

**THE ROLE OF PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN ENHANCING
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT MUKONO CHILD AND YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT CENTER IN NABUTI MUKONO**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

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DECLARATION

I, Ahereza Anselem, hereby solemnly swear that the research project I have presented is the product of my own original labor. Every source that was used and consulted for this proposal has been properly cited.

Signature: 

Date: 10th / 10 / 2024

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(STUDENT)

APPROVAL

This research report on “The Role of Parental and Community Involvement in Enhancing Early Childhood Education at Mukono Child and Youth Development Center in Nabuti, Mukono” has been submitted with my consent as the supervisor of the university.

Signature.....*ana*.....

Date.....*10/10/24*.....

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(UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR)

ABSTRACT

In this study, the Mukono Child and Youth Development Center in Nabuti-Mukono Parish examined how community and parental involvement might improve early childhood education (ECE). Taking into account that a child's early education provides a vital basis for lifelong learning, the study looked at the ways in which parents' and the community's active involvement might enhance children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth.

The research pinpointed the main obstacles to parental and community involvement, such as scarce resources, ignorance, and time restraints, and also offers solutions. The study's conclusions showed that increased community and parental involvement greatly enhances children's educational results.

Specifically, collaborations with neighborhood organizations are emphasized as a vital tactic for assembling resources and cultivating a cooperative atmosphere that supports early learning. The study concluded with recommendations to strengthen communication, increase resource availability, and promote collaborative efforts to enhance the quality of early childhood education in Nabuti-Mukono Parish.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research proposal to my parents for their unwavering love, support, and encouragements have been the driving force behind my academic journey. Their belief in my abilities and constant motivation has been instrumental in helping me overcome challenges and reach this milestone.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This study seeks to explore the Role of Parental and Community Involvement in Enhancing Early Childhood Education at Mukono Child and Youth Development Center in Nabuti, Mukono. Early childhood education is essential in setting the groundwork for a child's development and learning throughout life. These help children develop the cognitive, social, emotional, and motor abilities that are necessary for success in later schooling and in life. Giving kids scheduled learning opportunities helps them improve their language, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. These also encourage emotional intelligence, self-control, and social relationships, all of which contribute to the development of a well-rounded person. In addition to fostering physical growth, the loving atmosphere ensures that kids are ready for the demands of formal education by providing opportunities for motor skill development. This chapter includes the study's background, problem statement, general objective, specific objectives, and research questions. It also includes the study's scope, significance, justification, conceptual framework, and definitions of important words.

1.1 Background of the Study

Early childhood education refers to structured learning environments that provide experiences for children, typically from birth to age eight, with the goal of supporting their cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development (UNESCO, 2024). These comprise a range of activities designed to assist with fundamental abilities and school preparedness; play-based learning, language development, and social interactions are often covered. Because it has an impact on people's long-term educational outcomes and general well-being, early childhood

education is crucial. It is therefore a crucial component of lifelong learning. Effective early childhood programs include family participation, developmentally appropriate methods, and nurturing environments (McCoy, et al., 2017).

Early childhood education (ECE) is widely recognized as being crucial to a child's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. Children who receive high-quality early childhood education are considerably better prepared for school, which improves their social and academic outcomes, according to study. Since they reduce the disparities in linguistic and cognitive capacities, these are especially beneficial for children from disadvantaged homes, providing them with a fairer start in life. Early experiences are critical for brain development, and Early Childhood Education (ECE) environments are structured, nurturing, and have a big influence on how development progresses over the long term (Bago, et al., 2020).

The importance of early childhood education (ECE) as a foundation for lifetime learning and development is becoming more widely acknowledged. According to research, a child's early years are a time of rapid brain development, and the experiences they have during this period have a big impact on their cognitive, social, and emotional development (Likhari, Baghel, & Patil, 2022). In order to create supportive environments that improve these early learning experiences, parental and community involvement is crucial.

Although the Ugandan government has worked to advance ECE, there are still obstacles, especially in remote places like Nabuti-Mukono. Socioeconomic hurdles, insufficient infrastructure, and scarce resources frequently make it difficult to implement ECE effectively. These difficulties highlight the value of parental and community involvement in filling in the gaps created by the official education system.

In early childhood education, the term "parental involvement" describes how parents actively support their children's learning at home and in formal learning environments. Research shows that parental involvement in their kids' schooling improves their social skills, academic performance, and learning motivation (Sobri, Soh, & Roziman, 13–20). including many rural communities, Nabuti-Mukono's parents may experience obstacles including poverty and ignorance, which might restrict their involvement. Notwithstanding these challenges, community-based programs that promote parental engagement can surmount them and establish a nurturing educational atmosphere for kids.

On the other side, community involvement includes a wider range of community members', local leaders', and organizations' support of ECE. According to Grimberg and Cortazar (2022), community-driven approaches have been demonstrated to improve educational outcomes through the provision of extra resources, fostering a sense of responsibility, and encouraging a culture of learning. The success of ECE in Nabuti-Mukono can be greatly influenced by utilizing local resources and encouraging cooperation amongst local stakeholders, parents, and schools.

Involving the community and parents in early childhood education (ECE) is essential for tackling larger social challenges as well as boosting educational achievements. According to Neuman and Powers (2021) involving parents and communities in education helps foster social cohesiveness, lessen inequality, and pave the road for sustainable development. Thus, the purpose of this research is to investigate how much parental and community involvement contributes to improving early childhood education in Nabuti-Mukono.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Establishing a foundation for lifetime learning and development is a critical function of early childhood education (ECE). Nonetheless, parents' and the community's active participation is

frequently necessary for ECE to be effective. There are worries that low levels of parental and community involvement are preventing ECE from realizing its full potential in many districts of Uganda, especially Nabuti-Mukono. Studies indicate that children who experience significant parental and community involvement in their early education tend to perform better academically, demonstrate enhanced social skills, and experience more emotional well-being (Bathabile, 2023).

Even though it is acknowledged that family and community involvement in early childhood education is important, it is unknown how much of it exists in Nabuti-Mukono. Anecdotal data indicates that cultural norms, poverty, and ignorance may prevent people from participating effectively (Sekiwu & Kaggwa, 2019). Furthermore, the potential impact that local ECE can have on children's development may be limited if they lack the necessary tools to meaningfully involve parents and communities.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how community and parental involvement might improve early childhood education in Nabuti-Mukono. It specifically aims to comprehend the level of participation, the obstacles to it, and the tactics that can be used to encourage increased involvement. In doing so, this research will add to the expanding corpus of knowledge on early childhood education (ECE) and provide useful suggestions for raising the standard of early childhood education in Uganda.

1.3 Research purpose

To explore the Role of Parental and Community Involvement in Enhancing Early Childhood Education at Mukono Child and Youth Development Center in Nabuti, Mukono

1.4 Specific objectives

- i. To examine the role of the community in supporting early childhood education at Mukono Child Development Center
- ii. To explore the impact of parent involvement on the academic and social development of children at Mukono Child Development Center
- iii. To propose strategies to improve parent and community involvement in early childhood education at Mukono Child Development Center.

1.5 Research questions

- iv. What is the role of the community in supporting early childhood education at Mukono Child Development Center?
 - i. What is the impact of parent involvement on the academic and social development of children at Mukono Child Development Center?
 - ii. What are the strategies to improve parent and community involvement in early childhood education at Mukono Child Development Center?

1.6 Scope of the study

1.6.1 Geographical location

This study was carried out from Nabuti is a parish located in Mukono Municipality within Mukono District. It lies in the central region of the country, about 21 kilometers (13 miles) east of Kampala, Uganda's capital city. The parish is part of Mukono Central Division and is characterized by a blend of urban and peri-urban settings. It is easily accessible via the Kampala-Jinja highway, making it well-connected to the larger Mukono town and surrounding areas. The

area features a mix of residential, commercial, and agricultural land use, with a growing population due to urban expansion.

1.6.2 Time scope

The period to be considered for the study was 3 years that is from 2020-2023, this is because during that period, many parents in Nabuti-Mukono are preoccupied with economic survival and lack the time or resources to engage fully with their children's education.

1.6.3 Content scope

The study was limited to explore the Role of Parental and Community Involvement in Enhancing Early Childhood Education at Mukono Child and Youth Development Center in Nabuti, Mukono.

1.7 Justification the study

Research consistently showed that parental involvement in early education leads to better educational outcomes for children. This study explored the specific ways in which parents in Nabuti-Mukono are involved in their children's education, the challenges they face, and the potential benefits of increased participation.

This study investigated the level of community engagement in supporting ECE and identify areas where improvements can be made.

By focusing on this specific area, the study provided contextually relevant insights that can be used to develop targeted interventions that address the needs of the community.

The results of the study can help shape community-based programs that promote early childhood education and, in turn, help enhance the educational outcomes of children in Nabuti-Mukono Parish.

1.8 Significance of the study

The results of this study will help to promote early childhood education (ECE) in Nabuti-Mukono by emphasizing how important community and family involvement is to raising the standard of these programs.

Both local and national policymakers will find the research useful. It will include evidence-based suggestions for creating laws that support and enable community and parent involvement in early childhood education.

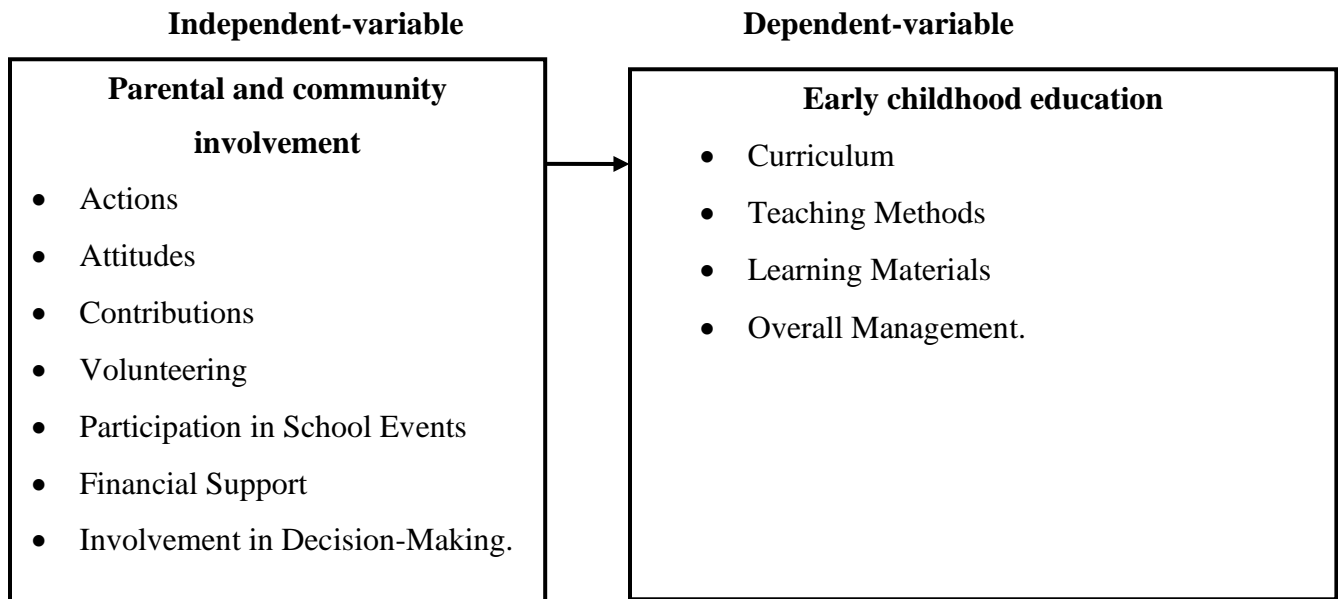
By acknowledging parents' critical involvement in their children's education, the study will empower parents. Parents who are aware of the benefits of their involvement could be more inclined to participate fully in their kids' education.

The study will clarify the significance of community involvement in the learning process. By encouraging community people to actively support local schools and early childhood education, it will create a sense of shared responsibility and investment in the education of young children.

In order to effectively support parental and community involvement in ECE in Nabuti-Mukono, the study will identify obstacles and problems.

The research may help the region's long-term educational growth by highlighting the value of early childhood education and the significance of community involvement.

1.9 Conceptual frame work



Source: Researcher's conceptualization (2024)

Parental and Community Involvement

This covers the deeds, mindsets, and efforts made by community members and parents in support of early childhood education. It could include things like giving back to the community, attending school functions, lending a hand financially, and participating in decision-making.

Early Childhood Education

This speaks to the caliber and efficacy of early childhood education. Curriculum, instructional strategies, educational resources, and general administration are all included.

1.10 Key Terms

The term "parental and community involvement" describes how parents and community members actively support and enhance educational procedures and outcomes. In order to support

their child's learning, parents can get involved in school events, help with homework, and maintain regular communication with teachers (Henderson & Mapp, 2017).

Early childhood education, which focuses on promoting cognitive, emotional, and social growth during critical developmental stages, is a structured learning and development program for children ages one to eight years old (National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 2020). These comprise a range of educational environments, including kindergartens, preschools, and early intervention programs, which work to develop fundamental skills and competences in order to get kids ready for formal education (Berk, 2022).

The term "community involvement" describes how local people, groups, and establishments assist and enhance the welfare of their community, including educational programs (Putnam, 2017). Community involvement in education can take the form of volunteer opportunities, school-community partnerships, and community-led educational initiatives (Christenson & Reschly, 2019).

Early childhood refers to the period of a child's development from birth to about eight years old, during which time they experience substantial social, emotional, and cognitive growth (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2018). This stage is essential for setting the stage for learning and growth in the future since early experiences affect how the brain develops and how successful one's subsequent education is. In order to ensure that children acquire the foundational skills and competences required for future academic and personal success, effective early childhood programs are designed to satisfy the developmental requirements of children throughout this formative era (Zigler & Styfco, 2019).

Plans and curricula for education are organized and created to support the acquisition of knowledge and skills in a variety of disciplines and age groups (UNESCO, 2021). These are

designed to satisfy particular learning requirements and objectives and can vary from official education to extracurricular learning activities.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The goal of this project is to investigate how community and parental involvement at Mukono Child and Youth Development Center in Nabuti, Mukono, might improve early childhood education. This study aims to evaluate the impact of parental involvement in their children's daily learning activities on their academic performance in early childhood education in Nabuti-Mukono parish. Additionally, it will analyze the effect of community-based initiatives and support systems on the enrollment and retention rates in early childhood education in Nabuti-Mukono parish. The literature will be reviewed in the context of these specific objectives. to look at the research gap and the impact of parental education levels and socioeconomic position on early childhood education participation in Nabuti-Mukono parish.

2.1 The Role of the Community in Supporting Early Childhood Education

A child's growth throughout the Early Childhood Education (ECE) phase is crucial because it establishes the groundwork for lifetime learning and wellbeing. Early Childhood Education (ECE) includes a range of activities and programs aimed at supporting young children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. In order to promote and improve early childhood education, community involvement is crucial because it offers vital resources, social capital, and a sense of shared responsibility for the development of children. The community plays a variety of roles in assisting with early childhood education, such as participating in the formulation of policies, supplying resources, working with educational establishments, and being physically present in the learning environments of young children (Hartwig, 2020).

A crucial component of early childhood education is the community. It talks about the relationships that exist between families, community groups, caregivers, and children. Strong communities offer a welcoming and nurturing atmosphere that fosters children's development of their sense of self and their social and emotional skills. It also provides access to opportunities, experiences, and resources that raise the standard of care. Caregivers should prioritize open communication, respect diversity, work in conjunction with the community at large, and involve families in order to cultivate a strong sense of community (Robinson, 2023).

Communities play a critical role in shaping policies that affect early childhood education. Local communities, through parent-teacher associations, community-based organizations, and other civic groups, can advocate for policies that ensure access to quality early childhood education for all children, regardless of their socio-economic background. When communities are actively involved in the advocacy and policy-making process, there is a greater likelihood of achieving equitable access to ECE). In many developing countries, community advocacy has been instrumental in the establishment of early childhood centers and the implementation of policies that support ECE (Eden, Chisom, & Adeniyi, 2024).

According to a study on *The Importance of Community Engagement in Education Management in Early Childhood Education in 4.0 Era* by Eravia (2019), Participation of the community in school development makes sense because education is fundamental to human existence. The community is interested in early childhood education facilities not just for the sake of school growth, but also primarily in enhancing quality within the context of social role formation. The degree to which the community can be empowered in the educational process in schools is an indicator of the school administration in question. Community involvement in school activities is a trait of excellent partnerships between schools and communities.

According to a different study, community-based early childhood programs are crucial for giving underprivileged kids access to services and education. It is titled *The Role of Community-Based Early Childhood in Children Learning: The Concept of Funds of Knowledge*. It also implies that innovative community-based programs may be able to assist underprivileged kids in establishing links between their homes, communities, and schools (Gelir, 2019).

Furthermore, significant findings of the community's support for the management and improvement of the welfare of public early childhood education centers were found in another study. According to the report, the majority of parents assist ECE centers in a number of ways, including hiring new teachers. This result further demonstrated that the ECE committee oversaw and hired the teachers at the ECE centers. According to the study, the community provided financial support for early childhood education (ECE) centers, built physical facilities, released children to attend school, deployed ECE staff, started and maintained an ECE feeding program, assisted children in creating learning materials, monitored student progress, and upheld pre-school discipline (Kiende & Orodho, 2019).

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the community in providing resources for early childhood education. Funding, facilities, instructional materials, and human capital are examples of resources that are necessary for early childhood education to run well. To support ECE centers, communities frequently mobilize resources through local fundraising events, donations, and volunteerism. Community contributions are essential to maintaining early childhood education in underserved and rural areas where government funding may be limited (Ahasu, Kwao, & Zang, 2024).

Early childhood education must succeed through community and educational institution collaboration. There are a number of ways that this collaboration can occur, such as

collaborations between schools and community organizations, parent-teacher initiatives, and community involvement in curriculum development. Community-based organizations and early childhood centers frequently work together to offer supplementary services that are necessary for the holistic development of children, such as nutrition, health screenings, and parent education. Furthermore, community involvement in school governance via advisory councils or school boards guarantees that educational establishments continue to be receptive to community concerns and the students they serve (Chandratreya, 2024).

In early childhood education settings, community members—parents and caregivers in particular have a direct impact on fostering children's learning and development. It is commonly acknowledged that parental involvement in early childhood education has a critical role in a child's social and academic development. This involvement can take many different forms, such helping out in the classroom, taking part in extracurricular activities, and supporting education at home. Children's general development is enhanced by communities that foster a culture of learning by offering secure, encouraging, and stimulating surroundings (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017). Libraries, community centers, and leisure centers are a few examples of such settings that provide chances for learning and discovery outside of the classroom.

2.2 The Impact of Parent Involvement On the Academic and Social Development of Children

A broad definition of parent involvement in education is when parents actively assist their children in their educational endeavors, both at home and at school. This involvement can take many different forms, such as volunteering at school functions, attending parent-teacher conferences, offering homework assistance, and creating a home atmosphere that is conducive to learning (Cotton & Wikelund, 1989).

Parents' participation and students' academic achievement are strongly correlated, especially in subjects like reading and math, according to a 2019 study by Erdem & Kaya titled *A Meta-Analysis of the Effect of Parental participation on Students' Academic Achievement*. Students with involved parents typically outperform those whose parents are less involved academically, according to their meta-analysis of 25 studies.

Hill and Tyson (2009), on the other hand, stressed the value of family involvement during the middle school years. They found that higher academic achievement is significantly predicted by engagement in academic socializing activities, such as talking about school-related issues and establishing high expectations. The study also made clear that, depending on the child's age and developmental stage, different kinds of involvement—like parental help with homework—might have different benefits.

Apart from its beneficial effects on academics, parental involvement is essential for children's social development. Studies have indicated that kids with involved parents have superior social skills, such as cooperation, communication, and problem-solving. Additionally, these kids have greater levels of self-esteem and are more likely to interact constructively with their peers (Roy & Giraldo-García, 2018).

Cohen & Anders' (2019) study emphasized the value of parental participation in developing social competence in young children. The study's findings indicate that parents who take an active interest in their kids' schooling typically create a secure and encouraging atmosphere that fosters social skill development. These results are consistent with ecological systems theory, which highlights how social development in children is shaped by the family, community, and school.

Notwithstanding the established advantages of parental involvement, a number of obstacles may prevent parents from taking an active role in their children's education. Parents' capacity to participate can be restricted by socioeconomic issues including poverty and low educational attainment. Effective communication between parents and schools may be hampered by linguistic and cultural difficulties, especially in immigrant households. A study by Baker, Wise, Kelley, and Skiba (2016) found a number of psychological obstacles, such as parents' opinions of the school's openness to their involvement and their views of their own role in education. In order to overcome these obstacles, schools and educators can make a significant contribution by establishing friendly environments and offering tools that encourage parent involvement.

Schools and communities can use tactics that support and encourage parents' involvement in education to optimize the advantages of parent involvement. Schools must to use a holistic approach that incorporates cooperative decision-making, volunteer opportunities, and frequent communication. Parent participation can be increased through collaborations between communities, families, and schools. For example, it has been demonstrated that the "Community Schools" model—which combines social, health, and academic services for kids and their families—improves academic results and raises parent engagement (Newman, Northcutt, Farmer, & Black, 2019).

Academic achievement of pupils is positively impacted by parental involvement in their education, particularly when it occurs at home. Giving kids access to educational resources and materials at home creates a nurturing learning atmosphere that helps them consolidate and build upon what they learn in school (Gitonga, 2023).

2.3 Strategies to Improve Parent and Community Involvement in Early Childhood Education

One important aspect of early childhood education (ECE) that has a big impact on kids' learning and development is the involvement of parents and the community. Children are more likely to perform better academically, have stronger social skills, and exhibit higher levels of motivation and self-esteem when parents and communities actively participate in their education, according to research (Barnett, Paschall, Mastergeorge, Cutshaw, & Warren, 2020).

To encourage parent involvement, schools and families must communicate effectively. Schools can tell parents about their child's development and school events using a variety of communication methods, including parent-teacher conferences, emails, texts, and newsletters. Parents who receive regular updates are better able to support their child's education and feel more a part of the school community. In order to guarantee that all parents, irrespective of their cultural background, feel included and understood, it is also crucial to implement culturally responsive communication practices (Chen & Rivera-Vernazza, 2022).

By fostering inclusive and friendly environments, schools may increase parent involvement. Parent participation in school activities is encouraged when there is a positive school atmosphere that recognizes and respects varied families. This can be accomplished by making sure that the school personnel is friendly and helpful, delivering parent orientation, and providing information

in multiple languages. Parents are more likely to get actively involved in their child's education when they sense that their presence is valued (Abed & Shackelford, 2023).

Communities and schools can provide parents with the information and tools necessary to assist their children's learning at home by hosting workshops and providing instruction. These can address issues including the importance of play in early childhood development, good discipline techniques, and literacy development (Eden, Chisom, & Adeniyi, 2024). Schools can assist close the gap between home and school and promote better consistency in children's educational experiences by providing parents with useful tools.

Parents who participate in school decision-making processes are more likely to have a feeling of accountability and ownership for their child's education. Parent advisory councils and parent involvement in school committees that deal with curriculum creation, school regulations, and budget allocations are two options available to schools. This cooperative strategy guarantees that parents' opinions are acknowledged and that their perspectives improve the way the school operates as a whole (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991).

By giving parents access to more resources and support services, community partnerships can increase parental involvement. Schools can work with neighborhood institutions like health facilities, libraries, and cultural centers to provide cooperative education that benefits kids and parents. These collaborations can give families access to early literacy programs, parenting workshops, and health screenings, among other services that improve kids' general wellbeing and school preparedness (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020).

One good option for parents to get more involved in their child's education is by volunteering. Parents can volunteer in the classroom, plan school events, or help with extracurricular activities—all of which are opportunities that schools can provide. Schools might also invite

parents to participate in school activities like cultural celebrations, open houses, and parent-teacher conferences. These get-togethers give parents a greater sense of the school setting and give them a chance to interact with educators and other parents (Yamamoto, Li, & Bempechat, 2022).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used for the study. Discussions were held regarding the study population, research design, sample size, sampling tactics, instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis, validity and reliability of the instruments, data gathering process, and ethical concerns.

3.1 Research Design

A cross-sectional descriptive survey design was employed in the investigation. A research with a descriptive design gathers information to address inquiries on the subject's or study topic's state. In a cross-sectional study, data is collected as part of a research design from multiple participants at one time (Thomas, 2023). This is because, in comparison to other research designs, it is less costly and takes less time because it enables the simultaneous collection of data from a large number of participants. Furthermore, since the study uses a suggested quantitative research approach, a descriptive cross-sectional survey design is employed.

The goal of the quantitative approach is to conduct research with an emphasis on quantification. It can be used to explain the state of affairs or look at relationships, such as cause and effect relationships. The quantitative technique is used since the research questions address topics that need for both in-depth knowledge and specifics about the study population (Williams, 2021). Additionally, helpful in overcoming any type of data deficiency is the method. The goal of the qualitative approach is to interpret naturalistic data through several methods. Individual interviews were used to have one-on-one, direct communication with the subjects.

3.2 Target population

The target population of 120 respondents includes parents, teachers, and community leaders involved in early childhood education in Nabuti-Mukono Parish. Specifically, the study focused on:

- Parents with children enrolled in ECE.
- Teachers working in early childhood education centers.
- Community leaders and members who contribute to or influence ECE.

3.2.1 Sample size determination

A sample of 92 respondents will be chosen from the 120 target population, according to the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table of population distribution, which was used to calculate the sample size for this study.

3.3 Sampling techniques

A sample size of 92 participants were selected for the study, comprising parents, teachers, and community leaders. The sampling technique used is a combination of purposive and random sampling. Purposive sampling is employed to select teachers and community leaders with relevant experience and knowledge about ECE. Random sampling is used to select parents to ensure a diverse representation of different socio-economic backgrounds.

3.4 Data Collection Methods and Instruments

Data was collected using different methods and different instruments.

3.4.1 Data Collection Methods

Questionnaire Survey Method

Primary data consisted of responses from the respondents through self-administered questionnaire. Secondary sources of data consisted of information from textbooks, journals and articles of scholars, researches of experts who have made earlier analysis on similar or related subject. Each respondent was given a questionnaire to fill in after explaining the study purpose and benefits to them and attaining their consent. Structured questionnaires were administered to parents to collect quantitative data on their level of involvement in ECE and their perceptions of the importance of such involvement.

3.4.2 Data Collection Instruments

3.4.2.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire consisted of a list of open-ended and or close-ended questions to facilitate the collection of primary data. The researcher developed one questionnaire for all the respondents to be interviewed. The questionnaire was adopted from previous similar studies with a few modifications to suit this study.

This is a formulated written set of questions that will be used to obtain information about the study objectives from the study participants. In this study the questionnaires were hand delivered to the respondents because they possess the information required to answer the questions and Literature. It is also less expensive using the questionnaire for data collection. In this method, the respondents will record their answers within closely defined alternatives.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

The degree to which an instrument is suitable for the task it is intended to measure is referred to as its validity (Amin, 2005). In order to ensure validity, the study's intended instrument was examined by specialists who will assess how relevant each item in the instrument is to the study's goals. The experts will assign a score to each item, and their suggestions will be taken into consideration while modifying the questions and tool structure in order to collect the anticipated data. This will be done in order to evaluate how relevant and clear the instructions are. This will assist in evaluating the appropriateness of the data collection approach and the quality of the surveys. It will also assist in highlighting some of the issues that the study might not have foreseen. Expert judgment and the content validity index (CVI) will be used to determine the validity of the instrument.

The stability of the measure used to examine the interactions between variables is referred to as reliability (Amin, 2005). The questionnaire's questions were created with the study's objectives and problem-related concerns in mind. Because of this, it is anticipated that the study's replies and findings will be trustworthy.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, the research instruments are pre-tested in a pilot study involving a small sample of respondents. Feedback from the pilot study is used to refine the questionnaires and interview guides. Additionally, triangulation of data collection methods (questionnaires, interviews, FGDs, and observations) enhances the credibility and reliability of the findings.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

The Department of Social Sciences at Uganda Christian University provided the researcher with an introduction letter that introduced him to the respondents. In order to obtain permission to gather data, the researcher scheduled meetings with local authorities. Once permission was obtained, the researcher proceeded to notify all selected participants of the study's aim and objectives, which were promptly conveyed to the respondents. Giving the questionnaires to the sampled respondents was the next task. After that, respondents had time to complete the questionnaires and return them for analysis.

3.7 Data analysis

The study coded and evaluated the quantitative data obtained from the structured, closed-ended questionnaires for each aim. They were exposed to percentages and frequencies, which aided in illuminating the respondents' distribution with respect to each independent and dependent variable.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Research ethics are taken into account at every stage of the process. All participants provide their informed consent and are guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. Participants received an explanation of the study's goal as well as information about their right to discontinue participation at any moment without facing any repercussions. The applicable institutional review board's ethical requirements are also followed by the study.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the study findings as obtained from analyzed data in relation to the research objectives and research questions. The data was presented in tables and figures with corresponding frequencies and percentages with explanatory remarks. The researcher involved 92 respondents in the study.

4.1 Demographic Data of Respondents

Variable	Frequency (n=92)	Percentage (%)
Age groups		
18-23	4	4.3
24-29	29	31.5
30-35	22	23.9
36-41	18	19.6
42 and above	19	20.7
Educational level		
No formal education	8	8.7
Primary education	25	27.2
Secondary education	34	37
Tertiary education	25	27.2
Occupation		
Farmer	25	27.2
Teacher	20	21.7

Business person	30	32.6
Government employee	17	18.5
Relationship to the Child		
Parent	60	65.2
Guardian	20	21.7
Community member	12	13.1

Table 1: Presenting Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 above shows that the highest number of respondents 29/92 (31.5%) were in the bracket of 24-29 years while the least 4/92 (4.3%) were aged 18-23.

Regarding the educational level, the majority of respondents 34/92 (37%) attained secondary education while the minority 8/92 (8.7%) were had no formal education.

About occupation, most of the study participants 30/92 (32.6%) were business persons while 17/92 (18.5) were government employees.

More than half of study participants 60/92 (65.2%) were parents to the children while the lowest number 12/92 (13.1%) were community members.

4.2 Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education

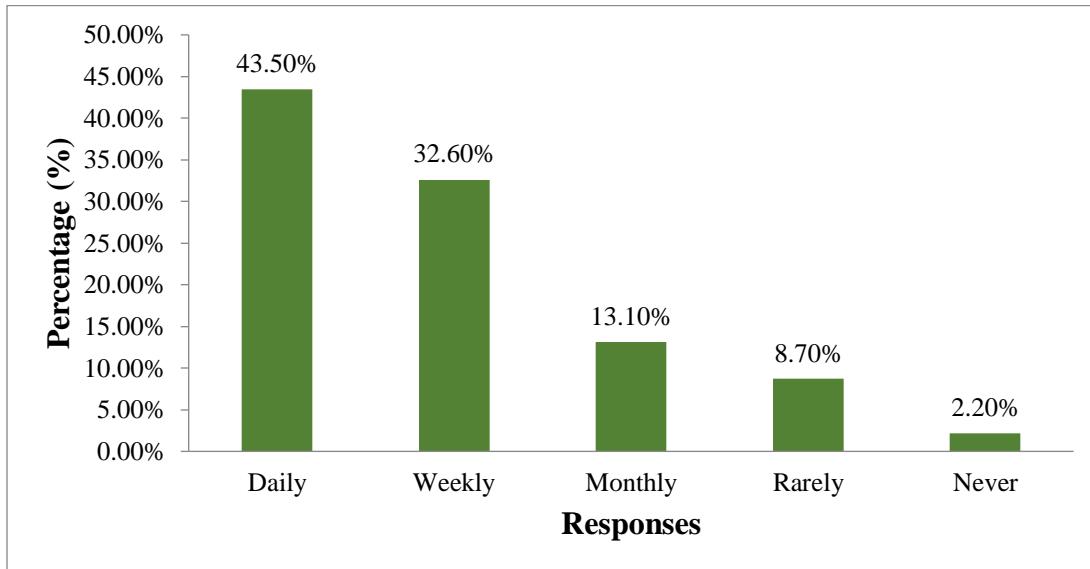


Figure 1: Responses on engagement in activities that support child's early education (n=92)

Figure 1 above shows that nearly half of study participants 40/92 (43.5%) frequently of engaged in the child's educational activities while the least 2/92 (2.2%) never engaged in the child's educational activities.

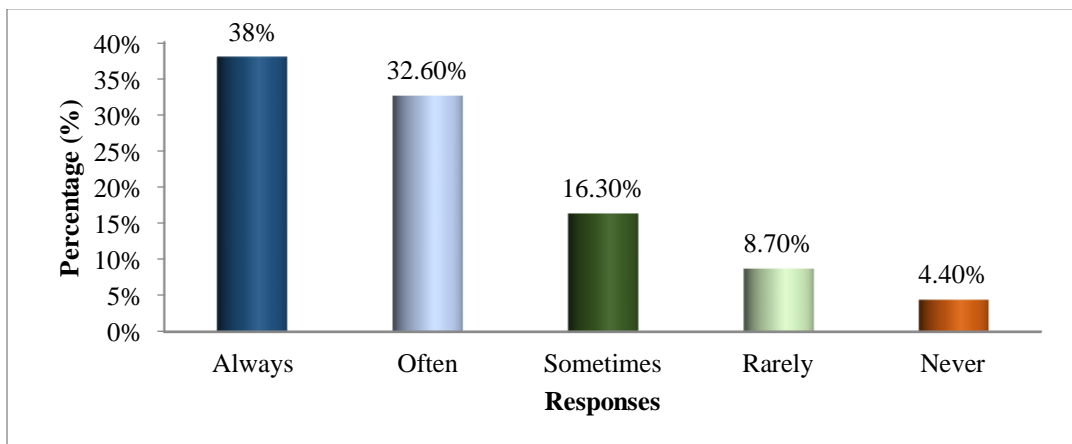


Figure 2: Attendance at Parent-Teacher Meetings or school events regularly (n=92)

Figure 2 above shows that the highest number of respondents 35/92 (38%) always attended the parent – teacher meeting or school events regularly while the lowest number 4/92 (4.4%) have never attended the meeting or school events.

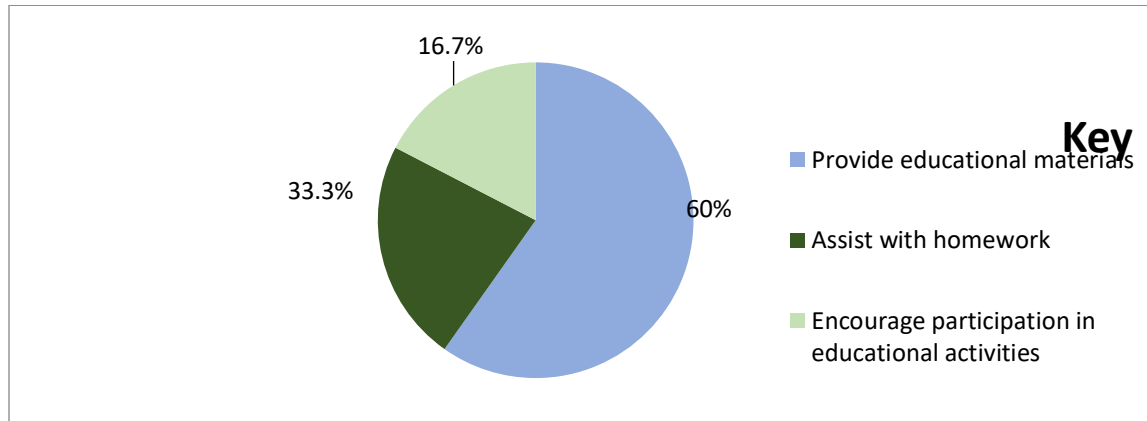


Figure 3: Support on the child's learning at home (n=92)

Figure 3 shows that more than half of respondents 55/92 (60%) supported their child's learning at home through provision of educational materials while 16/92 (16.7%) encouraged the participation in educational activities.

4.3 Community Involvement in Early Childhood Education

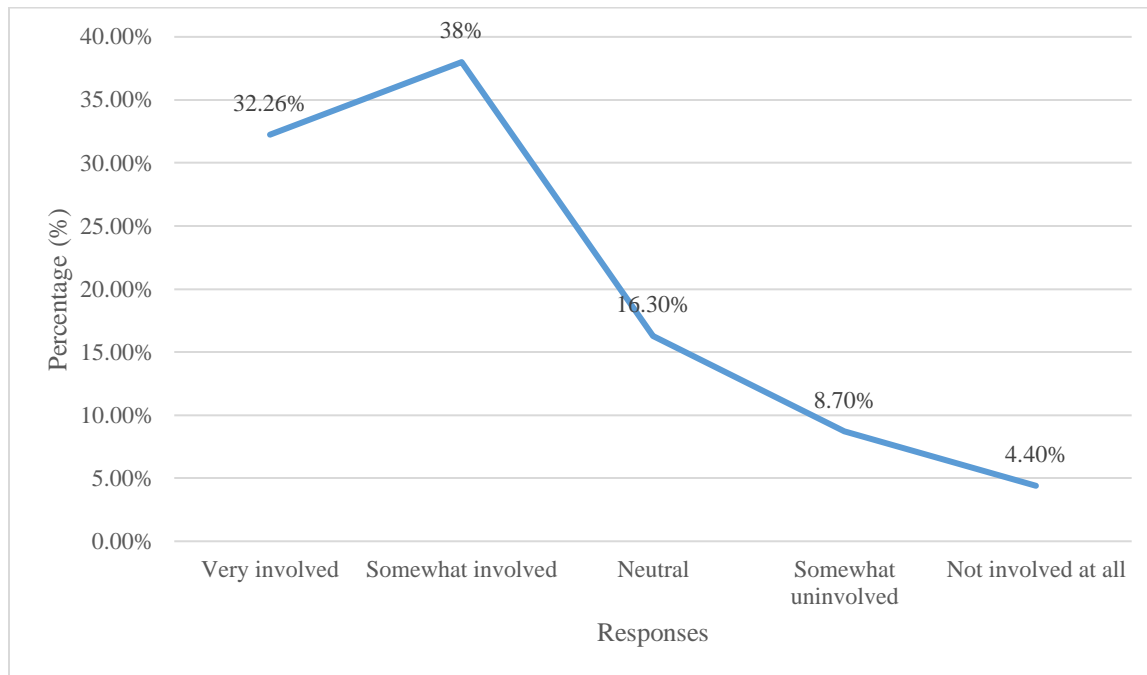


Figure 4: Showing the involvement of the community in supporting early childhood education

Figure 4 shows that the majority of the respondents 35/92 (38%) agreed that the community somewhat involved in the supporting

of early childhood education while the least number of participants 4/92 (4.4%) responded that the community is never involved in the supporting of early childhood education.

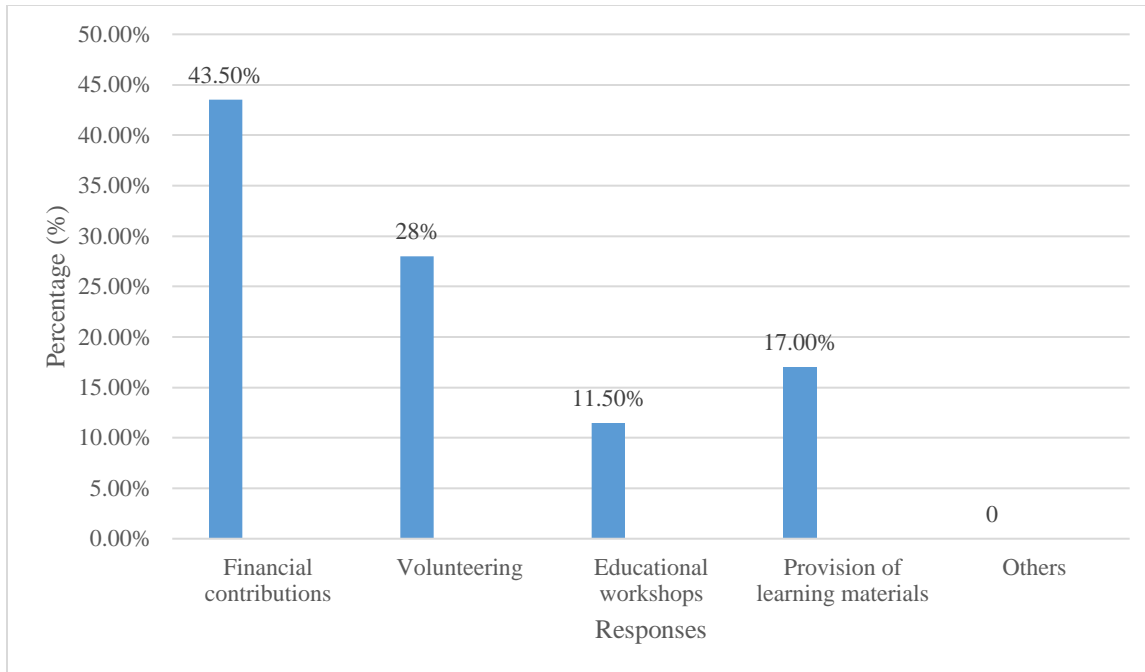


Figure 5: Showing types of community support available for early childhood education

Almost half of the respondents 40/92 (43.5%) agreed that financial contributions were the community support available for early childhood education while the least number of the participants 10/92 (11.5%) believed that educational workshops were the type of support.

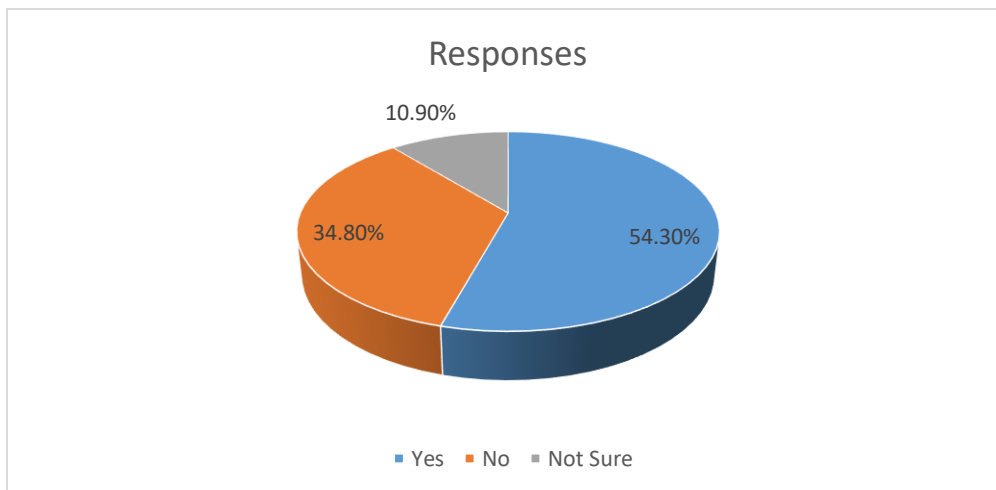


Figure 6: Local Community Organizations Collaboration With Early Childhood Education Centers

More than half of the participants 50/92 (54.3%) agreed that local community organizations collaborate with early childhood education centers and the least number 10/92 (10.9%) were not sure.

4.4 Strategies to improve parent and community involvement in early childhood education

variable	Very positively	Positively	Neutral	Negatively	Very negatively
In your opinion, how does parental involvement impact the quality of early childhood education?	54.3%	32.6%	10.9%	2.2%	0.0%
In your opinion, how does community involvement impact the quality of early childhood education?	48.9%	34.8%	13%	3.3%	0.0%

Table 2: Showing Impact of Parental and Community Involvement on Early Childhood Education

Table 2 shows that more than half of the respondents 50/92 (54.3%) answered very positively when asked on how parental involvement impact the quality of early childhood education while 2/92 (2.2%) of the respondents answered negatively and none of them were very negative.

Regarding how community involvement impact the quality of early childhood education, less than half of the participants 45/92 (48.9%) answered very positively while the least number 3/92 (3.3%) answered negatively and none of the respondents were very negative.

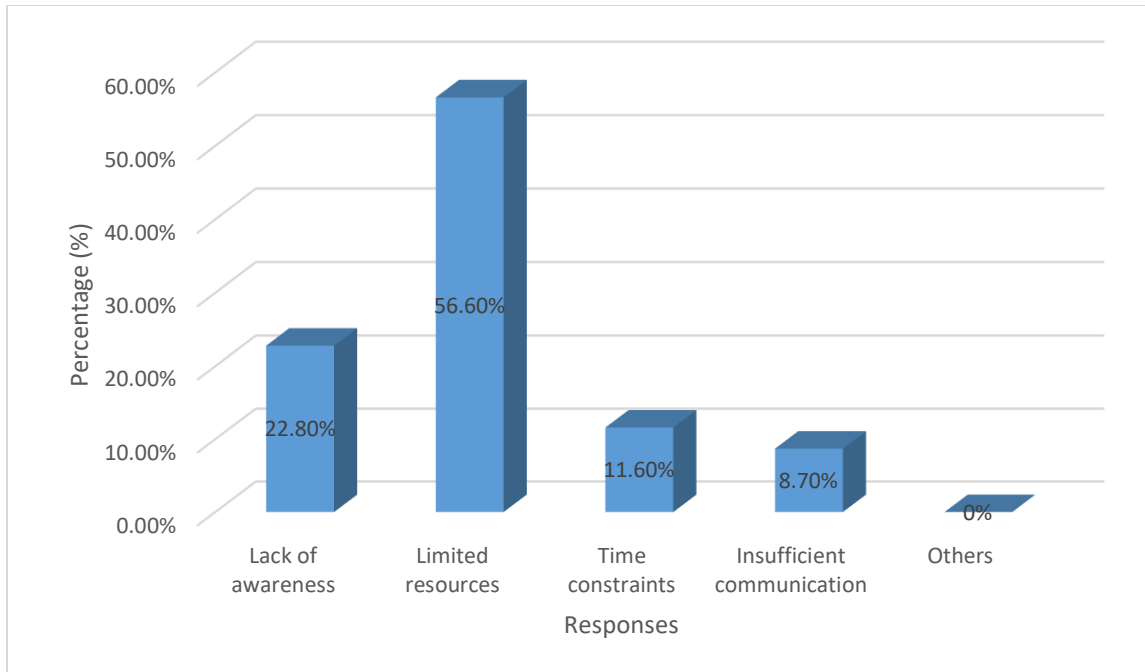


Figure 7: Showing challenges that affect parental and community involvement in early childhood education

The majority of the respondents 52/92 (56.6%) agreed that limited resources was the major challenge that affect parental and community involvement in early childhood education while the lowest number of the participants 8/92 (8.7%) noted that it was insufficient communication.

What strategies do you think could improve parental involvement in early childhood education?	
Variable	Responses (%)
Regular workshops and training	10.9
Improved communication between parents and educators	29.3
Increased availability of educational resources	59.8
What strategies do you think could improve community involvement in early childhood	

education?	
More community events and programs	17.4
Partnerships with local organizations	67.4
Increased awareness campaigns	14.1

Table 3: Suggestions for Improvement

Table 3 shows that when the respondents were asked what strategies could improve parental involvement in early childhood education, the majority of the respondents 55/92 (59.8%) agreed on increased availability of educational resources while the least number 10/92 (10.9%) agreed on regular workshops and training.

Concerning strategies that could improve community involvement in early childhood education, the highest number of the respondents 62/92 (67.4%) agreed in partnerships with local organizations while the least number of the respondents 13/92 (14.1%) agreed on increased awareness campaigns.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the study results in accordance with related literature review. It also presents the conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 Discussion

This was in line with the specific objectives of the study.

5.1.1 Demographic Data of Respondents

According to the findings of this study, the highest number of respondents 29 (31.5%) were in the age bracket of 24-29 years old, 34 (37%) attained secondary education and most of the study participants 30/92 (32.6%) were business persons. More than half of study participants 60/92 (65.2%) were parents to the children. This implies that the majority of the respondents were directly involved in the lives of the children and most likely have the right information needed regarding the study.

5.1.2 Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education

Study results showed that nearly half of study participants 40 (43.5%) frequently of engaged in the child's educational activities. This might be due to the fact that early education activities often involve parents and the community, fostering a supportive environment for the child. This collaboration enhances the child's learning experience and strengthens the community as a whole. This is consistent with a study by Eravia (2019) who showed that the community is interested in improving quality in the context of establishing social roles through a variety of

engagement in early childhood education institutions, rather than merely in the growth of schools. The degree to which the community can be empowered in the educational process in schools is an indicator of the school administration in question. Community involvement in school activities is a trait of excellent partnerships between schools and communities.

The study also found that the majority number of respondents 35 (38%) always attended the parent – teacher meeting or school events regularly. This can be attributed to the opportunities that come with it such as partnerships, collaborations, volunteering mad also encourage the parent’s participation in education. The results are in agreement with (Newman, Northcutt, Farmer, & Black, (2019) who asserted that to maximize the benefits of parent involvement, schools and communities can implement strategies that encourage and facilitate parents' participation in education. Schools should adopt a comprehensive approach that includes regular communication, opportunities for volunteering, and collaborative decision-making. Partnerships between schools, families, and communities can strengthen parent involvement.

Concerning support on the child's learning at home, the study found that more than half of respondents 55 (60%) supported their child’s learning at home through provision of educational materials. This might be so because parents play in supporting their child's education beyond the classroom, contributing to their overall academic success. This is substantiated by Gitonga (2023) who explained that parental involvement in children's education, especially at home, has a positive impact on students' academic achievement. Providing educational materials and resources at home fosters a supportive learning environment, enabling children to reinforce and expand upon what they learn in school.

5.1.2 Community Involvement in Early Childhood Education

A significant number of the respondents 35 (38%) agreed that the community somewhat involved in the supporting of early childhood education. This could be attributed to community involvement being a pivot in supporting and enhancing early childhood education, as it provides essential resources, social capital, and a sense of shared responsibility for children's growth. In relation to the findings, Đurišić & Bunijevac (2017) proposed that members of the community, particularly parents and caregivers, can directly assist the learning and development of young children in early childhood education settings. It is commonly acknowledged that parental involvement in early childhood education has a critical role in a child's social and academic development.

However, nearly half of the 40 respondents (43.5%) felt that the community's financial assistance for early childhood education was the best option. This may be explained by the fact that resources like money, buildings, instructional materials, and human capital are necessary for early childhood education to run well. Ahasu, Kwao, and Zang (2024) corroborate this, stating that communities frequently mobilize resources to support ECE centers through local fundraising initiatives, donations, and volunteerism. Early childhood education must be supported by the community in rural and underprivileged areas where government funding may be scarce.

The study's findings show that a majority of participants—50/92 (54.3%)—agreed that early childhood education centers and local community organizations should work together. This might be the case because early childhood education facilities and neighborhood community organizations work together to generate a positive synergy that benefits kids, families, teachers, and the larger community. This is consistent with Chandratreya's (2024) observation that community and educational institution partnership is essential to early childhood education

success. There are a number of ways that this collaboration can occur, such as collaborations between schools and community organizations, parent-teacher initiatives, and community involvement in curriculum development. Community-based organizations and early childhood centers frequently work together to offer supplementary services that are necessary for the holistic development of children, such as nutrition, health screenings, and parent education.

5.1.3 Impact of Parental and Community Involvement

More than half of the 50/92 respondents (54.3%) to the study's question about how parental involvement affects the caliber of early childhood education gave very good answers. This may be the case due to the fact that parent participation raises kids' engagement in school activities, which in turn results in academic success. The findings support Gitonga's (2023) observation that parental involvement in their children's education—particularly at home—has a beneficial effect on their academic performance. The results confirm with Gitonga (2023) who noted that parental involvement in children's education, especially at home, has a positive impact on students' academic achievement. Providing educational materials and resources at home fosters a supportive learning environment, enabling children to reinforce and expand upon what they learn in school.

Concerning how community involvement impact the quality of early childhood education, less than half of the participants 45 (48.9%) answered very positively. The findings support the findings of Baker, Wise, Kelley, and Skiba (2016), who observed that parents who actively participate in their kids' schooling typically create a secure and encouraging atmosphere that fosters the growth of social skills. These results are consistent with ecological systems theory, which highlights how social development in children is shaped by the family, community, and school.

According to the study's findings, the majority of respondents—55, or 59.8%—agreed that more parental involvement in early childhood education might be achieved by making more educational resources available. Books, activity guides, and digital tools are examples of educational materials that give parents the information and assurance they need to help their child learn at home. Even though they are not certified teachers, parents feel more prepared to participate in their child's education when they have access to organized, unambiguous resources. In light of the findings, Eden, Chisom, and Adeniyi (2024) recommended that communities and schools provide training programs and seminars to give parents the information and abilities they need to assist their kids' learning at home. These can address issues including the promotion of literacy, the use of good discipline techniques, and the value of play in the early years of development.

When it came to tactics that might enhance community involvement in early childhood education, the majority of respondents—62, or 67.4%—agreed with forming relationships with neighborhood organizations. Collaborations with neighborhood groups can aid in mobilizing material and financial resources, which are frequently few in early childhood education facilities, particularly in rural locations like Nabuti-Mukono. This is consistent with the findings of Kelty & Wakabayashi (2020), who found that by offering more resources and support services, community partnerships can increase parent involvement. Schools can work with neighborhood institutions like health facilities, libraries, and cultural centers to provide cooperative education that benefits kids and parents. These collaborations can give families access to early literacy programs, parenting workshops, and health screenings, among other services that improve kids' general wellbeing and school preparedness.

5.2 Conclusion

At Nabuti-Mukono Parish's Mukono Child and Youth Development Center, the project examined how community and parental involvement may improve early childhood education. The results emphasized the value of community and parental involvement in fostering young children's cognitive, social, and emotional development in school. The study found that children's academic performance and social skills are positively impacted by parents and community members who actively participate in educational events.

The study did, however, also point out a number of obstacles to successful community and parental involvement. These consist of insufficient communication between parents, schools, and the community; lack of knowledge; time restrictions; and restricted resources. Notwithstanding these obstacles, stakeholders firmly believe that improved cooperation and well-thought-out interventions can greatly raise the standard of early childhood education in the region.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of early childhood education depends on the involvement of parents and the community. Children are more likely to thrive academically and acquire strong social and emotional skills when parents and communities are involved. Therefore, in order to improve the educational outcomes for children in Nabuti-Mukono Parish, measures to increase parental and community participation should be given top priority.

5.3 Recommendations

Parent-teacher contact should be facilitated by schools through frequent newsletters, meetings, and internet platforms, among other means. By keeping parents updated on their kids' academic achievements and extracurricular activities, this will motivate them to get more involved.

Educate parents on the value of being involved in their children's early education by holding workshops and seminars. These courses ought to offer helpful advice on how parents can encourage their kids' learning at home.

It is recommended that schools and early childhood institutions engage in partnerships with community organizations to plan parent-teacher and community-wide events. These occasions, which promote a sense of social ownership and responsibility for children's education, might take the form of educational fairs, community service initiatives, and cultural festivities.

Form alliances with neighborhood companies, non-governmental organizations, and governmental organizations to give early childhood education facilities more funding and assistance. These collaborations can include funds, supplies, and volunteer labor, which can assist in addressing resource shortages.

Acknowledge that parents might be unavailable at varying times, and provide possibilities for flexible involvement that work with their schedules. Schools can provide a variety of opportunities for involvement, including working as a volunteer after hours, working remotely on school projects, or participating in virtual meetings.

Encourage the federal and local governments to provide more funds for early childhood education centers to upgrade their facilities and resources. To augment these resources, schools might also look into community fundraising efforts.

Establish a warm and accepting school climate where all parents and community members are valued and respected for their efforts, irrespective of their financial situation. Fostering an environment of mutual respect, inclusion, and cooperation among all parties involved can help achieve this.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1: Demographic Information

1. What is your age bracket?

18-23

24-29

30-35

36-41

42 and above

2. Gender:

Male

Female

Other

3. Educational Level

No formal education

Primary education

Secondary education

Tertiary education

Other (please specify) _____

4. Occupation

Farmer

- Teacher
- Businessperson
- Government employee
- Other (please specify) _____

5. Relationship to the child

- Parent
- Guardian
- Community member
- Other (please specify) _____

Section 2: Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education

6. How often do you engage in activities that support your child's early education (e.g., reading, playing educational games)?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely
- Never

7. Do you attend parent-teacher meetings or school events regularly?

- Always

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

8. How do you support your child's learning at home? (Select all that apply)

- Providing educational materials
- Assisting with homework
- Encouraging participation in educational activities
- Other (please specify) _____

Section 3: Community Involvement in Early Childhood Education

9. How involved is your community in supporting early childhood education?

- Very involved
- Somewhat involved
- Neutral
- Somewhat uninvolved
- Not involved at all

10. What types of community support are available for early childhood education in your area? (Select all that apply)

- Financial contributions
- Volunteering

- Educational workshops
- Provision of learning materials
- Other (please specify) _____

11. Do local community organizations collaborate with early childhood education centers?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Section 4: Impact of Parental and Community Involvement

12. In your opinion, how does parental involvement impact the quality of early childhood education?

- Very positively
- Positively
- Neutral
- Negatively
- Very negatively

13. In your opinion, how does community involvement impact the quality of early childhood education?

- Very positively
- Positively
- Neutral

Negatively

Very negatively

14. What challenges do you think affect parental and community involvement in early childhood education in your parish? (Select all that apply)

Lack of awareness

Limited resources

Time constraints

Insufficient communication

Other (please specify) _____

Section 5: Suggestions for Improvement

15. What strategies do you think could improve parental involvement in early childhood education? (Select all that apply)

Regular workshops and training

Improved communication between parents and educators

Increased availability of educational resources

Other (please specify) _____

16. What strategies do you think could improve community involvement in early childhood education? (Select all that apply)

More community events and programs

Partnerships with local organizations

Increased awareness campaigns

Other (please specify) _____

17. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions regarding the role of parental and community involvement in enhancing early childhood education.
