

**Thematic Curriculum and Learners' Performance in Government-Aided Primary Schools in
Tororo Municipality.**

By

Gamoiza Abdu

BU/GS19/EDM/2

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Education, Faculty of Science and
Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of
Masters of Education in Leadership and Management of Busitema University.**

December, 2022

Declaration

I Gamoiza Abdu, hereby declare that I am the author of this study and that any assistance received in its preparation is fully acknowledged and disclosed. This dissertation is my original work, and to the best of my knowledge, it has never been presented, published or submitted for any award in any other University or Institution of learning.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Gamoiza Abdu

BU/GS19/EDM/2

Approval

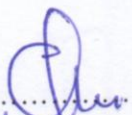
Gamoiza Abdu's Dissertation titled: "Thematic Curriculum and Learners' Performance in Government-Aided Primary Schools in Tororo Municipality", was conducted under my supervision and it is hereby submitted for presentation with my approval.

Signature : 

Date: 23/11/2023

Olema David Kani (Associate Professor)

Research Supervisor

Signature : 

Date: 19/11/2023

Mr. Kasirye Richard

Assistant Research Supervisor

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved parents; the late Banja Mustafa and Ms. Namugosa Juliet for their financial support, words of encouragement, moral and spiritual support that have enabled me to complete my Masters study course.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I am highly indebted to the Almighty God Jehovah (Yahkev Allah) for the gift of life and His blessings upon us. My sincere appreciation also goes to Professor David OlemaKani and Mr. Kasiry Richard my lead supervisors. Besides being busy with other duties, they always found time to guide my research work by helping me sail through the difficult times. God abundantly bless these benevolent supervisors.

My special thanks go to my spouse NamulwaNulu for being supportive and standing with me in all the trying moments. To my sons Abdunoor, Abduhakeem, Abdusharif, Abduhalim and my daughter Hasinnah who always encouraged and allowed me time to study, I am indeed grateful.

Equally pertinent and very much appreciated are my lecturers: Dr. AtibuniZami Denis, Dr. CharlesEryenyu, Dr. Andama Edward, Dr. Suubi Ujeyo Margaret and Mr. Wamakote Leonard for all their contributions towards the attainment of this paper.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions and encouragement made by my seniorcolleagues; Ajuma Teddy Makola (Mrs.), Mr. Jawacho David Ochwo, Olokojo Benadette (Mrs.), Rebecca Awany (Mrs.) and Ofamba Francis during the course of developing this Dissertation.

I am also indebted to my research assistants: Nabitula Agnes, and Nangumba Allan for proof reading, aligning and type-setting the work.

Lastly but not least, I am very grateful to my participants who spared time to respond to the questionnaires and interview guides.

Table of Contents

Declaration	ii
Approval	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	x
List of Acronyms	xi
Abstract	xii
Chapter One	1
Introduction	1
Background of the Study	1
Historical Perspective	2
Conceptual Perspective	3
Theoretical Perspective	4
Contextual Perspective.....	5
Problem Statement	6
Objectives of the Study	7
Scope of the Study	8
Geographical Scope	8
Content Scope	8
Time Scope	9
Significance of the Study	9
Justification of the Study	10
Conceptual Framework	11
Definition of Key Terms	12
Chapter Two.....	13
Literature Review.....	13
Empirical Review of Objectives	18
Teachers' Use of Local Language in Teaching and Learning	18
Availability of Textbooks and Non-Textbook Learning Materials for Thematic Curriculum Implementation.	
Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Local Language in Teaching and Learning, and Learners' Competencies in Literacy and Numeracy	25
Gaps in Literature	27

Chapter Three.....	28
Methodology	28
Introduction	28
Research Design	28
Population of Study.....	28
Study Population	29
Sample Size	29
Sampling Techniques	30
Purposive Sampling	30
Data Collection Methods	31
Survey	31
Interview guides	31
Observation	32
Data Collection Instruments	32
Questionnaires.....	32
Interview Guide	33
Observation Guide	33
Quality of Data Collection Instruments	33
Validity	34
Reliability	34
Research Procedure	35
Data Management	35
Response Rate	36
Data Analysis	37
Ethical Considerations	38
Chapter Four	39
Presentation of Results	39
Demographic Features of the Participants	39
Objective one: To assess the teachers’ use of local language in teaching and learning thematic curriculum in government aided lower primary classes in Tororo Municipality	40
Objective Two: To Assess Teachers Perception of Learners’ Literacy and numeracy competencies in government-aided lower primary classes in Tororo Municipality	45
Objective Four: To determine the relationship between the teacher’s use of local language in teaching and learning, and Pupils’ Competencies in Literacy and numeracy in Government-Aided Lower Primary classes in Tororo Municipality	52
Chapter Five	56

Discussions, Conclusions, and Recommendations	56
Introduction	56
Discussion of Findings	56
Objective Two	58
Objective Four	60
Conclusions	61
Recommendations	62
Areas for Further Research	63
Limitations of the Study.....	64
REFERENCES	66
APPENDIXES	71
Appendix A: Letter of Permission to Collect Data	71
Appendix B: Consent Form	72
Appendix C: Questionnaire to Teachers	73
Appendix D: Interview Guide for School Head teachers	78
Appendix E: Classroom observation instrument comment	79
Appendix F: Table for determining sample size	82

List of Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework	10
--------------------------------------	----

List of Tables

Table 1: Government-Aided Primary Schools in Tororo Municipality	Error! Bookmark not defined.
--	-------------------------------------

Table 2: Sampled Population, Sample Size, Sampling Technique and Research Instruments	30
---	----

Table 3: Demographic Information of the Teachers (n = 45)	39
---	----

Table 4: The Level of Using Local Language in Teaching Lower Primary Classes	41
--	----

Table 5: The Level of pupils' Literacy and Numeracy competencies in lower Primary	46
--	----

Table 6: Number of available local language learning materials	49
--	----

Table 7: Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficients	52
--	----

List of Acronyms

ATE	: Association of Teacher Educators
LOI	: Languages of Instruction
MoES	: Ministry of Education and Sports
MT's	: Mother Tongues
NAPE	: National Assessment of Progress in Education
NCDC	: National Curriculum Development Center
NEA	: National Education Association
SACMEQ	: Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
TPs	: Teaching Procedures
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	: United States of America

Abstract

This study was titled "Thematic Curriculum and Learner Performance in Lower Primary Schools Receiving Government Aid in Tororo Municipality." The objectives of the study included: a) assessing the teachers' use of the local language in teaching and learning; b) assessing the teachers' perceptions of the literacy and numeracy skills of the pupils enrolled; c) determining the availability of materials for the implementation of thematic curriculum; and d) determining the relationship between the teachers' use of the local language in teaching and learning and the pupils' literacy and numeracy competencies in government-aided lower primary classes. The survey employed a cross-sectional approach. Using questionnaires, lesson observation tools, and interview guides with teachers and principals, data was collected. The study found that pupils in lower primary government-aided schools in Tororo Municipality could read, count, and actively partake in the teaching and learning process when a familiar language was employed. The multilingual character of Tororo Municipality also necessitated the use of English as the language of instruction. Therefore, it was suggested that in multilingual communities, any language that is commonly understood within that community, even if it is not an indigenous language, should be used as a medium of instruction in lower primary.

Key words: Thematic Curriculum, Learners' performance, Literacy and Numeracy competencies, Cass teacher system.

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter covers the study's historical, theoretical, conceptual, and contextual perspectives, problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions/hypothesis, study scope, significance, and conceptual framework.

Background of the Study

Research on the development of children's emergent literacy have been conducted in order to provide education stakeholders with extensively tested teaching strategies (Donnelly, 2013). These strategies are intended to assist lower primary pupils with reading and interpreting written language. A study of the arrangement and language of instruction in lower primary education was conducted to increase learners' acquisition of reading and numeracy abilities (Byamugisha et al., 2015). Several educational authorities conducted additional research and discovered that elementary school pupils had inadequate literacy and numeracy skills that required immediate attention (Mabirizi, 2017; Uwezo, 2019). These pupil weaknesses prompted the need to introduce the use of local language in thematic curriculum instruction in lower primary (P1-P3), as proposed in Ssentenza Kajubi's 1989 education report.

Learners ability to read at an early age has the potential to develop ones' ability to acquire other forms of knowledge (Mabirizi, 2017). Likewise, the inability to read and understand instructions will result in increased failure rate even at the subsequent level after Primary three. Jimenez et al. (2010) reported that majority of Primary Two pupils could neither read English words nor mother tongue in the central and Lango region of Uganda. Baseka (2018) and Amone (2021) revealed similar results that more than half of

REFERENCES

- Akello, L. D., & Timmerman, M. G. (2018). Local language a medium of instruction: challenges and way forward. *Educational Action Research*, 26(2), 314-332.
- Akurut, T. (2022). Is the thematic curriculum still relevant? Monitor publication, march 29th, 2022. <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/oped/commentary/is-the-thematiccurriculum-still-relevant--3764466>
- Al-nusair, D. M. (2000). *An assessment of college experience and educational gains of Saudi pupils studying at US colleges and universities*. The George Washington University.
- Altinyelken, H. K. (2010). Curriculum change in Uganda: Teacher perspectives on the new thematic curriculum. *International journal of educational development*, 30(2), 151-161.
- Amin, E.M. (2005). *Social Sciences Research: Principles and Methodology*, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda
- Amone, C. (2021). Ethnic pluralism and the challenge of thematic curriculum implementation in Uganda. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 42(1), 52-63.
- Anderson, N. J. (2018). Introduction to Teaching Reading. *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*, 1-2.
- Aschelong, V., and Nygaard, M. (2010). *Teaching methods*. London: Macmillan Education Ltd.
- Azhari, A., & Umar, F. (2017). Implementation of Illiteracy Eradication Program in Kato District North Kolaka, Indonesia. *EDUCATIO: Journal of Education*, 2(1), 232-245.
- Boyle, (2018). 'Making primary connections: the cross-curriculum story', Curriculum

Journal, 19:1, 5 — 21

Buechler, (2003). *Connecting Learning Assures Successful Pupils: A Study of the class Program*. Indiana University

Cantarello, S., Nosella, A., Petroni, G., & Venturini, K. (2011). External technology sourcing: evidence from design-driven innovation. *Management Decision*.

Creswell, J.W (2014). *Research Design, Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Approaches*. 4th Ed). Thousand Oaks, C.A .Sage.

Duncan .N. (2019). *Curriculum and introduction to the methods of teaching*. London: Macmillan Publisher Ltd.

Ellis, R. (2010). Second language acquisition, teacher education and language pedagogy. *Language teaching*, 43(2), 182-201.

Eskelson, T.C. (2020). *How and why formal education originated in the emergence of civilization*. *Journal of education and learning*, 9(2), 29-47

Jiménez, J. E., Rodríguez, C., Crespo, P., González, D., Artiles, C., & Alfonso, M. (2010). Implementation of Response to Intervention (RtI) Model in Spain: An example of a collaboration between Canarian universities and the department of education of the Canary Islands. *Psicothema*, 22(4), 935-942.

John, Y. J. (2015). A " New" Thematic, Integrated Curriculum for Primary Schools of Trinidad and Tobago: A Paradigm Shift. *International journal of higher education*, 4(3), 172-187.

Kagure, G. 2010. Challenges in implementing a mother tongue-based language in education policy: *Policy and practice in Kenya*. Polis: University fo Leeds.

Kagwesage, A. M. (2013). Coping with English as Language of Instruction in Higher Education in Rwanda. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 2(2), 1-12.

- Kasirye, I. (2009). Determinants of learning achievement in Uganda. *Economic Policy Research Centre, Uganda*.
- Kavule, N. (2007). *The Achievement of Primary school pupils in Uganda in Numeracy, Literacy in English and Local Languages*. Kampala: National Assessment Of Progress In Education.
- Kendall, D., Murray, J. L., & Linden, R. (2004). *Sociology in Our Times* (3rd Canadian edition). *Scarborough, Ontario: Nelson Thomson Learning*.
- Kwesiga, J. B. (1994). Literacy and the language question: Brief experiences from Uganda. *Language and Education*, 8(1-2), 57-63.
- Lhomi S. (2020). *Designing the thematic curriculum*. All Aspects Applied.
- Loew, S. J., Alba, M. E. F., & Watson, K. (2013). Incidence of Meares-Irlen/visual stress syndrome in reading and learning disorders: does fluorescent lighting in classrooms affect literacy and numeracy?. *Aulaabierta*, 41(3), 23-32.
- Mabirizi.M, (2017) *Challenges facing the implementing of thematic curriculum in lower primary schools*. A Case Of Nabingoola Sub-County, Mubende District. Uganda
- Moore, A., George, R., & Halpin, D. (2002). The developing role of the head teacher in English schools: Management, leadership and pragmatism. *Educational Management & Administration*, 30(2), 175-188.
- Mugenda. A.G and Mugenda. O.M (2013). *Research Method dictionary*. Nairobi, Kenya. Applied.
- Namirembe, E. (2021). Predictors of Successful Adoption of Technology Supported Learning in Universities in Uganda: A Pupils' Perspective. *The African Journal of Information Systems*, 13(2), 3.
- NCDC (2013). *Institutional repositioning to a centre stage in National Development*. NCDC. Kampala.

- Norris S, Atkins D, Bruenin W et al (2011). Observation studies in systematic reviews of comparative effectiveness: AHRQ and the Effective classroom.
- Nsibambi, A. (2017). *Involving parents improving literacy: Language in Uganda*. Naroibi: Paulines Publishers.
- Oloka, F. R. E. D. (2017). Assessment of the Role of School Management Committees on the Academic Achievement of Learners in Universal Primary Education Schools in Bugiri District.
- Ouma, G. (2018). Thematic Curriculum Implementation in Lower Primary Classes in Namayingo District, Uganda. A Dissertation Submitted to the College of Education, Kampala International University.
- Siska, N., Yulia, S. H., Anika, M., &Aulia, A. (2019). Disseminate of handout based on guided discovery method in terms of student learning motivation. In *International Conference on Mathematics and Science Education* (Vol. 4, pp. 159-163). UniversitasPendidikan Indonesia.
- Skinner, B.F. (1950). Are theories of learning necessary? *Psychological Review*, 57(4), 193-216.
- Skinner, B.F. (1957). *Verbal Learning*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
- Skinner, B.F. (1971). *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*. New York: Knopf.
- Smit, N., van de Grift, W., de Bot, K., & Jansen, E. (2017). A classroom observation tool for scaffolding reading comprehension. *System*, 65, 117-129.
- Ssentanda, M., Southwood, F., &Huddleston, K. (2019). Curriculum expectations versus teachers' opinions and practices in teaching English in rural primary schools in Uganda. *Language Matters*, 50(2), 141-163.
- Teodorović, J. (2011). Classroom and school factors related to student achievement: What works for pupils? *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 22(2), 215-236.

- Thomas, P. B. (2000). The competence-based preprofessional curriculum: A key component of vision success. *Journal of Accountancy*, 190(4), 128.
- Tongco, M. D. C. (2007). Purposive sampling as a tool for informant selection.
- UWEZO and NAPE Report (2021): *Are our children learning? Uwezo learning assessment in refugee contexts in Uganda*. Kampala: Twaweza East Africa.
- Vidoni, D., Bezzina, C., & Gatelli, D. (2008). *The role of school leadership on student achievement: Evidence from TIMSS2003*. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1986). *Thought and Language*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Williams, E. (2011). Language policy, politics and development in Africa. *Dreams and realities: Developing countries and the English language*, 39-56.