Thematic curriculum and its implementation in
Primary schools in Iganga municipality,
Iganga district, Uganda

BY

Namulondo sophia
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DECLARATION

I, NAMULONDO SOPHIA, hereby declare that this thesis entitled *"Thematic curriculum and its implementation in Primary Schools in Iganga Municipality, Iganga District, Uganda"* is my original work. It has not been presented to any institution of higher learning in whole or in part for any academic award.

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APPROVAL

I certify that this thesis entitled *"Thematic curriculum and its implementation in Primary Schools in Iganga Municipality, Iganga District, Uganda"* was carried out by Namulondo Sophia under my close supervision and is now ready for submission for consideration as a basic requirement for an award of the degree of Master of Education in Education Management of Kampala International University.

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DR. SOFIA SOL GAITE

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to my dear parents, Nanangwe Fatuma and Hajji Eriyasa Koote, my lovely husband Kiirya Patrick and my children Patricia, Mercy, Frank and Ibra.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

CASA   Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society

CCTs   Center Coordinating Tutors

DEO   District Education Officer

DIS   District Inspector of Schools

EFA   Education for All

IIEP   International Institute of Educational Planning

LOI   Language of Instruction

MoES   Ministry of Education and Sports

MTs   Mother Tongues

NCDC   National Curriculum Development Center

NTC   National Teachers' College

SMCs   School Management Committees

UNESCO   United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization

UPE   Universal Primary Education

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the thematic curriculum and its implementation in primary schools in Iganga Municipality, Iganga District. It was based on three objectives: To measure the level of implementation of the thematic curriculum in terms of; talking, writing and reading in local language, to identify challenges in implementing the thematic curriculum and to establish policy issues that would be followed to implement the thematic curriculum. The study employed cross sectional design qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study population of 1268 comprised of teachers, pupils, Head Teachers, School Management Committees, District Education Officer and District Inspector of Schools. The sample size of 504 was determined using Krecjie and Morgan (1970) table. Questionnaires, focus group discussion guide and interview guides were used to collect data. Frequency, means and standard deviations were used to analyze the data. The study found out that the level of implementation of the three key aspects of the thematic curriculum was moderate that is talking and comprehending in local language, writing in local language, and reading in local language. Four challenges were established: It's hard to translate from textbooks, Increase in workloads, and inadequate reference materials. Conclusively, the study identified three key aspects of the thematic curriculum, four major challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum, various policies to implementation of the curriculum such as; training of teachers; obtaining reference books, the time factor such as increasing the hours given to teach thematic curriculum, increasing on the motivation of teachers, sensitization of the Public about the necessity of local language, and using teachers who are indigenous in a particular place. Recommendations were that necessary materials be provided to facilitate effective implementation of the thematic curriculum, organize refresher courses to enable all teachers acquire skills of teaching pupils in local language and Coordinating Centre Tutors (CCTs) should ensure that Continuous Professional Development (CPDs) courses are organized at school level to build capacity of thematic curriculum and should closely monitor its implementation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

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

1.1 Background to the Study

Thematic curriculum is the teaching in a language understood by the majority of the people in the area. The background of thematic curriculum is subdivided into historical, theoretical, conceptual and contextual perspectives.

1.1.1 Historical Perspective

Globally, education is believed to have began in prehistory, as adults trained the young in the knowledge and skills deemed necessary in their society (Fischer and Steven 2004). In pre-literate societies, this was achieved orally and through imitation. Story-telling passed knowledge, values, and skills from one generation to the next. As cultures began to extend their knowledge beyond skills that could be readily learned through imitation, formal education developed. Schools existed in Egypt at the time of the Middle Kingdom(Begley and Kotersk 2005).With the gradual rise of more complex civilizations, knowledge became too complicated to transmit directly either from person to person or from generation to generation. This propelled Jews to initiate the teaching mechanism for preservation and recording of a cultural heritage in 3100 B.C(Begley and Kotersk 2005).

In Africa South of the Sahara, formal education in most states was started by Christian Missionaries on religious foundations. Later, governments established their own institutions with less religious oriented education systems, to prepare citizens for societal responsibilities (Kendall, Murray, & Linden, 2004).

Missionaries are recognized among the key pioneers of formal education in Sub Sahara Africa, in general, and Uganda in particular. They established the first schools in Uganda that included; Gayaza High school, Kings College Buddo, St. Mary's College Kisubi, and Namilyango College among others. Initially children received instructions in their Local languages. Lugbara was used

in West Nile, Luoin Acholi land and Lango, Luganda in Central Uganda and Busoga, Ateso in Teso and Karamoja, Runyoro-Rutoro in Bunyoro and Runyankole-Rukiga in Ankole and Kigezi.

The idea of the thematic curriculum followed recommendations from the 1989 Kajubi Report which confirmed the low levels in acquisition of literacy by primary school goers. Since the launch of the White Paper on Education in 1992, the policy has passed through a number of steps. These include the development, trial-testing and implementation of the local language syllabuses for both Primary Teacher Colleges and primary schools and the preparation and Distribution of modules to support it in the Teacher Colleges (Thomas, 2000).

In 1999, The National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC) requested Districts to form District Language Boards, and later in 2000, the Ministry of Education and Sports sent a circular to schools instructing them to forward languages which were ready for use as medium of instructions to the NCDC. In 2002, teachers were oriented in the use of the primary school Syllabus Vol. II, which has the local language syllabus content. This was followed by dispatch of guidance on local language time-tabling, its use as a medium of instruction on all subjects except English, and the teaching of local languages as a subject (Begley and Kotersk 2005).

Thereafter, the National Curriculum Development Center, in a bid to enhance learning achievements in literacy and numeracy, revised the Lower Primary Curriculum to make it Thematic. This curriculum was rolled out nationally in 2007 for P1, 2008 for P2 and in 2009 for P3. Teachers and pre-service student teachers were trained on thematic curriculum materials. The curriculum of Primary Teacher Colleges has been harmonized with the primary curriculum.

On the review of primary school curriculum, Tormere (2004) pointed out that children generally learn faster if early education is conducted in a local language. Therefore, the use of local language as a medium of instruction in lower primary was institutionalized with major objectives being to ease transition from home to school environment and enable pupils freely communicate with their teachers and peers in local languages which in turn would increase the degree of understanding and enhance performance among pupils in lower primary(Wink, 2002).

The then Minister of Education and Sports, Mrs. Bitamazire, launched the use of local language in teaching lower primary pupils in 2008. She said that it was a Ugandan Government's deliberate attempt to launch the curriculum and keep Ugandan languages alive as they were slowly being eaten up by neo-colonialists languages (Kavule, 2007). In Iganga District, teachers

use local language (Lusoga) to teach lower primary classes (P1-P3) as a requirement of the language policy.

1.1.2 Theoretical Perspective

There are a number of theories which provide explanations about learning. However, this study specifically used the Behaviorist/learning Theory of John Watson (1878-1959) and Cognitive Theory by Piaget and Bruner (1979).

John Watson was believed to be the brain behind the learning theory advanced from 1878 to 1959. Behaviorists believe that as the child advances to learn in his mother tongue, learning becomes interesting. The behaviorist theory further states that human beings are empirical in nature as they tend to experiment whatever happens or want to look for facts. Therefore when children are taught in the language they understand, they are able to make better decisions. Behaviorists also believe that learning is controlled by conditions under which it takes place and that as long as individuals are subjected to the same conditions, they will learn in the same way (Knud & Ileris, 2004).

The cognitive theory of learning advanced by Piaget and Bruner in 1979 was also relevant. There are three ideas that make this theory applicable to the study. The first one is that human beings are logical and can look at things objectively. Secondly, the mind can stop someone from doing something and thirdly; human beings are motivated by their competence to solve problems (Munari, 2004). This theory directed the study in such a way that if pupils in lower primary are taught in local language, they are ushered into a new world of even ts using familiar experiences. Consequently, children develop positive attitudes towards academics and finally they are motivated to continue studying.

1.1.3 Conceptual Perspective

Thematic curriculum refers to the curriculum arranged into themes of learning areas which are familiar to the children in their surrounding environment. It includes talking in local language, comprehending in local language and writing in local language.

Implementation is the carrying out, execution, or practice of a plan, a method, or any design, idea, model, specification, standard or policy for doing something. As such, implementation is

the action that must follow any preliminary thinking in order for something to actually happen. It includes effectiveness, attitude, assessment and mechanism.

1.1.4 Contextual Perspective

A good number of primary schools in Iganga Municipal Council, Iganga District are in a very sorry state. Only few schools in this area have standard adequate classrooms and in some schools there are no adequate instructional materials. Many of them actually exist in name and classes are held under trees.

In spite of the above conditions, public primary schools in Iganga Municipal Council implement the thematic curriculum to teach pupils from primary one to three. However, it has been noted that there are difficulties in implementing this policy in many primary schools in the area (UWEZO, 2011) and this has sparked the need to look at the relevance of the thematic curriculum and challenges, which are still not very clear in the context of Iganga Municipal Council.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Though the thematic curriculum was introduced to enhance children's proficiency in various aspects and life skills, many children in lower primary classes in Iganga Municipal Council are still struggling to read and write (UWEZO, 2011); they lack the desired competencies in literacy and numeracy. By end of primary level, many children are not in position to write letters, or even express themselves well in public using an appropriate diction. Some parents and teachers attribute this to the introduction of the thematic curriculum whose content and objectives are not yet clear among stakeholders. They believe thematic curriculum has done more harm than good by keeping children's minds not to think beyond home environment.

Whereas many researchers have supported the use of thematic curriculum to enhance learning at lower primary, little has been explored about its current aims and line challenges in the context of Iganga Municipal Council. Stakeholders need this kind of knowledge so as to confirm whether or not the thematic curriculum is an appropriate strategy in primary schools.

1.3 General Objective

The study investigated the thematic curriculum and its implementation in Iganga Municipality, Iganga District, Uganda.

1.4 Specific Objectives

The following were the specific objectives:

1. To measure the level of implementation of the key aspects of the thematic curriculum in terms of Talking and comprehending in local language, Writing in local language and Reading in Local language

2. To identify the challenges in implementation of thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipality.

3. To investigate the policy issues that would be followed in implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipality, Iganga District

1.5 Research Questions

The research was guided by the following questions;

1. What is the level of implementation of the key aspects of the thematic curriculum in terms of Talking and comprehending in local language, Writing in local language and Reading in Local language

2. What are the challenges in implementation of thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipality?

3. What policy issues have affected the implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipality, Iganga District?

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study includes geographical scope, content scope , theoretical scope and time scope.

1.6.1 Geographical Scope

The study was conducted in Iganga Municipality, Iganga District because this is where the researcher sighted strong criticism against the policy of thematic curriculum more so from the elite parents and teachers. This emanated from the poor achievement levels in literacy and numeracy among lower primary pupils. It was also convenient for the researcher since the schools are not very distant from each other. Figure 1.1 below shows a map of Iganga District where the study was conducted.

Figure 1 : *Road Map showing Iganga Municipal Council and surrounding areas.*

1.6.2 Content Scope

The study was specifically designed to examine aspects which constitute the thematic curriculum implemented in primary schools, stakeholders' views on the aims of implementing the thematic curriculum, challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum and solutions to challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipal Council, Iganga District.

1.6. 3. Theoretical Scope

The study employed Behaviorism Learning Theory by John Watson (1878-1959). and Cognitive Theory by Piaget and Bruner.(1979).

1.6.4 Time Scope

The study was carried out for a period of two months. In this period, the student was able to collect and compile this research report. The period whose vents surrounding the study were noted was from 2010 to 2017.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to be helpful in the following ways:

The Ministry of Education and Sports will get feedback on the level of implementation and effectiveness of the thematic curriculum for proper monitoring and evaluation.

Similarly, District Education Officers (DEOs) and inspectors of schools will gain insight into adopting support supervision strategies for teachers so as to promote the thematic curriculum in primary schools.

Using findings, teachers will be able to understand, appreciate and support the thematic curriculum in schools so as to enhance pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy.

Bring to light the aims and challenges of thematic curriculum to teachers and pupils. Learners can use findings from this study to learn their mother language and speak it.

This study is instrumental in developing a uniform attitude of all stakeholders towards the Policy maker and to ensure its effectiveness.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The themes which make up this chapter are; theoretical review, conceptual framework, and related studies to the research.

2.1 Theoretical framework

This study was directed by two theories. The first was theory of behaviorism by John Watson and another one was by John Piaget called the Cognitive Theory of Learning.

The theory of Behaviorism by John Watson

The theory of behaviorism was advanced by John Broadus Watson, an American psychologist who lived from 1879 to 1958 and who is considered the father of the psychological school of behaviorism. Watson was one of the early American psychologists to break the Freudian notions that our unconscious mind was behind most of our behavior. These ideas were quickly gaining acceptance among psychologists in Europe and later in the United States. Watson made his most memorable declaration against Freud's theory at a lecture he delivered in 1913 at Columbia University titled 'Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It.' This lecture established Watson as a pioneer of a new school of thought that would later become known as behaviorism.(Gillies 2003).

Behaviorism, according to Watson, was the science of observable behavior. Only behavior that could be observed, recorded and measured was of any real value for the study of humans or animals. Watson's thinking was significantly influenced by the earlier classical conditioning experiments of Russian psychologist Ivan Pavlov and his now infamous dogs (Ibid).

Watson's behaviorism rejected the concept of the unconscious and the internal mental state of a person because it was not observable and was subject to the psychologist's subjective interpretation. For example, Freud would ask his patients to tell him their dreams. He would then interpret the dreams and analyze what these dreams were indicating in the person's life. Watson found this emphasis on introspection and subjective interpretation to be very unscientific and unhelpful in understanding behavior (Knud & Ileris, 2004).

Watson is best known for taking his theory of behaviorism and applying it to child development. He believed strongly that a child's environment is the factor that shapes behaviors over their genetic makeup or natural temperament. Watson is famous for saying that he could take a 'dozen healthy infants and train any one of them to become any type of specialist he might select - doctor, lawyer, artist, and merchant-chief and, yes, even beggar-man and thief.' In other words, he believed that you can expose the child to certain environmental forces and, over time, condition that child to become any type of person you want. As you might imagine, this was radical thinking and a type of behavioral control that many people were not comfortable with at that time (Knud & Ileris, 2004).

In his most famous and controversial experiment, Watson put his theory on conditioning to the test. The experiment became known as the 'Little Albert' experiment. It involved an 11-month-old boy who was allowed to play with various animals, such as rats and rabbits that he was not initially afraid of. But with repeated exposure, Watson and his assistant and wife, Rosalie Rayner, began pairing the animal contact with a loud clanging noise. When he touched an animal, the frightening noise sounded. Over time, they conditioned 'Little Albert' to be afraid of the animals. Watson believed that this proved that emotions could become conditioned responses(Gillies 2003).

Watson's emphasis on environmentalism and the ubiquitous role of conditioning became immensely popular in psychology, in part because, as Kagan (1983) said, "Conditioning emphasized the role of experience, not biology, in promoting both change and stability of psychological attributes.
This behaviorism theory informs the study because Watson's experiment was done on children and most specifically to test the impact of play on these children. One of the main aspects of the thematic curriculum is allowing children to interact freely with objects as they generate meaning from the constructs. The theory therefore serves as a reference to confirm that the thematic curriculum is a very good approach to be implemented in order to enhance positive behaviors of children towards education within their natural environment.

The cognitive theory of learning

The cognitive theory of learning advanced by Piaget and Bruner in 1979 is yet another theory that guided this study.

Piaget advanced that cognitive development was a progressive reorganization of mental processes resulting from biological maturation and environmental experience. He believed that children construct an understanding of the world around them, experience discrepancies between what they already know and what they discover in their environment, and then adjust their ideas accordingly. Moreover, Piaget claimed that cognitive development is at the center of the human organism, and language is contingent on knowledge and understanding acquired through cognitive development. Piaget's earlier work received the greatest attention. Research shows that Child-centered classrooms and "open education" are direct applications of Piaget's views. Despite its huge success, Piaget's theory has some limitations that Piaget recognized himself: for example, the theory supports sharp stages rather than continuous development (Singer and Karen 2005).

Piaget noted that reality is a dynamic system of continuous change. Reality is defined in reference to the two conditions that define dynamic systems. Specifically, Piaget argued that reality involves transformations and states. Transformations refer to all manners of changes that a thing or person can undergo. States refer to the conditions or the appearances in which things or persons can be found between transformations. For example, there might be changes in shape or form for instance, liquids are reshaped as they are transferred from one vessel to another, and similarly humans change in their characteristics as they grow older, in size, a toddler does not walk and run without falling, but after 7 yrs of age, the child's sensory motor anatomy is well developed and now acquires skill faster, or in placement or location in space and time e.g., various objects or persons might be found at one place at one time and at a different place at another time. Thus, Piaget argued, if human intelligence is to be adaptive, it must have functions to represent both the transformational and the static aspects of reality. He proposed that operative intelligence is responsible for the representation and manipulation of the dynamic or transformational aspects of reality, and that figurative intelligence is responsible for the representation of the static aspects of reality (Munari, 2004).

Operative intelligence is the active aspect of intelligence. It involves all actions, overt or covert, undertaken in order to follow, recover, or anticipate the transformations of the objects or persons of interest. Figurative intelligence is the more or less static aspect of intelligence, involving all means of representation used to retain in mind the states (i.e., successive forms, shapes, or locations) that intervene between transformations. That is, it involves perception, imitation, mental imagery, drawing, and language. Therefore, the figurative aspects of intelligence derive their meaning from the operative aspects of intelligence, because states cannot exist independently of the transformations that interconnect them. Piaget stated that the figurative or the representational aspects of intelligence are subservient to its operative and dynamic aspects, and therefore, that understanding essentially derives from the operative aspect of intelligence (Munari, 2004).

At any time, operative intelligence frames how the world is understood and it changes if understanding is not successful. Piaget stated that this process of understanding and change involves two basic functions: assimilation and accommodation.

Assimilation and accommodation; through his study of the field of education, Piaget focused on two processes, which he named assimilation and accommodation. To Piaget, assimilation meant integrating external elements into structures of lives or environments, or those we could have through experience. Assimilation is how humans perceive and adapt to new information. It is the process of fitting new information into pre-existing cognitive schemas. Assimilation in which new experiences are reinterpreted to fit into, or assimilate with, old ideas. It occurs when humans are faced with new or unfamiliar information and refer to previously learned information in order to make sense of it. In contrast, accommodation is the process of taking new information in one's environment and altering pre-existing schemas in order to fit in the new information. This happens when the existing schema does not work, and needs to be changed to deal with a new object or situation. Accommodation is imperative because it is how people will continue to interpret new concepts, schemas, frameworks, and more. Piaget believed that the human brain has been programmed through evolution to bring equilibrium, which is what he believed ultimately influences structures by the internal and external processes through assimilation and accommodation (Munari, 2004).

Sensor motor stage; through a series of stages, Piaget proposed four stages of cognitive development: the sensor motor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational period. The sensor motor stage is the first of the four stages in cognitive development which "extends from birth to the acquisition of language". In this stage, infants progressively construct knowledge and understanding of the world by coordinating experiences, such as vision and hearing with physical interactions with objects such as grasping, sucking, and stepping. Infants gain knowledge of the world from the physical actions they perform within it. They progress from reflexive, instinctual action at birth to the beginning of symbolic thought toward the end of the stage (Munari, 2004).

Pre-operational stage; By observing sequences of play, Piaget was able to demonstrate that, towards the end of the second year, a qualitatively new kind of psychological functioning occurs, known as the Pre-operational Stage. It starts when the child begins to learn to speak at age two and lasts up until the age of seven. During the Pre-operational Stage of cognitive development, Piaget noted that children do not yet understand concrete logic and cannot mentally manipulate information. Children's increase in playing and pretending takes place in this stage. However, the child still has trouble seeing things from different points of view. The children's play is mainly categorized by symbolic play and manipulating symbols. Such play is demonstrated by the idea of checkers being snacks, pieces of paper being plates, and a box being a table. Their observations of symbols exemplify the idea of play with the absence of the actual objects involved.

Symbolic function sub stage; at about two to four years of age, children cannot yet manipulate and transform information in a logical way. However, they now can think in images and symbols. Other examples of mental abilities are language and pretend play. Symbolic play is when children develop imaginary friends or role-play with friends. Children's play becomes more social and they assign roles to each other. Some examples of symbolic play include playing house, or having a tea party. Interestingly, the type of symbolic play in which children engage is connected with their level of creativity and ability to connect with others. Additionally, the quality of their symbolic play can have consequences on their later development. For example, young children whose symbolic play is of a violent nature tend to exhibit less pro-social behavior and are more likely to display antisocial tendencies in later years(Munari 2004).

Intuitive thought sub stage; at between about the ages of 4 and 7, children tend to become very curious and ask many questions, beginning the use of primitive reasoning. There is an emergence in the interest of reasoning and wanting to know why things are the way they are. Piaget called it the "intuitive sub stage" because children realize they have a vast amount of knowledge, but they are unaware of how they acquired it. Centration, conservation, irreversibility, class inclusion, and transitive inference are all characteristics of preoperative thought. Centration is the act of focusing all attention on one characteristic or dimension of a situation, whilst disregarding all others. Conservation is the awareness that altering a substance's appearance does not change its basic properties. Children at this stage are unaware of conservation and exhibit centration. Both centration and conservation can be more easily understood once familiarized with Piaget's most famous experimental task.(Moserge 2010).

Concrete operational stage; the concrete operational stage is the third stage of Piaget's theory of cognitive development. This stage, which follows the pre-operational stage, occurs between the ages of 7 and 11 (preadolescence) years, and is characterized by the appropriate use of logic. During this stage, a child's thought processes become more mature and "adult like". They start solving problems in a more logical fashion. Abstract, hypothetical thinking is not yet developed in the child, and children can only solve problems that apply to concrete events or objects. At this stage, the children undergo a transition where the child learns rules such as conservation. Piaget determined that children are able to incorporate Inductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning involves drawing inferences from observations in order to make a generalization. In contrast, children struggle with deductive reasoning, which involves using a generalized principle in order to try to predict the outcome of an event. Children in this stage commonly experience difficulties with figuring out logic in their heads. However, the application of standardized Piagetian theory and procedures in different societies established widely varying results that lead some to speculate not only that some cultures produce more cognitive development than others but that without specific kinds of cultural experience, but also formal schooling, development might cease at certain level, such as concrete operational level(Moserge 2010).

This theory of cognitive development is informative to the study because it contains a general knowledge that learning is a process that goes through a series of stages a child requires in order to manifest functional skills.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Thematic curriculum	Implementation
• Talking in Local language • Comprehending in local language • Writing in Local language	• Teaching in local language • Arranging theme familiar to learner • Developing subject matter with pupil. • Learner writing in local language

Intervening Variables

- Political
- Economic factor
- Culture

Figure 2 : Showing thematic curriculum as independent variable and implementation as the dependent variables and the intervening variables.

Source: *Primary data source*

The conceptual framework above indicates that the effects of implementing the thematic curriculum are determined by nature of intervening variables. This implies that if the intervening variables such as culture, political, economic, are realized in implementation of the thematic curriculum. The reverse is true if these intervening variables reflect negative implications.

2.3 Related Studies

Related studies includes the level of implementation of the thematic curriculum in primary schools, aims of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools, and challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools.

2.3.1 Level of implementation of the Thematic Curriculum

The thematic curriculum is a new policy for school improvement in Uganda. Its overall aim is to raise the quality of children's achievements and standards so that every child leaves primary education with the appropriate standards of literacy and numeracy' (Kenny, 2013). The use of themes brings the curriculum closer to a child. Themes have been selected because they are close to a child's interests and experience, and reflect more closely the way a child views the world. The content, concepts and skills of subjects such as Science and Social Studies have been rearranged within themes that are local to young children's experiences (Kavule, 2007).

The recommended teaching methodology emphasizes children's activities rather than the teachers. It encourages the participation and performance of all children including those with special needs. It is expected that children can be active participants in their own learning by exploring, observing, experimenting and practicing, rather than being passive receivers (doing what they are told to do). The suggested activities are intended to be enjoyable, such as songs, games, acting and drawing (Namirembe, 2006).

According to Kagure (2010), a child should learn in his/her home language or at least a language that is Local to the child. The thematic curriculum is based on evidence that literacy is achieved at a much faster speed when it is acquired in a language in which a given child already has a strong oral command. That is why children with hearing impairment are taught in sign language.

This curriculum provides a child with a rich and varied literacy environment. The approach emphasizes a need for the use of varied learning resources such as flash cards, word/sentence cards, wall charts, work cards, simple readers, both factual and story-based, and the children's own written work (Kagure, 2010).

The thematic approach reflects the way young children understand the world around them and the type of knowledge and skills they need to acquire. Young children cannot be expected to understand the boundaries between different subjects, nor are the skills they need on entering

school necessarily reflected by traditional subject labels. By adopting themes related to the child's own experiences, the thematic curriculum enables the child to understand and develop the skills necessary to study topics related to their interest.

In terms of content, the thematic curriculum covers many of the same areas as the 1999 primary school Curriculum (Vols. I and II), but the content and target competences are arranged around a number of different themes that have been selected as central to the interests and needs of the child (Namirembe, 2006).

The selection of themes was based on a variety of criteria, including: intrinsic interest and value to the child; appropriateness to the child's age and environment, including the conceptual difficulties; exploitability across subject areas - use of relevant content, skills and competences of different subjects across the curriculum (Namirembe, 2006).

The 12 themes selected for P2 have been subdivided into 36 sub-themes and each sub-theme provides a basis for organizing one's week's teaching and learning. Comments by stakeholders (especially parents) in the Curriculum Review recommended prioritizing literacy and numeracy skills. These basic skills have therefore been brought out within the thematic approach in the lower primary curriculum, to prioritize the competences that lead to improved literacy and numeracy.

The curriculum for each year is arranged in a matrix. The themes are presented horizontally while crucial learning areas are presented as vertical strands. The matrix shows how competences that relate to different learning outcomes are developed, as a child moves from one theme to another. Namirembe (2006) explains the key aspects of thematic curriculum used in primary as inclusive of; T*alking and listening* in local language. The 1999 National language meeting in Malawi revealed that English should be the medium of instruction at Secondary and Tertiary levels while the study in other African languages are introduced in all Education Institutions. While this is the system in Malawi, in Uganda, English is a medium of instruction from primary four at a level which scholars are expected to have the capacity of transiting from the familiar language which in this context is "LUSOGA" to unfamiliar language (Adama & Glanz, 2010).

Children learn faster if early education is conducted in local languages because learning from what they already know sets a good pace (Tormere, 2004). Language is an important tool for the dissemination of knowledge and learning. In Kenya, the thematic curriculum requires that in lower primary school, Mother Tongues (MT's) should be used as Languages of Instruction (LOI) up to class 3 while English and Kiswahili are taught as subjects, but from classes-four to eight as the LOI (Mbatha, 2009).

Research has shown that mother tongue-based schooling significantly improves learning (Kosonene & Young, 2009). The use of a familiar language to teach children literacy is more effective than a submersion system as learners "can employ psycholinguistic guessing strategies" to learn how to read and write (Benson, 2004). This means that since children can already speak the language, they can learn to associate sounds with the symbols they see, thus facilitating understanding.

Writing in local language which is inclusive of labeling a range of objects; Writing names of things; Writing stories by themselves and in groups; Ordering events in stories; Editing and improving the content of written work; Writing poems, instructions and opinions; Rewriting village stories in own words; Writing neatly; and Writing down local words and sentences from dictation.

The use of a foreign language in schools, in Freirian terms, makes children objects of their world, rather than subjects. Freiran (1973) notes that as we all have human experiences and participation in our world, we all have something of value within us. He adds that the role of educators is to offer children instruments to enable them to critically understand the value of their experiences and express them through reading and writing. In this way, the educational experience comes from the inside out, hence to adequately express their experiences and articulate their knowledge; children require an environment that uses the language they speak. Submersion in a foreign language denies children the opportunity to articulate their world.

Reading in local language, that is; Read a range of printed materials; Engage in silent reading, reading aloud and with others; Read and understand instructions; Read and understand main points; Work out the meaning of words in context; use pictures to help understand new words and Read new words using knowledge of letter sounds.

Kerubi (2009) gives the values of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools as providing the basis for the child's ability to learn, enhancing a child's skills in singing, drawing, playing, cutting and gluing, playing games, reading nursery and primary stories, promoting traditional songs, dance and games, strengthening a child's sense of identity; providing more effective formal education to children, building on the language skills and attitudes they have already developed at home, among others.

The thematic curriculum arouses learners' attention in class, enables active participation in the academic performance and for this reason, the National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC) comments that thematic curriculum creates confidence in individuals to the extent that when lessons are conducted in local languages, children are free and confident to share out their ideas (Munoga, Amol, & Hamid, 2007). The thematic curriculum acts as tool for socialization that helps to shape people's behaviors with the environment around them. This also enhances participatory methods used in classroom like group participation and gaining skills that are effective in achieving learning (MCDonough & Feinberg, 2006).

The International Institute of Educational Planning report (1997) also notes that people educated in foreign languages cannot confidently express their worldview if they have to "compete with those embodied in the foreign language of prestige". If people are deprived of the chance to express their knowledge or needs, the deprivation may increase feelings of resentment and exclusion, which could fragment a country (Terry, 2000). The use of L1 in schools has been found to reduce the incidence of political instability and conflict as it draws linguistic minorities into wider society, while the enforced use of second language entrenches feelings of being marginalized (Kavule, 2007).

2.3.2 Challenges in the implementation of the Thematic Curriculum
In all areas where children are taught in local language, there are challenges which originate from various sources and these challenges have made it quite difficult for beneficiaries to enjoy the intended aims. Whereas some challenges are shared in areas of implementation, there are also differences in these challenges depending on the specific area of interest. This section reveals those challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in Iganga Municipal Council, Iganga District.

There is a risk of increased customs and greater division within a country if mother tongue-based learning is overly focused on. According to the Department for International Development report (1999), a narrow focus on a minority language of instruction may reinforce social and economic marginalization. If developed extensively, the focus on local languages may create tribal enclaves that reduce attempts towards building a unified nation-state (Kagure, 2010).

The current staff ceiling is a limitation to implementation of the policy of thematic curriculum. The thematic curriculum involving the use of local language requires adequate committed and full time teachers per class in order to carry out assessment effectively. However, the resource constraints which determined the traditional staff ceilings basing on the whole school enrolment do not favour the policy e.g. Muhorro Muslim primary school in Kibaale has 230 pupils in P.1 and handled by one teacher (Terry, 2000).

One key point to note is that the local language policy recommends the formation of District language Boards to ensure that schools access translated materials but this has not taken full course leading to most Districts lacking ready translated materials to be used in implementing the use of local language in schools (Gulere, 2002). Lack of instructional materials like reference books and teaching/learning aids for thematic curriculum and local language has led to the misinterpretation of many concepts depending on the understanding and nationality of the teachers, for example a muganda teacher by tribe working in Bunyoro interprets the word English as "Olungereza" instead of "Orujungu" in Runyoro. It also makes teaching and learning less children centered (Kisembo, 2008). Even in the context of Iganga Municipal Council, not all teachers are perfect in using local language (Lusoga- Lutenga) as a medium of instruction. This is because many of them speak Lusoga language. Therefore without adequate reference materials for interpretation, the policy seems to lose ground.

In second language-dominant systems, this interaction characterizes all years of primary schooling, making the experience unpleasant for children. Bunyi's (2005) ethnographic study of Kenyan lessons showed that classroom interactions in a second language-dominant school are dominated by safe talk – where the teacher makes little demand on learners, encourages chorus answers, repetition of phrases and copying of notes from chalkboards or textbooks, undermining efforts to bring up a new generation of teachers. When teaching becomes mechanical and stifling, pupils are likely to want to distance themselves from primary school as soon as possible.

Inadequacy of the vocabulary is another factor where the vocabulary is not sufficient for the curriculum and this advocates for a second language would have to be introduced at a later stage after they have learned enough of the second language, (UNESCO 1951). This viewpoint is in some way similar to Kisembo (2008) which reveals that schools lack reference materials to use. This is the basic reason as to why possibly inadequacy of vocabulary comes in. Martha (2003) too emphasizes that the use of references and instructional materials contributes a lot to any learning situation. So if there are inadequate references of the local language books, the gap still exists. Therefore, the challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipality were established basing on lack of reference materials/inadequate vocabulary to use.

While Kisembo (2008) and Martha (2003) cite lack of reference materials leading to inadequate vocabulary, Ghana's education report of 1968-1971 identifies that Parents' and teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of thematic curriculum in schools are negative. According to the report, teachers and parents in Ghana wrongly imagine that education acquired through use of local language is useless and worthless yet as stake holders; they are sensitized and already know the value of implementation of the thematic curriculum (Neuman, Hagedom, Cellano, & Dalley, 2005). One of the reasons cited for teachers regressing to the 'known bad' is that they often fail to implement "the child-centered teaching strategies in which they were trained - and reportedly believed in - because of the pressure of high-stakes examinations for their students" (Capper 2000, p. 18). This means teachers are more likely to focus on acquisition of the second language, which in most cases is done through submersion, as it is the language of examination even though the language policy advocates use of mother tongue.

This reaction received little protest from parents and learners as many believed that submersion in the second language would help pupils gain speedy access to greater socioeconomic opportunities (Trudell 2005; Benson 2004; Maeda 2009). But perhaps such opinions are expressed because local languages have not received sufficient attention, making mother tongue-based programmes ineffective. And as Benson (2004) found out, parents tend to favor second language learning only when governments present them with an either-or choice for their children's schooling – either an L1-dominant system or a second language-dominant system.

According to Kagure (2010), implementation of thematic curriculum can easily result into dogging lessons by teachers because they think thematic curriculum bores them. Learners may also dodge classes or be influenced by their parents to abscond from schools ahead of feelings that the thematic curriculum wastes time which could have been used for other activities. To some extent, one can be made to think that if the stakeholders' perception towards the thematic curriculum is negative, children too cannot see the value of studying under such an environment.

Monday (2008) states that, learners in urban schools perform better than their rural counterparts because they are fluent in English. They access Internet in English and not in local language. So Monday views it as a wrong to imagine that children can understand concepts better in local language in the global village. According to Monday (2008), there are many ways of advocating for local languages in schools. These include teaching them, but not using them as languages of instruction. To emphasize his argument, Monday uses an example of Luganda which is taught and examined as a subject in some schools. To ascertain whether or not, Monday's observation is true with Iganga Municipal Council, which is also urban, this study was necessary.

Lack of continuity is another challenge in the implementation of this policy. This is brought about by the imbalances encountered during the time of training on how to run the policy. For example the training given to the teachers for P.1 and P.2 was not given to other staff members and the head teachers, so this leaves the entire load on only that teacher who was trained in thematic curriculum. The relationship between workload and lack of continuity is clearly revealed here. This is because there are still few teachers who can teach using local language in all areas where the policy is implemented including Iganga Municipal Council. This study was fully designed to ascertain whether lack of enough teachers was a challenge of implementing the thematic curriculum or not.

The delay in the delivery of procured instructional materials has caused a setback in the results expected at the end of a particular level in the cycles of local language use. A challenge of almost similar curriculum for both nursery and lower primary has rendered thematic teachers irrelevant in those schools which handle nursery graduates because they teach what pupils are already well versed with, this appears to be a wastage of time for such pupils thus low attention is observed.

The IIEP (1997) notes that until the 1980s, many of the indigenous languages in Kenya did not have a written form. However, later attempts to provide reading materials have proved challenging as the issue of providing instructional materials in local languages is heavily influenced by donor interests, evangelical motives, strong economic interests from overseas publishing companies and global power relations (Brock-Utne 2000, Brock-Utne 2005, Waruingi, 2009). Brock-Utne (2000) gives examples of the British and French governments' roles in advocating for the use of their languages in schools in their former colonies through bilateral aid to support language acquisition. The aid, which comes through school texts written in French or English or money to support literacy in these languages, makes it difficult for cash-strapped governments to focus on local language development.

Waruingi (2009, p. 30) notes that the Kenya Book Foundation regularly receives obsolete editions of books "complete with snowballs and snowmen" from Western countries for donation to selected schools, even though they are largely irrelevant to the Kenyan environment and curriculum. Further, Waruingi, who was involved in a UNESCO run Basic Learning Materials (BLM) Initiative that ran from 1996-2001 in Namibia, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Mali and Burkina Faso, adds that the initiative did not achieve its aim of providing instructional materials in local languages.

The reasons he cited are: lack of policy incentives and political will; lack of the skills set required for effective development of BLM, like writers, curriculum developers, publishing and printing infrastructure; and opposition from transnational publishing and commercial interests. Thus, without adequate L1 policy, political will and allocation of resources for the development of local languages, a mother tongue-based education system like the one advocated by the Kenyan language policy has little chance of being successful.

The lack of materials in mother tongue is also often explained by the excuse that there are too many languages in African countries to justify publishing in them (Prah, 2009). However, while it has long been said that the number of languages in Africa is large, this number greatly varies among linguists and sociologists. This paper earlier mentioned that the range given for languages in Kenya varies between 30 and 70, partly because early missionaries classified dialects as different languages. However, work done by the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) since the year 2000 has revealed that about 85% of Africans speak 12-15 core

languages as first, second or third languages. So far, CASAS has transcribed and harmonized the orthographies of 23 core African languages (Prah 2010).

Their main aim is that by standardizing core African languages, the economies of scale that follow should make it possible to, among other things, produce learning materials for mother tongue-based education. Rubagumya (2009) adds that Uganda is currently working on transcribing a language called Runyakitara, which standardizes four related languages – Runyankore, Rukiga, Runyoro and Rutooro – which are also closely related to Kihaya and Kinyambo spoken in Tanzania, presenting the chance for cross-border language development. Regional African languages such as Kiswahili, Fulani, Wolof and Lingala also present the chance for wide-scale indigenous language development.

The IIEP (1997) notes that for development to occur, it is necessary for all segments of the population to participate in political and economic matters. One way of increasing participation is by introducing institutional changes that enhance the status of local languages and increase their relevance in society. However, the development of local languages to even out the playing field is not without political difficulties, particularly in countries trying to forge a unified nation. Gregersen (1977) notes that the development of most African languages has been accompanied by division or separation, with separatist sects following the publication of the Bible into an indigenous language. And as evidenced by May (1999), dissidents of a multilingual education system argue that it recognizes and accentuates the differences and diversity rather than uniting society.

The common approach to language planning and policy referred to as the 'one nation, one language' model attempts to avoid the pluralist dilemma by advocating for universal literacy in at least one language to enable wider communication, yet multilingualism is an asset in a world that is becoming synchronized. The idea of a nation-state faces pressure from without in the form of globalization, and from within as minority groups exert their right to greater public recognition. Various policy-makers have argued that an second language-based LiE policy is the best way to prevent ethnic division and contribute to the construction of a nation-state, but the reality is that it has excluded a majority of the population and worked to the benefit of minority elite, thus increasing inequality, political instability and disaffection (IIEP 1997; Canagarajah 2005, p. 196; Pennycook 2006, pp. 60-71). This is in conflict with most state policies as weakly

developed language policies end up pursuing elitist aims rather than the inclusive ideals encompassed in the 'one nation' idea.

Further, the 'one nation, one language' ideology assumes that a single language will ensure a country's unity and equal development. Unfortunately, speaking a similar language does not seem to stop ethnic or clanist tendencies. For instance, despite a majority of the population speaking Amharic in Ethiopia, Somali in Somalia and Kinyarwanda in Rwanda, this has not contributed to the entrenchment of peace, improved participation or prevented retreat into ethnic or local factionalism (Gregersen 1977, Rubagumya 1990, Benson 2009). And as Githiora (2008) adds, the idea of 'Kenya' as a nation is a relatively new construction, introduced by colonial boundaries, and requires the at least 42 tribes with strongly grounded, localized identities to adopt a more general, altered identity.

Further, despite the language policy advocating for a mother tongue-based education system it favors English-speaking elite by setting final examinations in English. Thus, the latter language continues to be the chief screening determinant as to who accesses higher education and therefore jobs and other social mobility mechanisms. Kenya's attempts to create an ethno-linguistically homogenous people literate in English, and to a smaller extent Kiswahili, perpetuates what Silverstein (1996) calls a monoglot ideology, which prohibits linguistic diversity and prevents society from seeing the value in multilingualism. This study used the above views to establish the challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipality.

2.3.3 Policy Issues that would be followed in Implementing the Thematic Curriculum

As a measure to deploy enough teachers in all schools in the country, government should adopt a new system of determining the number of teachers for every school by considering existing classes in a school for example a school operating classes from P.1 through P.7 should be allocated seven teachers then extra teachers can be determined by the high enrolment realized by different schools. This is very important because thematic classes need a full time teacher throughout the learning time. (Kisembo, 2008).

Same training should be offered to all the stakeholders involved the implementation of this policy because this will enhance team work between the practicing teachers, immediate supervisors that is the head teachers and the Inspectorate. Thematic Curriculum training should

be incorporated in the primary teachers training syllabuses as this will enhance their expertise in handling the curriculum and reduce monopoly of the load to only a few trained teachers through thematic workshops.

Through the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), governments should ensure a clear design of curriculum for nursery and lower primary, so that talking, writing, and reading are done in vernacular as opposed to the former curriculum where everything was done in English. This increases teachers' relevancy as they introduce new concepts and arouse children's interest to learn new ideas.

Being a policy, no alternative programs which contradict the laid down guidelines, by the Ministry of Education should be adopted. Ensuring this serves as an advocacy for the policy because all stake holders will get the transparency between the guidelines stated by the Ministry and the ways of implementing the Curriculum. Teacher pupil ratio in lower primary should be reduced from 1:55 to 1:40. This eases the process of individual assessment through observation, listening, marking, handwriting and class work all during normal course of teaching.

Government should invest more money in constructing classrooms, and sanitation facilities to ensure a child centered learning environment as recommended in the Thematic Curriculum. Government should also provide books, and design strategies to help teachers handle small groups in well displayed environment.

Regular continuous professional development courses should be conducted to all teachers to equip them with more skills of handling the contents of the Thematic Curriculum. Teachers should also be given rewards in form of certificates of recognition especially for teachers who intend to climb promotional ladders in new education service schemes, and as recognition for good services rendered in implementing the policy. These solutions will be used to determine ways of eliminating challenges of teaching in vernacular on the Pupils' learning Process in Iganga Municipality.

2.4 Gaps Identified

In the above literature, authors have tried to explore about the content of the thematic curriculum and the main aspects, benefits and challenges have been fully explored. However, most of the studies were conducted in other African countries, and the few studies conducted in Uganda

investigated about schools in central Uganda. To the researcher, the environment which fosters implementation of the thematic curriculum differs based on the geographical location. In the context of Iganga Municipality, there are a number of factors which may not be found in central Uganda or even some other parts of Africa and the world at large. As a result, the recommendations for improvement cannot differ thus continuing to justify the need for this study. Further, school environments can be improved to change situation as years pass by hence rendering previous research invalid. With most of the research efforts conducted before 2014, there was really need to conduct another study in this year 2018 and check on the current trend of issues.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter contains the research design, target population, sample size and sampling techniques, sources of data, methods of data collection, research instruments, reliability and validity of research tools, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

3.1 Research Design

A cross sectional research design was adopted in this study. This is because the study consisted of various categories of respondents namely; head teachers, teachers, parents and pupils plus members of school management committee whose responses were obtained in a specified period of two months. A cross sectional design is the commonly known research design that allows obtaining responses from such a variety of respondents in a specified fixed period of time. The study also employed quantitative and qualitative approaches because head teachers and the District Education Officer were interviewed, pupils engaged using focus discussion guide and teachers and school management committee members were asked using questionnaires.

3.2 Study Population

The study was conducted in selected schools in Iganga Municipality, Iganga District and the study population was 1268 which included head teachers, teachers, parents, pupils, inspector of schools and District Education Officers (DEO).

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. According to Krejce & Morgan (1970), the most appropriate sample for 15 is fourteen. Therefore fourteen schools and fourteen head teachers were considered. The DEO and inspector of schools and head teachers were purposively sampled. Table 3.1 shows the target population and sample size.

Table 3.1: Total population and sample size

Population Category	Total population	Sample Size
Pupils (P.1-P.3)	960	274
Teachers	140	103
Head teachers	15	14
SMCs	168	113
Total	**1268**	**504**

The pattern for selecting sample population per school was done through calculations made using the total number (N) of respondents in a category per school as the numerator and total number (N) of a particular category in all schools as the denominator multiplied by the sample size according to Krejce and Moghan (1970) table guide for determining sample size.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

3.4.1Stratified sampling

Stratified sampling is technique used to identify various sub populations (strata), from an overall study population (Wikipedia, 2012). A stratified random sample is the total sample population obtained from all the strata of the study population (Investopedia, 2012). According to Investopedia (2012), stratified random sampling is good because the sample population selected represents all the qualities in categories of the study population. Using this technique, the target respondents were classified into parents, teachers, pupils, head teachers, DEO and Inspector. This technique was further used to classify respondents by sex.

3.4.2 Simple Random Sampling

Simple random sampling treats each element in a stratum with equal chances of being selected because members of a given stratum always have similar qualities. This technique was used to select individual respondents from each category of; teachers, pupils and SMCs.

3.5 Sources of Data

In this study, both primary and secondary data sources were used.

3.5.1 Primary source

Primary sources provide raw data from the population being studied. This raw data is then used to discuss the study objectives and research problem (Nordquist, 2012). The primary source data for this research project were pupils, teachers, head teachers, parents and DEO.

3.5.2 Secondary sources

According to Henderson (2011), secondary source of data refers to any infromation that is not first hand but talks about the theme of study. Sources of secondary information according to Henderson include articles, newspapers, magazines and journals. The study obtained secondary information from school magazines, journal and textbooks to back up primary data.

3.6 Tools of Data Collection

The researcher used Questionnaires, discussion Guides and Interview schedules.

3.6.1Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Wallace, 2012). The researcher used Questionnaires in obtaining responses from teachers, head teachers and SMCs. This method was chosen because Munn &Drever, (1999) identifies that; it demands for detailed data such as sex, age, marital status, and level of education being well organized according to the objectives, giving respondents freedom to give answers at their conveniences, and being good for large groups of people such as teachers in this study. There were three key aspects in the questionnaire for the implementation of the thematic curriculum and eight questions on the challenges on the implementation of thematic curriculum. The response is SA- strongly agree, A – Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree and SD –strongly disagree.

3.6.2 Focus Group Guide

A focus group discussion is a form of group interviewing in a small group of 10 to 12 people and is led by a moderator or interviewer in a loosely structured discussion of various topics of

interest (Frank, 2010). The course of the discussion is usually planned in advance and most moderators rely on an outline, or moderator's guide, to ensure that all topics of interest are covered. The researcher organized pupils into nine to ten members for each focus discussion group. Focus discussion groups have been chosen because by virtue of their age, they could not fill questionnaires besides being too many. In the focus group discussion there were five questions which were asked to the pupils.

3.6.3 Interview Guides

An interview guide is a list of questions that directs a discussion between two people-the interviewer and the interviewee (Wallace, 2012). These were used to obtain data from DEO and IS. According to Boyce (2006) this is the best method to obtain data from respondents who may not have time for questionnaires. The interview guide for district education officer and district inspector was composed of eight questions.

3.7 Validity

Validity is a parameter used to measure the truthful of research results according to the intended objectives of the research project (Nahid, 2003). To test validity of research instruments, the researcher set questions in form of a questionnaire and interview guides, and the drafts were presented to colleagues and friends to read and provide constructive comments on individual items, whether each question was clear, simple and unambiguous before submission to the assigned supervisors. The formula for content validity index (C.V.I) was used to obtain results for the validity tests.

$CVI =$

$CVI =$

$CVI = \ = 78.1\%$

The CVI is .78 which is acceptable. The research instrument was valid.

3.8 Reliability

Reliability of research means the extent to which results of the research rare consistent over time (Nahid, 2003). Reliability is used to imply that the results can be reproduced under a similar methodology. Nahid states that reliability is measured through being consistent with research

tools. Reliability scale was determined using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. With this approach, credible coefficients measure 0.6 and above. Table 3.2 shows results of reliability obtained.

Table 3.2: Determination of sample size

Variable	No. of Items	Alpha Coefficient	Interpretation
Aspects of thematic curriculum	3	.886	Highly reliable
Challenges of implementing thematic curriculum	8	.676	Reliable

Source: Primary data from Iganga Municipal Council, 2018

Results for the study were all reliable. However, aspects of the thematic curriculum had the highest reliability level, followed by challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum and then the aims of implementing the thematic curriculum.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

Following approval of the proposal, permission was sought and granted in form of an introductory letter from Kampala International University. Permission was also sought from the DEO of Iganga District to carry out investigation in Iganga Municipality, Iganga District. The consent and convenience of respondents was sought before the researcher started investigations.

3.10 Data Analysis

Raw data from respondents was selected in order of its relevance to the study. Quantitative data were presented in tables to show mean scores and standard deviations. To interpret the obtained data, the following numerical values and descriptions were used. The mean range for level of thematic curriculum implementation and challenges on thematic curriculum implementation were shown below:

Table 3.3A: Mean Range Interpretation Table of the Level of Thematic Curriculum Implementation

Mean Range	Response Mode	Interpretation
4.24-5.00	Strongly Agree	Very Good
3.43=4.23	Agree	Good
2.62-3.42	Neutral	Fair
1.81 -2.61	Disagree	Low
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Source: Primary data, February, 2018

Table 3.3B; Mean Range Interpretation table on the Challenges in Thematic Curriculum Implementation

Mean Range	Response Mode	Interpretation
3.24 – 5.00	Strongly Disagree	Very Poor
3.42- 4.23	Disagree	Poor
2.62- 3.42	Neutral	Fair
1.81-2.61	Agree	High
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Agree	Very High

Source: Primary data, February, 2018

Qualitative data were presented and analyzed descriptively in themes and wherever necessary, verbatim was used.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

To ensure utmost confidentiality for the respondents and the data provided by them as well as to reflect ethics practiced in this study, the following was done. All questionnaires were coded to provide anonymity of the respondents. As for those involved in the study they were requested to signed the informed consent. Authors quoted in this study were recognized through citations and referencing. And finally presentations of findings were generalized.

3.12 Limitations of the Study

The researcher claimed an acceptable 0.05 level of significance or 5% margin of error in view of the following anticipated threats to validity with relevance to this study.

 The researcher has no control over the honesty of the respondents and their personal biases. The respondents in most of the schools expected to be given certain amount of money before they could make their contributions towards the study. This limited time of concentration especially during interview sessions with head teachers.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and interpretation of findings about: socio-demographic characteristics, measuring the level of implementation of key aspects of the thematic curriculum in terms of Talking in local language, Reading in local language and Writing in local language,Identifying challenges in the implementation of the thematic curriculum and policy issues that can be followed in implementation of the thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipality.

4.1 Socio Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The socio- demographic characteristics of the respondents consisted of sex, age-group, level of education and marital status. Table 4.1 shows results obtained for all these aspects of socio-demographic characteristics.

Table 4.1: Frequency and percentage showing the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (n = 230)

No	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	**Sex of Respondents**		
	Males	136	59
	Females	94	41
2.	**Age-groups**		
	20-30	66	29
	31-40	51	22
	41-50	68	30
	51-60	21	09
	61+	24	10
3.	**Education Level**		
	Grade III	78	34
	Diploma	104	45
	Degree	36	16
	Masters	12	05
4.	**Marital Status**		
	Single	50	22
	Married	169	75
	Widowed	11	05

Source: Primary data, February, 2018

Table 4.1 shows the results of demographic characteristics of respondents in terms of their sex. Results indicate that primary schools in Iganga Municipality consisted of more males (59%) than females (4 1%). Findings from the qualitative study revealed that Iganga District Education officer (DEO) and District Inspector of Schools (DIS) were males. The sample population of pupils consisted of more girls than boys.

Table 4.1 further shows that most respondents were in the age-groups of 20-30 and 31 -40 years old respectively. This kind of age structure reflects that the teaching profession, school and management committee groups were balanced between the youthful and middle ages thus helped to increase reliability of findings since youths' views were analyzed against those of the middle aged respondents.

Table 4.1 indicates variations among respondents in that majority of the respondents (45%) had acquired diplomas followed by 34% with grade Ill certificates mainly teachers. Findings further indicated that there were some respondents who had acquired bachelor degrees and master degrees in various disciplines and some of them were on the teaching staff while others were part of the school management committee non-staff members.

Table 4.1 shows that the highest percentage (75%) of these respondents belonged to the category of the married respondents while 22% were not yet married and the least percentage (05%) was a representation for the widowed. In handling issues of thematic curriculum marital status is important following an assumption that about ¾ of married people in any community are likely to have children thus since the thematic curriculum is a direct pick-up from home environment or a transition from home to school, these kind of respondents can drive the point home by making comparisons between the home and school environments.

4.2 Level of implementation of key aspects of the thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipality.

The first objective of this study was intended to measure the level to which the thematic curriculum was implemented in terms Talking in local language, Reading in local language and Writing in local language,

The line question was " what is the level is the thematic curriculum implemented in terms of; talking, reading and writing in local language? Responses were validated on a five Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA), and results were obtained as indicated in Table 4.2;

Table 4.2: Aspects of the thematic curriculum implemented in primary

No.	Components	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
i)	Talking and Listening in local language	2. 90	.309	Fair
ii)	Writing in Vernacular	2.72	.644	Fair
iii)	Reading in Vernacular	2.84	.420	Fair
	Average Mean	2.83	.458	Fair

Source: Primary data, February, 2018

The average mean for significant results was 2.83 which is fair meaning that all the results for the three aspects of thematic curriculum were just moderately implemented by the teachers in lower primary schools. However, going by the scores, talking and listening in local language was done more often, followed by reading in local language. The aspect of writing in local language was the least done. Below are the detailed analyses for each of the three aspects.

4.2.1 The level to which talking in local language was implemented

Findings identified that teachers of thematic curriculum in Iganga Municipality mostly conducted lessons by talking and listening in vernacular (mean = 2.90); which means fair as an element of the thematic curriculum. However, opinions varied among different categories of respondents such that majority of the respondents agreed, few disagreed and some were neutral responses. The neutral responses reflect uncertainty simply because some respondents such as parents (under SMCs) do not have access to the contents of the thematic curriculum and are not directly granted to own these copies unless if they just buy their own copies. It was also attributed to poor attitudes of these stakeholders towards the thematic curriculum. Nonetheless,

Talking and Listening in local language is one of the key aspects of the thematic curriculum used on the academic performance of lower primary pupils in Iganga Municipality.

Based on the interviews the following were their responses:

According to the District Inspector of Schools talking and listening have a strong influence when implementing the thematic curriculum because they help to establish a welcoming environment enabling children to have a mental transition from home to school. In his explanation, the DIS Iganga emphasized that if a teacher talks in a language that children can easily understand, he/she gets a positive response to indicate that they have understood the concept.

The pupils were asked in the area local language (Lusoga) to mention what they understood by the contents of "thematic curriculum". The researcher used responses to establish key aspects of the thematic curriculum, (see question 2 of the discussion guide appended). Pupils aired out different oral views about thematic curriculum. In one group at Noor Islamic primary school, one boy mentioned that local language is a language used to teach children because the mature people are taught in English. In other schools, the commonest understanding of concepts involved in the thematic curriculum mainly pointed towards teaching in local language.

4.2.2 The level to which writing was done in local language

Another component of the thematic curriculum implemented in primary schools in Iganga Municipality is writing in local language. According to Table 4.2, writing in vernacular (Lusoga) was an aspect embedded in the thematic curriculum implemented in primary schools of Iganga Municipality (mean = 2.72) which means fair, a comparative consideration of views, writing in local language is a strong aspect that must be considered in this study.

Based on the interview the following were the responses:

The District Inspector of Schools in stating aspects of the thematic curriculum, reported that writing was one of them. According to him, writing in local language is the center of all activities carried out to make the thematic curriculum a success. The DIS acknowledged that when a child masters to write in local language, they can truly cherish the rest of the activities required.

Findings from pupils identified some of the activities done in various schools to write in local language. Some pupils related writing to drawing whereby using drawings, they were able to

explain, in writing what the illustration is about. Using drawings of human beings standing along the roadsides, cows, furniture, umbrellas, tables, houses, goats, among many others mentioned, pupils are *instructed to write in local language to explain these illustrations.*

This and many other un-reported quotations were aired out by pupils orally and individually to confirm that writing in local language is a component of the thematic curriculum as implemented in primary schools in Iganga Municipality.

4.2.3 The level to which reading was done in local language

Reading in local language was identified as another component of the thematic curriculum used on the academic performance of lower primary pupils in Iganga Municipal Council. Though variations existed, most of the responses reflect agreements towards the option as shown in Table 4.2 (mean -2.83) which means fair. However, with the high percentage of SMCs, the study still confirmed that reading in local language was one of the key aspects of the thematic curriculum.

Based on the interview it shows no remarkable difference was cited from the DEO and DIS in their responses about reading in local language as one of the key aspects of the thematic curriculum. Indeed, the two district education authorities boldly confirmed the option.

Pupils' responses also greatly confirmed reading in local language as a component of the thematic curriculum implemented in primary schools in Iganga Municipality. Pupils emphasized that they read different statements in textbooks and on blackboards in local language and that they are taught how to greet in local language. Respondents also mentioned other key aspects as; role playing in local language, reciting rhymes in local language, singing in local language, counting and adding numbers in local language and drawing in local language.

4.3.Challenges in the implementation of the thematic curriculum

Usually, any policy that comes on board is not free from criticism and challenges. Therefore, this section explores the challenges faced in implementing the thematic curriculum which structures instruction of lower primary into talking, reading and writing in local languages. The second objective was to identify the different challenges of thematic curriculum on the pupils' academic performance, respondents in Iganga Municipality. Responses varies among categories as represented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Challenges in implementing thematic curriculum in primary schools

NO	Challenges	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
i.	It's hard to translate from text books	2.87	.433	Fair
ii.	Negative attitudes by the stakeholders	2.22	.763	High
iii	Inadequate references	2.36	.861	High
iv	It is time consuming	1.64	.892	Very High
Viii	Teachers are not fluent in languages of the area	2.44	.875	High
	Average Mean	2.51		High

Source: Primary data, February, 2018

4.3.1 Difficulties in translations from textbooks

Respondents from primary schools in Iganga Municipality reported that one of the challenges facing implementation of the thematic curriculum relates to difficulty in translating it from textbooks (mean = 2.87) which is fair as indicated in table 4.4.Challenges related to translation of local language from textbooks were envisaged in the language policy statement and recommendations for District language boards were made. Districts have copies of already translated copies of local language to be used by instructors but the recommendations have not taken full course. This could justify why instructors still face difficulties in translating local language from textbooks.

In the interview, *the DEO stressed that just as the informal and formal education are two different concepts, the thematic curriculum has a lot which differs from teaching in English and most people refer to the differences as challenges. "The reading of English words is easier than reading Lusoga words". The DEO adds that in most cases, the instructor has to get enough time*

to master words in Lusoga to the extent that they can teach pupils, assured of what they are talking. It is therefore a double challenge to pupils and teachers.

4.3.2 Negative attitudes of stakeholders

Findings of the study showed that one of the challenges of thematic curriculum on lower primary relates to the attitudes of stakeholders with a mean = 2.22 which means high. It showed that most of the stakeholders have negative attitude on the implementation of thematic curriculum in primary schools as it might affect the performance of the pupils in the primary leaving examination (PLE).

Based on the interview the following were the response of the stakeholders;

The DEO also emphasized that various people view the thematic curriculum as wastage of time that in some meetings, parents even ask that the policy be avoided because it contradicts with normal school programs. Such agitation reflects negative attitudes which parents have towards the thematic curriculum which advocates for instructing pupils in local language.

However, much as some parents may develop dislikes towards teaching lower primary pupils in local language, all pupils were jubilant about the policy and assume the policy continued to further levels. Therefore, if pupils who are principal beneficiaries take pleasure in being taught in local language yet some stakeholders have negative attitudes, it creates difficulties in ensuring that schools have adequate materials to be used in implementing the thematic curriculum. The policy aims can only be fully reached through eliminating divided thoughts of stakeholders towards thematic curriculum.

4.3.3 Inadequate reference materials

Opinions towards establishing whether or not, inadequate reference materials for local language are a challenge to the pupils' performance has a mean of 2.36 which means high. The lack of enough reference materials post a challenge to the implementation of thematic curriculum. It is a problem to the teachers as well as the pupils to learn effectively without enough reference materials.

This implies that lack of adequate or shortage of reference materials for thematic curriculum is more of a challenge to teachers who cannot speak the language of an area where the school is

located than otherwise. In Bugumba Primary school, and Buliigo Primary school, pupils with various tribal backgrounds were cited. Some were Baganda, others were Asians who were gradually picking up with the system. In class such pupils show a lot of interest but find difficulty in interpreting different concepts used in teaching local language.

4.3.4 Its time consuming

The item on time consuming as a challenge in thematic curriculum implementation has a mean – 1.64 which means very high. It is considered as a challenge since spending more time teaching using vernacular which sometimes there are no appropriate words for a specific concepts and the teacher is not conversant with the language itself.

4.3.5 Teachers are not fluent in the language of the area

The last item on the challenge in the implementation of thematic curriculum is that teachers are not fluent in the language of the area with a mean 2.44 which means high. Teaching concepts which the teacher is not fluent posts a problem not only to the teachers but especially the pupils.

Due to globalization, technology has changed the trend of things whereby traditional culture is gradually disappearing. On this note, Monday (2008) observes that learners in urban schools use computers and textbooks which are written in English and pass examinations perfectly. Therefore, it becomes hard to teach such children in local language. Monday (Ibid) views it better to teach local language as a subject than instructing pupils in local language. Monday argues that if Luganda is taught and examined in many Uganda schools as a subject but not a medium of instruction in primary schools, other subjects too can especially in urban schools.

The fact that the study involved both rural and urban schools, respondents were required to state by agreeing, or disagreeing on whether or not, local language is most effective as a medium of instruction in rural schools. By strongly agreeing or agreeing that it is good for rural schools, Monday (2008)'s findings that learners in urban schools are used to English would have applied so that it becomes a challenge to urban pupils. However, Contrary to Monday's findings, the study identified that a significant percentage of respondents never viewed the use of local language as a medium of instruction to be good for rural areas.

4.4 Policy Issues to be followed in implementing the thematic curriculum

There are various policy issues which can be followed during implementation of the thematic curriculum to enhance its relevance among stakeholders. They have been discussed as given by respondents.

Training of teachers; the study identified a need to train more teachers so that high teacher workload could be minimized. According to responses from teachers, each class where the curriculum is implemented has one teacher for vernacular instructing a minimum of 80 pupils. With the increasing number of pupils as fueled by Universal Primary Education, it is important to train more teachers to reduce on workloads. According to Kisembo (2008), providing same training to all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the policy enhances teamwork between practicing teachers and immediate supervisors such as head teachers and the inspectorate.

Provision of resources; Findings showed that in all Iganga Municipal Council primary schools where vernacular is a medium of instruction, there is lack or inadequacy of resources to ease implementation of the policy. Most schools do not have reference books. Respondents therefore saw provision of resources such as textbooks, charts, dictionaries and teaching guides as a solution to difficulty in reading, writing and translating vernacular concepts.

Time factor; Teachers claimed that the time given to them for instructing pupils in vernacular is so limited and recommended additional time for effective teaching. The study identified that pupils too are not satisfied with the time given to a vernacular class.

Motivation of teachers; Being few at the moment coupled with the fact that the workload is so high, teachers viewed that administrators would consider extra payments or any forms of allowances as incentives to keep them hardworking. In his responses about how the challenges of learning in vernacular on the pupils' learning process can be eliminated, the IS mentioned issues related to motivation of teachers. The IS stated that it is considerably a hard task to handle a class of about 100 pupils especially alongside various complications regarding translation and interpretation.

> *"...it is therefore important to treat teachers of vernacular in a special way. This may not need special gifts but even words such as Thank you very much for what you are doing,*

can work better for them….to schools with enough resources, additional payments would act as a better option..” DIS Iganga.

Sensitization of the Public; Findings from all categories of respondents identified that there are many stakeholders especially parents who do not know the value of the thematic curriculum. This was reflected in many cases including the percentages of respondents who took neutral positions in their opinions. According to the DEO, it could not be the responsibility of the government or district administrators to organize sensitization sessions to make stakeholders aware of the importance of teaching pupils in vernacular but individual stakeholders have a role to find out what is contained in the Thematic Curriculum. In addition, the DEO suggested that school administrators could be organizing these sensitization sessions in terms of meetings, workshops or seminars for parents and other teachers to acknowledge the benefits of the Thematic Curriculum. Apparently, few teachers are selected from each school and one teacher is assigned a class to instruct. In addition, only teachers of lower primary are taught how to instruct in vernacular. This pattern of training leaves no possibility for a teacher from upper primary to assist a fellow teacher who is at lower primary as a way of minimizing the workload.

Use teachers who know the language of a given locality; the study identified that there is a good number of teachers in Iganga Municipality who do not know how to speak Lusoga. Such teachers find difficulty in pronouncing Lusoga words. They either pronounce words wrongly or stammer. If teachers who speak native language of the area were used, this could not be a problem anymore.

Incorporation of English language; As a challenge, pupils from lower primary find difficulties in transiting to English and always perform poorly because they are totally used to reading and writing in vernacular. The argument that was raised by some respondents especially teachers to get rid of this challenge was that instructors could design the best methods which enable pupils to learn some English in concurrence with vernacular.

Start examining vernacular; Respondents viewed that the fact that vernacular is not examined has made many teachers and pupils to dodge classes. Besides, lack of examination for vernacular creates difficulty in making assessments about achievement levels of pupils. The DEO cited that

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most challenges f the new curriculum which permits teaching in vernacular are associated with the fact that there are no examinations given at the end of terms. The DEO therefore suggests that the Thematic Curriculum could be revised in such a way that provides for examinations like other subjects at the end of every term. The DEO explained that when children learn that teachers have started examining vernacular, they will show more interest in the lessons. Secondly, examining vernacular can easily enhance teachers' interests towards the subject.

"..In fact teachers are more concerned about the failure to have vernacular examinations like other subjects than other issues…If that is sorted out, no more complaints will come…" Said the DEO.

The study also identified that a great number of pupils is tired of attending to lessons without examinations. In their responses towards ways of eliminating challenges of teaching in vernacular, pupils of majority primary school said that there is need to start examining vernacular to make it as important as other subjects. Other pupils even argued that the policy should be phased out because they could not see the reason of continuing to study without examinations.

Improving attitudes of stakeholders; Negative attitudes of stakeholders were identified as great challenges to the thematic Curriculum. While pupils develop enthusiasm towards teaching in vernacular, many teachers and parents were identified to be having negative attitudes towards the policy. As the DEO identified, most of the teacher related effects of the Thematic Curriculum originate from the fact that it is not examinable. Responses from all categories of the study population mentioned the need for establishing mechanisms through which attitudes of stakeholders could be improved.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter contains the discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations generated from the findings in chapter four.

5.1 Discussion

This section explains the details of findings in chapter four. This discussion answered the research questions and clearly manifests the relationship between the findings and the theory of constructivism that guided the research.

5.1.1 Level of thematic curriculum implemented in primary schools

Teachers, head teachers, and SMCs were required to give their views about various options which explain the key aspects of the thematic curriculum used on the pupils' academic performance in Iganga Municipality. Key aspects of the thematic curriculum were required to expand knowledge of the reader about the topic being investigated. All key aspects were in agreement with Bruner's view that learning is an active engagement of learners in such a way that all activities designed are more pupil than teacher centered.

The first component of the thematic curriculum considered during implementation of the thematic curriculum in Iganga Municipality was talking and comprehending in local language. Talking and listening in local language is also mentioned as number one component of the thematic curriculum as stated by Bitamazire (2006). In his statement as minister of education and sports, Bitamazire (2006) explains that talking and listening in local language involves different activities such as knowing sounds in local language vocabulary and language structures; talking to different people in different ways; telling and retelling stories in local language; asking and answering questions in local language; and giving explanations and rephrasing things in local language, which are children centered.

Another aspect was writing in local language. According to the layout of the thematic curriculum, writing in local language encompasses accomplishment of such activities as

instructing pupils to write stories in local language as individuals or in groups; ordering events in stories; editing and improving the content of written work; writing poems, instructions and opinions; rewriting village stories in local language; learning to write neatly and writing down local words and sentences in dictation (Bitamazire, 2006). Findings from all categories of study populations reflected that these activities are evident in schools. These activities were designed to provide for active participation of pupils as advanced by Bruner and to enable them become fluent in their own languages.

Reading in local language is characterized by various activities such as engaging in silent reading, reading a range of printed materials; reading and understanding instructions and main points; working out the meaning of words in contexts; use of pictures to understand new words and reading new words using knowledge of letter sounds as stated by Bitamazire in 2006. The study findings showed that majority agreed that reading in local language was one of the key aspects of the thematic curriculum used on the pupils' academic performance in Iganga Municipal Council. Respondents mentioned various activities in line with reading in local language which included Counting and adding numbers in local language, and singing in local language.

5.1.2 Challenges of implementing thematic curriculum

By percentage rank of strong agreements, the study identified four factors- local language as a hard subject to translate from textbooks, increased workload for teachers, inadequate references, and missing out some themes were considered to be basic. Other challenges such as ineffective assessment, negative attitudes of stakeholders towards the policy, being time consuming and a claim that thematic curriculum is only good in rural areas, had mixed reactions which implied that they were considered to be challenges in few schools while in others, they were not viewed as challenges.

The greatest challenge identified was that local language as a component of the thematic curriculum was hard to translate from textbooks. This challenge had a percentage rank of respondents who agreed in support. Only 4% of respondents Disagreed that this was a challenge encountered in teaching local language. The study also discovered some neutral responses. The

neutral responses could mean stakeholders who had not yet acquired knowledge about the thematic curriculum, hence were hesitant to give responses out of uncertainties.

The increase in workloads was second in percentage rank among challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipal Council. The workload was attributed to the arrangement of the thematic curriculum which provided for one teacher of local language per class. In addition, the system of training could not involve teachers of upper primary. As a result, no teamwork was observed among teachers which increased workloads.

A significant percentage of respondents could not view negative attitudes of stakeholders towards the thematic curriculum as a challenge of implementing the thematic in primary schools but 38% remained neutral and 27% were in strong agreement. However, other respondents such as the DEO and DIS viewed it as a strong challenge. The DEO cited that many stakeholders view the thematic curriculum as wastage of time with misconceptions that only examinable subjects matter a lot. At one time, the DEO mentioned that some parents demanded termination of the policy because they could not identify its relevance.

Amidst agitations by teachers that the government increases the time for teaching Local language were some claims that Local language is time consuming. Wastage of them was therefore not considered as a challenge rather teachers advocated for adjustments in the periods of instructing in local language.

5.1.3 Policy issues followed in implementing the thematic curriculum

From the study, a need was identified to train more teachers so that high teacher workload could be minimized especially when each class where the curriculum is implemented has one teacher for vernacular instructing a minimum of 80 pupils. According to Kisembo (2008), providing same training to all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the policy enhances teamwork between practicing teachers and immediate supervisors such as head teachers and the inspectorate.

Further there was a lack of adequate resources/materials to use in implementing the thematic curriculum thus advocating for provision of resources such as textbooks, charts, dictionaries and teaching guides as a solution to difficulty in reading, writing and translating vernacular concepts.

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Findings by Martha (2003) also confirm that availability of enough reference and instructional materials contributes a lot to any learning situation.

There was also an identified difficulty in pronunciation of many words of local language. Abaji (2003) also identifies that a teacher who is first speaker of a mother tongue can speak it without formal training.

5.2 Conclusions

Thematic curriculum is much beneficial in lower primary school if well facilitated. In order to prepare the learner from transitional curriculum which I more complex, the ministry of education and port should make a proper follow up like through training teacher to effect the curriculum. Among the challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools, four major factors-difficulties in translating local language from textbooks; increase in workloads for teachers; and lack of adequate reference materials were considered. Solutions to these challenges included; distribution of materials such as dictionaries, and teaching manuals to ease translations; training more teachers to work in teams and relieve counterparts of workloads; revising the thematic curriculum so that English is integrated; and even distribution of instructional materials such as textbooks and charts in schools, respectively.

In response to the challenges, respondents suggested various policy issues were suggested to be followed in implementation the thematic curriculum such as training of teachers; obtaining reference books, the time factor such as increasing the hours given to teach thematic curriculum, increasing on the motivation of teachers, sensitization of the Public about the necessity of local language, and using teachers who are indigenous in a particular place.

5.3 Recommendations

The Ministry of Education and Sports should provide the necessary instructional materials such as dictionaries, textbooks, charts and teaching manuals to schools to check on the problem of inadequate resources/reference materials.

The DEO should organize refresher courses to enable all teachers acquire skills of teaching pupils in local language. This reduces the burden of too much work load on the head of only one teacher in a school trained in local language as it is now.

Coordinating Centre Tutors (CCTs) should ensure that Continuous Professional Development (CPDs) curses are organized at school level to build capacity of thematic curriculum and should closely monitor its implementation.

Head teachers should ensure that all teachers participate in the local language CPDs and put in place mechanisms to monitor and follow up its implementation

All teachers regardless of their respective classes should embrace the training and keep interested in acquiring the skills for using local language as a medium of instruction

5.4 Areas for further research

Further research efforts are required in the following areas:

1. The challenges of the thematic curriculum on the academic performance of upper primary pupils of Iganga Municipality

2. Effects of the thematic curriculum on foreign learners of Iganga Municipality

3. To assess the effects of stakeholders' attitudes on the effective implementation of the thematic curriculum in Iganga Municipal Council.

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APPENDIX I
INTRODUCTORY LETER

Directorate of Higher Degrees and Research
Office of the Director

Our ref. 1162-07096-05215   Tuesday 27th February, 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Introduction Letter for Namulondo Sophia (1162-07096-05215)

The above mentioned is a student of Kampala International University pursuing a Master's Degree in Educational Administration and Management.

She is interested in conducting a research for her dissertation titled, *"Thematic Curriculum and its Implementation in Primary Schools"*

Your organization has been identified as a valuable source of information pertaining to the research subject of interest. The purpose of this letter therefore is to request you to kindly cooperate and avail the researcher with the pertinent information she may need. It is our ardent belief that the findings from this research will benefit KIU and your organization.

Any information shared with the researcher will be used for academic purposes only and shall be kept with utmost confidentiality.

I appreciate any assistance rendered to the researcher

Yours Sincerely,

2 7 FEB 2018
DIRECTOR
DHDR

Dr. Claire M. Mugasa
Director

C.c.   DVC Academic Affairs
      Principal CEODL

"Exploring the Heights"

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LETTER TO THE RESPONDENTS

Dear Respondent,

You have been identified as one of the respondents for the study at hand entitled, *The Thematic Curriculum and implementation in primary schools in Iganga District.* The contribution that you will make in providing information will be very significant especially given the fact that the post you hold is very important.

Whatever you will say will be treated confidentially for the study.

Thank you very much

Yours, faithfully,

Namulondo Sophia

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS, HEAD TEACHERS AND SMCS

SECTION A

Questions about the background information of the respondents

Instructions: Tick in the appropriate box against the right option.

1. What is your sex   Male   Female

2. In which age bracket are you?

    20-30 ☐   31-40 ☐   41-50 ☐   51-60 ☐   61 and above ☐

3. Level of Education

    Grade III Certificate ☐   Diploma ☐   Degree ☐

4. What is your marital status?

    Single ☐   Married ☐   Widowed ☐

SECTION   B

KEY: For the questions in this section, put a tick under: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), disagree (D), Strongly disagree (SD), and write in the spaces provided appropriately

5. Do you consider the following to be the aspects considered during implementation of the thematic curriculum in Primary schools in Iganga Municipal Council?

NO	Key Aspects	SD	D	N	A	SA
I	Talking and comprehending in Local language					
ii	Writing in Local language					
Iii	Reading in Local language					

6. Would you consider the following to be Challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools in Iganga Municipality?

NO	Challenges	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	It's hard to translate from text books					
2.	It misses some themes					
3.	Ineffective assessment					
4.	Negative attitudes by the stakeholders					
5.	Inadequate references					
6.	Only good in rural areas					
7.	It is time consuming					
8.	Teachers are not fluent in languages of the area					

7. Please indicate in the space below any additional information that could not be captured because of limited space.

Aims of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools

……………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………....

……………………………………………………………………

Challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools?

………………………………………………………………….

....

Solutions to the Challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum

ii. ………………………………………………………………….

iii. ....

iv. ………………………………………………………………….

v. ....

Thanks You Very Much for your Time

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE DEO AND DIS

- Self-introduction
- Purpose of the visit

1. What is your working experience?

2. What is your age

3. What is your Marital Status?

4. What is your Level of Education?

5. What do you think are the aspects considered while implementing the thematic Curriculum in primary schools?

6. What do you think are the aims of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools?

7. What do you think are the challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools?

8. How do you think can the challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools be checked?

APPENDIX V

FOCUS DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR PUPILS

1. What is your age

2. What do you think are the aspects considered while implementing the thematic Curriculum in primary schools

3. What do you think are the aims of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools?

4. What do you think are the challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools?

5. How do you think can the challenges of implementing the thematic curriculum in primary schools?

APPENDIX VI

TABLE FOR DETERMINING SAMPLE SIZE

"N" is the population size

"S" is the sample size

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	190	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	341
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	351
35	32	150	198	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	181	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	180	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	190	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	200	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	210	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	373
65	56	220	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	230	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	240	144	550	225	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	250	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	260	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	270	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	256	2600	335	100000	385

APPENDIX VII: RELIABILITY RESULTS

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	225	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	225	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in

the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.886	3

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
LL1	2.8933	.30938	225
LL2	2.7244	.64405	225
LL3	2.8444	.42022	225

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
8.4622	1.678	1.29547	3

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	225	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	225	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in

the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.661	7

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Aim1	2.1778	.83690	225
Aim2	2.9822	.13244	225
Aim3	2.9244	.26487	225
Aim4	2.9600	.19640	225
Aim5	2.7022	.60890	225
Aim6	2.6667	.63387	225
Aim7	2.9733	.16147	225

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
19.3867	3.747	1.93575	7

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	225	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	225	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.676	8

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
CGE1	2.8667	.43301	225
CGE2	2.4400	.61033	225
CGE3	1.7200	.80556	225
CGE4	2.2178	.76277	225
CGE5	2.3644	.86115	225
CGE6	1.3778	.62994	225
CGE7	1.6356	.89172	225
CGE8	2.4444	.87514	225

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
17.0667	11.000	3.31662	8

APPENDIX VIII: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS CHARACTERISTICS

Frequency Table

Sex

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	134	59.6	59.6	59.6
	Female	91	40.4	40.4	100.0
	Total	225	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-30	65	28.9	28.9	28.9
	31-40	50	22.2	22.2	51.1
	41-50	67	29.8	29.8	80.9
	51-60	20	8.9	8.9	89.8
	61 and above	23	10.2	10.2	100.0
	Total	225	100.0	100.0	

Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Grade III	77	34.2	34.2	34.2
	Diploma	103	45.8	45.8	80.0
	Degree	34	15.1	15.1	95.1
	Masters	11	4.9	4.9	100.0
	Total	225	100.0	100.0	

Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	45	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Married	169	75.1	75.1	95.1
	Widowed	11	4.9	4.9	100.0
	Total	225	100.0	100.0	

APPENDIX IX: DATA FOR DETAILED MEAN

Statistics

		LL1	LL2	LL3
N	Valid	225	225	225
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		2.8933	2.7244	2.8444
Mode		3.00	3.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		.30938	.64405	.42022
Minimum		2.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum		3.00	3.00	3.00

Statistics

		Aim1	Aim2	Aim3	Aim4	Aim5	Aim6	Aim7
N	Valid	225	225	225	225	225	225	225
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.1778	2.9822	2.9244	2.9600	2.7022	2.6667	2.9733
Mode		3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		.83690	.13244	.26487	.19640	.60890	.63387	.16147
Minimum		1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
Maximum		3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00

Statistics

	CGE1	CGE2	CGE3	CGE4	CGE5	CGE6	CGE7	CGE8
Valid	225	225	225	225	225	225	225	225
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	2.8667	2.4400	1.7200	2.2178	2.3644	1.3778	1.6356	2.4444
Mode	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	3.00
Std. Deviation	.43301	.61033	.80556	.76277	.86115	.62994	.89172	.87514
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00