TEACHER COMPETENCE AND CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF ITANDA PARISH, IGANGA DISTRICT-UGANDA

BY

NAKASANGO ROSE
11/U/35/GMED/PE

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DECLARATION

I, **NAKASANGO ROSE** declare that this dissertation entitled, "Teacher Competence and Curriculum Implementation in Pre-Primary Schools. A Case Study of Itanda Parish, Iganga District" is my original work and has never been presented anywhere to any institution of higher learning before for any award.

Signature.....N..... Date...21/12/2016.

NAKASANGO ROSE

11/U/35/GMED/PE

APPROVAL

This dissertation entitled, "Teacher Competence and Curriculum Implementation in Pre-Primary Schools. A Case Study of Itanda Parish, Iganga District" has been submitted to the University with our approval as the University Supervisors for examination.

Signature..... Date...02-12-2016

Dr Kasule George Wilson

Signature..... Date...02-12-2016

Dr Sr Maria Goretti Kaahwa

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late father, my bed ridden mother and my lovely beautiful daughters, Scovia, Justine, Juliet and my dearest only son Alex for all the hardship and patience endured during the time I pursued this Masters of Education in Policy, Planning and Management Course at Kyambogo University.

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"May the Good Lord reward you abundantly"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE ..... **i**
DECLARATION ii
APPROVAL iii
DEDICATION iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT v
TABLE OF CONTENTS vi
LIST OF FIGURES viii
LIST OF TABLES ix
ACRONYMS x
ABSTRACT xi
CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION **1**
1.0 Introduction 1
1.1 Background of the study 1
1.2 Problem Statement 5
1.3 Purpose of the study 5
1.4 Specific Objectives 6
1.5 Research Questions 6
1.6 Research Hypothesis 6
1.7 Scope of the Study 6
1.8 Significance of the Study 7
1.9 Limitation of the Study 7
1.10 Conceptual Framework 8
1.11 Definition of Operational Terms 9
CHAPTER TWO : LITERATURE REVIEW **10**
2.0 Introduction 10
2.1 The Competencies Teachers Need to Implement Curriculum. 10
2.2 The Teacher Competence Levels in Implementing the Curriculum 14
2.3. Professional development Activities that Enhance Teacher Competence to Implement Curriculum 16
2.4 The Extent To Which Pre-Primary Curriculum Is Implemented 19
CHAPTER THREE : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY **21**
3.1 Introduction 21
3.2 Research Design 21
3.3 Target Population 21

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling strategy 21
3.5 Data sources and types 22
3.6 Research Instruments 22
3.7 Validity and Reliability 23
3.8 Data Collection Procedure 24
3.9 Data Analysis 24
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION ... 25
4.1 Introduction 25
4.2 Respondent's Demography 26
4.3 Competencies Teachers Need to Implement Curriculum in Pre-Primary Schools 27
4.4 Teachers Competence Levels. 29
4.5 Professional Development 33
4.6 The Extent to Which Pre-Primary Curriculum is implemented 37
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 42
5.1 Introduction 42
5.2 Discussion of Findings 42
5.3 Conclusion 50
5.4 Recommendation 51
5.5 Areas for further study 51
REFERENCES 52
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS 56
APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS 60

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework ……..……..8

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Distribution of questionnaires according to positions of respondents 25

Table 4.2: The characteristics of the respondents 26

Table 4.3: Showing the competencies 27

Table 4.4: ECD Teachers Competence Levels 30

Table 4.5: The Professional Development Activities 33

Table 4.6: The Extent to Which Pre-Primary Curriculum is implemented 37

Table 4.7: Shows Pearson correlations Analysis 40

Table 4.8: Shows findings on regression. 41

ACRONYMS

ECD : Early Childhood Development

GWPE : Graduation Writing Proficiency Exam

PEAP : Protected Extensible Authentication Protocol

TOA : Theory of Action

HIV : Human immune virus

PTCs : Primary Teacher Colleges

CCC : Certificate in Community Child Care

ECE : Early Childhood Development Teacher's Certificate

PLE : Primary Leaving Examination

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools in Itanda Parish, Iganga. The study's specific objectives included; to establish the competences teachers need to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools, to establish ECD teachers competence levels in implementing the curriculum in pre-primary schools, to establish professional development activities that enhance teacher competence to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools and to determine the extent to which pre-primary curriculum is implemented. The target population for this study were the Head teachers and teachers from the pre-primary schools of Itanda Parish, Iganga District. The parish consisted of 32 pre-primary schools which are managed by 96 teachers who will be targeted for the study. A sample size of 77 respondents consisting of 45 teachers and 32 head teachers was considered for the study. This study was conducted using descriptive research design with mixed-methods of qualitative and quantitative techniques. Purposive sampling was used for the study .Questionnaires and interview guides were used for data collection in addition to observation method. Data sources were both primary and secondary. The findings revealed that 65.3% variance in curriculum implementation is attributed to teacher competence (Adjusted R Square = .651), thus this reveal that teacher competence is more statistically significant predictor of curriculum implementation (Beta = .808, Sig. = .000). In general, the regression model fit was significant at sig. = .000. In conclusion, it was established that there is a relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation. The more competent teachers are, the more effective the implementation of curriculum becomes. It was established that teachers need a number of competencies to enable them implement ECD curriculum efficiently and effectively. This includes developing the ability to make ECD schemes, ability to organize and manage ECD instructional processes and understanding the key statutory instruments that govern the teaching profession. This implies that nursery teachers require regular training so as to improve their skills in curriculum implementation. The study recommended that the government should promote in-service training of pre-primary teachers so as to improve their skills in curriculum implementation. School managers should allow teachers to attend education conferences and seminars so as to gain more skills in their field.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, specific objectives, research questions, research hypothesis, scope of the study, significance of the study, limitation, conceptual framework and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the study

Historical Perspective

With the gradual rise of more complex civilizations in the river valleys of Egypt and Babylonia, knowledge became too complicated to transmit directly from person to person and from generation to generation (Nederstigt & Mulder, 2011). To be able to function in complex societies, man needed some way of accumulating, recording, and preserving his cultural heritage. So with the rise of trade, government, and formal religion came the invention of writing, by about 3100 BC. Because firsthand experience in everyday living could not teach such skills as writing and reading, a place devoted exclusively to learning, the school appeared. And with the school appeared a group of adults specially designated as teachers, the scribes of the court and the priests of the temple. The children were either in the vast majority who continued to learn exclusively by an informal apprenticeship or the tiny minority who received formal schooling. This led to the rise of formal education (Guisepi, 2010).

Formal education in Uganda owes its origins to the activities of Early Missionaries who came to Uganda prior to the inception of the British colonial rule in Uganda. Education was however, restricted to only small groups of people that mainly comprised children of the nobles, prominent families, tribal heads and the clergy. The education system was modeled on the British 7-4-2-3 tier. However, following attainment of independence in 1962 up to 1970, the post-colonial government prioritized the expansion and development of the education system to cater for the rapidly expanding number of school going age children. Education sector became increasingly central to manpower development in the country.

Throughout the 1970s, and early 1980s, education sector like other sectors of the economy collapsed. This period was characterized by inadequate physical infrastructure; instructional

materials; qualified teachers which resulted into use of untrained personnel in the primary education system to over 40%; and under payment of teachers. Above all the strategic functions1 of the sector was undermined. Consequently the quality of teachers deteriorated at all levels; only 50% of the school going-age children accessed primary education and approximately 10% had access to the other sub-sectors. This culminated into significant manpower gaps in the labor market (Education Sector Annual Performance Reports, 2009).

From 1986, and throughout the past two and half decades, education sector witnessed comprehensive policy reforms that have put it decisively on the development path. The main thrust of these reforms are focused on establishing an enabling environment for reconstruction of the sector as well as its development geared towards enhancing equitable access across all the sub-sectors. The policy for the reform process has been mainly based on the Government White Paper on Education (GWPE, 1992) and the Poverty Eradication Action Plans (PEAPs, 1997 - 2009). These policy frameworks have been translated into action through the Education Sector Investment Plan (1998-2003), the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP: 2003-2018) and the National Development Plan I (NDPI, 2010 – 2015) and NDPII (2016-2020).

Theoretical Perspective

This study was based on Capacity Building Theory of Action as advanced by Ricket. The theory emphasizes the importance of instructional capacity building and the use of practice-centered criteria grounded in research on teaching and learning to define the characteristics of effective teaching. This research underscores the importance of pedagogical content knowledge; classroom management skills; understanding of students' social, cultural, and economic backgrounds; understanding of cognitive and human development; ability to collaborate with peers; and ability to cultivate partnerships with parents and the broader community as critical components of effective teaching. The instructional capacity-building TOA reasons that if schools and school districts provide supports that build the capacity of teachers to address the elements of effective teaching, then student performance will increase and achievement gaps will narrow (Collins, 2001).

Conceptual Perspective

A 'teacher' is a person who delivers an educational program, assesses student participation in an educational program, and/or administers or provides consistent and substantial leadership to an educational program. Borich (1977) suggests that teacher competency is an extremely complex phenomena that is made up of both behavior and knowledge. He views competency as a developmental phenomenon. According to Borich, there are three categories of such competence which include; Knowledge competence-which specifies the cognitive understanding a teacher is expected to possess, Performance competence- which specifies the day-to-day behaviors teachers exhibit in class and Consequence competence- which we know as student outcomes. According to Shulman's (2000), competence can be viewed as having a set of skills or a collection of knowledge that one selects and implements. The selection of action is attended by reflection. Teachers choose to teach in a certain way.

Curriculum is the way content is designed and developed. The process includes the structure, organization, and balance of the materials .Curriculum implementation therefore refers to how the planned or officially designed course of study is translated by the teacher into syllabuses, schemes of work and lessons to be delivered to learners (University of Zimbabwe 1995:9).

Contextual Perspective

In Uganda, pre-primary children can begin school at age three. Most urban areas have fine preschool facilities. Preschool is very commercial, and the private sector dominates such schools. The government is concerned about the lack of regulation at this level. Fees are often seen as excessive and exclusionary. The quality of education is very uneven, as are teaching methods, facilities, and alleged violations of sound pedagogical principles of child psychology and development (Mulder et al., 2009). The problem with the better schools is competition, which is so high for the few positions available that parents must literally enroll the child at birth to assure that the child will find a place in these preschools (Akoojee, 2005).

The main other problem facing pre-primary educators in Uganda is budgetary. Beyond this there is a great disparity between the education available in cities and in remote rural areas. This attracts Ugandans to cities like a magnet and is the source of many urban problems when unsuccessful students drop out and take to crime or other self-help activities to support themselves. More vocational training is being introduced into primary school curriculums in an attempt to address this problem (Sofoyeke, 2001).

The Early Childhood Development Policy in the Education Sector approved in 2007 stresses the importance of Pre-primary Education; the early stimulation of different parts of the brain to provide social and learning advancement throughout life. The Policy underscores that "learning begins at birth and that whatever experiences a child goes through during these formative years will impact on a child's learning in later years positively or negatively".

Pre-primary education does not only facilitate the progression of children through the education system but it also strengthens their position on the labor market; their productivity and their income generation capacity; their parenting skills; et cetera. Many studies from all over the world have shown that even at a later age, individuals with pre-school experience fare better than those without, leading to important benefits for society and Government. NCDC has developed the Learning Framework for Early Childhood and a Caregivers Guide to the Learning Framework to help in the enhancement of Early Childhood Education in Pre-primary schools(Glenda et al, 2010).

In Uganda, teaching in schools is now official policy, but only 6000 out of 240,000 teachers have been trained in curriculum (Mulder et al., 2009). Uganda revised the pre-primary and primary school curriculum in the year 2002 and the implementation of the revised curriculum started in 2003. During the revision of the syllabus special attention was paid to the coverage of emerging issues, with as one of the contemporary and vital issues addressed during the revision process. The old curriculum was phased out at the end of 2005 in pre-primary, primary and secondary schools (Education Sector Policy Document, 2004). However, the competence of teachers in implementing the new curriculum remains unclear as no study has been carried out to investigate it.

Teachers' productivity is an important factor in educational development and also a vital factor in consolidating the educational system. Training of teachers determines the quality of the out-put in curriculum implementation and no nation can progress without the effective development and management of teachers (Sofoyeke 2001). Therefore, training and re-training of teachers as a pre-condition for functional educational system is very necessary.

This therefore created the need to find out the relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation in Pre-primary schools in Itanda parish, Iganga

1.2 Problem Statement

Teachers' competency in teaching and learning is an important factor in determining the success of learners in early childhood development. Teacher's ability and wisdom in handling learning activities will have a direct impact on learners' active involvement in learning activities. As a professional, a teacher needs to plan and implement the learning process, evaluate the learning outcomes, provide guidance and training, conduct a research, develop and manage school programs and professional competency.

However, poor implementation of Early Childhood Development curriculum in pre-primary schools has led to deteriorating numeracy and literacy skills, high drop-out rates, skills mismatch leading to more un-employment and poverty and increasingly de-motivated teachers and students. If left unaddressed, these matters will have far-reaching consequences not only for our education system but also for the type of skilled learners that will be produced and for the economic growth of the country. It is therefore based on this background that the researcher is compelled to conduct a study on the relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools in Itanda Parish, Iganga

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools in Itanda Parish, Iganga.

1.4 Specific Objectives

The research was guided by the following specific objectives;

i). To establish the competences teachers need to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools.
ii). To establish teachers competence levels in implementing the curriculum in pre-primary schools.
iii). To establish professional development activities that enhance teacher competence to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools.
iv). To determine the extent to which pre-primary curriculum is implemented

1.5 Research Questions

The research was guided by the following research questions;

i). What are the competences teachers need to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools.
ii). What are the teacher competence levels in implementing the curriculum in pre-primary schools.
iii). What are the professional development activities that enhance teacher competence to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools.
iv). What is the extent to which pre-primary curriculum is implemented

1.6 Research Hypothesis

There is a significant relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools in Itanda Parish, Iganga

1.7 Scope of the Study

1.7.1 Content scope

This research focused on the relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools. It specifically looked at the competences teacher need to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools, the extent teachers possess the competencies needed to implement the curriculum in pre-primary schools, professional development activities

that enhance teacher competence to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools and the extent to which pre-primary curriculum is implemented. The learning framework for ECD was also studied.

1.7.2 Geographical scope

The study was conducted in Itanda Parish, Iganga District in Eastern part of Uganda.

1.7.3 Time scope

The study considered the literature of 10 years that is to say from 2005 to 2015. However, the actual study was conducted within a period of eight months that is from November 2015 to July2016 and this time scope is expected to enough to correct all the necessary information concerning the phenomena under investigation.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The findings from the study may assist education service providers, policy makers and other education workers to develop improved policies and strategies for addressing issues on curriculum implementation

This study is expected to provide a basis for comprehensive information on teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools

The study established the existing gaps in teacher competences in the implementation of curriculum for pre-primary schools.

The output of this study may serve as a blueprint for libraries, information managers/information scientists, researchers, lecturers, students, and teachers to chart the right course of action for the competencies teachers need in the implementation of curriculum in pre-primary schools.

1.9 Limitation of the Study

Study findings could not be generalized to all pre-primary schools in Uganda as only pre-primary schools in Iganga district were involved in the study.

Hostile and non-cooperating respondents and constraint in the completion and return of research instruments.

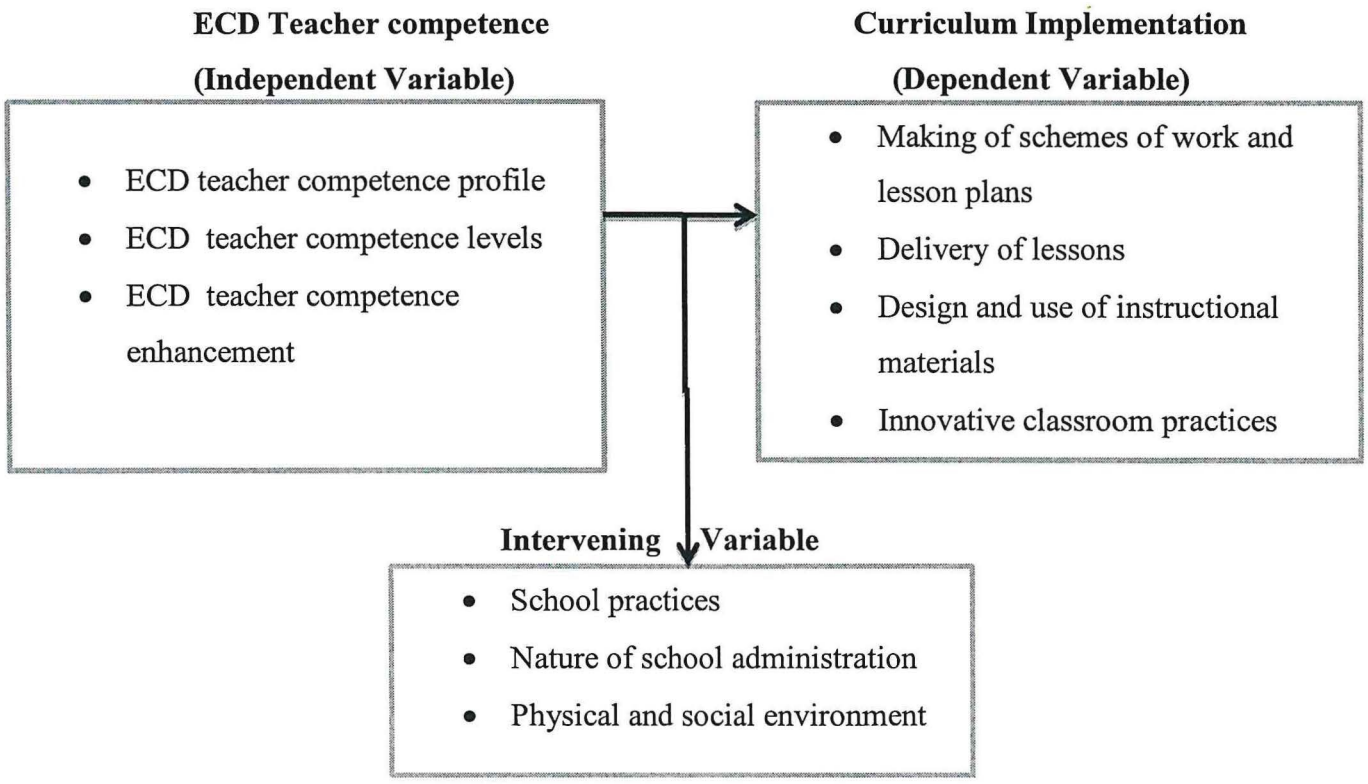
1.10 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a hypothetical description of a complex entity or process. The framework captures the relationship between independent and dependent variable

The dependent variable in this study is curriculum implementation. In this study, curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools means teaching and learning materials used in teaching, time allocation and innovative classroom practices.

The independent variable is teacher competence. The components of teacher competence in this study or dimensions are professional ethics, skills competences, values and attitudes and knowledge competences. The conceptual framework below shows the relationship between the independent variable (teacher competence), dependent variable (curriculum implementation) and the intervening variables (Resource availability, Classroom environment, Learners attention).

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship between Teacher Competence and Curriculum Implementation



Source: **OECD, (2011)**

Competence is the ability of an individual to do a job properly. It is a set of defined behaviors that provide a structured guide enabling the identification, evaluation and development of the behaviors in individual employees. The key teacher competences in this study are, ECD teacher competence profile, ECD teacher competence levels and ECD teacher competence enhancement. Competence profile is a list of the skills needed to do a job well. Teacher with a high competence profile are effective in making the schemes of work and lesson plan, delivering lessons and implementing innovative classroom practices. Teacher competence enhancement includes activities that are intended to result in ongoing improvement in teaching skills and knowledge, especially those related to understanding and complying with legal, ethical and regulatory requirements. Competence enhancement enables teachers to perform their activities effectively.

1.10 Definition of Operational Terms

Curriculum: Refers to a plan or programme of all experiences which the learner encounters under the direction of a school

Implementation: Refers to making something that has been officially decided to start or happen or to be used, in this case, the curriculum

Competence: Is the ability of an individual to do a job properly.

Teacher competence refers to the ability of teachers to do their job properly

Curriculum implementation: Refers to how the planned or officially designed course of study is translated by the teacher into syllabuses, schemes of work and lessons to be delivered to students.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This section provides the reviewed literature of the studies that were done on teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools. The section deals with factors related to teacher training, availability of teaching and learning materials, and suggests some recommendations for effective mechanism of curriculum implementation and monitoring.

2.1 The Competencies Teachers Need to Implement Curriculum.

According to Lubanga, (2010), teachers should possess the knowledge competencies which consists of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, profession al knowledge, and contemporary knowledge. The teacher should understand the content in the pre-primary school curriculum, the relationship between curriculum content and children's learning needs and experiences and the relationship between different subjects/ learning areas of the curriculum.

Lubanga further noted that the teacher should understand the procedures for using child-friendly approaches, methods and techniques of teaching, phasing teaching from known to unknown, inducing children's own learning, using a variety of teaching/learning aids during lesson delivery, using the local environment as a teaching resource and assessing pupils' learning.

According to Elimu, (2012), the teacher should understand the key statutory instruments and other legal frameworks that govern the teaching profession, the sociology, philosophy and management of education, the primary education system and how it relates with other sectors, his/her own rights , entitlements and privileges, the national goals of education and related international undertakings, children's learning needs at the various developmental stages, Cross-cutting issues in education such as gender, HIV/AIDS, special needs education among others, assessment of learning.

Lubanga, (2010), noted that skills competences forms the basis of success in curriculum implementation by teachers. The skills the teacher needs to perform his/her duties effectively have been categorized as follows; practical skills, mental skills, pedagogical skills, research skills, leadership and management skills and life skills.

Wolf, (2001), also noted that the teacher should demonstrate proper handling and care for teaching/learning materials and equipment, makes and applies child-friendly learning aids in the teaching process, creates a safe learning environment and demonstrates skills of first aid. Komba et al., (2012) further noted that the teacher interprets the primary school curriculum correctly and applies both deductive and inductive reasoning.

According to Mosha, (2012), the teacher adapts the school time table to the needs of the learners; prepares comprehensive schemes of work and lesson plans; relates curriculum content to pupils' needs and experiences, integrates content across subjects/learning areas; demonstrates proper use of child-friendly approaches, methods and techniques in teaching; uses learning aids appropriately in the course of teaching; makes use of the locally available materials in teaching; regularly carries out assessment of his/her learners; provides timely and appropriate feedback in the process of learning; creates and maintains a conducive learning environment, fosters self-discipline, responsibility and creativity among his/her learners; gives clear instructions and checks for understanding.

Utomo, (2005) noted that the teacher exhibits the life skills of knowing and living with oneself, knowing and living with others and effective decision making, Applies life skills in the world of work and in leadership situations, Supports learners to develop life skills during the teaching/learning process and during co-curricular activities.

Utomo further noted that the teacher helps colleagues and team members to work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict and promote meaningful change; presents ideas, leads discussions, clarifies, mediates and identifies the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and continuous professional development; facilitates trust among group members; builds effective teams with and among group members; uses effective modeling behavior, seeks the right balance between guidance and counseling; steering and following; confrontation and reconciliation; and, corrective measures and stimulation, identifies opportunities/issues/challenges related to pupil learning and consults for possible solutions and takes proper care of the institutional resources. Rutayuga & Kondo, (2006) also noted that the teacher strives for continuous professional development, widens his/her perception, regularly reflects on his/her performance and documents and shares his /her reflection.

According to Wangeleja, (2010), the teacher promotes good working relationships within and beyond the school to promote learning, makes technical and professional consultations, Maintains harmony between his/her activities and those of others, Shares relevant information with others and Carries out supplementary tasks as may be required. Wesselink et al., (2010) noted that teachers should possess values and attitudes. The teacher treats his or her colleagues, parents, learners/education officials and other members of the community with respect; prevents hurtful confrontations and turns enemies into friends; demonstrates care for others; demonstrates honesty and self respect; takes responsibility for his/her actions and demonstrates perseverance.

Nuffic, (2004) noted that teachers should posses professional ethics which are the standards of behavior expected of a particular profession. Every respected profession has a code of conduct which guides its professionals in executing their duties. Similarly in the teaching profession, teachers are expected to conform to the expected professional code of conduct. The Education Service Commission outlines the values expected of teachers in Uganda in the Teachers' Code of Conduct. This code is divided into three parts which include the teachers' professional conduct, professional responsibility and personal conduct.

According to Kafyulilo, Rugambuka & Moses, (2012), the teacher lives up to the highest standards of the profession, teaches conscientiously with diligence, honesty and regularity; prepares relevant schemes of work, lesson plans teaching notes and teaching /learning aids; assesses all written and practical exercises promptly and carefully, and gives feedback to the learners, undertakes remedial teaching and seeks permission to be absent from school.

Komba & Kira, (2013) noted that the teacher devotes necessary time to his or her duties; conducts all lessons without discrimination or bias; delegates in case of absence; recognizes and rewards good performance; avoids situations which will distract his/her attention from teaching or supervising learning. He further noted that the teacher dresses appropriately, decently and smartly, attends to his/her personal appearance, observes the laws of Uganda particularly in matters of sex, marriage and parenthood, Serves as a good role model for the children, Shows respect for rules set by the governing body of the school and assists in their implementation.

Various criticisms have been leveled at the use of a competence approach for defining teaching ability: the limitations of behaviorism; the reductionist tendencies that any set of statements about complex actions invites; the incompatibility between descriptions that stress teacher action and the emotion, ritual and interpersonal characteristics that typify every school situation, but which cannot be adequately described or incorporated into a set of statements. At the heart of these concerns is a belief that teaching cannot be deconstructed into a number of discrete and separately identifiable parts in the form of competence statements. In expressing his concerns about such fragmentation, Wangeleja, (2010) argues that no series of statements can allow for the multitude of reactions, interactions and behaviors typical of every teaching encounter.

It is easy to relate to Wangeleja's concerns when we consider the sensitivities required in classroom situations, such as knowing when to insist that children act in a particular way rather than negotiating with them, or when to alter the course of a lesson rather than pressing on regardless, or when to overlook errors to praise the positive aspects of work, or when to intervene in pupils' work instead of giving them time and space to make mistakes, and so on. These skills cannot easily be articulated or translated into single statements because they involve a complex amalgam of understanding children's needs, the teacher's personal confidence, subject knowledge, and intelligent classroom management, all of which need to be embedded within the practitioner's framework of educational values.

Nederstigt & Mulder, (2011) alerts us to the danger of assuming that as long as the context is specifically designed for inexperienced teachers, they can begin to work with understanding within the first few weeks of practice.

Similarly Mulder et al, (2009) warns of hastening the transition from teaching as a profession to teaching as a set of technical competences. The influence of professional values is such an obvious factor in the equation that in our effort to evaluate a student's teaching behavior, it might easily be overlooked. If efforts to improve a student teacher's teaching skills are considered within a values framework, judgments about their achievements must not only take close account of things like lesson intentions and teachings strategies, but of the level of agreement and trust existing between the class teacher and student, as significant tensions or points of disagreement may influence the quality of the teaching and learning.

2.2 The Teacher Competence Levels in Implementing the Curriculum

Though the rate of student enrollment has risen, especially at the lower primary levels, the education sector is still faced with a number of challenges related to teaching and learning — insufficient and poorly trained, under motivated teachers, overcrowded classrooms, and a shortage of teaching/learning materials (UWEZO, 2012). In light of the aforementioned challenges, the quality of learner outcomes, especially in government-aided primary schools, remains a cause for serious concern in Uganda. Given the learning environment, it is not surprising that a number of learners in many developing countries, including Uganda, fail to master basic literacy and numeracy even after six years of schooling (Nannyonjo, 2007). The education sector continues to register low learning outcomes despite enormous investments in the primary sub-sector to improve educational quality in terms of the curriculum and learning environment as well as the teaching and learning processes (UWEZO, 2012).

Recent studies in Uganda have focused on either students' academic achievement or teachers' competence in the disciplines they teach (SACMEQ, 2009; UNEB, 2011). However, these studies do not relate teachers' competence to the academic achievement of the students they teach. In an attempt to rectify this, a study of the achievement of primary two (Form Two) pupils and teachers in Uganda reveals that pupils taught by teachers with a Diploma in Education have higher achievement than those whose teachers had Grade III (UNEB, 2011). Teachers with a higher education qualification are suggested to have a stronger grounding in their disciplines (UNEB, 2012). Nevertheless, no statistical assessment has been made to ascertain whether the difference in the performance of pupils taught by teachers with various levels of academic qualifications is significant. The aspect of contention is not necessarily the lack of academically qualified teachers in Uganda's primary schools, but rather their competence skills for the disciplines they teach.

Available data on pre-primary and primary teachers show that in 2010, 12.7 percent of pre-primary teachers and 16.1 percent of primary teachers were not qualified, in the sense that they were not holding the minimum required certification. While this proportion has decreased over the years, especially among teachers in government schools, the number of teachers to receive

training remains high at 3,572 in pre-primary schools and at 23,363 at primary (Kafyulilo, Rugambuka & Moses, 2012).

According to Utomo, (2005), evolution of qualified teachers in government primary schools and private pre-primary schools has increased steadily over the last years, following both the output of qualified teachers from PTCs, Nursery teacher training institutions and the provision of in-service courses to upgrade and certify unqualified teachers. In 2010, one found very low proportions of unqualified teachers in government primary schools at 2.7 percent; pre-primary at 30%, 6.2 percent of the secondary teaching force unqualified. Of worry is the situation in private schools that absorb big shares of unqualified teachers. In 2010, almost 35 percent of teachers were unqualified in private primary, a proportion stable over2006-2010. In secondary, despite a slight decrease in the proportion of unqualified teaching staff, still 16 percent of the private teaching force did not have the minimum requirements for teaching.

World Bank, (2011) also noted that the distribution of teachers by type of certifications shows that at pre-primary level, most teachers hold either a certificate in nursery teaching or Grade III certificate, primary level, most teachers hold a Grade III Certificate (64 percent) while 17 percent hold a DPE. Worth of note is that the vast majority of the unqualified teachers in pre-primary schools were educated to at least an O'level (94 percent). Yet, these teachers may not have the O'level passes in mathematics, English and science which are required for entry into PTCs.

According to Francis, (2010), continuous professional development or upgrading for un/under-qualified teachers still remains a challenge; to what extent can the system adequately deal with these issues need to be better looked at. Also, the education training sector is facing another major challenge that lies with the need to train new teachers as the system is expanding, but also following attrition (due to death, illness, or departure from the teaching force. Initial pre-training of those new recruits is essential if the system is to expand smoothly, and should be adequately planned and tackled.

The ability of the current teaching training system to cater for those in need of initial training and of upgrading needs to be assessed (Wesselink et al., 2007).

2.3. Professional development Activities that Enhance Teacher Competence to Implement Curriculum

Curriculum implementation entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects. The process involves helping the learner to acquire knowledge or experience. It is vital to note that curriculum implementation cannot take place as the learner acquires the planned or intended experiences, knowledge, skills, ideas and attitudes that are aimed at enabling the same learner to function effectively in a society (King"ori, 2012)

A study conducted in Tanzania by Louis and Arcand, (2010) concluded that training of teachers in Tanzania has boosted their confidence and ability to transfer knowledge and life skills to young people (Louis and Arcand, 2010). A survey study carried out by Education International (EI) in selected Sub Saharan African countries states that greater emphasis need to be put in teacher training both at the pre-service stages. The study confirmed the concerns that such training plans are currently lacking in the majority of countries surveyed (EI, 2006). Teachers are the backbone of education and have the capacity to provide hundreds of learners with essential skills on daily basis as long as they are well trained on curriculum and posses positive attitude towards the subject (Education International (EI), 2006).

According to Isaka, (2007), the task of curriculum implementation involves some main processes, which include changing attitudes of policy makers, administrators, teacher trainers, supervisors, teachers, and parents and ultimately the learners. It also involves providing the materials and administrative means to make this possible. King"ori, (2012), observe that: the importance of attitude in implementation of a new programme cannot be neglected. Attitudes held by teachers, head teachers, pupils, parents and other education stake holders about a new programme such as curriculum play an important role in determining how the programme will be handled and received. A positive attitude towards a programme will favor its successful implementation.

Mosha, (2012) assert that instructional materials are critical ingredients in learning and the intended programme cannot be easily implemented without them. Instructional materials provide information and opportunities for pupils to use what they have learnt. Kafyulilo, Rugambuka & Moses, (2012), concurs with Mosha, (2012), and observes that, without resource materials and

facilities, the teacher may not be able to set the objectives that he would like his pupils to attain. It would mean that pupils cannot be taught using the most suitable methods.

An important shortcoming of much of the education on is that there is not specific time allocation and that teaching-learning on the subject is fragmented and irregular. It is important when integrating education into the curriculum that a specific amount of time be allocated to the subject and that it be clearly scheduled in the school timetable (Utomo, (2005).

To be able to perform in preprimary schools one needs to holds at least a certificate in community child care (CCC), obtained after a 12-week course. While this course is open to anyone, more stringent entry requirements are requested for Certificate in Child Care (CC) and the Early Childhood Development Teacher's Certificate (ECE) holders. While the former is obtained after one year of training and requires holding the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE), the latter involves two years of training with O'level as a prerequisite.

Pedagogical innovations refer to emerging practices that involve changes in what teachers and students do and learn in the classroom, which prepare students for lifelong learning in the information society. Examples of such practices can be activities that promote active and independent learning in which students take responsibility for their own learning, and activities engaging students in collaborative learning in which students work with others on complex, extended, real-world-like problems (Kozma & Anderson, 2002)

Akoojee, (2005) indicates that for educators to be self-motivated and committed to their objectives, the mutual relationship between teachers should be promoted, all stakeholders should be involved in planning the curriculum, and there should be opportunities for growth and more innovative and effective teaching methods. What becomes clear is the need for teacher education and for educators to grasp the challenges and opportunities to assert their power over shaping the curriculum process that will produce competent, confident teachers (Kruss, 2009). On the other hand, the term "training" implies exercising some repetitive actions. It aims at developing limited ability or skill rather than the development of the entire personality. Training of teachers is the process of imparting to someone the skill to perform some operations which may be mental or physical, the acquisition of which may or may not be accompanied by understanding of the principles on which the operation depends (Mulder et al., 2009).

It is also the process or a set of activities aimed at making a person efficient at the performance of a given task. In other words, it could be understood that doctors, lawyers and teachers are trained rather than being educated. Teachers are included here because, their preparation is directed towards acquisition of certain special skills, and the evidence of learning in the classroom, is the successful performance skills of the teacher termed pedagogue.

Teachers' productivity is an important factor in educational development and also a vital factor in consolidating the educational system. Training of teachers determines the quality of the out-put and no nation can progress without the effective development and management of teachers (Sofoyeke, 2001). Therefore, training and re-training of teachers as a pre-condition for functional educational system is very necessary.

In any developing country, there is an ever increasing need for training of teachers in order to facilitate efficient and effective implementation of curriculum for teaching productivity and functional educational system. The rate of academic development and the increasing demand with regards to knowledge require a constantly and regularly updated teaching workforce that is, teachers that are professionally trained and have acquired skills with regard to the changing job content and environment. To meet these requirements, teacher training must become a life-long process.

Also, effective and functional curriculum implementation involves professionally trained teachers because they constitute the vital force as part of the implementers of the curriculum at every stage of the educational programme. Therefore, teachers are important factor in educational development. The quality of teachers determines the quality of their output. As such, no educational system can be consolidated without the development of the teachers that will implement the programme (Elimu, 2012)

According to Thendu, (2011), teachers should apply the following elements as innovative classroom practices of teaching education: (i) Clarify Key concepts and generalizations to ensure that all learners gain powerful understandings that serve as the foundation for future learning. Teachers are encouraged to identify essential concepts and instructional foci to ensure all learners comprehend. (ii) Use assessment as a teaching tool to extend versus merely measure instruction. Assessment should occur before, during and following the instructional episode, and

help to pose questions regarding students" needs and optimal learning. (iii) Emphasize critical and creative thinking as a goal in lesson design. The tasks, activities and procedures for students should require that students understand and apply meaning. Instruction may require supports, additional motivation, varied tasks, materials or equipment for different students in the classroom. (iv) Engaging all learners is essential. Teachers are encouraged to strive for development of lessons that are engaging and motivating for a diverse class of students. Vary tasks within instruction as well as across students. In other words, the entire session for students should not consist of all drill and practice. (v) Provide a balance between teacher - assigned and student - selected tasks. A balanced working structure is optimal in a differentiated classroom. Based on pre-assessment information, the balance will vary from class-to – class as well as lesson – to – lesson. Teachers should assure that students have choices in their learning (Thendu, 2011)

2.4 The Extent To Which Pre-Primary Curriculum Is Implemented

Since the late seventies educators and researchers in general education have recognized the problematic nature of implementing a proposed curriculum (Chhem, 2001). The process of curriculum implementation has been described as a "black box" (O'Sullivan, 2002) in which challenges to implementation can arise. The complexities of and incongruent relationship between curriculum policy and its practice are indicators of the implementation problems.

According to Bekalo and Welford (2000) a discrepancy often exists between what was intended and what is enacted. The view that these two objectives should match poses challenges for policy makers, administrators, and teachers in particular. Problems of various kinds arising from curriculum implementation have been recognized as inevitable and therefore the implementation is inherently more complex than people anticipate. This complexity can be perceived from several aspects with stakeholders at different levels interpreting the curriculum policies differently than as originally conceived.

According to Chhem (2001) one of the strategies for a successful implementation of a curriculum includes that plans must be established for an ongoing professional development for all teachers and support of new teachers. Segoria and Hudson (2009) reported one example of a curriculum which was not successfully implemented. This was the implementation of integrated English

language curriculum in 1985 in Kenya. They reported that teachers had not been prepared to teach English Literature using the integrated methods in their pre-service teacher education. This led to unsuccessful implementation that brought about persistent complaints about falling standards of both written and spoken English. Fullan (2001) concluded that the way educational theory is introduced and especially the lack of opportunity to involve teachers in reform created a discrepancy between the teachers, in understanding the change and the initiators, in the intended change.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section deals with descriptions of method that were used to carry out the study. the sub sections includes research design ,target population, sample size, sampling procedures, research instrumentation and ,their validity and reliability method of date collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

Descriptive survey research design was adopted to study the influence of teachers' training on curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools of Itanda Parish, Iganga, as it is deemed appropriate for this study (Pearson, 2010). Survey research uses questionnaires and interviews to collect information about people's attitudes, beliefs, feelings, behaviors and life styles. The researcher opted for this design as a way of collecting first hand data from respondents so as to formulate rational and sound conclusions and recommendations for the study.

3.3 Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda(2003) states that a target population is that population which the researcher wants to generalize result from .The target population for this study were the Head teachers and teachers from the pre-primary schools of Itanda Parish, Iganga District. The parish consists of 32 pre-primary schools which are managed by 96 teachers that were targeted for the study. Data about the location of pre-primary schools was obtained from Iganga district in the office of the D.E.O.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling strategy

According to oxford advanced learners dictionary (8th ed.2011:307) a sample is a number of people or things taken from a large group and used in tests to prove information about the group. A sample size of 77 respondents consisting of 45 teachers and 32 head teachers was considered for the study. This was determined using Krejcie and Morgan sample size table as given by Amin, (2005).

Purposive sampling techniques were used for the study. It was used to select the teachers from the selected pre-primary schools of Itanda Parish, Iganga District.

3.5 Data sources and types

The researcher collected primary data from the respondents using interviews and questionnaires and secondary data from existing documents related to the study field like journals, textbooks, internet among others. This was both qualitative and quantitative in nature.

3.6 Research Instruments

3.6.1 Questionnaires

The set of questionnaire was designed to collect the data about teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools. The matrix questions were coupled with a five point Likert scale. The scores ranged from 1-5 and the respondents were circled the desired response regarding their view on the influence of teachers' competences on the implementation of curriculum. Questionnaires were preferred for the study because respondents were of reasonable academic backgrounds and were able to read, interpret and understand the questions before answering them. Questionnaires are generally relatively quick to collect information, potential information can be collected from a large portion of a group. And return rates can be dramatically improved if the questionnaire is delivered and responded to in the right time (Amin, 2005).

3.6.2 Interviews

The researcher also used semi structured interviews as a method for data collection with the perception that interviews were essential in order to derive further into silent features that may be under looked in the questionnaires; the interviews also helped the researcher to get first-hand information from the respondents. This method will be used by the researcher because; it caters for respondents who lacks reading skills to answer a questionnaire, gives chance to the Interviewer to probe deeper into a response given by an interviewee (Greener, 2008).

3.7 Validity and Reliability

3.7.1 Validity of the Questionnaire

McMillan & Schumacher (2006) stated that validity refers to the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world. Validity is the extent to which the instrument gives the correct answer. The questionnaire was tested for validity of all the possible dimensions of the research topic.

After constructing the questionnaire, the researcher contacted three research experts in order to understand whether her questionnaire is valid in a way of collecting information that was used to understand the research problem. Hence the researcher constructed the validity of the instruments by using expert judgment method as suggested by Gay (1996). The instrument was refined based on experts' advice. The following formula was used to test validity index.

$$\text{Content Validity Index} = \frac{\text{No. of items regarded valid by judges}}{\text{Total No. of items in the instrument}}$$

The questionnaire was considered valid, as the generated coefficient was 0.83 which is above 0.7 as recommended by Amin (2005).

3.7.2 Reliability of the questionnaire

To test the reliability of the instruments, the researcher used the alternate-form reliability test by administering the instruments to different key players. The degree of correlation between the scores of the instruments were then assessed. The test was carried out on five key respondents within the area of study.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
0.76	42

The researcher used Cronbach's Alpha Co-efficient using SPSS, and obtained 0.76 which is above 0.5 and therefore the instruments were regarded reliable as given by Amin, (2005).

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

An introductory letter was obtained from Kyambogo University, graduate school to help the research in assuring the respondents that the study is for academic purposes. A research permit was obtained from the District Education Officer. This was done to give the study a legal backing. The document authorized the researcher to conduct the study in the identified pre-primary schools in Itanda Parish, Iganga District. The researcher personally visited the sample schools. The researcher herself directly observed and administered the questionnaires. Questionnaires for each selected schools were filled and returned there and then. Head teachers and teachers that were absent and not able to answer their questionnaires were given one more week to respond to the questionnaires. Interviews were conducted by making appointments with the respondents and then engage them on a face to face format from where their views were captured.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis involved the organization and interpretation of all the collected data so as to simplify and present it in the best way possible for easy interpretation and understanding. All data collected from the field was first checked to ascertain completeness. It was then categorized, coded and computed manually. The data was then analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Qualitative data was organized. Put into categories, themes and patterns then analyzed and interpreted (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Quantitative data was presented in frequency tables, bar graphs, percentages and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The relationship between the variables was determined using regression and correlation analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings on investigating the relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools in Itanda Parish, Iganga. The chapter contains the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the findings. Statistics were generated with the aim of generating responses for the research. The chapter begins with the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Descriptive statistics (mostly frequency tables), derived from the statistical package for social scientist (SPSS) were used to generate the results for this chapter. The presentation was guided by the following research objectives; to establish the competences teachers need to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools, to establish ECD teachers competence levels in implementing the curriculum in pre-primary schools, to establish professional development activities that enhance teacher competence to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools and to determine the extent to which pre-primary curriculum is implemented.

Out of the 77 questionnaires distributed, only 75 were returned as valid. This implies that 97.4% of the questionnaires were returned valid. This can be shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Distribution of questionnaires according to positions of respondents

Category of respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Head teachers	32	43
Teachers	43	57
Total	**75**	**100**

Results from the table above reveal that, among the respondents that participated in the research, 32(43%) were head teachers, 43(57%) were teachers. The study had planned to cover 77 respondents but some questionnaires were not returned and others were not valid. This implies that out of the expected questionnaires, 97.4% were returned and valid, which is a good number for the study to produce unbiased report.

4.2. Respondent's Demography

The first aspect of the study deals with the personal information of the respondents, thus the study presents the information in the following sub section; age, sex , marital status and level of education of the respondents.

Findings on the characteristics of the respondents

Table 4.2: The characteristics of the respondents

Factor	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 25yrs	9	12
	26-35yrs	39	52
	36-50	17	22.7
	Above 50yrs	10	13.3
Sex	Male	34	45.3
	Female	41	54.7
Marital status	Married	47	62.7
	Single	21	28
	Divorced	7	9.3
Level of education	Certificate	43	57.3
	Diploma	19	25.3
	Degree	12	16
	Postgraduate	1	1.3

Source: Primary Data 2016

Results from the table above reveal that 9(12%) of the respondents were aged below 39(52%) were between (26-35) years, 17(22.7%) were between (36-50) years and were above 50 years. The majority of the respondents were below 35years of age and this was attributed to the nature of Uganda's population where the youth contributes the majority.

Results from the table above reveal that 34(45.3%) of the respondents were males and 41(54.7%) were females. The majority of the respondents were females and this was attributed to the nature of Early child hood schools where by most of them prefer employing females as they are good at handling infants.

Results from the table above reveal that 47(62.7%) of the respondents were married, 21(28%) were single and lastly 7(9.3%) were divorced. The majority of the respondents were married and this was attributed to nature of Uganda's culture where individuals above 18 years are expected to get married.

Results from the table above reveal that 43(57.3%) of the respondents completed certificate, 19(25.3%) completed diploma, 12(16%) completed degree and lastly 1(1.3%) completed postgraduate level. The majority of the respondents had attained certificate level and this was attributed to the nature of the sector as the schools are small and cannot afford to employ highly qualified staff.

4.3. Competencies Teachers Need to Implement Curriculum in Pre-Primary Schools

Objective one was to establish the competences teachers need to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools. This involved both qualitative and quantitative data as indicated below;

4.3.1 Quantitative Data

Table 4.3: Showing the competencies teachers need to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools

Statement	SD		D		NS		A		SA	
	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	F	%
I need to develop ability to make ECD schemes of work and lesson plans	16	21.3	12	16	3	4	34	45.3	10	13.3
I need to develop ability to organize and manage ECD instructional processes effectively	9	12	10	7.5	6	8	22	29.3	28	37.3
I need to possess values and attitudes	9	12	7	9.3	9	12	12	16	38	50.7
I need to understand the key statutory instruments that govern the teaching profession in ECD	10	7.5	12	16	7	9.3	25	33.3	21	28
I need to possess professional ethics	9	12	14	18.7	9	12	20	26.7	23	30.7
I need to possess honesty and integrity	13	17.3	28	37.3	08	10.7	08	10.7	18	24

Source: Primary Data 2016

Results from the table above reveal that 16(21.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they need to develop ability to make ECD schemes of work and lesson plan , 12(16%) disagreed, 3(4%) were not sure, 34(45.3%) agreed and 10(13.3%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea . Most of the teachers do not have enough knowledge in making lesson plans and schemes of work and this has affected their performance as they cannot

have good planning for their lessons. This was attributed to low levels of education as most of them are certificate holders.

Results from the table above reveal that 9(12%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they need to develop ability to organize and manage ECD instructional processes effectively, 10(7.5%) disagreed, 6(8%) were unsure, 22(29.3%) agreed and 28(37.3%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Most of the teachers lack skills regarding the different ECD instructional processes and this affects the performance of their learners. This therefore created the need for more skills so as to improve the effectiveness of curriculum implementation.

Results from the table above reveal that 9(12%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they need to possess values and attitudes, 7(9.3%) disagreed, 9(12%) were not sure, 12(16%) agreed and 38(50.7%) strongly agreed. Most of the teachers lack values and attitudes when handling the ECD children and which is key in curriculum implementation. This has contributed to lack of effective curriculum implementation. Teachers need to acquire more skills and training regarding curriculum implementation.

Results from the table above reveal that 10(7.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they need to understand the key statutory instruments that govern the teaching profession in ECD, 12(16%) disagreed, 7(9.3%) were not sure, 25(33.3%) agreed and 21(28%) strongly agreed. Most teachers do not understand the statutory instruments and this is attributed to the failure by the government and school managers to provide such instruments to the teachers. This has also affected the quality of curriculum implementation

Findings from the table above reveal that 9(12%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they need to possess professional ethics, 14(18.7%) disagreed, 9(12%) were not sure, 20(26.7%) agreed and 23(30.7%) strongly agreed. Most of the teachers lack professional ethics and yet it is key in promoting the rights of children and ensuring their performance. This has also affected the level of curriculum implementation in most ECD schools in the area of study.

Results from the table above reveal that 13(17.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they need to possess honesty and integrity, 28(37.3%) disagreed, 8(10.7%) were not sure,

8(10.7%) agreed and 18(24%) strongly agreed. Most of the teachers are honest and they also understand its relevancy towards effective curriculum implementation and children performance. However the few that are not honest need to change their approach towards teaching and handling of learners in ECD.

4.3.2 Qualitative

Respondent (1) commented, *"Most of the teachers lack enough skills for developing lesson plans because most of them completed senior four and could not manage to do any certificate related to nursery teaching. The fact that our schools cannot afford to employ highly skilled and qualified employees also leads to having incompetent teachers"*

Respondent (2) commented, *"Teachers also need to acquire skills for using instructional materials as they are key for enhancing curriculum implementation at nursery level. Learners understand well when they are using instructional materials"*

Respondent (3) commented, *"Teachers also need to be ethical if they are to implement the curriculum effectively. Some of the teachers posses bad behaviors like heavy punishments to children"*

Respondent (4) commented, *"Teachers need to change their attitudes towards teaching as most of them do the work as a last resort and therefore do not put in a lot of energy to promote children performance"*

4.4. Teachers Competence Levels in Implementing the Curriculum in Pre-Primary Schools.

Objective two was to establish teacher competence levels in implementing the curriculum in pre-primary schools. This involved both qualitative and quantitative data as indicated below;

4.4.1 Quantitative

Table 4.4: ECD Teachers Competence Levels in Implementing the Curriculum in Pre-Primary Schools

Statement	High		Low	
	f	%	F	%
I understand the procedures for using child-friendly techniques of teaching	39	52	36	48
I have adequate knowledge of the current policy reforms in primary education	21	28	54	72
I demonstrate proper handling and care for teaching materials	41	54.6	34	45.4
I interpret the primary school curriculum correctly	43	57.3	32	42.7
I adapt the school time table to the needs of the learners	46	65.7	29	34.3
I exhibit the life skills of knowing and living with oneself	37	49.3	38	50.7
I help colleagues and team members to work collaboratively to solve problems.	45	60	30	40
I promote good working relationships within and beyond the school to promote learning	49	65.3	26	34.7
I possess values and attitudes	48	64	27	36

Source: Primary Data 2016

Results from the table above reveal that 39(52%) of the respondents highly understand the procedures for using child-friendly techniques of teaching whereas 36(48%) have a low understanding. The majority of the respondents have a higher understanding of the procedures for child friendly techniques. This has helped in increasing the relationship between children and teachers and therefore improving the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. However there are a few teachers who lack skills of using such techniques and therefore the need for further training.

Results from the table above reveals that 21(28%) of the respondents highly agreed that they have adequate knowledge of the current policy reforms in primary education whereas 54(72%)

have low knowledge. The majority of the respondents have low knowledge of the current policy reforms. This has affected their daily activities as they are not working according to the government policies and guidelines. This in turn affects the quality of curriculum implementation and therefore the performance of children.

Results from the table above reveal that 41(54.6%) of the respondents highly demonstrate proper handling and care for teaching materials whereas 34(45.4%) cited low. The majority of the respondents highly demonstrates proper handling and care for teaching materials. This implies that teachers have enough skills regarding the use of teaching materials. This has helped in promoting the performance of children and ensuring effective curriculum implementation.

Findings from the table above reveal that 43(57.3%) of the respondents highly interpret the primary school curriculum correctly whereas 32(42.7%) have a low interpretation. The majority of the respondents highly interpret. This was attributed to the fact that most teachers are qualified ECD teachers and therefore posses enough knowledge and skills regarding curriculum interpretation. This has contribution in improving the quality of curriculum implementation.

Results from the table above reveal that 46(65.7%) of the respondents highly adapt the school time table to the needs of the learners whereas 29(34.5%) have a low adaptation. The majority of the respondents have a high adaptation. This implies that school school time tables are organized according to the type or characteristics of learners in the school. This has helped in improving children morale towards studying the different subjects taught.

Results from the table above reveal that 37(49.3%%) of the respondents highly exhibit the life skills of knowing and living with oneself whereas 38(50.7%) have a low exhibition. The majority of the respondents have a low exhibition of life skills. This has contributed in affecting the effectiveness of curriculum implementation in ECD schools and therefore implying that it is a key factor towards children performance

Results from the table above reveal that 45(60%) of the respondents highly help colleagues and team members to work collaboratively to solve problems whereas 30(40%) provide less help to colleagues. The majority of the respondents highly help colleagues. Working in teams has

enabled teachers to solve a number of challenges that cannot be solve individually and yet are key in ensuring effective curriculum implementation. This has in turn improved the performance of both teachers and learners.

Results from the table above reveal that 49(65.3%) of the respondents highly promote good working relationships within and beyond the school to promote learning, whereas 26(34.7%) less promote good working relationships. The majority of the respondents highly promote good working relationships. Teachers promote friendship with parents, children and fellow teachers from both within and outside the school. This has helped in promoting learning through discussions among teachers of different backgrounds.

Results from the table above reveal that 48(64%) of the respondents highly possess values and attitudes whereas 27(36%) less possess values and attitudes. The majority of the respondents highly possess values and attitudes. Most of the teachers posses values and attitudes when handling the ECD children and which is key in curriculum implementation. This has contributed to effective curriculum implementation. Teachers need to acquire more skills and training to further improve their attitudes and values.

4.4.2 Qualitative.

Respondent (1) commented, *"Most of the teachers employ child friendly techniques whenever teaching and this has helped in improving the effectiveness of curriculum implementation and therefore promoting the performance of learners"*

Respondent (2) commented, *"Teachers in my school have enough skills to implement the curriculum effectively. They regularly go for short courses which has enabled them to improve their skills"*

Respondent (3) commented, *"Most of our teaching timetables are designed according to the class and the age of learners because some reach at school late while others reach early"*

Respondent (4) commented, *"Most of our teachers have a good relationship with the learners and with their fellow teachers and this has enabled skills sharing as teachers can interact well with one another"*

4.5 Professional Development Activities that Enhance Teacher Competence to Implement Curriculum in Pre-Primary Schools

Objective three was to establish professional development activities that enhance teacher competence to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools. This involved both qualitative and quantitative data as indicated below;

4.5.1 Quantitative

Table 4.5: The Professional Development Activities that Enhance Teacher Competence to Implement Curriculum in Pre-Primary Schools

Statement	SD		D		NS		A		SA	
	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	F	%
Participating in individual and collaborative research	10	13.3	15	20	5	6.7	13	17.3	32	42.7
Participating in informal dialogue to improve teaching	14	18.7	11	14.7	5	6.7	16	21.3	29	38.7
Attending short courses and workshops	34	45.3	13	17.3	6	8	14	18.7	8	10.7
Reading professional literature	8	10.7	14	18.7	0	0	22	29.3	31	41.3
Building professional development networks	17	22.7	14	18.7	0	0	21	28	23	30.7
Mentoring and peer observation	13	17.3	11	14.7	3	4	33	44	15	20
Observation visits to other schools	14	18.7	16	21.3	9	12	18	24	18	24
Attending education conferences and seminars	7	9.3	17	22.7	0	0	27	36	24	32
Training of teachers determines the quality of the out-put	10	13.3	2	2.7	11	14.7	21	28	31	41.3
In-service trainings should be organized for teachers	5	6.7	7	9.3	0	0	22	29.3	41	54.7
Training and re-training of teachers is a pre-condition for functional educational system	5	6.7	9	12	3	4	25	33.3	33	44

Source: Primary Data 2016

Results from the table above reveal that 10(13.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that participating in individual and collaborative research enhances teacher competence, 15(20%) disagreed, 5(6.7%) were not sure, 13(17.3%) agreed and 32(42.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Teachers need to participate in research through reading books, attending seminars and upgrading their education levels so as to update their skills. This helps in improving the effectiveness of curriculum implementation.

Results from the table above reveal that 14(18.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that participating in informal dialogue to improve teaching enhances teacher competence, 11(14.7%) disagreed, 5(6.7%) were not sure, 16(21.3%) agreed, 29(38.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Participating in informal dialogues improves the knowledge of teachers regarding both the subject matter and curriculum implementation skills. This enables teachers to learn from one another and therefore ensuring knowledge sharing.

Results from the table above reveal that 34(45.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that attending short courses and workshops enhances teacher competence, 13(17.3%) disagreed, 6(8%) were not sure, 14(18.7%) agreed and 8(10.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents disagreed with the idea. Improving teacher competence depends on the ability of the teacher to practice the learnt skills. Most teachers have done short courses but their skills are still low due to failure to keep putting their skills in practice.

Results from the table above reveal that 8(10.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that reading professional literature enhances teacher competence, 14(18.7%) disagreed, 22(29.3%) agreed and 31(41.3%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Reading professional literature helps in improving the knowledge of teachers through promoting their masterly of concepts. This improves their competence in teaching and therefore implementation of the curriculum.

Results from the table above reveal that 17(22.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that building professional development networks enhances teacher competence, 14(18.7%) disagreed, 21(28%) agreed and 23(30.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Professional networks help teachers to share knowledge on the ways of solving the

challenges involved in the profession. This inturn improves their competence in implementing the curriculum and therefore the performance of children.

Results from the table above reveal that 13(17.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that mentoring and peer observation enhances teacher competence, 11(14.7%) disagreed, 3(4%) were not sure, 33(44%) agreed and 15(20%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Teachers need to have mentors to help them in times of challenges. This can help in improving their morale in the profession and therefore promoting their competence and academic performance of learners.

Results from the table above reveal that 14(18.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that observation visits to other schools enhances teacher competence, 16(21.3%) disagreed, 9(12%) were not sure, 18(24%) agreed and 18(24%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. This helps teachers to learn good practices from other schools and implement them in their school of work. This should be done regularly as it can also improve problem solving through discussions among teachers of different schools.

Results from the table above reveal that 7(9.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that attending education conferences and seminars enhances teacher competence, 17(22.7%) disagreed, 27(36%) agreed, 24(32%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Conferences and seminars enables teachers to determine their strengths and weaknesses through interacting with their fellow teachers.

Results from the table above reveal that 10(13.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that training of teachers determines the quality of the out-put, 2(2.7%) disagreed, 11(14.7%) were not sure, 21(28%) agreed and 31(41.3%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents agreed. This is because teachers who have been attending regular trainings are performing better than those that have been receiving. They are more competent in implement the curriculum and improving the performance of learners.

Results from the table above reveal that 5(6.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that in-service trainings should be organized for teachers to enhance teacher competence, 7(9.3%) disagreed, 22(29.3%) agreed and 41(54.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents

agreed. The government should organize in-service trainings as they help teachers to improve their competences through sharing knowledge from their fellow teachers and also learning from more skilled lecturers.

Results from the table above reveal that 5(6.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that training and re-training of teachers is a pre-condition for functional educational system , 9(12%) disagreed, 3(4%) were not sure, 25(33.3%) agreed and 33(44%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents agreed. Regular training helps in updating teachers knowledge regarding the subject of specialization and curriculum changes by the government. This therefore promotes teacher competence in implementing curriculum.

4.5.2 Qualitative

Respondent (1) commented, *"most of our teachers participate in informal dialogues, workshops and seminars aimed at improving their skills in the profession. Through such experiences they are able to share their experiences with teachers from other schools"*

Respondent (2) commented, *"some of our teachers improve their skills through reading novels, prays and other professional books. The school also provides teachers with books regarding early childhood education"*

Respondent (3) commented, *"we encourage our teachers to attend short courses so as to enable them improve on their skills. Sometime the school pays for them half the fees for studying professional courses mostly when they are willing to remain in our school after studying"*

4.6 The Extent to Which Pre-Primary Curriculum is implemented

Objective four was to determine the extent to which pre-primary curriculum is implemented. This involved both qualitative and quantitative data as indicated below;

4.6.1 Quantitative

Table 4.6: The Extent to Which Pre-Primary Curriculum is implemented

Statement	SD		D		NS		A		SA	
	f	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
The syllabus is available and followed	12	16	2	2.7	12	16	23	30.7	26	34.7
Lesson schemes are designed and used	13	17.3	8	10.7	0	0	25	33.3	29	38.7
Engage children in learning	9	12	13	17.3	0	0	22	29.3	31	41.3
Use questioning and discussion techniques	15	20	18	24	0	0	19	25.3	22	29.3
Effectively prepare the teaching materials	15	20	8	10.7	0	0	26	34.7	26	34.7
Content taught primarily from textbooks	9	12	10	13.3	0	0	15	20	41	54.7
Local or cultural examples are used when teaching	12	16	5	6.7	2	2.7	27	36	29	38.7
Effective Classroom organization established to manage learning, behavior, and opportunities to learn	13	17.3	15	20	5	6.7	18	24	24	32
Demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness in class	19	25.3	13	17.3	8	10.7	11	14.7	24	32
Progress of learners evaluated to assess growth towards achieving bench-marks	2	2.7	5	6.7	2	2.7	27	36	39	52
Regular assessment of learners' progress toward curricular benchmarks	14	18.7	11	14.7	5	6.7	16	21.3	29	38.7
Evidence-based interventions are used to teach content	10	13.3	15	20	5	6.7	13	17.3	32	42.7

Source: Primary Data 2015

Results from the table above reveal that 12(16%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the syllabus is available and followed, 2(2.7%) disagreed, 12(16%) were unsure, 23(30.7%) agreed and 26(34.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Teachers have access to the syllabus which is provided by the ministry of education for ensuring uniformity and skills among the learners from different parts of the country. This helps teachers to have a clear guideline on what to teach.

Results from the table above reveal that 13(17.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that lesson schemes are designed and used, 8(10.7%) disagreed, 25(33.3%) agreed and 29(38.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Lesson schemes have helped teachers in planning on how to handle different lessons for different classes with learners at different levels of understanding. This has helped in improving the performance of learners.

Results from the table above reveal that 9(12%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that children are engaged in learning, 13(17.5%) disagreed, 22(29.3%) agreed and 31(41.3%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Children are engaged because they participate in class through discussing with the facilitation of the teacher. This has enabled learners to improve their skills and perform well in exams.

Findings from the table above reveal that 15(20%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they use questioning and discussion techniques, 18(24%) disagreed, 19(25.3%) agreed and 22(29.3%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Questions are used by some of the teachers depending on the subject of study. This enables learners to understand the subject matter well without cramming for the sake of passing exams.

Results from the table above reveal that 15(20%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they effectively prepare the teaching materials, 8(10.7%) disagreed, 26(34.7%) agreed and 26(34.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Most of the teachers use teaching materials to demonstrate to the learners. This has helped in improving learners performance and mostly in mathematics. This has also promoted effective curriculum implementation.

Results from the table above reveal that 9(12%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that content is taught primarily from textbooks, 10(13.3%) disagreed, 15(20%) agreed and 41(54.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Teachers get their information from textbooks with content is prescribed in the curriculum. This helps in improving curriculum implementation as much of the information is got from recognized sources.

Results from the table above reveal that 12(16%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that local or cultural examples are used when teaching, 5(6.7%) disagreed, 2(2.7%) were not sure, 27(36%) agreed and 29(38.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Cultural and local examples are good in enhancing the understanding of learners as compared to national examples. This helps learners to internalize the leaned content into the local context and therefore having a clear understanding.

Results from the table above reveal that 13(17.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that effective classroom organization are established to manage learning, behavior, and opportunities to learn, 15(20%) disagreed, 5(6.7%) were not sure, 18(24%) agreed and 24(32%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Most of the teachers have enough skills in classroom organization because it influences the concentration of learners whenever the teacher is teaching. This makes it a key determinant of teacher competence and therefore students' performance.

Results from the table above reveal that 19(25.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness in class, 13(17.3%) disagreed, 8(10.7%) were not sure, 11(14.7%) agreed and 24(32%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Teachers are flexible whenever teaching because there are a number of factors that influence student learning and therefore have to be considered by the teacher. However this depends on the competence of the teacher in most cases and is key in influencing performance of learners.

Results from the table above reveal that 2(2.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that progress of learners is evaluated to assess growth towards achieving bench-marks, 5(6.7%) disagreed, 2(2.7%) were not sure, 27(36%) agreed and 39(52%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Evaluations are done by all teachers and this enables schools to remain focused towards achieving their set objectives and goals.

Results from the table above reveal that 14(18.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that there is regular assessment of learners' progress towards curricular benchmarks, 11(14.7%) disagreed, 5(6.7%) were not sure, 16(21.3%) agreed, 29(38.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents supported the idea. Learners are assessed at the end of each term to evaluate

their performance and also the performance of teachers. This helps in determining whether teachers are on track or not such that recommendation measures can be put in place before performance worsens in case they are off track.

Results from the table above reveal that 10(13.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that evidence-based interventions are used to teach content, 15(20%) disagreed, 5(6.7%) were not sure, 13(17.3%) agreed and 32(42.7%) strongly agreed. The majority of the respondents disagreed with the idea. These are not used by most of the teachers due to lack of enough skills. This implies that there is a need for more training in order for school to be able to improve curriculum implementation competence.

4.6.1.2 Correlation and Regression Analysis

Correlation Analysis

The Pearson's correlation coefficient was conducted to determine the relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation in pre-primary schools in Itanda Parish.

Table 4.7: Shows Pearson correlations Analysis

Correlations			
		Teacher Competence	Curriculum Implementation
Teacher Competence	Pearson Correlation	1	.808**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	75	75
Curriculum Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.808**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	75	75
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: Primary Data 2015

Results show that there is a significant relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation (r =.808**: p= .000). This implies that the higher the teacher competence the greater impact or influence it will have on curriculum implementation.

Regression analysis

The regression analysis was used to find the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable, that is, the extent to which teacher competence affects curriculum implementation.

Table 4.8: Shows findings on regression analysis showing the relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation.

R Square = .653					**F = 353.533**	
Adjusted R Square = .651					**Sig = .000**	
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.407	.198		2.059	.041
	Teacher competence	.887	.047	.808	18.802	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Curriculum implementation						

Source: Primary Data 2015

Results in table above show that 65.3% variance in curriculum implementation is attributed to teacher competence (Adjusted R Square = .651), thus this reveal that teacher competence is more statistically significant predictor of curriculum implementation (Beta = .808, Sig. = .000). In general, the regression model fit was significant at sig. = .000.

4.6.2 Qualitative

Respondent (1) commented, *"The syllabus for all classes is available and it is followed by all teachers. Teachers are not allowed to teach outside the syllabus as they can mislead students"*

Respondent (2) commented, *"Most of the teachers engage children when learning. This is usually done in higher classes like p4 and p3. This involves teachers discussing with students through question-answer approach"*

Respondent (3) commented, *"We do assess students on a termly basis to enable us evaluate their performance. this is done through the use of end of term exams. Some of the teachers also give revisions to students when doing their own assessments"*

Respondent (4) commented, *"Some of the teachers use local examples to make students understand well but others don't use them but instead employ others means for example use of demonstration materials like charts"*

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter includes the discussion of findings, the conclusions drawn from findings and the recommendations made by the researcher on how to solve the issues of curriculum implementation.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

5.2.1 The Competencies Teachers Need to Implement Curriculum in Pre-Primary Schools

Results from Table 4.3 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 50(66.7%) agreed that they need to possess values and attitudes. This is in line with Wesselink et al, (2010) who noted that teachers should possess values and attitudes. The teacher treats his or her colleagues, parents, learners/education officials and other members of the community with respect; prevents hurtful confrontations and turns enemies into friends; demonstrates care for others; demonstrates honesty and self respect; takes responsibility for his/her actions and demonstrates perseverance.

Results from Table 4.3 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 46(61.3%) agreed that they need to understand the key statutory instruments that govern the teaching profession in ECD. This is in line with HakiElimu, (2012) who noted that, the teacher should understand the key statutory instruments and other legal frameworks that govern the teaching profession, the sociology, philosophy and management of education, the primary education system and how it relates with other sectors, his/her own rights , entitlements and privileges, the national goals of education and related international undertakings, children's learning needs at the various developmental stages, Cross-cutting issues in education such as gender, HIV/AIDS, special needs education among others, assessment of learning.

Findings from Table 4.3 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 43(57.4%) agreed that they need to possess professional ethics. This is in line with Nuffic, (2004) who noted that teachers should posses professional ethics which are the standards of behavior expected of a particular profession. Every respected profession has a code of conduct which guides its professionals in executing their duties. Similarly in the teaching profession, teachers

are expected to conform to the expected professional code of conduct. The Education Service Commission outlines the values expected of teachers in Uganda in the Teachers' Code of Conduct. This code is divided into three parts which include the teachers' professional conduct, professional responsibility and personal conduct.

Results from Table 4.3 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 39(52%) agreed that they need to possess honesty and integrity. This is in line with Wangeleja, (2010) who noted that, the teacher promotes good working relationships within and beyond the school to promote learning, makes technical and professional consultations, Maintains harmony between his/her activities and those of others, Shares relevant information with others and Carries out supplementary tasks as may be required.

5.2.2 ECD Teachers Competence Levels in Implementing the Curriculum in Pre-Primary Schools.

Results from Table 4.4 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 39(55.7%) respondents highly understand the procedures for using child-friendly techniques of teaching. This is in line with Lubanga further who noted that the teacher should understand the procedures for using child-friendly approaches, methods and techniques of teaching, phasing teaching from known to unknown, inducing children's own learning, using a variety of teaching/learning aids during lesson delivery, using the local environment as a teaching resource and assessing pupils' learning. This is in line with Wolf, (2001) who noted that the teacher should demonstrate proper handling and care for teaching/learning materials and equipment, makes and applies child-friendly learning aids in the teaching process, creates a safe learning environment and demonstrates skills of first aid.

Results from Table 4.4 also reveals that majority of the respondents consisting of 54(79%) agreed that they have inadequate knowledge of the current policy reforms in primary education. This is in line with Kafyulilo, Rugambuka & Moses, (2012) who noted that, available data on pre-primary and primary teachers show that in 2010, 12.7 percent of pre-primary teachers and 16.1 percent of primary teachers were not qualified, in the sense that they were not holding the minimum required certification. While this proportion has decreased over the years, especially

among teachers in government schools, the number of teachers to receive training remains high at 3,572 in pre-primary schools and at 23,363 at primary.

Results from Table 4.4 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 41(54.6%) highly demonstrate proper handling and care for teaching materials. This is inline with Wolf, (2001) who noted that the teacher should demonstrate proper handling and care for teaching/learning materials and equipment, makes and applies child-friendly learning aids in the teaching process, creates a safe learning environment and demonstrates skills of first aid.

Findings from Table 4.4 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 43(57.3%) highly interpret the primary school curriculum correctly. This is in line with Komba et al., (2012) who noted that the teacher interprets the primary school curriculum correctly and applies both deductive and inductive reasoning.

Results from Table 4.4 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 46(65.7%) highly adapt the school time table to the needs of the learners. This is in line with Mosha, (2012) who noted that, the teacher adapts the school time table to the needs of the learners, prepares comprehensive schemes of work and lesson plans, relates curriculum content to pupils' needs and experiences, integrates content across subjects/learning areas, demonstrates proper use of child-friendly approaches, methods and techniques in teaching, uses learning aids appropriately in the course of teaching

Results from Table 4.4 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 37(49.3%) highly exhibit the life skills of knowing and living with oneself. This is in line with Utomo, (2005) who noted that the teacher exhibits the life skills of knowing and living with oneself, knowing and living with others and effective decision making, Applies life skills in the world of work and in leadership situations, Supports learners to develop life skills during the teaching/learning process and during co-curricular activities.

Results from Table 4.4 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 45(60%) highly help colleagues and team members to work collaboratively to solve problems. This is inline with Utomo, (2005) who noted that the teacher helps colleagues and team members to work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict and promote

meaningful change; presents ideas, leads discussions, clarifies, mediates and identifies the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and continuous professional development; facilitates trust among group members; builds effective teams with and among group members; Uses effective modeling behavior, seeks the right balance between guidance and counseling; steering and following; confrontation and reconciliation; and, corrective measures and stimulation, identifies opportunities/issues/challenges related to pupil learning and consults for possible solutions and takes proper care of the institutional resources.

Results from Table 4.4 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 49(65.3%) highly promote good working relationships within and beyond the school to promote learning. This is in line with Wangeleja, (2010) who noted that, the teacher promotes good working relationships within and beyond the school to promote learning, makes technical and professional consultations, Maintains harmony between his/her activities and those of others, Shares relevant information with others and Carries out supplementary tasks as may be required.

Results from Table 4.4 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 48(64%) highly possess values and attitudes. This is in line with Wesselink et al, (2010) who noted that teachers should possess values and attitudes. The teacher treats his or her colleagues, parents, learners/education officials and other members of the community with respect; prevents hurtful confrontations and turns enemies into friends; demonstrates care for others; demonstrates honesty and self-respect; takes responsibility for his/her actions and demonstrates perseverance.

5.2.3 Professional Development Activities that Enhance Teacher Competence to Implement Curriculum in Pre-Primary Schools

Results from Table 4.5 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 45(6%) agreed that participating in individual and collaborative research enhances teacher competence. This is in line with Bolhuis and Geijsel, (2005) who noted that, since student outcomes depend greatly on teacher quality, governments, local politicians and school managers need to foster teachers' continuous professional development in order to cope effectively with ongoing changes and improve the quality of education. Strengthening internal school conditions to promote teachers' professional development is considered an important prerequisite for addressing a continuous

stream of changes in their environments (*e.g.* demographic changes, large-scale educational innovations, socio-cultural renewal), the multidimensional restructuring demands to which they must respond, and the considerable external pressures arising from the tighter "output" controls introduced by accountability policies. Furthermore, promoting the professional development of teachers is also expected to reduce the alienation that bureaucracy may produce.

Results from Table 4.5 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 45(60%) agreed that participating in informal dialogue to improve teaching enhances teacher competence. This is in line with McArdle and Coutts, (2003) who noted that, professional learning through sense-making is an on-going process. A teacher engages in sense-making in a variety of situations, such as interacting with a colleague, gaining an insight into a student's response to their teaching practice or responding to a teaching approach introduced through a reform practice. Each experience is assessed 'against a backcloth of one's sense of oneself as a person and, of course within that, as a professional'. This was also given by Rashman and colleagues (2009) who highlighted the social nature of knowledge and its creation through interaction in their review of the literature on organizational learning and knowledge. They note that, while some authors consider the organizational knowledge construction process to be from the individual to the collective, others consider it to be the reverse, with collective learning driving individual knowledge creation. However, both views hold that the knowledge created through interaction with colleagues is context specific.

Results from Table 4.5 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 47(62.6%) disagreed that attending short courses and workshops enhances teacher competence, 13(17.3%) disagreed. This is in line with Chalmers and Keown, (2006) who noted that, good teachers become great teachers by going beyond the call of duty and beyond the textbook. To do this, he or she must continue their education. There are conferences, workshops, and continuing education that could give the teacher that extra help in technology for their students. There are online workshops, and classes that teachers could attend as well as on-site workshop and classes.

Results from Table 4.5 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 53(70.6%) agreed that reading professional literature enhances teacher competence. This is in line with National Reading Panel (2000) who noted that, improvements in teacher knowledge and practice

positively impact student reading success. Reading is as much about teacher change as it is about student change. In order to successfully accomplish the aim of having all students reading on grade level, Reading First schools have to start by increasing teacher skill in research-based instructional practices and by changing the prevailing notion of professional development.

Results from Table 4.5 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 44(58.7%) agreed that building professional development networks enhances teacher competence. This is inline with Putnam and Borko, (2000) who noted that, teaching quality and school leadership are the most important factors in raising student achievement. For teachers and school and district leaders to be as effective as possible, they continually expand their knowledge and skills to implement the best educational practices. Educators learn to help students learn at the highest levels.

Results from Table 4.5 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 51(68%) agreed that attending education conferences and seminars enhances teacher competence. This is in line with Chalmers and Keown, (2006) who noted that, good teachers become great teachers by going beyond the call of duty and beyond the textbook. To do this, he or she must continue their education. There are conferences, workshops, and continuing education that could give the teacher that extra help in technology for their students. There are online workshops, and classes that teachers could attend as well as on-site workshop and classes.

Results from Table 4.5 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 52(69.3%) agreed that training of teachers determines the quality of the out-put. This is also in line with Toit, (2003) who noted that, administrators should encourage their teachers to continue their education as well as make opportunities available for them to do so. Moreover, administrators and districts should offer to either pay or help pay for the classes and workshops. There are workshops on how to integrate technology into the classroom and how to make it cross curricular. There are also conferences that will have several workshops all at one time so that teachers and administrators can go to more than one workshop at a time.

Results from Table 4.5 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 58(77.3%) agreed that training and re-training of teachers is a pre-condition for functional educational system. This is in line with Crane, (2012) who noted that, the development of a person's professional identity

within any organizational group is influence by the level of expertise they perceive they have; the level of expertise they consider others in the group have; and how they consider the others in the group perceive their level of knowledge. The 'positioning' of each person in relation to perceived expertise within the group is 'relational and reflexive'. Individuals often justify their status as a 'knower' within the field under discussion, thus their worthiness to participate in the discussion as well as their willingness to share.

5.2.4 The Extent to Which Pre-Primary Curriculum is implemented

Results from Table 4.6 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 49(65.4%) agreed that the syllabus is available and followed. This is in line with Woolcock, (2000) who noted that, a school syllabus can serve as a highly effective facilitator of children learning, something that many pre-primary schools may not fully consider. With the increasing influence that cognitive, constructivist, and social learning theories are having on pre-primary education as well as the effects of the many technological advances in modes of delivery of instruction, school members realize that children do not do all of their learning while sitting in the classroom. Children learn as much or more by reading, writing and discussing outside of class as they do from direct interaction with a teacher.

Results from Table 4.6 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 54(72%) agreed that lesson schemes are designed and used. This is in line with Borich (2007) who noted that the importance of lesson planning is emphasized in the education process of many countries. As a combination of lesson objective designing, teaching, modeling, checking for understanding, re-teaching and teacher's self-reflection, lesson plan is a crucial element in the process of meeting national content standards and optimizing the outcome of classroom teaching and learning. This was further given by Wong, (2009) who noted that, lesson plans affects not only teachers instruction but classroom management as well. Characteristics of a well-managed classroom are that (1) students are deeply engaged with their work; which would be possible if their roles are described and they have a goal as provided in a good lesson plan; (2) students know what is expected; which would be possible via routinely implemented good lesson plans; (3) there is little wasted time, confusion; which would be possible via effective implementation of a good lesson plan; and (4) the climate of such a classroom would be work-oriented, but relaxed and pleasant; which would be possible via good time management due to effective implementation of a good lesson plan.

Results from Table 4.6 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 53(70.6%) agreed that children are engaged in learning. This is in line with Brewster & Fager, (2000) who noted that, psychologically, engaged learners are intrinsically motivated by curiosity, interest, and enjoyment, and are likely to want to achieve their own intellectual or personal goals. In addition, the engaged child demonstrates the behaviors of concentration, investment, enthusiasm, and effort. In the opening example the children demonstrate engagement through their curiosity, effort, and persistence. They can be described as busy and on task. But they are also using their minds, hearts, and even their bodies to learn.

Findings from Table 4.6 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 41(54.6%) agreed that they use questioning and discussion techniques. This is in line with Marks , (2000) who noted that, good teachers use divergent as well as convergent questions, framed in such a way that invite students to form hypothesis, make connections, or challenge previously held views. High-quality questions encourage students to make connections among concepts or events previously believed to be unrelated and arrive at new understandings of complex materials.

Results from Table 4.6 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 52(69.4%) agreed that they effectively prepare the teaching materials. This is in line with Roderick & Engle, (2001) who noted that, teaching aids are those materials that help the teachers explain better knowledge and help the students understand. It is like the picture of the lesson. It is especially important in lessons or topics that are strange to the kids. E.g. if you were teaching a group of kids in a remote village with no civilization about types of houses, you will need a picture or a DVD showing the different houses and their names because most probably these kids have never seen or heard of such.

Results from Table 4.6 reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 56(74.7%) agreed that content is taught primarily from textbooks. This is in line with Oakes & Saunders, (2004) who noted that, Textbooks are at the heart of educational enterprise, as they offer students a rich array of new and potentially interesting facts, and open the door to a world of fantastic experience. Literature provides evidence of the significant role of textbooks as primary vehicles for delivering content knowledge, for determining in large measure what goes on in a class, and for assessing what students do and do not learn. It has been identified that access to and availability of textbooks is a particularly significant factor in predicting academic achievement.

Results from Table 4.6 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 56(74.7) agreed that local or cultural examples are used when teaching. This is inline with De Guzman, (2000) who carried out a study that found a set of nested relationships linking the use of culture-based educational strategies by teachers and by schools to student educational outcomes. First, culture-based education (CBE) positively impacts student socio-emotional well-being (e.g., identity, self-efficacy, social relationships). Second, enhanced socio-emotional well-being, in turn, positively affects math and reading test scores. Third, CBE is positively related to math and reading test scores for all students, and particularly for those with low socio-emotional development, most notably when supported by overall CBE use within the school.

Results from Table 4.6 also reveal that majority of the respondents consisting of 45(60%) agreed that there is regular assessment of learners' progress towards curricular benchmarks. This is in line with Bransford, Brown, and Cocking, (2009) who noted that, assessment and feedback are crucial for helping people learn. Assessment should mirror good instruction; happen continuously as part of instruction; and provide information about the levels of understanding that students are reaching. In order for learners to gain insight into their learning and their understanding, frequent feedback is critical; students need to monitor their learning and actively evaluate their strategies and their current levels of understanding.

5.3. Conclusion

It was established that there is a relationship between teacher competence and curriculum implementation. The more competent teachers are, the more effective the implementation of curriculum becomes.

It was established that teachers need a number of competencies to enable them implement ECD curriculum efficiently and effectively. This includes developing the ability to make ECD schemes, ability to organize and manage ECD instructional processes and understanding the key statutory instruments that govern the teaching profession. This implies that nursery teachers requires regular training so as to improve their skills in curriculum implementation.

It was also established that majority of the teachers in pre-primary schools in the area are competent. They understand the procedures for using child-friendly techniques, demonstrate proper handling and care for teaching materials, interpret pre-primary school curriculum

correctly, possess values and attitudes and capable of promoting good working relationships within and beyond the school. A number of professional activities have helped teachers in enhancing their competences to implement curriculum and they include, participating in individual and collaborative research, reading professional literature, building professional development networks, attending education conferences and seminars, attending regular trainings. However, it was also established that teachers have played a big role in implementing pre-primary curriculum. They engage children in learning, lesson schemes are designed and used evidence-based interventions are used in teaching content, effectively prepare the teaching materials, local or cultural examples are used when teaching, progress of learners evaluated to assess growth towards achieving bench-marks, use questioning and discussion techniques

5.4. Recommendation

The government should promote in-service training of pre-primary teachers so as to improve their skills in curriculum implementation.

The ministry of education and sports should organize short courses and workshops for pre-primary teachers aimed at improving their competences

School managers should allow teachers to attend education conferences and seminars so as to gain more skills in their field

Pre-primary teachers should be encouraged to participate in individual and collaborative research so as to gain much skills in curriculum implementation.

5.5. Areas for further study

The study should be replicated in other districts across the country

- A study should be carried out on other factors influencing effective curriculum implementation in Pre-Primary schools in Uganda.
- A study should be carried out on the challenges facing pre-primary schools in curriculum implementation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear Respondent

I am **Nakasango Rose,** a student of Kyambogo University carrying out an academic research on: "Teacher Competence and Curriculum Implementation in Pre-Primary Schools . "You have been selected to participate in the study and you are therefore kindly requested to provide an appropriate answer by ticking the best option. The answers provided will only be used for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

1). Age

☐ Below 25yrs ☐ 26 -35yrs ☐ 35 -50yrs ☐ Above 50yrs

2). Sex of the respondent

☐ Male ☐ Female

3). Marital status

☐ Married ☐ Single ☐ Divorced

4). Level of education

☐ Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Postgraduate ☐ Others (specify)

The following section should be answered using the options: SD= Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NS = Not sure, A = Agree and SA = Strongly Agree. Please choose the option that best represents your response or perception.

SECTION B: THE COMPETENCIES TEACHERS NEED TO IMPLEMENT CURRICULUM IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

No	Statements	SD	D	NS	A	SA
1	I need to develop ability to make ECD schemes of work and lesson plan					
2	I need to develop ability to organize and manage ECD instructional processes effectively.					
3	I need to possess values and attitudes.					
4	I need to possess professional ethics					
5	I need to understand the key statutory instruments that govern the teaching profession in ECD					
6	I need to possess honesty and integrity					

SECTION C: ECD TEACHERS COMPETENCE LEVELS IN IMPLEMENTING THE CURRICULUM IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

This section should be answered using the two options of high and low. Please choose the option that best represents your response or perception

No	Statements	High	Low
1	I understand the procedures for using child-friendly techniques of teaching		
2	I have adequate knowledge of the current policy reforms in primary education		
3	I demonstrate proper handling and care for teaching materials		
4	I interpret the primary school curriculum correctly		
5	I adapt the school time table to the needs of the learners		
6	I exhibit the life skills of knowing and living with oneself		
7	I help colleagues and team members to work collaboratively to solve problems.		
8	I promote good working relationships within and beyond the school to promote learning		
9	I possess values and attitudes		

SECTION D: PROFFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES THAT ENHANCE TEACHER COMPETENCE TO IMPLEMENT CURRICULUM IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

This section should be answered using the options: SD= Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NS = Not sure, A = Agree and SA = Strongly Agree. Please choose the option that best represents your response or perception.

No	Statements	SD	D	NS	A	SA
1	Participating in individual and collaborative research					
2	Participating in informal dialogue to improve teaching					
3	Reading professional literature					
4	Attending short courses and workshops					
5	Building professional development networks					
6	Mentoring and peer observation					
7	Observation visits to other schools					
8	Attending education conferences and seminars					
9	In-service trainings should be organized for teachers					
10	Training of teachers determines the quality of the out-put					
11	Training and re-training of teachers is a pre-condition for functional educational system					

SECTION E: THE EXTENT TO WHICH PRE-PRIMARY CULLICULLUM IS IMPLEMENTED

This section should be answered using the options: SD= Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NS = Not sure, A = Agree and SA = Strongly Agree. Please choose the option that best represents your response or perception.

No	Statements	SD	D	NS	A	SA
1	The syllabus is available and followed					
2	Lesson schemes are designed and used					
3	Effectively prepare the teaching materials					
4	Engage children in learning					
5	Content taught primarily from textbooks					
6	Local or cultural examples are used when teaching					
7	Evidence-based interventions are used to teach content					
8	Progress of learners evaluated to assess growth towards achieving bench-marks					
9	Demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness in class					
10	Effective Classroom organization established to manage learning, behavior, and opportunities to learn					
11	Regular assessment of learners' progress toward curricular benchmarks					
12	Use questioning and discussion techniques					

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS

1). Age

2). Marital status

3). Level of education

4). What are the competences teacher need to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools?

5). What can be done to improve teachers competencies in implementing curriculum?

6)). Examine the extent teachers possess the competencies needed to implement the curriculum in pre-primary schools?

7). What are the professional development activities that enhance teacher competence to implement curriculum in pre-primary schools?

8). What is the extent to which pre-primary curriculum is implemented

9). What are the challenges faced by teachers in implementing curriculum?

10). What can be done to solve the challenges faced?