs is ideal for their education. Key physical support system includes facilities that children need to use on individual level and which they ought to use communally. According to Glenn (2015) schools should provide a number of different physical facilities such as toy facilities, cramps, swings, as well as specialized facilities depending on nature of disability. Existence of these physical support facilities enables children to experiment, tryout, learns and also the facilities motivate CwSNs to learn by practice and association.

In a study by Kane (2010), physical support facilities may be structural. Structural facilities include the layout of the school environment including walkways, staircases and elevators. More so, physical support system also includes bathrooms, toilets, places for meals and walk ways to classrooms. Related to Kane (2010) is an opinion cited in Moyi (2012) that while most schools in Sub-Saharan Africa do not give keen attention to the needs of persons with special needs, improvements in structures especially in urban areas has improved to focus on these requirements.

While Ejuu (2012) notes that there have been improved research and investment in ECD at different levels. There seem traces of unmet physical support for many systems in providing education to children with special needs in ECD. There still remain a few physical facilities that can be used to facilitate learning of CWDs such as braille, people who make and supply walking canes for the blind and provision of motorable cycles for those CwSNs having walking disabilities. Inadequate physical support in these areas remains a curtailing factor to successful education of children with special needs.

With different innovations in ECD in Africa, ECD is taking shape in Uganda but there remain shortfalls in physical facilities and necessary structures and system for better implementation and attainment of learners in these institutions (Ejuu, 2012). The current study was however optimistic to recognise that some children with special needs have been enrolled in Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools (MoES, 2016) but still encounter shortage of these physical support desired. Hence their chances to complete primary education cycle remain few. Besides this, the same trend is evident in fully-fledged special needs institutions. This may not exclusively be associated on the nature of school but also physical support system that encourage enrollment, retention, and subsequently academic achievement of learners (Glenn, 2015). Detailed information had not yet been explored by any previous study.

From a number of studies, the role of physical support facilities in the education system with children having special needs has been emphasized and recommended most times (Lundqvist, 2016; UNESCO, 2017). According to UNESCO (2017), efforts have to be directed towards ensuring equity in physical ability in class and outside class, providing better physical accessibility to necessary facilities, and providing for physical needs of learners according to nature of special needs. However, do schools provide these physical facilities in support to education of Children with Special Needs? This is a potential question not clearly answered by most previous studies. In the above context, the current study sought to explore the extent to which physical support systems in ECD affect learning opportunities for children with special needs. This was explored in this current study drawing lessons from ECD centres in Kampala City.

### **Social Support systems and education of children with Special Needs**

Socialization is part of society and schools form a secondary social group where people live as social beings, interacting and co-existing including children with special needs (Brokane & Zalceva, 2011). Thus, social support is a universal aspect expected in schools. Provision and access to social support is ideal in a school system but is critical when the school has children with special Needs. Social support system in the school environment is key since children are social animals (Elena, Svetlana, Kalashnikova & Klimenko, 2016). Some of social support systems relevant for CwSNs are discussed in this literature.

Drawing from this perspective, Elena *et al.* (2016) reveals that one of the core aspects of social support is co-operation from normal-bodied children when the school population constitutes children with all categories of special needs. Studies including Merinova (2007) and also Teresa (2013) agree that one of the social support children with disabilities need is love, care, support and co-operation from fellow children. While this is rarely experienced at home, it is expected at school, and when they do not get this social support, the school becomes worse than remaining at home.

From the view of Zubets (2013) a full social integration of learners with disability in entire system by providing and improving social facilities. The contribution of achieving and getting to benefit from facilities in the school depends on teachers support to the learners. Reflecting on the view of Zubets (2013), Malofeev (2016) noted that one other aspect of social support system is teachers' skills, competences and readiness to work and help out children with Special Needs.

Contrary or absence of this may demotivate learners, increased instances of isolation, discrimination against children with Special Needs.

While the above authors (Malofeev, 2016; Zubets, 2013; Elena *et al.* 2016) agree entirely to the value of social facilities and support in enhancing education of learners with special needs, their scope of inquiry was undertaken in Russia, Siberia and less of this is well documented for the Uganda schools. Critical social support in this case is the system in which the school is run, activities done and when they are done. For instance, the social systems guarantees on who participates in what game, play and poem matters a lot. While this may be vital, it may not be uniformly accessed in all schools. Therefore, it was important that the researcher pays attention to social support of children with special needs in the Ugandan school setting.

According to Sigstad (2017) close relationships appear to be a prerequisite for encouraging learners to attain belonging to school like other learners. The precondition is that most learners with special needs may not exist alone without social support from the teachers, pupils and system of education itself. Earlier studies (Estell, Jones & Pearl, 2009; Carra & O'Relly, 2016), show ability for learners to change their social behaviour, learn social etiquettes and live like other persons in community, dwells a lot on social support provided.

Nevertheless, there has been less study undertaken to explore social support systems and competences of learners in school (Pijil, Frosad & Flem, 2008). In addition, social support system and academic achievement is be vital and is less explored. This study focused on different social support systems relevant for children with special needs, and which ones exist in ECD centres in Kampala City.

### **Transition Support systems and Education of children with Special Needs**

In an education setting, academic and educational goals are realized when they cause a steady and continuous transition from one level of education to another (Adkinson, 2007). Transition may be in knowledge, competencies and skills or from one level of study to another in an education system (Gray, 2010). Although Gray's study paid attention to transition after secondary school, the concept of transition cuts through all levels of education from lower levels (ECD) up to post institution level- work place. These studies confer that successful learning outcome is measured on basis of transition levels. This current study paid attention to transition support system that prevails in ECD centres, and how fundamental is this transition school support in boosting the education of children with special needs.

When it comes to preparing the child to post-ECD life, school should have a system that allows the learner to prepare for transition (Brokane & Zalceva, 2011), and this should be integrated right at the design of the system. A good education system is one where learners are able to change their behaviour, transit from traditional, inert knowledge to better knowledge, skills and abilities gradually (Zubets, 2013).

In the view of Glenn (2015), transition support is evident in the way the school system provides a relevant curriculum and exposes children to other children in schools, encouraging children to play and socialize with others of the same disability from other study centres, inviting parents and undertaking festive days such as: parent /sports days makes children transit from their inert behaviour to change their attitudes.

According to Lundqvist (2016) on educational pathways and transition in early school years, he showed that innovativeness in coming up with physical learning aids and play facilities was key for keeping special needs children at school. However, this study was undertaken in Sweden, and reflects the position as per the education system of Sweden.

Complementing views of Brokane and Zalceva, as well as Zubets is Wehman's view that as children grow to adulthood, they grow through a lot of transition process, and value of this is how best this transition causes learning (Brokane & Zalceva, 2011; Zubets, 2013; Wehman, 2013). This transition support system can be evidenced through progressing from one class or school to another. However, the focus on Wehman as transition from the school to place of work tends to disagree to the earlier views of Zubets. For transition to cause learning it must be functional and supported to be so. Hence this study explored the relevancy of transition support system on the education of children with special needs in Uganda, particularly within the Kampala City.

Arguably, transition support system enriches learning outcomes of learners but this also depends on how it is applied (Carr & O'Relly, 2016). When the learners are aware of progression from one level of learning to another, learning becomes a duty. However, Russell (2016) exposes out that over 1 million of children with special needs are trapped in an education setting that does not provide transition opportunities for them. Related to Russell (2016), is UNESCO (2017) which put transition levels of children with special needs at 30% for most schools in Africa and Middle East, where support facilities to support it are not prioritized. With above

view, a few learners with disabilities progress to higher levels of education and a few are in workplace, though talented in some way.

Indeed, National Council for Special Education, NCSE (2014), in their booklet designed for parents of Children with Special Educational need, they emphasize that transition is key. It is a change of behaviour which children with special needs like any other children ought to exhibit. Transition academic, social and emotional in perspective is expected as children with special needs enroll for school. Parents are advised to keep a look and check of these changes and empower them at home. While this study focused on parents, it critically recounts on benefits of transition facilities to support transition of children in academic, behaviour and emotions at schools.

Relatedly, Macharia (2018) revealed that the position of teacher professional Qualifications on improving teaching and transition of learners with physical disabilities in school were key in enhancing transition school system. However, Macharia (2018) puts evidence that administration and teachers shape how pupils use school facilities that enhance transition. This view is also pointed out in study of Claborn and Kane (2012) and in UNESCO (2017) guidelines. The findings and recommendations in all these studies bridge the gap between school facilities and transition. However, they do not provide a lasting recommendation on how the existence or shortfalls of transition support facilities help elevate the scope of educational attainment of children with special needs.

In the Kenyan perspective, the provision of transition system as a mechanism to enhance education of children with special needs is highly acclaimed. The Ministry of Education, Kenya, through policy recommends that each school that

offers Special needs Education to evaluate transition rates and retention rates of learners with special needs as a formal means of learning assessment in institutions (Mutahi, 2009). Complementarily, OECD (2018) also emphasized transition is vital. In the OECD (2018), it was echoed that transition reduces barriers to students' smooth progression levels and their transition into post-secondary education or labour market. To improve student trajectories, systems need to consider both vertical co-ordination of levels and grades as well as the horizontal co- ordination of parallel sectors and programmes.

Reflecting on transition of learners with special needs, the European Commission, (2019) considers relevancy of structure transition as a formally recognised platform for better education. In their working group report, European Commission (2019) asserts that transition in a flexible manner is ideal for progressive learning of CwSNs. Transition calls for change in behaviour, attaining good grades in academic drills like any other learner and attaining improved and observable behaviour in work-related learning, personal skills and priorities.

Ability of learners to progress and transit from ECD to other institutions at primary and vocational levels have a backup in the current school they study. It is not thus uncommon to find well-to-do schools offering ECD highly located in an urban setting as compared to rural setting. This is influenced by ownership and interest to invest in early childhood education, a sector that that has lagged behind in many economies including Uganda. The current study specifically focused on the education of learners with special needs in KCCA and drawing lessons on how this has been improved with the transition support system facilities prevailing in ECD schools.



## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter explained the research methodology for this study. It includes the study design, study area, population of study, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, measurement of variables, data quality control, data collection procedure, processing and analysis. Lastly, the chapter presents ethical considerations.

#### **Study Design**

A case study design was utilised for this study. This is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context basing on small / multiple cases of reference (Kombo & Tromp, 2010). This design was considered relevant in exploring support systems and education of children with Special Needs in ECD centres, because selected ECD centres were exemplifying cases (Bryman, 2016). Participants from selected ECD centres were meant to give facts that could be used to understand the study variables better. Case study is widely used in many studies (Creswell, 2014), and was hence appropriate for this study.

#### **Research Design**

A qualitative approach was used to obtain information for the study. Qualitative approach helps to describe and analyse the behaviour of phenomena as it exists (Kombo & Tromp, 2010). In this study, qualitative design focused on opinions, and views about support systems and education of CwSNs in Early Childhood Education. This research design was relevant in providing an in-depth

coverage of information. More so, study variables and the nature of target respondents could be explored primarily through a qualitative approach, since they could not be freely expressed in statistics.

### **Location of the Study**

The study was conducted in two (2) schools which had existed for over 12 years in operating as Early Childhood Education Centres. These two schools were ECLAC Kyambogo and Kampala School for the physically handicapped located in Kampala City. Kampala School physically handicapped (KSPH) is located along Balintuma road in Rubaga division, while ECLAC Kyambogo is located in the North end of Kyambogo University in Nakawa Division. The two (2) ECD centres were selected by convenience sampling from list of schools offering ECD in Nakawa and Rubaga Division. Nakawa and Rubaga Divisions had the highest number of ECD centres as compared to other divisions (KCCA, 2018). Additionally, KSPH and ECLAC were model schools, convenient and accessible. More so, the administration in these ECD centres willingly allowed for the study to be undertaken in their premises.

The two (2) ECD centres are from different backgrounds; operate as an inclusive school and special needs centres respectively. More so, they are an example of well-established ECD centres in the city divisions selected. These ECD centres were useful in providing a comprehensive picture of Support systems and education of children with Special Needs.

## Study Population

The study population was drawn from members of staff and administration of ECLAC Kyambogo and Kampala School for the physically handicapped (KSPH).

The target population constituted participants who had a direct or indirect role in establishing school support system.

More so this population included those tasked with ensuring successful use in education of children with special needs. A study population is total number of people who fulfill study selection criteria (Kombo & Tromp, 2010). Regarding children with Special Needs, the children were selected basing on their nature of disability. Those whose disability could not allow (mentally ill, with high level of autism, parents did not accept, or well personally not willing to participate) were left out of the study.

The overall population was 121 which included: Two (2) School Head teachers, eleven (11) teachers and 108 children with direct Observable Special needs. Owing to the nature of disability, some children were not taken. Children with Mental related disabilities such as autism were not considered as well as those whose ability to answer study question was considered low were removed from the target population. A target population of 48 participants was drawn as shown in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Study target population**

Category of respondents	Sch 1	Sch 2	Total
School Head teachers	1	1	2
Teachers	7	4	11
Children with direct Observable Special needs	30	5	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>48</b>

## Sampling Size and Techniques

### Sample Size

A total sample of 33 respondents was purposively taken after seeking their formal consent from the target population of 48. The sample reduced from the population because for some targeted participants were not involved. The reduction of participants was due to the fact that their parents refused to consent their children (with special needs)'s involvement, while other children could not freely participate and were left out. The sample was distributed as shown in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2: Sample size composition**

Category of respondents	Sch 1	Sch 2	Total	Sampling Technique
School Head teachers	1	1	2	Census
Teachers	7	4	11	Census
Children with Special needs	15	5	20	Purposive
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>33</b>	

The sample size was appropriate given that it was representative of all teachers and school administrators. These provided information on behalf of children with severe disability that could not participate. More so, it was gender inclusive and covered all categories of children' disabilities [for those who could participate on their own] in the ECD centres visited. However, out of the sample of 33 respondents, 28 fully participated in the study, as observed in the next chapter about findings.

The study also focused on ensuring that in addition to gender, the demographic characteristics of respondents such as nature of disability, and age of respondents were captured. This helped to explore extent to which support systems in ECD centres supported education of CwSNs basing on their demographic characteristics and abilities.

### **Sampling Techniques**

A census was used for School Head teachers and Teachers. A census is a technique of selecting participants for the study where all members of the population are taken up to participate in the study (Kombo & Tromp, 2010). This is because each of the individuals has specific contribution to the study, and his/her opinions are vital. A census is also used when members of the population are few and they could all be involved in the study.

Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used for this study. Purposive sampling is an approach where respondents are chosen because the researcher feels the respondent (s) is a key informant in the study (Sarantakos, 2005). All the children drawing from their category of disabilities were purposively selected.

### **Data Collection Methods**

Three (3) methods of data collection that were primarily qualitative in nature were used. These included:

*Interviewing:* This is an interaction involving conversation between two or more people regarding a given area of study. In this study, face-to-face interviews were held with School Administrators and Teachers. Interviewing is commonly adopted where the researcher is interested in getting a detailed, deeper exploration of a given phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Interviews are however conducted between one or a few people, and hence were complemented with Focus Group Discussions and Observation methods. The interviews were held at selected ECD upon appointment with Headteacher / teachers. Interviews took duration between 40- 60 minutes.

### *Focus Group Discussions (FGD)*

A focus group Discussion is an interactive discussion between a moderator and discussants regarding a given topic (Namelly, 2015). The FGDs were held at selected ECD centres with Children with Special Needs. Each category of children were considered as a FGD, and contacted differently. The teacher and a sign languages interpreter facilitated the progress of the FGDs. Children who could not comfortably take part on FGDs were either interviewed, or observed over a period of seven (7) days on: how they used physical facilities, interacted socially with teachers and fellow children, and also their performance in class and non-class transition activities.

The observed behaviours were recorded and used to complement findings from Interviews and FGDs. These methodological approaches helped to collect data easily, were self-enriching for both the researcher and respondents, and provided room for self-expression. All these yielded comprehensive findings for this study.

### *Observation*

The study also involved non-participant observation, where the researcher was able to take note of various aspects that describe the physical, social and transition support in ECD centres. Direct observation is very useful when the study is undertaken in its natural setting (Amin, 2005). The use of observation helps to prove the detail given in other data collection methods (Creswell, 2014). In this study, observation involved a keen look at facilities in place in ECD centres in Kampala City which defined the status of Education of Children with Special Needs.

## **Research Instruments**

### ***Interview Guide***

Face to face interviews were held with respondents. Interview guides were prepared to facilitate conducting the interview. This enabled the researcher to collect first-hand information over what they think, know or feel (Cohen & Manion, 2010) about Support systems and education of children with Special Needs. The interview guide consisted of ten (10) questions, two (2) on the biodata of the respondent, and three (3) per objective. The questions were open-ended to allow respondents express their views freely and minimize rigidity of respondents (Oso & Onen, 2009). Interview guides were used to obtain information from Headteachers and Teachers.

### ***Focus Group Discussion Guide***

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with children at each of the selected ECD centres in the study. At ECLAC, one FGD was held, while at KSPH, six (6) FGDs were held depending on the numbers of children at the school. Focus group discussion checklist was formulated to facilitate in moderating these discussions. An interpreter / Specialist in Sign language was hired to facilitate the discussions with children depending on their disability. FGD helped in generation of views, emotions, feelings, perceptions and beliefs of respondents (Sarantakos, 2005) during the study. Each FGD guide had three (3) themes, organized as major topics of discussion and arranged according to study objectives.

### ***Document Review Checklist***

Documentary review was also used for this study. This was useful in obtaining already written and published information. With firm assurance on ethical considerations of confidentiality, the researcher requested the head teachers of selected ECD centres to provide documents related to the Study. These documents included records of physical, social and transition facilities/support systems available, those needed (but unavailable), enrollment of children in the school, among other records.

### **Measurement of Variables**

The study has two (2) major variables that is: Support systems and Education of Children with special needs. Support systems was measured basing on Physical, Social and Transition support systems existing or vital in ECD as described by Sigstad (2017).

Education of children with special needs based on the overall academic and non-academic achievements of learners with special needs in a school setting. These were examined drawing reference from Ejuu (2012).

### **Validity and Reliability of study instruments**

#### ***Validity***

Validity of the tool is its ability to give true and answers as expected from asked questions (Kombo & Tromp, 2010). Face validity was ascertained. For face validity, instruments were reviewed by supervisor and practicing teachers in selected ECD centres in Kampala City. The supervisor and practicing ECD teachers consulted made comments which the researcher based on to adjust tools. Basing on



pre-test comments, the tools were revised by content of questions and layout. This provided detail of validity of the tools for this study.

### ***Reliability***

The researcher also ensured that the instruments used were reliable.

Qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Creswell, 2014). Reliability of tools was ascertained through proper documentation of steps to take in interviewing, and interacting with participants. This also involves checking transcription of opinions to remove mistakes of grammar, spellings and irrelevant opinions, and using a matrix to summarize the result under themes, and sub-themes for consistency and clarity (Yin, 2009). This helped to have not only consistent but also clear and objective-based results. Generally, this was ideal for good qualitative reliability.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The study began with data collection after preparing, pretesting and testing for validity and reliability of tools. The study tools: the Interview guides, FGD checklists and documentary checklist copies were printed for data collection. With an introduction letter from Faculty of Education, researcher proceeded to the field. Formal consent was sought from selected ECD centres (ECLAC) and KSPH before data collection. On the basis of booked appointment dates and days for holding interviews, and Focused group Discussions, data was collected.

On dates/days of appointment, the researcher began with interviews. Interviews were held with each head teacher at their respective ECD centre. Headteachers then mobilized teachers. Each selected teacher was interviewed in a

face-to-face interview session. An interview guide consisting of short semi-structured questions was used to facilitate the interview. An interview session took 20-35 minutes per respondent.

The researcher also conducted Focus Group Discussion with the respondents (children). On appointed days, children were arranged into groups, preferably according to their special needs. A Focus Group Discussion was held with each of the group, guided by a teacher and an interpreter. The researcher was a moderator while children were participants in the discussion. A FGD checklist helped to keep the discussion on track and relevant to the study objectives. Each Focus Group Discussion took 30-45 minutes and discussions recorded.

Upon formal consent, the researcher also reviewed documents related with the school support system and education achievements of the children with special needs. All collected data was recorded, or summarized on paper to capture views of respondents. Collected data was used to compile study findings.

### **Data Processing and Analysis**

The collected data was organized and categorized using appropriate computer programs especially Microsoft word. The explanation–building technique was used (Sarantakos, 2005). Thematic and narrative analysis techniques were used to analyse findings. Findings were analysed basing on themes. Each objective was a theme and all major findings sub-themes. Respondents' opinions, views and responses were directly presented or paraphrased to explain sub-themes. The data from interviews and focus group discussion guides were analyzed using thematic and narrative analysis.

Opinions on children's access and usage of physical facilities that were available, needed and/ or lacking were used to describe the Physical support system. Social support systems were evaluated basing on social facilities in place and how teachers utilised these facilities to facilitate learning. Transition support systems were examined basing on the extent to which children can go to affiliated institutions and transit from one learning experience to another. In examining, and analyzing this information, content and narrations were used to present findings in verbatim, direct quotations and paraphrased statements. Analysis was done and presented according to the study objectives.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The researcher sought for a formal introduction letter from the Department of ECD, Faculty of Education at Kyambogo University. This was presented to School Head teachers of ECD centres (ECLAC and KSPH) visited. With these letters, the researcher was introduced to the School Administrators before conducting the study.

Approval was also received from the Administrators of the ECD centres (ECLAC and KSPH). This approved the researcher to undertake the study in the ECD facility. This approved letter hence authenticated the presence of the researcher in the ECD centre and facilitated free interaction with teachers and pupils.

In studies, involving minors (participants below the recognised age of maturity- in Uganda 18 years), parental consent is key ethical aspect for consideration. Parental consent was obtained through direct visits to parents at their homes and/ or telephone call. The parents were taken through the purpose, and

study objectives, and only children whose parents formally gave their consent, participated in the study.

A high level of confidentiality, anonymity and safety of respondents was ensured. Confidentiality was upheld by not mentioning the names of participants, but referring to them with Numbers. More so, anonymity was upheld through using pseudo names for the schools as Schools (School 1, and School 2) in reporting the findings.

The researcher upheld the rights and safety of participants. Children were contacted in their ordinary lifestyle environment, and the researcher adjusted the interaction session to suit the environment children were used to at school. Children whose state of disability could not allow them to participate in the study such as those with autism, not able to understand questions, were not included in the study.

## Chapter Four

### Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

#### Introduction

This chapter presents findings to this study regarding the effect of Support systems on Education of children with Special Needs in ECD centres in Kampala City. The findings were obtained after an interaction with teachers, administrators and children with Special Needs at ECLAC Kyambogo and Kampala School of Handicapped children.

#### Response Rate

The distribution of the participants was as shown in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1: Study Response rate**

Category of respondents	Sch 1	Sch 2	Total
Administrators	1	1	2
Teachers	7	4	11
Children with Special needs	10	5	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>28</b>

*Source: Primary data, 2019*

A total of 28 out 33 selected for the study, participated. This was 85 percent of the targeted sample for the study. The unattained responses were of children who withdrew from the discussion groups before they were completed. However, the 85% provided comprehensive data to explore support system and education of children with special needs in ECDs for selected centres in Kampala City.

### Demographic details of study participants

The study demographics of respondents were explored on the basis of their position in school, age, gender, and form of disability. These details are summarized in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Demographic characteristics of respondent**

Characteristics	Number of respondents by Category			Total
	Administrators	Teachers	Children	
<b>Position</b>				
Headteacher	2	-	-	<b>2</b>
Teachers	-	11	-	<b>11</b>
Learners	-	-	15	<b>15</b>
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	0	3	7	<b>10</b>
Female	2	8	8	<b>18</b>
<b>Age (years)</b>				
< 3	-	-	-	<b>-</b>
3-5	-	-	4	<b>4</b>
5-12	-	-	11	<b>11</b>
Over 18	2	11	-	<b>13</b>
<b>Disability</b>				
No physical disability	1	7	-	<b>8</b>
Physically handicapped	1	3	10	<b>14</b>
Sight	-	1	3	<b>4</b>
Hearing	-	-	2	<b>2</b>

*Source: Primary data, 2019*

Table 4.2 shows that respondents occupied different positions. To obtain the views from the administrators and hence explore the Teacher-child relationships in ECD education system, School Administrators, teachers and learners were involved in the study. All administrators were Headteachers.

Further findings shows that 18 out of 28 participants were female and ten (10) were male. In all instances, the females dominated which implied high level of interest of females in education of CwSNs compared to men. More so, many parents were willing to send female CwSNs to School. Thus, efforts to encourage male teachers were found critically important. Additionally, the low interest in education by male learners without disability accounted for their fewer numbers in the visited ECD centres.

With exception of teachers and school administrators who were above 18 years, learners were in age bracket of 3-12 years. Of the children contacted, majority was between 5-12 years and only four (4) children were 3-5 years. Most learners were still of the ECD recommended age bracket, though others had over stayed in school up to the age of 11 and 12 years, ideal for upper primary education.

On the aspect of disability, majority participants (20) out of 28 had some form of disability. One Headteacher, four (4) teachers and all the children had either physical, sight or hearing disability. Fourteen (14) participants had physical disability, while others had sight and hearing disabilities. These were contacted with assistance of a sign language interpreter.

The above findings describe the background information and characteristics of respondents. These facilitated the researcher to define clearly the approaches of soliciting data from the participants. Regardless, of the disability, the consideration for gender equality was prioritized in the ECD centres that were visited. Indeed, these demographic findings were a basis for exploring objective-based findings as presented in the next section.

## Findings per Objectives

### **Objective 1: Effect of Physical Support Systems on Education of children with Special Needs in ECD centres in Kampala City**

All categories of respondents were asked about the effect of Physical Support Systems on Education of children with Special Needs in ECD centres in Kampala City. Participants were asked questions on what they understood about physical support systems facilities, availability of physical support system and the effect of Physical Support Systems on Education of CwSNs in ECD centres.

#### ***Meaning of Physical Support systems in ECD Centres***

Two (2) broad themes emerged regarding Physical Support System, namely: Self-help Physical Support system facilities and School-based Physical facilities. These are further described below.

**Self-help Physical Support systems:** The study explored that within ECD centres, children were supported by families. This parent's support to schools largely as Self-help Physical Support systems. These facilities categorized as self-help physical support system (SHPSS) were helpful in aiding children to fit in the school setting which they used right at home and school. They included: wheel chairs, scholastic stationery depending on sight challenges, toys, school bag and uniform. Provision of self-help physical support was key for education achievement of CwSNs especially in ECD centres, as also revealed by, one head teacher that:

*“Parents to these children (meaning... children with SNs) are several times aware and sensitized about their children.....that their children are special....so... they provide self-help physical support systems.... what is a challenge is that... they cannot afford most of the physical support they should provide..... parents mainly offer home-made facilities.”-Interview with Headteacher at School A- May, 2019.*



These findings reveal that as part of Support system, CwSNs get self-help support from home (SHPSS), and this is later complemented by School-based Support system (SBPSS) at ECD centres. The different areas in which Physical support System aided education of CwSNs covered areas of enrollment, retention and full education opportunities of children with Special Needs in ECD centres, as further explored.

**School-based Physical Support systems:** At school, several opinions echoed out a number of items that constituted support systems. Generally, it was noted that unlike self-help support which was obtained from home, other support was received/provided to children with special needs. These were School-based physical Support system (SBPSS). From the interviews with teachers, Children with SNs require a lot of physical system support on individual and structural basis at school much more than at home. In one of opinions from the Head teacher, she said:

*“Yeah... Yes....the school provides some of physical support as part of the school system to cater for the CWDs. In this ECD centre (....). We have majority children with physical disabilities and support systems offer some of these physical Support. Of course (...she laughs)... they are not enough, and are most often these physical facilities are shared among our children with SNs.*

*They as good as learning itself, as they determine their wellbeing at school.... some able parents support the school in providing these physical support to their children, although done by few” Interview with Headteacher at School B- May, 2019.*

In relation to above perspective and views from other participants, a number of physical support systems facilities were mentioned as necessary to be provided at each school where there are CwSNs. These included: ramps, stairways, walkways,

special needs effective elevators, toys, play facilities such as furniture, swings, disability friendly physical toilets, places of meals, play, classroom facilities. Other physical school support facilities included braille, walking cane and moveable desks.

Results also show that in the two (2) case study ECD centres, most desirable Physical Support system (PSS) facilities were inadequately provided. However, and most importantly, participants showed that they were vital for children with SNs, if they were to attend classes and move freely like other children. In almost all FGDs, children with special needs revealed that they often lack enough what to use for classes, play and moving around school depending on their disability.

Generally, Physical school system support in the ECD centres visited was essential but inadequately provided. Parents also did not giving enough system support facilities to their CwSNs and so were schools. Further findings reveal that three-quarters of desired items as mentioned by Children with Special Needs in FGDs were not available. Additionally; the few available were shared among learners depending on study/play time, and nature of disability.

The findings highlighted a number of ways physical support systems affect the education of children with special needs in ECD centres. Four broad (4) areas in which physical support systems affects education of CwSNs were established. These were: its effects on enrollment, attendance, learning and motivation of CwSNs in Early Childhood Education and ECD Centres. This means that if parents were to improve the education of their children in ECD centres, and specifically those in place to support children with disabilities, there is need to revisit and improve the physical facilities in ECD centres.

**School Physical Support system effects on Enrollment:** The study established that Physical Support accorded to an ECD School System was ideal for education of CwSNs. Indeed, the existence of Physical Support system in ECD centres encouraged parents to take their CwSNs to a given school. In support to this view, a teacher said:

*“It depends on the facilities that can be physically seen as relevant to a parent. He/she is able to bring his child to the school, either provide these facilities or get them from the school..... As a result, enrollment increases with the physical support, the child gets while at the given ECD School.”*

Interview with a teacher at School A- May, 2019

This perspective how that school support draws a lot from family support. To give a detailed explanation of this family factor, several other opinions were pointed out. Among these, are the opinions raised from FGDs complemented the above perspective, notably:

*“ we are here because our parents chose this school,.... school had some of the basic items we need to learn such as braille..... school is near, and my parents can bring me here in morning.... and come back for me in evening, among others.. All these are physical support facilities that prevail in system which. when lacking hinder enrollment levels..... ”* FGD views with children in ECD centres School B- May, 2019

Basing on the school facilities in place, the willingness of parents to bring their children to ECD increased. More so, with reliable Physical Support system, a number of CwSNs attended and attained education like any other children in ECD centres. Where these physical system supports were lacking or inadequate, these learners [CwSNs], studied in hardships. More so, these physical systems facilitated children to communicate, move and ease themselves, were key for enrollment of CwSNs in ECD centres in Kampala City. This implies that level of access and stay at

school by CwSNs was influenced by their parents' ability to appreciate the available facilities. Generally in ECD centres, where the physical support system existed, parents were motivated to bring their children to school.

**School Physical Support system effects on Attendance:** The study participants were keen to note that Systems Support by Physical facilities was key for attendance of children with Special Needs. From interaction with study participants, it was established that these physical system support facilitate learning and make learners active in class. In one of the opinions raised, a discussant confined to the researcher that,

*"I had been disadvantaged when I was at a Primary School in the village as I could not get what I need to read like others since I was blind. ... but after coming to school, I am now able to learn and attend like others."* Opinions from a FGD, May, 2019

More so, the study participants in interviews also affirmed that absence of adequate physical facilities has constrained attendance of some children with Special Needs. For instance in one of the case ECD centres, absence of enough walking canes hindered attendance of blind without guide and yet at another case, there were no ramps and toilets were not well constructed to favor all forms of disability. Where physical facilities are in place attendance improves. This implies that absence of required physical support in the education system implemented in ECD centres had detrimental effects on the ease of Children with Special Needs to attend school. This influence was not only on regularity but full attendance of class and involvement in outside class activities for the entire study term.

Related to above, a number of opinions were raised in FGDs related with Physical System Support and Attendance. Excerpts from FGDs were revealed as described:

*“Indeed, I personally find it hard to attend classes with others when... I have nowhere to pass my wheel chair... unless one of the fellow pupils [I mean strong ones like...lift me in my wheel chair; I cannot go to our class. In our school, the swings are few, and I who cannot climb it well, several times I do not play I like attending playing and games though.....”* FGD opinions at School A, May, 2019.

Several other related views were noted, indicating that Physical Systems support is ideal for attendance of children of different disabilities basing on facilities, structures and environment utilised by the school. These findings imply that in a school where there is provision of motorable walkways, parents are encouraged to have their CwSNs stay and study. Absence or presence of inadequate physical support make a number of children not to attend classes regularly especially in main stream inclusive school setting.

**Physical Support system effects on Learning and motivation to learn:** In the study, participants revealed that system support in ECD schools was also evident in form of Physical support. Physical Support had far-reaching effects on the learning and willingness of CwSNs to stay in school. It was established that when School Physical Support system is okay, it encourages regularly attendance, learning is aroused and motivation levels for CwSNs to stay in School are high. This implies that with ideal support system in terms of physical amenities, ability of children with special needs education to pursue education like others was high. More so, given that they would not only be interested to go to school, but most importantly motivated to learn and cover the education cycle.

The participants revealed that due to School Physical Support system (PSSS) has effects on providing physical support, learning process, integrate learning content in environment to learning, and this keeps children motivated. Different opinions from interviews and FGDs were cited as described below.

*“It is surely hard to handle children with Special Needs without physical enhancement. For instance, how can you teach without braille? A few children can remain at school when they find challenges to move well in the compound... even when the meals and teachers are okay.”.* Opinions from FGD at School A, May, 2019.

Additionally, in a number of FGDs, typical opinions realized reflected a lot on the value of Physical System Support towards education of Children with Special Needs. In their opinions they raised a number of effects like: If physical system support is improved, CwSNs can study up to the end of term or education cycle. More so, they can also feel at ease when in class and/or in school compound like other children. This meets their special needs and motivates them to keep at school. Therefore it should be schools’ concern for physical support system was not only a necessity but a core requirement for better education of children with special needs in ECD.

Physical school support facilitates cordial stay of children with Special Needs at school. Results showed that where there are conducive facilities such as computers, toilets, adequate relevant furniture, nature and type of disability, children with special needs are able to study and keep at school. This revealed that ECD centres ought to focus a lot on the facilities in place right from furniture, but also to the views from the Headteacher of the visited ECD.

Some of the excerpts from the interview with the head teacher at School A, were:

*“As you may see, we have numbers of these children (SNs) because we try our best to have best structures that meet their needs (...). For example, after acquiring these computers... children can now do [Photoshop which they like a lot], play games and like being in this room.*

*Some want to stay all day in this computer room.... and like it.... This in the end makes it possible to have them interested in school activities and hence study. You cannot have CwSNs keep at school when there is nothing that attracts them physically.”. Interview-Headteacher at School A- May, 2019*

When these are lacking, the children (CwSNs) study not only in hardships, but it also generates demotivation. In the Focus Group Discussion, one of the children expressed her dissatisfaction and said:

*“Our school does not have enough computers for us to read words and do photoshop.” This implies that availability and adequacy of Physical School Support facilities in school system are fundamental for”. FGD at School B, May, 2019.*

Therefore, this implied that there is need to improve on our structures, provide them in right way so that they can enhance learning. From the focus group discussion, the school physical facilities were vital in enhancing access to school environment. For instance, physical support system at ECD centres tailored to special needs designs such as toilets, bathrooms, furniture, though inadequate were critical in serving their purpose to aid and meet diverse special needs of children in ECD centres.

The above findings further imply that machines available in ECD centres are far from being accessible to all and not enough. The few available are mainly utilised by teachers in teaching, and this leaves children less empowered to study well in these ECD centres. More so, findings showed that physical systems in terms of classroom

space are relevant for enhancing adequate so mobility, inadequate resources. Some key/desirable facilities that would support the system are expensive and in other instances these may not be readily available. In regard to these perceptions, one respondent said:

*“Some children have multiple disabilities so providing relevant multiple physical system support facilities becomes not only costly but hard without sponsors. This Physical Support of system ensured that the children with special needs keep at school all day long...”* Interview with a Teacher, at School B, May 2019.

In a related perspective, during an interview with one of the teachers at school A, it was revealed that the prevalence of physical support is key for learning. Key excerpts from the interview are pointed out below.

*“Owing to what is at school physically, these children (CwSNs) can remain at school or leave.... For instance, Physical support to School Systems adds a lot to learning of children with Special needs. In fact, Physical Support is much more needed than academic support.....”* Interview at School A, May 2019.

The study also identified key activities that prevail within the context of physical support facilities, that when not well provided, constrains teaching and learning of children with special needs. In agreement with the above reflection, a Headteacher said:

*“Our school was started with focus on children with Special Needs..... Therefore though we do not have enough specialized physical resources, but indeed Physical System Support is good for teaching and learning of children with special needs. There is need for special needs and training so that teachers can assist pupils to adopt the right environment.”* Interview at School. B, May 2019.

Overall, results show that Physical System support was key for education of CwSNs although in all two (2) case schools, facilities were not enough, 25 out of 28 respondents complained of poor and less functional Physical System School Support in their ECD. Through observation wheel chairs are not enough and well maintained.



Other physical materials: books, pens, pencils, uniforms, braille, radios, TV, sound objects, drums and musical instruments. This indicates that availability of these facilities implied better, conducive learning environment for CwSNs' education.

At one of ECD Centres, however specialized text books, instructional materials are being given for easy learning and teacher instead of using materials accorded extra time for explanations and assignments to CwSNs. This is being provided through wheel chairs, braille machines / papers, white canes, clutches, reading glasses, tapes, projectors, written material /cards though still few. The findings implied that in studied schools do not have enough physical and appropriate instructional materials support like wooden blocks, bright, coloured materials, real materials, recommended for special needs.

Indeed, this described the relevance of having not only adequate, but also affordable, and relevant physical support system facilities at ECD centres, if we are to have the right education for children with special needs. Physically, the environment and recreations in ECD centres include swimming pool, and sand pool and non-hazardous compound where CwSNs can utilise to learn and play.

In summary, and whereas varying opinions across various respondents, it was echoed that Physical Support system facilities are rather indispensable in education activities in ECD. The study findings show that several physical support facilities as mentioned in the above discussion are core in boosting, not only enrollment, but also retention of children with special needs (CwSNs). The study is keen to note that, in essence, physical support system improves attendance, boosts learning, and motivates children with special needs at ECD centres in Kampala City.

## **Objective 2: Effect of Social Support Systems on Education of children with Special Needs in ECD centres**

The study's second objective was to find out the effect of Social support systems (SSS) on the Education of children with Special Needs in ECD centres in Kampala city. Participants contacted in interviews and FGDs, revealed a number of opinions on Social Systems Support as it prevails in ECD centres. Their opinions also focused on how it affects Education attainment of CwSNs in ECD centres. Specifically ECD centres in Kampala City were surveyed.

### ***Social Systems Support in ECD centres***

Several opinions were pointed out regarding Social Systems Support. From interviews and FGDs, a number of opinions were pointed out to describe what Social support systems in schools were and these included: Facilities that make learning enjoyable and appropriate for all members in school. It was also pointed out that social systems support items are part of school setting that encourage children to interact, play and relate with each other and their teachers.

**Social issues deal with society.** Majority participants considered themselves as a team or society, of friends attaining education in a given school/centre. As findings from interviews show, CWDs like other children require supportive social environment. For instance one of the Headteachers said:

*“it is ideal that we give these children [CwSNs] the most appropriate social support we can ably afford... otherwise, they lose interest in the school... and may not come back to school.... social support by fellow CwSNs, other children, teachers, parents, everybody's support is vital (.....).”* Head teacher Interview at Sch. A, May 2019.

The findings of this study on the aspect of social support system implies that Systems Support was anticipated as dominantly a support and motivator for co-operation, and togetherness in a school setting for all members of school community. This include what makes learning and teaching universal for children with special needs just like other children in school, and how these facilities enhance co-operation from other children with disability, normal children, teachers, head teachers, parents and others. In relation to above, the above different opinions were obtained regarding SSS support in ECD centres however these facilitate were not enough. Social issues included play facilities, engaging in drama, shows, and parent visit days. Several views were mentioned as discussed.

***Social Systems Support and its effects on education of children with special needs***

The study participants revealed that effective education of CwSNs was not independent of social systems support. A number of ECD centres reflect on this support to evaluate their effectiveness in teaching CwSNs, just as they do for other children at this early tender age of their education. Some notable effects of social system support on education of CwSNs were evident in supporting team learning, motivation, skill transfer and in school environment social aid. The ECD centres visited endeavored to support education of children with special needs through social system support.

From the interaction and observation it was noted that 20 of 28 participants revealed that Social Systems Support as at their school was still low. This had significant effects on education of learners especially CwSNs. Some social facilities like swimming pools, swings, animated objects such as europlanes, motorable bikes, sand pools for children to jump and play in, computers where to play games,

were not available as commensurate to the number of children to use them. Children had to share one or some miss using computers. This implies that overall, social support was considered by ECD administrators, but they had constraints in providing required social materials for all the children in ECD centres. This effect can be seen a number of attributes prevalent at their ECD centre. These Social Systems in School and their effects on education of CwSNs is further discussed.

**Team learning and support:** The study found out that majority participants including school head teachers, teachers and children, agreed that the better the social support systems in a school, the better is team learning among children especially CwSNs. Furthermore, it was reported that: team learning is possible when children share social facilities like swimming pool, sand pool and computers. The children support, play and learn together. Several opinions were pointed out on this aspect including:

*“We cherish the support we get from various stakeholders with balls and other play materials [though not enough]. These children like to play..... we (at school) at times recognise they are not feeling well. When their interest to play lessens... Tom (**not real name**) for instance cannot spend an hour in class without playing in the sand (...).*

*Although he has Amnesia ....his abilities to play, laugh and joke with others is high (...).” “Social support by having the right play materials is very key. When we have to play.... It is good... except when it rains and we cannot play”* FGDs with the Children with Special needs at Schools A and B, May, 2019.

Therefore proper social system school support is as good as Physical Facilities in enhancing team work, learning and interactions. All these facilities enable learning of CwSNs when well provided in right quantities, design and sizes to suit the needs of the children.

**Motivation to Learn: social support facilities** (SSF) puts in place/instills social values in children with SNs like it is for other children, facilitates interpersonal communications, depending on social agents (teachers) in given school setting. In this study, a number of respondents affirmed that social systems support, contribute highly even than physical facilities. These children in ECD centres have high opportunities of sharing and being extend to social love not only from their parents but also their peers at school. This implies that the school acts as a socializing agent making CwSNs develop social esteem, feel part of the school community, and also enrich their talent.

Socialization motivates them to make friends, love these friends, and feel happy when with friends at school. This implies further that the school has to cultivate an environment that supports this social change among children with special needs, through providing necessary social support systems. In a school setting where Social Support facilities exist, the level of motivation for CwSNs to learn is high. From the perspective of teachers, this is possible as in the excerpts related to this:

*“The existence of supportive colleagues has helped to improve lifestyle of these children. As you can see... they are okay. Jane (**not real name**) came here when she could keep quiet, and only cry when she needs food or assistance (...).” Here you go... she is one of our most active and jolly child when it comes to swimming and playing around in water (.....)”*  
Teacher Interview at Sch. B, May 2019.

*“the parent of Walakia (**not real name**), that as soon as he get home he starts arranging chairs as they were at school... Plays around with them... and cries a lot to come to school especially in the weekend (.....)” Most*

*often, it has been these playful toys have tamed him to be social, happy and like school...*” Teacher Interview at Sch. A, May 2019.

Several of related opinions were obtained not only from teachers but also heads of ECD centres, and children themselves. The above show that social school support is ideal if there is need to extend and improve home environment to the better at school. Proper play and social support can help create a sense of belonging, attachment between children who play together and their motivation to keep at school. However a number of social facilities that are required at most ECDs were not only inadequate in supply but also not available.

Reflecting on the above narrative is the view held by one of the children in FGD that:

*“Yes... I like our school. why? Because we eat well, play together and when one is tired he can sleep and rest.....”* FGDs opinions at Schools A, May, 2019.

This statement encompasses social support to school system including recreation, leisure and basic needs support. However, this support is not always available in most ECD centres. When interacting with teachers at one of centres, they revealed that they get hardships in managing CwSNs when their social life is curtailed to academic life. More than 90% of children in ECD schools and have special needs prefer play than classroom work and yet the school emphasizes the contrary.

**Transfer of home-based skills to School:** It can be recalled that most children in ECD are between three (3) and eight (8) years. This is one of the areas where talents and skills are identified and enriched. Results show that Social School systems support is vital in helping placement of learners in their right categories. There are children good for art, craft, drama, academic and entrepreneurship. These ideas are established in a school setting whose social system is supportive. This

implies that a better school social support system that makes school an extension of home, and makes it easier for children to learn more and develop their talents.

Complementing the above finding are various opinion excerpts from participants, further described. In one FGD, a number of opinions were raised on Social Systems Support and Education of Children with Special Needs. Some of the opinions were:

*“Aaaaaah... eeeeeemmm, ..eeemmm....., you see..., at school we play but at home I do not. I reach home and **Saul** (Elder brother-Not real name) tells me to sleep but he cannot play with me as I do with **Baroke** (peer with same condition of disability- not real name) (...).”*

*We have a lot of time to play at school..... learn from each other how to sing.... You know I like making balls... but at home I do not get thread like I do at school to make balls...” Surely... we learn and share in drama...*

*You know our drama group uses photoshop images... which we use to act in a group game every Friday.....”* FGDs with Children at Schools A and B, May 2019.

These were among many narrative opinions that were pointed out as enriching moments in education of CwSNs while at their ECD centres. These enriching moments were being reached at because of social support, providing, although still below expected standard in ECD centres visited. These findings significantly reveal that when there are no social facilities at school, CwSNs do not enjoy school life at school, just as they do at home.

Important to note was that Social Systems at the school is an extension of parenting roles at home. The teacher-child relationship builds along parent-children relationship and as such it is an extension of “home”. Reflection on this was a view held by one of the head teachers that:

*“In fact... some of these children do not want to go home.... They have had a sense of belonging here and seem comfortable when their social systems facilities are functional (...). I have on instance when..... **Rose** (not real name) almost going home when it was time to go home without taking our (school) braille writing material... and we had to allow the parent sign for it and take it with her.... she was happy (.....). So, this is merely their second home.... They do not treat it as school....”. “What challenges us is shortage of these facilities... some skills are inhibited for instance those who want to participate in wheel chair race, do not usually have their chairs in good condition to do so (...).*

*The portable chairs for instance are few and we only allow children to sit on it when they are making bowel/ defecating or urinating, instead of seating on them throughout the lesson... this is still our challenge and it makes them socially challenged....”. Interview with Teachers at Schools A and B, May 2019.*

The above excerpts, statements and descriptions depict that what children have and learn at school is socially supported to translate learning from home to school and from school to home environments. This implies that owing to social support system, children develop a sense of belong to their schools and play-peers. With a sense of belonging to either home and/or school, the child is able to develop talents. Some of talents that were noted to have been enhanced through social school systems support were: music, dance, drama, craft making and entrepreneurship skills.



**Sharing skills and Abilities:** Closely linked to social transfer from home to school was the fact that Social School system support (SSS) embeds are facilities that support education system of CWDs as they partake studies like any other children in school. These SSF include co-operation from other children, ordinary children, teachers, care givers, parents, Head teacher, and extension of love, care and support. This also advocates for integration of CWDs' tailored activities which aids learners to practice their skills and competences, and get ready for work. This implies that support facilities are not only a learning mechanism but also a social aspect that builds and trains teamwork, co-operation and sharing among children, a behaviour commonly lacking among children with special needs especially when they have not been exposed to peers and teachers in schools. The provision of this social support system was hence ideal for better social co-operation and skills sharing. Reflecting on the above assertion one of the teachers said:

*“Social Support facilities like working in teams of pulling the rope game, the social togetherness by each of groups act without discrimination. This absence of discrimination reduces isolation, demotivation of CwSNs but rather encourages them to participating and builds their skills..... Teacher at School B, May, 2019.*

*“As a teacher, these social facilities help children to help each other..... as they participate.... When at theatre [as we were last year], both the children helped each other, which made use enrich their skills in drama” another teacher said.*

These views significantly depict that social facilities are key for self-reliance, and as a result the children are able to gain self-help skills, build physical, psychomotor and affective domains as they learn and share social facilities. When the school setting is constrained with social system challenges, learning of CwSNs is also challenged.

Similarly, findings showed that a number of social facilities were lacking, and these hindered progress of children in the school. Lack of / existence of inadequate social support systems hindered self-reliance such as ability for CwSNs to bathe themselves, go for meals alone and take themselves around school. This implied that when there is lack of social support, this hinders children with special needs' motivation, widened dropout when one's specialized social support facilities were not catered for by the school system. This research informed to fact that CwSNs are not able to study and keep at school when focus on social system in the school is not giving them special attention. This was highly evident in issues of sanitation and self-reliance, social development and therapy.

In a related perspective, findings from one of ECD centres, indicate that more than five (5) children dropped over the last three years because school did not have their specialized social/ environment friendly facilities to allow them move around the compound (walking cane) so after several fall-offs' from pavements, and injuries, they dropped out of school. Provision of a good and interactive social school environment does not only support education but also ensure that ordinary children co-operate and socialize with CwSNs. This makes education of CwSNs not only enjoyable but lasting.

In a summative perspective, and as evidence in the above description shows that different categories of respondents continue to argue that social support facilities are core in enhancing education of children with special needs at ECD centres. In the study, it was established that these social support systems provide children with special needs the opportunity to develop teams, support learning,

enhance transfer of home –based skills, and to support facilities. Social support aids children to enjoy, share and learn from each other and other teachers.

**Objective 3: Effect of transition support systems on education of children with Special Needs in ECD centre**

In a bid to explore more the aspects of school support systems, we also asked questions that relate to the third specific study objective. This was to examine the effect of Transition support systems (TSS) on education of children with special needs in ECD centres in Kampala city. In exploring TSS and education of CwSNs in ECD centres, participants noted different transition support systems that are evident in their ECD centres, and those that would be necessary but lacking. Suffice to note was that findings also showed the extent and ways in which transition support systems (TSS) affect the education of children with special needs in ECD centre. It was observed that transition in behaviour or academic is supported by what facilities are in support of this change. The support facilities for example were: curriculum tailored to meet the learning expectations of different disability needs, play facilities that teach motor skills and social facilities that teach social change and behaviour. These transition facilities are further described in proceeding study findings.

*Transition Support in School Systems*

The value of the school is seen when children are able to progress from one level [class] to another. The aspect of transition encompasses all those facilities that support change in behaviour, conduct and study level to another.

Different opinions were also raised on the concept of transition. One of the respondents, and a teacher revealed:

*“in my view.... Transition is a change... and TSS are those facilities or tools used to facilities learner to change....” -Teacher at School A, May, 2019*

The above excerpt shows that transition is a change in behaviour and conduct, and so is measurable on basis of observed behaviour. In a related perspective, other teachers complemented this perspective, and said:

*“What we need to use to cause learning can in summary be transition objects..... And another stated: “it depends on what you mean but basically they are means used to cause change and transfer of knowledge, skills and competencies of learners in a school.(.....)” -Teachers at School B, May 2019*

All these perceptions pinpoint to the fact that subsequently, Transition Support system was found out to be a blend of all those facilities that help CWDs to change from the home environment to school environment, exhibit a change from being alone at home to being with others at school. It also involved a change from/move from isolation at home or in class to inter-personal relations.

While in other instances, it meant a change from one school setting to another, and change from one level to another, school to another. This findings implies that transition support are core means of enriching learning right from home by shaping learning to suit changes that child may meet after leaving home in ordinary social lifestyle.

Interestingly, it was established in this study that key areas of transition explored in a school are: the school system's ability to change in knowledge, skills, talents, competencies, curriculum, social skills, further study and transition in behaviour of children with special needs. More so, it was mentioned that ECDs facilitates learning and transition for CwSNs. This is possible even when the school is a mainstream setting with ordinary/able-bodied children. Reflecting on this, one senior teacher said,

*"We are a specialized centre for special needs education.... We have seen many of such children go through our hand". I am proud of it...by policy, like any other school, transition is expected...."* -Teacher at School B, May 2019.

Another head teacher said

*'Indeed.... which school can be a school without changing learners' behaviors... what is special with us handling CwSNs is that we emphasis transition in behaviour a lot. Some children for instance may not do much academically but can have a transition in behaviour. Enrich their natural talents and skills and be better persons in future. All that is what I consider as transition!'* -Head teacher, School A, May 2019.

As noted in aforementioned excerpts of statements, it can be appreciated that transition is key for any ECD centres. While ECD focus on causing this transition among its children, in this current study, 22 of 28 participants did not agree that their ECD centre was providing a high level of transition in education. This was further mentioned in several perceptions including, the ensuing reactions by one of the teachers at the case study ECD:

*"Yes.... We do see some change in some of the children brought here... but because we lack some facilities, some of the children take long or may not even change behaviour in their first year of stay with us. Transition is low especially intellectual related transition...."* Teachers at School A, May 2019.

Complementary is the view held by one of the senior teacher that:

*“Teaching these children is not easy. It requires not only patience, maturity and dedication. some CwSNs hardly change their conduct, but are kept here to be with others. The most we can translate their behaviour is in social change”.*

To the contrary, one head teacher said:

*“Surely we have seen them change.... some do well as if they are able-bodied children or even better in both curricula and co-curricular.... It is what is inside [motivation] that a learner has that drives his/her transition”.*

A related perspective from another Headteacher was

*“We have sent a few of our children to primary level especially those whose disability can be easily coped up at that level. This attracts more of the physically handicapped children, and those who have had secondary disability cases...”*

In light of the above findings, it was established that transition was not easily attainable but was realized in some instances. The ability of the teachers to cause transition did not only base on their competences and training, but facilities in place to cause this transition. In one of the schools, several transition facilities such as every day assessment board, curricula and correspondence with other schools such as Ntinda School of Deaf regarding children who get placement positions there.

Despite the evidence that a few of the children in ECD could move on to further study in primary especially CwSNs, there was evidence of transition in behaviour. Out of the 28 respondents contacted, 20 said, a visible behaviour change has been seen since CwSNs enrolled at the selected visited ECD centres. Out rightly, transition system support in the school affects education of children with special needs, as further discussed.

**Prepares children for another level of education:** As ascertained from various opinions, it was established that transition support system within school setting help to prepare children for the academic level. Results show that many participants believed that ECD schools should be committed towards preparing all children irrespective of their disability challenges towards termly, weekly and daily exercise meant to improve their academic scores.

This implies that transition was ideal for not only change of behaviour, but also for ensuring that children are able to learn academically like any other child in the ECD centre. Also proper preparation of children in ECD centres is one of the means of supporting their later transition to other academic levels of learning. However, this was associated with existing physical and social support facilities in place to cause learning to each distinct child with disability. In an interview with a head teacher of one ECD, she revealed:

*“There is no shortcut.....like we do for other children.... These children also do services, have what to do which we base on to assess whether they should progress on to next level of education. Some are given exams to do, while others practice some drill exercises depending on their abilities, and nature of disability”. “We share, and interact with them in English, teach them what they need to learn now in English, speech, and sign language owing to disability..”*

was an expression of one of the teachers. And to another teacher, he stated:

*“Yes my friend, this is a learning centre like any other school, assessment and learning evaluation is done.... Those who reach the set mark are able to move on to another level. However, we ensure that all the children get to experience some form of learning in one way or the other.....”*

Therefore, the study found that depending on facilities that constituted transition environment, could enable or inhibit education of children with special needs. Results show that in ECD schools, transition support system helps to change

perception of learners from traditional to school life, transit their inert knowledge to formal knowledge, learning in ECD facilitates gradual transition process and schools should provide a relevant curriculum to facilitate ECD learners' transition.

It was also observed that transition support system widens exposure of CWDs to other children, teachers and schools. This implies that proper support of schools with system support system, it is possible to support and enrich socialization between children with special needs and ordinary children in ECD centre. This transition is possible through socialization, children transit from their behaviours to change their attitude. The transitions make it possible for teachers to make learning aids which facilitate and empower learning scope of children.

**Transition Support System enriches learning:** The results show that transition support system facilities enriches learning outcomes of learners, become a duty of learners and teachers and ensure balance in education services access. However, findings observed from the visited ECD centres show that there are few opportunities enjoyed by CwSNs regarding transition, a few manage to make it to next education level (primary) through secondary to University. Regional imbalance in location of ECDs in urban centres facilitates transition more than in rural areas. In response to these perceptions, opinions were established and included:

*“Well established transition programmes, help learners to be shaped in their areas where they can learn best” We ensure that children can be able to get balanced opinions and how these facilities cause more learning... It is very key to establish on the distribution of ECD centres”* More so, a head teacher said: *“We still have issues... I can tell you. ECD is still a developing area....and few of these are in rural areas. If we can be able to cause transition in both urban and rural areas”.*



From above perceptions, it was observed that transition school support system enriches learning through better facilitation of teachers. The children with special needs are able to attain enriched learning experiences with transition facilities in education school system.

**Practical and academic change in behaviour:** Transition system support in a school is very key for enriching skills. These facilities can be in the school setting or school support systems that utilise transition tools like curriculum, timetable, among others. In the study findings, Transition in skills is core area in education of CwSNs that borrows from the transition System Support in the ECD centre.

Drawing from these findings, it implies that like it is in other learning institutions, learning is considered effective when there is change in behaviour. The change in behaviour must not only be seen but observed being implemented. When children with special needs like other children undertake some activities such as weaving, making sandals, read numerals from 1-100. All this is a practical academic transition. In response to practical change, Transition Support system facilitated learning and change in behaviour. Several excerpts were established regarding this effect as noted in the opinions. Some of these FGDs opinions include:

*“I came to school when I could not mop and now I can mop our seating room.... I am able to help pick dropped waste in the compound even though I use a walking cane to move around... I have also learnt to make door mats..... our class was the best in making necklaces, belts and sandals last year, and we won a prize.... I think I have learnt a lot at this school....”* FGD excerpts, May 2019.

These were some of opinions of children with special needs related to transition support facilities in place. However, not every CwSNs is able to transit/change at same pace with the other. Thus, availability of transition facilities in ECD was a core

factor for learning of CwSNs. Participants supported the view that when teachers are trained and are able to support children, they facilitate transition. Related to this aspect also were the opinions key informants. In his opinion, one of the head teachers said:

*“For children to progress and put in practice their skills, the quality of teaching as a transition factor must be highly enriched... learners emulate, share, interact and learn from teachers the skills they move on with to next level. For example children are able to get literacy skills by listening to the teacher..”*

Complementarily, several perspectives were also revealed in interviews. For instance, some teachers noted that: *“guided by the curriculum in place, we interact with all children in the school, those with special needs inclusive....and so as a teacher I think, better defined curriculum, own abilities can help support the education of these children.”*

The ability of the children to read, share and enrich their talents is shown in the magazines, newspapers and drawings and are supported by transition support systems in ECD centres. When these TSS are well managed, they aid learners acquaint themselves with transition opportunities.

**Talent development for lifelong skills:** Participants also revealed that Transition School Support system (TSSS) is key in facilitating talent development which is learnt as a lifelong skill. In the various opinions, it was established that focus need to be directed towards TSSS, as it helps to support children to develop their talents such as singing, co-creation by use of musical instruments such as drums and engaging / learning to act in plays and drama.

In regard to view that Transition School Support system has supported them to develop skills, children revealed a number of opinions and noted:

*“Although, we do not have enough instruments, we use them to learn how to sing, do drama and dance. Our school has computers that facilitate learning from photoshop, and hence be able to learn these facilities now, and in future. More so, collaboration is key to facilitate learning, and empower skills, knowledge and education”.*

The study found out that as part of transition school support system, ECD centres are able to facilitate collaborations and held learners visit and get exposed to various areas they can join in future. This implies that efforts ought to be on ensuring that reliable transition facilities are in place because they support change. More so transition facilities help to meet the needs of learners including children with special needs. Reflections on this assertion can be presented in following perspectives:

*‘Collaboration is key and can be facilitated among ECD and other centres where children can further their skills, knowledge and education when there are better transition opportunities in place’.*

However, achievement of the right transition support system was highly constrained since a number of ECD centres were not well supported. As a result, children in these ECD centres may not easily gain and learn from these collaborations. One of the peculiar responses, included the opinions below:

*“A few ECD centres offering special needs education in the country are able to support their children with special needs to access and have well laid platform of transition. For instance, a few are willingness to collaborate with each other and others lack necessary facilities for teaching and learning of CwSNs. Where they exist, these facilities are not in the right condition, place and design appropriate for use by children with special needs”* FGDs at ECDs, May 2019

Other aspects of transition support systems were echoed in relation to support in ECD centres to enable CwSNs do examinations. In relation to these transition levels, different opinions were revealed. One Headteacher revealed:

*“Transition can also be in terms of physical infrastructure in an inclusive school. Children are allowed to visit other areas especially National theatre. Basing on this they learn and can be examined on these aspects they see. Giving them examinations is a way of facilitating their (CwSNs) transition like any other learner”* Headteacher Sch. A, May 2019.

In addition to the above findings, one of the teachers said;

*“as we focus on transition to support education of children with special needs, there is a challenge of examination process. The exam process is not one slow but tedious. Each learner wants an interpreter, and yet the teachers are few”*

As cited in opinions above, results show that it was very ideal to facilitate the education of children, and this was constrained with resources. One key transition support was ability to help parents to support further education of these children, which was lacking in ECD centres visited.

**Adoption to life skill facilities and equipment use:** The study participants revealed that Transition Support Systems provide an opportunity to cater for individual differences basing on their disability. The study established that teachers need to be accommodative because CwSNs learn at a slow pace. This implies that transition is a gradual process. Hence it is key to properly utilise transition support systems like in bowel movement, sanitation and feeding. Behaviour transition such as adopting seats, toilets and walkways is key for proper CwSNs just like it is for other children in ECD. With necessary transition support, teachers can be able to spend more time, and give special attention to CwSNs who learn at a slow pace.

In summary, and from the above presentation, it can be recognised that in different ECD centres, support system in schools is core in all forms whether physical, social and/or transition facilitation. More so, above findings express the different ways in which presence or inadequacy of these physical, social and transition support systems affects the education of children in ECD centres especially for CwSNs. It is on the basis of these findings, that the researcher discusses these findings, makes conclusions and recommendations about Support school system and Education of CwSNs in ECD centres in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings as established in the study. The chapter further presents conclusions made and recommendations suggested on school support systems and education of CwSNs in ECD Centres in Kampala City.

#### **Effect of physical support systems on education of children with special needs in ECD centres**

In this study, the first objective was to establish effect of Physical Support Systems on Education of CwSNs in ECD centres. Physical Support system mainly included physical items that were in place, fixed, motorable or accessible for use by children with Special Needs. These physical support systems were also cited in earlier works on ECD as tangible learning aids prevalent in schools (Miles & Singal, 2015). Relatedly, it was mentioned that these physical support system were either self-help physical support facilities or school-based physical facilities.

Additionally, Self-help physical support system are facilities that learners can provided for themselves right from homes as they enroll for school. They are facilities that CwSNs require to help themselves in everyday life whether at school or at home, and included braille, wheel chairs, specialized toilets which the children can use on their own. Similarly, Malofeev (2016) revealed that as part of their lifestyle, CwSNs require physical support. This is needed to facilitate their movement and in performance of basis chores of life.

In the schools visited, a number of parents could not provide self-help physical support facilities and hence children benefited by getting/finding them at school. The cost of using them was met by the school and they were also user-friendly. This inadequacy by parents to CwSNs is also expressed by earlier works (Kane, 2010; Teresa, 2013) who mentioned that parents were failing to offer physical support to CwSNs is ideal for their education, and also agree with the perspective of the constraints of education of CwSNs in Uganda (Najjingo, 2009).

Additionally, self-help facilities helped learners to improve on their school life. The existence of these facilities was a core aspect in supporting education of children as also echoed in earlier works on CwSNs (Eileen & O’Raw, 2010). Comparatively, the difficulties in accessing Physical Support in school system that was for personal use/Self-help depended on nature of disability (Zubets, 2013). Some disabilities have complications that on most occasions provide multiple needs of facilities for cordial stay at the school.

In addition, further findings revealed that physical facilities are also school-based. School based physical support system reflects on what school can offer to support education of children, not necessarily for use by an individual learner but a group of learners (Teresa, 2013). These facilities included well-arranged compound, disability suiting toilets, dining tables, ramps, stairways, walkways, special needs effective elevators, toys, play facilities such as furniture, swings and disability friendly physical toilets, places of meals, play and classroom facilities like braille, walking cane and moveable desks. These were echoed in earlier works of Najjingo (2009) that learners with disability need physical support which complements their physical support needs at school like any other children. These findings were also in

agreement with earlier works on the need for school based physical support facilities in Africa (Kwame *et al.*, 2010).

Results indicated that in all ECD centres visited Physical System support was rather inadequately provided like computers and others absolutely lacking. This affected CwSNs who required them for use. The dependence on school system and support to this system to enable physical movements among children with disabilities is fundamental for their education (Zubets, 2013). Poor physical system support at home and prevailing schools offering inclusive education as expounded in this study agree to what was pointed out in earlier works (Glenn, 2015; Teresa, 2013), and so this was not a challenge in education of children with special needs.

A reflection on the above status provides a rationale to explore the effects it has on their education. Findings denoted that the existence or to contrary, absence of Physical Support Systems affects the education of children. This agrees to what was maintained in the UNESCO (2017), that education of CwSNs is quite demanding especially with relevant facilities, which often leave these children at the disadvantage in accessing, attaining and benefiting from formal education. In the finding, one of the areas pointed out was its effects on enrollment. Majority participants concede that Physical Support Systems especially school-based facilities motivate parents to send their children with special needs to a given school. The CwSNs feel supported, given aid and rehabilitated on how to cope in school which improves their willingness to go to school. This aspect is significantly emphasized also in Lundqvist (2016) on special needs education.



Parents also develop morale to send their CwSNs to schools where there are necessary physical support. These findings agree with Glen (2015) who revealed that presence and support of schools with necessary physical facilities depending on the nature of disability handled, is ideal for education of the children with special needs. While NGOs like Cheshire International were pointed out its efforts are hardly enough and physical support is still below average levels. In this context, higher Physical Support Systems are considered key for enhancing decisions to educate a child in a given school. These opinions agree with Russell (2016) who reported that operating in friendly support systems provide conducive environment for CwSNs to study and accomplish academic expectations like any other child at school.

The study found out that Physical Support Systems and support attendance of CwSNs. When these facilities are in place, children feel part of the school and supported in the classroom and compound. More so, results show Physical support systems simplify wellbeing of CwSNs enhancing their school welfare, and guaranteeing their opportunity to stay at school for long hours and years. These findings reflect what Kane (2010) refers to as structural support that enables learning of CwSNs in ECD centres. In contrary, their absence or adequacy affects interests of learners, most often negatively.

Another visible aspect was that Physical Support Systems affects not only attendance of learners but make CwSNs gets acquitted with school environment. Physical support enhances learning, integrate and support conceptualization of learnt content. This finding is also reflected in other works (Brokane & Zaleeva, 2011; Glenn, 2015). More so, Physical Support Systems when improved enhance the education cycle and provides a key towards making these children feel at ease when

in class and in compound and stay in class. For instance having conducive and affordable facilities such as computers, toilets, and adequate relevant furniture make it ideal for CwSNs to remain at school. This finding agree with Teresa (2013) who reported that a serene environment for learning of children with special needs is one with physical facilities that acclimatize CwSNs to the school environment.

Furthermore, physical support system was found key for facilitating mobility of CwSNs especially when resources are in place, in the instances where there are children with multiple disabilities. The ECDs visited did not have all necessary physical support system. This is an indication that a lot remain desirable in education for CwSNs. These findings confer with Peters (2009) revealed Education for CWDs is basis on for better education of children. Indeed laxity in providing enough computers, toilets, adequate relevant furniture, swimming pools, and other physical inputs have adverse effects on education of CwSNs drawing from experiences of ECD centres in Kampala City.

### **Effect of social support systems on education of children with special needs in ECD Centres**

In exploring the effect of school support system and education of children with special needs, this study focused closely on the social issues. The socialization attribute is key for the education of CwSNs for love, care, comfort and a sense of belonging. This aspect is also emphasized by Brokane & Zaleeva (2011) when they also asserted that CwSNs are also social beings whose day to-day life including education is well spent when they socialize with others. Results in this study henceforth show that social support systems are and ought to be given due diligence in planning for the education of children with special needs. This finding agrees

entirely with Russell (2016), that social support is key for children with special needs in all aspects of life.

The social support systems were explored and found to relate to all that ‘aid’ the school has or gives to CwSNs to help them to relate, share, interact and stay together. This Social Support Systems was evident in organizing joint plays, drama, play toys, social environment where children can share in the school setting. The school setting included how best it can allow better co-operation. These facilities were also pointed in Eileen and O’ Raw (2010) who argued that social issues were encouraged, as a means to make play facilities, engaging in drama, shows and parent visit days.

In this study’s context, various opinions were echoed regarding Social Support Systems on the education of CwSNs. It was pointed out by more than three quarters of the respondents that Social Support Systems enhance team learning, and attracts help from other members of school community to CwSNs. One hence may not out the earlier scholarly opinion that to attain full social integration of learners with disability in the learning environment, there is need for better social facilities that make them learn as peers and teams (Zubets, 2013) when expounding on social attributes in education of CwSNs. Indeed, the social warmth expected by children with special needs at their school is harnessed when the other children work as a team in their favour. This perception was significantly agreed to by the earlier study by Elena *et al.*, (2016), that CwSNs learn and socialize well when part of the larger society. More so, I have strong consideration that social facilities when shared and made available to CwSNs make them learn despite challenges associated with their teaching-learning encounters.

Findings also reveal that social support systems are indispensable in facilitating education of CwSNs by arousing their interest and motives to stay at school. In schools where social support was prioritized, learners with special needs were interested not only in coming to but also stay at school to play. These aspects included sharing computers in doing photoshop, playing using swings, swimming pool, sand pools. This revealed that CwSNs in this environment finally get the social love they need when supported by peers. These aspects agree with Malofeev (2016) who noted that one other aspect of social support system is the teachers' skills, competences and readiness to work and help out the children with Special Needs.

This research found out that Social Support Systems is ideal in extending and improving the stay of children at school as an extension and a better home environment. Proper play and social support can help create a sense of belonging, attachment between children who play together and their motivation to keep at school. It was however found out that social support at most ECDs were not only inadequate in supply, but irregular. This affected the number of CwSNs to access, stay and keep at school. These findings agree with Sigstad (2017) who cited that there relationships appear to be a prerequisite for encouraging CwSNs to attain belonging to the school like other learners. This is part of the social school support the children can get as and when they are at school.

One of such were having a friendly school compound and playground where children can interact, play, move around and enjoy free movement. Complementarily, social support from peers, friends and teachers make their social life not only better but also academic enriching. Nevertheless, for ECD visited social facilities were inadequate, and less emphasized. These findings agree with Pijil *et al.*

(2008) who recounted that the social support system and academic achievement may be vital closely related, give that one enriches and supports them in both short and long run.

More so, results show that presence of Social Support Systems was key in facilitating transfer of home-based skills to schools. Consequently, CwSNs engaging in social events at school such as art, craft, drama, academic and entrepreneurship became better with the skills a school and after school. Hence school social support was an extension of home making it easier for children to learn and develop their talents. Social Support Systems is ideal, social relations at school improve and the ability of these children to be happy at school and feel it is an extension of home environment or better home. These findings agree with Merinova (2007) who also asserted that there is need for consideration of what makes children with special needs live and stay at school like any other children; partly of these are social facilities. In some interactions, some children found it convenient to be at school and liked it than their homes. This was one of the effects of an ideal social environment for education of children with special needs (Adkinson et al, 2007). It was also expressed in this study that Social Support Systems reengineers co-operation from other children, ordinary children, teachers, care givers, parents, head teacher, and extension of love, care and support. Socialization made CwSNs and attach their belonging to schools, also mentioned in (Sigstad, 2017)' study.

Drawing from the findings, it was noted that amidst the benefits of social facilities in enhancing learning of children with special needs. The prevalence level of these Social Support Systems facilities was indeed low (Elena *et al.*, 2016). This research and according to the majority of the participants, school support system is

key in making education more of academic than social in a number of ECD centres visited in the study. Reliably informed by above effects, the researcher is keen to note that Social Support Systems provide outstanding benefits to CwSNs as also revealed in earlier study of Elena *et al.* (2016) cannot be underestimated. Overall, the effect of Social Support Systems was visible, clear, and outstanding. Most of the CwSNs were better socially and rehabilitated as compared to prior condition in which they were in for period they had been at ECD centres visited in Kampala City.

### **Effect of Transition Support Systems on the Education of Children with Special Needs in ECD centres**

Transition is key for life and right from childhood, a person is in the process of transition. Transition of CwSNs is ideal not only for academic purposes but also for cordial stay in ever changing environment. Results are affirmed that transition support mechanisms encompass all facilities that support the change in behaviour, conduct, and study level to another. These assertions regarding transition support systems were also pointed in earlier study of Eileen and O' Raw (2010) who recounted that transition cuts through all levels of education to work place all evident in behaviour change.

The findings also shows that transition include that skills, talents, competencies, curriculum and social relations among learners. The transition focused on policy requirements of ECDs facilitate learning and make transition possible for (CwSNs) even when the school is a mainstream. In respect to education of Children with special needs in ECD centres, transition support is key (Macharia, 2018). In many school including ECD centres, transition support yield to change in

attitude, behaviour and actions. This requires not only patience but also maturity levels among teachers and learners. This perspective concurs with Brokane and Zalceva (2011) who revealed that when it comes to preparing the child to post- ECD life, school should have a system that allows learner to transit not only in academics but also in behaviour.

The ability of teachers to ease transition did not only base on their competences and training, but facilities in place at their schools. Transition facilities such as every day assessment board, curricula and correspondence with other schools was a core aspect for the support of CwSNs and a few ECD had effective transition support systems in place (Elena *et al.*, 2016). As shown transitions support included the ability to change behaviour, assessment of academic improvement and possibility of moving on with studies beyond ECD. This agrees with what Zubets (2013) reported that good education system is one where learners are able to change their behaviour, transit from tradition and acquire knowledge, skills and abilities as a gradual transition process.

Furthermore the study revealed that transition system support affects education of children with special needs by preparing them for another level of education. Children are able to participate and develop their talents by doing termly, weekly and daily exercises meant to improve their academic scores (Eileen & O' Raw, 2010). Owing to facilities in the transition environment, CwSNs can attain desirable education achievement by changing in their perception to learning and behaviour gradually. These findings agree with Macharia (2018) who also revealed that with improved teacher professionalism to handle CwSNs, adopting and using a

given curriculum becomes easier, and consequently results into facilitating transition abilities among these CwSNs.

Transition by socialization, makes children transit from their behaviours and change their attitude which empowers their learning scope of the children. This opinion makes reference to Glenn (2015) who noted that transition support in school provides a relevant curriculum, and exposure to necessary and relevant knowledge by learners. Additionally, transition Support System enriches learning by recognizing special needs and providing equal opportunities to CwSNs like other children (Eileen & O' Raw, 2010). Additionally, these findings confer to Lundqvist (2016) who asserted that educational transition in the early school years, results into innovative learning using supportive learning aids in place.

To sum it all, as mentioned in the findings, transition support system is key in facilitating talent development among CwSNs, offering them lifelong skills, and supporting these CwSNs to develop their talents. Notable talents such as singing, co-creation, use of musical instruments such as drums, acting in plays and drama are groomed (Sigstad, 2017). Transition support accelerates the learning platform. These findings agree with Wehman (2013) who recounts that transition is change in behaviour. Hence, CwSNs gradually transit to be [outmatch] other children as also mentioned by Claborn & Kane (2012) that as a means of providing lasting solution to education of CwSNs, there is need for transition support facilities. They also reflect on what UNESCO (2017) pointed out that schools that offer recommendable transition facilities elevate the scope of education attainment of CwSNs. This is vital for education life of CwSNs right in early years of education at ECD level.



## **Conclusion**

Drawing from the above findings, the study concluded the following:

### **Effect of physical support systems on education of children with special needs in ECD Centres in Kampala City**

It is concluded that there is a significant effect of Physical Support System on Education of CwSNs. Indeed, results of this study (25 out of 28 respondents) agree that declining education of CwSNs was constrained by inadequate and dysfunctional physical support system in ECD centres. Key notable effects were Physical Support Systems their influence on enrollment, attendance, learning and motivation of the Children with special needs in their ECD centres.

### **Effect of Social support systems on the education of children with special needs in ECD Centres in Kampala City**

Results show that in regard to the second objective to establish the effect of social support systems on the education of CwSNs in ECD Centres in Kampala City, it was concluded that: There is a significant effect of Social Support Systems on the education of children with special needs in ECD Centres in Kampala City. Six of each ten participants discoursed that Social Systems Support was still low in ECD centres. Visible effects were that social support enhances team learning, motivation, skill transfer, act as social aid in sharing skills and abilities, if well provided.

### **Effect of transition support systems on the education of children with special needs in ECD Centres in Kampala City**

The study concluded that transition support system has a lesser positive effect on the education of CwSNs, as most of children benefit a lot from the physical facilities and social support. From 28 participants, 25 said their transition support

system was inadequate and this had some effect on education of CwSNs. The effect of transition was visible on how transition school support system prepares children for another level of education, enriches learning, practical and academic change in behaviour, focuses on talent development and enriches ability of children with special needs to use equipment of their life skills. Generally it can be concluded that all attributes of School Support system (physical, social and transition) had an effect on the education of children with special needs for ECD centres in Kampala City.

### **Recommendations**

There is need for government through the Ministry of Education and Sports to increase its support to ECD centres with necessary physical and social support system. New special needs ECD centres should be opened up and supported. The few that are there should be rehabilitated and improved to support learning for CwSNs.

There is need to install more physical facilities, paying attention to CwSNs' specification such as in construction of toilets, walkways and providing writing pads. The Schools (ECD) centres need to provide facilities such as pencils with big grips, communication boards, and good seaters for volley ball, desks chairs, and clutches which are lacking but relevant physical support to education of children in ECD centres.

There is need for teachers to assess children with special needs considering their slow pace of transition as compared to other children. They should be given extra time during teaching. To achieve this role, ECD teachers handling CwSNs should be facilitated and with motivation allowances. More so, there is need to

deploy more special needs specialists teachers to facilitate teaching of CwSNs in ECD centres.

Focus should be on ensuring that there is a leveled ground for all the children to attain their education well, offer sanitary facilitation and enough space in class. For example allowing wheel chairs to move and turn-around freely and at ease and also providing pavements on walkways. Efforts should be devoted by School Administrators and Teachers to utilise the available Physical System Support facilities, be innovative with new structures in means and affordability of pupils, parents and the ECD centre.

There is need to seek for sponsors and donors who can extend aid to EECD centres and individual CwSNs. This can help in enhancing their access these facilities with ease and at manageable cost. Additionally, donors and sponsor can support the Education of CwSNs with physical equipment like wheel chairs and walking sticks and textbooks

There is need to focus on providing relevant and modern transition- support facilities in ECD centres. Such facilities can include provision of computer-based learning, providing writing platform for children who use the feet to write as support to their education.

There is need to emphasis a one-to-one interaction as a means of social school system support. CwSNs need a good social system support that can cater for individual differences basing on their disability. Parents need to look for schools that can enable and support their CwSNs to slowly but gradually learn. Specifically, focus should be on looking for a special needs assistant and centre where the child is able to exercise, play and meet fellow disabled children.

**Areas for further research**

In conducting this study, I find need to explore further the following areas:

- More research is needed to explore the effect of parental involvement in the education of children with special needs education in ECD.
- There is need for a study on the effect of school support systems on the education of children with special needs in other districts in Uganda

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## Appendices

### Appendix I: Consent letter

Kyambogo University  
P.o. Box 1, KYAMBOGO  
Kampala Uganda  
10/06/2019

Dear Sir/ Madam,

#### SEEKING FOR YOUR CONSENT IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY

You have been randomly selected to participate in this survey leading to the award of a Master of Education in Early Childhood Development Degree of Kyambogo University. As a person involved in activities regarding education of children especially ECD, you are so resourceful in providing relevant information for this study. The topic of study is “**Support systems and Education of Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Education in Selected ECD Centres in Kampala Capital City Authority**”. Therefore, you are being contacted to participate in this study through interviews/ Focus group discussions regarding the above topic.

With this letter, I am asking for your consent to participate in the study. **If you consent, please, fill in the tear off portion below and return it to the bearer of this letter.** This is an academic study. Hence your responses will be used for academic purposes and treated with utmost confidentiality.

Yours faithfully,

.....

**NAMUYABA ROBINAH BEATRICE**  
*Student/Researcher*  
Kyambogo University

## **Appendix II:**

### **Interview guide for Headteacher and Teachers for lower primary Classes**

This interview is on the topic: “Support systems and Education of Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Education in Selected ECD Centres in Kampala Capital City Authority”

#### **Section A: Introductions and Bio-data**

Self-introduction: (i) *Introduction of the researcher (Interviewer)*

(ii) *Introduction of the respondent (Interviewee)*

#### **Section B: Physical support systems available for children with Special Needs**

What physical support facilities are needed by children with Special Needs at this school?

Which of these facilities does the school provide?

In your opinion, do you think the physical support systems/facilities provided have affected the education of these children with special needs?

Why do you think so?

#### **Section C: Social support systems offered to children with Special Needs**

Which social support aspects do children with special needs require?

How have teachers supported education of children with special needs?

In your view, how have the social support affected the education of these children with special needs at your school?

#### **Section D: Transition support systems offered to children with Special Needs**

How many of the children with special needs education have moved on to the next education level of learning?

What support does the school provide to help children with special needs in education to progress to a higher level of learning?

In your opinion, how have the school helped these children with special needs to transit (improve) in their learning? In which way?

*“Thank you for your time and responses”*

### Appendix III:

#### Focus group Discussion Guide

This interview is on the topic: “Support systems and Education of Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Education in Selected ECD Centres in Kampala Capital City Authority”

#### **Section A: Introductions and Bio-data**

Self-introduction: (i) *Introduction of the researcher (Moderator)*  
(ii) *Introduction of the respondents (Discussants)*

#### **Topic 1: Physical support systems for children with Special Needs**

The researcher will briefly highlight what physical support systems are and then asks related question on the topic such as:

What physical support facilities do you need?

Do you get these physical support facilities at this school?

How do you feel when you fail to get these facilities you need?

Do you think these physical support facilities would help you learn well?

Why do you think so?

#### **Section C: Social support systems offered to Children with Special Needs.**

The researcher will briefly highlight what social support systems are and then asks related question on the topic such as:

Who supports you at this school when you are studying?

What social support do you usually need?

How have teachers supported you?

How have fellow children helped you in education and play?

#### **Section D: Transition support systems offered to children with Special Needs.**

The researcher will briefly highlight what transition support systems are and then asks related question on the topic such as:

How many of your friends have left this school to another school?

What have you learnt to do after you came to this school?

What can you do on your own without the help of the teacher which you could not do before?

What do you like at school?

How have the facilities helped you study?

*Thank you for your time and responses*

### Appendix IV:

#### Document Checklist

In the course of conducting this study, the researcher will observe and take note of the following aspects related with the physical, social and transition support system in the school.

The checklist below will be observed.

Particular	Remark (put a tick (√))				General Remark
	<i>Available</i>	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not in usable state</i>	<i>Regularly used</i>	
Physical Support facilities					
Social Support facilities					
Transition Support facilities					

## Appendix V:

### Parent's Consent/Approval for Child's participation

Dear Parent/ Guardian

Greetings!

I am grateful to have been in touch with you. The purpose of this communication is to request for your approval for me to engage you and your child in this study. This is an academic study leading to the award of a Master of Education in Early Childhood Development Degree of Kyambogo University. The topic of study is **“Support systems and Education of Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Education in Selected ECD Centres in Kampala Capital City Authority”**.

With this letter, I am asking for your consent to participate in the study. **If you consent, please, fill in spaces below and give me further areas of concern that you may need me to put in consideration as I interact with your child.** All the information provided will be used for academic purposes and treated with utmost confidentiality.

Name of child	School	Special areas/considerations	Approval Yes/ No	Signature of Parent/guardian

Thank you for your Trust and co-operation

Sincerely

**NAMUYABA ROBINAH BEATRICE**

*Student/Researcher*

Kyambogo University

**Appendix VI:**  
**Letters of Acceptance**



P. O. BOX 1, KYAMBUGO, KAMPALA, UGANDA

**Appendix VI:**  
**Faculty of Education**  
**Department of Early Childhood Education**

**INTERNAL MEMO**

**FROM:** Chair, Department Graduate Board, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019

**TO:** Ms. Namuyaba Robinah Beatrice  
C/o Early Childhood Education  
Department

**REF:** 15/U/15925/GMEC/PE

**REF: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL**



This is to inform you that the Faculty Graduate School Board at its meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018 approved your research proposal for the Master of Education (Early Childhood Education). You can now proceed to the field for data collection.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Ejuu Godfrey

**FOR: CHAIR, FACULTY GRADUATE BOARD**

**CC** Chair, Early Childhood Education Department Graduate Board

**Supervisors**

- 1 Dr. Ejuu Godfrey  
Early Childhood Education
- 2 Dr. Sr. Evangelista Busingye  
Early Childhood Education

# KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY

P. O. BOX 1, KYAMBOGO – KAMPALA, UGANDA

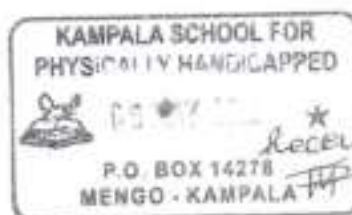
## Faculty of Education Department of Early Childhood Education

### INTERNAL MEMO

**FROM:** Chair, Department Graduate Board, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019

**TO:** Ms. Namuyaba Robinah Beatrice **REF:** 15/U/15925/GMEC/PE  
C/o Early Childhood Education  
Department

**REF:** APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL



This is to inform you that the Faculty Graduate School Board at its meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018 approved your research proposal for the Master of Education (Early Childhood Education). You can now proceed to the field for data collection.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Ejoo Godfrey

**FOR: CHAIR, FACULTY GRADUATE BOARD**

**CC** Chair, Early Childhood Education Department Graduate Board

**Supervisors**

- 1 Dr. Ejoo Godfrey  
Early Childhood Education
- 2 Dr. Sr. Evangelista Busingye  
Early Childhood Education