

## Early Childhood Education and Learning Outcomes in Lower Primary Schools, Uganda

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**Abstract :** Using a qualitative research technique, this study investigates the influence of Early Childhood Education (ECE) on learning outcomes in lower primary schools in Gulu City, Uganda. The study, which is based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of human learning, fills gaps in the current literature on the influence of ECE on learning outcomes. The aims of the study include analyzing the state of learning outcomes, investigating ECE practices, and determining the influence of these practices on learning outcomes in lower primary schools. The findings highlight the critical significance of ECE in promoting children's overall development. Nursery education helps children improve their handwriting, reading abilities, and general cognitive development. Children who have received nursery education have improved their abilities to handle pencils, form letters, and engage in social interactions, highlighting the significance of fine motor skills and socializing. Despite the good elements, difficulties in implementing ECE practices were found, such as differences in teaching styles, financial limits, and potential weariness due to prolonged school hours. The study suggests focused interventions to improve the effectiveness of ECE practices, ensure their connection with educational goals and maximize their influence on children's development. The study's findings show that respondents agree on the importance of nursery education in supporting holistic development, socialization, language competency, and conceptual comprehension. Challenges in nursery education, such as differences in teaching techniques and insufficient resources, highlight the need for comprehensive measures to address these challenges. Furthermore, parental engagement in home learning activities was revealed as an important factor affecting early education outcomes. Children who were engaged at home performed better in lower primary, emphasizing the value of a supportive family environment. Finally, the report suggests measures to enhance parental participation, changes in teaching methods through retraining, and age-appropriate enrolment. Future studies might concentrate on the involvement of parents, ECE policy practice, and the influence of ECE teachers on lower primary school learning results. These ideas are intended to help create a more favorable learning environment by encouraging holistic development and preparing children for success in succeeding academic levels.

**Keywords :** early childhood education, learning outcomes in lower primary schools, early childhood education practices, how ECE practices influence learning outcomes in lower primary schools

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