

THE PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN CHENCHA ZURIYA WOREDA, IN GAMO ZONE.

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to investigate the practices and challenges of pre-primary school enrolment on implementation of pre-primary school education in Chenchu Zuriya Woreda. The subjects of the study were including 20 parents, 73 teachers, 16 clusters of the schools. The participants were selected based on descriptive survey method of simple random sampling and Availability Sampling Technique used. The data collected through questionnaires, interview and observations. The instruments were pilot tested to ten teachers which were not used in the final study. Mixed methods were used to conduct the study. The study employed descriptive survey research design. Descriptive statistics involving frequency, mean, standard deviation and percentages were used to analyze data. The information was presented using tables, bar graphs and pie charts to facilitate comparisons b/n variables. The major findings of the study were lack of training of teachers, lack of good relationship of parents with teachers, lack of awareness of parents in preparing their children for school, lack of prepared text books based on the curriculum. The study concludes that most of the pre-primary teachers have lacked the training, majority of parents have shortage of good relationship with teachers, and teaching learning materials were inadequate in most pre-primary schools. This study recommends that role of parents must be increased, all teachers at level must be trained, and the number of toilets in pre-primary school be increased because young children are more frequent in toileting than older children.

keywords:-pre-primary, pre-primary school education, challenges, implementation

1.INTRODUCTION

Pre-primary education is important since it introduces children to basic learning skills that are needed in primary schools and enhance their chances of success in the education system. It has been proved that educating children at an early age is more critical than at a later age. It is believed that the incidence of repetition and dropout in lower grades of primary school would decline if children are better prepared for school. This in turn would improve the internal efficiency of primary education, (ESDP V, 2015:38-39)

Research suggests that pre-primary education is very important for the development of young children before they enter formal school (Kaul, 2002). It helps in cognitive development of children at the early grades of primary education and it has strong bearing on attendance and participation of children once they enter primary school.

Learning during the early years is critical. The consensus seems to be that early exposure to learning expedencies in stimulating environment will lead children to perform better in primary schools. In the meantime these individuals become more productive healthier citizens in democratic society.

Barbara Biber (1903:5) also states that schooling must be as real, as vivid as life itself, must become a tool by which the child meets the real problems of life more efficiently, with a greater yield of happiness to himself and a greater promise of service to the community in which he will live as an adult.

Many pre-primary education researchers proved that the pre-primary school years are crucial and characterized by rapid physical and mental growth .these will have lasting effects across the child's life course. So as of pre-primary years foundation stage every child deserves the best possible start in life and support that enables them to fulfill their potential (Justice and Vulkelick, 2008).

The new Ethiopian education and training policy define pre-primary education as it is a "pre-school preparatory education for children and can take up to three years .in this program children b/n the ages of four to six years are offered fun-like education that would enable them to express their feelings, to appreciate beauty, and to learn to distinguish and form letters and numbers." MOE (2002 p: 76)

Choudhury and Choudhury (2002:157-158) states that the research evidences confirmed that those children who pursue pre-primary education are successful in socio emotional and cognitive variables. Their study also showed that a happy child wished to go to school than those who are under stress and pressure to learn too much and too fast. The idea of pre-primary education is to provide the child with suitable learning environment where he can learn through play and get an opportunity for all round development b/n four years to six years old. B/n this age group, a child's cognitive, psychomotor and sensory controls are best developed through the medium of play and creative rather than teaching the subject formally.

Piaget (1978) stressed the importance of play as an important avenue for learning. As children engage in symbolic play (making a cake out of sand, using a garden hose to be a fire fighter) they make sense of the objectives and activities that surround them. As they imitate what goes on around them, they begin to understand how things work and what things are for. Initially this is a process of trial and error. However, with time and repetition they use new information to increase their understanding of the world around them. (Carol 2000:62-63)

Children's new influences and capacity to learn are high during their pre-primary years, they need different important skills , knowledge and attitudes that will affect their ability to learn ,personal development ,

relationship with others and future participation in greater society, (Curtis ,1998 cited in Yemane Gama Dulo, 2007:1)

Today, it is known that our countries education is entangled with complex problems of relevance, quality, accessibility and equity. The objectives of education do not take cognizance of the societies needs and do not adequately indicate future direction. The absence of interrelated contents and mode of presentation that can develop student's knowledge, cognitive abilities and behavioral change by level, to adequately enrich problem-solving ability and attitude, are some of our major problems of our education system. (ETP 1994:5)

Ethiopian EGRA Result (2014) also showed that a high number of grade 2 and grade 3 children were not able to read, write and comprehension skills. In all eight regions, more than 80% of children were not reading at expected fluency benchmarks in (RTI, 2010).The above EGRA result shows how much contribution of the pre-primary school education in Ethiopia is important..

The pre-primary schools are not given ample attention by government and this could explain the lack of quality learning and this leads low quality of education in the area. i.e., lack of budget, lack of curriculum based books, low interest of the community to pre-primary school education, lack of standardize class room space, absence of the trained pre-primary school teachers, and lack of access to pre-primary school education for most children with disabilities. The mentioned above problems can be the probable causes of having challenges in implementing of pre-primary schools of Chenchu Zuriya Woreda. In order to establish the effects of the teachers' quality, the parental participation in pre-primary school, and enough and good learning school infrastructures in Chenchu Zuriya Woreda the study is important.

Statement of the Problem

In Ethiopia, the demand for pre-primary school education has increased due to the growing recognition that the pre-primary education can contribute to all aspects of children's development who are the future citizens of the country. Consequently, the issue of pre-primary school education was given important place in the education and training policy (ETP, 1994), of the country to address the needs of pre-primary school children. (Temesgen: 2006)

Pre-primary school education is one such proper level of education to make the child active citizen. World data on education 2010/11 states the main purpose of pre-primary education is to prepare children physically, emotionally, socially and mentally for formal schooling and to prevent poor performance and early drop out. More specifically, pre-primary school education helps children to be confident, eager and enthusiastic learners, who are looking forward to start school and success in life. (Fitzgerland, 2004)

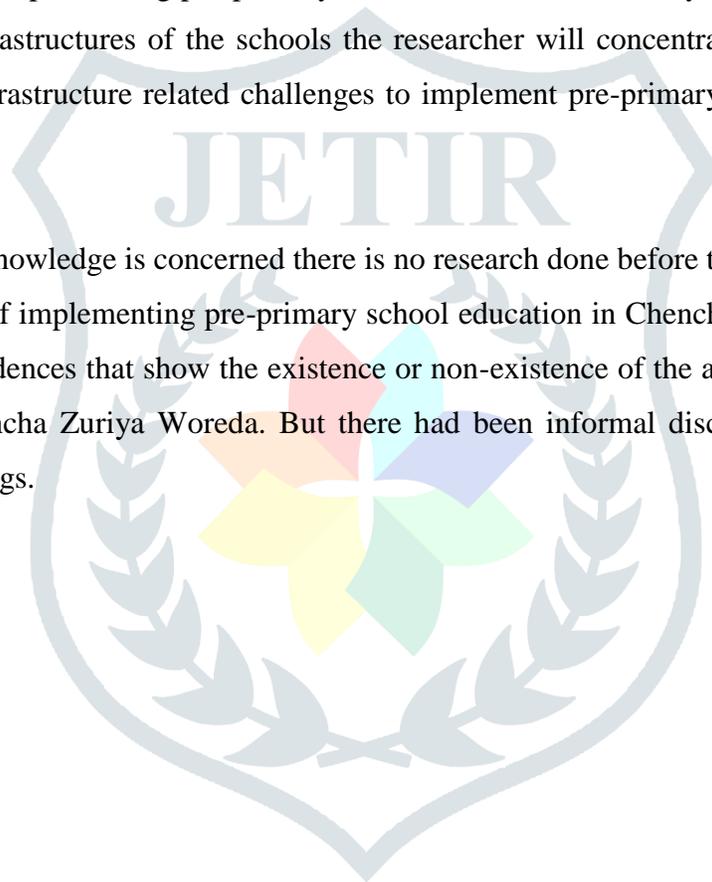
MOE (2002) also states that pre-primary school education requires high investment and trained manpower teachers should have affection for children; educational and recreational materials have to be supplied; and there have to be facilities that allow children to rest when tired and to eat when hungry.

According to Miller and Mc Dowelle (1993), quality education in pre-primary school demonstrates the following; designed to accommodate a broad range of abilities and personalities; integrates objectives; methods; materials and teachers who have formal training and experiences.

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Due to the challenges of implementing pre-primary education of Chench Zuriya Woreda is determined by the stakeholders and infrastructures of the schools the researcher will concentrate on the role of parents, teachers, and schools infrastructure related challenges to implement pre-primary school education in pre-primary schools.

Moreover, as far as my knowledge is concerned there is no research done before this study in relation to the practice and challenges of implementing pre-primary school education in Chench Zuriya Woreda. Hence, there are no research evidences that show the existence or non-existence of the above problems in the pre-primary schools of Chench Zuriya Woreda. But there had been informal discussion with teachers and parents in cultural meetings.



According to the report of Chenchu Zuriya Woreda Education Office EGRA Result in 2010 showed that a high number of grade 1,2,3,and grade 4 students in 68 schools the total enrollment in the year is 12,388.From the report the students who are not read, write and comprehension skills were above 60.7%.

Historical Perspective of Pre-primary School Education

Throughout, the histories of pre-primary education, there have been a number of philosophers, educators and theorists who have observed young children.

Friedrick Frobel, the 19th century German who created and named the kindergarten (German to children's garden).children the age between 3 and 6 spent their days working in identically laid out gardens, participating in especially composed singing ,games, and interesting with materials designed to teach a series of specific skills.(Suzanne and Kristine:2001)

According to the Tanzania education and training policy of (1995), pre-primary is referred to the type of education where by infants and young children b/n the ages of (0-6 years old) are cared for and receive initial education both at home and on the few existing day care centers ,kindergarten, nursery, and other pre-schools allocated urban areas .

Now a day's two approaches or combination of both is being implemented as the leading world pre-primary school methodology for teaching children .pre-primary by and large is a product of 20th century ,beginning from 1940 to mid-1960's in which pre-primary school education has become the subject of serous studies by scholars ,researchers, because this time research evidences and provocative literature on child development and early learning had motivated the community in general and policy makers in particular.

This idea show us had better economic development and the advancement of human knowledge on the importance of early learning brought the need for the establishment and expansion of pre-school education all over the world including out continent, Africa. However, the difference in economic development and educational status among the nations of the world created disparities in the development of pre-primary school education. (Yemane Gama 2007:13)

Education in Ethiopia changed tremendously since 1800's because the government had made an attempt to improve children's education. When formal education started in Ethiopia during the fourth century, Christianity was the recognized religion. For many years the church controlled all education. Muslim communities also have Qoranic schools in mosque in similar way. The Ethiopian church had a long history of church education that had involved pre-school age children (Bizunesh, 1983; Demissie, 1996; and Dereje 1994).

The emergence of modern education is a recent phenomenon. It was at the beginning of the 20's.century (1908) that modern educational system was introduced in the country. The importance of introducing modern educational opportunity to more Ethiopian young people was first recognized by Menilik II (ruled 1889-

1913). Later on, it was given due attention by Emperor Haile Selassie. However, the expansion of educational opportunities and the widening of the scope of the curriculum did not begin until the liberation in 1941. This was due to the war disaster that affected the country's political, social and economic development. Since 1941 as the country's realization of economic development was dependent on trained man power, elementary and secondary schools were opened in great number in different provinces.

(Tekeste Negash, 1990; 1-3) ; (Bizunesh, 1983:52) also stated modern pre-primary education began in Ethiopia in 1908 in Dire Dawa. This time coincides with the beginning of modern education in Ethiopia. The Ethio-French Railway Company established this first modern pre-primary education for the children of workers. The French Embassy took the initiative in Ethiopia. Fifty years later the second pre-primary education was opened in Addis Ababa.

Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) globally and Ethiopia in particular has been recognized as a crucial program that lays a foundation for a child's holistic and integrated education that meets the cognitive, social, moral, spiritual, emotional, physical and developmental needs. Currently, ECDE is under the care of parents, community, non-governmental organizations (NGO), religious organizations and other private providers.

ECDE is currently facing challenges related to the following: funding, policy formulation, low participation rates of target age groups including special learners, lack of curriculum content informed by research based data, inadequate qualified educators, lack of schemes of service for educators, rising number of orphans, conflict in medium of instruction among others. Lack of practical approaches to inform the parents and lack of the Ministry of Education's funding and implementation initiatives further complicates the provision of ECDE (UNICEF, 2018).

Accordingly, children may be viewed as: growing plants that need nurturance, miniature adults, natural and national resources that need to be nurtured, and/or as future investments critical to the sustenance of a society and its ability to compete in the technological age (Essa, 1999). The belief that early learning begets later learning and success, just like early failure breeds later failure, has been validated in both economic and educational research (Boocock, 1995; Heckman, 1999).

According to the World Development Report (Jaycox, 1992), education and economic development are positively correlated, making education intrinsic to development. Therefore, the potential long-term benefits for children's cognitive and social development (Barnett, 1995; Gonzalez-Mena, 2000) have inspired increased interest in early childhood education and care. This interest continues to be championed by UNICEF's health and nutrition programs (UNICEF, 2002).

Objective of the Pre-primary Education

Education has played a definite role in human history as a means of transmission of knowledge, skills, ideas and values from generation to generation. That is why all societies that are found in different stages of

development have established systematic methods of teaching to their young children. These methods of teaching are imperative for children to understand their society, its traditions, and to equip them from survival (Academic American encyclopedia, 1986:537, Vol.15)

According to children's Family and youth welfare organization of Ethiopia (1992:7), the following are some of the objectives of pre-primary education in Ethiopia are :To develop in the children a feeling of self-dependence and self-reliance; To develop and encourage positive attitudes towards work; To build children with enjoyable behavior necessary for life; To make children aware of their rights and personalities; To prepare children for social life; To teach about nature, their environment, and to make them innovative and creative; To develop in the children a sense of respect, and love of their society and country.

As stated by MOE (2002) the main aim of pre-primary education is the all-rounded development of children in order to prepare them for formal schooling. On the other hand Wasserman(1993) pointed out that the aim of the program can be achieved through meeting the following goals by participating in the kindergarten program: children will develop confidence in themselves and their ability to learn, demonstrate curiosity and the ability to focus their attention, acquire a level of communicative competence that is personally satisfying , acquire social skills and abilities which enable them to relate other children and to adults and remains true to their individual natures, being free to develop to their own potentials.

Agrawal (1997:57) also suggests more specific objectives of pre-primary school education institutions. These are: To develop in the child good health, habits and to build up basic skills necessary for personal adjustment, such as dressing, toilet habits, eating, washing, cleaning etc.; To develop desirable social attitudes, manners and to encourage healthy group participation, making the child sensitive to the right and privileges of others ;To develop the Childs ability to express his thoughts and feelings influent, correct and clear speech; and

Role of Pre-primary School Teachers

Teaching characteristically is a moral enterprise. The teacher, whether he/she admits it or not, is out to make the world a better place and its inhabitant's better people. Sykes and Turner (1980) noted that teachers are constantly observing the behavior and activities of their pupils as a basis for action or intervention to maintain the smooth running of their class. Teachers play a vital role in the development of children .what children learn and experience during their early years can shape their views of themselves and the world and can affect their later success or failure in school, work and their personal lives.

Teaching practices for young children include opportunities for choice, hands on learning, promotion of collaboration between children, use of a variety of teaching strategies, individualization, and self-regulation (Brede Kamp and Copple, 1997; Buchanan et al., 1998).

Goldstein found in a qualitative study that kindergarten teachers could address content standards in a developmentally appropriate manner by "recognizing and building on the curricular stability in kindergarten, employing instructional approaches that accommodate the children's developmental needs, setting limits, acquiescing to demands for developmentally inappropriate practices and materials, engaging in proactive education and outreach, accepting additional responsibilities ,and making concessions" (Dosen,1994:51)

Teachers also take active roles in promoting children's thinking and the acquisition of concepts and skills. These roles range from asking a well-timed question that provokes further reflection or investigation to showing children how to use a new tool or procedure. (Breden Kamp and Copple, 1997:115)

To help them reach their maximum levels, teachers can encourage children to tackle a task that challenges them and that are slightly beyond their skill levels. Teachers can structure their experiences with children and note how children use their assistance as well as what hints and cues are most helpful. (Rosmary et al.:2003)

In order to make an informed decision about how to make meaningful differences while providing high-quality care and education, teachers need knowledge of child development, learning, and best practices as well as tools for making sense of this vast array of information. (Terri Jo Swim: 2001)

Pre-primary school teachers perform a complex and multidimensional role. They are responsible for implementing pre-primary education that is thoughtfully planned, challenging, engaging ,integrated, developmentally appropriate, and culturally and linguistically responsive ,and that promotes positive outcomes for all children. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>

Parents Role in Pre-primary Schools

Parents and teachers are partners in helping children learn. Parents are their children's first teacher and continue to have the primary responsibility for their children. Steiner, (1996: pages 127) noted that one common quality of the most successful school in the country was the active involvement of parents and citizens in planning curriculum and instructions.

Ayot (1990) suggested three things that occur when school and parents co-operate, parents and children's self-concept increases, children's motivation accelerates and children's achievements advances. Parents may be able to contribute to education in a variety of ways, by talking to children about their jobs as key resource teachers, telling a story in another language or bringing in special materials or equipment.

They might also volunteer to accompany groups of children on outings or work alongside children during activities, providing valuable extra adult input. Others may feel happier by making customers or organizing materials where they have an opportunity to observe others work with the children. Staff members should be sensitive to each parents needs and provide appropriate opportunity for them and that wealthier and better educated parents utilized basic education and resources in a manner to improve pre-primary school conditions. This is difficult to match among the poor, uneducated slum dwellers and rural Ethiopian parents. These families set their lifestyle and influences life chances for the child

In addition children may be viewed as: growing plants that need nurturance, miniature adults, natural and national resources. The need to be nurtured as future investments is critical to the sustenance of a society and its ability to compete in the technological age. It is at pre-primary school where most striking changes in behaviors are linked to the child's growing sense of his/her own identity and increasing independence. The child delights in mastering of new skills and enjoys exploring the world outside his/her home.

According to Bredekamp (1987), at this early stage a child develops autonomy, learns to choose and decides to accept the consequences of choice. It is in these years of life that one's development can be guided towards the highest potential and determines what one will be; reasons that one of the most frequent reasons why families send children to pre-school is for them to learn to get along well with others. Teachers agree with parents that this is indeed a very important kind of competence to acquire. The focus of the teacher therefore must be geared towards helping the children acquire the ability to function successfully as part of a group, restrain their social impulses, obtain what they want in socially acceptable ways and find satisfaction in helping each other as they help their group as a whole.

There is need for formal and informal connections between families and their young children's educational setting. Hence, both participation in pre-school based activities and regular communication between families and teachers are related to young children's outcome. When parents and teachers work together in the interest of children, the results are usually maximized. Parents provide continuity for children, which the professional cannot give. They also have a deeper knowledge of their children's interests and needs. Through participation in pre-school activities, parents can learn even more about the capacities of their own children. Involvement by the parents in the learning of statistical information helps them to learn faster. In traditional African society, the family was socializing agent which provided the child with the necessary emotional support that formed the foundation of a child's life. Parent's participation is essential for optimal development in early childhood education.

Varies evidences have shown that partnerships that recognize the rightful role and responsibility of parents can provide an opportunity to have a say on decision making in various aspect of the kindergarten activities. Parents can serve in policy council, on sub-committees, and play a supportive role in fund raising and various issues related to children's learning. An official recognition of the role of parents in the children's education, with respect to their involvement in assessment, representation in governing bodies and access to information

need to be emphasized, sided by side, with increase in the involvement of parents with their children's education, the school needs to introduce the concept of accountability of school to parents. (Curtis, 1998:135)

Under this objective the researcher was on the view that parents could be involved in promoting pre-primary education through paying school fee and other contributions at school, paying transport facilities, buying books and stationary, making follow up on pupils' academic performance.

Participating in School Events and Meeting

According to Desforgas and Abouchaar (2003) noted that good parenting in home, include: the provision of stable environment which stimulate intellectual, good models of constructive social and education values, high aspiration relating to parental fulfillments and good citizens contact to school to share information, participation of school events and participation in the work of school.

This observation showed that parents could be involved in the matters of pre-primary education by preparing good environment of teaching and learning of the child such like contributing food to school, infrastructure such like desks, tables, contraction of classrooms, toilets and the like giving them good direction and instruction which lead to make them good citizen, to have good relation with teacher teaching pre-primary pupils, participating in school events such like parent day and meeting aimed at improving teaching and learning process, contributing financial resources for the matter of improving teaching and learning environment.

Making follow up on Children's Academic Performance

Anold (2004) suggested that parenting program, family support efforts and parent involvement activities are all being encouraged to take active roles in development of children's intellectual life. Shanmugaratnam (2005) noted that if there is consistence and categorical finding in structure of educational achievement, it is that the engagement of parent matters regardless of role of social economic background. Children are better motivated at their studies and actually do better when parents continually monitor their children's work, encourage them on and give them love and care they need when young. These observations indicated that making follow up on pupils academic progress were the role of parents and when parents do it effectively and efficiently enhance the children intellectual life, motivate children to participate fully in learning ,hence do better in their academic achievement.

Contributing Food, School Uniform and Buying Books

Mental development scholars like Khan ,(2000,Rose et al ,210;paul et al ,2012 and Moyo ,2013) agreed that food has an impact on children's academic performance, Moyo (2013) found that in adequate nutrition food lead to malnutrition which hinder proper pupils learning.

Grantham et-al (1998) noted that good academic performance of pupils depends on availability of study materials, also Bhalalusesa (1998), found that study materials made pupils interactive because they are able to conduct self-study whatever they are even in absence of their teachers. This implied that for academic achievement pupil in pre-primary schools needs text books and other supplementary materials related to pre-primary education in order to promote intellectual capability.

Gentile and Imberman (2010) suggested that school uniform was introduced for the purpose of enabling students from low income of families who cannot dress property to match with others. In addition to that the study found out that uniform can enhance success of pupils in their academic achievement.

Oketch and Rottenstone, (2007) stated that parents still have to provide funds for desk, uniform, books and building funds. Based on the above comments and observation from above scholars ,researcher intended to conduct this study in order to examine how parents were involved in the issues of contributing food ,school uniforms and buying text books to support their children to participate effectively in learning hence promote their academic progress.

Challenges of Implementing Pre-primary School Education

According to the Basic Education Act, education shall be provided according to the pupils' age and capabilities and so as to promote their healthy growth and development. Those providing education shall cooperate with pupils' home and pupils participating in educations are entitled to a safe learning environment. (University of Zimbabwe, 1995:8)

Despite the actual and potential advantage of pre-primary education, some problems remain to be overcome before its promises can be fully realized. Regarding challenges of implementing pre-primary school education (Snow et al., 2003), and Brede Kamp et al. (1992) mentioned that child based, parent based, community and school-based problems.

Child based: include age of children's severe cognitive deficiencies, hearing impairment, early language impairment, and attention deficits,

Parent based: includes parent history of education, home literacy environment, Community and school-based: includes the practice for factors such as the family lives, the cultural and economic community of which the family is a part ,and the school the child attends, teacher qualification, curriculum , and center facilities , time factor, availability of equipment's , pedagogical factors etc.

The Concept of School Infrastructure

The main task of school is to provide education which involves a series of programs and activities. The successful conduct of these programs and activities depends mainly upon the availability of proper

infrastructure in the school. School infrastructure includes buildings, grounds, furniture and apparatus along with equipment's essential for imparting education.

In an ideal school infrastructure programmed, the school building should be well planned, spacious, functionally and with pleasing architectural features. The rooms of the building should be spacious and ventilated with all facilities like fans etc. (Wayne & Youngs, 2003). While constructing a school building one must keep in mind the school buildings should have different facilities such a library, different types of laboratories, workshops art and craft rooms, staff room, principal's office, school office, multimedia room, conference room or theatre along with assembly ground, gymnasium among others (McCarthy & Guiney, 2004).

Classroom is the backbone of any school physical infrastructure. An ideal school infrastructure programmed has adequate number of classrooms and every classroom has a pleasant look. Walls are painted by some light colors and rooms carefully decorated. New charts and paintings should be fixed on the walls. The front wall should have blackboard at appropriate height. The walls of the back should be having built-in cupboards for keeping books, tools, crafts materials, apparatus for experiments, maps and other teaching outs. In a classroom where there are movable seats and work tables, where varied resources for learning are readily available in storage cabinets. The seating can be changed in a variety of activities simultaneously. The classroom should be well lighted so that students seated at different corners are able to see the teacher and the blackboard. The location of rooms would be airy and lighted naturally on the failure of power (Electricity) (Dhanalakshmi, 2008).

Library is a counterpart of a school physical infrastructure programmed. It plays a vital role in the learning process of the school. The library is an essential component of a good school. The library room should be located in such a place where students are not getting disturbed by noise. It is a place where a useful means of storing and communicable knowledge and one that teacher body cannot do without (Dash, 2005).

The school infrastructure programmed should also envision a well-planned administrative block. Leadership and service functions are done in the administrative block. The school office should be centrally located so as to serve as a good coordination centre, easily accessible to visitors, teachers and students. In the physical infrastructure, there must be a room where the teachers can meet and interact with each other, do corrections of home/school work of students and refer to books. This room should have lockers for teachers so that they can safeguard various reference books and instructional materials and answer books and their personal belongings (Dhanalakshmi, 2008).

Well maintained playgrounds are also important. Sports and games play so vital roles in education that they cannot be totally dispensed with. Playgrounds not only enable pupils to develop their physical but also help them to grow cognitively, socially and effectively. Any school that has its eye on the total development of

children should have enough facilities for indoor as well as outdoor sports and games. Physical education is a subject to be taught so that it should be taught in playground only (McCarthy & Guiney, 2004).

Excellence in public schools is one of the most important factors contributing to metropolitan vitality. Many stakeholders, recognizing these links, seek to define what makes a “good school” and a “quality education.” The State of California, for example, measures and ranks every school based on test scores. Other educational organizations focus on different measures (Henke et al, 2000).

What is often left out of nearly all definitions of a high quality school, however, is the condition of school facilities—despite increasing evidence of its importance to teaching and learning, as well as the vitality of the community. Natural light, indoor air quality, temperature, cleanliness, acoustics, and classroom size can positively or negatively affect learning and productivity. Poor ventilation, dust, and mold in ceilings and walls—all factors found in many older urban school buildings and portables—can lead to respiratory infections, headaches, sleepiness, and absenteeism (Wayne & Youngs, 2003).

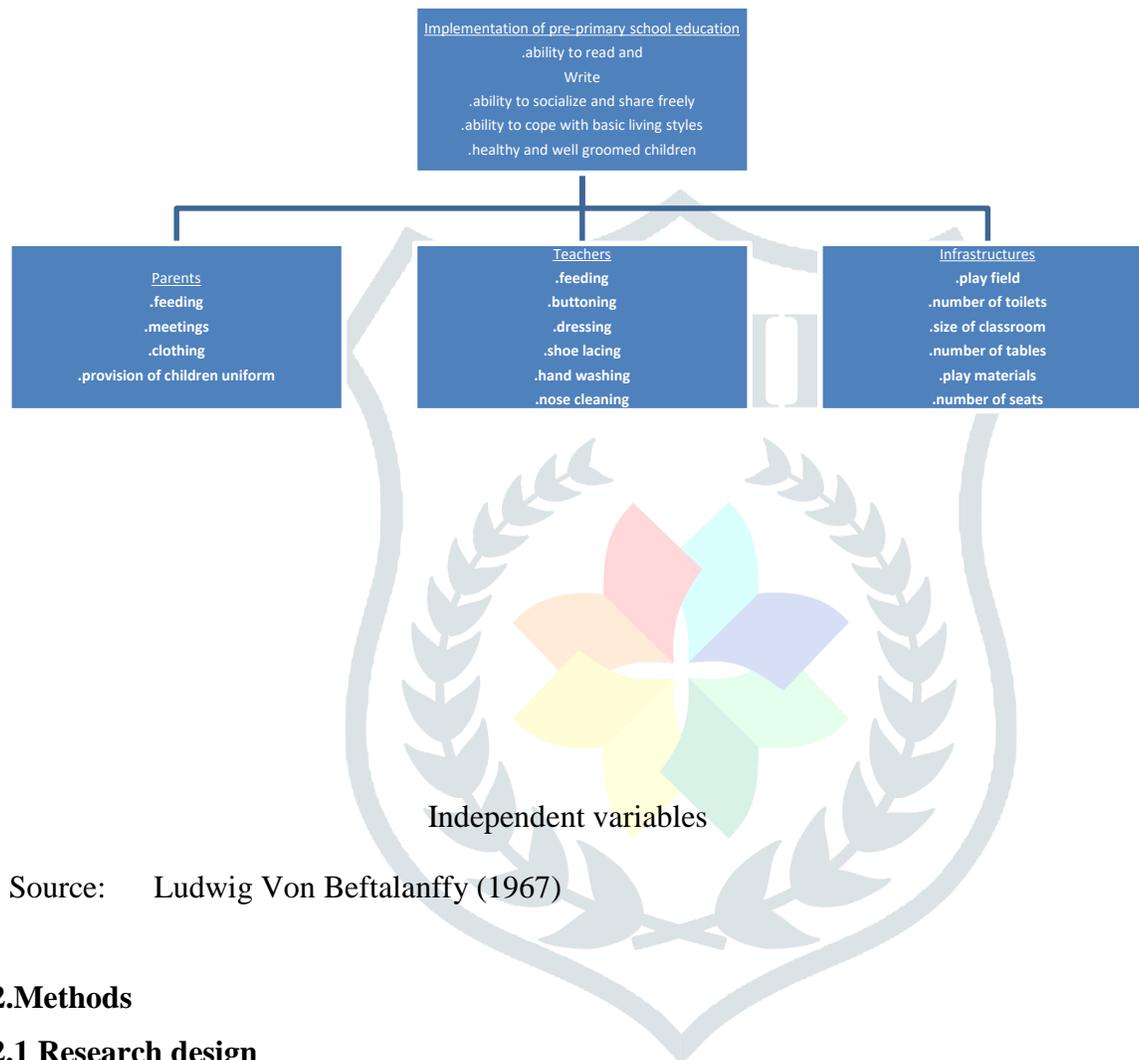
Teaching and Learning Infrastructure

Most schools in the urban slums of Ethiopia continue to lack adequate infrastructure and several still facing a severe shortage of teachers. Many complain about the poor quality of institutional support for teachers’ professional development.

The usual assumption is that if these gaps are filled, children will learn and learn well. This “theory of change” explains the push from within the government as well as from outside to ensure the timely provision of adequate inputs, and to point out the urgent need to build institutions that support schools and teachers. Classrooms consist of sheet metal nailed to posts for walls and roofs, dirt floors, and wooden plank desks.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of an evaluation of the implementation of pre-primary school education of pre-primary school units.

Dependent variable



Source: Ludwig Von Beftalanffy (1967)

2.Methods

2.1 Research design

The research design used for the study was descriptive survey design .since ,the survey research would enable the researcher to collect and describe large variety of data. Besides ,qualitative data were used in the study to support quantitative data gathered through questionnaires (Creswell,2014).

According to Bryma and Cramer (1997) descriptive Survey design reveals relationship between variables and draw attention of their limited capacity in connection with the education of casual processes.

2.2 Population of the study

Participants of the study were parents and teachers obtained from Chenchu Zuriya Woreda education office Enrolment data of September 2011.

The demographic information of the teachers is sex, age, educational level, and teaching experiences, and is described in the following sub-sections

Table 1: Sex, and age distribution of the respondents.

Sex of teachers	Frequency	Percentage
Male	9	13.4
Female	58	86.6
Age		
20-25	33	49.3
26-31	24	35.8
32-37	9	13.4
Above 37	1	1.5

The first item in table 1 indicates that 9 (13.4%) teaches were males and 58 (86.6%) teachers were females.

Item 2 in table above indicates that significant number of 33 (49.3%) the teachers age were in the range of twenty to twenty five years.

Table 2: Teachers Educational Level and teaching experience

Educational level	Frequency	Percentage
Certificate	18	26.9
Diploma	28	41.8
One year pre-primary teacher	21	31.3
Teaching experience		
0-5	41	61.2
6-10	22	32.8
Above 11	4	6.0

The table shows that the educational background of teachers. Accordingly, 18(26.9%) have certificate. 28(41.8%) of the teachers have other filed college Diploma and 21(31.3%) of the teachers have one year pre-primary school teachers training certificate. J. (1970) stressed that child development is an essential subject of study for everyone who works with young children.

From the table 41(61.2%) of the teachers had experienced of 5 years. The other were 22(32.8%) of the teachers with 6-10 years, while those with 4(6%) of teachers had more than 11 years .

2.3 Data collection instruments

For this study, the following data collection instruments were used:

Questionnaires: The questionnaires(both closed ended and open ended),as the main tool of data collection ,was administered for teachers. The questionnaires focus on practices and challenges of implementing pre-primary school education .To ease the work of filling of questionnaire, the questionnaires were translated into Amharic language .

Interview: semi-structured type of interview guide was employed to collect data from the parents of the children. The interview was used in the study to support quantitative data collected using questionnaires.Again,the interview guide was translated in to Amharic language to reduce difficulties of communication.

Observation: observation was used to find additional data for the study. Hence, direct classroom observation was conducted while the teachers are teaching. Consequently, in the classrooms ,the use of teaching methods, number of children in each section and interactions between students and teachers as well as among students was observed. One class of each sample pre-primary center was randomly selected and observed by using semi-structured observation checklist. According to Bryman (2002) observation is fundamental to many activities.

2.4 Sample size and sampling procedures

According to the data obtained from Chench Zuriya Woreda Education office ,there are 73 pre-primary schools in the woreda.All of the pre-primary schools were selected by using availability sampling technique ,20 parents were selected from 1543 by using simple random sampling technique, and 73 pre-primary school teachers were selected by using availability sampling technique for questionnaire to cover all the study area.

2.5 Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative analysis technique were employed .the data collected through questionnaire were presented through frequency distributions and percentage. On the other hand ,data from observation, interview were presented in a narrative form. According to Creswell (2014), the qualitative data would intertwine with the quantitative data to further enrich and enhance the information collected. The information was presented using tables, bar graphs and pie charts to facilitate comparisons between variables.

3.Results

In this section, the major results on practices and challenges of implementing of pre-primary school education are presented.

Table 3: Number of Children taught in the classroom

No of item	Frequency	Percent
1.How many children do you teach?	11 – 20	8
	21 – 30	5
	31 – 40	18
	Above 40	36
	67	100.0

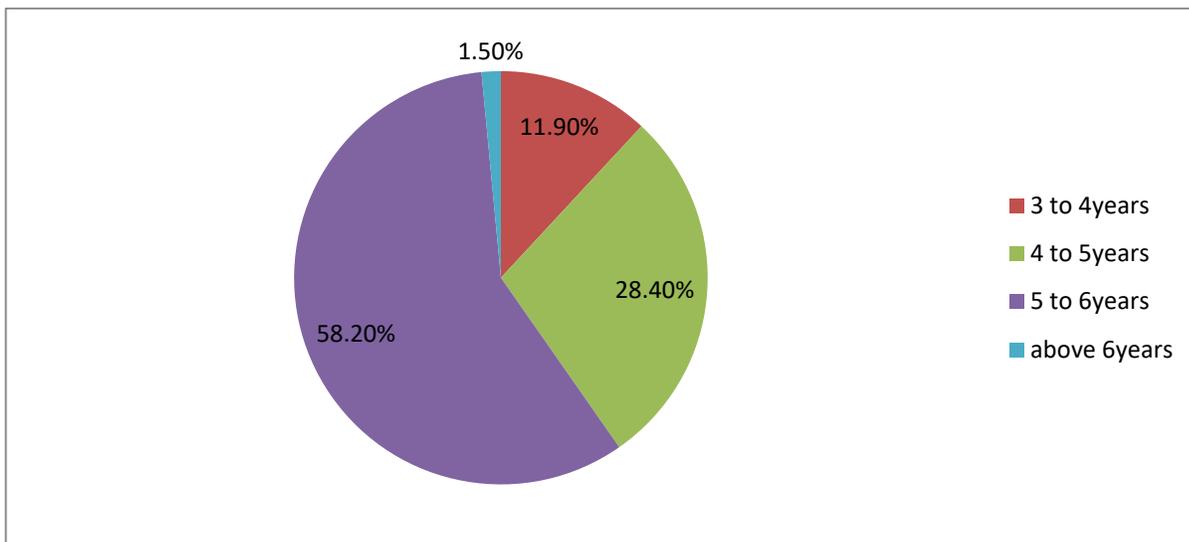
The item in the above table indicates that many pre-primary school teachers handle above 40 children representing 53.7% of the sampled pre-primary schools. 11.9% of the teachers handled between 11 and 20 children. 7.5% of the teachers handled between 21 and 30 children. And 26.9% of the teachers handled between 31 and 40 children. This is breach of ministry of education recommendations of maximum of 25 to 30 children per teacher. This might have challenged the implementation of re primary school education because at an average the teachers could not tell at least 10% of their children names.

Table 4: Feeding program for the children in the school

No of item	Response	Frequency	Percentage
2. Do you have a feeding program for the children?	Yes	18	26.9
	No	49	73.1

The item in the above table 5 indicates that 18 (26.9%) of pre-primary schools feeding the children and 49(73%) of the schools were not feed the children in the school. These shows there were challenges to implement the pre- primary school education.

Figure 1:pre-primary school entry age of the children



The researcher found out that the pre-primary schools entry age at school and the time they spend in school challenges the implementation of pre- primary education. As presented in figure 1 above, about 11.9% of children join pre-primary schools when they are between three and four years. 28.4% join when they are four to five years, 58.2% join between five and six years and 1.5% above six years.

Table 5: Children in matters pertaining to toileting on admission.

No item	Response	Frequency	Percentage
4. How effective are children in matters pertaining to toileting on admission?	Very high	14	20.9
	High	26	38.8
	Medium	15	22.4
	Low	12	17.9

Result shows that on the above table, 14(20.9%) of children wash their hands after toileting is very high, 26 (38.8%) of the children wash their hands after toileting is high, 15 (22.4%) of the children wash their hands after toileting is medium and 12(17.9%) of the children wash their hands after toileting is low.

Table 6: Teacher Training

No item	response	Frequency	Percent
	Yes	25	37.3

5. have you trained in pre-primary teachers profession	No	42	62.7
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Table 6 indicates that 25(37.3%) of preprimary teachers had training on preprimary school education, and 42 (62.7%) of preprimary teachers had no training on preprimary school education. This shows the majority of preprimary teachers had not taking training on preprimary education.

Table 7: Teachers Training in a Year

No of items	Response	Frequency	Percentage
6. For how many months have you taken training on preprimary school education?	3 months	6	8.9
	6 months	10	14.9
	10 months	7	10.4
	Above 10	2	2.9
	None	42	62.7

Table 7 indicates that 6(8.9%) of preprimary teachers had training on preprimary school education for only 3 months, 10 (14.9%) of preprimary teachers had training on preprimary school education for only 6 months, 7(10.4%) of teachers had training on preprimary school education for only 10 months, 2(2.9%) of teachers had training on preprimary school education for above 10 months, and 42(62.7%) of teachers had no training on preprimary school education. This shows the majority of preprimary teachers had not taking training on preprimary education.

The training duration of pre-primary teachers vary from country to country based on the nature of the program offered. The survey study made by UNESCO on 67 United Nations member countries shows that most of them found to offer courses that last for two years.

Table 8: Children ability in shoe lacing, buttoning and nose cleaning and main advantage of pre-primary education.

No of items	Response	Frequency	Percentage
7. Children ability in shoe lacing, buttoning, and nose cleaning in your school?	Very high	14	20.9
	high	24	35.8
	Medium	21	31.3

	Low	8	11.9
8.The advantage of preprimary education for children in preparing to formal education	High	62	92.5
	Medium	5	7.5

The items in the above table 8 indicates that 4 (20.9%) of children ability in shoe lacing, buttoning and nose cleaning were very high, 24(35.8%) of children have ability of shoe lacing, buttoning and nose cleaning were high, 21(31.3%) of children were medium, and 8(11.9%) of children have low ability. This shows the majority of the children have the ability of shoe lacing, buttoning, and nose cleaning.

The remaining item in the table above all the respondents of 62(92.5%) were give the answer to the advantage of preprimary school education high, the remaining 5(7.5%) of the respondents were given the answer medium for the main advantage of preprimary school education. this tells majority of the preprimary teachers believed that preprimary school education prepares the children for formal education.

Table 9: Good Relationship of Parents with Teacher and Participation of Parents

No of items	Response	Frequency	Percentage
9. Is there good relationship between parents with teachers?	Yes	24	35.8
	No	43	64.2
10. Are the parents participate to affairs of the children?	Yes	23	34.3
	No	44	65.7

As shown in table 9 above, majorities of the respondents 43 (64.2%), indicated the good relationship of parent and teacher is not important. Likewise the rest 24(35.8%), indicated the good relationship of parent and teacher is important. The response revealed good communication between parent and teacher communication is not available in most schools.

Lilley (1961:114) subjects parents are one of the major determining factor and contributors to the development of an integrated personality of their children.

23 (34.3%) of the respondents were give response **Yes**. and 44(65.7%) of the respondents were given response of **No**. This shows most of the parents are not participating and preparing their children for school and some of the parents are preparing and taking care for their children.

Table 10: Preference of parents about their children education

No of items	Response	Frequency	Percentage
11. Parents preference about their children education?	Focus on laying	28	41.2
	Focus on identifying numbers and letters	16	23.5
	Focus on how children describe their interest	14	20.6
	Focus on studying their surrounding	9	13.2

The item in the above table indicates that 28(41.2%) of the parents reference focused on laying, 16(23.5%) of the parents reference was focused on the identifying of numbers and letters, 14(20.6%) of the parents reference was focused on how children describe their interest, and 9(13.2%) of the parents preference was focused on studying their surroundings .

Table 11: Teaching and Learning Infrastructure

No	Item	Sum	Mean	St d
1	On which books have you use to teach the children?	247.00	3.6866	.74282
2	using of teaching aids by preprimary teachers	134	2	.7785
3	Do you have enough text books in your school?	121.00	1.8060	.39844
4	Does your school have enough teaching and learning materials?	106.00	1.5821	.49694

Item 1 table 11 indicated that mean 3.6866 of text books are inadequate i.e., in different schools there are different teaching pre-primary school education books. Finally, the result tells there is no text book based on the curriculum of the preprimary school education.

Item 2 tables 11 indicated that mean 2 of using of teaching aids by preprimary teachers is medium .

Item 3 tables 11 indicated that mean 1.8060 of availability of text books in ratio according to the number of children in schools is 1:40.as a researcher observed in the schools there in most schools teachers use a teacher guide as a text book.

Item 4 tables 12 indicated that there is lack of teaching learning materials in most of the schools. Therefore, it challenged the implementation of pre-primary schools education.

4.Discussion

The majority of the pre-primary school teachers had not taking training on pre-primary school education

The development of pre-primary schools in various countries have been challenged by the problems of qualified teachers, As, Rose et al, (2013) assert that in Zimbabwe the country responded well to the call of education for all of 1995.

The findings of the study are the majority of the parents have not good relationship with teachers in affairs of their children, most of the parents had not feed their children properly, the most parents had not prepared their children for school, and majority of the parents' preference was focused on playing.

Mental development scholars like Khan ,(2000,Rose et al ,210;paul et al ,2012 and Moyo ,2013) agreed that food has a challenge on children's academic performance, Moyo (2013) found that in adequate nutrition food lead to malnutrition which hinder proper pupils learning.

Grantham et-al (1998) noted that good academic performance of pupils depends on availability of study materials, also Bhalalusesa (1998), found that study materials made pupils interactive because they are able to conduct self-study whatever they are even in absence of their teachers. This implied that for academic achievement pupil in pre-primary schools needs text books and other supplementary materials related to pre-primary education in order to promote intellectual capability.

The findings of the study are, lack of curriculum based books, lack of teaching and learning materials in most of the schools, and lack of teaching aids in schools to stimulate children's interest and demonstrate how things work.

Most schools of in Ethiopia continue to lack adequate infrastructure and several still facing a severe shortage of teachers. Many complain about the poor quality of institutional support for teachers' professional development.

The usual assumption is that if these gaps are filled, children will learn and learn well. This "theory of change" explains the push from within the government as well as from outside to ensure the timely provision of adequate inputs, and to point out the urgent need to build institutions that support schools and teachers. Classrooms consist of sheet metal nailed to posts for walls and roofs, dirt floors, and wooden plank desks.

Chalkboards are scarce and those that exist are in poor repair. The roofs leak and the rooms are in poor repair (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

The study of the finding concludes the majority of the pre-primary school teachers of,42(62.7%) were lacked training on pre-primary school education; majority of the parents were lacked good relationship with the pre-primary school teachers or (64.2%) of parents have shortage of good relationship with the pre-primary teachers in the affairs of their children; lack of teaching learning materials, on pre-primary school education (text books, toilets, seats, playing materials, teaching aids) were inadequate in most pre-primary Schools of Chench Zuriya Woreda.

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