

**PHONICS PROGRAMMES AND EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT  
AMONG PRESCHOOL CHILDREN: A CASE STUDY OF  
KINDERKARE PRE-SCHOOLS, KAMPALA  
CENTRAL DIVISION, KAMPALA,  
UGANDA**

**BY**

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UNIVERSITY**

**NOVEMBER, 2023**

## **DECLARATION**

I, **Ojur Joseph** hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other University for academic award.

**Signature:.....**

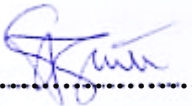
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**APPROVAL**


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**Supervisor**

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Date.....

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**DEDICATION**

This research thesis is dedicated to my parents and family for their parental guidance and education they gave me, my brothers and sisters, and lastly my supervisors for the guidance and directions in writing this report and not forgetting my friends; for giving their love and ideas during my studies.

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May the Almighty GOD bless you abundantly!

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CIPO \_\_\_\_\_ CONTEXT, INPUT, PROCESS, AND OUTPUTS

CVR \_\_\_\_\_ CONTENT VALIDITY RATIO/INDEX

CVR \_\_\_\_\_ CONTENT VALIDITY RATIO/INDEX

DIBELS \_\_\_\_\_ DYNAMIC INDICATORS OF BASIC EARLY LITERACY

EFA \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATION FOR ALL

GOILP \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE ONE INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PROFILE

MKO \_\_\_\_\_ MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE OTHER

NRP \_\_\_\_\_ NATIONAL READING PANEL'S

PA \_\_\_\_\_ PHONEMIC AWARENESS

UNESCO \_\_\_\_\_ UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

ZPD \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

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## ABSTRACT

The study investigated the effect of phonics programmes on early literacy development in preschool children of Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala Central Division. The study was guided by specific objective, (i) to examine the effect of all-board phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda, (ii) To ascertain the influence of Jolly phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda, (iii) To analyze the effect of Letter land phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda, and (iv) To establish the effect of phonic programmes on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda. This study followed a descriptive survey design. The target population was 150 of the administrative staff and the lower teaching staffs. From the study results, all-board phonics programs had a significant effect on early child literacy development in preschool children with a coefficient of 0.655(\*\*) at a significance level of 0.000. Further, Jolly phonics had a great effect on early child literacy development which was positive with probability value ( $p = 0.000$ ), and Letter land phonics had a relatively strong positive effect on early child literacy development with a correlation coefficient of 0.575(\*\*) at a significance level of 0.000. The study concluded that if the school management properly applied all-board phonics programs, then early child literacy development in preschool children will improve. It is further concluded that if there is effective use of Jolly phonics programs, early child literacy development in preschool children will improve definitely children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda. It was further concluded that early child literacy development in preschool children was enhanced with the effective uptake and usage of Letter land phonics. The study however recommends that there is need to have strong activities that engage your students. Here are six different activities that build on different ways kids can learn. Further, the study recommends that when planning your lessons, be sure to add a group component. Partner work and sharing motivate students to participate and learn together.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the background of the study, in four perspectives, namely; historical perspective, theoretical perspective, conceptual perspective and contextual perspective. It also presents the problem statement, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, scope, hypothesis and significance to the study.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In this background section, four perspectives including, Historical background, Theoretical background, Conceptual background and Contextual background of the study was presented.

##### **1.1.1 Historical Perspective**

The history of pre-primary education dates back to the beginning of eighteenth century with the pioneering work conducted by Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel (Mkuchu, 2002). The major goal of these pioneers was to create educational centers in which they expected to provide children with an environment that would compensate for their social, physical and intellectual deficits. They recognized the necessity suffering from severe deprivation due to war and slum condition (Mkuchu, 2002) as cited from Austin (2015).

Similarly, since the turn of the 20th century, phonics has been widely used in primary education and in teaching literacy throughout the world. And in recent years, there has been much debate about just how children should be taught to read. The International community through different forums such as EFA and Millennium Development Goals agreed to address the illiteracy problem by reducing it by 50% at the end of 2015. Despite the current shrink in illiterate population globally in past decade still 774 million adults – 64% of whom are women still lack basic reading and writing skills (UNESCO, 2016). Developed countries such as China, Canada and UK reported that most of the primary pupils face reading difficulties. Example in China, primary school pupils



especially in grade 4 and grade 5 faces reading difficult in Chinese language and English language, in Canada, from grade 3 to grade 5 pupils had difficulties in reading (Nasir & Rohiman, 2018).

In Africa, according to UNESCO (2016), there is great progress sub-Saharan Africa in the past ten years, however, still big number of pupils are either not in schools or they graduate from schools without competence in reading and numeracy. There has been reading deficit among pupils, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Evidence indicates that nearly 58% and 37% of grade six pupils in West, Central and Southern Africa, have not developed sufficient reading skills as expected. Also, statistics show that more than half of pupils in Gambia (54%) and Malawi (56%) tested in English in grade two and at early grade four could not read even one word (Gove & Cvelich, 2011). Around (57%) pupils in Mozambique in the test administered in Portuguese at the Mid-year grade three could not read one word (Gove & Cvelich, 2011). In Kenya, and Uganda, in the test administered in English, three-quarters of grade three pupils failed to comprehend the sentence such as “the name of the dog is Puppy” (Uwezo, 2019). This achievement trend provides a holistic view that reading among pupils is still challenging yet pre-primary education is meant to enable children to develop basic skills such as pre-reading, pre-writing and language skills that are essential for learning in primary school and beyond.

Mbise (2006) reiterates that pre-primary education helps children to acquire skills that enable them to cope with school and life encounters. Therefore, pre-primary education has been presumed to have an influence on children’s literacy skills development in primary school. It has been argued that pre-primary education is an important stage which lays the foundation for future learning and that the child who has access to pre-primary education has a better foundation in education (Mtahabwa, 2007). Globally, preprimary education is considered as a necessary stage of learning if a strong foundation for future literacy skills development is to be built. Pre-primary education as the education of children before being enrolled in primary school has different names such a Day Care Centers, Nursery schools, Kindergartens, pre-schools and pre-primary schools (Mbise, 2006). While the names may refer to children in different age categories, they are, sometimes used interchangeably.

Accordingly, poor literacy and numeracy teaching practices is a common problem that affects primary education system in Africa as a whole and elsewhere in the world in particular developing countries (Alcock et al., 2020). As result of ineffective literacy teaching practice around the globe

enormous population are still illiterate despite being in schools and support from international community to address the problem. For example, recent UNESCO data indicated that “24% of all illiterate adults live in sub-Saharan Africa, 12% in East Asia and the Pacific, 6.2% in the Arab States and 4.6% in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is estimated that less than 2% of the global illiterate population live in the remaining regions combined” (UNESCO, 2018).

It is established that the early years of child development are of crucial importance for the physical, intellectual, and emotional development of the child. Fordham (2019) pointed out that success or failure to learn in the early years will serve a child throughout life. During the child’s early years, innate abilities like talents are recognized through fostering learning and giving the child a sound start towards a productive life (Mbise, 2016). There is a strong consensus that educating for sustainability should begin very early in life. It is in the early childhood period that children develop their basic values, attitudes, skills, behaviors and habits, which may be long lasting. Studies have shown that racial stereotypes are learned early and that young children are able to pick up cultural messages about wealth and inequality. Early childhood education is about laying a sound intellectual, psychological, emotional, social and physical foundation for development and lifelong learning, it has an enormous potential in fostering values, attitudes, skills and behaviors that support sustainable development such as a wise use of resources, cultural diversity, gender equality and democracy (Kaga and Samuelsson, 2018).

In Uganda where English is a language of instruction from pre-primary education to standard seven in public schools, pupils lag behind in reading skills. Statistics show that since 2010 many Ugandan children were not gaining basic literacy skills including reading in their early primary years (Uwezo, 2018). Most pupils are still not able to read grade one and two level stories by the end of the primary cycle (that is, grade 7) (Uwezo, 2018). In 2018, 16% in grade seven, pupils could not read grade one and two level stories. Uwezo (2018) concludes that only three in 10 grade three pupils could read a grade two story in English. Even many grade 7 pupils still could not read English; some could not even pronounce words and recognize syllables. And currently, many scholars like Adams, (2019), & Gimson, (2017), endorse phonics among language learners because learners can accurately and effortlessly master pronunciation of a new foreign language through phonics practice. In this approach, the sounds of the letters of the alphabet are taught, and

children learn the correspondences between letters and groups of letters and their pronunciations (Adams, 2019).

### **1.1.2 Theoretical Perspective**

This study was guided by Lev Vygotsky's (1896-1934) Social-cultural theory. Vygotsky was one of the Russian psychologists. Socio-cultural theory is the theory that focuses on the contributions of society especially adults to children's learning and development. For Vygotsky, learning occurs in a socio-cultural context in which caregivers or teachers and parents support or "scaffold" pupils to higher levels of thinking and language learning (Shahrehabaki-Mahmoodi, 2019; Tamis-LeMonda & Rodriguez, 2009). This implied that adults or teachers should create a friendly environment which accommodates pupils learning how to learn and use language (McLeod, 2018).

According to Vygotsky's theory, learning by the child occurs through social interaction with a skillful adult or teacher (Cherry, 2013; McLeod, 2018). The adult or teacher may model behaviors and/or provide verbal instructions for the child. Vygotsky refers to this as cooperative or collaborative dialogue (McLeod, 2018). Through socio-cultural interactions, children go through a continuous process of learning. Vygotsky noted, however, that culture, profoundly influences this process. Imitation, guided learning, and collaborative learning all play a critical part in his theory (Cherry, 2018). In understanding of Vygotsky's theory on learning, one must understand two of the basic principles of Vygotsky's work: the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (McLeod, 2018). MKO is described as someone (teacher or older peer or adult) with more knowledge or experience than the learner, with respect to a particular task, concept or topic being learned. The concept of MKO is integrally related to the second important principle of Vygotsky's work, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

This theory is relevant in this study because, it is related to the issues that require the creation of teaching and learning environment and the role of the teacher in enhancing learning with the use of effective teaching approaches. Additionally, the theory emphasizes active interaction and collaboration between the teacher and learners as well as with other adults of the community. This implies that teachers have to create conducive environment that allows active interaction, collaboration and exchange of ideas between teacher, pupils and other adults in the community. Therefore, this theory enabled the researcher to assess indoor and outdoor learning environment

and the capacity of teachers to create conducive learning environment and effective approaches they use to enhance reading among pre-primary pupils.

### **1.1.3 Conceptual Perspective**

In this study, the independent variable (IV) is Phonics Programmes and the dependent variable (DV) is Early Literacy Development.

According to Allen, (2017), Phonics Programmes refers to the set of relationships between sounds and how they can be represented by letters of the alphabet in print; that is, the sound-symbol relationships or grapho-phonics. Yoop, (2019) also pointed that Phonics Programmes is viewed as a method which stresses the letter-sound correspondences connection in alphabetic orthographies. As the example given by Groff, phonics is information about how the speech sounds in oral language (for example; /b/-/ ã /-/t/) are represented by letters of alphabet (for example, bat) (McLeod, 2018). As to phonics instruction, Hsu, (2016) viewed that that phonics instruction referred to all the teaching and approaches used to present or introduce the letter-sound correspondence relationship. To sum up, all above mentioned definitions focus on a body of knowledge about letters and sounds, especially the letter-sound correspondence connection.

Early Literacy Development according to McLeod (2018), means helping children develop a rich vocabulary, self-expression, and reading comprehension tools they need to become successful readers and lifelong learners. These skills allow a young child to enter kindergarten with a love of books and a readiness to learn.

In recent years, early childhood education has become a prevalent public policy issue, as funding for preschool and pre-K is debated by municipal, state, and federal lawmakers. Governing entities are also debating the central focus of early childhood education with debate on developmental appropriate play versus strong academic preparation curriculum in reading, writing, and math (Cherry, 2013). The global priority placed on early childhood education is underscored with targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development.

#### **1.1.4 Contextual Perspective**

Since independence in 1962, Uganda's governments have shown strong commitment in providing primary education for all of its children by investing much in education. As a result, Uganda achieved high level of literacy among its citizen in the early 2000s (Kitta, 2017). Uganda has made a significant stride in primary school enrolment. However, literacy development among primary school pupils remains a serious challenge. Statistics show that there has been an increase rather than decrease of illiteracy rate in recent years. For example, the illiteracy rate rose from 10% in 1987 to 30.6% in the year 2011 (BEST, 2011). Furthermore, statistics indicate that in 2012 a total number of 5,200 primary school leavers who were admitted to secondary schools could not read and write. Some efforts have been made to improve and expand preprimary education in Uganda. Since independence in 1962, for example, the Government of Uganda had supported pre-primary education by keeping an open door policy for interested parties to initiate and establish pre-primary schools under given guidelines (Mbise, 2016). As a result, individuals and religious institutions such as Churches, Mosques, and interested parties offered pre-primary education under the guidance of the Government.

However, despite the enjoyed support, little has been done and instead education standard at this level due to poor instruction methods used by many and the lack of standardized instruments of teaching like phonics. Phonics teaching is mostly done early in kindergarten and provided in short, regular, fast-paced teaching sessions. There are some truths about the idea of instructing phonics among pre-school learners. As Gimson (2017), in order to speak any language, one needs to learn almost 100% of its pronunciation, 50%-90% of its grammar and about 1% of its vocabulary. This study therefore seeks to examine the effect of phonics programmes on early literacy development in preschool children taking Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala Central Division, Kampala Uganda.

#### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Phonics is one important part of language learning and it contributes to language literacy through involving learners understanding the relationship between letter form and speech sound (Gimson, 2017). It's made evident that younger learners are shown the ability to learn a foreign language in many researches and thereby phonics should be taught systematically as part of a balanced and

integrated English language program. It's found that the effect of phonics instruction on development of pre-school English language learners could be reflected and denoted in four parts or areas of language learning, i.e. pronunciation development of pre-school learners, spelling development of pre-school learners, vocabulary development of pre-school learners and reading development of pre-school learners (Ehri, et al., 2011). It's hoped that this research provides a useful reference for future phonics instruction practice among younger English language students.

Previous studies (Gimson, 2017 and Ehri, et al., 2011) indicate that instruction through systematic and explicit instruction has shown to be the most effective in grades kindergarten to first grade by enhancing the reading ability among students (Campbell, et al., 2018). Others, such as Also, Ehri et al. (2011) found that systematic instruction did not enhance spelling skills as much as it did when it was used with younger students. One explanation for this could be because it is harder to influence how children read or to shape their reading habits when over the age of 8 or 9 years old (Ehri, et al., 2011). However, Phonics instruction may be especially difficult in English, since English has the most difficult spelling of any Western language; and Phonics teaching needs to begin early in kindergarten and be provided in short, regular, fast-paced teaching sessions (around 20 minutes overall with time distributed as best judged by the teacher). And for learners to make sense of phonics teaching, students need to understand that a word is made up of a series of discrete sounds, and teaching phonics is an effective way to significantly influence the rate at which students successfully acquires phonics knowledge and skills (Ehri, et al., 2011). Among pre-school learners, phonic awareness and instruction need to be integrated in their learning courses; hence the study.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The study investigated the effect of phonics programmes on early literacy development in preschool children of Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala Uganda.

#### **1.4 Specific objectives**

- i) To examine the effect of all-board phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.
- ii) To ascertain the influence of Jolly phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.
- iii) To analyze the effect of Letter land phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

- i) What is the effect of all-board phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda?
- ii) What is the influence of Jolly phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda?
- iii) What is the effect of Letter land phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda?

#### **1.6 Hypotheses of the Study**

*The study tested the following hypotheses;*

H1: All-board phonics has a significant effect on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala, Uganda.

H2: Jolly phonics has a significant influence on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala district, Uganda

H3: Letter land phonics has a significant effect on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala district, Uganda

#### **1.7. Scope of the Study**

The scope is presented in four categories; geographical scope, time scope, content scope and theoretical Scope.

### **1.7.1 Geographical Scope**

The study was conducted in Kampala district of Uganda particularly at Kampala Kinderkare Pre-School, Kampala Central Division. Kampala Kinderkare Pre-School is a Nursery School in Uganda. The School is a Private Sponsored School. The School is found in Kampala District and in Central Sub-County. The school is located at Kitante; Plot 4 Olumi Close, Kitante Next to Kitante Primary School. The school prides itself in being one of the very first kindergartens in Uganda. And over the years the school continues to be a Centre of excellence in early childhood education.

### **1.7.2 Content Scope**

The study content was limited to examining the effect of phonics programmes on early literacy development in preschool children, a case study of Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala district, Uganda. This was realized through examining the effect of all-board phonics, Jolly phonics and Letter land phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children.

Early literacy development was conceptualized into three constructs of; Categorizing Skills, Blending skills and Segmenting Skills. And intervening variables included; government policies on Preschools and School Policy on Early literacy Development

### **1.7.3 Time Scope**

The study covered a period between 2015–2021 from various literature materials and primary data respectively. This provided the researcher the opportunity to gather current and relevant literature related to the study topic which certainly enhanced quality and serve as a reference material for other researchers undertaking similar study. This period was chosen because this is the period in which there has a high record use of phonics programmes in early literacy development in preschools in Uganda (Valadez. et al., 2020). However, for the purposes of data collection, this study took a period of 8 months from January to August, 2023.



#### **1.7.4 Theoretical Scope**

The study was guided by the knowledge generated from the Social-cultural theory by Levy Vigotsky (1896-1934).

#### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

The study would help education policy- makers in Uganda in streamlining curriculum that incorporates the use of phonics programmes in early literacy development among preschool children a priority by implementing their use to guide preschools on how to make their pupils more interested in them and why it is important to use them (Gimson, 2017).

The study would produce a guide on how phonics programmes can be incorporated in the preschool curriculum to help equip young learners with reading skills and enhance the development of early literacy among preschool children in Uganda and world over (Ehri, et al., 2011).

The research would provide a wealth of knowledge on how teachers can be use phonic programmes to equip their pupils with reading skills, policymakers, and schools in order to improve the reading culture in pre-schools in Uganda. It is hoped that this will create more awareness among the pupils and teachers about the importance of using phonic programmes in order for them to be more knowledgeable and acquire the love for reading (Gimson, 2017).

Furthermore, the study would be a source of literature to be reviewed by those intending to do further research on the problem being investigated. The study will be consulted by other people carrying out research about phonics programmes and early literacy development among preschool children.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical review, conceptual review and empirical review. The empirical review follows the objectives of the study. The chapter also shows the research gaps which the study intends to fill. The literature used in this chapter was extracted from existing books, journals and reports.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Review

This study was guided by Levy Vygotsky's (1896-1934) Social-cultural theory. Vygotsky was one of the Russian psychologists. Socio-cultural theory is the theory that focuses on the contributions of society especially adults to children's learning and development. For Vygotsky, learning occurs in a socio-cultural context in which caregivers or teachers and parents support or "scaffold" pupils to higher levels of thinking and language learning (Shahrebabaki-Mahmoodi, 2019; Tamis-LeMonda & Rodriguez, 2009). This implies that adults" or teachers" should create a friendly environment which accommodates pupils learning how to learn and use language (McLeod, 2018).

A student centered learning environment is linked to the experiences of the learner. According to Bretz (2013), sociocultural theorists such as Vygotsky (1978) believed that learning occurs in a cultural context, and children develop literacy skills through the experiences gained in their social settings. Garner (2011) posited that sociocultural theories support the framework of how children learn. Mayer (2008) stressed that the concept of Dewey, Piaget, and Vygotsky's cultural social environment led to students" success in acquiring knowledge. Dewey (1916) maintained that children's learning is self-directed, and educators are facilitators, while Piaget (1976) argued, "the basis of learning is discovery".

The constructivist approach, according to Ultanir (2012), emphasized that learning occurs through the interaction of the learner with his or her environment. Educators, therefore, need to create appropriate environment to stimulate learning. Strategies used should facilitate activities such as experiments, discussions, role plays, art and craft. Hands on experiences will lead to individual

and cooperative learning. Students need to learn from their environment in structured ways that facilitate the various stages of their development (Atherton, 2011). Hall (2013) argued that phonetic awareness is associated with print representing both phoneme and grapheme communication. The use of identified and pronounced words, based on internal letter and phoneme sounds, contribute to word meaning and the development of reading comprehension skills (Reyes, 2011).

Wyse and Goswami (2013) maintained that the strategies employed by the Jolly Phonics program provide concrete experiences that link print to objects, sounds, and actions. The outcome of this interaction determines the development of literacy of young children or struggling readers. A teacher's pedagogical delivery is the instructional strategies associated with activities linked to the development of phonetic awareness. The synthetic phonics method involves a variety of printed materials related to the teaching of letters, sounds, and syllables. According to Campbell (2015), the use of the Jolly Phonics program results in effective strategies for learning. Students need to make association with learning activities. Scaffolding of the basic literacy skills and concepts should be done to ensure development of phonetic awareness. Learning must be stimulating and meaningful for children.

According to Vygotsky's theory, learning by the child occurs through social interaction with a skilful adult or teacher (Cherry, 2013; McLeod, 2018). The adult or teacher may model behaviours and/or provide verbal instructions for the child. Vygotsky refers to this as cooperative or collaborative dialogue (McLeod, 2018). Through socio-cultural interactions, children go through a continuous process of learning. Vygotsky noted, however, that culture, profoundly influences this process. Imitation, guided learning, and collaborative learning all play a critical part in his theory (Cherry, 2018). In understanding of Vygotsky's theory on learning, one must understand two of the basic principles of Vygotsky's work: the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (McLeod, 2018). MKO is described as someone (teacher or older peer or adult) with more knowledge or experience than the learner, with respect to a particular task, concept or topic being learned. The concept of MKO is integrally related to the second important principle of Vygotsky's work, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

According to McLeod (2018), ZPD concept relates to the difference between what a child can achieve independently and what a child can achieve with the guidance and encouragement from a

skilled teacher or peers. Vygotsky's scaffolding sees ZPD as the area where the most sensitive instruction or guidance by more knowledgeable personnel (teacher) should be given to allow the child to develop skills they will then use on their own (McLeod, 2018). At this level, interaction with peers is seen as an effective way of developing skills where teachers use cooperative exercises where less competent pupils develop with the help from more skilful peers (McLeod, 2018). In spite of having a short-lived professional endeavor, Vygotsky's ideas still prevail in different fields of studies including educational psychology, linguistics and education in general (Shahrehabaki-Mahmoodi, 2019; McLeod, 2018; TamisLeMonda and Rodriguez, 2009). The Theory emphasizes the establishment of classroom context and opportunities for children to learn with teacher and peers that are more skilled.

According to McLeod (2018), Vygotsky's theory also fits into the current interest in interactive and collaborative learning. Furthermore, the source of literacy knowledge should be knowledgeable and experienced adults or teachers than learners due to their familiarity and experience with the real world (Cherry, 2013). Additionally, the theory recognizes the use of variety of approaches by teachers to teach various skills to pupils including plays. This is because play has an important role in the pupils' learning during pre-school years (Cherry, 2013).

However, Vygotsky's Theory has been criticized to some levels (McLeod, 2018). First, Vygotsky's socio-cultural perspective does not provide as many specific hypotheses to test making evidence, if not impossible. Second, Vygotsky's assumption that all cultures are universal is not concrete. Rogoff (1990) cited in McLeod (2018) criticizes the idea that Vygotsky's ideas are culturally universal and instead states the concept of scaffolding - which is heavily dependent on verbal instruction - may not be equally useful in all cultures for all types of learning. Third, Vygotsky's educational views have been considered very general and holistic without provision of concrete guidelines for curriculum development, assessment, teacher training, and programme evaluation (Cherry, 2013).

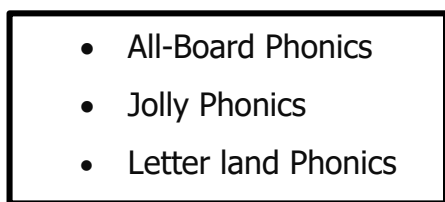
Importantly, this study is not concerned with these shortfalls of the theory rather it is concerned with the application/strengths and relevance of the theory to the pupils' learning and this study. This theory is relevant in this study because, it is related to the issues that require the creation of teaching and learning environment and the role of the teacher in enhancing learning with the use of effective teaching approaches. Additionally, the theory emphasizes active interaction and

collaboration between the teacher and learners as well as with other adults of the community. This implies that teachers have to create conducive environment that allows active interaction, collaboration and exchange of ideas between teacher, pupils and other adults in the community. Therefore, this theory enabled the researcher to assess indoor and outdoor learning environment and the capacity of teachers to create conducive learning environment and effective approaches they use to enhance reading among pre-primary pupils.

## 2.2 Conceptual Framework

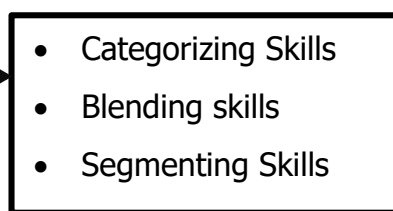
### Independent variable

#### Phonic Programmes



### Dependent variable

#### Early Literacy Development



*Figure 2.1: Conceptual frame work showing the effect of Phonic Programmes and early child development.*

**Source: Adopted from Jaap Scheerens (1990) and modified by the Researcher, (2023).**

From the figure 1 above, the independent variable is the phonic programmes measured by three constructs of; All-Board Phonics, Jolly Phonics and Monster Phonics. On the other hand, the dependent variable of the study is early child development measured by; Categorizing Skills, Blending skills and Segmenting Skills.

## 2.3 Review of Related Literature

### 2.3.1 The All-board phonics and early child literacy development

According to Schickedanz and Collins (2013), All-board phonics involves matching the sounds of spoken English with individual letters or groups of letters. For example, the sound k can be spelled as c, k, ck or ch. Teaching children to blend the sounds of letters together helps them decode unfamiliar or unknown words by sounding them out (Roth, Paul & Pierotti 2006). Some phonics programmes start children off by learning the letters s, a, t, n, i, p first. This is because once they know each of those letter sounds, they can then be arranged into a variety of different words (for

example: sat, tip, pin, nip, tan, tin, sip, etc.) (Cunningham, 2012). The term All-board phonics during the 19th century and into the 1970s was used as a synonym of phonetics. The use of the term in reference to the method of teaching is dated to 1901 by the Oxford English Dictionary. The relationship between sounds and letters is the backbone of traditional phonics (Cunningham, 2012).

Schickedanz and Collins (2013), conducted a study in Copenhagen investigating the role of phonemic awareness to predict the presence of specific reading difficulties. Ninety-one kindergarten aged children were divided into two groups. The first group contained children who had at least one parent with dyslexia whereas the other groups were children with parents of average reading ability. Numerous tests were conducted over a two-year period including print concepts, letter naming, initial-phoneme deletion, phoneme discrimination and reading pseudowords. The pseudoword testing was not administered until the beginning of second grade. Results indicated that there was a correlation between initial-phoneme deletion and reading pseudowords thereby predicting later reading competence.

Pierotti (2016) stated that phonemic awareness deficits become more evident when pseudowords are used in testing. Felton (2013) outlines the Bowman Gray Learn log Disabilities Project which investigated the effectiveness of phonemic awareness training for children experiencing difficulties with reading. This longitudinal study included 48 children in kindergarten, with an average IQ of 97.6 who were randomly placed in groups of and assigned to regular classrooms. A meaning-emphasis program (Houghton Mifflin Program) was used by four classes while a Code-emphasis program (Lippincott Basic Reading Program) was used in the remaining classrooms. A variety of testing measures were used including decoding pseudowords. Significant group differences between the code-emphasis group and the meaning-emphasis group were recorded for decoding pseudowords, both at the end of first and second grade. Felton (2013) also reported that all the children in the code emphasis group were able to apply knowledge of the alphabetic code when reading words at the end of second grade.

Schickedanz and Collins (2013), state there are two processes and two phases of development for learning conventional reading. The processes are decoding and comprehending and the phases are learning to read and then reading to learn. However, Schickedanz and Collins (2013), also state

that emergent readers need to engage in meaningful language rich experiences from birth to early childhood to be able to build a foundation for later conventional reading. The authors list the following as the understandings and skills needed when learning to read: print conventions, the alphabet and phonological awareness, and oral language. “The truth is, early childhood professionals must keep many balls in the air right from the beginning. The alphabet is not the place to start, nor is oral language or content knowledge. Early childhood teachers must start on many fronts simultaneously and why curriculum frameworks suggest a wide range of experiences.” (Schidedanz & Collins, 2013). There is a debate among professionals in early childhood special education programs about the benefits of teaching letters and letter sounds to children with developmental delays.

Many professionals in early childhood special education programs do not teach letters and letter sounds because the area of pre-academics is not a qualifying area for a young child with developmental delays. If there is not a goal for learning letters and letter sounds early childhood special education teachers and therapists often feel they should not spend valuable instructional time working on letters and letter sounds when they are not addressed as a goal in a child’s individualized education plan. Loyd (2000) developed the Jolly Phonics program to help students, who were struggling with the whole language approach, learn letter sounds which aid students in learning to read. The authors of “Let’s Talk: for people with communication needs also believe early intervention with learning phonics is critical in the preschool years. Everyone involved with the child during the preschool years has a role in helping the child learn phonics and better ready him or her for later learning. (Roth, Paul & Pierotti 2006).

Furthermore, many parents would like to see early childhood special education teachers spending instructional time teaching children letters and letter sounds. For some YCDD students, pre-academic skills are an area of strength and parents feel this area of strength should be used to build on other areas of development that area an area of concern in the child’s development (Roth, Paul & Pierotti 2006). According to posts in an online discussion by parents with YCDD children, parents’ overall felt phonics instruction and/or learning to read helped their child with speaking and communicating. The majority of parents posting in this online discussion also felt once the child learned letters and/or letter sounds using programs such as Jolly Phonics they then had a more visual reference and producing sounds in speech became easier (Roth, Paul & Pierotti 2006).

This is one way to build on the child's strength and individualize instruction to meet the needs of the child.

### **2.3.2 The Jolly phonics and early child literacy development**

The Jolly Phonics program uses a child centered approach to teaching literacy through synthetic phonics (Campbell, 2015). Students develop an association between the letter sounds and related letters through kinesthetic activities designed to facilitate the transition to reading printed words. The strategies facilitated the development of early literacy skills aligned with local and national assessments (Cunningham, 2012). To determine the aptitude and educational comprehension of students, the Ministry of Education in Jamaica created the Grade One Individual Learning Profile (GOILP) instrument to gauge individual students' readiness for Grade 1.

At the start of the academic year, in all primary schools in Jamaica teachers assessed students to make decisions about individual and group instructional activities. The results of the test showed that many Grade 1 students lacked basic literacy skills such as listening comprehension, recognition of letters, letter sounds, and oral communication (World Data on Education, 2010). This test indicated that the majority of students entering Grade 1 at some primary schools of the Region 1V School District were reading below the first grade level (World Data on Education, 2010). Many of these students attended infant or early childhood schools at the age of 3 and transitioned into the primary school Grade 1 at the age of 6. In addition, to determine the aptitude and educational comprehension of Grade 4 students, a standardized Grade 4 Literacy Test was used to rate mastery levels at the national level and consisted of three sections: word recognition, reading comprehension, and communication tasks (Lewis, 2010). The National Comprehensive Literacy Strategy (2011) indicated that Grade 4 literacy was at 65% for 2011.

There are fundamental structures related to phonological awareness, letter identification, and decoding skills, which facilitate reading. Hall (2013) indicated that there is a trend of phonemic awareness and phonics instruction entrenched in literacy programs. Analytic and synthetic phonetic principles are effective strategies for teaching reading. According to Shaw and Davidson (2009), analytical approaches include the examination of the whole word first then by segments. Synthetic guidelines, on the other hand, emphasize combination of letters or words and letter sounds.



Jolly (2008) contended that children who learn letter sounds before they are exposed to the letters demonstrate sustained gain in reading. Wyse and Goswami (2013) highlighted the importance of phonological processing, which involves isolating the sounds, relating them to print, application, and interpretation of reading the print or words. Concerning work on sentence structure and parallelism, Campbell, Torr, and Cologon (2012) stressed that phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehensions have significance in the process of reading. The teaching of phonics provides students with the opportunity to learn within a context. Phonetic awareness aids the development of literacy skills.

Davidson (2010) argued that cognitivists link literacy to phonetic awareness, which connects patterns of letters and sounds. Chall (1996) highlighted six stages of reading acquisition. The pre-reading stage is from birth to 6 years; the initial reading or decoding stage is 6-7 years; confirmation, fluency, and inquiring from print stage is 7-8 years; and reading for learning stage reflects ages 8- 14 years (Chall, 1996) multiple viewpoint stage is ages 14- 18 years, and the constructing and decoding stage occurs in 18 years and over (Chall, 1996). These stages represent a spiral structure to facilitate reading instructions and delivery.

Herold (2011) stated the importance of systematically teaching the development of reading skills related to phonetic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Reading is connected to a developmental process which is associated with acquiring literacy skills such as decoding and levels of comprehension. How phonics is taught can influence the rate of literacy development. Shaw and Davidson (2009) argued that the focus of literacy instructions should be on the process of teaching phonics instead of its scheduling. The Jolly Phonics, and Teaching Handwriting, Reading, and Spelling Skills (THRASS) indicated that during children's first year of synthetic phonics reading instructions reading skills are developed based on short-term memory skills for words and phonemes (Callinan & Van der zee, 2010).

Vernon-Fergans et al. (2012) discussed the need for expertise in phonological and phonemic skills to deal with reading disabilities. Children associated with low socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to be at risk of not developing effective literacy skills. Templin (2013) mentioned that there is a relationship with social and economic achievements and reading attainments. The more affluent families tend to place more value on literacy. RamsinghMahabir (2012) highlighted the

success of implementing the Jolly Phonics Program with students of low socioeconomic status in mixed ability classes. Vernon-Feagans et al. maintained that students benefit more from a combination of integrated language arts and phonics when teaching reading rather than teaching both in isolation. Lu (2010) also stated that phonetic instruction is more effective when it is entrenched in language arts rather than taught separately. Phonics should be taught in a context that would facilitate the engagement of students in their learning. Language arts enable the use of verbal, visual, and written expressions.

The piloting of the Jolly Phonics literacy program resulted from many students performing below the national and regional literacy target level of 100%. Teachers involved in a professional development training workshop indicated that the implementation of the program helped remedy deficient literacy skills (Wilson, 2013). The evaluation of the literacy programs was supposed to be an indicator of success (Hur & Suh, 2010). While there might be a perception of a positive or negative effect of the Jolly Phonics approach on literacy, the depth of the effect needs analysis. Hay and Fielding-Barnsley (2012) posited that an intervention can positively effect the development of emergent literacy skills. According to Sparks, Patton, Ganschow, and Humbach (2012), longitudinal studies indicated a relationship between the development of literacy at the elementary level and proficiency and achievement at the secondary level. A gap in practice exists because the school administrators have failed to study the effectiveness of the Jolly Phonics program and the intervention strategies used by teachers in Grades 1-3.

Pretorius (2014) highlighted that early interventions are needed to target students who lack the basic phonological skills or at risk of developing reading difficulties. Training teachers to deliver phonetic instructions is paramount to the success of programs. According to Lam and McMaster (2014), phonetic skills taught within a multisensory environment are beneficial to students at risk of not developing basic literacy skills. Goldstein (2011) posited that successful comprehensive literacy programs are comprised of print, reading and discussion of stories read aloud, vocabulary work, spelling, and writing. The learner's exposure to the language experience approach facilitates prewriting discussions designed to provide focus for writing activities. Brinda (2011) and Burton-Archie (2014) stressed that educators have a responsibility to ensure that students' literacy transcends the basic level to beneficial literacy skills at the middle and secondary levels. Teachers

should be able to identify the learning needs of all students, and employ appropriate strategies to facilitate effective learning.

The government facilitated access to literacy through formal programs, agencies, and, professional development. According to Flagg (2013), formal evaluations of programs and the education system are crucial to determine proficiency and effectiveness. A data-driven report provided insights to the merits of a regional or national adoption of the program, resulting in a national effect on the development of literacy benefiting the educational and social development of society (Hassen, 2013).

Ahmed (2011) emphasized that functionally literate individuals can spur growth and economic development. According to Young-Lyun (2011), an education system cannot effectively benefit from new programs if they are not evaluated. The evaluation will provide the findings that will determine the extent to which strategic goals and objectives are met. Informed decisions can then be made based on findings, and recommendations. Stakeholders will be privy to this valid and reliable data.

Literature has provided evidence of the relevance of program evaluations. Patton (1997) and Hassen (2013) emphasized that evaluation is necessary to make judgments, for improvement, and to engender knowledge. Judgment-oriented evaluations can be used to examine program effectiveness, goals, objectives, and target attainments (Qin, 2012). Research and decisions using improvement oriented evaluations develop quality programs whereas knowledge-oriented evaluations focus on how programs operate and the effect of interventions in creating changes (Hassen, 2013).

According to YoungLyun (2011), evaluation assists stakeholders in determining the effectiveness of programs. Zohrabi (2011) highlighted the importance of identifying problems and addressing them promptly in program implementation. Poor program evaluation robs organizations of maximum improvement opportunities. Qin (2012), in an empirical study, divulged that program evaluations are effective tools in determining the effect of a program on students' learning outcomes. Program evaluations can be used to identify and correct errors and shortfalls. Kolberg (2013) contended that formative and summative evaluations are important in achieving program goals. Formative evaluations can be used to monitor activities which may have a negative or

positive effect on the program outcomes. Summative evaluation is necessary for evidence of the findings and recommendations in regard to program goals and objectives.

Udosen & Ukpak (2013) states that most pupils in preschool come without a slight reading readiness, and they have no idea of how to sound out the letters in English. Consequently, Mullins points out that many children struggle to decode words. In this case, one of the most effective strategies that could be used to enhance children's early reading and literacy skill is Jolly Phonics. Jolly Phonics is a fun- systematic program designed for young or beginner learner to develop their reading and literacy skill. According to Lloyd, Jolly Phonics teaches the main skills, where the children are firstly taught the sounds in English, and then continued into blending and reading skill, at the same time they are taught to write by identifying the sounds in words (Udosen & Ukpak, 2013).

In addition, Farokhbakht & Nejadansari, (2018) also state that Jolly Phonics incorporates multisensory approach, where the information is delivered through sight, sound and kinesthetic means, which is really suitable for young children's characteristics. Dixon et al, as well as Farokhbakht & Nejadansari, (2017) have conducted a study to see the effectiveness of Jolly Phonics in improving the children's early English literacy. The findings of both study shows that children who are taught by using Jolly Phonics has better performance on reading, spelling and literacy compared to those who are conventionally taught. Other study conducted by Ruhaena, (2019) has also proved that Jolly phonics implementation affects not only the children's English literacy ability, but also their Indonesian literacy.

As a result, Ogbemudia & Alasa, (2016) claims that Jolly Phonics instructional strategy is a very effective panacea to reading difficulty faced by children. Despite the popularity and its effectiveness, there are still factors to the absence of the strategy. In this case, Mullins have listed few factors to the absence of Jolly Phonics at school, such as lack of materials and lack of teacher knowledge. For that reason, this study was carried out to assist teachers on how to develop and enhance children's English literacy skill through Jolly Phonics strategy. In addition, the problem in this study were directed to answer questions about the kinds of technique used for implementing Jolly Phonics and how those techniques implemented in the classroom.

Professional development enables growth and development of stakeholders in an effort to achieve organizational goals. Trumbull and Gerzon (2013) argued that professional development is vital to program implementation. Fuchs and Lemon (2010) recommended rigorous training, adequate teacher preparation, and authentic supervision to guarantee the successful implementation of any intervention aimed at improving students' performance. Silva and Contreras (2011) emphasized the integration of professional development with program implementation to facilitate teacher effectiveness. DiBiase (2014) also agreed that aspects of training, supervision, assessment, and evaluation are paramount to the implementation of intervention programs. Savage, Abraml, Hipps, and Deault (2009), through a randomized and controlled trial study of the ABRACADABRA Reading Intervention program in Grade 1, revealed that crucial to the success of the reading program was professional development in delivering the curriculum. Dove and Freely (2011) maintained that school leadership plays a role in the success of programs. Rule and John (2011) posited that the direct involvement of principals in school improvement programs yields greater success. Administrators are the promoters of shared vision, and should be able to motivate stakeholders and monitor activities aimed at achieving established objectives.

### **2.3.3 The Letter land phonics and early child literacy development**

Letterland is a phonics-based early literacy instructional program, which incorporates student interaction through participation in phonic story logic and play with language through alliteration, rhythm, and rhyme. The program is designed to make the task of remembering shapes and sounds of letters easier for students (Ehri & McCormick, 1998). Letterland's phonics based approach is consistent with the National Reading Panel's findings that the best approach to reading instruction includes explicit instruction in phonemic awareness (PA) and systematic phonics instruction.

Executive function skills are inter-related cognitive processes required for goal-directed behavior including memory, attention, and mental flexibility. Emphasis on executive function skills during reading instruction is linked to positive reading outcomes especially for K-1 students (Cartwright, 2012). Because reading is complex and cognitively-demanding, students benefit from support in mentally managing the reading process (Cartwright, 2012). Letter learning requires retaining shapes, names, and sounds in memory and retrieving that information automatically in reading and writing words (The US National Reading Panel, 2000). Letter learning is designed to increase

automaticity in letter knowledge and PA, which develops students' executive function skills as they read. Brain wave research provides evidence that Letter learning promotes the development of executive function skills in preschool-age children. According to Wendon (2010) three and four year olds who were exposed to Letter learning activated more of their brain when reading compared to students exposed to more traditional reading programs. Increased brain activity is associated with more developed executive function skills (Cartwright, 2012). The results were found to persist beyond a period of six months, even after instruction had discontinued (Wendon, 2010). These results suggest that students exposed to Letterland are better able to regulate the multiple cognitive processes involved in reading, including attention, memory, language processing, and visual processing (Cartwright, 2012; Wendon, 2010).

According to the National Reading Panel's analysis the best approach to reading instruction includes: overt instruction in PA, systematic phonics instruction, efforts to improve fluency, and use of strategies to improve reading comprehension (The US National Reading Panel, 2000). Letterland is designed to improve students' skills in PA, phonics, and executive function. Although reading fluency and comprehension are components of the WCPSS balanced literacy program, these components are not directly targeted with Letterland instruction and are not addressed in this report.

Letterland is provided for young learners from 3 to 8 years old who have got difficulties in reading. Wendon created Letterland for helping young learners in starting early stage of reading. Therefore, it is suitable to use this method for early stage of reading because it uses phonics as the basis of learning. Phonics becomes an important part in learning because there are so many researchers believe that phonics is very important part in the early stage of reading (Graham and Kelly 2008).

Adams (1994) stated that phonics is the best way to teach young learners to read in the word level. Therefore, phonics is the effective approach to teach the alphabetic and also helping young learners in decoding unknown words. Letterland method can be used not only to teach reading to young learner but also to teach others skills such as listening, speaking, phonics, and whole word recognition (Wendon (1987) as quoted in Yeverbaum, 2003).

Previous studies have found some evidence to support the use of Letterland in K-2 classrooms to improve students' reading outcomes (Felton & Crawford, 2010; Wendon, 2010). Felton and Crawford (2010) found a significant decrease in the number of students classified as 'at risk' based

on Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) indicators after students received Letterland instruction for three years. Furthermore, the number of students classified as 'at risk' progressively declined each year that Letterland was implemented. Phonemic Awareness Letterland is designed to improve students' PA, which is defined as students' ability to identify and blend phonemes into words. PA refers to the understanding that spoken words can be subdivided into phonemes or smaller segments of sound. In order to understand PA, teachers typically ask students to isolate phonemes, identify phonemes, or categorize phonemes.

In developing listening, young learners may be accustomed to hear the real words in letters. For example, the letter 'k' in Letterland there will be a character such as 'Kicking King'. He represents this letter and he helps young learners remember the 'k' sound by simply starting to say his name. During speaking activities, they may utter the letters correctly from what they heard. During listening and speaking activities, they are able to recognize the whole of the words and they are going to produce all of the sounds correctly. Letterland can be used for young learners for 3 to 8 years old where the emphasis is on having fun, thus young learner may absorb learning naturally. Most of young learner got difficulties in reading. When a child found the difficulty on comparing the letters then Letterland comes to provide the easy way. It gives a unique mark on every character such as the pictures that explain each letter and also sing a song, thus, it makes easier for young learner to remember the letters.

Besides, during learning process using Letterland method, young learners may get several advantages in learning to read. Letterland method helps young learners to learn all of the letters. By using Letterland method, young learners are facilitated with fun and enjoyable learning situation by experiencing learning with hidden objects in each letter that begin with the character's sound. For example, on Golden Girl's there is a goat, grapes, gate, geese, green house and lots more. There is also a short narrative about the character, using lots of words beginning with her sound. This is very suitable to be used in teaching to young learners where the learning is very creative and colorful, thus, it makes young learner interested since it provides enjoyable and comfortable learning situation.

Students might also be asked to recognize individual sounds in words. For example, students might be asked to identify the first phoneme or sound in the word "paste," in which case students should identify the sound /p/ (phoneme isolation). PA is part of the more encompassing term,

phonological awareness instruction (The US National Reading Panel, 2020). Phonological awareness refers to awareness of larger spoken units including syllables and rhyming words, which is also specifically targeted with Letterland instruction. Students might be asked to participate in rhyming exercises and to break sentences into words and words into syllables before they are taught to segment phonemes in words. However, identification and manipulation of sounds at the phonemic level contributes most to helping children learn to read, particularly when phonemes are taught with letters (US National Reading Panel, 2020). Effective PA instruction helps students break apart and manipulate the sounds in words. Prior research suggests that students' levels of PA in kindergarten predict how well they learn to read during their first two years of school and beyond (Ehri et al., 2001; Gillon, 2004; Stahl & Murray, 1998; The US National Reading Panel, 2020).

After joining the whole learning process, young learners should be able to compare the letters and produce the sounds properly. Letterland method helps both language learners who learn English as a second language and those who learn it as a foreign language to practice English reading more easily. As stated by Yaverbaum (2013) Russian children had been taught of reading by using Letterland method in learning for their foreign language. It becomes successful in teaching reading to young learners and it will develop an effective foundation to develop EFL teaching program. Referring to the previous explanation, this research is intended to investigate how Letterland method is applied in teaching early stage of reading to young language learners. It is also aimed at providing help for young learners in their early stage for reading by applying Letterland method.

From all of the problems described above young learners will possibly get improvement in reading skill since they experience learning using Letterland method. So, using Letterland as a teaching method to teach young learners will help them to be able to read because Letterland provides the easy way in reading since it invites them to recognize things they familiar with and thus, it is easy for them to memorize the words. Therefore, to create a successful and fun learning, the writer chooses Letterland method as an appropriate teaching method to use in teaching reading to young learners (Felton and Crawford (2010). From the problem above the writer proposes the research entitled: "The Use of Letterland Method in Teaching Reading at Early Year Level to Pre-school students in an Informal Education in Bandar Lampung".



Systematic phonics instruction teaches students to recognize letter-sound correspondences and spelling patterns. Specifically, phonics is the knowledge that letters of the alphabet represent phonemes or sounds that are blended together to form written words. Readers who are skilled in phonics can sound out words they have not seen before, without first having to memorize them (The US National Reading Panel, 2020). Knowledge of the alphabetic system greatly contributes to students' ability to read unfamiliar words in isolation. For example, children may be asked to read pseudowords or nonsense words (e.g., gan, sig, rav, trusk) in order to assess their understanding of letter-sound correspondence. Letterland is designed to improve students' ability to blend letter knowledge (e.g., letter name and shape) and PA (sound) to decode written words accurately and automatically using materials that are high-interest and motivational for students. For example, letters are embedded in characters using pictograms and stories, which engage students by providing a visual cue to remember the letter shape and an auditory cue to recall the sound (Letterland International, 2014).

## **2.4 Research Gaps**

While there have been various studies on the effect of phonics programmes on early literacy development in preschool children, there is little and or none of the studies focused on the effect of phonics programmes on early literacy development in preschools, particularly on Uganda. Further, the reviewed studies were from across the globe more specifically from the developed countries. However, this study was conducted in a developing country (Uganda) that makes the results less impacting due to the geographical gap. Hence, this study seeks to close the geographical gap through examining the effect of phonics programmes on early literacy development in preschool children in the Ugandan context.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research design, target population, sample size, sampling strategies, data collection tools, their validity and reliability, data collection processes, data analysis, and ethical issues.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a correlational design. The correlational design investigates relationships between two variables (or more) without the researcher controlling or manipulating any of them. It's a non-experimental type of quantitative research.

The design was chosen because it provides insights into complex real-world relationships, helping researchers develop theories and make predictions. The Correlational designs also have the advantage of allowing the researcher to study behavior as it occurs in everyday life. The study was also based on two approaches, and these included; quantitative and qualitative approaches for the purposes of proper triangulation of data.

#### **3.2 Target Population**

The target population of this study was the administrative staffs of Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division and the lower teaching staffs. According to School Human resource (2020), Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division had a total staff population of 150 staffs which comprised of; lower staffs and top administrators of Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division.

#### **3.3 Sample Size**

Given a target population of 150 was purposively selected as the sample size and these included; 100 lower staffs and 50 top administrators who were involved as key informants, giving a total sample size of 150 respondents.

**Table 3.1: Target Population, Sample size and Sampling techniques**

| <b>Category</b>    | <b>Population</b> | <b>Sample Size</b> |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Administrators     | 50                | 50                 |
| Lower class staffs | 100               | 100                |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>150</b>        | <b>150</b>         |

**Source:** HR Report, (2022).

### **3.4 Sampling Techniques / Procedure**

#### **3.4.1 Purposive sampling**

According to Kumar (2016), purposive sampling was used and this category was administered to both the lower staffs and the top administrators of Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, also called judgmental sampling technique. It refers to a method of selecting respondents, where the researcher selects respondents believed (judged) to have the information the researcher wants. The researcher selects respondents according to pre-defined inclusion criteria.

In this study Purposive sampling was used to enable the researcher select a specified category of the population being studied using a set criterion. The researcher used purposive technique to provide the opportunity for these subjects included in the study given their positions and level of information (and knowledge) they had about issues concerning the study topic.

### **3.5 Data Collection Instruments**

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

According to Kumar (2016) a questionnaire refers to a written list of questions, the answers to which are recorded by respondents. In this study, a researcher used semi-structured questionnaire to collect primary quantitative data. The researcher used questionnaires because they enhanced effective and efficient means to quickly collect massive amounts of information from many respondents in a relatively short period of time. The questionnaire contained two sections labeled A and B. Section A involved questions on the demographic characteristics of

respondents. Section B had questions on phonics programmes and early literacy development among preschool children in KinderCare pre-schools, Kampala central division. The questionnaires were designed based on the 4 likert scale; where 1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-disagree and 4-lastly disagree.

### **3.5.2 Interview Guide**

Kumar (2016) defines an interview guide as a list of issues, topics or discussion points to be covered during an interview session with the participants, which helps to remind the researcher (interviewer) of the areas needed to be covered in a data collection session. In this study, the researcher used the key informant's interview technique as a second tool to collect data from the designated interview participants from the selected kinderkare school. The researcher used the key informant interview technique to enable him relate directly with people who had more knowledge and information on the study variables. This involved interviewing the selected respondents to provide deeper information about the study variables. The key informant interview technique targeted study participants who had quality information given their positions.

### **3.5.2 Observation Checklist**

An observation checklist is a list of things that an observer is going to look at when observing a class. This list in this case was developed by the researcher to guide him in collecting the necessary data for the study. The Observation checklist provides the researcher with some questions to think about the strategies observed. Review the notes from the class using the observation guide, to examine the effect of phonics programmes and early literacy development among preschool children.

## **3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Research Questionnaires**

### **3.6.1 Validity of the Research Questionnaires**

According to Taherdoost (2016), validity refers to an instrument's suitability for measuring the variables desired by the researcher. The content validity index (C.V.I.) was used to determine the validity of the questionnaires and interview guide's questions. Following the instrument's design, the researcher gave it to two experts in the topic area for examination to grade or judges

all of the questionnaire's questions. This was done to identify whether they are pertinent or not to the study topic and to mark out those that are not.

The pilot study was tested whether the questions were clear and were understood by different respondents and led to improvements in the precision of the questions. Content validity index (CVI) for the questionnaire was computed using the following formula.

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{\text{Number of items considered valid on the draft}}{\text{Number of items on the draft instruments}}$$

$$\text{CVR} = \frac{28}{30}$$

$$\text{CVR} = 0.9$$

**Table 3.2: Content Validity Index Results Table**

| Variable                         | Anchor  | CVI (Content Validity Index) | No of Items |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------------------------|-------------|
| All-Board Phonics                | 5-point | .747                         | 05          |
| Jolly Phonics                    | 5-point | .772                         | 07          |
| Letter Land Phonics              | 5-point | .849                         | 08          |
| Early Child Literacy Development | 5-point | .861                         | 09          |

*Source: Primary Data, (2023)*

The research findings shows that the research constructs has all attained Content Validity Index scores of above 0.7, as indicated by the presentation in Table 3.2 above; hence being valid and good to be utilized in the primary research.

### 3.6.2 Reliability of the research instruments

According to Phelan and Wren (2016), dependability refers to an instrument's capacity to produce reliable, consistent data. This implied that each time the instrument is used to measure a variable; the findings should be almost same. The instruments' reliability was evaluated using the test-retest approach, which involved conducting the same test to a group of individuals twice over a period of time. To employ the test-retest procedure, the instrument was administered both individually and in a group setting in order to triangulate the data acquired. The

instrument's dependability was thus judged by the t-test result, which was 0.82, indicating that it was acceptable.

**Table 3.3: Reliability Statistics**

| <b>Variable</b>                  | <b>Cronbach's Alpha</b> | <b>N of Items</b> |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| All-Board Phonics                | 0.837                   | 5                 |
| Jolly Phonics                    | 0.797                   | 7                 |
| Letter Land Phonics              | 0.828                   | 8                 |
| Early Child Literacy Development | 0.879                   | 9                 |

Source (Primary Data, 2023)

The results above satisfy the research methodology rule to ensure a Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of at least 0.7 is considered, hence confirming the research instrument were reliable. To ensure the reliability of the data collection instruments (questionnaire and interview guide), the test-retest technique was also applied where the instruments were applied on ten respondents and then re-applied on the same ten respondents in a space of seven days to see if they were able to give similar responses and thus test the reliability of the instruments.

### **3.7 Data Gathering Procedure**

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from Kampala International University that introduced him to the school management authorities. The researcher introduced himself to every individual respondents, fully explaining the purpose for which the study was being conducted. After getting their consent, he distributed the data collection instruments, arranged appointments for interviews. The researcher also built rapport hence gaining the confidence of the respondents by assuring them that their views were treated with all due confidentiality and were used only for academic purposes.

### 3.8 Data Analysis

After data collection, the researcher screened it to check its completeness, which included reading over all questionnaires and the responses gathered from them, as well as the interview guide, to ensure that all questions were correctly filled out or replied. Where there were inconsistencies, the researcher conducted follow-up contacts to obtain clarity.

For the data collected for all the three study objectives, all the descriptive data was presented in tables indicating the study results analyzed in terms of terms of frequencies, means and standard deviation. Relationships between variables were presented in terms of correlation analysis.

To interpret the obtained data the following numerical values and descriptive values were used.

**Table 3.4: Mean Range Interpretation**

| <b>Mean range</b> | <b>Response mode</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> |
|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 3.21-4.00         | Strongly Agree       | Very Good             |
| 2.41-3.20         | Agree                | Good                  |
| 1.76 -2.20        | Disagree             | Poor                  |
| 1.00 1.75         | Strongly Disagree    | Very poor             |

### 3.9 Ethical Considerations

As this research was conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's degree in Education in Early Childhood, permission from the College of Education, open distance and e-learning was sought first, and a formal letter was granted that was presented to targeted respondents and institution to facilitate effective data collection.

Additionally, suitable measures were taken to ensure that participants' privacy, confidentiality, dignity, rights, and anonymity were protected. The researcher notified participants that their names were not used for any other reason and that no information revealing their identity were not disclosed.

The researcher ensured at most good faith with supporting documents for undertaking the study for the respondents to provide the required information. During the study, an informed consent

form was attached to each questionnaire and interview guide which required to filling and signed by the respondents before any attempt to partake in this study. This form, as attached to the appendices sought to ensure that the respondents were not coerced into taking part in the study but did it out of their own will to make the research program a success.

### **3.10 Limitations of the Study**

Bias from some respondents to simply fill the questionnaires to please the researcher. The researcher conducted a face to face interaction to clarify the purpose and objective of the study. On looking at the limited time which the researcher had to conduct the study, respondents suspected that the research findings were used for other purposes while others were likely to delay the questionnaires because of busy schedules. Here the researcher used a cover letter from the university to mitigate the outcome.

Fear of giving confidential information as viewed by the organization they work for. Here the researcher assured them of at most good faith with supporting documents for undertaking the study. Fear of giving confidential information by respondents.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

#### 4.0. Introduction

This chapter provides the results and discussion of the study findings on “phonics programmes and early literacy development among preschool children at Kinderkare pre-school, Kampala central division”. It presents findings of the study that were generated from data analysis and its interpretation. The results presented were guided by the research objectives as established earlier on in Chapter One.

This chapter also presents the general background information about the respondents of the study. This includes; gender, age bracket, marital status, designation at school, level of education and their working experience at the said School.

The analysis was based on the data collected using questionnaires, interview guide and observation guide which were answered by the target respondents. These findings were analyzed using SPSS version 23, Microsoft excel and Microsoft word and presented in tables and percentages as it gives a clear understanding of the study findings. It ends with inferential statistics testing for the effect of the independent variable of (Phonic programmes: All-board phonics, Jolly phonics, Letter land phonics on the dependent variable).

The data collected from the field was processed and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The approaches used in analysis provided more clarification on explanations on both quantitative and qualitative data. The attained information was summarized to show the responses of the respondents. All these findings were interpreted and presented, through thorough re-examination of the research objectives.

It also presents the response rate, demographic factors of the respondents (bio data), mean, standard deviation, correlation analysis and Model Summary based on the study objectives.

#### 4.1. Response Rate

The study population sample was 150 respondents selected from the staffs of KinderCare pre-schools in central division of Kampala. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, the researcher managed to retrieve only 120 questionnaires of the 150 were retrieved, with a fair response rate of 79.7%

This response rate was found to be satisfactory since according to Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. Thus, with that high response rate of 79.7%, the findings of the study were representative of the actual population and sample size, and could therefore be generalized as authentic, and this is illustrated in table 4.1 below;

**Table 4.1: Response Rate**

|       | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Valid | Respondent       | 120              | 79.7              |
|       | Not responded    | 30               | 20.6              |
|       | <b>Total</b>     | 150              | <b>100.0</b>      |

**Source:** Survey data computed by the researcher, (2023)

#### 4.2. Findings on the demographic characteristics of the respondents

Information about background characteristics of respondents is presented in this section. These characteristics include gender, Age, level of education and length of time of respondents had spent working with the respective agencies.

Results of the gender of respondents are presented in table 4.2 below;

**Table 4.2 A: Gender of Respondents**

|       |              | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Valid | Male         | 77         | 64.38        |
|       | Female       | 43         | 35.61        |
|       | <b>Total</b> | <b>120</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Survey data (2023)

Table 4.2A above presents the study findings about the gender of the study respondents. The results indicate that 77 (64.38%) of the total study respondents were male and 43 (35.61%) of the respondents were female. Thus, the involvement of both male and female respondent’s enhanced representativeness and reliability of the data collected. It is also a clear sign that gender sensitivity was taken care off so the findings therefore cannot be doubted on gender grounds; they can be relied for decision making. Creswell (2014) contends that data collection that integrates responses from both gender is consistent than data from a single gender. Further, Mbabazi (2008) who argued that survey data that incorporates responses from both sexes is reliable than from a single sex.

Results of the Age Bracket of respondents are presented in table 4.2 B below;

**Table 4.2 B: Age Bracket of respondents**

|       |              | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Valid | 20-29        | 29         | 24.65        |
|       | 30-39        | 51         | 42.47        |
|       | 40-49        | 23         | 19.17        |
|       | 50-Above     | 16         | 13.69        |
|       | <b>Total</b> | <b>120</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Survey data (2023)

The table above shows that majority of respondents 51(42.47%) were between 30-39 years followed by 29(24.65%) respondents in the age bracket of 20-29 years who were the youths, while 23(19.17%) of respondents were between 40-49 and the rest of the respondents (minority) representing 16(13.69) were 50 years and Above. The results therefore indicate that the majority of respondents were of mature and of experienced age which made the researcher to consider their views as valid and authentic in relation to the study. These findings concur with Amin (2005) who argue that majority age of above 18 years adds value to the responses given that mature people are more and take time to think about a particular aspect of life given their wide exposure and experience.

**Results of the education level of respondents are presented in table 4.2C below;**

**Table 4.2 C: Education level of respondents**

|       |                | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------|----------------|------------|--------------|
| Valid | Certificate    | 23         | 19.17        |
|       | Diploma        | 34         | 28.76        |
|       | Degree         | 54         | 45.20        |
|       | Masters- Above | 08         | 6.84         |
|       | <b>Total</b>   | <b>120</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Survey data (2023)

Research findings in table 4.2C above indicate that majority 54 (45.20%) of the respondents were bachelor's degree holders, followed by 34(28.76%) with diplomas, 23(19.17%) with Certificates, and 08 (6.84%) with masters degrees and above.

These findings indicate that most of the respondents were adequately educated since most of them (45.20%) were degree holders. This therefore implies that the study involved people with acceptable level of literacy who were in better position to understand and interpret the contents in questionnaire. This is supported by Uma (2000) who argue that it is important in social investigation research to involve people who have attained an acceptable level of literacy and numeracy in order to be in position to understand and interpret the content in questionnaire.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their Number of years of service in Kinderkare pre-schools

**Table 4.2 D: Number of years spent with Kinderkare pre-schools**

|       |                   | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Valid | Below 1 Year      | 29.58      | 9.58         |
|       | 2 - 5 Years       | 61.09      | 41.09        |
|       | 6 Years and Above | 69.31      | 49.31        |
|       | <b>Total</b>      | <b>120</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Survey data, (2023).

Research findings in table 4.2D indicated that 23 (41.09%) had spent 2 to 5 years, 05 (9.58%) had spent less than one year dealing with tourism related business matters, 27 (49.31%) had 6 years and above and these were the majority. And thus, this meant that the majority of the respondents had spent enough time in the construction sector. Hence, it can be asserted that, the study respondents had the satisfactory knowledge about the study phenomena under investigation in their respective capacities.

### **4.3 Objective 1: Descriptive Statistics for all-board phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala.**

The study worked towards evaluating the level of agreement that the respondents had on the effect of all-board phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda. The results are detailed in Table 4.3 below.

In the study, Mean shows the average of response and Standard Deviation (SD) shows how spread the responses are to or from the mean value.

**Table 4.3 A: Descriptive Statistics for all-board phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala.**

| <b>NO.</b> | <b>Item</b>   | <b>Std Dev</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> |
|------------|---|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
|            | <b>Items of all-board phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children</b>  |                |             |                       |
| 1          | All-board phonics knowledge is the key to starting to decode written words as children can use phonics knowledge to “sound out” words, decode and improve their spelling.                         | 0.23           | 3.30        | Very Good             |
| 2          | With All-board phonics children learn to recognize how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some letter sounds, symbols, characters and signs.                                      | 0.29           | 3.22        | Very Good             |
| 3          | All-board phonics help children learn the sounds that each letter makes, and how a change in the order of letters changes a word's meaning.   | 0.33           | 3.09        | Good                  |
| 4          | All-board phonics instruction teaches children how to decode letters into their respective sounds, a skill that is essential for them to read unfamiliar words by themselves.                     | 0.38           | 2.86        | Good                  |
| 5          | All-board phonics is a way of teaching children how to read and write, and helps children hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another in the English language. | 0.44           | 2.49        | Fair                  |
|            | <b>Average Mean &amp; Std Deviation</b>   | <b>0.39</b>    | <b>2.77</b> | <b>Good</b>           |

*Source of Data: Primary Data (2023)*

From the results in Table 4.3A that all-board phonics was a phonic programme for improving early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools in Kampala Central Division with an average mean of 2.77 which meant good.

Form the table above, the majority of the respondents agreed that all-board phonics knowledge is the key to starting to decode written words as children can use phonics knowledge to “sound out” words, decode and improve their spelling, with a mean value of (3.30), SD at (0.23) which meant very good. And majority of the respondents asserted that with All-board phonics children learn to recognize how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some letter sounds, symbols, characters and signs, with a mean value of (3.22), and SD at (0.29) which meant very good as well.

While, a good number of the respondents said that all-board phonics help children learn the sounds that each letter makes, and how a change in the order of letters changes a word's meaning, with an average mean of 3.09 and SD of 0.33 which meant good. And a good number of the respondents asserted that, all-board phonics instruction teaches children how to decode letters into their respective sounds, a skill that is essential for them to read unfamiliar words by themselves with an average mean of 2.86 and SD of 0.38 which meant good.

Finally however, a relative number of the respondents disagreed that all-board phonics is a way of teaching children how to read and write, and helps children hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another in the English language, with an average mean of 2.49 and SD of 0.44 which meant poor.

**Table 4.3 B: Model Summary, ANova<sup>b</sup> table and Coefficients table of the impact of all-board phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala.**

| Model Summary                                |       |          |                   |                            |
|--|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model  | R     | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1  | .623a | .388     | .381              | .49354                     |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), All-board phonics |       |          |                   |                            |

| ANOVA <sup>b</sup>                                      |                   |                             |            |                           |        |       |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| Model   |                   | Sum of Squares              | Df         | Mean Square               | F      | Sig.  |
| 1   | Regression        | 13.874                      | 1          | 13.874                    | 56.956 | .000a |
|   | Residual          | 21.922                      | 120        | .244                      |        |       |
|   | Total             | 35.796                      | 121        |                           |        |       |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), All-board phonics            |                   |                             |            |                           |        |       |
| b. Dependent Variable: Early child literacy development |                   |                             |            |                           |        |       |
| Coefficients <sup>a</sup>                               |                   |                             |            |                           |        |       |
| Model   |                   | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig.  |
|   |                   | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |       |
| 1   | (Constant)        | 1.103                       | .244       |                           | 4.513  | .000  |
|   | All-board phonics | .629                        | .083       | .623                      | 7.547  | .000  |
| Dependent Variable: Early child literacy development    |                   |                             |            |                           |        |       |

*Source: Primary data computed by the researcher, (2023).*

Regression analysis results in the Model Summary table revealed that all-board phonics accounted for 38.8% on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala, and this was indicated by r-squared of 0.388, implying that to small extent, all-board phonics as an a construct of phonics programmes do contribute to early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala.

The ANOVA table indicated that all-board phonics as a concept of phonics programmes significantly affects the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala, and this was indicated by the F-value=56.956 and Sig-value=.000, since the sig. value (0.000) was less than 0.05; which is the maximum level of significance required to declare a significant effect. This implies that all-board phonics as a construct of phonics programmes highly contributed to the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala.



Lastly, the coefficients table indicated that considering the standard error, all-board phonics significantly influences the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala with ( $\beta=0.629$ , Sig=0.000).

**Based on the interviews conducted, when the respondents were asked, “how does all board phonics effect early child literacy development in preschool children?”, one respondent said that,**

*“All -board Phonics is a good program for pre-school children as it uses the synthetic phonics method, which means that the phonemes are taught first and then children are taught to blend phonemes together to say words. The programme follows a systematic approach, meaning that the phonemes are introduced in a specific sequence.”*

**While another respondent said that,**

*“With All-board Phonics, all the main phonemes of the English language are taught and each phoneme is introduced with a character called a pictophone which is a memorable, visual prompt to support phonemic awareness. For example, the Toad About to Explode represents the /t/ phoneme and the Oo on the Moon represents the long /oo/ phoneme. In this phase, the variability of phoneme correspondences for the vowels and some consonants will be explained.”*

**One respondent also said that,**

*“All-board Phonics also uses segmenting and blending which helps in identifying the sounds in a word and voicing them individually as well as merging multiple phonemes or sounds to say a word.”*

**4.4. Objective 2: Descriptive Statistics for Jolly phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

The second objective of the study was to investigate effect of Jolly phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda. The frequency and percentage scores were computed using SPSS. The study worked towards evaluating the level of effect of Jolly phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools. The results area evidenced in Table 4.4 A below.

**Table 4.4 A: Descriptive Statistics for Jolly phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools**

| <b>NO.</b> | <b>Statements</b>  | <b>SD</b>   | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Interpretation</b> |
|------------|--|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1          | The Jolly Phonics program uses a child centered approach to teaching literacy through synthetic phonics.   | 0.28        | 3.25        | Very Good             |
| 2          | Jolly phonics facilitates the development of early literacy skills aligned with local and national assessments.                                    | 0.32        | 3.15        | Good                  |
| 3          | Jolly Phonics have fundamental structures related to phonological awareness, letter identification, and decoding skills, which facilitate reading. | 0.36        | 3.08        | Good                  |
| 4          | Analytic and synthetic phonetic principles are effective strategies for teaching reading.  | 0.39        | 2.79        | Good                  |
| 5          | The teaching of phonics provides students with the opportunity to learn within a context.  | 0.44        | 2.64        | Good                  |
| 6          | Jolly Phonetic awareness aids the development of literacy skills.  | 0.48        | 2.55        | Good                  |
| 7          | Jolly Phonics synthetic guidelines also emphasize combination of letters or words and letter sounds.   | 0.50        | 2.49        | Fair                  |
|            | <b>Average Mean &amp; Std Deviation</b>  | <b>0.42</b> | <b>2.79</b> | <b>Good</b>           |

Results in table 4.4A revealed that Jolly phonics do influence early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools with a mean value of 2.79 which is interpreted as good, and Std deviation of 0.42.

Further, table 4.4A, results show that that majority of the respondents (62%) agreed that Jolly phonics effectively influences early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, confirmed by average mean of (3.25), and SD at (0.28) which meant very good. Most of the respondents (58%) agreed that the Jolly Phonics program uses a child centered approach to teaching literacy through synthetic phonics, with an average mean of (3.15), and SD at (0.32) which meant good. A good number of the respondents (54%) agreed that jolly phonics facilitates the development of early literacy skills aligned with local and national assessments, with a mean value of 3.08 and SD of 0.36 which meant good.

Also, a good number of the respondents (50%) agreed that Jolly Phonics have fundamental structures related to phonological awareness, letter identification, and decoding skills, which facilitate reading, with a Mean value of 2.79 and SD of 0.44 which meant good. A number of the respondents (45%) agreed that Analytic and synthetic phonetic principles are effective strategies for teaching reading, with a mean of (2.64), and SD at (0.44) which meant good. And a relative number of the respondents agreed that the teaching of phonics provides students with the opportunity to learn within a context, with a mean of (2.55), and SD at (0.48) which meant good.

However, a number of the respondents disagreed that the teaching of phonics provides students with the opportunity to learn within a context, with a mean of (2.49), and SD at (0.50) which meant poor. And lastly a relative number of the respondents disagreed that Jolly Phonics synthetic guidelines also emphasize combination of letters or words and letter sounds, with an average mean of (2.43), and SD at (0.58) which also meant poor.

The study results indicate that the Jolly phonics had an overall mean of 2.79, which was interpreted as good. This shows that Jolly phonics influence early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, though more improvement is needed to better further early child literacy development in preschool children to be achieved.

**Table 4.4 B: Showing the Model summary, ANOVA and coefficients tables on the impact of Jolly phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools.**

| Model Summary   |               |                             |                   |                            |        |       |
|---|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------|
| Model   | R             | R Square                    | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |        |       |
| 1   | .473a         | .224                        | .215              | .55553                     |        |       |
| Predictors: (Constant), Jolly phonics                   |               |                             |                   |                            |        |       |
| ANOVA <sup>b</sup>                                      |               |                             |                   |                            |        |       |
| Model   |               | Sum of Squares              | Df                | Mean Square                | F      | Sig.  |
| 1   | Regression    | 8.021                       | 1                 | 8.021                      | 25.992 | .000a |
|   | Residual      | 27.775                      | 120               | .309                       |        |       |
|   | Total         | 35.796                      | 120               |                            |        |       |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Jolly phonics                |               |                             |                   |                            |        |       |
| b. Dependent Variable: Early child literacy development |               |                             |                   |                            |        |       |
| Coefficients <sup>a</sup>                               |               |                             |                   |                            |        |       |
| Model   |               | Unstandardized Coefficients |                   | Standardized Coefficients  | t      | Sig.  |
|   |               | B                           | Std. Error        | Beta                       |        |       |
| 1   | (Constant)    | 1.326                       | .315              |                            | 4.207  | .000  |
|   | Jolly phonics | .562                        | .110              | .473                       | 5.098  | .000  |
| a. Dependent Variable: Early child literacy development |               |                             |                   |                            |        |       |

**Source:** Primary Data, (2023)

Regression analysis results in the Model Summary table indicated that Jolly phonics accounted for 22.4% on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, and this was indicated by r-squared of 0.224, implying that Jolly phonics as a construct of phonics

programmes in this case significantly contributes to 22.4% on the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools.

The ANOVA table indicated that Jolly phonics significantly affects early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, and this was indicated by the F-value=25.992 and Sig-value=.000, since the sig. value (0.000) was less than 0.05 and which is the maximum level of significance required to declare a significant effect. This implies that Jolly phonics as a determinant of phonics programmes highly affects early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools.

Lastly, the coefficients table therefore indicated that considering the standard error, Jolly phonics significantly affects early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools ( $\beta=0.562$ , Sig=0.000).

**In regard to whether jolly phonics effects early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, the key informants gave different opinions, as here render;**

**One respondent said that,**

*“.....Jolly Phonics programme do help preschool children to easily remembering the sounds, it is also a continuum of skills where students recognize the spoken parts of sentences and words.....” Thus, the benefits of the early introduction to literacy through Jolly Phonics include: Improved cognitive development. Improved confidence & self-esteem. Enhanced emotional and social skills.*

**From the interviews with some educators, one respondent also said that,**

*“..... synthetic phonics is often seen as the better and more effective approach to take when teaching kids to read, and we feel Jolly Phonics is a particularly good and effective example of this method of teaching.....” thus, Jolly Phonics works by introducing children to the '42 letter sounds of the English language. Students learn letters by sound rather than by name and are taught them via songs, action and stories.*

**Another respondent said that,**

*“.....The primary focus of phonics instruction is to help beginning readers understand how letters are linked to sounds (phonemes the smallest parts of spoken language that combine to form words) to form letter-sound correspondences and spelling patterns.....”*

**An interviewee who doubled as a head teacher and a director of studies at a particular pre-school was quoted that,**

*“..... systematic phonics teaching had been proven the world over to be the most effective method of teaching children to read.....”*

**The respondent also said that,**

*“.....The benefits of the early introduction to literacy through Jolly Phonics include: Improved cognitive development. Improved confidence & self-esteem. Enhanced emotional and social skills.....”*

From the observation, the findings showed that the teacher had successfully implement the 5 skills in Jolly Phonics, namely (1) learning the letter sounds, (2) learning letter formation, (3) blending-for reading, (4) identifying sounds in words-for writing and (5) tricky words, through variety of enjoyable techniques involving children's. Further, whilst the Jolly Phonics programme is aimed at children aged 4-5, we have a number of wonderful resources that can be introduced to children at an earlier age, for parents or at nurseries.

#### **4.5. Objective 3: Descriptive Statistics for Letter land phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

The third objective of the study determined the extent at which Letter land phonics effects early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda. The frequency and percentage scores were computed using SPSS. The results area evidenced in Table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5 A: Descriptive Statistics for Letter land phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

| NO. | Items   | SD          | Mean        | Interpretation |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------|----------------|
|     | <b>Items of Letter land phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children</b>  |             |             |                |
| 1   | Letterland incorporates student interaction through participation in phonic story logic and play with language through alliteration, rhythm, and rhyme.   | 0.29        | 3.15        | Good           |
| 2   | Letterland also makes the task of remembering shapes and sounds of letters easier for students.   | 0.34        | 3.05        | Good           |
| 3   | Letterland’s phonics based approach is consistent with the National Reading Panel’s findings that the best approach to reading instruction includes explicit instruction in phonemic awareness (PA) and systematic phonics instruction. | 0.38        | 2.68        | Good           |
| 4   | Letterland is designed to improve students’ skills in PA, phonics, and executive function.  | 0.41        | 2.54        | Good           |
| 5   | Letterland help young learners in starting early stage of reading and uses phonics as the basis of learning.  | 0.46        | 2.48        | Poor           |
| 6   | Letterland is provided for young learners from 3 to 8 years old who have got difficulties in reading.   | 0.49        | 2.45        | Poor           |
| 7   | Letterland method can be used not only to teach reading to young learner but also to teach others skills such as listening, speaking, phonics, and whole word recognition.  | 0.53        | 2.40        | Poor           |
| 8   | Letterland is designed to improve students’ PA, which is defined as students’ ability to identify and blend phonemes into words.  | 0.59        | 2.38        | Poor           |
|     | <b>Average Mean &amp; Standard Deviation</b>  | <b>0.44</b> | <b>2.64</b> | <b>Good</b>    |

*Source: Primary data computed by the researcher, (2023).*

From table 4.5 A, the results shows that Letter land phonics do influence early child literacy development in preschool children with a mean value of 2.64 which is interpreted as good.

Further, the table results show that that majority of the respondents (52%) agreed that letter land phonics has a significant effect on early child literacy development in preschool children at

Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda, confirmed by average mean of (3.15), and SD at (0.29) which meant good.

Most of the respondents (48%) agreed that letterland incorporates student interaction through participation in phonic story logic and play with language through alliteration, rhythm, and rhyme, with an average mean of (3.05), and SD at (0.34) which meant good. A good number of the respondents (44%) agreed that letterland also makes the task of remembering shapes and sounds of letters easier for students, with a mean value of 2.68 and SD of 0.38 which meant good.

While, a relative number of the respondents (40%) agreed that letterland's phonics based approach is consistent with the National Reading Panel's findings that the best approach to reading instruction includes explicit instruction in phonemic awareness (PA) and systematic phonics instruction, with a Mean value of 2.54 and SD of 0.41 which also meant good.

However, a number of the respondents (28% and 21%) disagreed that letterland is designed to improve students' skills in pa, phonics, and executive function, with a mean of (2.48), and SD at (0.46) which meant poor. And a relative number of the respondents disagreed that letterland help young learners in starting early stage of reading and uses phonics as the basis of learning, with a mean of (2.45), and SD at (0.49) which also meant poor. A number of the respondents disagreed that the letterland is provided for young learners from 3 to 8 years old who have got difficulties in reading, with a mean of (2.40), and SD at (0.53) which meant poor.

While 22% and 27% respectively disagreed that letterland method can be used not only to teach reading to young learner but also to teach others skills such as listening, speaking, phonics, and whole word recognition, with an average mean of (2.38), and SD at (0.59) which meant poor. The study results indicate that Letterland is designed to improve students' PA, which is defined as students' ability to identify and blend phonemes into words with an overall mean of 2.64, which was interpreted as good. This critically shows that there was need to improve the application / use of letterland phonics in pre-school children, if early child literacy development in preschool children is to be effectively achieved.



**Table 4.5 B: presents the Model summary, ANOVA and coefficients tables on the impact of Letter land phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools.**

| Model Summary   |                     |                             |                   |                            |         |       |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------|-------|
| Model   | R                   | R Square                    | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |         |       |
| 1   | .780a               | .609                        | .604              | .39451                     |         |       |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Letter land phonics          |                     |                             |                   |                            |         |       |
| ANOVA <sup>b</sup>                                      |                     |                             |                   |                            |         |       |
| Model   |                     | Sum of Squares              | df                | Mean Square                | F       | Sig.  |
| 1   | Regression          | 21.788                      | 1                 | 21.788                     | 139.990 | .000a |
|   | Residual            | 14.008                      | 90                | .156                       |         |       |
|   | Total               | 35.796                      | 55                |                            |         |       |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Letter land phonics          |                     |                             |                   |                            |         |       |
| b. Dependent Variable: Early child literacy development |                     |                             |                   |                            |         |       |
| Coefficients <sup>a</sup>                               |                     |                             |                   |                            |         |       |
| Model   |                     | Unstandardized Coefficients |                   | Standardized Coefficients  | t       | Sig.  |
|   |                     | B                           | Std. Error        | Beta                       |         |       |
| 1   | (Constant)          | .672                        | .193              |                            | 3.476   | .001  |
|   | Letter land phonics | .741                        | .063              | .780                       | 11.832  | .000  |
| a. Dependent Variable: Early child literacy development |                     |                             |                   |                            |         |       |

**Source:** Primary Data, (2023)

## **Description of the table results**

Regression analysis results in the model Summary table indicated that Letter land phonics significantly affects early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools at a rate of 60.9% and this was indicated by r-squared of 0.609, hence implying that Letter land phonics significantly influences the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools.

The ANOVA table indicated a positive significant effect, Letter land phonics has on the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, and this was indicated by the positive Beta=0.741 and Sig-value=.000, since the sig. value (0.000) was less than 0.05; the maximum level of significance required to declare a significant effect. This implies that effective Letter land phonics highly affects the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools.

While the coefficients table indicates that considering the standard error, Letter land phonics significantly affects the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools with ( $\beta=0.741$ , Sig=0.000).

**In regard to letterland phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda, while conducting the interviews, the respondents gave different opinions, as here render;**

**One of the respondents said that,**

*“.....Yes, Letter land uses a structured, systematic phonics sequence aligned with the science of reading which helps these preschool children to get things easily.....”*

**Another respondent said that,**

*“.....Yes, Letter land introduces children to the '44 letter sounds of the English language which forms their basis of reading and pronouncing things rightly.....”*

**Also one respondent said that,**

*“.....Yes, Letter land also uses a multi-sensory approach to activate learning through visuals, music, movement, art, and role-play in these preschool children.....”*

**Another respondent said that,**

*“.....Yes, Letter land also uses pictograms are used to represent alphabetic letters such that each letter is a character whose name aligns with the letter's sound (e.g., Clever Cat, Eddy Elephant, Munching Mike).....”*

**Also one respondent said that,**

*“.....Yes, Letterland activities include stories featuring the characters and their names/sounds, cards with pictures of the characters and manipulatives in the shape of the characters that can be combined to create words and to practice phonological processing skills (e.g., sound blending, segmenting and elision, for example, saying the word cat without its beginning sound—at) which helps preschool children to learn letter writing skills through the use of directional arrows embedded in the characters as guides to writing each letter.....”*

#### 4.6: Descriptive Statistics for the dependent Variable (Early Literacy Development).

**Table 4.7 A: Constructs to measure Early Literacy Development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

| NO. | Items for of Early Literacy Development  | SD          | Mean        | Interpretation |
|-----|--|-------------|-------------|----------------|
|     | <b>Categorizing Skills</b>   |             |             |                |
| 1   | The child is able to distinguish between the kinds of letter sounds  | 0.20        | 3.01        | Good           |
| 2   | Categorizing skills improves the accuracy of the child's reading but not necessarily their comprehension.  | 0.24        | 2.65        | Good           |
| 3   | Categorizing skills help children learn the alphabetic principle   | 0.29        | 2.56        | Good           |
|     | <b>Blending skills</b>   |             |             |                |
| 4   | Blending skills help the child make progress in all aspects of reading including comprehension, the development of vocabulary and spelling.                        | 0.33        | 2.52        | Good           |
| 5   | Blending skills help the child better learn sounds of spoken language, logical, and predictable relationship between written letters and spoken sounds             | 0.38        | 2.49        | Poor           |
| 6   | Blending skills teach common letter-sound relationships, including sounds for common letter patterns, so that readers can apply them in decoding unfamiliar words. | 0.43        | 2.46        | Poor           |
|     | <b>Segmenting Skills</b>   |             |             |                |
| 7   | Segmenting Skills are effective in supporting younger pupils to master the basics of reading, with an average effect of an additional five months' progress.       | 0.35        | 3.43        | Very good      |
| 8   | Segmenting Skills essential for pupils to acquire all the necessary reading skills, including comprehension and meaning.   | 0.47        | 2.43        | Poor           |
| 9   | Segmenting Skills allow young readers to develop their reading comprehension and decode new words as they read.  | 0.51        | 3.01        | Good           |
|     | <b>Overall Mean</b>  | <b>0.36</b> | <b>2.67</b> | <b>Good</b>    |

*Source: Primary Data, (2023)*

- **Categorizing Skills**

The results in table 4.7 reveals that that majority of the respondents agreed that the child is able to distinguish between the kinds of letter sounds, with a mean value of (3.01) and SD at (0.20) which was interpreted as good. And most of the respondents also agreed that categorizing skills improves the accuracy of the child's reading but not necessarily their comprehension shown by the mean value of (2.65) which meant good. Also some respondents agreed that categorizing skills help children learn the alphabetic principle with a mean value of (2.56) which also meant good.

- **Blending skills**

On blending skills, majority respondents agreed that blending skills help the child make progress in all aspects of reading including comprehension, the development of vocabulary and spelling, with a mean value of (2.52) which was interpreted as good. While, some respondents disagreed that blending skills help the child better learn sounds of spoken language, logical, and predictable relationship between written letters and spoken sounds, with a mean value of (2.49) which means poor. And lastly, majority respondents disagreed that blending skills teach common letter-sound relationships, including sounds for common letter patterns, so that readers can apply them in decoding unfamiliar words, with a mean value of (2.46) which was interpreted as poor.

- **Segmenting Skills**

On Segmenting Skills, majority respondents strongly agreed that segmenting Skills are effective in supporting younger pupils to master the basics of reading, with an average effect of an additional five months' progress, with a mean value of (3.43) which was interpreted as very good. While others disagreed that segmenting Skills essential for pupils to acquire all the necessary reading skills, including comprehension and meaning had a mean value of (2.40), which was interpreted as poor. And lastly, majority agreed that segmenting Skills allow young readers to develop their reading comprehension and decode new words as they read, had a mean of 3.01 which meant good.

**Table 4.7 B: ANOVA for Early Literacy Development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda**

| Early Literacy Development |                | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Sex                        | Between Groups | 1545.100       | 7  | 220.729     | .861  | .023 |
|                            | Within Groups  | 512.500        | 2  | 256.250     |       |      |
|                            | Total          | 788.400        | 7  | 112.629     | .351  | .105 |
| Marital Status             | Between Groups | 642.500        | 2  | 321.250     |       |      |
|                            | Within Groups  | 1430.900       | 9  |             |       |      |
|                            | Total          | 1032.100       | 9  |             |       |      |
| Age Group                  | Between Groups | 795.100        | 7  | 113.586     | .609  | .057 |
|                            | Within Groups  | 373.000        | 2  | 186.500     |       |      |
|                            | Total          | 1168.100       | 9  |             |       |      |
| Job Designation            | Between Groups | 942.100        | 7  | 134.586     | .922  | .030 |
|                            | Within Groups  | 292.000        | 2  | 146.000     |       |      |
|                            | Total          | 1234.100       | 9  |             |       |      |
| Education Level            | Between Groups | 1157.900       | 7  | 165.414     | 1.018 | .014 |
|                            | Within Groups  | 325.000        | 2  | 162.500     |       |      |
|                            | Total          | 1482.900       | 9  |             |       |      |
| Working experience         | Between Groups | 435.400        | 7  | 115.057     | 1.746 | .009 |
|                            | Within Groups  | 127.000        | 2  | 58.500      |       |      |
|                            | Total          | 352.200        | 9  |             |       |      |

*Source: Primary data computed by the researcher, (2022).*

“Results in Table 4.17 above indicate a no statistically significant difference among respondents both within and between groups on the basis of sex, the age bracket levels, job designation, education level and working experience categories of the respondents since all the levels of significance are less than 5%.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0. Introduction

In this Chapter, the researcher presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations, basing on objectives of the study.

#### 5.1. Discussion of Study Findings

The major objective of the study was to investigate the effect of phonics programmes on early literacy development in preschool children of Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala. The results indicated that all-board phonics, jolly phonics and Letter land phonics positively effected on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.

##### **5.1.1. All-board phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

All-board phonics programs had a significant effect on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, an implication that early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala, Uganda was significantly enhanced by All-board phonics programs.

In this case, the findings are also supported by, Schickedanz and Collins (2013), conducted a study in Copenhagen investigating the role of phonemic awareness to predict the presence of specific reading difficulties. Ninety-one kindergarten aged children were divided into two groups. The first group contained children who had at least one parent with dyslexia whereas the other groups were children with parents of average reading ability. Numerous tests were conducted over a two-year period including print concepts, letter naming, initial-phoneme deletion, phoneme discrimination and reading pseudowords. While, Pierotti (2016) stated that phonemic awareness deficits become more evident when pseudowords are used in testing.

The regression analysis result confirms that sixty six percent variations in early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools; Kampala, Uganda was attributed to All-board phonics programs. From the descriptive statistics, majority of the respondents agreed that all-board phonics knowledge is the key to starting to decode written words as children can use phonics knowledge to “sound out” words, decode and improve their spelling. And majority of the respondents asserted that with All-board phonics children learn to recognize how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some letter sounds, symbols, characters and signs.

The above findings are in line with Schickedanz and Collins (2013) who asserted that, all-board phonics involves matching the sounds of spoken English with individual letters or groups of letters. For example, the sound k can be spelled as c, k, ck or ch. Teaching children to blend the sounds of letters together helps them decode unfamiliar or unknown words by sounding them out (Roth, Paul & Pierotti 2006).

In agreement, Felton (2013) outlines the Bowman Gray Learn log Disabilities Project which investigated the effectiveness of phonemic awareness training for children experiencing difficulties with reading. This longitudinal study included 48 children in kindergarten, with an average IQ of 97.6 who were randomly placed in groups of and assigned to regular classrooms. A meaning-emphasis program (Houghton Mifflin Program) was used by four classes while a Code-emphasis program (Lippincott Basic Reading Program) was used in the remaining classrooms.

Further, Schickedanz and Collins (2013), state there are two processes and two phases of development for learning conventional reading. The processes are decoding and comprehending and the phases are learning to read and then reading to learn. However, Schickedanz and Collins (2013), also state that emergent readers need to engage in meaningful language rich experiences from birth to early childhood to be able to build a foundation for later conventional reading.

### **5.1.2. Jolly phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

Jolly phonic programs had a great effect on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala which was positive, which practically implied that early child literacy development in preschool children is enhanced by effective application and usage of Jolly phonic programs. The results indicates how much of the dependent variable (early child literacy



development in preschool children) is attributed to the independent variable (Jolly phonics programs), an implication that sixty two percent variations in early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools was attributed to effective usage of Jolly phonics programs at Kinderkare Pre-Schools.

While, the descriptive results indicated that results indicate that most of the respondents agreed that letterland incorporates student interaction through participation in phonic story logic and play with language through alliteration, rhythm, and rhyme. A good number of the respondents also agreed that letterland also makes the task of remembering shapes and sounds of letters easier for students.

These findings were supported by Hall (2013) study finding that, there is a trend of phonemic awareness and phonics instruction entrenched in literacy programs. Analytic and synthetic phonetic principles are effective strategies for teaching reading. According to Shaw and Davidson (2009), analytical approaches include the examination of the whole word first then by segments. Synthetic guidelines, on the other hand, emphasize combination of letters or words and letter sounds.

Similarly, Jolly (2008) contended that children who learn letter sounds before they are exposed to the letters demonstrate sustained gain in reading. Wyse and Goswami (2013) highlighted the importance of phonological processing, which involves isolating the sounds, relating them to print, application, and interpretation of reading the print or words. Concerning work on sentence structure and parallelism, Campbell, Torr, and Cologon (2012) stressed that phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehensions have significance in the process of reading. The teaching of phonics provides students with the opportunity to learn within a context. Phonetic awareness aids the development of literacy skills.

### **5.1.3. Letter land phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

Letter land phonics had a relatively strong positive effect on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala, which implied that early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala was enhanced with the effective uptake and usage of Letter land phonics in Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala. The R2

value though indicated how much of the dependent variable (early child literacy development in preschool children) is attributed to the independent variable (Letter land phonics programs). This implied that Letter land phonics programs positively predicted early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools.

The study findings are in agreement with According to Wendon (2010) three and four year olds who were exposed to Letter learning activated more of their brain when reading compared to students exposed to more traditional reading programs. Increased brain activity is associated with more developed executive function skills (Cartwright, 2012). The results were found to persist beyond a period of six months, even after instruction had discontinued (Wendon, 2010). These results suggest that students exposed to Letterland are better able to regulate the multiple cognitive processes involved in reading, including attention, memory, language processing, and visual processing (Cartwright, 2012; Wendon, 2010).

## **5.2. Conclusions**

### **5.2.1. All-board phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

According to study findings, it is concluded that all-board phonics programs significantly effect the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda. This meant that if the school management properly applied all-board phonics programs, then early child literacy development in preschool children will improve. Therefore, policies are necessary to ensure that the early child literacy development in preschool children is evaluated which in turn ensures that the appropriate use of all-board phonics programs is enhanced.

### **5.2.2. Jolly phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda**

It is further concluded that Jolly phonics programs positively effect early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda. This meant that if there is effective use of Jolly phonics programs, early child literacy development in preschool children will improve definitely. Further, it is concluded that Jolly phonic programs had a great effect on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-

Schools, Kampala, which practically implied that early child literacy development in preschool children is enhanced by effective application and usage of Jolly phonic programs.

### **5.2.3. Letter land phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

It was further concluded that Letter land phonics relatively effect positively early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda. This meant that early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala was enhanced with the effective uptake and usage of Letter land phonics in Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala. The results indicated how much of the dependent variable (early child literacy development in preschool children) is attributed to the independent variable (Letter land phonics programs).

### **5.3. Recommendations to the study**

Based on the study findings, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

#### **5.3.1. All-board phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

Phonics instruction is all about helping developing readers understand how letters are linked to sounds. There are two ways to teach phonics: incidentally and systemically. Teachers who use incidental instruction teach intervention strategies as they arise and are needed. With systemic phonics instruction, teachers use specific lessons in a prescribed order ensuring lessons build on each other and work together.

#### **5.2.2. Jolly phonics and early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda**

Pictures are the first symbols a child learns. She might not know how to spell cow, but she knows a cow when she sees one. Using pictures or videos to teach sounds can build confidence in students who struggle with letters. With picture cards, students can learn key words that are used to remember the sounds and shapes of the letters of the alphabet.

### **5.2.3. Letter land phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.**

Combining the rhythm and action of songs or chants with clapping and dancing helps children connect sounds and letters in an easy, memorable, and active way. When planning your lessons, be sure to add a group component. Partner work and sharing motivate students to participate and learn together.

### **5.4. Suggested Areas for further research**

The researcher recommends that future researchers need to conduct studies on the general teaching methods in preschools and their effect on pupil performance in Kampala schools, to guarantee the findings of this study.

More research should be conducted on increasing the rate of awareness of preschool teachers on the use of phonics programs and how this effects early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda.

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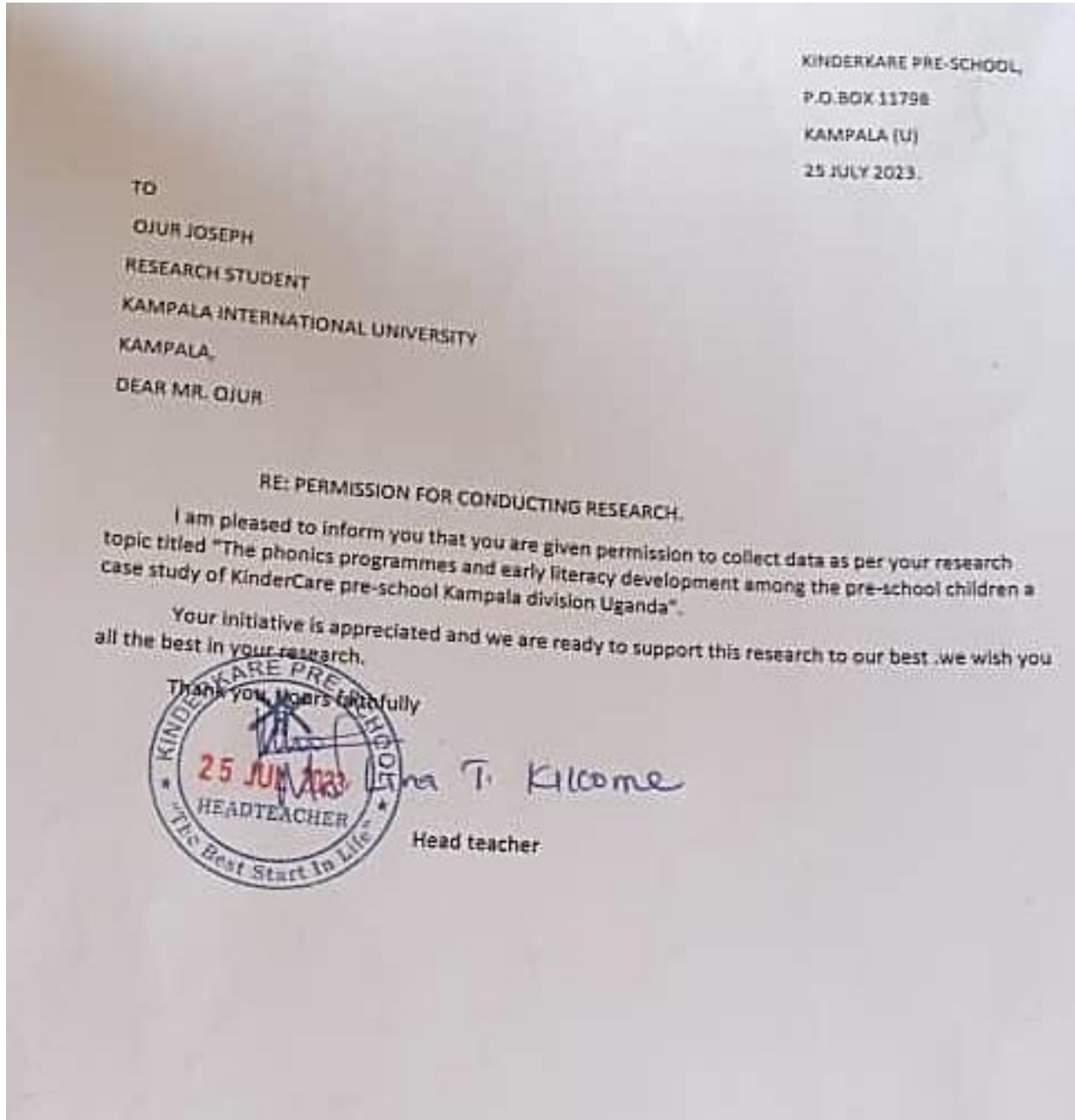
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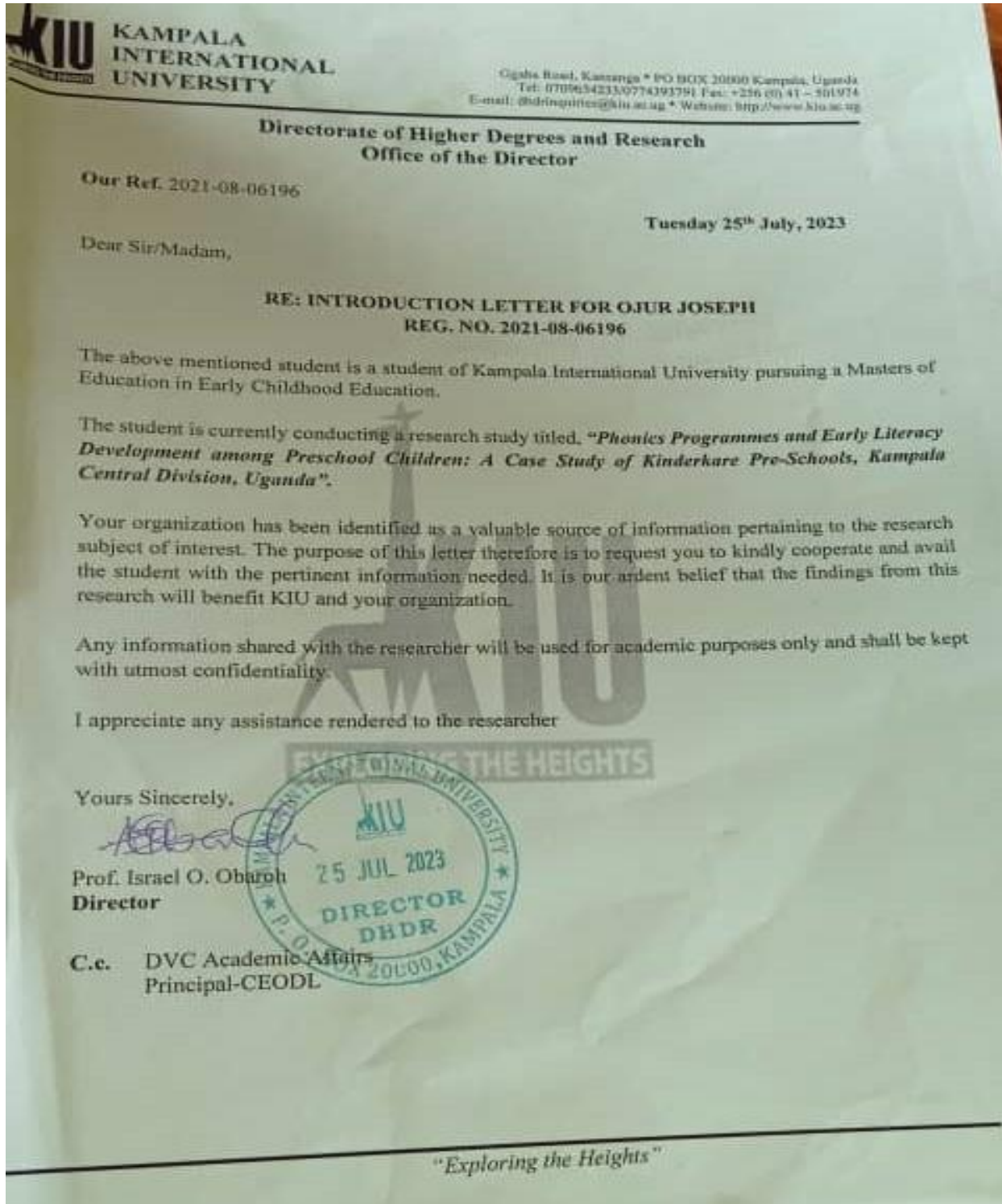


## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: ACCEPTANCE LETTER



APPENDIX II: LETTER TO THE RESPONDENTS



**APPENDIX III: INFORMED CONSENT FOR THE RESPONDENTS**

I am giving my consent to be part of, the research study of Mr. OJUR JOSEPH that focuses on: PHONICS PROGRAMMES AND EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG PRESCHOOL CHILDREN: A CASE OF KINDERKARE PRE-SCHOOLS, KAMPALA CENTRAL DIVISION, KAMPALA CENTRAL DIVISION. I shall be assured of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality and that I will be given the option to refuse participation and right to withdraw my participation any time.

I have been informed that the research is voluntary and that the results will be given to me if I ask for it.

Initials. ....

Date. ....

## APPENDIX IV A: SELF-ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS

I am OJUR JOSEPH, a student of Kampala International University pursuing a Master's Degrees of Education in Early Child Hood Education. As part of my study at Kampala International University, I am conducting a study on "PHONICS PROGRAMMES AND EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG PRESCHOOL CHILDREN: A CASE OF KINDERKARE PRE-SCHOOLS, KAMPALA CENTRAL DIVISION, KAMPALA CENTRAL DIVISION."

Please spare some time and answer the questions that follow. Your response will be kept strictly confidential and will only be accessed by the research team. The information provided will only be used for academic purposes in this study.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Yours Cordially,

.....

Researcher

### Part A: Respondent Characteristics

Please tick the responses that best apply to you

#### B.1. Sex of Respondent

|      |        |
|------|--------|
| Male | Female |
| 1    | 2      |

#### B.2. Marital Status

|        |         |           |          |         |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|
| Single | Married | Separated | Divorced | Widowed |
| 1      | 2       | 3         | 4        | 5       |

#### B.3. Age Bracket

|       |        |       |     |
|-------|--------|-------|-----|
| 20-29 | 30- 39 | 40-49 | 50+ |
| 1     | 2      | 3     | 4   |

#### B.4. Designation at this school

|            |               |             |
|------------|---------------|-------------|
| Supervisor | Administrator | Lower Staff |
| 1          | 2             | 3           |

**B.5. What's your highest level of education?**

|             |         |        |                       |
|-------------|---------|--------|-----------------------|
| Certificate | Diploma | Degree | Post graduate courses |
| 1           | 2       | 3      | 4                     |

**B.6. How long have you worked with this school?**

|                  |           |            |           |
|------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Less than 1 year | 1-5 years | 6-10 years | 11+ years |
| 1                | 2         | 3          | 4         |

**Section B: Phonics Programme**

Please check your feelings on “Phonics Programmes and Early Literacy Development among Preschool Children: A Case of Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala Central Division” by following the rating below and tick the appropriate choice: 4- Strongly Agree (SA) 3 - Agree (A) 2 -Disagree (D) 1 - Strongly Disagree (SD).”

**Kindly tick the response appropriate to you using the scale below:**

| Strongly (SA)               | Agree (A)   | Disagree (DA) | Strongly (SD) | Disagree  |           |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>1. All-board phonics</b> |   |               |               |           |           |
|                             |   | <b>SA</b>     | <b>A</b>      | <b>DA</b> | <b>SD</b> |
| 1                           | All-board phonics knowledge is the key to starting to decode written words as children can use phonics knowledge to “sound out” words, decode and improve their spelling. |               |               |           |           |
| 2                           | With All-board phonics children learn to recognize how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some letter sounds, symbols, characters and signs.              |               |               |           |           |
| 3                           | All-board phonics help children learn the sounds that each letter makes, and how a change in the order of letters changes a word's meaning.                               |               |               |           |           |

|                             |   |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| 4                           | All-board phonics instruction teaches children how to decode letters into their respective sounds, a skill that is essential for them to read unfamiliar words by themselves.                     |  |  |  |  |
| 5                           | All-board phonics is a way of teaching children how to read and write, and helps children hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another in the English language. |  |  |  |  |
| <b>2. The Jolly phonics</b> |   |  |  |  |  |
|                             |   |  |  |  |  |
| 1                           | The Jolly Phonics program uses a child centered approach to teaching literacy through synthetic phonics.  |  |  |  |  |
| 2                           | Jolly phonics facilitates the development of early literacy skills aligned with local and national assessments.   |  |  |  |  |
| 3                           | Jolly Phonics have fundamental structures related to phonological awareness, letter identification, and decoding skills, which facilitate reading.  |  |  |  |  |
| 4                           | Analytic and synthetic phonetic principles are effective strategies for teaching reading.   |  |  |  |  |
| 5                           | The teaching of phonics provides students with the opportunity to learn within a context.   |  |  |  |  |
| 6                           | Jolly Phonetic awareness aids the development of literacy skills.   |  |  |  |  |
| 7                           | Jolly Phonics synthetic guidelines also emphasize combination of letters or words and letter sounds.  |  |  |  |  |
|                             |   |  |  |  |  |

| <b>3. Letter land phonics</b> |   | <b>SA</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>DA</b> | <b>SD</b> |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1                             | Letterland incorporates student interaction through participation in phonic story logic and play with language through alliteration, rhythm, and rhyme.   |           |          |           |           |
| 2                             | Letterland also makes the task of remembering shapes and sounds of letters easier for students.   |           |          |           |           |
| 3                             | Letterland’s phonics based approach is consistent with the National Reading Panel’s findings that the best approach to reading instruction includes explicit instruction in phonemic awareness (PA) and systematic phonics instruction. |           |          |           |           |
| 4                             | Letterland is designed to improve students’ skills in PA, phonics, and executive function.  |           |          |           |           |
| 5                             | Letterland help young learners in starting early stage of reading and uses phonics as the basis of learning.  |           |          |           |           |
| 6                             | Letterland is provided for young learners from 3 to 8 years old who have got difficulties in reading.   |           |          |           |           |
| 7                             | Letterland method can be used not only to teach reading to young learner but also to teach others skills such as listening, speaking, phonics, and whole word recognition.  |           |          |           |           |
| 8                             | Letterland is designed to improve students’ PA, which is defined as students’ ability to identify and blend phonemes into words.  |           |          |           |           |
| <b>4. Phonic programmes</b>   |   |           |          |           |           |
| 1                             | All board phonics influences early child literacy development in preschool children   |           |          |           |           |

|   |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 2 | The influence of Jolly phonics on early child literacy development in preschool children   |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Letterland phonics do influence early child literacy development in preschool children   |  |  |  |  |
|   | <b>DEPENDENT VARIABLE</b>  |  |  |  |  |
|   | <b>Categorizing Skills</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | The child is able to distinguish between the kinds of letter sounds  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Categorizing skills improves the accuracy of the child's reading but not necessarily their comprehension.  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Categorizing skills help children learn the alphabetic principle   |  |  |  |  |
|   | <b>Blending skills</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Blending skills help the child make progress in all aspects of reading including comprehension, the development of vocabulary and spelling.                        |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Blending skills help the child better learn sounds of spoken language, logical, and predictable relationship between written letters and spoken sounds             |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Blending skills teach common letter-sound relationships, including sounds for common letter patterns, so that readers can apply them in decoding unfamiliar words. |  |  |  |  |
|   | <b>Segmenting Skills</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Segmenting Skills are effective in supporting younger pupils to master the basics of reading, with an average effect of an additional five months' progress.       |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Segmenting Skills essential for pupils to acquire all the necessary reading skills, including comprehension and meaning.   |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Segmenting Skills allow young readers to develop their reading comprehension and decode new words as they read.  |  |  |  |  |
|   | <b>THE END</b>   |  |  |  |  |



## **APPENDIX IV B: SELF-ADMINISTERED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STAFFS**

*Phonics Programmes and Early Literacy Development among Preschool Children: A Case of Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Kampala Central Division*

1. How does phonics programmes affect the early literacy development among preschool children in Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division?
2. How does all-board phonics affect the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda?
3. How does Letter land phonics affect the early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda?
4. How does phonic programmes affect early child literacy development in preschool children at Kinderkare Pre-Schools, Kampala Central Division, Uganda?
5. Under which ways do use of Letter land phonics encourage student interaction through participation?
6. What are some of the phonic programmes used in teaching early child development?
7. How do they affect the learning process of a student?

**THE END**

**APPENDIX V: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST**

| <b>ITEM</b>   | <b>V<br/>GOOD</b> | <b>GOOD</b> | <b>FAIR<br/>(Needs<br/>Improvement)</b> | <b>POOR<br/>(Needs<br/>Upgrade<br/>)</b> |
|---|-------------------|-------------|---|--|
| There appropriate differentiation of 42 initial phonemes or sounds from children?   |                   |             |   |  |
| Do children articulate single phonemes clearly  |                   |             |   |  |
| The children able to practice correct pencil grip and correct start and exit point for the letter formation   |                   |             |   |  |
| Our children sound or produce sound for graphemes that is to say digraphs or two letter combinations eg ew,ue oi,oy oo,ur ou  |                   |             |   |  |
| Do children decode/spell words with consonant and vowel blends correctly e.g st, sl, tr br, ti, pa, te?   |                   |             |   |  |
| Are children able to differentiate between digraph and trigraph phonemes eg ir ea ou, au trigraph ure igh   |                   |             |   |  |
| Can children delete or substitute syllables or phonemes as they read words e.g Onion honour hour minute?  |                   |             |   |  |
| Are the children actively blending to read and segmenting to spell words containing new consonant vowels consonants (CVC) words and graphemes phonemes correspondence (GPCs) words? |                   |             |   |  |
| Can children decode and be able to read tricky words that do not need segmenting to read them e.g me was, be, to, are do, he she I?   |                   |             |   |  |