THE NEXUS BETWEEN LOCAL NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF UGANDANS AND

GLOBAL EDUCATION GOALS: A CASE STUDY

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Christine Margaret Okurut-Ibore

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Christine Margaret Okurut-Ibore

The Supervisory Committee certifies that this *disquisition* complies with North Dakota
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SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

Dr. Elizabeth A. Roumell

Chair

Dr. Chris Ray

Dr. Florin Salajan

Dr. Chris Whitsel

Approved:

April 10, 2014	William Martin
Date	Department Chair

ABSTRACT

The United Nations promotes access to basic education as an indelible right for all children, leading to the global push for Education for All (EFA) as a vehicle for realizing the global Millennium Development Goals. EFA has regulatory expectations for all participating countries to show programming and progress to achieve the targets by 2015. The Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Uganda, is aligned to these global targets to deliver access, equity, and relevant, quality education for poverty eradication, economic, and social development. However, the relationships among UPE, global goals, and the local needs are not well known. The central question for this case study was whether UPE addresses the local educational needs and aspirations of Ugandans.

Through the lenses of critical pedagogy, *Eituŋanane* local philosophy, and 'education as a weapon' metaphor, data were collected during three-months of intense field work using interviews, talking circles, and informal discussions with a total of 49 local district participants. Qualitative metaphoric analysis revealed that UPE, while a key to economic progress, is yet to build the social fiber (humanness) and develop knowledge, skills, and the moral aspects of individuals for community living. Consequently, as a tool for achieving global goals, UPE is yet to adequately achieve expected outcomes from local schools, and effectively address daily experiences and educational needs. An *Eituŋanane*-inspired, indigenous research-based approach to community participation and ownership, and teacher training and support is proposed to inform policies, organizational processes, and local practices. The study augments knowledge about policy implementation at local levels.

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DEDICATION

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As Ugandans celebrate over half a century as a post-colonial country, formal mass education introduced during the colonial era continues to expand to every corner of the world, including the most rural regions of Uganda. Currently, the formal education system is a structured approach in which all learners progress through skills-focused curricula in age-based classrooms with the overall intent to prepare them for performance in the global work place. The international agents, orchestrated by the UN-backed view that education is a right for all children, push for the global expansion of quality education, which is rationalized under the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and six Education for All (EFA) goals (UNCRC,1989). The educational systems in many countries in Africa are directed by the national governments, which are highly under pressure to achieve these global goals. The Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy in Uganda is aligned to EFA and MDG goals and, therefore, is used as the vehicle for delivering and measuring the success of these goals through globally set targets and indicators.

EFA and MDG frameworks, which target primary education and are vigorously promoted by the development partners, including the United Nations, the World Bank, and other agents (WCEFA, 1990), dictate goals that tend to pressure these governments against timelines, thus placing less consideration of and emphasis on the need to tailor education curriculum and pedagogy to the local circumstances. Yet, formal mass primary education has also been associated with inequalities based on, among others, demographic differences, gender, class, and geographical location (UNESCO, 2009). There are also increasing numbers of secondary and primary school dropouts and wastage (UNESCO, 2009; UNESCO, 2010), where only a few school leavers (graduates) find meaningful community involvement (UNESCO, 2003).

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Initiatives to address these gaps in the expanded schooling in most parts of Africa, for example in Uganda, continue to encounter challenges of quality, relevance, and equity (MOES, 2013).

To understand the historical perspectives to these gaps, pre-colonial Indigenous Education (IE) practices are first explored via literature review including the literary works authored during the era of early colonization. I will describe the traditional ways of life of African society, leading to an examination of the scholarship of Indigenous Education (IE). Then, I will explore the concept of *Eituŋanane* by weaving it with Ubuntu philosophy, which is expressed in different languages across the continent. In order to appreciate the link between formal education introduced during the colonial period and after independence, I will offer a short personal account of my experience in a village primary school in the early years of independence to highlight the link with the problem of study.

I will also scan and present the general political, social and economic context of Uganda, the historic and current education structure and management with the ultimate aim being to describe the many factors, benefits and challenges associated with approaches to education, some of which lay foundation to the current educational practices and problems. The description also provides background to the current context in Bukedea local district (the case study area), to allow us to become familiar with the shifting policy and practice environments as they unfolded in Uganda. This is important because we cannot take stock of the current local context without understanding its history for a better appreciation of the phenomenon under study. Indeed, across most of Africa, with emphasis on Uganda, despite more than a decade of universal education policies and initiatives, noticeable benefits have not yet reached the local rural communities (Dembele, 2007). The global pressure for mass formal primary education (that is, public compulsory education for all children aged 6 to 12 years following a 7 year cycle), which was

expanded after independence in the 1960s and hurriedly in the 1990s, has brought with it systematic challenges that will likely continue to persist (Chimombo, 2005). Furthermore, there are increasingly serious reservations expressed regarding this universal approach to education, and the effect of assumptions made about improving public education for all students under standard-driven and market-driven frameworks (Klees, 2009).

Following is an exploration of the African society's traditional ways of life before colonization to provide the historical foundation for the discussions on the purposes of education in addressing the needs of a particular society.

'The Pumpkin in the Old Homestead Must Not Be Uprooted'

It is impossible to separate Indigenous Education (IE) from peoples' ways of life. Therefore, I begin by briefly reviewing representative literary texts to capture the indigenous life in pre-colonial Africa. I then will discuss the local organization of people before colonial rule to prepare the ground for understanding IE. Prior to Europeans coming to Africa (before 1800s), people lived within their ethnic groupings and collaborated in trade and other social activities with their neighbors. There is a substantial literary narrative documenting these time periods. The arrival of Europeans in the 1880s and 1890s was met with mixed feelings within many African societies. Numerous novels, plays, poems, and autobiographies present the narratives of African ways of life before and after the coming of Europeans, depicting the social, cultural, religious, economic, and political aspects. Literary texts set in Nigeria illustrate the historical shift: Chinua Achebe's, *Things Fall Apart* (Achebe, 1958) and *No Longer at Ease* (1966), Elechi Amadi's novel *The Concubine* (1966), and Wole Soyinka's play, *The Lion and the Jewel* (1962). In Uganda, cultural narratives include Okot p'Bitek's poems *Song of Lawino and Song of Ocol* (1967), in Kenya Wa Thiongo's novel, *The River Between* (1965), and Wangari Mathai

Unbowed (2008) and *The challenge for Africa* (2009) among many others. They provide precolonial cultural beliefs and practices and express the uncertainties that gripped Africans when the Europeans introduced ways of governance, Christianity as a western religion, and formal education. "What would people do when everything they believe in, - and everything that makes them who they are - has been called 'satanic' or 'primitive' or 'witchcraft' or 'sorcery'?" (Maathai, 2009, p. 173). The indigenous knowledge and the ways of knowing, the aspirations of the people, the things they treasured and passed on to their young, were all being destroyed (Maathai, 2009). So, the authors warn people of the dangers of ignoring their rich cultural heritage.

Furthermore, these novels offer deeply personal/intimate perspectives of life before and during colonization, and the autobiographies detail personal experiences in political contexts during and after colonial rule. Two in particular directly address the loss of traditional cultural life in the face of colonization. *Song of Lawino* and *Song of Ocol* present issues facing the colonized Africa, in which Lawino, an uneducated woman, represents the traditional society. Lawino is married to Ocol, who represents the educated man, mimicking Western society's knowledge, cultures, and values. Lawino experiences the differences between traditional and Western value systems through wisdom and proverbs, and implores Ocol not to, "uproot the pumpkin from the old homestead" (Okot, 1972, p.41).

Formal education and interruption of ways of life in Africa

Before the arrival of Europeans, physical features like mountains in Africa "were known by local names, given by the people who lived near their shadows" (Maathai, 2009, p.173). They were associated with the people's religions and ways of life. People had unique ways of interacting with their environment because some of the features were considered sacred grounds

(Kenyatta, 1938). The ancestors of today's Ugandan society "had a deep understanding that people created knowledge they needed through using intelligence" (Hanson, 2010, p. 158). Everyone's capacity and responsibility including the young, the old, women and men, was recognized. One could conclude that in African economics, people were more important than things or riches. Money as it is known today, was not important. Qualities such as justice, trustworthiness and other values that respected and protected human life and dignity in all aspects of life were imparted and exercised (Mbiti, 2002). For example, the attitude of sharing was cultivated from early childhood. All these were forms of learning in the pre-colonial African societies provided by both centralized and decentralized leaderships (Mino, 2011). Therefore, the element of communalism and humanness were entrenched in what was learned. Children belonged to society and it was the community's role to ensure that the children grew up to uphold societal values (Kenyatta, 1938; Wangari, 2008).

Consequently, in African traditional life, plants, especially plant roots, signify the richness of, "traditions that root a particular society to their histories" (Mino, 2011, p. 51; Maathai, 2009). Through proverbs, the elders in many societies in various parts of Uganda and Africa, passed on their wisdom and knowledge to their youth during family gatherings around the fire (*etem* in Ateso). All these experiences, practices, norms, values, and other matters were passed to the young generations as indigenous education (Sifuna, 2007).

Indigenous Education (IE) purpose, curriculum, methods, and teachers

It is important to note at the outset that Africa is a large continent, and therefore Indigenous Education (IE) differed from one society to another with no single, one-size-fits-all form or approach to education (Sifuna & Otiende (1994). On one hand, there were no obvious differences in the values of IE, but the methods and content varied considerably. On the other

hand, the similarities were striking from one type of IE to another because of the influence of

people's constant interactions (Farrant, 1980). African IE, therefore, accompanied the evolution

of the African societies until the introduction of foreign-based (formal) education (Ssekamwa,

2000).

Purpose. The research on Indigenous Education (IE) cuts across many ethnic and

geographic categories in Africa with variations, depending on how each group hands down their

historical and cultural knowledge and practices to their young through oral traditions (Mbiti,

2002; Sifuna & Otiende, 1994; Ssekamwa, 2000). The common purpose for a traditional

educational system was to shape individuals to fit into, and be accepted by, the indigenous

society (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). In line with this thinking, the unwritten and ethno and

geographical specific IE curriculum actually reflects Blooms' Taxonomy (1956), which

identifies the cognitive, psychomotor, and the affective domains as necessary for learning.

Curriculum. The IE curriculum content was based on what the society considered

important, so IE was well rooted in indigenous societies (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). Curriculum

emphasis was on discipline (centered on human-ness), respect for societal values, acquisition of

practical skills for survival, and sustainability of the society in its unique setting (Mbiti, 2002).

There were neither structures known as 'schools' nor trained and certified teachers, written

curricula, or text books (Ssekamwa, 2000; Sifuna, 2007).

Methods and teachers. Therefore, the Indigenous approaches to education among many

ethnic groups in Africa emerged from indigenous knowledge systems based on the physical,

spiritual, and social environments (Mason, 2008, Mbiti, 2002). Teaching was done through

stories/folklores, riddles, initiation rites to adulthood and apprenticeship (Wandira, 1973, Ociti,

1973). Ssekamwa (2000) recounts that education occurred at the same time while children were

on the task, at a social event, in the home during storytelling, in the celebration dance and other events. The youth learned through listening, observations, touching, story-telling, hands-on experiences, folklore, riddles, and tongue twisters (Okot, p'Bitek, 1967; Maathai, 2007; Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). All people within families, especially parents, grandparents, community elders, older siblings, aunts and uncles, and other uniquely gifted and skilled musicians, drum makers, crafters, artists, potters and many others, to prepare them for specialized skills of different trades participated in teaching children (Ssekamwa, 2000; Ociti, 1973). These teaching approaches were grounded on norms, values, and traditions developed over several generations (Mbiti, 2002). Overall, education was gendered in that men taught boys and women taught girls their roles in a family in terms of home chores, gardening, construction, providing for the family and other social roles.

In addition, the traditional societies mastered the art of observation. For example, the Iteso people in Eastern Uganda accumulated knowledge through observing how children born to a couple that was closely related, developed or grew up. If someone married his/her first cousin, their children would be sickly or constantly on poor health or die. Close relatives were then forbidden from marrying each other (personal communication with Etesot elder, March, 2014). It is known through the science of genetics, that relatives marrying increases the probability for genetically-based health problems to be passed on to children, a practice which the community advocated against, based on their observations. The indigenous African people did not know anything about genetics but through observations over a period of time, these happenings were understood and generated new and useful knowledge, which was shared both through informal processes and direct teaching.

Consequently, IE was the primary way in which the societies handed down the cultural baton to their young (Ociiti, 1994; Ssekamwa, 2000; Wandira, 1973). The youth were provided with knowledge, skills, and what a society valued. Positive attitudes were promoted from within the cultures and influenced their attitudes about themselves as individuals and collectively as a group or society. This was necessary for the preservation and survival of their society amidst external pressures (Hanson, 2010; Wandira, 1973). Education was therefore relevant because whatever was taught was geared towards the creation of an ideal individual who would be able to fit into society in which he/she lived (Owuor, 2007; Sifuna & Otiende, 1994).

Criticisms of Indigenous Education (IE)

However, criticisms of IE in Africa have pointed out that IE was an education that did not produce literate people. Reading was not known, but knowledge was stored in the individual memory and accessed through individual or group oral narratives (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). The danger of this mode of knowledge storage was it could not be preserved in a written form. Memory banks preserved in the elderly eroded with the deaths of the elders (Mino, 2011, Ociiti, 1973). So, the death of older people who kept the knowledge, meant the end or the distorted versions of that knowledge. Sifuna and Otiende (1994) further argue that IE was gendered and traditional, therefore, preserved the status quo of the tribes. Different types of training was given to boys, and offered them opportunities to explore and discover, while girls were confined to the rigid training of a home provider doing all the domestic chores and motherhood.

Furthermore, some of the scholars, who have been exposed to Western ways of knowing, argue that in IE, students were taught to be passive recipients of the social system and were not encouraged to question or criticize. They further argue that the curriculum, IE body of knowledge, lacked critical thinking as it is understood today (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). This

view, it was observed by Sifuna and Otiende (1994), does not take into consideration the rigor in which knowledge, as it known, was practically generated by the learners. Nevertheless, Indigenous Education took place within indigenous communities. The following section explores these organizations.

Local Organization of People before Colonial Period

In Uganda, there are about fifty-three tribes with different languages and ways of organizing socially and politically. Uganda is divided into regions based on the major cultural or ethnic groups of Bantu, Nilotes, Nilo-Hamites each formed by a number of tribes as indicated in Figure 1. The map shows that there are more Bantu-speaking groups to the southern and western parts of Uganda. The eastern and northern parts are composed of Bantu, Nilotes Nilo-Hamites (Maxon, 2009, Okello, 2002). Before the external influence by the European, indigenous people had social and political organizations of varying units (Maxon, 2009). The Baganda ruled through hierarchical kingdoms under the leadership of a Kabaka (King) and the Banyoro had the Omukama as the central figure (Ssekamwa and Lugumba, 1971). The Iteso, Langi and Karamojong were however governed through politically, organized, and decentralized clan networks and age set systems (Mino, 2011). A clan is composed of families descending from a common ancestry, and was the main social unit under which education occurred. The Iteso clan administration was based on *etem*.

Etem was the Iteso's organizational structure, literally a fire lit, usually early in the morning, at the entrance of a homestead (Personal communication with the Iteso Cultural Leader, March, 2014).

Figure 1: Map of Uganda showing ethnic groups
Note: Sources used to draw this map: Gordon, Raymond G., Jr. (ed.), 2005. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, (15th ed). http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Languages_of_Uganda.png

A homestead comprised of 4 to 8 young men with their wives and children living within an enclosure. The purpose of lighting a fire around where the elders sat, was to resolve family or clan disputes through guidance and cultural counseling. So, early in the morning when they had disagreements, quarrels or other related issues in their families, they sat together to discuss and resolve them. Above all, *etem* had powers to punish and reprimand those who were guilty. Everyone was expected to be disciplined, considerate of others, helpful to others, and responsible for the wellbeing of those who were younger than them. According to the elders interviewed for this study, compliance to the norms of the clan was highly emphasized. Later, the word *etem* was

adopted and retained to mean a 'sub county' when Iteso were incorporated into the British

colonial rule through the Baganda, who were the British agents.

Eituŋanane among the Iteso in Eastern Uganda

The Iteso elders tightly followed those norms in order to properly bring up children.

"Iteso grew up with *iponesio luajokak* (good behavior) which was highly valued (personal

communication with an Etesot elder). The philosophy driving the process by which *iponesio*

luajokak is realized is referred to as *Eituŋanane.* However, it is important to note that the concept

of *Eituŋanane* has not been used in any study or research in Uganda. Therefore, there is no

written literature to draw from for this study. However, given the close connection to Ubuntu,

which has been expressed in many African languages to mean the principle of being human or

humanness (Eze, 2010), I explore Ubuntu in a bid to further shed light on *Eituŋanane.*

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Using Ubuntu's African Connection to Understand *Eituŋanane*

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Eituŋanane has no accurate English words to explain its full meaning. I have therefore,

made an attempt to translate the core concepts of *Eituŋanane* through the lens of *Ubuntu*

philosophy. Based on the literature about Ubuntu, and what the Iteso cultural leaders, elders, and

the community members who experienced *Eituŋanane* as children, know about *Eituŋanane*, I

consider *Eituŋanane* as *Ubuntu* among the Iteso and so I weave them in this section. According

to Buntu Mfenyana (1986), a Johannesburg sociolinguist, *Ubuntu* is a communal way of life and

must be for the good of all through cooperation, sharing, and charity. *Ubuntu* is therefore a

quality of being human through human attributes (Eze, 2010). *The South African Ubuntu*

Foundation website, indicates that the essence of *Ubuntu* is being human or humanness (*South*

African Ubuntu Foundation, 2013). *Ubuntu* has been widely used and popularized in English and

is commonly used in research, social services, and community work (Broodryk, 2006). For these

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uses, *Ubuntu* is translated loosely to mean a "human-ness" that is intentionally conscious of others' needs and feelings.

Furthermore, Eze (2010) describes the central notion of *Ubuntu* as acknowledging that a person is only fully human when connected with other people. In fact, according to *Ubuntu,* recognizing another's unique humanity results in a powerful recognition of one's own (Muzvidziwa, et.al 2012). And if we belong to each other, we co-participate in our creations: because you are, and since I am, the possibility of "we" moves to an actuality and "we" are (Eze, 2010). Therefore, *Ubuntu* manifests itself through various human acts, and is visible in social, political, and economic situations. As a result, themes or attributes such as generosity or caring, sense of community or togetherness, friendship and hospitality are central and intractable from discussions of *Ubuntu,* and by inference, *Eituŋanane.*

Ubuntu in other African languages

Many African languages and cultures have similarities. *Ubuntu* is a word or a concept found in many languages across all four African regions, especially in areas occupied by Bantu-speaking ethnic groups. Swahili is a common spoken language in East Africa, which has a mix of Bantu and Arabic words. The Swahili term '*utu*' means a human being/a person, plural *watu*. In Uganda, *omuntu* in Luganda (spoken by the Baganda) is similarly expressed in many other Bantu tribes in the country. According to Tirivangana (2013) in Kinyarwanda (Rwandan language) *Ubuntu* is associated with human "open-handedness" (para. 2). Similarly, in the collection of dialects spoken by Banyankole, Banyoro, Batooro, and Bakiga of Western Uganda and the Bahaya of Northern Tanzania, the concept of *Ubuntu* refers to the human characteristics of generosity, hospitality and consideration of others in the community (Broodryk, 2006). Broodryk further acknowledges these similarities in African languages and how many tribes have the

concept of *Ubuntu*. However, other tribes that are non-Bantu equally use words that express a similar concept and meaning to *Ubuntu*. Thus, this use of *Ubuntu* across many African languages illustrates the overall connectedness of African ways of life and, more specifically, that *Ubuntu* influences "every aspect of African peoples' well-being" (Muzvidziwa & Muzvidziwa, 2012, p. 27).

Eituŋanane **and the human factor**

The *Eituŋanane* concept among the indigenous Iteso, like *Ubuntu*, is similar to that of other African cultures. *Eituŋanane* is understood as the center of the society's being. Accordingly, like *omuntu*, an individual or a person is called *ituŋanan (ituan* in a short form) or *etuŋanan* in reference to a man in Ateso language. In addition, *Eituŋanane* is derived from masculine characteristics to capture the full essence of being human (male or female). Furthermore, *Eituŋanane* is a philosophy that imbues a sense of group cohesion or communalism within the society (personal communication with a member of Iteso Cultural Union, March 2014). Respectful human relationships are emphasized, and sharing is a virtue that is expected of the Iteso. One retains one's individuality (the individual as a human being), yet is also a part of a strong societal identity; every individual belongs to and represents a family, clan, community and society (personal communication with an Iteso Cultural Union leader, March, 2014).

Therefore, the centrality of this relationship to one's own humanity is the connectedness between individuals, family, and society (personal communication with an Iteso Cultural Union leader, March 2014). Because of this connection, children are assumed to belong to the whole community, thus they can be taken care of, or disciplined by, any adult member of the community. Hence, the expression '*the village educates a child'* embraces the humanity and the connectedness among human beings (Akala, 2006). There are expectations for both adults and

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children to develop and maintain the characteristics of *iponesio luajokak* (good behavior), including *aipapeoro arai aiyapepera* (humility or meekness), *ariimarit* (obedience or respect of elders), *amunonut* (trust), which is built through speaking the truth, and *akukuranut* (hard work). The perception of the people now, is that hard work and trustworthiness are traits that unfortunately, were taken advantage of by colonialists and their agents, who exploited them to make it easier to rule the Iteso. So, key attributes of *Eituŋanane* include teamwork, commitment, community, good behavior, selflessness, and compassion, which are ultimate ladders for getting and holding onto good jobs once they realized an education. These attributes were among the indigenous Iteso philosophy encompassing humanity and human agency.

So*, Eituŋanane* is more than simply classifying another person as belonging to the category "human." It is "the recognition of the core of one's self in another human being. A recognition of the other as not merely a reflection of humanity, but a vital component of one's own humanness. This is so fundamental to the Iteso" (personal communications, an Etesot elder, August, 2013). The promotion of the welfare of the community is an important aspect of the indigenous Iteso. People took care of one another, and this caring was a community practice. The communities emphasized the importance of each person putting their attention on people (humans) and taking responsibility to ensure their physical and psychological wellness through teamwork in the communities. This was done through regular clan or community meetings to resolve conflicts or solve problems, and support other initiatives in the community. For example, one common activity was taking turns in working in each other's gardens or supporting each other in activities such as building a house or granaries for food storage. These were important bonding experiences and sharing that contributed to building unity in the community.

For that reason, the positive aspects of these interactions are promoted so as to build resilience in times of challenges and trials. Working with your family alone without taking part in others' gardening activities was considered selfish, and a person would be branded with a nickname befitting the selfishness. Selfishness was defined as lack of compassion for other people, when a person persistently put his or her own needs and interests before other person's interests. The logic was that by considering others first, one would in turn benefit if the other person was well or okay. Thus it was a caring, reciprocal or symbiotic relationship. People supported each other with resources for example, if a parent did not have money to take a child to school, a friend or a neighbor would offer his goat or cow for the parent to sell and send the child to school. Generosity was a characteristic trait embraced by the communities. Emphasis is on the fact that one's actions affect others' lives. However, by looking at my own schooling experiences, we shall notice that these community characteristics are slowly being eroded.

Personal Experiences in Education

I was born toward the end of the British rule in my country, just at the dawn of independence in October, 1962. I grew up in a rural village among the Iteso community, in the part of East African region, which became known as "Uganda" due to political maneuverings by European colonizers. While several hundred years of colonization had resulted in a primarily British formal education system and the associated over-privileging of the colonizers, their values and culture, the Iteso people held on to many cultural values and practices developed and handed down in the hundreds of years of history before colonization.

So, during the early years of independence, these values were reflected in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), a body that was central in ensuring that we learned and our teachers taught and behaved according to the norms of the community and the rules of government. Our

parents and teachers collaborated to establish effective schools. Parents had a voice in the governance of their schools. The PTA was actively involved in school affairs, closely monitored school activities, and recommended the disciplinary measures for both students and teachers, made decisions on the transfer of teachers, and expulsion of students. Teacher transfers, absenteeism, discipline, and remuneration were issues that the community handled together with the school leadership.

Furthermore, the PTA and the head teacher worked hard to ensure teachers were teaching and children were learning. Our teachers were never absent from school, and we only stayed away from school if we were sick or had lost a close family member. Throughout the school year, parents worked intimately with the headmaster (head teacher or principal) to ensure teaching and learning was properly conducted. The school only closed for a community activity, for example, in order to attend an important cultural event that required children's participation. The school and community worked together to improve students' performance and discipline.

Teachers were well trained and hard working. Their conditions of living and work were taken care of by both the government and the PTA. The PTA constructed semi-permanent houses for teachers to live within their school environment. The teachers commanded respect in the community as specially trained in their field and as those who knew what and how to teach. Our teachers socially mingled with the community and were considered part of community because they were Iteso from other parts of the region. Each teacher in turn referred to us as *my children* or *our children*. Parents listened to teachers and teachers listened to parents.

Participation by parents and the community in school improvement was common. My father and other parents came to our school either for meetings, or to watch games and sports. The school had a particular 'open' day per year for parents to come and see what their children

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had learned. In my first grade, I remember my class reciting poems/rhymes in English including nursery rhyme *The Man in the Moon*. There were rhymes in English, but also tongue twisters, and riddles in Ateso, my language, which we recited. We also sang, played drums, danced, and dramatized some themes that we had learned about the community, for example, the value of taking children to school, or the importance of personal hygiene. Each year throughout my primary school, we performed for our parents on that special parents' day. The whole community was involved in such school/community events, in one way or another.

The English books were about people from other countries, stories from other lands, presented in the *New Oxford English Course: Uganda: Introductory Picture book Primary One* (English series up to primary 4). Although the formal schooling was primarily British in content, pedagogy, and materials, learning was fun because we had so many materials to use. We had small cards and big charts with words, objects, and pictures. We also had different English readers and other materials. Mastering English was important because final selection examination for secondary education was in the English language. We also learned other subjects including Nature Study (Science), Mathematics, Geography, History and Civics, Art and Crafts, and played a lot during Physical Education lessons. Children were expected to work hard at school, pass the end of primary school examinations, and to be able to go to good secondary schools and get jobs. This was instilled in us as soon as we enrolled in schools.

However, in the early grades (Primary 1 to Primary 3) our community language, Ateso (mother tongue) was used for instruction and in some curricular materials using the local Iteso cultural practices, stories, riddles, and rhymes. Emphasis was also placed on learning to read and write in Ateso. We spoke our local language Ateso at school and read local story books in Ateso like *Bia Kosiom* (Come and Read), *Ecidong lo Atolong*, (A fictional story about a man, *Ecidong,*

and his adventures in the fictional *Atolong* community). This book covered many aspects of life including community hygiene. *Akonye Auni (Three- eyed)* was a fictional story about the importance of appreciating one another as individuals, and not only for one's physical abilities. We enjoyed stories our teachers told us about animals like the clever hare, the greedy hyena, and the slow tortoise. The animals also represented the characteristics of good and bad people, and hence promoted values our society upheld. I would tell the same stories to my mother when I returned home in the evening, thereby connecting my school experiences with my family and community. The value of obtaining a good education in order to return to benefit one's own community was a central expectation. Accordingly, there were many things we learned in the village school that were not 'examined' in the formal curriculum and yet the community measured our success many ways: through our behavior, our commitment to support our families and to serve the community, our kindness, our willingness to participate in community activities to name just a few.

Schools were far away and many children had to walk long distances. Some parents were uncomfortable with their children being in school all day and unavailable to help on the farm, or take care of animals (mainly cows). In addition, some families did not want to send their daughters to school because they feared that school would make their daughters lazy and ill prepared for marriage. In this sense, school activities (which involved a lot of hours sitting in the classrooms) were considered not physical enough to impart practical skills that were directly related to dowry price. Because girls fetched dowries (bride prices) for the families, sending them to school for too long was seen by parents as devaluing their dowries. Therefore, many girls who started primary education were lucky to complete Primary Seven; most were not able to proceed to secondary education. They were married off, especially when they failed the

Primary Leaving Examination (PLE). The fear of the girls getting pregnant and dropping out of

school was another roadblock to the girls transitioning to secondary education. It was taboo to

have a child out of wedlock. Parents closely monitored their daughters, but also instilled the fear

of being rejected in them if they became pregnant while at school. However, early pregnancies

were rare at primary school level, but were more common at early secondary school level

especially in the first and second years. Illegitimate children were accepted if they were girls (as

potential dowries), but boys were mostly shunned (they were viewed as potential rivals for land).

Whereas girls got married, left the cradle home and did not inherit any properties, boys are

expected to remain as heirs in the home and inherit all property especially the ancestral land.

As a girl who later became a teacher in a primary school located in another village, I

realize now that I was a product of my accumulated experiences as a pupil in my village primary

school, my home, community, and teacher training college. All these influenced the way I

viewed and understood the world and who I was in the space/position I occupied. This means

that from the early days as a child, I acquired models, emulated, imitated (consciously or

unconsciously) for my own teaching, the political and moral values, my aspirations and concerns

for my future. As a teacher, all these may have affected my conception of the primary curriculum

especially the hidden curriculum that acts on a child's social and moral understanding.

I trace these experiences in my village school and community and strongly associate

them to the principles of *Eituŋanane*. *Eituŋanane* was central to the aims of an education in

which being human in a community is emphasized. Similarly, education was expected to expose

children to these qualities of sharing problems and seeking solutions, living and working together

as 'a people.' In Western cultures, a person can migrate to anywhere in the world and not have

attachment or connection with the place of departure sometimes even beyond the immediate

family. In African cultures however, a person is born into a family, a clan, and a tribe in that order. Nationality then is a foreign concept that comes with western colonization. Once born to an African community, a person remains permanently identified as "*the son or daughter of the soil"* often literally translated into English as *son/daughter of* or *'a born of'* or a person born to or belonging to a particular society. It is the reason a person's remains are always returned and buried near one's ancestors. The emphasis is that a person is not alone but belongs to a cradle home, a clan and a tribe, hence, the Iteso proverb: "*Mam irutori amugit*" (do not uproot the roots of a gourd plant). In this respect, *Eituŋanane* becomes the umbilical cord connecting me to my birthplace and confers some benefits, rights, roles, and responsibilities to me now as an educated member of my family and community to use my education for their benefit.

However, the humanness, which I think made education more relevant, is less emphasized in the current education systems. My observation is supported by the 1986 stocktaking of the education system (MOES, 1986) and the Education Policy Review Commission (MOES, 1989) findings that point out that Uganda's problems in education are the same as the time of independence, in which the education curriculum was deemed irrelevant to the needs of the people, mostly theoretical, and prepared students for non-existent white-collar jobs.

In summary, my personal experiences in education have been, paradoxically, both gains and losses. I became aware of this dichotomy of experiences in education while embarking on this study, first as one who originates from and attended a school in a rural village in Eastern Uganda and secondly, as one who has experienced some of these problems within the system as a student at various levels, and as an educator. On one hand, the local gains include my ability to speak English, a global dominant language, which exposes me to a cultural knowledge of others

as it opens many doors. I am therefore able to participate in education dialogues at different levels, be employed and contribute to the community and society, which made me who I am. On the other hand, it has drawn me away from my societal and cultural cradle. My losses include for example, the idea that the names I am known by continuously hide who I am as an African because my true name has become just a label, placed in the hierarchy of names as second or last name.

This tendency to use other names other than our own was introduced with formal education by the Christian Missionaries. In order to become known as a Christian, I was baptized and given a *new* European name(s) by which I am known. My first name was automatically shifted in the order of names, according to the Western naming, and became just a *family* or second name. The schools I attended and the teachers promoted the Christian names (foreign) as the new norm. I reflect on the education system I experienced and wonder how the current education relates to the communities at the local levels. Could we, as a country, have taken a wrong turn from what was previously working and instead of building on it, like our colonial rulers, we have ignored and preferred to place our future within the 'global' pedestal?

My experiences illuminate the formal education in the early years of independence, and show that there were signs of both Western and traditional systems existing in the schools. This was seen through the role of the PTA, the use of both the local language, *Ateso* and English, use of both locally and industrially made materials, and the support of schools by parents and the community. The curriculum not only reflected the children's environment, and application in the community, but was also linked to social and economic development (Odaet, 1990). In addition, my experiences from working with the teachers at various levels indicate that the realities at the local levels are very diverse from the national or global picture that is painted about education in

a country. It is a fact that over the years, education has slowly drifted toward emphasis on the

economic, global, and modernization discourses (McGrath, 2010; MOES, 2007; MOES, 2010;

World Bank, 2011). And yet, despite decades of promoting primary education from the global

level, positive results remain elusive especially at the local levels (Chimombo, 2005).

Problem Statement

Despite decades of promoting universal primary education at the global, positive results

in social, moral, economic and cultural behaviors, remain elusive (Lalange, 2009). In light of all

the money, time, intellectual energy, and political capital spent at global and national levels, the

fact that gaps in the knowledge, skills, quality, equity and relevance of education are still here

may be a key indicator as to why these overarching global goals are problematic to realize

(Chimombo, 2005). The EFA global monitoring reports, the MOES annual sector review reports,

the Education Management Information Systems data (EMIS) and various studies on EFA/UPE,

present a picture of achievement of UPE program with high Gross Enrollment (GER) and Net

Enrollment (NER) figures (UNESCO, 2002, 2005, 2009; MOES, 2008, 2010), but these numbers

do not tell anything about the realities at the local levels of implementation (Lalange, 2009).

These reports indeed point to a conversation that is going on between global and national

interests, but the local voice is disregarded, diminished, and marginalized in these conversations.

Yet, actions and activities towards the realization of these goals and the primary

beneficiaries are at the local district, school, and community levels. Surprisingly, these education

stakeholders at the local district levels are under-researched and neglected in terms of probing

the stakeholders' critical contribution to education provision and their views about its impact.

Little is documented about the local actors, their contextual needs and aspirations, how these

influence participation in their children's education and the root causes of this predicament, at

the rural level beyond poverty discourses. A critical reflection on the current issues of the global EFA goals within the local context is important in understanding the shifts in the national and global priorities as the 2015 target approaches. This level of focus is missing from many dominant discourses regarding the universal education movement and development. There is a danger that the Ugandan policies that are moving towards a market-driven education will ignore the debate about the fundamental purposes of education within a national and local context (Rizvi, 2003). This study, therefore, attempts to fill this gap by examining whether by aligning Ugandan national education goals to global goals, the needs and aspirations of Ugandans are adequately addressed in the universalization process.

Research Questions

The current model of the Ugandan education system reflects the banking approach to education (Freire, 2000), which was also applied to the design and implementation of UPE policy. My focus in this case study was to develop an understanding of ways in which UPE, modeled under this approach, has addressed or failed to address local education needs and aspirations of the local education stakeholders. Awareness of local actors'/beneficiaries' perspectives is arguably critical for future education reform beyond 2015. The overarching question was: To what extent has the UPE policy addressed the local realities, needs and aspirations of Ugandans, and Bukedea specifically, at the local district level? The subsidiary questions that guided the study included:

Question 1: What are the local perceptions about the purpose of education?

   a) What aspirations do stakeholders hold for the future of their children?

   b) Are there discrepancies between the local aspirations and the national education goals?

   c) How has UPE addressed, or not addressed, local needs and aspirations?

Question 2: Do local stakeholders feel they own UPE?

    a) What does UPE mean to the local education stakeholders?

    b) How do the district leaders coordinate all local stakeholders to participate in UPE?

    c) Does participation by the local communities in UPE implementation demonstrate ownership of UPE?

    d) How much power do local stakeholders feel they have to influence decisions around UPE?

Question 3: How are the UPE objectives on reducing inequality and improving equity applied at the local level?

    a) What local district initiatives promote equality and equity in schools in the district?

    b) Does UPE implementation embrace the community philosophy of *eitunganane*?

    c) Is Mandela's *education as a weapon that can be used to change society*, applicable at the local context?

    d) What do local stakeholders visualize as solutions to the challenges of UPE?

The ancillary questions are interlinked, indicating that the main components of the national priorities are reflected in the Ministry of Education Sector Investment Plans (ESIPs) 1997-2003, the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2008-2015, and the EFA target of universalizing education by 2015. *Question 1* uses the individual lens to document the individuals' perspectives about the purpose of education. *Question 2* uses the bureaucratic lens to explore how the national system supports education initiatives. *Question 3* is an ideological lens used to illuminate the link between UPE and local values. Overall, these questions sought to discover whether, or not, and in what ways, UPE policy, developed at an international level, has been the right fit to the local realities, needs, and aspirations of Ugandans.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this case study was twofold: first to examine in what ways UPE fulfills the local needs and aspirations of Ugandans. The second purpose was to examine how the people from the rural regions participate in critically reflecting on the processes of education reform at the local level of policy implementation. This was because local stakeholders' role is critical in implementing optimal policy responses relevant to their local education needs and aspirations (Fullan, 2007; Owings, et al, 2012; Spillane, 2002). Their perceptions of the relative success and failure of UPE policy implementation could inform future policy initiatives.

Significance of the study

Despite substantial effort to gauge EFA effectiveness at the international levels through an array of quantitative measures (targets), few, if any, systematic studies have been attempted to qualitatively examine how the policy addresses the local needs, especially in the rural areas. The local district perspectives documented in this study describe ways that UPE addresses the local needs. This represents a unique contribution to existing research in UPE in terms of understanding how contextual realities influence education policy implementation. The study also offers a unique framework for future explorations regarding the effectiveness of EFA.

Moreover, the study adds to the current research on UPE (and by inference EFA) outcomes, from the perspectives of a local rural district, then analyzes Ugandan primary education from this local context, taking a realistic stock of the conditions that exist in, and are unique to, the context of Ugandan Primary Education system. An understanding of the local realities informs academicians, policymakers, and practitioners in Uganda and beyond, to call into question the applicability and practicality of the global education goals espoused in EFA and MDG, and to think about what education ought to be in the future.

Furthermore, communities would be able to use this information to develop awareness of the inconsistencies between their need to preserve their ways of life and the schooling expectations of a global future for their children, and the need to align their own societal knowledge and good practices with education programs.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provided the genesis of formal education in Africa in general, and particularly in Uganda. The essence of the Indigenous Education (IE) were the values that were passed on to the next generation, including hospitality, honesty, sacrifice, obedience, humility, respect for elders, and many others. The goals, content, and approaches of IE education, were determined by the society itself based on its needs and aspirations. It was reasonable, therefore, to conclude that because society made decisions for what was relevant to their contexts, the indigenous education largely fulfilled its purpose. In contrast, formal education introduced through colonization, progressively continues to maintain a privileged position in the current education. Despite many primary schools being in the local communities in Uganda, the values of humaneness espoused in the community are disappearing and in its place individualism is promoted. It is possible to conclude that the traditional philosophies remain in the periphery of the education systems.

Study Design and Overview of the Research

The study was pursued in three phases. Phase one involved document analysis and preparation for field visits. Phase two was an intense three-month field visit. During spring of 2014, I travelled to my home district of Bukeda in Eastern Uganda, where I conducted face-to-face interviews, semi-structured talking circles (focus groups), and engaged in informal discussions and observations of some schools' physical infrastructures. The visit also included

locating and obtaining some documents such as reports and materials related to UPE, which were not available elsewhere or digitally. Phase three involved organizing data streams, interview transcribing, coding, and analysis and writing the final report.

This disquisition is organized under six chapters. The first chapter presents the historical context of education development in Uganda is presented with timelines to help understand the shifting policies and initiatives that have shaped education at national and local levels. Bukedea district, in Eastern Uganda, the region used for this study. The third chapter briefly explores the account of the purpose of education and mass education, and describes UPE as aligned to the global EFA and the MDGs. The critical theory/pedagogy with *Eituŋanane* philosophy and *education as a weapon to change society metaphor* are discussed as the conceptual framework of the study.

The fourth chapter offers research methods, highlighting the use of interviews, talking circles for collecting data, and metaphorical analysis to think through the data and explain the findings. In addition, data analysis, coding, and interpretation of each of the research questions is presented. The fifth chapter structures and presents the findings from the field, guided by the key research questions and themes derived from the analysis. The sixth chapter brings together all the scholarly elements that are developed through the thesis and links them to policy implications. The conclusions and recommendations are offered with reflections on the methodological approach and offers suggestions for further research. The following section begins by exploring indigenous ways of life in order to understand how education unfolded in Uganda before colonization. I briefly explore Uganda as a post-colonial country and trace highlights of social, economic and educational development. This is necessary so as to create familiarity to the ever-

changing strategies and initiatives that explain experiences in Uganda over the past and show

how these slowly have replaced values from the societies with unearned privilege.

CHAPTER 2: UGANDAN CONTEXT AND EDUCATION PROGRESS

This section presents Uganda as the country in which the main focus of the study, the Universal Primary Education (UPE), takes place. The purpose is to create familiarity with the shifting policies and initiatives that have historically unfolded in Uganda. In this regard, the chapter is divided into four parts. General information about the political, social, and economic situation is presented in the first part, with the aim of providing an overall picture of the country. Social classification of primary schools is closely linked to the social situation. The second part presents the development, structure and management of education to understand how education structure has continued to influence education provision today. The third part covers education reforms, including its management through a decentralized approach, with the objective of understanding how historical management practices. Finally, in order to shed light on the extent to which UPE has been a pro-poor policy, and provide a better grasp of the current local contexts, an overview of the Bukedea local district is provided in the fourth part.

Political, Social, and Economic Situation

Uganda is a landlocked country in East Africa. Uganda's location in relation to its neighboring countries is: Kenya is to the East, South Sudan to the North, the Democratic Republic of Congo to the West, Tanzania to the South and Rwanda to the South West, as shown in Figure 2 on page 32. Uganda has the world's fastest growing population, with a growth rate of 3.2 % (UNICEF, 2013) and is approximately 35.9 million people with more than half of the population under the age of 18 (UBS, 2014). Information regarding Uganda is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Uganda information sheet summary

Feature	Information
Location	East Africa
Total Surface area	241,550.6 Km²
Area under water	194,881 Km²
Countries bordering	South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda
Climate	Temperature 15-30 °C, rainfall 600-2,000 mm/year
Population	35.9 million (UBOS, 2014)
Population growth rate	3.2 per cent
Birth rate	Average of 6.2 children per reproductive woman
Literary	73 per cent for persons 10 years above (men 79% and women 69%)
Official language	English, Kiswahili

Source: Uganda Bureau of Standards (2012) and GOU (2007, p. xi)

The rate at which the population is growing poses challenges for developmental initiatives (MOES, 2013b, UBOS, 2010, UNICEF, 2013). The increase in the numbers of children born each year puts pressure on the social service provisions, especially education, to cater to the school-age going cohorts of children (MFPED, 2012).

Political environment

During the colonial rule, Uganda was divided into 39 administrative units known as districts, and usually took the name of the majority tribe in a particular area (Byrnes, 1990). Uganda is currently divided into four regions: Eastern, Western, Central and Northern. These are

further divided into sub regions. Each region is diverse in terms of geography, economic status, and culture. Therefore, there are various livelihoods associated with each region, which have an influence and impact on the availability and quality of education. For example, in regions where fishing takes place for a living, there is increased child labor, which is highly associated with high dropout rates and poor attendance (UBOS, 2010).

The sub-regions are comprised of local districts. There are 112 politically-created districts (from the original counties of the 39 colonial districts) under a decentralization policy, which seeks to locate services closer to the people. Figure 2 shows the current districts. The government is still in the process of further sub-dividing some of these districts. The continued sub-division of the districts has even further implications on the implementation of education policies as is discussed later in the fourth part of this chapter.

In the East African region, Ugandan political leadership has been most frequently changed through the military and general elections (Kelly & Odama, 2011). Since independence, Uganda has had political turmoil and other civil strife including the military coup of 1971 whose rule lasted till 1979, and the armed-bush war by the National Resistance Army/National Resistance Movement (NRA/ NRM), the 1984 Military coup (Tito Okello), and 1986 takeover of power by the NRM (Gulooba -Mutebi, 2008).

According to the World Bank, the trajectory of insecurity and a long-term role of the military in politics was sparked by insecurity in Uganda (World Bank, 2002). The National Resistance Movement (NRM) took power in 1986 and formed a government, but there have been insurgencies in the North, East, and part of the West of Uganda.

Figure 2: *Map of Uganda: Local districts*
Note: Ugandapicks.com2012

For example, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), operated mostly in the Northern and

Eastern parts, and the Uganda Peoples' Army (UPA) was mainly in Eastern Teso region.

Furthermore, the wars and insurgencies not only terrorized and left scars of cruelty,

marginalization, and helplessness, but parts of Northern and Eastern regions remained behind in

most development activities (Kelly & Odama, 2011; World Vision, 2004).

Social and economic situation

In Uganda, more than 85% of the population resides in the rural areas and accounts for

94% of the poor (MFPED, 2012). *The Chronic Poverty* report from Uganda (DRT, 2013),

emphasizes disconnect between the persistently poor and the policy makers. Despite progress reports on economic growth, the majority of rural and semi-urban populations remain in the poverty brackets (UBOS, 2010). Household surveys taken in 2005/06, and updated in 2010 (UBOS, 2010), show that chronic poverty has been halved since 1999, but still persists. According the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2010) one out of ten households are trapped in poverty and are unable to meet basic needs. Consequently, the persistence of poverty, especially in the rural areas, has increased inequality and poor quality of services between urban and rural settings (UBOS, 2012). At the international level, in 2013, Uganda ranked low at 161 out of 183 Human Development Index (UNICEF, 2013). This means that, according to the summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions published by the UN, Uganda is one of the bottom 22 countries in the achievement of a long healthy life (life expectancy), a decent standard of living (income) and in being knowledgeable (education) (United Nations Human Development).

Moreover, the impacts of war and insecurity on the local people have influenced many ways of life for the last thirty years (World Vision, 2004). The effects are long lasting and continue to manifest in many ways in peoples' behaviors and relationships. For example, before these wars and insurgencies, among most tribes, when a parent died, the closest relative quickly filled that gap because children belong to the clan and society. Today, some orphaned children have become household heads even in their teenage years (MGLS, 2010). People have become withdrawn and focus more on their immediate families and no longer care for the values that previously mattered. Generally, wars and insurgencies were oppressive and traumatic to the country's effective recovery (World Bank, 2002). As a result, within the regions of the country there are economic and social inequalities, which are made worse in rural areas by the loss of

livelihoods in the agricultural sector from environmental stress, and climate change (UBOS, 2010).

In addition, the economic and social restoration processes of the country were interrupted by the armed insurgencies that left parts of Northern and Eastern regions lagging behind in all social and economic development activities (World Bank, 2002; World Vision, 2004). Communities moved constantly to safer areas thereby affecting social and economic activities, especially opportunities for children to attend school (Lambright, 2009). Furthermore, the government alternatives to formal schooling during emergencies were not developed. The government could not address the communities' educational needs. Lack of access to education results in prevalent poverty in these regions (World Vision, 2004; District Education Officer, 2009). This contributed to widening the regional gaps in the country leading to inequity and inequality in the provision of education, especially between urban and rural settings (UNESCO, 2005; UNESCO, 2009).

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) supported the economic reforms in the 1980s. The development of the Child Rights by the UN-led Child Rights Convention of 1989 (UNCRC, 1989), emphasized education as a right for all children, which sparked a new discourse on education for all (WCEFA, 1990). Accordingly, education for all became the main focus in the 1990s in many parts of the world. In Uganda, following the Education Policy Review Commission's (EPRC) report of 1989, Universal education was declared in 1997. Education was among the social sectors that received increased budget support in the 1990s (MOES, 2011). The support from the World Bank and IMF, however, came with conditions that required adherence to a number of specific reform programs sweeping across Sub Saharan Africa (SSA), including Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) and Decentralization

(Ndegwa, 2002). The ensuing privatization agenda identified a few key areas for government focus instead of managing many public assets (Hanushek, 2003). Payment of fees for health and school fees for children resulted in many children staying out of school due to poverty (Hanushek, 2003). In the mid-1990s, there was a paradigm shift from Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) to Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF). The PEAP encompasses health, education, water and sanitation, nutrition, inequality and social protection within its development pillar, and is closely aligned to the MDGs (World Bank, Feb 2009). This shift was understood by some scholars to indicate the failure of the SAPs (Kingston, Irikana, Dienye, & Kingston, 2011).

Social categories of primary schools

The beginning of national examinations in the 1970s established the grading of schools according to their performance (Odongo, 2010). This grading, based on the numbers of students passing in the first division in each school, has contributed to a serious divide in schools throughout the districts, region, and country (Tajuba, 2014). This has become an ingrained problem, which has consequently revealed an inequality of educational opportunities (Kagoda, 2012). There is a general belief that education is to rectify socio-economic inequality ensuring learning opportunities for all children (MOES, 2002). However, whether or not children go to schools that produce high scores seems to be determined by family background and economic factors (Buchmann & Hunnum, 2001). These factors reveal that the education disparity in Uganda comes from two aspects. The first aspect comprises of geographical, cultural, and economic variables. For example, in the Northern region, the Karamoja sub-region scores least in examination and also in enrollment ratio, and these low scores are associated with their precarious environment and nomadic culture, coupled with an atmosphere of underlying violence

(MOES, 2009). Besides, the language of instruction in upper primary is English, a language not so closely associated with their own *ŋakarimojoŋ* language, thus influencing the reading test scores and responses to examination questions (Okuni, 2008). The second aspect is the mushrooming of private boarding primary schools all over the country, which, because of their boarding facilities, coach and maintain high scores in the national examinations. Most top performing schools in the national examinations are private schools (non UPE) (Busingye, 2013).

Development, Structure, and Management of Education

The British colonial government was established in Uganda in the 1880s, leading to the process where the different social administrative organizations, that later came to be known as 'Uganda,' changed their outlook and began a path toward Western civilization and colonization (Byrnes, 1990). Western civilization brought with it new forms of education, which unraveled the social set up and ways of life. In the 1880s, Christian Missionaries, mainly Anglican and Catholic organizations introduced formal education (Aguti, 2002; Ssekamwa & Lugumba, 1971). This was later followed by the establishment of locally organized village schools (Hanson, 2010). Academic education was for Europeans and Asians; Africans were provided industrial and agricultural training to provide the British with raw materials (Byrnes, 1990). Between 1886 and 1918, syllabi were set by the Church Missionary Society (CMS), who also developed examinations, managed schools, and trained teachers (Byrnes, 1990; Ociti, 1989; Ssekamwa, 2000). The syllabi and examinations were based on British system until early 1970s (Byrnes, 1990). From the onset, western education introduced new types of educational institutions, which fostered cultural and social values, and in turn, reduced the ability of Africans to hold on to their

cultures (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). It is observed that this was the foundation of some of the stubborn marks of domination through education.

Therefore, education in Uganda during the colonial and post-colonial periods was affected by the ways in which the original indigenous cultural groups were 'forced' to unite as a new country through colonization; people's ways of life were affected, and led to self-doubt and trauma (Kelly & Odama, 2011). The subsequent political conflicts, wars, and insurgencies in the 1970s to 1980s affected many societal groups in Uganda, especially in the ways that the cultural transmission of values was interrupted across generations in Northern and Eastern refugee camps, leading to loss of life, loss of a proper childhood, family, clan and tribe upbringing, and hence, loss of social fiber in the communities. These traumas took a toll on the people. Kelly and Odama (2011) observed that education in these contexts "was born in the history of oppression through the inherited structures and systems from the West" (p. 5).

Structure of the educational system

The current structure of education in Uganda has been in existence since independence. Indeed, Juuko and Kabonesa (2007) observe that the present structure of education has been in existence since 1965, when the Castle Commission report was implemented. This shows that the education policies are overdue for serious repair (Mwesigye and Kitagaana, 2012). The British colonial education structure and system has been maintained, and follows a four-tier model consisting of seven years of primary education, a four-year cycle of lower secondary Ordinary-("O" level), followed by a two-year cycle of upper secondary (Advanced level); this results in a model of 7-4-2-3 (3 to 5 years of tertiary education) as indicated in Table 2 (MOES, 2002). The completion of the cycle of each level of education is marked by rigorous qualifying and/ or placement examinations. All the examination scores at the various levels determine the nature or

type of progression one makes and the personal development programs in which one participates. The structure of education, therefore, provides opportunities for rigid linear progression, as shown in Table 2, which is not attained by many Ugandans, majorly due to failure in achieving the required standards in the various examinations (Kagoda, 2012).

In addition, the 1990s campaign for Early Childhood Development (ECD) resulted in a policy that has mandated a two-year pre-primary stage of education attended by three to five year olds (MOES, 2007). This service, however, is still highly concentrated in the urban centers and run by the private sector. The majority of rural students, especially those in the rural districts, mainly start primary school without any opportunity for early stimulation through ECD.

Furthermore, the National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) measures students' achievements at the primary school level. The concerns raised by the World Bank on the lack of system level information on students' learning to gauge levels of achievement and performance of a particular group, resulted in the creation of the NAPE (Greaney and Kellaghan, 2008). NAPE was intended to help in determining the effectiveness of government policies to improve outcomes (Greaney and Kellaghan, 2008). In order to do this, NAPE assesses the performance of the primary education system to determine the achievement levels based on the curriculum of learners in a particular grade and over a period of time. So far, NAPE tests students in literacy (focusing on reading skills) and numeracy (mathematical skills) by sampling districts within zones and analyzing the results using *basic, adequate, inadequate, and desired levels* as the criteria (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008).

Table 2: Progression in Uganda Education system

Education level	Cycle	Award	Progress opportunities
Pre- Primary	3 Years	-	1. Primary Education
Primary Education	7 Years	Primary Leaving Examination (PLE)	1. Lower Secondary (O' Level) 2. Technical school 3. Community polytechnics
Lower Secondary (Ordinary Level)	4 Years	Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE)	1. Upper Secondary (A' Level) 2. Primary Teachers College 3. Technical/Vocational Institutions 4. Farm Institutes 5. Health Institutions 6. Other Departmental Training Institutions
Technical Institutes	3 Years	Certificate	1. Technical Colleges 2. Universities
Upper Secondary (Advanced Level)	2 Years	Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE)	1. University 2. Uganda College Of Commerce 3. National Teachers College 4. Uganda Technical College 5. Other Training Institutions
Primary Teachers College	2 Years	Certificate	1. National Teachers College
Uganda College of Commerce	2/3 Years	Diploma	1. University
National Teachers College	2 Years	Diploma	1. University
Uganda Technical College	2 Years	Diploma	1. University
University	3/5 Years	Diploma/Degree	1. Post Graduate Studies

Source: Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES, 2008).

However, the challenge rests on how to coordinate assessment, teaching methods, and new curriculum both among and within the institutions and agencies (National Curriculum

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Development Center, NCDC, Uganda National Examination Board, UNEB, Kyambogo University, and NAPE) responsible for educational policy and practice. Even more specifically, the challenge is to ensure that these institutions and agencies positively impact student learning outcome, teacher professional support and management, and funding of primary education at national and local levels.

Management of education

The current education management is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) on behalf of the government of Uganda (Education Act, 2008). The Ministry has specialized technical departments headed by commissioners, who are responsible for different sectors including teacher education, pre-primary and primary, secondary, guidance and counseling, and technical education (Education Act, 2008). The functions of the Ministry includes among others, "developing and implementing education laws, policies, regulations, and delivery of education and training; coordinating, monitoring and evaluating implementation of all government education policies and programs" (Education Act, 2008, p.24; GOU, 2008). The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), a statutory agency established under the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001, regulates, guides, and manages institutions of higher learning and guarantees the quality of higher education (GOU, 2001; GOU, 2008; MOES, 2008).

In addition, there are support sections that include semi or fully autonomous institutions under the Ministry including the National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC) responsible for curriculum development, the National Examinations Board (UNEB), responsible for primary and secondary national examinations, and the Directorate of Educational Standards (DES) responsible for quality assurance and Education Service Commission, responsible for efficient,

motivated education service. It is important to emphasize the role of Kyambogo University as the main teacher education institution responsible for training, examining, and certifying teachers for ECD, Primary and Secondary Education and Special Needs Education (for students with disabilities). However, the management of teacher institutions is solely the responsibility of the Department of Teacher Education under the Ministry of Education.

Furthermore, Uganda adopted a broad decentralization policy in which the civil service was changed from the inherited highly centralized colonial model, into a decentralized structure with most of the decision making moved to the local districts (Oxhorn, 2004). As a result, decentralization, places primary, and to some extent secondary education, under the jurisdiction either the District or the Municipal Council Standing Committee supported by the District Education Officer (DEO) and District Inspectors of schools (DIS) (Education Act, 2008). These committees are expected to develop education plans for the provision of education services. However, the District School Inspectors (DIS) remain professionally supervised by the Education Standards Agency (ESA) even though they work with the local governments. Observations by an official from the Ministry of Education and Sports about these management structures, indicated a discrepancy between how the inspectorate operates as both operatives of the central government and the employees of the local district. The district inspectors report to a central authority yet get paid at the local district. This results in unguided schools and unimplemented programs (discussions with an education official, April, 2014).

At the school level, the School Management Committee (SMC) is responsible for ensuring that the implementation of the curriculum is taking place under the prescribed government regulations. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) was weakened with the emphasis on the role of the SMCs by the Education Act 2008. Therefore, because the SMCs are

responsible for ensuring implementation, they are also responsible for the adult education that supports parental participation. However, adult education is under the Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development (MGLSD), which develops policy guidelines and coordinates with other stakeholders in implementation at the local level (MOES, 2010b). This crossover between the SMC's responsibility and the MGLSD's responsibility creates a system that cannot function efficiently. Furthermore, the management of orphans and vulnerable children are also under the SMC umbrella and are expected to strengthen the provision of primary education. However, the Orphan and Other Vulnerable Children (OVC) Secretariat was established in 2003 under the MGSLSD and addresses the issues related to the education of these groups, in collaboration with responsible ministries of education and health and finance (MOES, 2010b). These make coordination of education services at the local level, very complex. When it comes to resource allocation, the complexity becomes dysfunctional.

Educational Reforms

Consequently, education development has gone through successive political and economic changes from colonial to post independence periods. Efforts to reform education during the colonial era used the 'commissions-strategy' for both improvement in education and in its relevance to the needs of Ugandans. The commissions were expected to explore the environments in which education took place, find out how education could best meet the needs of the Ugandans (referred to in some reports as "Africans"), and recommend the best ways to move forward (Castle Report, 1963). This trend of using commissions persisted decades after Uganda became independent without the concurrent examination of their effectiveness in bringing about the desired change. Notable among the developments were the 1960's emphasis, through the Castle Commission 1963 recommendations, on expansion of secondary education,

expansion of primary education, teacher education, and education management (Sekammwa, 2000).

Thus, recommendations from education policy commissions led to the restriction of further expansion of primary education, which was, in effect, a restriction in favor of secondary education (Castle, 1963; MoES, 1989). This turned technical schools into secondary schools so that technical education could become an integral part of secondary education. Throughout this period, the importance of secondary was emphasized to produce the manpower needed for economic development (Balihuta, 1999; Nsibambi, 1976). The Castle Commission of 1963 and the World Bank Survey Mission guided the education growth and development (as cited in Education Policy Review Commission Report MOES, 1989). However, "the system remained sophist in approach, British in content, and elitist in accessibility" (Balihuta, 1999, p.29). Relevance of education to Ugandans eluded these efforts for reform. In addition, despite the emphasis on expansion, literacy, and numeracy, the majority of the population remained non-literate, with the literacy rate of only 65% (Education Review Commission, 1989).

In 1986, the government of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) led by Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (current president) took power, and set a commission emphasizing the review of education policy. Here again, like the colonial government before, commissions were the solution to any observed problems in education. The key point here is that there appears to be a pattern of using commissions to determine major policy changes. This is how the Universal Primary Education (UPE) program evolved from the recommendations of the Education Policy Review Commission's (EPRC, 1989). These recommendations were also highly influenced by what was taking place at the global level. However, it is also to be observed that the methods used by the EPRC to gather and analyze information have never been debated or challenged

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(Katebalirwa, 1999). Most notable was that education as an indelible right for all children had been declared during the Child Rights Convention (UNCRC, 1989). It is possible to surmise that the recommendations safeguarded the interests of government and development partners, and therefore, even where these recommendations had been implemented, critical issues of equity, equality, access and relevance of education to Ugandans still remained. Indeed, these are the same issues with which the current education system has been grappling since 1989 when the policy report was received. Accordingly in 1989, the Education Policy Review Commission's (EPRC) recommendations to the government became the *Government White Paper on Education* (GOU, 1992). This white paper replaced the Castle 1963 Report and has been the main policy guiding education sector for more than 10 years.

Decentralization

The rehabilitation of education in the 1990s aimed at restructuring the curriculum, restoring educational facilities, and catering to an increasing population (UNESCO, 2010b). Rehabilitation of schools relied again on parents and communities. This colonial pattern of government collaboration with local communities through funding teacher training, teacher salaries, curriculum reviews, materials provision, and school inspection continued, while parents took care of the rest of the students' needs (Bashaasha et al., 2011). However, parents were not actively involved in policy decisions.

The push to expand education gained prominence in Africa at the same time as the decentralization policies swept across the continent, due to the public sector reforms that were a central part of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) (Ndegwa, 2002). According to the Local Government Act (1997), the district local government in Uganda is a result of decentralization policies of the 1990s that transferred power from the central government to the

district-level administrative units. The devolution of power to the local governments at district levels is supposed to make services better at the local level and provide for a clearer accountability of basic social services to the people (MGLS, 2010). However, it has been argued that decentralization had an inclination towards maintaining centralized control with power at the central government (Bashaasha, et. al., 2011). Therefore, the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy implementation is under the jurisdiction of the Local Governments (LGs), and inherits all the challenges of a decentralized district. Appendix A shows the structure of a local government in Uganda. The structure shows that local educational issues are dynamic and diverse, and that there are several players at local and national levels (Niwagaba & Okurut, 2014). In order to achieve desired results in education programs, it is necessary to sort through these levels so as to understand how ideas are sifted and fashioned to fit the individual local context that they are being pplanted (Niwagaba & Okurut, 2014).

Thus, the management and provision of primary education is largely in the hands of the local district administration, while the central government through the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) remains responsible for policy development and control and maintenance of standards, teacher education, curriculum, and examinations (MOES, 2008). Decentralization is also supposed to provide districts with the flexibility to address problems that are unique to the local context (Bashaasha, et al., 2011; Naidoo, 2008; Oxhorn, 2004). Notwithstanding, there are variations between the districts in management capacity for implementation of programs (Naidoo, 2008). Naidoo further argues that because of the way districts were set, many districts do not have the capacity needed to realize the required changes. As a result, education services suffer from inadequate infrastructural capacity and funding for the support and management of

schools. Participation of the local actors runs the risk of becoming mere rhetoric in order to please central government and their development partners (Naidoo, 2008).

Bukedea Local District Context

Below is a brief overview of the Bukedea Local Government (LG), which is used as a case study. Here, the purpose is to provide an example of a decentralized local district and how education happens in a local district context, in order to lay a foundation for further discussions of the local context.

The Teso sub-region (originally known as the Teso District) is located in the Eastern region and comprises 8 districts: Amuria, Bukedea, Kaberamaido, Katakwi, Kumi, Ngora, Serere, and Soroti. The dominant ethnic group is the Iteso followed by the Kumam. The Bukedea district is one example of the local district government. Information about the district was obtained from the District Development Plan, 2010 (DDP). The Bukedea district was originally a county in the larger Teso district. The district was carved out of Kumi district, and granted district status in 2007 (DDP, 2010). Bukedea is therefore, a one county district with five sub-counties and one town council. We share boarders with the Kumi district to the north, the Katakwi and Nakapiripirit districts in the northeast, the Pallisa district in the south, the Mbale and Sironko districts in the east. The population of the district is estimated at 189,774 (91,735 males, 97,988 females) with the majority of the district population living under absolute poverty with many people malnourished (DPP, 2010). The causes of poverty include floods, drought, insurgency, cattle raids, alcoholism, and population increase with little space for farming. Small-scale retail trade in manufactured goods and produce is predominant.

However, the insurgency that engulfed the sub-region (from the late1980s to the late 1990s), triggered by the cattle rustling from the Karamojong warriors, has rendered the area

insecure. Specifically, homesteads, schools, and other social infrastructure were destroyed and the delivery of basic services disrupted. The economy was ravaged, and this in turn has watered down the quality of education in the area. In terms of health, we do not have a functional hospital, but instead have dispensaries that cannot perform even basic surgery. HIV/AIDS prevalence is estimated at 4.2 % compared to the National average of 6.2%; the populations at risk are the young people aged 15-38 years (DPP, 2010).

Education situation in Bukedea

The district has educational institutions ranging from nursery schools to technical/tertiary levels. Altogether there are 164 educational institutions, 29 nursery (pre-primary), 120 primary (97 public, 23 private), 13 secondary (5 public, 8 private), 1 institution for training teachers, and 1 technical institution. This list does not include community schools, which are started by the community, church or Community Based Organization (CBO). The construction of a government vocational / technical institution is underway and is not yet functional. The institutions are both publicly and privately owned as indicated in Figure 3.

Primary schools dominate at 73%, as the district as the main education activity. Again, out of the 73% primary schools, 80.8% are government aided (UPE schools), and 19.2% are privately owned (non-UPE schools). The district has only 13 secondary schools (8% of the total institutions). Other students go to technical institutions outside the district because the one technical institution inside the district is still being built. Many students from Bukedea who are eligible for post-secondary studies could compete for places in the neighboring districts. In comparison to the rest of Uganda, the public Business Technical Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) institutions in Bukedea are non-existent. The private training service providers and other apprenticeships and enterprise-based training programs also operate in many

districts, while in the Bukedea district, the construction of one sole vocational training institution

is only now underway (DDP, 2010). The expectations are that vocational training would boost

skills development among the youths and primary school graduates. Yet, unlike other districts,

the Bukedea district does not have a higher institution of learning beyond the Primary Teacher

Training College and the BTVET institution.

In addition, the literacy level in the district stands at 68.6% (69% males and 28%

females), and varies from one sub-county to another and from one age-set to another (UBOS,

2010). Illiteracy rates stand at 31% males and 52% females (DPP, 2010). Compared to the

national literacy rates at 73%% (79% men, 66% women), there are more illiterate women than

men in Uganda but more so at the rural district levels (UBOS, 2010). At the regional level,

Eastern region literacy level was 68% (75% men, 60% women). The high illiteracy among

women in the district translates into lower numbers of women participating in the

technical/professional and political arenas (DPP, 2010).

Therefore, Bukedea in comparison to other districts is lagging behind in key educational

indicators/statistics. For example, while Bukedea is only just now constructing a vocational

institution, Ntungamo district in Western Uganda boasts of 8 vocational institutions, where 6 are

privately owned (Natamba, Muyomba-Tamale, Ssemakula, Nimpamya & Asiimirwe, 2010).

Furthermore, Bukedea lacks a government-aided school with the advanced secondary level to

prepare students for university entrance. This makes it difficult for the students struggling in

rural areas to succeed in secondary, and to benefit from the government quota to access

government scholarships to public universities. However, the Government of Uganda, in

partnership with the international and local communities and Non-Government Organizations

(NGOs), has made concerted efforts to restore peace and security and reconstruct the social and

economic sectors (Interview with the District Resident Commissioner). Nevertheless, we are still grappling with the challenges of low-income levels and funding, inadequate and poor infrastructure, and lack of trained manpower (including teachers), revealing poor quality education at all levels (UBOS, 2012).

UPE performance and the district dropout dilemma

The district enrolment, despite improvement, is affected by the performance in progression to completion of the primary education cycle. Indeed, close examination of cohorts of the UPE clearly showed huge percentages of dropout rates. For example, the eleventh cohort of UPE entrants in Bukedea district had a 73% dropout (73% boys and 74% girls) (District Education Office EMIS, 2013). Meanwhile at the national level, in 2012 the UPE persistence rate to Primary Five was at 59% (boys, 59%, girls, 60%) (EMIS, 2012). The figure 2 presents an illustration of the dropout rates of one cohort in Bukedea district.

Figure 2: UPE Cohort 2007-2013
Source: District Education Office EMIS, 2013.

From the chart, it is possible to see the sharp drop in enrollment in Primary 2 (second grade) and Primary 6 (sixth grade). There is stagnation in Primary 3(third grade) and Primary 4

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(fourth grade) where the numbers almost stay the same. This stagnation was attributed to high repetition rates in those grades. As a result the numbers of students completing the primary school cycle are quite few. The transitioning rates are at 7% while 23 % are wastage as they are unaccounted for (DDP, 2010).

The stakeholders reported a majority of students failing PLE having given up retaking the examination. Many of these students were either in the streets in the neighboring towns or were married and settled in the villages. Some stakeholders felt that the UPE was far from addressing the needs of students, due to many failures in PLE, especially on school drop outs and a small number continuing to higher levels. "Those who do not continue are not prepared for local jobs (activities). Many want white collar jobs which they are not adequately prepared for" (talking circle with District officials, April, 2014).

Elsewhere, other stakeholders felt that transitioning was the main issue. There are transitions at three stages; in Nursery/pre-school to primary school early years; from Primary 4 (transitioning from the Thematic Curriculum) to Primary 5 (considered upper primary); then from Primary 7 to Secondary level. "These levels form cracks in which many children are lost by the system. Students drop out with no skills, with flimsy knowledge, and different attitudes towards manual work in the community" (informal discussion with the CSO staffs, April, 2014). UPE transition rates are worrying "… especially because of the automatic promotion policy. This is not being addressed properly in primary schools" (informal discussions with elders, April, 2014).

Furthermore, the situation of girls is more alarming than the situation of boys. More girls drop out largely due to the frequent incidences of early teenage pregnancies and the caretaking roles that the girls play in their homes. It was observed that girls who enrolled in Primary One

(P.1) to Primary Two (P.2) and Primary Three (P.3) were about 600-800. When they reached P.4 the number begins to sharply decline by the time they reach P.7. For example, the number of girls who take the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) is always less than 20 in any school in the district. Another reason for girls' dropout was attributed to the communities' perception that girls are assets or source for wealth (as they fetch dowry). Furthermore, girls provide care for the sick in the family including parents, grand-parents, and siblings in their homes. HIV/AIDS was cited as having increased infection rates among the youth and young parents in Bukedea. The girls are at greater risk of infection due to the role they in taking care of sick relatives, and being exposed to early, unprotected sex with motorcycle private transporters, who often have multiple partners. Based on this reality at the local level, girls are at risk of not only missing out on education, but also of infections, as they are not equipped with enough knowledge about different disease and viruses such as HIV/AIDS.

There are seemingly high enrolments of both boys and girls in Primary One. However, the numbers start to reduce by the time they get into Primary Seven. There is a high dropout rate especially of girls in schools. Dropout rates in the district stood at about 69% for boys and 73% for girls in Bukedea in 2013 (DDP, 2010). "These dropout rates have implications to the community as many of them cannot get jobs anywhere" (interview with district stakeholders). Instead, those who went to primary and secondary schools have turned to watching videos. The school dropouts are mostly boys accused of watching videos, playing cards and participating in illegal gambling activities, such as betting during European football premiers. This mostly happens in *video halls* (small makeshift huts, where solar power is used to show movies). "Watching those videos requires paying money which they do not have, so they resort to stealing from people" (interview with district officials). As a result, many of these school dropouts have

resorted to crime. "Children are turning to be thieves, and what that means is that they see themselves as completely useless or failures" (*informal discussion with parents*).

In addition, still other stakeholders were concerned about the growing number of students leaving school early and have nothing to fall back on. "They finish secondary education but come back; our homes are full of youths that are redundant. UPE is by name, but many students are not progressing; there is a lot of coming back to the village" (*interview with stakeholder*). The stakeholders were expressing the high numbers of students who failed to continue with education or find training to gain skills. Local communities stressed the situation of the youth in their communities as needy. They lamented the high number of school leavers, who they felt the system had neglected because they did not make it to the higher grades. This associated UPE with walking a tight rope. "UPE made us to relax and now we do not know what to do with our children when they do not go further with education" (talking circle with parents).

Summary of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter was to create familiarity with the shifting policies and initiatives that have unfolded historically. The chapter briefly discussed the educational development and reforms in Uganda from the colonial period to the neocolonial period, and identified three factors that continue to influence the current education system. Generally, throughout the history of education development in Uganda, there has been growing political interest in primary education. However, because of political interest, education is often used as a weapon by politicians and is therefore prominent in their political agenda (Alexander, lecture notes, 1995). As a result, successive governments demand the education reforms, commissions, and the subsequent commission reports. The reception of these reports has depended upon the political climate at the time of presentation. For example, the Education Policy Review

Commission (EPRC) was presented to the NRM government at the time the political leadership was actively making "*fundamental changes*" (Museveni, 1986) to the economic and social service sectors, and was also seeking political validation from the electorates (Stasavage, 2004). This political validation could be associated with the ideological changes, which enhance policy formulation, that occur at the juncture of the commissions' reports and governmental response. However, it could be argued, first, that conceptually there was no clear understanding of primary education values or the evidence available (empirically) to support reforms, hence the frequent resolve to use commissions in attempts to justify policy decisions. The governments seemed to know the direction they wanted to take, but sometimes under the advice of developmental partners, setting commissions' became a legitimate way of solidifying these ideas.

Second, most of the policy reforms promoted over the last few decades only reinforced centralized hierarchical systems that insulated schools and educators and officials from changes that would actually recognize, adapt, and adopt innovations favorable for learning. Thus, district structures that followed the central hierarchy became more complex. Third, the economic goals to improve social services through the setting of priorities for poverty reduction improved Uganda's credentials within the international aid organizations and donor countries in the west (Byrnes, 1990, MFED, 2008). These approvals encouraged the donor and developmental partners led by the World Bank, UNESCO, USAID and others to become actively engaged in financing and providing technical support for education expansion through the Universal Primary Education (UPE) (Eilor, 2005). Fourth, education reform policies in Uganda since independence aimed at making education relevant, equally accessible, and of good quality for Ugandans, but they did so without sufficient provision for targeted groups (parents, women, the marginalized, orphans, children not in school for various reasons, and those without jobs). As a

result, the reforms have been counterproductive and have not affected positive change in the long run (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003).

Consequently, when comparing the current universal education to the colonial system, a striking resemblance is noticeable showing that the legacy of the colonial government lives on. Decades after independence, the Ugandan educational system maintains its colonial roots as a replica of the old British system of education (Balihuta, 1999). This haunting presence of colonial legacy with its lingering maladies can be described as a *colonial hangover*. This characterization holds true because the curriculum is largely academic-oriented, placing emphasis on Western knowledge and ways of knowing, externally motivated policies, rigid curricula, standards, and decontextualized pedagogy, thus making education an instrument of domination (Freire, 2000). In addition, it is observed that the forced introduction of Western culture, especially learning English, make Ugandans (Africans) feel less equal to Europeans (Farrant, 1980; Balihuta, 1999; Ssekamwa, 2000). The English language remains dominant and is the main 'official' or commercial/business language for economic, social, and political contact within the former colonies (Balihuta, 1999). The use of a foreign language for schooling sets precedence for inequalities in education that have persisted despite the reforms (EPRC, 1989).

Currently, social status continues to function as one of the most discriminating variables that separates the elites from the masses (Mino, 2011) and rural from urban as exemplified in the education situation of Bukedea local district. Consequently, Uganda has actively pursued reforms for more than three decades, resulting in enacted laws, processes, and structures that are promoted as the best in Africa (Andrews & Bategeka, 2013). However, Andrews and Bategeka (2013) further said that the implementation of these laws and processes are "… poorly executed

with insufficient follow up mechanisms to ensure conformity and measure impact … most reforms have produced weak institutions with limited impacts" (p. 34).

The current education system in Uganda has wholly embraced Western thought in a context where the available opportunities do not reflect Western social infrastructures at the local level (Nussbaum, 2011). Furthermore, the current system ignores the local values and approaches, knowledge, and emphasis on *humanness*, which are in line with the African societies' philosophies of education. Therefore, these issues are further explored in the next chapter in a bid to understand the links between the contextual background of education in Uganda with: 1) the wider thinking about the purpose of education, 2) the global push for education expansion, 3) how links 1 and 2 have become forms of control through international partnerships and agendas over the local people. In addition, the conceptual lenses used for examining this phenomenon are presented.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores the existing literature on the purpose of education, the background to mass education, the global focus and initiatives that influence education expansion, and educational reforms that have addressed expansion challenges and weaknesses in Uganda. The purpose is to provide context and build a case for this study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). It further intends to show how this study fits to existing body of knowledge (Kardong-Edgren, 2011) by reporting on the current knowledge and on how this study adds to the understanding of the global thinking about educational purpose. There are three sections to the chapter. The first section provides an overview of the purpose of education, the mass expansion of formal education globally, and the education expansion under the umbrella of the global education goals. The performance of these goals is explored further in the second section leading to observations on education as domination and the need to empower communities to address the challenges that this domination creates. The third section describes the theoretical basis for this study using critical theory/pedagogy, *Eituŋanane*, and Mandela's "education is a weapon for change" metaphor as the conceptual approaches for the study.

Purposes of Education around the World

Children and youth live in families and communities and grow to become adult members of the society at large. For many cultures, this is stressed in the expression *children are the hope for tomorrow*. They are expected to grow and effectively play important roles as adults in contributing to the wellbeing of their society. Emphasis is on the need to develop a person to enable him/her, to look after him/herself, provide for family, and contribute to the community and to society. Children cannot develop if they are continually being provided for without learning to take care of themselves (Nyerere, 1973). Therefore, across the different cultures of

the world, there are many different ways of thinking about the purpose and the roles of education in developing individuals and society. Developing an understanding about the purpose of education opens the doors to its intrinsic value. Commonly used phrases to define the role of education are: to inculcate or impart knowledge, influence attitudes, values, morals, and shape the learners' behavior and character to contribute to human life (Ozmon & Craver, 1999). Children, through individual growth and development, assimilate knowledge and develop both life principles and the ability to use knowledge and principles in pursuit of other ideals (Ozmon & Craver, 1999). Education's role must, therefore, be good for society and personal wellbeing (Reid, 1998).

Schooling is developed in the Western world with the key purpose of socializing an individual into society (Ezewu, 1983; Meyer et al., 1992). Therefore, the socialization of individuals, acquisition of knowledge, and the development of skills are central to the purpose of education (Ezewu, 1983). In the United States, the colonial education system is similar to the Ugandan colonial experience in that it was introduced first by missionaries and then by British settlers, with the purpose of providing religious-oriented instruction to upper social class children (Moran, 2009; Webb et al., 2007). Reading, mathematics, and writing are taught together with the Bible (Moran, 2009). Moran further observed that public education reforms in later years established a free public education system open to all children, with the purpose of training students to become skilled workers, create better citizens, and a culturally uniform "American" society. This is similar to the Ugandan education reforms after independence from the British.

In addition, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1947) in his essays on the purpose of education explored the dual function of education. Education should, according to King (1947), "empower human beings to think well and in an unbiased manner" (para. 2). King (1947) argues not only

that thinking is important for reasoning, making informed choices and decisions, and weighing

options, but also that thinking is closely linked to society's values and worthy objectives. King

(1947) conceptualized a moral education and uses the analogy, "*a life without education is as a*

ship without a compass," to describe his point on the centrality of education in life (para. 3).

Furthermore, John Dewey (1925), in his *Experience and Nature,* expounded on a theory of

society and education which explored the possibility of searching after the perfect medium

between the individual and society. Progressive education, at least in Dewey's (1925) way of

promoting it, is all about rearing the individual to become cognizant of both current and future

societal needs and then providing for those needs. One of the most significant features of

Dewey's (1925) thought is that education goes far beyond the formal idea of learning a subject

matter in a structured setting, to embracing the whole person and the society from which he/she

comes.

Moreover, Dewey (1931) in his book, *Democracy and Education*, sought to synthesize,

criticize, and expand upon the democratic educational philosophies of Jean-Jacques Rousseau

and Plato (Woolfolk, 2011). Dewey saw Rousseau's philosophy as overemphasizing the

individual and Plato's philosophy as overemphasizing the society in which the individual lives

(Ornstein & Levine, 2006). For Dewey (1931), this distinction was largely a false one. Like

Vygotsky, he viewed the mind and its formation as a communal process. Thus, the individual is

only a meaningful concept when regarded as inseparable from his or her society, and the society

has no meaning apart from its realization in the lives of its individual members. There are both a

striking similarity and a difference here with the African philosophies. The similarity centers on

the society, but the difference is in the emphasis. In most African societies, emphasis is first on

the family, clan, and society the individual comes last, while in the West emphasis is on the

individual first, and then society (Eze, 2010).

Comparatively, Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) rooted his ideas of education under

poverty, illiteracy, backwardness, and frustrations (Bala, 2005). Gandhi stressed the need to

develop an education system which promotes the development of mind and soul, instilling

courage and self-reliance in the individual, while at the same time cultivating intellectual,

scientific, moral, and ethical accomplishments (Bala, 2005). Therefore, Gandhi's philosophy of

education for the individual and the society is interpreted as "… Education for life, education

through life, and education throughout life" (Bala, 2005, p. 71). In short, the purpose of

education according to Gandhi was to prepare an individual to be a morally and spiritually

upright person, self-reliant, and a practical member of the society. These sentiments are shared

with the African societies. The question to pose here then is, what lessons can be learned from

the achievements and failures of the purposes the Western, mass education that Africans have

adopted, reformed, and adjusted to date, although the educational missions remain unfulfilled?

The answer to this question may be found in the globally emphasized mass education that holds

out the unfulfilled promises of money, prestige, and influence promoted by the human capital

theory.

Education and the Human Capital Theory

Education systems, especially in developing countries, adopt present global capitalism as

an overall dominant ideology and as a natural and desirable system of economic organization

(Apple, 1990; Van Welhof, 2008). Therefore, education and human capital are increasingly key

elements in modern development (Klees, 2009). McLaren (2005) observed the lack of discussion

of alternatives to capitalist systems by the proponents of capitalism. Van Welhof, (2008) called

this phenomenon "There Is No Alternative" (TINA) effect, and stated that its advocates see capitalism as inevitable and sometimes send a signal to indicate there is no need to debate or try to understand them. And yet most of the world's resources are placed in the hands of a few under global capitalism. Funding and education are also handled by the few, and education within the capitalist society accepts such inequalities as a natural result of the system (Apple, 1990; McLaren, 2005). Consequently, capitalist ideals influence education through instructional practices, curriculum, school funding, resource allocation, and administrative decisions (Apple, 1990).

Therefore, in the beginning of the twenty-first century, education and human capital are increasingly considered as the key elements in modern development. The belief that education develops the human capital of nations and leads to faster modernization of less developed societies, also leads the World Bank and the IMF to become active investors in education (World Bank, 1999, 2000). The World Bank is currently the largest funding agency for EFA (King & Palmer, 2012). As a result, the developing countries continue to borrow heavily from these institutions to finance their education development, an act which in turn continues to cripple their developing economies.

In Uganda, many theories of education are acceptable and very persuasive. The overriding idea that education is central to economic development has been used to initiate, develop and implement educational programs since independence (Castle, 1963, MOES, 1992, MOES, 2008). Indeed, Human Capital theory continues to guide the Ugandan educational system in a bid to eradicate poverty as clearly articulated in the government strategic papers (GOU, 2010, MOES, 2008). Therefore, the human capital beliefs are important in understanding the place education occupies at the national and local levels. The government emphasizes

modernizing the economy, agriculture, the military, the police and other sectors (GOU, 2010). Education becomes a tool best suited for this task and as an entrance to the global knowledge economy (MOES, 2004). Most of the funding to the Ugandan government comes in the form of loans (MFED, 2001). The international community through its G8 countries has prioritized education in developing countries, exemplified by the introduction of Education For All and New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD 2001). The international financial commitment to support education in the poor countries comes through various world bodies such as the UN agencies, the World Bank and the IMF, the European Union, Department for International Development, (DfID, (Britain), GTZ (Germany), USAID (United States) and the governments of Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and others (Aguti, 2009). It was observed that these development partners view education as playing a major role in the economic development inclined toward the notion of industrial revolution.

Mass Expansion of Formal Education-a Brief History

Generally, new theories and philosophies of education play a role in the expansion of education globally. Indeed, education as we know it today, began as accumulation of knowledge and information over time, and was repeatedly used by societies in response to their felt needs. This later became an organized process and a system. In ancient days, after the discovery of ways of preserving knowledge and experiences for a longer period through writing, the knowledge that persisted was transmitted orally and in figures, images, and words. Writing, reading, and arithmetic therefore became the foundation of all education systems. The indicators used globally for measuring educational outcomes are therefore based on basic literacy, numeracy (mathematics) levels, and science.

Education philosophers like John Dewey, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Pestalozzi, John Locke, Francis Bacon, and Thomas Hobbs, among others, emphasize the importance of the child in the educational process (Gutek, 1988; Osmon, & Craver, 1999). John Dewey (1931) emphasized the importance of allowing a child to develop his/her own individual talents within the notion that these talents would be used to serve society (Frost, 1962). Dewey (1931) conveyed the idea of education as life itself in the preparation for the young generation's future roles. He insists that societies, through the institution of education, have a duty to prepare these individuals and equip them with the relevant knowledge, appropriate skills, right attitudes and values (Dewey 1931). Similar notions of society and education were echoed by Ornstein and Levine (2006); Ozmon and Craver (1999); and Webb, Metha, and Jordan (2007). These philosophies are the basis for the emphasis on the roles and purposes of formal education, setting of goals, and the institutionalization of formal schooling, which have spread over the years to other parts of the world in a bid to achieve education for all. The theories and philosophies of education, therefore, play a foundational role in education reforms and /or expansion. Indeed the development of reading and writing, augmented by inventions in technology, also play a role in the expansion of formal education. Education expansion then, was emphasized in the Western world especially after the Second World War (Myer, Raminez, & Soysal, 1992) to improve industries that were skill intensive (Fleischhauer, 2007). Mass education was also informed by the new theories and philosophies on child development and learning promoted by education philosophers.

Subsequently, there are striking characteristics of modern mass education everywhere in the world. First, as indicated in the global Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), education is worldwide (universal) (Hume, 2009), standardized, and

rationalized (Raminez & Boli, 1982). The uncontested thinking is that EFA is a universal factor that can contribute to the development of human capital that is able to compete in the global market and knowledge-economy (Klees, 2009). Second, education is highly institutionalized and therefore homogeneous in aspiration (Boli et al., 1985). Therefore, global patterns of educational institutionalization make it easy, for example, for the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to collect data on education prevalence because education systems everywhere are built to conform to the "world-institutionalized standards model" (Boli et al., 1985, p. 148). Third, socialization of an individual as a central social unit is an important aspect of schooling (Ezewu, 1983; Raminez & Boli, 1982). Therefore, increasingly, nations are continuously forging forward to expand formal education in order to realize the purpose of mass education. However, the forced introduction of western knowledge and values systems to Africa resulted in neglect of the local knowledge (Sifuna, 2007; Ojiambo, 2009). And yet, the mass education is "… seen as an agency of cultural transmission as well as change; … reflect[ing] the dynamic process of nation-building that is continuously being modified by new conditions" (Woolman, 2001, p.40) through educational reforms and expansion supported by the industrialized or developed countries. Global education expansion is orchestrated through the development of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education For All (EFA) which symbolize education as an important tool for development (McGrath, 2010). The following section examines the influence of these global goals in expanding education.

Global education goals and expansion of primary education

Historically, the role and purpose of education is seen as empowering people to become productive members of their society (Raminez & Boli, 1982). This is an ongoing process starting from the western societies after World War II to the colonized nations in Sub Saharan Africa

(SSA), Asia and the Pacific and other regions. Primary education expansion increases in SSA from the 1960s to the 1980s soon after independence, but stagnated, and in some cases declined in the 1980s due to the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) (Kingston, et.al, 2009).

So, in September 2000, the UN Millennium Declaration was adopted by 189 world leaders and an action plan was developed known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Hume, 2008; UN Millennium Project, 2008). (The MDGs and their targets can be found in Appendix IX). Bound by a global partnership and to be completed by 2015, these goals are aimed at eradicating the many dimensions of poverty (UN Millennium Project, 2008). The 8 MDGs focus on: 1) reducing poverty, 2) achieving universal primary education, 3) promoting gender equality and empowering women, 4) reducing child mortality, 5) improving maternal health, 6) combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, 7) ensuring environmental sustainability, and 8) creating global partnerships for development (MDG Millennium Project, 2000). It is emphasized by the international community that MDGs are complementary and success in one MDG should work to positively to influence others (World Bank, 2008).

For this reason, there is a belief that some targets from Goal 8, namely developing transparent financial systems and addressing needs of landlocked countries (like Uganda), would directly affect post-colonial countries' debts and would therefore work to enhance MDG Goals 2 and 3, which focus on universal access to education and gender equality (UN MDG report, 2014). Another target in Goal 8 is cooperation with the private sector, which should make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies' (UN Millennium Project, 2008). This target can work to improve access, quality

and quantity of education, and encompass all the other action areas and broader goals of

Education for All (EFA), which has become an overriding priority in education (Easterly, 2009).

Progress in the MDGs are measured through twenty one targets and sixty official

indicators as shown in Appendix IX (UN, MDG, 2014). The two main aims of the MDG goals

are to eradicate extreme poverty and improve the conditions for the poor. MDG data is

segregated according to UN geographical divisions in which groups of countries are placed in

blocks for analysis. Reporting on MDGs is facilitated by several organizations. For example,

Goal 2 has UNESCO as its primary report facilitator, while Goal 3 has the International Labor

Organization (ILO), UNESCO, and UN Women (UN, MDG, 2014) as primary report facilitators.

EFA works toward achieving MDG Goals 2 and 3, which aim at ensuring education for

all children and eliminating the gender gap in primary education by 2015 (ANPCCAN, 2010).

EFA goals were introduced to the developing countries to ensure education for all citizens for

poverty eradication and economic development (UN, MDG, 2014). Uganda is among the 189

countries throughout the world that committed to the MDGs. The 2013 MDG report shows that

Uganda has made considerable progress in achieving some of the goals. For example, Uganda is

on target in halving the number of people living in absolute poverty, and is on track in achieving

other goals (GOU, 2013). The report, however, stresses that progress remains slow in achieving

EFA, is stagnant in reducing maternal deaths, and is in reverse for reducing HIV/AIDS (GOU,

2013). Furthermore, the current push for the expansion of primary schooling in Uganda through

the Universal Primary Education (UPE) is aligned to economic development and poverty

eradication. However, critics question as to whether or not these global goals actually represent

the west's moral issues, economic interests, or both (Daun, 2000), and whether or not they are

fair to developing countries (Easterly, 2009; Riddle, 1999; Samoff, 1999) or how the rationale for the goals was arrived at originally (Bray, 1989).

Education for All (EFA) goals

As stated earlier, Education for All (EFA) is a global movement coordinated by UNESCO, the World Bank, and other UN bodies. UNESCO is mandated to lead the movement and coordinate efforts to ensure that all children of the world access education (UNESCO, 2000). The EFA movement was launched in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 at a World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA, 1990). Representatives from throughout the international community (155 countries, as well as representatives from 150 organizations) agreed to make primary education available to all and thus decrease illiteracy (WCEFA, 1990). EFA has a diverse body of stakeholders including governments, development agencies, civil society, non-government (non-profit) organizations and the media. EFA is considered a basic human right; therefore the countries increased their efforts to improve education in order to ensure that basic learning needs are met. It has 6 goals aimed at meeting the learning needs of all children, youth, and adults by 2015. The 6 EFA goals are:

Goal 1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Goal 2. Ensuring that by 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to complete, free, and compulsory primary education of good quality.

Goal 3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs.

Goal 4. Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women,

     and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

Goal 5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and

     achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and

     equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

Goal 6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence, so that

     recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy,

     numeracy, and essential life skills.

     Consequently, each participating country is expected to achieve all 6 EFA goals and the

MGDs by 2015. However, EFA annual monitoring reports by UNESCO, show that many

countries are close to achieving some of the goals, but most countries are far from getting there

(UNESCO, 2009). The Ugandan government 2013 report on Millennium goals indicated that

EFA is on track to achieve gender equality and empowering women. This progress report further

observed that education quality initiatives and curricula reforms are achieving results and that

children are completing primary education earlier and staying in school longer (Government of

Uganda, 2013). This same report (2013) claimed that basic learning outcomes such as literacy

are improving (Government of Uganda). However, some of these claims made in the Ugandan

Government's 2013 report did not agree with other UNESCO, UWESO, and NAPE reports.

These discrepancies will be explored further in the next sections.

Progress toward EFA 2015

     The pressure put on the developing countries to achieve the global goals has resulted in

more children accessing schooling, with some nations hitting the targeted rate of enrollment

(UNESCO, 2009, UNESCO, 2010). Generally, progress has been made at a global level towards

achieving universal education (UNESCO, 2010). However, the road to September 2015 still remains difficult for many governments in developing countries, including Uganda. The biggest challenge remains in reaching the minorities and remote rural areas, where many uneducated persons and the rural poor reside (UNESCO, 2010). The UN MDG report (2014) indicates that half of the 58 million out-of-school primary education children live in conflict affected areas, and that more than 1 out of 4 children in developing regions entering primary school is likely to drop out. Furthermore, 781 million adults and 126 million youth worldwide lack basic literacy skills and more than 60% are women (UN, 2014, p.18). According to UNESCO (2010), despite heavy investment by the governments and the development partners in primary education for over two decades, the outcomes do not indicate that participating students have acquired the critical knowledge, skills, and values, necessary to prosper in their communities as well as compete in the global economic arena (UNESCO, 2009).

In spite of the successes registered in getting children to schools, and the improvements made in achieving some goals, primary education has continued to report weaknesses especially in the quality of education (UNESCO, 2010, 2013/14). Access to primary education has been lauded in terms of how many students have been enrolled since the inception of the policy (UNESCO, 2010, 2013/14). However, the indicators of access and learning provide a mixed bag of evidence that the EFA policy is successful. The increased numbers of enrolled students have not matched similar levels of learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2009; UNESCO, 2010; UNESCO, 2013/4). In Uganda, this is demonstrated by the 2013 Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) results, which show that urban districts outperformed their counterparts in the rural areas (Minister of Education and Sports, 2013); that private schools did better than public UPE schools (New Vision, 2014), and that while boys performed better in science subjects, nevertheless, their

English scores were poor, as is shown by the examination results of 2014 (New Vision, 2014, March). Thus, the Ugandan 2013 PLE results mirror the UNESCO findings of 2010 and 2013/14: minimal improvement in performance compared to previous years.

The MDGs, EFA, and Uganda's UPE

EFA is subsumed within MDG Goals 2 and 3, which focus on education for all and gender parity, respectively. EFA processes are linked to the promotion and sustainability universal rights, governance, and political systems (Kendall, 2007). In Uganda, MDG Goal 2 directly links to achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) to ensure that "all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling" (MDG Goal 2 and EFA Goals 1, 2, and 3). Another EFA (Goal 3), promoting gender equality and empowering women, thereby "eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015" is subsumed within the MDG Goal 3. (MDG Goal 3 and EFA Goal 3). Consequently, in many developing countries, attention is currently centered on the MDG goals as the 2015 deadline approaches (Glewwe, et.al, 2012; Joshi & Smith, 2013; King & Palmer 2013). However, the EFA movement results in countries either borrowing large sums of money or depending on foreign aid to finance their education expansion, an act which in turn continues to inhibit their developing economies (Klees, 2009). Despite this tendency, developing countries still believe strongly in EFA and MDGs goals, which have led them to be inextricably dependent on the rich nations and their donor and lending institutions (Young, 1995).

In addition, UPE is aligned to these goals and other Education Sector plans, and highlights the connection with global goals (MOES, 2007, MOES, 2013). MDGs and EFA goals are therefore measured through the achievements of UPE in access, gender equity, and quality education (GOU, 2013). Yet, these efforts to codify global and national goals are inadequate if

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over half of Ugandan children do not learn basic skills in reading and mathematics (UWESO, 2012). Moreover, because many children fail to complete the primary cycle and/ or leave with no relevant knowledge and skills (UNESCO, 2009), Klees (2009) argues that EFA could be viewed as a western effort to legalize economic globalization, which could result in more serious forms of social injustice within and across countries.

Universal Primary Education (UPE)

During the 1996 political campaigns, President Museveni pledged to provide free primary education to four children per family. Consequently, The UPE policy was born and implementation started in January, 1997. Through this policy, the government provides training and salaries for teachers, construction of classrooms, and purchase of requisite textbooks (Education Act, 2008). Parents buy uniforms, and other scholastic materials and provide meals for children (Education Act, 2008). Then in January of 1997 the government abolished school fees for children and allowed all children to go to school instead of just four per family, as earlier indicated (Education Act, 2008). The government also abolished tuition fees and PTA charges; an act that was later interpreted by parents as "free education" (Education Act, 2008). In order to sustain the program, financing measures were instituted (Education Act, 2008).

Funding for the education sector as a whole increased from 2.1% of the GDP in 1995 to 4.8% in 2000, and the share of the education sector as a whole increased significantly from 13.6% in 1990 to 24.7% in 1998 (ANPCCAN, 2010). The 2005/2006 government spent more money in the education sector making it the biggest funded sector in the country (ANPCCAN, 2010). The Education Sector Investment Plan (ESIP) mandated the primary education sector to receive not less than 65% of the sector budget (ESIP, 1998). Liberalization of education allowed the private sector to enter into education provision, but mostly in urban settings where 12% of

the population lives (ANPCCAN, 2010). The introduction of UPE demonstrated government's political commitment to ensuring that all children receive an education. Therefore, UPE is the Ministry of Education's flagship and main policy tool for achieving poverty reduction and human development (MOES, 2012). Its main objectives include:

1. Providing the facilities and resources to enable every child to enter and remain in school until the primary cycle of education is complete.

2. Making education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities.

3. Ensuring that education is affordable for the majority of Ugandans.

4. Reducing poverty by equipping every individual with basic skills (MOES, 2008).

UPE policy is also seen by the government and the development partners (mainly donors and others funders) as the main tool for achieving the economic, social and political objectives outlined in the Ministerial Brief 1998 (MOES, policy document of 1998). It should be noted, however, that the launch of UPE under the umbrella of poverty eradication, shows the complex relationship between education and other sectors including Local Government (decentralization), Finance, Planning and Economic Development (financing/accountability), Health (school health/hygiene), Community Development, Works, and others. In addition, because of its association with poverty eradication and economic development, UPE has had unwavering political backing and enjoyed support from other affiliated ministries.

While the UPE goals emphasize the roles of primary education in reducing poverty, reducing inequality, and improving equity, MOES policy objective 2.3 (ii), adds, "transforming the society in a fundamental way" (MoES 1998, p. 3). Therefore, through the different legal frameworks developed from the education policy reviews, attempts were made to expand and improve education services at the primary level. Examples of legal frameworks and policies

included: "free" and "compulsory" primary education legislation, supported by "*putting books in pupils' hands*," thematic curriculum, automatic promotion, Quality Education Initiative (QEI), construction of schools, teacher performance profile and others (MOES, 2009). The Universal Secondary Education (USE) was introduced in 2007 to support and absorb the UPE graduates (MOES, 2008).

Thus, UPE is not an isolated reform package, but part of the education reform process implemented within the entire broad spectrum of the Ugandan education system. Primary education has immense importance because it is the only type of education to which most Ugandans have access; secondary and university education are beyond the reach of the majority. Bashaasha et al. (2011) stated that UPE policy decreased delayed primary enrollment and achieved higher educational attainment. UPE is also credited with an increase in access and equity at the primary level as a 'pro-poor policy' (Nishimura, TakaAshi, and Yuichi, 2008). However, other than the success in increasing access, the policy's actual effects are yet to be realized or empirically determined. Some early studies carried out a few years after the start of UPE report improved access to primary schools by children from poorer families (Deininger, 2003; Grogan, 2006; MOES, 1999).

Performance of UPE

Despite UPE being a flagship program in the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES, 2012), the emphasis on the promotion of reading, numeracy, and basic skills is not enough to usher Ugandan children into becoming technologically savvy and critical thinkers in the absence of enough materials and content relevant to their contexts. The current education, despite being "universal," is almost entirely a product of western knowledge and pedagogy, is more focused on the intellect, and lacks a broad perspective, which develops an inquisitive spirit and deeper

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understanding (Kalule, 2009; Kagoda, 2012). The schools lack laboratories, gender sensitive textbooks, and relevant curriculum that is not focused on western theories of learning (Ekaju, 2011; Kattan, 2006).

In addition, at both primary and secondary levels, classroom activities do not provide a scope for the child's creative abilities to flourish. The recommended methods of teaching do not provide teachers enough room to maneuver, given the inherited colonial seating arrangements in the classrooms and the overwhelmingly large numbers of students per classroom. Teaching remains predominantly teacher-centered and highly contextualized. In addition, because it is memorization skills that are tested, the current examinations are inadequate for a holistic assessment of student skills. The whole education system continues to be driven by tests and selection (exit) examinations. There are immediate, unexpected challenges: high teacher/student ratio, lack of books and desks, and high dropout rates especially in Primary One (Byaruhanga, 2005; Grogan, 2006, Nishumura et al., 2008). Observations about the flaws of the UPE policy in its introduction include the absence of a research-based strategy for structural and curricular reform aimed at aligning the education system with the current national education needs (Vokstrup, 2001; Ward, et al, 2006).

Yet, adequate quality basic education is critical for the rural poor, where the majority of the population is found. The rural population depends largely on subsistence agriculture, which means education must develop a human resource strategy that addresses the local rural needs (Chimombo, 2005, Vokstrup, 2001). It is observed that UPE was introduced before the systems, including curriculum relevance, were fully reformed. UPE therefore expanded access to a primary education whose quality and relevance are questionable. As a result, the net enrollment in secondary and higher education for the rural poor continues to dwindle in spite of the

increased enrollment numbers for the entire country. Vokstrup (2001) further argued that educational content favors the urban middle class and that the rest of the students do not receive adequate attention, especially those in rural areas. He stated that "[e]ducation… is biased on western ideas, attitudes, and aspirations … The education system faces the challenge of being relevant to the rural population" (Vokstrup, 2001, p. 134). The government's education review reports, sector reports and strategies, and policies confirm Vokstrup's observations related to the concerns about UPE and the Ugandan education system as a whole (JICA, 2012, MOES, 2013, Murphy, 2002; Oonyu, 2012; Kagoda, 2012). Thus, the introduction of universal education in developing countries from the global perspective, is economically driven but is presented under the cover of poverty eradication programs, thus becoming a form of domination. In order to fight the domination, Mandela suggested "education as a weapon that can be used to change society" (Mandela, 2003, para 2).

Education as a Weapon for Changing Society

As president, Mandela inherited a divided South African society, with massive inequality and poverty. He saw education as the only means to transform South Africa after apartheid. Although Mandela stood for nonviolence in the apartheid era, his likening education to a weapon means he understood well the difficulty of realizing change and that education is the only effective assault weapon to usher in that needed change.

A weapon, according to *Merriam Dictionary*, is a tool such used to deter, defend, and protect from an attack or harm." That means that Mandala's educational weapon is meant for demolition of harmful structures, boundaries, traditions, and practices. It also means that education is the means to protect, promote, and maintain life. In other words, a weapon, when used well for the purpose for which it is meant, promotes safety and a sense of security.

However, the educational weapon can also be used to oppress and control people. The metaphor therefore, has two parts. Education as a weapon can *be used to protect and free* and thus *change the world*. Conversely, education as a weapon and also be used to oppress and subject. As a weapon, education *arms* an individual or a group of individuals with skills, knowledge, and ideas as tools to use to achieve something better. Skills application at different levels for survival within a context enables individuals to *fight* poverty. Poverty, as expressed in the global MDGs, include income, hunger, disease, and lack of adequate shelter leading to exclusion.

Education therefore, 'arms' children and youth with tools for critical thinking, informed decision-making, for taking action, making judgments, and participation in and contribution to the community and society. In Uganda, ignorance is associated with the inability to read or write, and is coupled with the lack of appropriate western knowledge as a result of not attaining formal education (*uneducated*). The ability to read and write, especially in English, is still considered important for anyone to be employed in any government sector. Indeed, it is globally acknowledge that reading, writing, and arithmetic are critical tools for use in daily living. Therefore, education as a weapon is used to fight and to prevent diseases, illness, and infections. Arming students with knowledge about the causes and prevention of disease is one very accessible, basic result of the concept of education as a weapon. The prevention of disease, in turn, can affect overall productivity, which in turn again, affects poverty. The alleviation of poverty, in turn again, affects education access and the inequality that pervades entire societies.

Education as a 'weapon' for fighting inequality

In a world where western culture promotes itself as superior, education can be used as a weapon to promote and maintain hegemony. Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, in his

remarks at the World Bank launch of the 2015 Education Strategy, cited Nelson Mandela's education metaphor to emphasize education's power:

> Education as a weapon for eliminating gender inequality, reducing poverty, creating a sustainable planet, preventing needless deaths and illness, and fostering peace. And in the knowledge economy, education is the new currency by which nations maintain economic competitiveness and global prosperity. Education is an investment and one of the most critical investment, we can make
>
> (Arne Duncan, April, 2013).

So, when we talk of *education as a weapon that can be used to change society*, the questions are which education, what change, for whom, and who makes this decision? As can be seen in Duncan's remarks, education laden with western values is what is promoted. The areas for change are defined as gender, poverty, and disease, and are generally based on the research from the West. But the actual change, and for whom the change is beneficial, is not well defined. This change is supposedly good for all human beings, i.e., the change that is good for the western culture is also good for everyone else. The decisions, based on western values and knowledge systems, are made by those with power in the western countries, which in turn, influences the southern countries' education policies (Kleen, 2009).

Therefore, it could be argued that education is not only a weapon for overcoming, but also a weapon for controlling, subjugating, and disenabling society. The Western education (formal), laden with western ideologies, is preferred to any other form of education (non-formal or indigenous). During colonization, education became the root cause of persistent inequality, especially the inequality between urban and rural, educated and uneducated, rich and poor, politician and the layperson (Nassbaum, 2002). The critical challenge, therefore, is how

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education can now strike a balance between interrupting and dismantling the divisions it creates, while at the same time it protects and defends individual and group rights.

Furthermore, the destructive aspects of education that control and maintain hegemony makes education a weapon of negative change, in that its recipients become dominated by the education they get. As stated in earlier chapters, it is clear that the mindset and models of education today in Africa are relics of colonialism, whereby education is an instrument of control rather than a means to empower and promote equity for all. It is also observed that the effects of the education system have not translated ideas into skills that develop the appropriate tools for solving problems within a local context. Besides, local participation and consent are not honored. Indeed, if education is irrelevant and is not grounded on informed policies, the result is indoctrination and misguided gain for only a few, and suppresses creativity and blocks progress. This calls for critical reflections on the type of education provided, using a critical lens to examine the purpose for which education is promoted.

Critical Theory/Pedagogy

The roots of critical theory are traced to the school of thought that emerged from the work of German theorists collectively known as The Frankfurt School (McClaren, 1989; Moonet & Nolan, 2005). Critical theory roots are directly centered in the social thinkers who promoted the Idealism of Karl Marx. The school examined capitalism and how it involved contradictions associated with imbalances of power that resulted in the exploitation of certain members of society. The school explored ideas around power that tended to dominate and oppress others and the need for transformation of society to address these problems. Therefore, in a broad sense, critical theory can be taken as a set of ideas about society that have the potential to transform it. These ideas are generally about the role of power in social relations and how it can be questioned

to bring about transformation. Critical theories offer people ideas for understanding the ways power, privilege, and injustice affect them, and to examine and understand themselves within social relationships in order to abolish societal injustices (Horkheimer, 1972; McLaren, 1989; Morrell, 2008).

Other members of the school also conceptualized critical theory, including Habermas, who saw people as capable of effecting change from oppression through reflection and working together. From this perspective, and through discourse, people were able to see and shed light on the different ways in which they were systematically oppressed by capitalism. It is important to note that the key ideas held in critical theory then, continue to exist in the twenty first century. Oppression, domination, and the need to overcome them through transformation continue to be the thrust of critical theorists' discourses. Similarly, at school, teachers by using a critical lens are enabled to look closer at the school and classrooms for the ways in which they may unintentionally reproduce dominant power relationships and maintain inequity. As a result, critical theory can also serve as a means toward changing oppressive situations within classrooms and schools. This transformative aspect of critical theory enables educators to make schools sites of possibility (Giroux, 1983), where practices that are problematic can be named, and changed.

Paulo Freire's literacy education work in Brazil emphasized understanding of the word and the world resulting in his articulation of Critical Pedagogy. In the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000), Freire discussed the cycle of oppression and the complex relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor. Freire argued that education can never be neutral and explains the type of education that is needed to interrupt systems of oppression. He labeled this process "conscientização" (Freire, 2000, p.35), a process where people develop critical

cognizance of their actions and situations through *consciousness-raising* based on their own lived experiences and local knowledge. This may include realizing wrongs and acting against injustices. Therefore, education is approached through examining the self in relation to society (Freire, 2000; McClaren, 1989; 2003, Morell, 2008; Shor, 1992). It means that an educator becomes aware of their own actions, in relation to what society values and promotes, and examines how these actions, or lack of thereof, may or may not influence positive outcomes, and then doing something about it.

Critical theory/pedagogy emphasis

Critical theory/pedagogy is, therefore, an analytical lens that calls into question the assumptions and practices of the past, and views education as contributing to and perpetuating inequality and domination through curriculum and teaching. Freire's idea of dialogue is central to critical pedagogy. Most critical approaches to education realize that it is through communication that oppressive structures come into being and, in turn, restrict certain groups and deny them their rights. Freire also emphasized that it is through critical dialogue that these dynamics are understood, as well as counteracted. From this view, Freire's conscientização, which in *sensitization* in development terminology, is the way to freedom from those oppressive structures. The intention of critical theory is to dig up the underlying values and assumptions that guide education systems and serve to oppress not only teachers, but all those engaged in policy implementation at the lower levels. Critical theory stresses that democracies from developed nations are seen as, "the best in the world," a view that is maintained through the dissemination of dominant ideologies; the main purpose of the ideology is to 'seek' the consent of its participants by convincing them that this ideal system is for the good of their society, even if it really functions as a mechanism for control (Brookfield, 2005). This comes through theories of

education. I now examine the Ugandan education system, to understand how it is linked to these ideas.

Critical pedagogy and the Ugandan education system

Many theories of education seem to be plausible and very persuasive in Uganda. Human capital and modernization theories are important in understanding the place education plays in Uganda at the national and local levels. In the national development plan, the government talks about modernizing the economy, agriculture, the military, the police and other sectors (GOU, 2010). The overriding idea that education is central to economic development has been used to initiate, develop and implement educational programs since independence. The World Bank and the IMF, along with other lending institutions, have shown a lot of interest in education because of their belief that education develops the human capital of nations and leads to faster economic growth of less developed societies (World Bank, 1999, 2000). As a result of this belief, the developing countries continue to borrow heavily to finance their education development, an act which in turn continues to cripple their developing economies through interest payment outflows. As observed from the policy documents in Uganda, Human capital theory and modernization theory continue to guide the Ugandan educational system. Emphasis is on the need to develop human capital and improve Ugandan society and this is clearly articulated in the government and donor documents (GOU, 2010).

Therefore, according to the government, education is the tool best suited for this task and for entering the global/ knowledge economy, which seems to guide the current education decision-making (GOU, 2010). The government is supported by international donors who encourage investment in people; most of the money given to the Ugandan government comes in the form of loans. The international community through its G8 countries has prioritized

education in developing countries like Uganda, exemplified by the introduction of EFA and New Partnerships for Africa's Development (NEPAD 2001). The international community makes commitments to financially support education in the poor countries through various world bodies such as the UN bodies (UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP), the World Bank, the IMF, the European Union, and other country specific bodies such as DFID, (Britain), GTZ (Germany), USAID (United States of America) and the governments of Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Japan, among others. These international partners see education as playing a major role in economic development (UNESCO, 2000). Therefore, in the beginning of the twenty first century education and human capital are increasingly seen as key elements in modern development.

The recognition of such domination spurs the need for emancipation in education, which results in individual and structural transformation (Freire, 2000). Freire's conscientização (Freire, 2000) has political implications since banking education perpetuates oppression rather than challenges it and education needs structural transformation so oppressed people release themselves. Freire asserted that personal and structural changes dismantle systems of oppression. Gutmann (1999) proposed that for education to become democratic, a system of education must develop both the critical thinking skills upon which true dialogue rests, and the necessary dispositions for ordinary citizens to engage in the deliberative process. In this sense, for the act of education to affect broader structural change, individuals at the local level must be engaged in the critical dialogue and discourse that makes this change possible (Freire, 2000). As such, an analysis of the actual impact of UPE and national and district level educational policy requires an investigation of the localized discourse through a critical lens that interrogates the relationships between levels of policy and policy implementation.

How the control of education becomes oppression

According to Freire (2000), understanding the need for *conscientização* (p.35) demands an understanding of how power and control work through dominant ideologies and work through individual and societal levels. Gramsci, (1911-1935) analyzed hegemony, and defined it as a form of control where a social group or a leader of a country exerts dominance over people. Gramsci recognized that oppression was not exacted solely through economic pressure, but through social and cultural institutions and the government control over people. This oppressive ideology works through the collective common sense of individuals where "the conception of the world is uncritically absorbed" and is (re)produced through the social systems in which people participate (Freire, 2000, p.35). Therefore, countering hegemony involves acting to change society in ways to free people of the oppression they have been convinced to accept as natural.

Oppressive ideologies in education can be seen to occur at many levels. Under globalization, the education goals promoted under EFA represent a form of dominance. The World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) in Jomtien in 1990 'endorsed' the expansion of an educational design and implementation of policies within education systems, some of which were already promoting a "banking" concept/model of education. The international organizations promoting these goals create a system that appears to be based on human rights and goodwill from the former colonial powers. It is bringing knowledge and language to the underdeveloped nations of the world. The reality is that it is a form of control and a continuation of the system of global hierarchy (Ball, 2007; Klees, 2003). The policy makers also stress that they are giving aid to help EFA achieve success, but when there is failure they look at the individual governments' investment in education (World Bank, 2008). Consequently, in dealing with the lower levels of government, the top (central) government becomes the oppressor of

those they govern. Thus, the chain of oppression can go on reproducing itself to the very bottom. For example, during teacher training, teachers are handed the baton of oppression through the curriculum and the pedagogies that they use in the school and in the classroom. There is need to interrupt this phenomenon, but change has to begin with Freire's *conscientização*, which is the motivation of reflection and exploration through this study.

Conceptual Lenses

Global Education becomes a transmitter of hidden ideologies and curriculum which teachers accept without questioning (Freire, 2000; Shor, 1999). The dominant ideologies, cultural values, and norms continue to be conveyed to the young generations without questioning (Bourdeu & Passerron, 2000; Morrel, 2008). Over time, the dominant cultural values and social norms become accepted as truths within society. According to Bourdeu and Passerron (2000), the power structures work daily in educational systems through all the social contexts that surround schools and the social norms within the schools, curriculum content, curriculum texts, teacher perspectives, and discourses that place emphasis on certain values and perspectives more so than others (Apple, 1990).

The lenses of critical pedagogy, *Eituŋanane* philosophy, and *education as a weapon* metaphor are therefore used to inform this study, and each one is examined below. Critical pedagogy in education aims at challenging inherent inequalities through uncovering the hidden curriculum and dominant, oppressive ideologies that define peoples' lives such as gender, urban and rural, rich and the poor, educated and not educated, and other forms of oppression (Freire, 2000; Shor 1992; McIntosh, 1995). However, people need to have consciousness-raising (raising awareness) experiences in order to name the ways power and oppression work against them, as well as in and through themselves (Freire, 2000; Morrel, 2008). Critical pedagogy

educates people for action with the hope of transforming the world into a place where all people can live (Shor, 1992; Freire, 2000; Morell, 2008).

Eituŋanane philosophy, critical pedagogy, and 'education as a weapon'

Critical theory allows for knowledge handed down to be questioned and to challenge existing lines of power through individual and structural changes. *Eituŋanane*, an indigenous philosophy, includes "the capacity to express … human virtues including dignity, harmony and humanity, compassion, and reciprocity in the interest of building and maintaining a community with justice and mutual caring" (Nussbaum cited in Muzvidziwa, et al, 2012, p.27). Thus, for education to be meaningful, it must respond to the needs of the people and must be directed by the people's guiding philosophy. As *a weapon to change society*, education arms an individual or a group of individuals with skills, knowledge, and ideas as tools to use to achieve something better. Thus, I position the problem within the critical pedagogy, *Eituŋanane,* and *education as a weapon to change society,* metaphor as shown in Figure 3.

Conscientization, problem posing, and empowerment

Eituŋanane aligns well with the critical dialogue and process of raising awareness or conscientization as proposed by Freire. This in turn raises questions (problem-posing) that interrogates the relationship between the local communities and government, district and schools, teachers and students, parents and children, and employs dialogue within and among these groups as a means of ripping apart both external and internalized oppression. This would lead them to being armed (weapon) with knowledge and skills, thus, becoming empowered to take ownership of their learning process, and not just act as passive consumers, but rather as critical and active initiators of solutions to education. Once solutions are developed and problems in education are addressed, education then leads to embracing of culturally relevant values, all of

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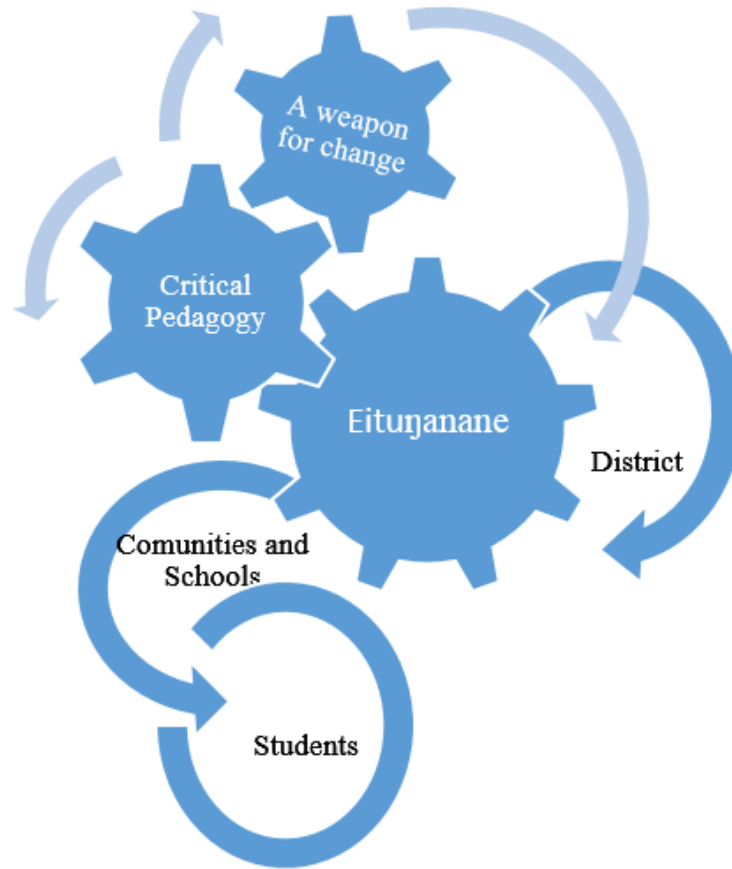
Figure 3: Illustration of the conceptual approach

which enable society to usher in change in which humanity is esteemed, thus making education truly a *weapon* for positive change.

Furthermore, critical pedagogy allows for knowledge handed down about UPE to be questioned and existing lines of power to be challenged through individual and structural changes (Shor, 1992), while *Eituŋanane* imbues the human virtues that strengthen learning outcomes, e*ducation as a weapon to change society* supports the lenses of critical pedagogy and *Eituŋanane* to understand whether the effects of the education system have translated ideas into a skill or knowledge that develops and uses the appropriate tools (a weapon) in solving problems (bring about change) within a local context, through communities, schools/classrooms and the

district. This understanding ties into the idea that critical conversations are necessary in raising consciousness (sensitization) and promoting emancipation, thus establishes a natural fit between the local philosophical standpoint and a Western critical analysis.

Limitations of critical theory/pedagogy

Critical theory, unfortunately, is not a popular theory as it challenges the very core of oppression by raising awareness of the oppressed. Most organizations, and especially governments, are unwilling to subject themselves to critique and to be vulnerable to disapproval. Because of this fear, many research studies are shy in examining education systems and policies using critical theory. In Uganda the introduction of UPE was politically motivated through election campaigns, the implementation of the policy has remained strongly anchored within the political eyes (Stasavage, 2005). Critical theory is also seen as purely developed from an academic setting, and thus is isolated from working-class politics, and increasingly accused of being embroiled in abstract issues and 'second-order' discourse (Burbles & Berk, 1999). Another criticism of critical theory is that it is ahistorical, meaning that critical theorists have examined a variety of events without paying much attention to their historical and comparative contexts.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter reviewed existing literature to provide an understanding about the complexity of education systems. Accordingly, to better understand the current contexts of the Uganda education system, three essential aspects emerged from the literature review. First, the purpose of education was explored to understand the basis on which society promotes and expands one type of education. The historic mass expansion of formal education in Uganda has been instigated from the outside, for example, by the British colonial government, post-

independent governments, and under the global agenda of EFA and MDGs. The expansion has been focused on realizing change in the human condition. However, mass access to education during and after colonial rule in Uganda has introduced a type of favoritism, through emphasis on a one-size-fits- all approach and unquestioned allegiance to the Western model of education, thereby triggering discriminating practices within the education system.

Second, these practices were introduced as a form of domination, which has been further maintained by international and Ugandan education policy. It was noted that because of historical ties, the education system and policies remain to be controlled by the central government, with the support from the development partners (donors). As viewed from the lenses of critical pedagogy, Eituŋanane philosophy, and Freire's metaphor of 'banking model' of education, the products of the education system and these policies have been educational practices that are ineffective and not relevant or suited to local communities.

Third, the dilemmas in education are around the balance between the quantity of education and the quality of education (Glewwe,et al.2012, Murphy, 2003). How to provide balanced quality, equitable, and accessible universal education for all children without leaving any children behind (MOES, 2009; Murphy, 2003; UNESCO, 2005)? As observed from the literature, the debates about goals and roles of education are based on the changing needs at a particular time and what knowledge, values, and skills (content) are deemed important at the time, the type of citizen a particular society wants to produce, and which functions of education should be prioritized (forms). The relationship between teacher and child constitutes of transactions, events and experiences, planned/unplanned, deliberate and incidental, justified by value systems and ideas of what is to be educated (Alexander, 1984). These transactions,

together with their justifications and outcomes in terms of child learning, constitute the curriculum (Alexander, 1992).

In light of this, the government of Uganda has initiated education policy reviews and reforms including curricula revision, new policy formulations, and the development of innovative projects and strategies (Higgins & Rwanyange, 2005). The reforms represent an attempt to revamp the education system to meet the global targets and standards given the push for competitiveness in the global market (World Bank, 2002). Education, therefore, gives children some of the tools they need to succeed, but it cannot guarantee that the tools will be used, because that would go beyond the scope of education. Therefore, producing adults who can thrive and give something back to their communities is a hope, not a certainty. It depends on the country's ability to not only employ the graduates of education system, but also to engage in developing new and sustaining beneficial cultural social practices. Yet, it was observed, that the need to ensure that students are educated to participate, live and thrive in their local communities and societies should be the driving force of these reforms.

Consequently, the expectations and needs of local citizens should be the emphasis within the government vision, strategies, policies, and other documents and should be reflected within the policy reform agenda. Unfortunately, the local levels have not been examined to allow connections and influences to be uncovered, and implications for policy and action to be explored. Therefore, this study is the next logical step, based on what has been done before, to explore the relationship between the globally influenced education goals and the local context, needs, and aspirations. The next chapter presents the methodology and methods for exploring the perspectives of the local stakeholders on these issues.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

This study explored the notion of local perspectives of education by grounding the discussions on the concepts of *Eituŋanane,* critical theory, and Mandela's "education as a weapon metaphor." The thrust of this research was an attempt to explore ways in which *Eituŋanane* philosophical characteristics and critical pedagogy could be blended in educational practice to develop a local framework that supports the current system in overcoming limitations within the UPE program. This understanding naturally tied into the idea that critical dialogue within the community is necessary for creating awareness and empowering people, and is thus a likely fit between a local philosophical standpoint and Western critical analysis.

This chapter, therefore, describes the way the study was conducted, including research design, planning of the study, sampling, data collection, and data analysis. It outlines the approach that I used for reviewing literature and gathering data, and explains the choice of methods, technique and tools used to collect data for exploring perceptions about how UPE policy has addressed the needs and aspirations of the local people. The study was carried out in one local district, therefore making it a case study.

Accordingly, assurances through approval of the formal study were obtained at three levels. First, for the North Dakota State University's Institute Research Board (IRB) approval process, appropriate forms were submitted to secure Board approval as soon as my dissertation committee approved the research proposal prior to data collection (see Appendix B, IRB approval). The NDSU approval letter was attached to another research application form (in Uganda), together with a letter from the chair of the dissertation committee and a copy of the research proposal. Second level required approval from the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST). Third, the study required that Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's

office grant permission to carry out research in the local district. If a researcher is not a Ugandan resident, the researcher must wait for the President's office to officially introduce the researcher to the local District Government. However, because I am a Ugandan, I was allowed to obtain the first two approvals prior to the commencement of data collection and to proceed directly to the field while waiting for the third approval. All these approvals are included within the Appendices B, C, and D.

The Selection of a Case Study

The selection of the case study approach was intended to allow for a better understanding of the local context and of how the local community functions, and then perhaps broadening the transferability of the findings across geographic and social frameworks (Berg, 2009). I selected a case study because it makes it possible to highlight a small number of participants' perspectives and outcomes in a local context, while critically and thoroughly analyzing individual cases (Berg, 2009). Berg (2009) summarized various definitions of case study and when taken together "suggest that a case study is an approach capable of examining simple or complex phenomenon with units of analysis varying from single to large corporations…using a variety of actions in its data gathering" (2009, p 317-318). The embedded case approach therefore, allows for inclusion of several levels or units of analysis (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Berg, 2009). As mentioned earlier, a case study was therefore, appropriate for this study because there is an identifiable case with boundaries that allowed me to understand the phenomenon under study (Berg, 2009; Creswell, 2007; Stake, 2007).

Furthermore, Creswell (2007) stated, "Cases may involve an individual, several individuals, a program, an event, or an activity" (2007, p.74). For this study, the Universal Primary Education (UPE) as a policy was the case and it was examined in one specific

geographically bound location; the unit of analysis was the Bukedea district. Like all districts in

Uganda, Bukedea has five levels of local councils, communities, and schools that are involved in

the overall efforts of official bureaucratic agencies. Therefore, because the district has multiple

levels, the case study approach best allowed for the analysis at both the individual and overall

levels. In addition, using this approach, I was better able to examine subunits at the local level,

which were the main focus of the research. The exploratory nature of this type of study allowed

for a myriad of relevant issues and experiences to emerge, especially those experiences that

would not have emerged without the depth provided in a case study investigation (Hancock &

Algozzine, 2006). The embedded case approach therefore allowed me to include several levels or

units of analysis (Berg, 2009; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). Furthermore, the choice of the

method matched the research questions, respected the limitation of time and resources, addressed

ethical concerns, and took into consideration the characteristics of the participants as well as the

cultural setting where the fieldwork took place.

Criteria for district selection

I used five major guiding criteria in a purposeful selection of the local district as the

object for the case study. First, due to the limitations of resources, the district had to provide

favorable logistics for me to be able to minimize cost and yet not compromise the quality of

work. I come from Bukedea district and so was able to stay with family during the data

collection period. Second, the district must be among the newly created districts in Uganda

(approximately between 2005 and 2010) in order to ensure historical and political contextual

issues within the district. Bukedea district was created in 2007, which puts it in the middle of the

acceptable period. Third, the district must be within the 10 government identified lowest

performing districts and which were put on "drip" (MOES, 2008) in order to participate in the

MOES Quality Enhancement Initiative (QEI). Bukedea district was among the ten lowest performing districts in the Teso sub-region. It was also highly affected by the insurgencies in the 1980's that destroyed not only educational infrastructure, but also the daily access to education. Fourth, the district had to be accessible and without any insecurity, conflict, or instability to ensure that the UPE implementation process had not been limited by external hindrances. Any of these factors would interfere with access to data collection sites. Bukedea district had been stable for the last 10 years. Fifth, the district must be within the region in which Ateso is spoken so as to engage with the indigenous Iteso philosophy of *Eituŋanane*. Therefore out of the 8 districts in the Teso region, Bukedea was the only district that met all 5 criteria, and I therefore purposely selected it as the case.

Limitations to the study

There were some limitations to this study. First, the local district case study yielded only a small part of the large global and national EFA reach. Because EFA is very broad, including in its purview Early Childhood, Youth, Adults and Lifelong Education, using it as the primary tool for investigation creates a scope that is too large for the in-depth study my research questions required. Therefore, this case study specifically focused primarily on the implementation of UPE in a particular local district. Thus, when references are made to the specific Bukedea district situation, caution should be taken to understand its unique characteristics. In other words, all national systems have commonalities, and yet there is also considerable diversity across governments, cultures, and educational histories. Furthermore, while these findings were rooted in the specific problems of UPE, they did not speak to every district's UPE structural program governance.

Participant Selection

Creswell (2007) defined purposive sampling as the "selection of individuals and sites for study" because they can inform, the "understanding of the research problem and the central phenomenon of the study" (p. 125). Furthermore, in a case study, sometimes a sample can be as small as one exemplary or representative case (Pyrczak, 2003). In addition, researchers sometimes "use their knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population" (Berg, 2009, p. 50). Therefore, rather than using a random sampling technique in order to generalize the findings, I adopted purposive sampling because I wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of the insights from local stakeholders and education practitioners at both district and community levels. I carefully selected participants because it was important to ensure a fair representation of the varied voices of the people across stakeholder categories.

As a result, I intentionally selected a relatively small sample, drawing what I believed to be appropriate for my research problem and for the case study (Creswell, 2007). This was because the specific aim of this study was to examine the lived experiences of stakeholders who are deeply engaged within the primary education policy processes. Lincoln and Guba (1985) posited that "the object is not to focus on similarities … but to detail the many specifics that give the context flavor" (p. 201). Therefore, my interest was to engage local stakeholders in the construction of knowledge about their perceptions of UPE education being offered, their aspirations for their future as a society, and how their children should be prepared for it, as well as their current involvement (or lack thereof) in the UPE policy.

Basic categories and criteria for participant selection

The district-level assistance was critical in identifying who else may be suitable in providing a better understanding of the UPE locally. I was keen to ensure a balance of gender

participation. The District Education Officer provided a list of district education stakeholders from which I purposely choose groups under major categories. According to the list, the district leadership had only one female at the administrative or management level and there were only a few council female representatives. I therefore made a decision to incorporate 2 women from another level within the category of local councils. In general, a snowball technique was useful in sampling these groups. In general, total of 49 participants (29 men, and 20 women) was realized as briefly described below and shown in Appendix F.

I identified 5 categories, which I refer to as *windows to the outside world, controllers, checkers, forerunners, and the beneficiaries.* The first category comprised of the legislators representing the district in the Parliament of Uganda, and I refer to them as the district *windows to the outside world*. They are an important source of information to the district about the UPE policy, and are well positioned not only between the people and the national government, but also between people and the international community. They influence the policy processes at both at the local district and the national level, and speak on behalf of the people they represent. Therefore, their analysis of the performance of the policy would be very important in comparing how ordinary people's views are represented. Out of 2 legislators, one participated in an individual interview.

The second category comprised of *controllers*, mainly the top administrators and managers of the district. They influence education processes within the district and are responsible for the implementation of and reporting about the programs, budgeting and financial management, and monitoring schools. They also make bi-laws and local policies. They are thus, critical to understanding how policy gets implemented in the district, how it is funded, who is answerable to whom (accountability) and what technical input is provided. Examining groups

within this category would reveal how they use power, who holds it and who does not, and why. Therefore, this group included the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), District Local Council V Chairperson, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), District planner, and the Secretary for Production. Altogether there were 6 participants for individual interviews.

The third category includes the *checkers* responsible for the implementation of and reporting about the programs in the schools and classrooms, monitoring and supervising schools. Their perspectives are important to understand the daily needs of schools and how they are or are not met. The groups under this category include the District Education Officer (DEO), the District School Inspector (DSI), District Service Committee (DSC), Center Coordinating Tutors (CCTs) and Chairman Local council III. In this category, 8 people participated in a talking circle, group interview and individual interview respectively.

The fourth category included *the forerunners,* who take policy action as the primary implementers of policy in schools and classroom levels and are involved in the day-to-day activities in schools. Their input is critical to understanding their perception of education purpose, the needs of the students, their own needs, and the aspirations they have for their children. The groups under this include teachers and head teachers and tutors in the Teacher Training College (PTC). A total of 17 participants from this category were involved in talking circles and 1 interview.

The fifth category is the primary *beneficiaries* (the receivers at community level). The groups in this category include parents, elders, and cultural leaders as members of the community in which the school is situated. The elders with vast experiences of both the past and present education systems are held with respect and sometimes consulted by government on matters of policy. They influence the process through their opinions and experiences. The Parent

Teacher Association (PTA) and the School Management Committee (SMC) belong to this group. They are influenced by the education processes, but they also influence the process at the local household and community levels. It is imperative to understand the aspirations the community has for their children's future, how these are articulated, to whom, and how they participate in realizing these aspirations, and in critically gauging whether UPE was the right fit to their needs. Broadly, the selection criteria aimed to provide for richness and depth of the diverse perspectives of the study participants. A total of 17 participants were involved in talking circles and individual interviews.

The Study Environment

Accessing the setting varied according to the preference of the group I met each day. Prior to visiting the communities and schools, I made an appointment to meet with the District Education officials (three persons) to develop an understanding of what was happening in the natural setting of the district in terms of school processes, when they would take a break from school, what teachers did during holidays, would teachers be available/accessible during the break, what events were planned within the next few months, and so forth. The purpose was to alert officials of my intended visit and research and also to solicit support in providing information from the district office, and gaining access to relevant colleagues in the district and members of Parliament. These official became my important points of contact and guides especially to the top district offices. The officials were able to help me set the appointments and made sure I followed the time. In each office at the district level, I introduced myself and told them why I was there and what I was doing, how long it would take, and what I expected from them by going through the information sheet. I sought their participation in the study, given their

knowledge and experience of the program. It was important to assure participants of their right to opt out of the study if, for some reason, they felt they did not wish to continue with it.

In addition, stakeholders needed to know the importance of their participation and how it would benefit the district. In each of the sessions, the participant briefing preceded the signing of the informed consent form. I provided the opportunity for them to ask me any questions regarding their participation before each participant signed consent forms and before the conversations started during interviews and talking circles. I also requested their telephone numbers so I could make a follow up call to arrange for data verification with some of them. I provided light refreshments such as soda (pop) and tea with biscuits depending on the time of the day the interview/talking circle occurred, as is customary.

In terms of physical visits to schools, the primary schools in the villages were far apart, but those in the 'urban' center were easily accessible. I conducted three talking circles in one of the town schools, where I was also able to watch children and teachers as they went about their school day. I was not able to visit many of the villages, but I made an effort to hold a talking circle with parents and two interviews with the community elders in one of the schools. While there, I made some observations of the classrooms, desks and chairs, teachers' houses, latrines, and the general condition of the school. In summary, locating informants occurred with the support from the district education officials, who acted as a guide and helped explain some of the structures in the district and how they worked and related to each other.

Understanding respondents

I am fluent in the language of the respondents, but each group insisted on speaking in English, except when the local philosophy of *Eituŋanane* was discussed. Most respondents spoke about *Eituŋanane* in the local language, which I later translated and transcribed into English. I

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then gave the transcribed English version of the sentences, phrases or words to expert elders who improved or confirmed the translations. However, in the report, I have maintained some of the expressions in the local language in an attempt to portray the voices of the people and have translated them in an assumed equivalent meaning in English.

However, the increased demand for community to take part in research studies (surveys), meetings, workshops, and other government /non-government organization's activities has become so common that people's expectations also needed to be managed. The economic situation in the country was challenging to many people, so I took care not to set a precedent by raising expectations that could have jeopardized my safety as the person 'from America' with a lot of dollars. A reasonable amount of money was set aside (for transport costs) and was given to each participant after the session to relieve the burden of their travel.

As another consideration, politicking was rife in the local districts with some politicians and district officials who are already unofficially campaigning for the 2016 elections. I was informed about some tensions between the local leaders, as some of them had declared intentions to run for the top leadership position in the district. Apart from one top district leader hinting on elections during an interview, the fieldwork was conducted smoothly without any interruptions. I made appointments to interview the Members of Parliament (MPs) in Kampala, but only one was available as the parliament was in session. Finally, I sought a lot of information from a breadth of different sources so as to be able to triangulate information to get an accurate picture.

Data Collection and Analysis

I conducted intensive and consistent fieldwork for three months in Bukedea district. Some discussions were held at the Ministry of Education, especially the Teacher Education and Pre-Primary and Primary Education sectors, prior to the fieldwork. For the district officials, one-

hour individual interviews were held in their offices. The talking circles for teachers and parents took place in large classrooms while students were in recess. Other individual interviews were conducted in the homes of the elders, at a trading center, and in a village school classroom. The fieldwork started and ended with some district leaders. The purpose at the beginning was to gain entrance to the district and get buy-in from the decision makers and political and civil service accounting officers. It was also important to debrief them about my progress after the fieldwork and to also ask for clarification, based on the field information (without disclosing any confidential information) so that they could look forward to using the findings from the study.

This case study utilized data derived from semi-structured interviews, the 'talking circles' technique, and content analysis. The 'talking circle' is a traditional discussion technique, which is consistent with the traditions in the communities (Rothe, e al. 2009). The reason is to provide a culturally appropriate and sensitive method of developing a deep and broad understanding of the individual participant's verbal description of their feelings, their experiences and their ways of reasoning (Rothe, et al., 2009). Researchers used talking circles as an interview method that adopts a modified focus group approach. Therefore, I collected data myself as a researcher through examining documents, and interviewing participants.

While conducting the study within its context, I remained conscious of the personal differences I have from the participants and my own subjectivities of being an African woman born and brought up within the social environment of the district. In addition, I remained mindful of the fact that I have acquired the ideological discourse of western society and sometimes define my identity as a western-educated (read 'indoctrinated') African woman. So, in interviewing and interacting with the communities in the research sites, I monitored the power and privilege I brought during the conversations and how it might conflict with the cultural position accorded to

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a woman in this community. In order to lessen the distance between the people with whom I interacted and myself, I constantly reminded myself of who I was as a native of Bukedea, a person interested in genuinely learning. I was more aware of the different experiences each one of us possessed and what ideologies shaped them. Thus, I listened with keen intent and acknowledged with appropriate gestures, or traditional words/sounds that showed an approval. I also kept encouraging the participants to feel free to contact me by phone later if there was anything they felt uncomfortable to say in the group and to minimize the distance between me and them.

Furthermore, I obtained permission form participants to record and later transcribe the interviews and talking circles, and was able to personally deal with all the data management and processing throughout the research processes. While in the field, I routinely collected data, properly marked it, and kept it in safe storage, which only I had access to. I quickly went through my field notes from each session and/ or listened to the recordings again while making notes to develop follow-up questions to address some of the important issues emerging from the collected data. In between the sessions, I used the time to transcribe the data. I took the transcripts to some selected participants of each session to verify that I had captured their information correctly. A few provided more clarification on some of the responses they had given. Because the numbers were large, I selected a representative from each talking circles/groups to review the transcript. For the interviewees, I contacted each individually to seek their approval of the data that I had captured. All of the successfully collected data then was brought to the US for further transcribing, coding and analysis.

Semi-structured interviews

Interviewing is a data gathering technique involving verbal communication between the researcher and the subject (Berg, 2009; Creswell, 2009; Kvale, 2009). The skill of the researcher is emphasized and the design of the interview determines the quality of the data collected. Semi-structured interviews were used with a series of open-ended questions on the topic areas that were covered especially guided by the research questions. This provided interviewees room to discuss the various issues and topics in more detail. I was able to use cues or prompts to encourage the interviewee to consider the question further (Creswell, 2004).

The key principle while conducting interviews was to listen attentively to what the participants had to say in order to gain more knowledge about local perceptions. Therefore, I probed to ensure that the questions were geared towards getting as much relevant information as possible. The information was gathered directly through individual, face-to-face interviews without the use of questionnaires or other instruments developed by other researchers. The open-ended, semi-structured interview questions were developed by the researcher. The semi-structured technique allowed me to develop several key questions that assisted in defining the perceptions about UPE, aspirations, needs and purpose of education, and local peoples' views about what needs to be done to get there. But most importantly, semi-structured interviews allowed me and the interviewees explore and further pursue an idea or response in detail (Gill, et.al, 2008; Patton, 2002). Therefore the semi-structured interviews allowed me to discover or elaborate on information that was important to participants, but which I may not have previously thought of as pertinent.

The key in all these interviews was for me to draw on meanings the participants brought to the phenomenon under study. Validation strategies included confirming or triangulating and

included reviewing the interview data from the two interview sources, and personal memos and documents. Two policy experts/researchers were identified to review my analyses to ensure accurate description of the phenomenon and to gauge accuracy of my interpretation of the local context and the lived experiences of the beneficiaries. I explored how the local level education stakeholders articulated what were their experiences and views about UPE implementation and what they have gained from it. Therefore, I was able to examine the local district discourses in policy implementation processes and how each influences the others, and to which results.

My tasks during the interview included determining the sampling procedure, which enabled locating where the respondents were or would be during the scheduled time. I set dates, place, and time and obtained agreements for interviews and assured the participants of confidentiality and anonymity in their participation. Individual interviews were held with the district leaders, and the members of parliament, one head teacher, a teacher, and two parents. Before starting the interviews procedures, each participant was provided with a form titled, "*Informed Consent,*" which clearly described the study, its purpose, and importance of their participation to education. The form also described how their participation would be conducted and what was expected of each one of them. It also clearly mentioned that participation was voluntary, and could be discontinued at any time and that the foreseeable risk that the interview process would evoke would be minimal. I also sought permission to record the sessions before each of the interviews. When asking questions, I refrained from giving my own opinions but tried as much as possible to be consistent in the way I interacted with each respondent. All answers were recorded in my notebook but also taped for further transcribing. Kvale & Brickmann (2009) reminded me about the need to watch for my position in relation to the participants' positions (often hierarchical) to ensure there was an equal power distribution.

After setting the stage and after the preliminaries, I asked an open question and then let the respondents answer each question with no interruption until they finished their train of thought. I also followed cues in a way that the respondent's answers could lead to the next question, asking about the issue from different angles. I also provided comments that allowed respondents to continue discussing a matter that was important for collection of rich data. Timing was critical while being mindful and courteous as a good listener.

Talking circle sessions (focus groups)

Talking circles are based on the idea that the Western focus groups technique does not adequately allow for the members' voices to be heard in an atmosphere of 'togetherness (Chilisa, 2012). According to Chilisa (2012), talking circles are adapted from the indigenous worldview to address the concerns about the relationship between the researcher and the researched Other and the uneven power distribution (Kvale, 2009). In African context, participants sit around a circle and take turns to tell stories, ideal for participants to demonstrate respect for each other (Okot, 1962; Wangari, 2008). Circles in African tradition are formed for various purposes in ceremonies, in dancing, in children's playing, or singing. In terms of discussions on important issues, circles were formed to allow for individual members to take turns to speak without interruption and taking turns based on age set or other criteria (Mathai, 2008; Wa Thiongo, 1986). "It was a symbol of sharing ideas, respect for each other's opinions, togetherness, and a symbol of equality among members" (Chilisa, 2012, p. 213) which was in line with the *Eituŋanane* lens with the characteristics of togetherness, trust and caring for one another.

The advantages of using talking circles as an indigenous way of communicating was to replace the dominant western research techniques and the use of the participants' lived sociocultural experiences that should provide a fresh sense of community (Lavalèe, 2009).

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Lavalèe further argued that the level of energy created using the talking circle approach, provides a sense of closeness and interconnectedness. Everyone has a turn to speak and each voice is heard in a respectful and attentive way (Umbreit, 2003). The discussion in the circle becomes a rich source of information, shared identity, and interaction as there were shared perceptions, opinions, views, aspirations, and needs.

A circle usually consists of two to twelve people participating in any one circle (Lavallee, 2009). I had four to six participants in each circle, balanced by gender. I started with opening comments explaining the purpose of the circle and setting basic rules including 'listening, speaking, and hearing from the heart'. A relaxed and open tone was set that welcomed and created a comfortable atmosphere. This was followed by introduction of the members, using a 'talking stick', handed from one member to the other. Each shared thoughts, feelings, views and ideas, and reflected on experiences. The 'talking stick' was passed around for each to take turns. One could not speak unless holding the 'talking stick'. The first pass was for introductions, second round for the first question, third was for the second question and the fourth was for the third question, whenever time allowed. We closed with positive comments and thanking the participants (Umbreit, 2003).

Documentary Evidence

Another set of data was collected from documents and media sources. Data from the documents were found useful to triangulate with the interviews and talking circles to ascertain the trustworthiness and accuracy of the information. Documentary evidence was derived from four sources. First, the readily available data were those reports or publications that had been in the public domain, either through the documentary evidence distributed to districts, schools, or to institutions. Many of these were available in bookshops, for example, the Education Act 2008,

Government White Paper on Education (a policy document produced and in circulation). Some other policy documents were not available for sale. A full list of these documents is in Appendix VII (List of documents).

The second set of documents were from the Ministry of Education and Sports, especially the policy reviews on EFA/UPE, Education sector Investment Plan of 2003, and Education Sector Reviews for the period between 2009 and 2013. These documents pointed to the strategic shifts by the Ministry of Education and they were supplemented by the Statistics and Abstracts from the Education Management and Information System (EMIS). The third source of information was the Media sources, especially from the Monitor and New Visions Newspapers as they frequently report and highlight implementation of UPE, performances of the national examinations, and research reports from other sources. The fourth source was the websites of the Ministry of Education, Local government, Uganda National Examinations Board, and others. My experience in Uganda is that it can be difficult to obtain printed documents directly from the Ministry of Education and the National Examination Board, however some of the information could be accessed from the websites when and where it was available.

Analysis of Data

The data collection for this case study involved field visits to the area of study, and was collected from multiple sources including interviews, talking circles and document analysis (Chilisa, 2012; Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2010). Ample time was spent recording the processes to ensure comprehensive data were collected. Nvivo 10 (QRS International, 2010) was initially used to manage and shape the data (Creswell, 2007). The data had phrases that were grouped as metaphors and analogies that captured the participants' perspectives about their experiences with Universal Primary Education. Metaphoric theory suggests that language is a social act and

therefore participants use language as a means through which they describe perception about their social reality (Jensen, 2006; Schmitt, 2005).

I used metaphorical theory for 'thinking with' the data (Alecia & Mazzei, 2012), while being cognizant of the fact that every aspect of a community's life and values in African indigenous society provides philosophies, metaphors, and analogies that serve as lenses for understanding the human life. Riddle (1999) suggested a multidisciplinary framework for analyzing educational reform, especially in developing countries. Riddle (1999) identified the economic, educational, and political lenses that can be used to analyze the qualitative data collected. I identified metaphors that portrayed perceptions about the purpose of education, the ways it has interacted with and fulfilled the local expectations and its success and failure and used Riddle's ideas while analyzing the data. First, I started using SQ Nvivo software by creating labelling and placing data on Nodes for easy manipulation at the initial stages of analysis. In addition data from documentary sources were coded and I used SQ Nvivo to identify frequency of word or phrase appearances and how the words were connected from one source to the others in order to identify a theme that ran through the documents and the various ways words were applied in the policy. This required critically revisiting and examining the information from the interviews, while searching for metaphors used to describe UPE within the educational, economic and political frames. My analysis also revisited *Eituŋanane* to reflect on the data and critically explain the challenges that interfere with the UPE success

Second, I examined the data looking for metaphors, analogies or similes, considering every word and phrase identified from each Node and took note of the context in which it was used in the text. Stories told using analogies and metaphors were assessed to determine if the word or phrase was used literally or figuratively. Third, after reading the transcribed data many

times, I wrote the metaphors contained within it on the Nodes in the SQ Nvivo for further analysis, to see the frequency of use, who used it and contexts in which they were used. I then identified a dominant concept that seemed to run through the metaphors and grouped them into new Nodes. Then the Nodes were grouped or merged for further exploration while considering the meaning brought by different people at different levels of the local district.

Metaphorical analysis

Metaphors according to Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary is, "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them." Aristotle defines metaphors as "using a name when referring to one thing, while the name belongs to another" (Zoabi & Awad, 2012). In other words, a metaphor could be an object, or activity that is used as a symbol of something else. A metaphor is hence, an image rich with a word or expression (Zoabi & Awad, 2012), which is used to study and understand meaning. The use of metaphors started with man's age of reasoning (Jensen, 2006). According to Jensen, we use metaphors in everyday interactions through language, literature, music, and poetry to enrich our understanding and description of society. Metaphors are therefore, dominant in our human thinking. We use metaphors to communicate with others so they may understand our inner experiences (Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Johnston, 1989). All of us speak, write, and think in metaphors every day. That means metaphors cannot be avoided because they are built right into our languages hence, conventional metaphors often used by speakers and are readily understood in the everyday use. Pierce (1992) added, using the theory of abduction, that metaphors provide different ways of looking at reality. Indeed, metaphors provide a more vivid description of words or thought (Carpenter, 2008).

In this connection, methods of research are committed to certain versions of the world (ontological meaning) and ways of knowing (epistemological) as a valid method of analyzing participants' stories of their lived lives (Jensen, 2006). Metaphoric analysis is a research technique that utilizes images rich with a word or words or expressions, to capture and understand the individual's inner world through the analysis of a metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). "To do this researchers and participants drew on existing knowledge and practices to account for current experiences. This is what metaphors accomplish" (Jensen, 2006, p.5). Therefore, metaphoric expressions are used to give effect to a statement. The metaphor gives the reader a better idea of the depths of feelings. Metaphors facilitate the connection between familiar concepts leading to a new meaning (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Education is guided by metaphors that are accepted as normal ways of talking and thinking about education (Goatly, 2002). Education researchers have applied metaphors with the belief that education research is a social activity originated from human interaction (Goatly, 2002, Jensen, 2006). The lived experiences of participants in education is thus aligned with this research method. Therefore, researchers consider not only the context of the research but also the research process itself (Jensen, 2006). Through access to the thoughts and perceptions of the education stakeholders, a researcher can gain a greater understanding of education (Jensen, 2006, Schmitt, 2005). Here the assumption is that words of the stakeholders represent their thinking. The language used by participants becomes the window through which the outside world can get a glimpse of the stakeholders' internal world (Jensen, 2006). Moreover, according to Patton (1990), metaphors can enable a researcher to creatively analyze and interpret data. Thus, I gathered the stakeholders' perceptions through the words they used, and analyzed those words to form meaning. By doing so I intentionally attempted to make sense of the stakeholders' inner

thoughts through language. However, metaphors could pose a challenge when analyzing the data, because it could be difficult to ascertain whose meaning is taken.

Therefore, I was challenged in this study to use metaphors properly to help illumine the experiences that I was investigating (Carpenter, 2008). My aim of using metaphor as a tool in this study was to convey thoughts and perceptions of stakeholders more forcefully than my plain statements. I analyzed subgroups systematically by first identifying metaphors through segments of the text (for example statements from the interviews and talking circles), using SQ Nvivo as described earlier, followed by the reconstruction of metaphorical concepts (Schmitt, 2005).

Identification of metaphors and deconstruction of the text. I started by identifying metaphors contained in the text, first by identifying a word or phrase as a metaphor especially if a word or phrase could be understood beyond the literal meaning in the context (Schmitt, 2005). And if the literal meaning of the word stems from an area of cultural experience (source area) and if the word is transferred to a second often abstract area (target area) (Schmitt, 2005). Secondly, I copied the metaphors used (in which the target area being researched appears), including the immediate text-context, and then pasted these into a separate list. I then scanned the remaining body of the text to find and extract more metaphorical descriptions of the UPE, until only "connecting words, text that is not relevant to the target area and abstracts with no connection to metaphors remained" (Schmitt, 2005, p. 371-372). For example, the metaphor 'education as a key' was linked to the district education context, and resources to see how the 'opened' doors for all the children to access education.

*Metaphoric cluster, model or concept.*According to Goatly (2002) and Schmitt (2005), this is a stage needs to be created during the sorting process to summarize metaphors to form a concept, "both the source area and the target area of the interaction' (Schmitt, 2005, p. 372). I

collected all metaphors belonging to the same image source and which described the same target area, and then I grouped them into metaphorical concepts under the main heading "target is source." This process of allocating metaphorical idioms to metaphorical concept was continued until all metaphors were listed under a concept. The education process is complex, therefore, "one metaphor is not enough" when it comes to describing education reform ideas in any broad way (McCandless, 2012, p. 545). In this regard therefore, I applied more metaphors in this study.

Methodological Assumptions

The purpose of the study was to understand how higher global goals address the needs and aspirations of people at the local levels (grassroots). My selection of the case study design was in alignment with the need to learn personal narratives of participants about UPE from a local context. Therefore, I selected individual semi-structured interviews and talking circles to achieve this aim. In selecting these methods, my assumption was that the participants would be willing to think deeply and critically about the purpose of education and that they would be empowered to speak their minds freely. The selection of talking circles (focus groups) was with the assumption that participants would be more open, given the culturally appropriate technique that allows them to be empowered in their social environment, and that this would result in a deeper insight into their lived experiences in education, especially under the UPE program, and their expectations from education. The success of using this method, however, was dependent upon whether each participant felt at ease with those in the group. Many participants seemed excited to realize that their experiences were important and that they could speak from the bottom of their hearts without being criticized.

Issues of Trustworthiness

There are some issues that might affect the trustworthiness. The first is the fact that all responses were supposed to be based on the respondents' personal experiences. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) pointed out that knowledge is tentative because it is influenced by positioning, when our position shifts, our knowing also shifts. There have been many national (political, cultural, religious, economic) events in Uganda that could have shifted people's positions so many times, making the results of this study not generalizable to the rest of Uganda populations. Second, it is not possible to verify whether the responses represented overall feelings and experiences of the respondents, or were based on single incidents that the respondents found most traumatic or enjoyable. I only assumed that the narratives were based on wider experiences, since Clandinin and Connelly (2000) argue that it is, "impossible to look at one event or one time without seeing the events or times nested within" (p. 16). Ugandan society is mainly an oral society despite all the development in technology. The selection of research participants included knowledge of some historical events as a way of ensuring that as much information as possible was obtained as people told their stories across several historical periods.

Furthermore, I provided a broad description of the research process at the various stages, and decisions made along the way to ensure trustworthiness (Schmitt, 2005). I intentionally selected some members among the participants interviewed or some of the groups in the talking circles, to check the interpretations that I had made in metaphors describing their perceptions. This was important to ensure that their voices were heard, and not my interpretation. The knowledge belongs to them. Furthermore, to confirm this happened, I continuously used a simple approach in interpreting the data and was consistent throughout the process.

Ethical Assurances

I emphasized the importance of the research to all stakeholders to ensure understanding and thinking about the best ways to achieve children's learning success. All participants consented to participating in the study before the process started. Because the case study approach used participants' lived experiences and perceptions, permission was sought from the participants about assigning pseudo names for each participant's anonymity in the analysis and citations in reporting (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Some participants chose individual pseudo-names, but the majority preferred to be cited in the report using the general references to participants as 'district leaders' or district officials' or "parents' or 'stakeholders' so as to hide the real source of the information obtained. I also sought permission to audio-tape the interview and talking circles. I stored away all the information collected from the interviews and talking circles immediately and kept them safe and confidential.

Furthermore, data from interviews and talking circles were analyzed and reported by only providing results at the aggregate level to support the document analysis and the findings for dissertation and for future publication. For contact purposes regarding any concerns or questions about the research process or participation in this study, my name and telephone number and that of my adviser were provided to the participants. If any one of them had any questions about their rights as a research participant, or to report a problem, contact information for the university's IRB office as well as the toll free number were provided as presented in Appendix II- (IRB Approval) and Appendix V (Informed Consent).

Limitations of the case study approach

A case study can be subjective, as it requires researcher expertise and intuition in interpreting and analyzing the specific case data (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). Aware of this,

I constantly reminded myself of the key questions, and the purpose of the study in order to remain focused in listening, observing and interpreting the situations. I focused on the fieldwork constantly checking the data collected to inform the next interactions in order to verify or clarify some observations. A case study was also intensive and time consuming, as it required one to be engaged in the context within which the phenomenon is located. From this experience, I believe that a case study on a large scale would become expensive, therefore, only one district was appropriate for intensive fieldwork.

Summary of the Chapter

The focus of the chapter was on the procedures adopted in the process of fieldwork. I have explained the general theoretical and philosophical underpinning of the study. The discussions identified clear links between methods (tools for collecting data and the methodology), and the general theoretical underpinnings of the research. Due to logistics and procedural demands, the case study approach was ideal for the sample size and the nature of the problem investigated. The integrated approach of indigenous and critical theory allowed this study to illuminate the social structure of Iteso society, the local district, and schools that reproduce existing social relations and power structures within them. The following chapter presents the findings of the study highlighting the insights of the local stakeholders.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

This chapter presents insights from local stakeholders about the implementation of the Universal Primary Education in the Bukedea district, Eastern Uganda. My analysis of the information gathered was guided by the Ministry of Education and Sports' (MOES) National Goals of Education, especially Goal (ii) on access, equity, quality, and relevance of education and the Universal Primary Education (UPE) objective (b), "transforming the society in a fundamental and positive way," and (e), "make education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities" (MOES, 1999, p. 10). Furthermore, Education Act (13) 2008 assigns the responsibilities to parents and guardians to participate in promoting discipline, development, reviewing curriculum, providing community support to the school, including food, clothing, shelter, and medical care. In addition, parents and guardians are expected to provide parental guidance and psychosocial welfare, and ensure the moral, spiritual, and cultural growth of the children (GOU, 2008).

My analysis was further guided by the 3 pillars of my theoretical framework: *Eituŋanane* local philosophy, Freire's conscientization and problem posing, and Mandela's "education is a weapon" metaphor. In addition the overarching research question: How has the UPE policy addressed the local realities, needs and aspirations of Ugandans? Guided the analysis. Purposive sampling was used to collect data to validate the claims made in three months of intensive fieldwork. In view of the above, the findings from the interviews, talking circles, informal discussions, district reports, and government documents, taken together yielded a number of themes supported by metaphors that informed the study. The metaphors derived from the data provide a better account of the participants' thought (Carpenter, 2008). And so, key metaphors that emerged from the data are categorized into two groups and presented under major themes.

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Metaphors that refer to the positive aspects of UPE such as *education as a key*, and *as a light* and UPE policy *as a seed,* reflected the local stakeholder's perceptions about the UPE positive influence to the community needs. The second category dealt with bottlenecks associated with the implementation process of UPE, and were captured under metaphors such as *examination driving teaching,* UPE *as a tight rope,* and *accidental* teachers. From the government documents, *education as a commodity* and as a *vaccine for poverty* metaphors were identified.

Based on the stakeholders' perceptions on UPE and their espoused local needs and aspirations, four major factors were identified. First, the sub-text of the government's definition of the purpose of education is an emphasis placed on schooling at global and national levels. That is, education for poverty eradication, and economic and social development, with less prominence afforded the local levels. Missing from this sub-text is education driven by local priorities. Second, the community's 'pseudo' participation in education is exacerbated by the lack of genuine dialogue with the government to develop appropriate strategies to address local educational issues. Third, policy related issues include poor understanding of the policy by the various stakeholders. This lack of understanding affects the level of commitment to real change in education and inhibits the mobilization of communities. This lack of understanding is further translated into inadequate funding plagued by utilization pressures at the local level, and fractured accountability and monitoring procedures. Fourth, the impact of past experiences and the current over-emphasis on the individual as opposed to the community has eroded the 'human-ness' that is cherished by the local Iteso society.

The chapter is therefore, presented in 4 major parts. The first part begins by reconciling local aspirations and the definition of the purpose of education. The main reason being to understand the connection between education offered by the government of Uganda, through the

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national goals of education, and the local people's views about what they aspire education to do for them. This connection is important to show whether or not there is a strong link between the government's definition of the purpose of education and the aspirations of local level stakeholders. The second part examines the local perceptions about UPE to gauge the level of understanding of the policy by the various stakeholders. This knowledge of the policy affects the level of commitment to real change, local ownership, and mobilization of communities to participate in education. Local community participation in education to develop appropriate indigenous plans to address local educational issues is examined. The third part explores UPE objectives in the light of equality, equity, and quality by examining the teacher situation and the support accorded to schools by the district. In this instance, School Management Committees, School inspectors, and parental support are presented. The fourth, part, examines the relationship between the school and the community to understand how the impact of past experiences and the current over-emphasis on the individual as opposed to the community, promotes or does not promote 'human-ness' cherished by the local society. Finally, the suggestions are presented from the participants, about how improvements to UPE could be made.

Reconciling Local Aspirations and the Purpose of Education

The importance of aspirations as a focus for this study is threefold. First, "aspirations provide a probabilistic indication" (Archer, et al., 2014, p. 58) that suggests the kind of future a community wants for its children. Local stakeholders' aspirations were examined with the view that understanding a people's aspirations may explain the level of resilience they have built to ensure that their children are supported against all odds to achieve those aspirations. Second, aspirations are of interest in social policies, including education (MOES, 1989). Aspirations are identified as effecting educational performance and hence aspirations are featured in education

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policy documents (Archer, et al. 2014). In addition, as has been previously noted, the lack of aspirations, or low aspirations, from education stakeholders leads to low participation in education (Archer, et al. 2014). Moreover, alignment of national and local aspirations is critical for shared ownership of education processes (Croll, 2008). Evidence of this is found in Uganda's Vision, Education Strategic Investment Plan, (ESIP), Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2007-2015, and other policy related documents that were compared with the primary data from the field. Third, I considered aspirations from a sociological perspective, as "a socially constructed phenomena, that provides the means to examine interplay between social agency and social structures" (Archer, et al., 2014, p. 59). The understanding here is that home and school are part of a wider context in which individuals form a sense of their future (Archer, 2014).

Key Local Aspirations

Therefore, the stakeholders were asked to share their desires (aspirations) for the future of their children, beginning from where they were currently and projecting to where they wanted to be in the next 5 to 10 years. Stakeholders' desires were grouped into two main categories. First, the community believed education should build the social fabric of their society. Based on this, emphasis should be placed on culture, morality, and spirituality both at home and at school. Second, they saw the need for social and economic improvements of both the individual and the community. In view of this, communities expect their children to get better jobs after completing school and to be able to not only care for their families, but also to contribute to the wellbeing of their entire community. The third view was derived mainly from the government policies and goals, which, despite citing the moral aspect as important, emphasized education 'as a commodity' or an (economic) asset to the community. Therefore, 5 key aspirations are derived from the responses namely people at the local level aspired: 1) to promote moral and upright

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citizens; 2) for future employment to improve family and community; 3) to promote traditional values especially unity and concern for others; 4) to promote inclusive community; 5) to acquire knowledge about their world and beyond.

Key aspirations 1: A future generation with moral and upright citizens

The need to bring up morally upright and God-fearing citizens, the type of citizens with good behavior towards and respect for each other, was emphasized in each group session. The behavior expected in the community, for example, was that of "being social, moving and working together with the community, being responsible, hard-working" (talking circle with parents, April, 2014). Furthermore, being God-fearing people, caring for others, and living in a corruption-free community" (talking circles with head teachers, April, 2014). In this regard, schooling should give children knowledge, but also guide them in their formation of good attitudes toward, and good relationships with, others. The focus on morality and character in education was attributed to the tough experiences resulting from war and insurgencies in the region. Many participants attested to the horrific activities that destroyed the entire social fabric within their communities. In addition, participants expressed concern about the poor behavior of children in schools, the fights between students and teachers, students threatening teachers and "answering or talking back" to adults generally (talking circle with parents, April 2014). While teachers attributed students' behavior to the weak parental and community participation in guiding their children (talking circle with teachers, April, 2014), parents argued that the enforcement of children's rights and the relaxed attitude of teachers made it difficult for them to have meaningful time to discipline their children (talking circle with parents, April 2014).

Indeed, some stakeholders compared their own experiences as students in the past with the current breed of student, both in primary and secondary schools. Parents also described their

own schooling experiences of corporal punishment, in the forms of caning and hard labor, as both *acceptable* and *preferable* (emphasis added) to the current emphasis on child rights. As a result, parents had confidence in bringing up their children in the same manner (talking circle with parents, April, 2014). They contended that the children should get an education that makes them socially responsible and religiously reverent (talking circle with parents, April, 2014).

This aspiration relates to *Eituŋanane* principles of respect for elders, obedience, being responsible, and hard working. From these perspectives, it was evident that the experiences indicate a weakening of *Eituŋanane* in homes and schools. The perspectives also implied that the nature of education provided lacked a balanced approach to addressing community needs towards good relationships. The promotion of children's rights in schools has not been well understood by the stakeholders. Freire's (2000) theoretical idea and concepts about importance of teachers- student (in this case including parent–children) relationship argues for creation of open climate for conversations in the classrooms, schools, and homes.

Key aspiration 2: Future employment for family and community improvement

Many parents agreed with the concept that "our children should aspire to reach higher levels of education and acquire prominent jobs to support us and offer services to the community like doctors, mechanics, and so on" (talking circle with parents, April, 2014). The parents want young people from their own locality to become more committed to community improvement. Most stakeholders felt that the success of the children at school would help further their studies and develop careers that enabled participation in various community based cultural, social, and economic activities. They recognized the current demand for academic achievements as a link to many opportunities for jobs and social status (prestige) and wealth. However, for this to happen, a higher level of education is required. Only a minute fraction of students from the district

achieve university level. There is no school with advanced secondary level in the district, to prepare students for university entrance. This aspiration reflects the human capital theory, in which education is perceived as a means to qualifications that can be exchanged for well-paying jobs. Indeed, the assumption held by parents, is that jobs are readily available for all those students who go to and complete school.

Key aspiration 3: Community enlightenment and promotion of traditional values

Furthermore, parents and teachers associated education with the need to enlighten the community. "To enlighten" was defined as "showing them the light, making them develop and move with the world" (talking circle with teachers, April, 2014). It was observed that those who held the view of bringing "light" to the implied darkness were coached into believing that their current ways of life was backward and not useful. So, western education, "the light," had to be shone into "the darkness" (the communities' assumed lack of knowledge). This makes western education "the only way for society to progress" or "move with the world" (talking circles with teachers, April, 2014). In addition to the concept of enlightenment was the sense of responsibility to ensure that the values passed on from previous generations are understood and practiced by the youth. Emphasis in the conversations was on the need to have a community in which individual improvement does not culminate at the individual level, but instead benefits all. An elder described education today as geared towards becoming modern, but argued "being modern does not mean becoming someone else other than yourself" (interview with a cultural leader, April 2014). Other elders expressed fear that traditions were dying with them: "Families no longer work together and do not teach children about culture and schools also take no interest" (interview with an elder, April, 2014). In line with this concern, is the expectation that schools

should, in partnership with communities, teach and promote community values and traditions. Traditional values are the center of *Eituŋanane* the elders recount.

Key Aspiration 4: Acquisition of knowledge of their world and beyond

Life aspirations were expressed in relation to acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge was explained in relation to the world around them and beyond, including issues or problems associated with life's circumstances. For example, they said that "[k]nowledge shapes a person's choices, opportunities or possibilities in life. Knowledge and understanding (*acoa ka aijen*) prepares them for what lies ahead, And to know what they are supposed to do in future" (talking circle with parents). In addition, the parents with no formal education emphasized education as a light that changes a person's life. They saw the future of their children through the eyes of their own experiences. They were denied the opportunity to attain education, and as a result, they experienced daily challenges due to lack of education. They desired their voices to be heard, but often were ignored as unintelligent (versus uneducated) persons. Society had therefore, branded them "uneducated' and rated them as *ibaŋiok* (fools). Their hope for their children is to "know the goodness of reading … so that wherever they go, they can speak their mind with others without shame" (interview with a mother, March 2014). This mother had experienced alienation from her society because she could neither read nor speak English. Thus, she felt powerless to express herself in her language because English dominates the mode of communication as an official language in Uganda. Many 'educated' people tend to use it in meetings even where the majority of members are local/ native Ateso language speakers.

From the responses, it was noted that there was a connection between stakeholder backgrounds and the types of aspirations. For example, aspirations for good behavior and God fearing came mainly from stakeholders highly associated with Christianity and Islamic

backgrounds. Furthermore working stakeholders stressed more career-oriented aspirations. These

aspirations told a story with four visions. First, they were grounded on the social and cultural

aspects of a society that is focused on peaceful co-existence and moral uprightness, in line with

the *Eituŋanane* philosophy. Second, the focus was on community wellbeing rather than

individual development as isolated from the others (shared good). Third, they focused on

employment and careers that benefit community development, in relation to the human capital

theory. Fourth, they focused on the spirituality of the people, especially as expressed through

Christianity or Islam. These four visions were expected to connect the local level to the national

level, where the aspirations of Ugandans as a people informed the national goals of education.

The Local Aspirations and National Goals of Education

Unlike the local aspirations that were collected directly from the field, the national

aspirations were drawn from the National Development Plan (NDP) and presented as a synopsis

by Dr. Rwendeire, the Deputy Director of National Development Authority (NDA), in his

keynote address at the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of Uganda's Independence in Vienna,

Austria. According to the NDP, Ugandans want:

1. Strong democratic structures and systems with demonstrated checks and

   balances.

2. Unity in diversity and equal opportunities … a progressive and

   developmental culture that blends traditional beliefs and national values.

3. To be resourceful and prosperous contributing to national development

   … while accessing affordable quality education services that are

   globally competitive.

4. To live in clean and well-planned urban/rural settlements with … strong social safety nets for the vulnerable groups.

5. A morally upright God-fearing society with values of love, care, fairness, justice, respect, truth and hope.

(Rwendeire, 2012, p. 3-4)

These national aspirations reflected Ugandan Government Vision 2040 (Uganda Vision, 2040), of a country that desires to support human development, equality, and prosperity (GOU, 2010). They told a story of the interplay of three ideas. Firstly, they are grounded in the social and cultural aspects of a society that is focused on peaceful co-existence and emphasized in the local aspirations. It is a vision of an ideal society characterized by peace, security, and humanity (referred to in the aims as human fellowship) where people consider their actions in relation to other human rights, in line with *Eituŋanane* and as stipulated in the 1995 Constitution of Uganda. Secondly, they focused on labor market (structures and systems, prosperity, gainful employment, competitiveness), which are central to the economic growth emphasized in local aspirations as jobs, aligned to the human capital theory. Finally, they focused on spiritual aspects of human beings as espoused in different faiths or religions of the society is affirmed in the local aspirations.

These national and local aspirations mirrored the Government White Paper on Education (1992) that was a response to the Education Policy Review Commission's recommendations. A comparison between the local aspirations, the national aspirations of Ugandans, and the National Goals of Education (Government White Paper) are shown in Table 3 below:

Table 2: Comparison of local and national aspirations to the National Education Goals

Local aspirations	National aspirations	National Education Goals
Society mobilized through education to purposefully participate in the development of the community	Living and working guided by the rule of law with strong accountability mechanisms	Evolving democratic institutions and practices in society (Goal II)
Focus on cultural/community values, family, culture, individual improvement with a far reaching effect to others	Unity in diversity and equal opportunities, … a progressive and developmental culture … blends traditional beliefs and national values	Forge national unity and harmony (value of unity, patriotism and cultural heritage) (Goal I)
Aspire for jobs provided by government for the improvement of the family and community.	Being resourceful, prosperous, and contributing to national development	"Creating national wealth" (technical and cultural knowledge and skills for development) (Goal IV)
Live in peace, harmony, community and help ensure that basic needs are met	Living in clean and well planned urban/rural settlements with world class infrastructure and services	"guaranteeing fundamental human rights" (Goal III)
Promote traditional values including integrity morality and others, guided by the fear God	A morally upright, and God-fearing society	"Promoting moral and ethical values" (Goal V)

Note: Created using information from the Government of Uganda: Development Plan (2010) Phase 1, Ministry of Education and Sports (2008) and perspectives of local participants.

As seen on the Table 2, it was observed that, aspirations constitute an important focus within education policy. Both the statements of aspirations and the National Education Goals implied the importance of education in fostering the social cohesiveness through unity, harmony, democratic government, and development (indicated as employment, resources, prosperity and national wealth) at national and community levels. While the national level was assumed to be a summation of all the local needs, there are vast geographical, cultural, economic, and social

differences unique to each region. Therefore, although the national aspirations and national goals of education expressed the importance of development, the emphasis is on economic development for the goal of eradicating poverty (Canajarajah & Diesen, 2011). In addition, development was seen through diverse, and sometimes contradicting, lenses and yet the emphasis of the purpose for education and the national goals of education remain on economic development and growth (GOU, 2010). This means that the government perceives development through an economic lens, as promoted by the human capital theory, hence the use of words such as "prosperity," and "wealth for all" (GOU, 2010).

Education as a key, a commodity, or an asset

The key as a metaphor was repeatedly featured in conversations with the participating parents and teachers. A description of education offers opportunity (a key) to achieve one's potential and realize improvement through an opening (schooling experience). A key opens a door or a lock that should lead to access (an entry), in this case enrollment in education; and also an exit, which symbolizes completion and qualification. The opportunities provided for access to education in this metaphor, become the doorways for students to experience something new, to develop new ambitions or dreams, and to acquire knowledge and skills whether in school or at work. The expectation of parents is that students do not abandon the valuable life lessons and experiences gained through the community, but strengthen their knowledge and belief systems with appropriate experiences. This means that learning is a life-long process in which students continuously acquire appropriate knowledge. Nevertheless, a door could also let one escape from a confinement or a secure environment to the outside. A door could shut out some people, thereby denying entrance.

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Indeed, in the same argument the stakeholders' perceive UPE as "a key for opening the doors" to primary education. The children from poor households, those with disabilities, and/or orphaned have been able to enroll in the primary schools. In line with the global thinking, this makes UPE the universal door that provides free access to all children. As a result, "there has been an increase in school enrollments for both boys and girls, showing that there is movement towards the gender balance that is mandated by the MGD Goal 3"(interview with district official, May, 2014). Furthermore, "[m]ore primary schools have been constructed making education equitably distributed" (interview with a district official, May, 2014). However, there is also visible disparity where doors are closed or half open to some children, especially in instances where children enroll, but school and home factors do not encourage them to persist through to completion. This predicament makes the doors half open, which can only be entered with difficulty and/or with suspicion. In this case, UPE becomes a wide universal door, free for all to enter, allowing large numbers of children to enroll, and yet at the same time, so wide that many children wander back to their homes before completing the primary school cycle.

For this reason, local aspirations indicated that when one acquires education, "wherever they go they can say what they think without fear" (interview with a mother, April, 2014). Students can get jobs and "be able to come back to *modernize* those they left behind" (interview with an elder, April, 2014). This relates to the connectedness between those educated and those uneducated. Those who are educated are expected to "remain part of the larger community, and should return to their roots no matter what or who they become" (personal communication with the cultural leader, March, 2014).

However, in contrast to the "education as a key metaphor," stakeholders who understood economic discourse said, "education is a sensitive commodity" (talking circle with parents,

April, 2014). This metaphor was also derived from the government Education Sector Strategic

Plan (ESSP, 2007-2015), national goals, and sector reports, which emphasize the notion that

education is a good or a commodity (GOU, 2010, MOES, 2007). Government procedures and

guidelines emphasize education for economic development and for reducing poverty as

highlighted by the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP I, II, 1997- 2003) and Poverty

Reduction Strategic Paper (PRSP). This makes education *a vaccine* for poverty, disease and

ignorance as hinted in the UPE Review Commission report (GOU, 2012).

Yet, the national aspirations for students to pass examinations, progress to post-secondary

education, gain employment, and be competitive are reflected through the emphasis placed on

mathematics and science in the curriculum. Therefore, examinations, certification, promotion,

and competition are products of a meritocratic agenda, linked to the human capital theory, in

which individuals are chosen on the basis of merit (Themelis, 2008). Moreover, Freire's concept

of oppression becomes an operational concept manifesting itself in the pursuit of credentials. The

Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) is an external examination (from outside the school) with

its certification (Primary Leaving Certificate), reinforces the notion that education is an external

object that can be transferred from place to place and is not necessarily rooted in the community.

Those who get certificates leave the community for urban cities to look for employment, because

there are no jobs in the rural villages. In other words, educational qualifications in the forms of

various certificates can be amassed and are exchangeable (Goatly, 2002), but they are not

necessarily meaningful to the community if the knowledge and skills provided do not match with

the community's changing needs. Moreover, metaphors such as these tend to reinforce the

existing attitudes towards the established model of education - the transmission model. Freire's

(2000) concept of oppression is reflected within this model, where the teacher (and the

government) is the "knower" and the students (and their communities) are the "recipients" or vessels to be filled with knowledge.

Consequently, the national aspiration and national education goals are mainly geared towards the economic field (McGrath, 2010), while the local people see acquisition of knowledge and skills for the purpose of contributing to the community, not only through the acquisition of gainful employment, but also primarily as an important vehicle for social, cultural, and moral improvements. While this improvement could take the form of personal prosperity, that prosperity is not expected to be only for the individual, but also for the benefit of family and community. Once a person gets a job, he/she is expected to be able to support his/ her immediate family and siblings, especially through the payment of school fees, emulating *Eituŋanane* principles of helping one another.

Discrepancies between Aspirations and Education Goals

The discrepancies between local aspirations, UPE goals, and national goals of education are evident from the local need for jobs, the level of poverty still existing in the villages, and the emphasis on the competitive national Primary Leaving Examination (PLE). Locally expressed aspirations focused on the need for an education that is balanced, builds the social fiber of the society, contributes to economic wellbeing of the community, and provides moral and character training for the children and youth. The expectation that students get jobs after schooling dominated the conversations to the extent that the lack of jobs was perceived as a huge stumbling block for communities to embrace education under the UPE policy. Lack of jobs suitable for the graduates of primary and secondary levels has left many youth unemployable. In addition, UPE's Objective 4 attempts to make education affordable for all Ugandans so as "to reduce poverty by equipping every individual with basic skills" (MOES, 2008, p.iv). However, it was observed

from the talking circles that communities still experience the burden of educating children. The cost of living keeps increasing making the prices of stationery, clothing, food, and books go up. Stakeholders argued that while the government says "free" education because the tuition fees are paid, "the UPE money sent is very little to cater for all the requirements of the school" (talking circle with stakeholders). Nevertheless, through the UPE policy goals, the government does take the responsibility for facilities and resources to enable every child to enroll and complete primary education, thereby making an effort to eliminate disparities and inequalities (National Goal of Education, ii). However, while there is an attempt to address disparities, many students who exit school do not get jobs that use their education.

Local Understanding of Universal Primary Education

This section sheds light on the extent the UPE Goal (b) "transform[s] the society in a fundamental way" and Goal (e) "make[s] education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities" (MOES, 1999) at the local level. Participant perceptions are captured under the expression *the glass is half full or half empty*. This phrase was chosen because, while some stakeholders saw opportunities in the UPE program, others mainly noted difficulties with it. Those who thought *the glass was half full*, described UPE positively with a perceived success realized since its inception. This group used metaphors such as "UPE policy is a seed" and "UPE is a light." In the government reports, "education as a vaccine for poverty" was used to show UPE achievements. Others who thought *the glass was half empty* described the program as riddled by challenges and far from responding effectively to their aspirations and needs.

UPE as a Seed in the Community

Generally, UPE is recognized through the government's emphasis at all levels. UPE has become a common, repetitive expression throughout the communities. All participants in the

study were able to talk about UPE, even though they used it to mean different understandings. UPE is associated with "*asioman na idwe kere,*" meaning education for all (an equivalent word for *education* in Ateso language, is *aisiom* [to read] and *aisisia* [to learn]). Hence, UPE is known for making all children go to school to learn, not only to read, but also to acquire knowledge and other basic skills.

"UPE as a seed" was a metaphor used to express UPE's positive contribution to offering opportunities to all children to go to school: "*Esubit e UPE bala ekinyomit…*" meaning 'UPE is like a seed" (interview with stakeholders). This was based on life experiences from farming in which seeds are significant to families and communities. Local seeds have unique needs, soil nutrients, maturing periods, farmers' skills, tools, preservation, planting season, harvesting, and storing. Hence, there is a general feeling that education should provide children with relevant knowledge (a good seed) passed on to or kindled within the children to help them (children) grow to take responsibilities in their families and communities. Three ideas were derived in this regard. First, teachers in schools become seed *providers* and care givers through the teaching of reading, writing, and mathematics as the basic tools for learning. Secondly, that there is a recognition that children have some inherent abilities that should be brought out through schooling. Thus, they are seeds with potential to germinate and produce fruits. Lastly, the knowledge (seed) does not only mean the academic knowledge that schooling tends to promote. Knowledge (*acoa* or *acobeu* in Ateso) is loosely used to mean many concepts including intelligence, local knowledge, specific skills for solving problems, understanding, knowledge for critical thinking, and so forth. For that reason, it is expected that once children acquire these forms of knowledge, they become like the seeds that are planted in the community so as to yield more and better crops for the family and community survival. But like the proverbial seed in the

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Bible, although all seeds are sown, they sometimes fall in unprepared ground or are constricted by the conditions found in the soil or the general environment. Indeed, imported foreign seeds (knowledge and values) may not grow well in soil that has not been prepared for the seed's adaptation to the environment in Uganda.

When the seeds fall into unprepared soil, then even though enrollment is increased, the harvest is poor. Indeed, according to some, although "UPE intervention was good, to some extent it is successful, up to say, about 60% in taking children to school, but implementation is problematic" (interview with the district officials, May, 2014). This 60 percentage is a result of high enrollments, yet there are few UPE students from the district transitioning to secondary education, and only a few reach university level. All stakeholders shared the view that UPE should lead to some form of change (development) in their current economic and social situation. They referred to the concept using different terminologies such as *apoloo* (growth), *ayaun ajokis* (bringing goodness or good things) (conversation with cultural leaders, March, 2014).

However, while basing their judgment on the UPE 'products' (those who had gone through the UPE program), there was a general feeling that many students enrolled in primary schools had completed primary and secondary education, but failed to progress to higher or tertiary institutions. This observation shows unmet expectations, that "… the children come back and help us in farming and using the land to produce better crops" (talking circle with parents, April, 2014). It might have also meant that UPE as a seed was planted on unprepared soil.

Stakeholders who see *the glass as half empty* identified the high dropout rate in the district as one of the biggest challenges in educating all children under UPE. They also attributed the poor performance of schools to the poor discipline of children and, to the lack of meals for children while attending school (school feeding). Thus, UPE was described by a local

administrator as "a basketful of flowers but empty inside" (informal discussions with nonprofit

community organization, May, 2014). By using a basketful of flowers metaphor, the notion is

that a basket cannot hold enough water in the soil, so the flowers wither for lack of nutrition.

Furthermore, some believe that the government exaggerates UPE achievements" (interview with

parents, April, 2014). Many children are not learning, are dropping out, and like flowers, they are

short lived in the system.

Other stakeholders felt that lack of shared understanding of UPE expectations means

*"When you use your hand to wash your face, if your fingers are scattered, you cannot hold

water"* (talking circle with district official, April, 2014). This was explained further:

> We do not understand what UPE is; (pause) we understand it differently. It
>
> says government has taken up part of the fees, but the parent has to take care of
>
> the rest of the requirements needed by the school. Parents too don't understand
>
> UPE, and as a result the political wing has confused them. So you find others
>
> taking their children to private schools, looking for good grades, and that's
>
> what it is all about, good grades
>
> (Interview with a district stakeholder, May, 2014).

This lack of a common local understanding of UPE, is exacerbated by political leaders

have varying perceptions and interpretations of the policies and clauses stipulated not only in the

UPE program, but also in other supporting documents from which UPE is derived. For example,

documents on EFA goals, education strategy, education policies and goals, Education Act, and

Uganda's Constitution and other global and local documents. In fact, some people believed that

"[i]n a bid to secure their votes, some political leaders have deliberately misrepresented the

policy to imply that UPE is free education for all, and by extension, the government will meet all

the students' needs" (interview with a district official, May, 2014). This opinion was supported

during another interview thus:

> The worst part is that everything now has become political, where the
>
> politicians, including the local councilors, keep telling people that UPE is free
>
> education. We are, therefore, divided when it comes to the UPE program.
>
> When you want to use water to wash your face, if your fingers are scattered,
>
> you cannot hold water.
>
> (Interview with a district official, May, 2014).

This indicates that the lack of collective understanding of UPE makes interventions to

address gaps in the program unsuccessful. Indeed, "UPE was wrongly referred to as 'free' and in

the minds of the people, everything was to be free. Our people value free things" (interview with

a district official, May, 2014). Participants discussed the way the program was introduced to

them and some had the opinion that it was "a political dream that lacked facilities" (talking circle

with teachers, April, 2014). Hence,

> UPE is a political program, we are there stuck with it. The government is in a
>
> fix. Enrolment is big. Many children are going to school and these pose
>
> problems. UPE is also to popularize the government. One is expected to
>
> mention the positive elements of UPE but not anything else. It is seen as a one
>
> way... positive.
>
> (Interview with a district official, May 2014).

These perspectives signal a top-down approach. They may also indicate where power is

and where it is not, as pointed out by Freire (2000). Such an education system inculcates

passivity and removes people's agency in questioning the government. At the local levels, this

approach stifles people's ability and fails to ignite their critical consciousness. This kind of

knowledge, according to Freire (1998), remains fixed and undisputable. He further argued that

knowledge serves the status quo in power and makes the present circumstances appear desirable

and normal (Freire, 2000). As a result, more power lies with the government, and less power at

the local levels, leading to a sense of helplessness. These are signs that there are

disillusionments, frustrations, anger, apathy, and blame among the local stakeholders. In this

case, education as a weapon (Mandela, 2003) could be used to empower communities to pose the

right questions in order for their voices to be heard.

Local Stakeholders' Participation in UPE: Ownership

This section shares how well the local government enables its constituents to participate

effectively in the education processes, especially in implementing the UPE program. The

government of Uganda increasingly promotes participation in education by the community. This

has become a common theme in education policy documents and laws, because in order for an

education system to be efficient, information about policy and laws must be communicated to the

all levels (Bray, 2003). Effective communication among stakeholders reveals who has power and

how it is used within the district sectors and levels. The guiding questions for this section is,

whether or not communication is centered on students, their needs and whether or not

communication establishes a climate for and a culture of dialogue among stakeholders. The goal

of such communication is that it would be student-centered, indicating community ownership of

UPE as a community program. The participants indicated that at the district level, district

officials shared district circulars (some general memos to departments on current issues, but

mainly guidelines and procedures) within the district offices and also shared ministry circulars

from education development partners. Within the district, official circulars were generated by the

top leaders and follow a hierarchical line of authority. Some circulars concerning policy are discussed at the District Council and the results shared through the hierarchy of management within the local government. District Officials often pass the circulars through the District Education Officer (DEO) to the schools. Sometimes the DEO receives copies of circulars, which he/she forwards to schools either directly or through the Local Council III. Reporting from schools also follows similar routes depending on the nature of information or reports required.

At the school level, communication between school leadership and teachers was through formal staff meetings, the use of notice boards for teachers, especially in the staff room (where these existed), or at the head teachers' notice board. If it was a circular from the education office, the head teachers usually generated a list of teachers and attached it to the circular for every teacher to read and then sign as a confirmation that they read and understood the information. Each individual interprets the circular, which sometimes contains policy statements, differently. Many teachers were concerned that sometimes they did not get enough time to digest what has been circulated, but are nevertheless expected to comply. They had little or no time to explore the circulars together with guidance from education leaders. For example, in the Education office, circulars were sent from the Ministry of Education and its affiliated institutions such as Kyambogo University, National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC), Education Standards Agency (ESA) and the Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB). Few explanations were given as to the background of the circulars or their contents. The only emphasis was on the type of action the school needed to take. The most common communications were requests for data from the schools and communities. However, the schools did not get any copies of the reports for which they contributed information, thus they did not have an opportunity to understand the importance of their data. The school stakeholders insisted that this practice discouraged

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participating in or responding to other requests for data (talking circle with teachers, April, 2014).

At the community level, questions were asked about how communities received and sent information, what kind of information, to whom, and for what purpose. This was meant to help the researcher understand how the communities were mobilized to participate. According to the district officials, the communities were informed about their roles in UPE implementation through meetings that were called in schools by the School Management Committee (SMCs). In this way the district officials would be able to meet parents. The district officials also used other occasions where many people gathered, such as funerals, marketplaces, and marriage ceremonies to educate the community. Churches were also used during Sunday prayers, where "district officials in attendance take opportunity to greet the people" (interview with the district officials, May 2014). The district leaders then passed on messages about specific school or health related issues requiring participation by the community. Emphasis was on parents and community involvement in the education of their children.

In addition, the message most commonly emphasized was "take children to school, help teachers by providing them with housing, and provide children with scholastic materials and food" (interview with a local council official, May, 2014). However, it was observed that it was primarily women who attended many of these events and meetings. The men, who were the primary decision makers for the households, were often absent. So, without the ability to target the right group of community members (men) with specific requests to take action, it was difficult for the district to understand whether or not these approaches of mobilizing communities can yield tangible results. Moreover, people at the local level were often spoken to,

but not consulted about how they could be involved. Indeed, it was revealed that the district stakeholders did not even share the same understanding about community involvement.

Therefore, beyond the circulars from the central government, the kind of activities the district engaged with the communities, were not explicitly planned. The district leaders claimed that in all their discussions with communities, they wanted to understand how parents' participation benefited children in the classroom. There was however, no evidence in the district reports and documents available to the researcher to show this link. As stated, there was a blanket blame on parents' lack of interest in participation in their children's education, poor attendance at meetings, and a lack of interest in providing their children with the necessary stationery and food. District leaders believed that "parents have not appreciated UPE and they have misunderstood the policy" (interviews with the district leaders, May, 2014). Parents were also blamed for being "lazy and used to free things" (interview with district leaders, May, 2014). Nevertheless, varying roles impose different kinds of demands on schools and parents require different kinds of relationships between them and the schools (Bray, 1996). In this case, it was clear that parents were disillusioned and did not see sound reasons to participate.

District Support to Realizing UPE Objectives

This part examines the support given to schools by the district to ensure that UPE objectives were realized. The section explores teacher status (especially their recruitment, motivation, and salary), tests and examinations, automatic promotion, and thematic curriculum. The section examines perceptions about their effectiveness of the district leadership in supporting community participation, district school inspectors' roles, School Management Committees in supporting parents were. The district leadership was clear on what roles they were assigned in UPE implementation, based on their positions in the district. The roles and

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responsibilities included, among others, overseeing the implementation of the UPE program and ensuring the security of the people and their property, ensuring that all children are in school. However, in the interviews, it was not explicitly stated how the district stakeholders carried out their roles in a collective effort to bring about the achievement of UPE goals. Indeed, each one of the district stakeholders confidently felt that each office was making a contribution and that they were playing their roles well. The lower cadres in leadership at the parish and village levels seemed to believe that they knew what they were supposed to do and that they made a good contribution to the implementation of UPE. However, other stakeholders disputed these claims while discussing the local councils and the parish or village leadership, and portrayed them as weak in supporting the program.

Generally, stakeholders' responses tallied in agreement to the fact that UPE was a top-down initiative because "the government holds tight on to UPE" (talking circles with stakeholders, April, 2014). The local stakeholders mainly got instructions on what they should or should not do. The laws and regulations tend to be controversial and contradictory. The directives bar parents from contributing to the school activities. The exception of contribution to school feeding was therefore received with mixed feelings. The controversy in the feeding students while at school is that whereas the government is not able to provide all the resources needed to support students at school, government rejects any idea of parents' contributions to improve the school. In contrast, while some parents from urban setting understood the importance of their participation to their children's education, the parents from rural communities expressed fatigue (*epasani*) in the demands placed on them by the government and the schools. All these implied that there was micro management of education at the national level, which was replicated at the district level.

Local consultations or dialogues

Parents expressed concerns about the centrally enacted education policies that were aggressively implemented, but that the local bylaws were difficult to enforce. Based on this, the district leaders indicated preference to implementing the centrally enacted government laws on UPE. Some district leaders indicated a need for more centrally enacted bylaws that would specifically address their local situation. It was observed that the local government's self-assurance was fragile, making ownership of UPE at the local government weaker. At the school and community levels, teachers were skeptical about discussing UPE or raising questions to the districts on issues that they felt needed to be addressed to make their work easier. Teachers said:

> Sometimes you feel like doing what you feel is right, but you are shut down. We have the questions to ask but we don't ask any questions because if you are seen talking about UPE, you can be deleted or dealt with. Teaching is a calling not a job, that's why we do not ask questions.

(Talking circle with teachers, April, 2014)

This could allude that the government was intolerant of criticism. Teachers felt threatened with punitive actions and cited removal of their names from the payroll for months, as one of the possible punishments. This action could mean that a teacher would not be able to access salary for months. Based on these perceptions, it was observed that participation in the UPE lacked genuine dialogue amongst themselves as UPE key stakeholders. So, they could not develop appropriate strategies to address their local education issues. Besides, while the UPE goal is well crafted at the national level, the top-down system approach leaves no opportunity for

the local levels to digest and understand the guidelines and expectations of the intended change or communicate concerns of their needs up the chain of command. It also makes it difficult for the local levels to tailor interventions according to their needs and what they can realistically do. There is evidence of Freire's (1998) ideas and concepts in relation to authoritarian environments, oppressive management, dialogue, versus anti dialogue. According to Freire (1998) teachers can quit to struggle against oppression and develop ways to understand it and develop appropriate measures to mitigate it. It requires teacher education that empowers teachers to think critically and pose problems about the world in which they work and live.

Perceptions on Equality, Equity, and Quality in UPE

The UPE objective in relation to reducing inequality and improving equity at the local level are examined in this section. According to the district leaders, the UPE goal on equality and equity were realized: "The increase in enrollment means more and more children from the targeted poor households' access education" (interview with a district leader). According to the reports and participants' responses, before the introduction of UPE, many children walked long distances to the schools in the neighboring villages. Many children found it difficult to complete primary or secondary education because of distances. "Today the district boasts of equitable distribution of schools in most of its villages. Children no longer walk very long distances" (interview with parents). An example was given of Kachumbala Sub County, which had only four primary schools before Bukedea became a district. Now it has 32 primary schools. Accessibility of schools has effectively reduced pupils' burden and opened more opportunities for education to reach many children in the district. As a result, there are increasing numbers of boys and girls enrolled in schools. Based on this data, and in an attempt to bring in gender parity,

it could be concluded that gender equality has been addressed as affirmed by the district official thus:

> Currently, there is also *equitable* distribution between the number of girls and boys enrolling in schools which was not the case before the inception of this program… Gender issues have been addressed, where the boys and girls are almost the same 50/50 in primary education especially in the lower primary classes P.1 to P.3 (Interview with a district official, April, 2014).

However, upon closer examination of enrollment from year to year, a small discrepancy is noted. For example, in 2012, enrollment in Bukedea Primary schools was 61,727 (30,886 boys, and 30,841 girls), while in 2013, enrollment was 59,402 (29,614 boys, and 29,788 girls, Bukedea EMIS, 2012/3). This shows a discrepancy of about 3.9 % of the pupils (1,272 boys and 1,053 girls). This reveals a decrease in the number of both boys and girls, with boys slightly fewer than girls. This type of data is often overlooked in the reporting of information to district and national stakeholders. Although the figures appear small, cumulatively the figures reveal high dropout rates in the district and also show a decrease in enrolments in the upper primary grades, especially Primary Six and Seven. In individual schools, especially in Primary One and Two, the numbers of both boys and girls are either the same or close. Nevertheless, this refers mainly to the numbers of the girls that get to schools when they are still young and eager to learn, but whose opportunities to progress towards completion get slimmer as they move from one grade to the next.

Thus, the reality of whether they actually complete the primary education cycle is much more important, especially whether they are supported through interventions that enable them to learn and succeed. The notable challenge is seen in the fifth to seventh grades, when many girls

'disappear' off the radar of the schooling system. From the field, there is a general perception that girls drop out of school once they reach puberty, and specifically, once they begin their menstrual cycle, because of lack of proper sanitation facilities. Parents noted that these periods for girls were a taboo for them to talk about and they found it embarrassing to discuss.

Unfortunately, early pregnancies, home chores, and parental attitudes regarding the education of girls were listed as contributing factors to the lack of girls' persistence in school. The government uses these two seemingly similar terms of equity and equality, which have all been lumped together at the local level to mean the equal access that requires both boys and girls enroll in school. Thus, there is a misconception between these two terms: equity and equality, as they are often taken and used interchangeably. To begin with, the government of Uganda uses these terms in many policy documents, education regulations, curriculum, reports, and strategies. Therefore, when reporting on UPE and EFA and MDGs achievement on equity, the equality definition is applied, which means the real issues of equity (through a social justice lens) get overshadowed. This results in limited actions taken to address the needs of the children with physical disability, girls who are culturally marginalized in the Iteso cultural beliefs and practices, and some children who are orphaned or living in difficult environments. His is a hindrance to the achievement of global goals at the local level.

Tests driving teaching and learning

Stakeholders observed that education was focused on examinations and tests and that they were required to pay a lot of money for these examinations and tests.

Teachers have developed what we call spot teaching. They teach children

topics that they think will be tested. That amounts to teaching children to pass

final PLE and making a name for the school due to the tight competition in the

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country. They test children on the book knowledge but children are not

encouraged to think … Children cannot even learn to make simple mats using

the available materials

(Interview with district stakeholder May, 2014).

This indicates that the district performance in the PLE leads education process. The national examination and frequent district and school tests have taken over the whole meaning of education. Table 4 shows the district performance in Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) 2007-2013. From the table, it was observed that the overall Bukedea district performance has greatly improved with district obtaining 97 Division 1 passes (UNEB, 2013) as compared to 4 division 1 in 2008 (UNEB, 2008), implying that the district may have benefited from the Quality Education Improvement Program (MOES, 2010). However, while the district celebrates improved grade attainment, there are discrepancies in the gender scores. While male students scored highly in the first, second and third divisions, female students cluster heavily on the fourth division including U (Failed all the examination subjects) and X (absent) or unscored.

The Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) uses Division I, II, III, IV, U, and X to grade the examinations. Students who pass in Division I, II, III, and IV are legible to join secondary education or Business and Technical Vocational Training (BTVT). Students who pass in Division U cannot be admitted to a secondary school and are encouraged to repeat the examination (Executive Secretary, UNEB, 2012). Often, many opt to drop out of the education system. Table 3 shows the district score distribution through 2007-2013.

Table 3: Bukedea district Primary Leaving Examination results 2007- 2013

	Division 1			Division 2			Division 3			Division 4			Division U			Division X			
YR	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	T
2007	11	1	12	489	309	798	279	289	568	120	151	271	56	109	165	31	41	72	**1886**
2008	3	1	4	256	127	383	467	415	882	195	234	429	168	312	480	12	39	51	**2229**
2009	13	0	13	493	337	830	403	500	903	215	229	444	186	265	451	22	28	50	**2691**
2010	21	11	32	671	437	1108	342	477	819	211	218	429	167	243	410	29	47	76	**2874**
2011	33	11	44	622	407	1029	372	383	755	266	345	611	153	228	381	23	30	53	**2873**
2012	72	20	92	750	619	1369	313	372	685	153	240	393	119	159	278	20	29	49	**2866**
2013	85	12	97	806	589	1395	393	472	865	133	186	319	86	127	213	22	28	50	**2939**

Source: Uganda National Examinations Board 2007-2013

Therefore, as shown in the table 3 the number of girls in divisions IV, U and X are much higher than the number of boys in the same grades. Failure rates are higher and vary from year to years. For example, in 2008, out of 1886 students who sat the PLE, 1378 (73%) passed and 508 (27%) failed. In 2011, out of 2773 who sat PLE, 1,828 (64%) passed but 1,045 (36%) students failed. So, despite an increase in the number of first grade scores, there was poor performance in 2011 compared to 2008. Many of the failures were girls who come from rural areas, where households depend on girls for chores, which could only mean that the impact of primary education on families' expectations is a long way from being realized in rural areas.

In order to understand this further, Table 3 shows the percentage of girls according to the divisions (grades). It explains that girls were predominantly dominant in IV, U and X divisions, which according to UNEB grading, are weak passes (Division IV), and division U is encouraged to repeat as they cannot be admitted to secondary or BTVT. The divisions I and II do not have even 50 percent of girls passing. While parents expect their students (boys and girls) to complete school, get jobs and help their communities, the overwhelmingly revealing reality is that there is no gender equity in education as stipulated in the global goals.

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Table 4: Girls' percentage passes by grades 2007-2013

Division	1	2	3	4	U	X
2007	8	39	51	56	66	57
2008	25	33	47	55	65	76
2009	0	41	55	52	59	56
2010	34	39	58	51	59	62
2011	25	40	51	56	60	57
2012	22	45	54	61	57	59
2013	12	42	55	58	60	56

Source: Calculations based on the UNEB results by District

Education outcomes, despite being low overall in the district, are of poorer quality for the girls. The high numbers of girls in primary schools, combined with the high dropout rate, poor performance, and difficulty in transitioning to secondary schools means that girls need affirmative action at primary and secondary education levels specifically targeted to help them or have a level playing field with boys. This action should be targeted at addressing the challenges girls meet at school, home, and community. The poor performance by girls at Division 1 as shown in figure 4 further illuminates the situation.

Figure 4 shows that girls perform best in Division III, IV and U and X. According to the district analysis of performance from the 2006-2012 results, the district experienced improvement in Division I and II (mainly by boys), but realized a decline in Division II, IV, and U (mainly dominated by girls). It was observed that whereas access to education showed that the gender parity was realized, the performance at the end of the primary education cycle was skewed towards boys' successful completion of primary education as compared to girls.
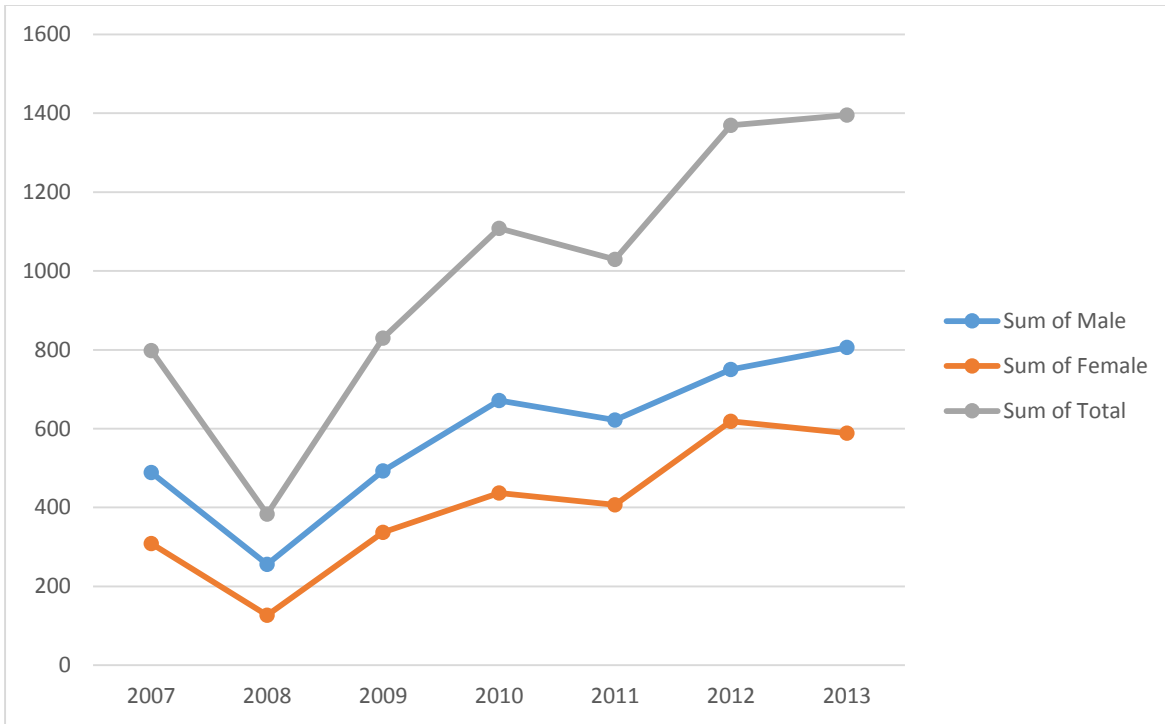
Figure 4: Girls performance in Division 1 from 2007-2013
Source: UNEB results by district 2007-2013.

This means two things: first, the district is still a long way from closing gender parity and equity, particularly in terms of the achievement and learning outcomes, along the gender gap. It was observed that as a result, many girls do not get the knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions about, for example, their sexuality, motherhood (including family planning), negotiation skills, and opportunities to compete in the male dominated labor market. Second, enrolment does not necessarily mean learning, and hence proves that schooling is not necessarily education (Pritchett and Banerji, 2013). In addition, using tests as a way to prepare students for future learning deprives them of creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving which are the answers to better learning outcomes.

The MOES sector report of 2012/13 shows a decline in acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills among learners (MOES, 2013). The MOES reported at least 59% of Primary Six pupils were not proficient in English literacy while 54% are not proficient in Numeracy. That

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means that despite the effort put in reforms, the sector has continued to register a decline in proficiency in numeracy and literacy (MOES, 2013). Media reports make it clearer to parents that "More than 50 percent of pupils can't read or count' (Ahimbisibwe and Senkabirwa, October 2013). According to the national data, the actual decline in learners' skill performance was estimated at 36% in 2013 compared to 48% in 2012 (MOES, 2013).

This section has shown that first the local district is faced with challenges in three issues. First, how to retain these students once in school and how to ensure that they gain knowledge from their schooling experiences rather than merely acquiring PLE grades. Many girls have the opportunity to go through the door of education, but show little evidence of learning as they do not complete the primary cycle. Second, that few stakeholders (decision makers) prioritize students' performance in PLE at the cost of developing children holistically. "We are growing children at school and not getting anything" (talking circle with parents, April, 2014). Parents with less access to decision-making process feel helpless to change what the system offers in terms of curriculum priority. Finally, the obsession with the PLE Division 1 and the competitiveness it brings, makes tests and examinations drivers of the education system at the district level, because the district encourages a culture of competitiveness among schools and teachers. "No matter how many Division IIs a school gets, without the Division I, the school has failed" (interview with a district official, April, 2014). Learning no longer seems to be the main focus; instead they have to follow what the rest of the country does to achieve first division graduates. As a result, teachers do spot teaching or teach-to-the-test without teaching students how to learn.

The misconception that school performance in PLE is the measure for success of education, has shifted the thinking of stakeholders to focus more on acquisition of first grades

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(Division I) at the expense of real learning (Pritchett and Banerji, 2013). Therefore, the curriculum's leaning on examination, coupled with theoretical teaching, is destroying creativity, critical thinking, and community involvement. Given this scenario, it is important to examine the local stakeholders' contribution to the students' schooling experience and to understand whether their participation revealed their ownership of the UPE program+.

Perceptions on Automatic Promotion

In a bid to support the success of the children enrolled in school under the UPE program, government enacted a policy of every child automatically progresses to the next level of education, regardless of the competencies achieved (MOES, 2002). This is because of the high numbers of pupils per class, that government put a caveat to ensure that no human traffic jam occurs in the system. This policy is commonly known as "Automatic promotion." However, there is little understanding of this policy and why it was passed. Some stakeholders argue that the "enrollment is big that's why they are promoted, if you make them to repeat yet next year there is another enrollment of children in that class. Government is at fix because there is overwhelming enrollment" (interview with a district official). Others voiced their concern that UPE as a policy has been ruined by the automatic promotion policy where no pupils are expected to repeat a class.

> Is a big challenge that's why we can't realize good grades and you find
>
> children in Primary 7 who can't read and write yet there are expected to know?
>
> It's the reason we talk about quality and Government should address it. This
>
> policy is not feasible because it does not give impetus to the quality of
>
> graduates being churned out of the program. As a result, we have a number of

students whose basic literacy and numeracy skills are still weak and yet they

are expected to compete at country level in the national examinations.

(Interview with a district official, May, 2014)

All participating stakeholders held diverse views about automatic promotion, but the main argument was that repeating classes (grades) leads children to dropping out of school. However, an interview with an official responsible for quality assurance, pointed out that the problem goes beyond automatic promotion. Stakeholders in the district have not appreciated their roles and are not exercising their mandates. According to the official, if teachers were motivated and took their responsibilities seriously, they would be reaching to all children and assisting those with learning difficulties. Many of them do not teach the way they are expected to hence the outcry against the promotion of children whom they have not helped enough. Other stakeholders have not embraced their roles in the educational process in supporting the learning. "Even if they admittedly are aware of their roles, they have not carried out their mandate which entails diligence in handling the learning process. There are structures in place including the SMCs, head teachers, teachers, the PTAs and political leaders on the ground have not played their supposed roles" (interview with a district official).

Perceptions on the Thematic Curriculum

As described in my personal experiences in Chapter 1, before independence, teaching in primary schools was in the local languages often known as Mother tongue (Ssekamwa, 2000). In the reforms that followed, English was slowly introduced first as a subject of study from P.1 to P.4 or even P.5. Then it became both a subject of study as well as a medium of instruction in the upper primary grades to tertiary/University levels. The switch to English as a medium of instruction and examinations was not a result of consultations with the local people whose

languages were dropped in upper grades in favor of English. It is important to note that all local (Vernacular) languages were removed from the curriculum or subject timetables throughout Uganda. However, Luganda language has maintained its position in Buganda primary, secondary and university curriculum (Ssekamwa, 2000). It continues to be a subject studied especially at the secondary and university levels (Ssekamwa, 2000).

However, the government made English the main language (official) and language of instruction hence language of examination which determines a pupil's placement and future; then turning around to introduce then suddenly while parents and students were still struggling to understand and implement UPE, the Thematic Curriculum was introduced in a similar manner as UPE, little or no consultation or preparation of the stakeholders (Altinyelkin, 2008, Okuni, 2009).

> Look at its achievements but for us it's a divisive policy. Why the thematic
>
> curriculum is not unanimously applied? Why is it only in rural areas where it's
>
> practiced and yet private schools pay the same salary as our schools and they
>
> get first grades? Bukedea district too needs first grades to get good schools for
>
> our children up to university. Are we achieving the goals of UPE? To me, I see
>
> a miss-match in this program
>
> (Interview with a district politician, May, 2014)

It was observed that there was inconsistency in implementing policy across the country. While the rural areas are expected to adhere to the policy, urban centers and private (non UPE) schools teach in English throughout. However, all the schools sit a national selection examination regardless of whether or a child was taught in the local language for the first 3

years. The policy becomes a blanket requirement for all primary school pupils to take in the primary schooling circle.

UPE performance indicator at the local level seems to include the ability for children to express themselves in a foreign language (English) even in lower grades of Primary One to Primary Three where the thematic curriculum mandates teaching in a local language. Interviews showed concerns about the policy of thematic curriculum.

> We have talked about it … we don't believe in the thematic curriculum. Where
>
> you find the pupil is expected to know English in the upper classes, and yet
>
> children spend three to four years learning in the local language in which they
>
> will not be tested. That leaves them with only three years to become proficient
>
> and compete favorably with those who are taught in English right from pre-
>
> schools. This policy needs to be looked into. Are we achieving the goals of
>
> UPE? To me, I see a miss-match in this program
>
> (Interview with a district politician, May 2014).

Using the local language during lesson delivery supposedly makes it easier for the teachers to disseminate learning in the rural setting where people predominantly speak the language of the area. In the urban and metropolitan schools, English is primarily being used. To address the English language skills of students from a rural setting, there are debates and arguments towards maintaining English as a medium of instruction and the local language to remain a subject of study examinable within the area.

Kagoda (2012) in her study of UPE in rural Iganga district observed that the thematic curriculum was still difficult to implement despite several years of implementation. In a district with diverse populations like Iganga, the "local" language (Lusoga), is not known by many

teachers. The district has more than 2 major languages spoken in the local area and teachers were

not trained to teach in any of them. Besides there were no textbooks or story books in those

languages. This coupled with the low teacher morale exacerbates the issues surrounding quality

of education offered under the UPE policy.

Education Quality and the Teacher Situation

Many teachers joining the teaching profession seem to do so by *accident,* meaning that

teachers had no other choice than to become teachers, where they had exhausted all other

avenues and possible career preferences. In Uganda, many students are hesitant to join the

teaching profession for many reasons including the negative attitudes held by society towards

teachers. Talking circles with teachers revealed that out of 10 teachers, five to six did not want to

join teaching. "I wanted to become an engineer, or lawyer, or a doctor, but failed to enroll"

(talking circles with teachers). Hence, as a desperate move to get jobs, they took up teaching as

the last resort. This makes improvement of teacher quality important. In the US, improving

teacher quality has emerged as a key strategy to increasing America's global competitiveness,

but teacher preparation programs are often criticized for being too easy to get into and too easy

to complete (Schmidt, Geary, Henion,, 2013).

The Education sector experiences challenges in recruiting a high caliber of students to the

teaching profession. The selection processes for candidates in teacher training colleges and other

tertiary institutions, follows the selection for students joining higher education. According to the

interview with a college tutor, teaching is not considered equivalent to going for higher

education and so only those who failed to go for higher education qualify to join teaching. Given

that understanding, participants enumerated reasons for joining the teaching profession.

Teachers' views indicated that a small number of teachers had intentionally joined teaching out

of love for the profession: "I got inspired by my teachers who helped me learn, so I also felt like helping other children develop their talents. My teacher was my role model" (talking circle with teachers, April, 2014). The majority of the participating teachers in the study joined teaching because they saw it as an avenue for progression into other professions or employment. Their intended goals had not worked quite as they had anticipated, and so they found teaching to be the only open and available option. As a participant explained:

I had a negative attitude towards teaching after my Senior Six. I planned to become a doctor and had not thought of teaching, especially becoming a primary school teacher. But I stayed home for two years. Then later decided to take any job so I tried teaching. I did not like teaching, I hated handling chalk. I knew, however, that there was no possibility for further education thus decided to join a training college. … it is the way you move a step ahead. A stepping stone, a foundation for something else … Not remaining in one level, but to go to another level

(Talking circle with teachers, April, 2014)

In this case, the idea of further professional improvement for teachers aligns well with the EFA goal of continuous adult education. However, given the high attrition of teachers in the district, this statement could mean either improving one's self within teacher education or leaving the profession to pursue other attractive careers. The above quote statement corroborated other stakeholder's view that teachers stumbled into education.

Currently we have accidental teachers…Many of the teachers either joined the teaching profession accidentally, or joined teaching as a last resort; which was

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not the case in the past where the top performers were encouraged to pursue

the teaching profession

(Interview with a district official, May, 2015)

Despite their lack of interest in teaching at the onset, many of the teachers said they developed a love for their students and therefore enjoyed teaching. However, even though the teachers have grown to love their jobs, the lack of incentives for teachers like housing, remuneration, community and government appreciation and support, were described as big challenges to teacher recruitment, deployment and retention in the district. Housing is an important aspect in keeping teachers within the schools and communities. In addition, "teachers take long to be confirmed (tenure), some die without being confirmed and fail to get gratuity and pension" (District report, 2013, p.4)

The core of the UPE and EFA lies in the outcomes from school and the learning processes (Barneji, 2013). The question of whether stakeholders felt that teaching and learning was taking place received varied responses. While the teachers in the study indicated that they were teaching well and that they enjoyed their work despite the challenges they faced; other stakeholders saw teachers' preparation as a challenge to the realization of quality education. "The teachers trained under the North Integrated Teacher Education program (NITEP) were not provided with a full dose of teacher preparation. These teachers are in our schools and not able to implement UPE" (interview with a district official, May, 2015). This view was shared by an official in the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) who observed that "the quality of teachers who were screened and allocated to UPE program during its implementation is wanting. For example, we have teachers who cannot even read a newspaper" (interview with a district official, May, 2014). A school administrator was also concerned about teachers' readiness to

teach; "… teachers do not plan to improve their teaching. … Teachers often do not make lesson plans" (an interview with a head teacher, April, 2014).

On one hand, parents argued that "Teachers are forced to teach when they are not interested. I see that it is reducing our education standards" (informal discussion with parents, March, 2014). Other stakeholders viewed the current brand of teachers with cynicism: "The current crop of teachers are also former UPE products. This has a direct bearing on the quality of UPE products churned from the system as a result" (interview with a district official, April, 2014). The official added that all these were troubling observations, "Teacher's attitude is poor towards their work". The teachers, on the other hand, argue that teaching, management, and assessment of learning in large classes, demotivates them and affects their teaching.

However, while research says there is no specific difference between large classes and small classes, such research was done in countries where school and classroom infrastructures were well developed (Brookings, 2011). Large numbers of pupils with varying ages and abilities in a small space, with no proper seats, could make teaching a nightmare for a teacher who is not committed to teaching and is unmotivated by the working environment. Moreover, discussion on class size reduction as the solution to student achievement does not cover or address achievement by how much, for whom, and under what circumstances (Brookings, 2011). Hanushek (1998) argues that calls to reduce class size are popular, but evidence about student achievement attributed to class size is scant, unappealing, and unconvincing. He concludes that in the US, for example, while policies to reduce class size may enjoy popular political appeal, such policies are very expensive and ineffective according to the evidence. In other instances, the findings of general effectiveness of reducing class size tend to be controversial (Stephenson, 2011).

In the US, the proposals to reduce class size at both state and federal level have implicitly

assumed that teacher quality will remain constant when thousands of teachers are hired to lead

the small classes (Stephenson, 2011). This is a mistaken assumption because things never really

remain constant. Student to teacher ratio has fallen for decades but student achievement has not

improved (Hanushek, 1998). Based on these arguments, the quality of the schools affect teaching

and learning much more than the numbers of students per teacher. Heynman and Loxley (1983)

confirm this in their study on the effects of the quality of school to students' achievement. They

conclude that the quality of the school, which teachers and students get exposed to, has a huge

influence on student's achievements.

Primary Education and Indigenous Values

This part examines the relationship between the school and the community to understand

how the current emphasis on the individual as opposed to the community promotes or does not

promote 'human-ness' cherished by the local society. Finally, the suggestions from the

participants about how to make improvements in education are examined from the community's

role, perception of *Eituŋanane*, and how *Eituŋanane* values are reflected among the Iteso.

The government guidelines on UPE implementation (MOES, 2008) identified parental

and community roles in guiding children in the traditional teaching of morals, behavior and in

ensuring children were guided towards societal values. Participants observed that parents were

not committed to supporting children in school. "Parents' lack of support of the education

process is very frustrating. Children are so undisciplined because parents have left the

responsibility to schools" (interview with a district stakeholder, May, 2014). Other stakeholders

felt that the parents had abandoned their roles in bringing up their children according to the Iteso

values. "Government said it would educate children for 'free,' so most parents have left the

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government to do everything as long as children were at school" (Talking circle with parents, April, 2014).

Perceptions on Eituŋanane philosophy influence

The concept of 'good behavior' (*iponesio luajokak)* portrayed characteristics that upheld values of oneness, respect and support for others and using language that does not offend others. This would mean that those serving in government and providing social services including health and education would do it with commitment to societal wellbeing. Also, being humble, meek, and respecting people around them and, humility were highly emphasized. Stakeholders defined *Eituŋanane* as a spirit of togetherness (socializing), having feelings for others (empathy), and the relationship between people as humans (humanness) while considering each as an important part of the group. "Eituŋanane in those days allowed you to relate with others positively, be approachable and have good personal behavior towards others. Being conscious about the other person's feelings" (talking circles with parents, April, 2014). According to them, *Eituŋanane* has characteristics that could be identifiable within the district programs especially in education. Concepts such as tolerance, kindness, selflessness, and being committed to teaching or working in education even without good pay, were related to Eituŋanane. In other words, they were ready to help the needy in the community, thus treating people as "our own people" (talking circles with stakeholders, May 2014).

Eituŋanane **characteristics in UPE implementation**

Three main areas were examined. First, characteristics of *Eituŋanane* as displayed by the stakeholders at school level, while implementing UPE. Second, the Primary Teachers' College and the Primary School curriculum to ensure that emphasis is placed on cultural values to meet

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people's needs and aspirations. Third, students' behavior (*iponesio lu ajokak*) to prepare them to understand their preparation for active roles in society.

At school level, in the current education system, parents and the community see the promotion of children's rights in schools as a root cause for indiscipline in schools and in the community. Children no longer respect and show good behaviors towards their teachers, parents and community elders. As a result there have been tensions between the school and the community on how best to instill discipline. Revitalizing the attributes of good behavior through training in seminars, reviving the accountability groups/institutions (*etem*) with inclusion of women and youths would bring an understanding of how each player fosters bad behavior among children, youth and adults at school, at home and in the community.

The school head teachers and teachers stressed that their work within the Iteso community fulfills the characteristics of *Eituŋanane*. The School management Committee leaders believed that they practice *Eituŋanane* through their commitment to guiding and counselling teachers. Teachers believed that they were following *Eituŋanane* by "sacrificing our time for our school" (talking circle with teachers, April, 2014). They observed that "through teaching children, we are fighting ignorance in our country. This means we render more service than just doing a job to be paid" (talking circle with teachers, April, 2014). They supported this by describing how they struggle with the low pay and poor service conditions. The teachers' statements were supported by the circulars displayed on the education noticeboards, indicating delays in teachers' salary payments. At the time of collecting this data, some teachers' names had been omitted from the payroll for more than three months. In this regard, teachers felt unappreciated by both the government and the communities they served. Based on these factors, head teachers and teachers concluded that they were following some form of *Eituŋanane*

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characteristics despite their predicament. They felt they were committed, respectful, hardworking, and caring about the children and community.

At the district level, the district officials were certain that they work 'more as a service to our people than just employment' (interview with a district official) and that their role in promoting education was one way of *Eituŋanane*. Accordingly, their mobilization efforts resulted in volunteer participation in schools by the communities through SMC and PTA. The government guidelines of 1998, revised in 2008, mandates that schools put in place the SMCs to oversee the school activities during UPE implementation. All schools in the district have functioning SMCs, but vary in their capacities to effect change and their commitment to their work. In some primary schools, parents contribute towards the construction of the teachers' houses, which shows that they care about the teachers' welfare as members of the school and community. District stakeholders claimed that they practiced *Eitunganane* values through the joint supervision of schools (similar to working together or community help) with education department working with the political leadership, as a way of showing that they not only worked well with, but also for, the communities.

However, contrary to this assertion in some communities, the local government has had to work with the police to ensure that parents responded to their responsibility in supporting schools. For example, in one primary school, it was reported that parents' relationship with teachers was described as "Poor, parents look at teachers as not good enough to earn salaries. Most parents dropped out of school during insurgency and now see education as not beneficial" (interview with head teacher, April 2014).

As a result, the School Management Committee (SMC) works closely with the government (Sub County) and in some cases have used the police to mobilize parents. Interview

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with a Local Council official confirmed that "the police in some places have been sent to support the head teachers in enforcing parents to, say, construct teachers' houses. Some parents are so stubborn that sometimes they can only act if they see the government is serious" (interview with the LCIII official, April, 2014). This was observed as government determination to enforce policy implementation at the grassroots level, but could become a source for alienation of the program by the communities rather than embracing it.

While the school stakeholders asserted the presence of *Eituŋanane* attributes in their schools, the parents felt that "Iteso don't have that togetherness. It's not there, we have lost it, those days we all used to care for each other's children as *our children*" (talking circles with parents, April, 2014). Caring for one another's child in the old days was the responsibility of everyone in the community. The change today is attributed to the insurgencies, wars and cattle rustling experiences that the Iteso society has gone through. "People are now on their own, one by one. Each person with his family, no more caring for other families" (interview with an elder, May, 2014). Because of this state of affairs, feeding children in school has become very difficult.

According to the Local Council I official, mobilizing parents to agree on the ways of feeding their children at school, and the logistics involved, is a tough task. This could be observed as the absence of *Eituŋanane* on the part of the parents, in that the spirit of community, where people helped each other for the good of all, was missing. With *Eituŋanane* values, parents would be demanding the school to tell them what their schools' needs are so they (parents and the teachers) could address them together. Participants suggested that an attempt to revisit this way of community was important. "We need to return to this thinking to support the positive aspects of our culture" (talking circles with teachers, April, 2014). They were, however,

hesitant to say how much would be achieved given the multicultural nature of society today. As one participant observed,

> In my view, I absolutely think that reviving *Eituŋanane* could support
>
> improvements in the UPE delivery, although I would be so skeptical in how
>
> this can happen. Our society is so *modernized* that many do not see our cultural
>
> values and philosophies as useful to the current day and age (interview with a
>
> district official, April, 2014)

From further discussions with the participants, two points emerged. First that the level at which the Iteso community has embraced individualism, promoted by the education they receive, coupled with the weak social and cultural institutions, causes them not to support schools in upholding and respecting community values and good practices. Second, that parents tend to over protect their children, due to the trauma they (parents) suffered during the insecurity periods, resulting in 'blind love' and weak guidance to their children.

***Eituŋanane* and the local school curriculum**

According to the broad aims of education, inculcation of "… integrity, tolerance and human fellowship" and "… a sense of service … through group activities in educational institutions and community" are highly stressed (MOES, 1992, p.7 goal i and iii) is a major priority. It was observed these goals share the *Eituŋanane* values even though they are not explicitly named in reference to the local philosophies. The primary school curriculum and the teacher training college curriculum also contain references to cultural values and encourage teachers to teach through the community activities and ceremonies. Teachers are expected to link the teaching of various topics from different subjects such as English, Science, Social Studies,

Music and Art and Crafts to the local cultural values and practices. However, teacher training

focuses more on the western pedagogies handed down to them during training.

According to the National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC), teachers are

expected to enrich learning through the most effective learner-centered activities (MOES, 2010).

The most highly recommended method of teaching is child-centered learning where the teachers

act as facilitators in the process of learning. In each subject, teachers are encouraged

('mandated') to use methods that contribute towards the achievement of competencies, learning

outcomes, and the achievement of goals and objectives of the UPE. The syllabus further

identifies what teachers should do with both the expected (planned) and the unexpected

outcomes, both of which are indicative of positive progress of the student (MOES, 2010, p. viii).

However, time allocation does not allow teachers to indulge in these traditional ways of

approaching subject content. According to the teachers, the time required for organizing the

materials, identifying the resources and teaching non-examinable subjects is seen as 'a waste'

since there are no immediate results or products to show for it.

As teachers expressed:

> Because of the large numbers, children cannot suggest any activities which are
>
> not time tabled … because the syllabus has to be followed. Sometimes …
>
> when the supervisor comes and finds you not following what you prepared, it
>
> becomes a problem. It is true that the school inspectors complain about
>
> teachers not following the timetables, even if what I am doing benefits
>
> children. I feel that the children should be given chance, but fear of the
>
> supervisors because it violates the time table
>
> (Talking circle with teachers, April, 2014).

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The fear of being punished scares teachers from following suggestions in the syllabus guides, by embracing traditional practices of story-telling, caring for children by listening to them tell their own stories, and having elders and community 'experts' lead some classroom activities. Indeed, the guidelines in the syllabus seem to drive teachers to use tests more frequently, most likely as a form of continuous assessment. "The teacher is reminded that P.5 learners are already anxious about PLE and therefore need to be prepared for it. There should be regular pen and paper assessment reflecting what is similar to PLE situations" (MOES, 2010, p. viii). This is understood by the teachers to mean "teach to the test." Assessment only through testing has, thus, become the driver of teaching rather than a part of classroom practices.

Time allocation in the curriculum expects teachers to give more attention to Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and English than the other non-examinable Art and Technology, Library, and local language subjects. The examinable subjects are supported by the district stakeholders when reporting about teacher support. "There is need to train teachers where there are identified subject inadequacies … especially training upper primary teachers in Science and Mathematics" (District Education report, 2013). However, another school leader found this a problem because: "Reading and writing are neglected because teachers concentrate on core subjects that are examined at the national or district levels. Teachers rely on revising the past papers. Sometimes the syllabus cannot be completed" (an interview with a school leader, May, 2014).

These local realities are linked to Freire's (2000) ideas about rigid and oppressive structures in education, which do not allow for individual creativity, and his argument for awareness creation (conscientization) concepts to empower teachers. Mandela's *education as a weapon* metaphor fits well as a response to Freire's conscientization, through empowerment, teachers can be able to dialogue with the education leaders about curriculum and pedagogy. The

stakeholders would also be able to dialogue with government, the district and schools on importance of keeping a strong link between local communities and schools.

Visualizing Solutions to Education and the Role of Local Actors

Despite the weaknesses reported by the program, there is belief that UPE is a key solution to reaching disadvantaged groups. UPE is expected to reach poor communities and support them in making access to education possible. Thus, many parents would like to see their voices added to debates about, plans for and ownership of the schools. The local communities expressed a desire for change in the UPE that would allow parents to contribute towards motivating teachers and developing the school. The imagined solutions include promoting *Eituŋanane* by starting activities that create awareness to teachers and community at large. One of them could be parents meeting with the purpose to discuss education to create practical solutions. "We would expect change in the practical aspect/skills to the students and the down-up approach in education policy" (talking circles with district leaders, May, 2014).

In all the above situations, teachers are central in implementation of policy, curriculum, traditional values in the classroom and school. There is a need to understand the situation of the teachers from grass root level, reviewing education policies while emphasizing parental participation beyond monetary contributions, to more meaningful commitment to education from the heart. This can only be achieved if the national policies are line with what is actually taking place on the ground, with the guidance of the local philosophies. If promoted, *Eituŋanane* values could make education a weapon to change society. To do this there is need to retrace cultural ways of engaging people in discussion of the issues by exploring current clan leaderships (etem or itemwan) and identify the positive community values to be promoted.

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Summary of the Chapter

The chapter started with local perspectives about stakeholders' aspirations for their children's future. From these analyses, government policies and laws have not been translated into the local language for easy interpretation and understanding. Instead, government translates some portions of these into circulars, procedures and strategies that are sent to the local governments for implementation. This, it was argued, creates a lack of a shared understanding of the purpose of education by the government and the local education actors. This lack makes the purpose of education only known to the national government and by a few of the district leaders who participate at the national level. The rest of the stakeholders do not have a clear understanding of educational goals and priorities and are therefore, not able to articulate what they should expect from the education policy of UPE. As such, education has increasingly been driven by the economic development goals articulated in the GOU national plan, national education goals, and strategies.

In addition, district perspectives about teachers showed that teachers were not popular with the districts and the schools. Teachers are by-products of not only their thinking and training, but also of their unique intellectual attributes, attitudes, and cumulative experiences. Their own experiences as children (some who are products of UPE policy) or parents, may influence their approach to the children they teach (Alexander, 1984). At the local level, the need for a balanced approach to education, focusing on the intellectual, social and spiritual development of the child so as to bring up human beings capable of working at the local, national and global levels. Unfortunately, the community's 'pseudo' participation in education lacks genuine dialogue with the government and, hampers meaningful partnership and program

ownership. Engaging in this dialogue would develop appropriate strategies for addressing local educational issues.

The varying level of understanding of UPE policy results in conflicting interpretations by different stakeholders including politicians, technocrats, community leaders, teachers, parents and students which affect the level of commitment to the program. There is also the dilemma of "free education" a concept that is interpreted differently by local communities. On one hand, stakeholders express their appreciation using metaphors of a seed and a light. Nevertheless, local politicians' interpretation of the policy varies depending upon the demands it places on the electorate and the election cycle. For that reason, the commitment to real change in education becomes a big problem. The circulars, guidelines, expectations, and demands sent down from the top to local levels, hardly leaves enough time for the districts to ingest and digest information since they come with time limits. Therefore, investing in empowering community to make decisions that work within their context, and demystifying "education for all" terminology would build the commitment to the real change in education.

The mobilization of community includes many actors who are not effectively coordinated and yet, they target the same local community. Sometimes there are conflicting messages to the community about UPE, and different ways of understanding policy including the thematic curriculum, automatic promotion, provision of and demands for community participation. In a situation where the commitment to educating all children requires more resources, capitation grant (the grants given to the local schools) do not match the needs at the local level.

The analysis also shows weak monitoring and lop-sided accountability, where the reports sent to the central government focus more on finances than the impact of this money on students' schooling and learning. That means that accountability does not extend beyond the capitation

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grant to the idea that each stakeholder is accountable for his /her actions based on their role(s). This has never been brought to discussions, and no one person or groups of people are held accountable, for example, for the high dropout rates of children. In addition, there is weak coordination and integration of departmental activities in creating synergy and avoiding duplication. Finally, the impact of past experiences and traumas on communities have in many ways eroded the "human-ness' in every aspect and sector in the district. 'Colonial' mentality in which authority cannot be questioned, that whatever decisions government makes are for the good of the people, and the 'Government-should' mentality resulting from "the not-me attitude" and a state of helplessness also permeate.

Therefore, in the chapter that follows, based on the analysis of data and my own understanding of the analysis, I draw conclusions and, using the participants' suggestions, provide recommendations for policy, district local government, schools and communities. In addition, I broadly imagine how education, from the stakeholders' perspectives, could be designed to promote values of mutual benefit to people in Bukedea and by extension, to all Ugandans, thereby making competition to mean striving towards achieving the greater good to enhance our shared humanity.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this case study, I drew attention to the conditions that exist in, and are unique to, the formal Uganda education system at the local level. This case study was prompted by the global drive to expand primary education to every corner of the world through Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). EFA was introduced at the global education forum in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 by UNESCO, the World Bank, and other UN bodies (. The government of Uganda, like all less developed countries, places great emphasis on the achievement of these goals by implementing the Universal Primary Education (UPE), which is highly aligned to EFA (Bramugisha, 2009, MOES, 2008). Whereas UPE was developed by the government of Uganda, the global discourses about education for all determine its monitoring indicators and targets (Bridget-Utne, 2000). The implementation of UPE is supported by the UNESCO, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), and other development partners (Easterly, 2009). However, UPE is received and implemented by people in the local community and district levels, who are far removed from the main decision centers.

To understand the link between globally motivated education aims and their implementation at the local level, I used an historical lens in Chapter 1 to trace African social methods for enforcing the continuity and preservation of indigenous knowledge, skills and values, before the introduction of external influences from the Western and Arab countries. It was observed that Africa used indigenous approaches and curriculum to impart knowledge and values, and teach skills to their children and youth. The main purpose was to ensure children's and the youth's participation in and perpetuation of their society. I traced this in an attempt to explain that, although education was well developed in many African societies, Western-forced education neither built on their foundations and achievements nor considered the local people's

needs and aspirations. Instead, a new way of learning was introduced as the main way of

imparting knowledge, thus beginning a trajectory of dominance by one society over another.

Christian missionaries, particularly, ensured uncritical culture through the religious teachings.

This culture of not questioning what one was given, it was argued, has persisted and become

fertile ground for inequity, inequality, and the irrelevance of the education system in Uganda,

which have persisted for over half a century since independence.

In Chapter 2, I explained the context and the development of education during colonial

and post-independence periods. The colonial period imposed education that promoted

knowledge from the West, and developed low-level skills fit for low cadre jobs, while the high

offices were occupied by expatriates. Education was, thus, irrelevant for most Ugandans' needs.

The need to fill gaps left by the departing expatriates after independence put pressure on the

government to expand formal education, which involved a review of the education system to

ensure it was relevant and addressed the needs of Ugandans. My thesis, based on this study

findings, is that, although Uganda has made attempts to align education to the needs of Ugandans

through policy reforms, external ideological influences have persisted, mirroring, supporting, and

reproducing knowledge that is disconnected from the lives of Ugandans. It ignores the local

values, knowledge, approaches, and emphasis on *humanity* that are in line with the African

(emphasis on Uganda) societies' beliefs about education. As a result, many initiatives to make

education meet the needs of the Ugandan communities at the local levels do not realize lasting

results. Instead, the issues, especially about education quality, equality and gender parity,

continue to haunt the education system.

In Chapter 3, I briefly explored the literature on historic mass expansion of formal

education by the British colonial government, post-independent governments, and under the

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global agenda of EFA and the MDGs. All of these agencies focused on realizing change in the human condition, primarily through education. The role of education has changed considerably, from merely learning to read and write, and numeracy, to more sophisticated concepts. The teaching of reading and mathematics has been in line with the global changes that indicate how pivotal education is in growing the economies, increasing and improving technology, reducing poverty, and eliminating inequalities (King, 2011). However, mass access to education during and after colonial rule in Uganda introduced a type of favoritism by emphasizing a one-size-fits-all approach and unquestioned allegiance to one type of education, thus, triggering discriminating practices within the education system. These practices, viewed from the lenses of critical pedagogy and *Eituŋanane* philosophy, informed the critical response to western educational norms that has been maintained by Uganda based on Freire's metaphor of a 'banking model.' Like a bank, the education system through its national institutions, distributes 'knowledge' to districts and schools.

In Chapter 4, I described the procedures utilized for fieldwork in the local district. The chapter identified clear links between methods for collecting data and the methodological underpinnings of the research. The case study approach was ideal for the nature of the problem investigated and the sample size. A local district (Bukedea) was selected as a unit of analysis that allowed for the use of a variety of actions in gathering data. The district selection was based on its poor performance in education indicators, its accessibility for the researcher, its being one of the created districts after 2000, and it was among the 12 districts that participated in the government's affirmative action to support poor performing districts by improving education quality.

In addition, the unstructured interviews, talking circles, informal discussions, and document reviews through the lens of critical theory, *Eituŋanane* and education as a weapon metaphor, allowed this study to illuminate how the social structure of the local district and schools reproduce existing social relations and power structure within them. The interviews were a series of open-ended questions guided by the research questions. Talking circles were used for teachers, head teachers, parents, and other community members. The level of energy created by using the talking circles provided a sense of closeness and interconnectedness among the participants. This was important for them to be able to speak honestly about the issues under study. Participants were purposively selected using snowball technique and based on simple criteria. It included those who controlled and checked the implementation processes, and those responsible for reporting, financial management, and monitoring schools. Others included those directly influenced by the policy especially the primary school head teachers, teachers, and parents or community members. Their inputs were critical in understanding local perceptions of the purpose of education, aspirations they had for their students, and how they participated in realizing these aspirations through the UPE program.

In Chapter 5, I presented, from the local stakeholders' lived experiences, examples of this banking model at the district, local schools, and community levels. I illustrated how, in the education system through the curriculum and examination, the educators at the national level, policymakers, become 'the knowers' (knowledgeable) of what (the aims and content) and the ways of imparting knowledge through school education. Teachers, parents, students, and communities who are the recipients of this education, are not considered 'in the know.' This indicates how the top down authority is ineffective. As a result, consultations to garner their ideas were limited and superficial and lead to parental disillusion, mistrust, and frustrations of

those in the middle. The local education actors and beneficiaries, therefore, feel vulnerable to being pushed to do only those activities that have been sanctioned and funded by the center, which leads to a sense of helplessness and resigned obedience. The impact of politics and power on decisions not only slow down activities, but also affect what does or does not get done. These, coupled with the district's poor respect for teachers, the teachers' weak respect for their profession, and the children's lack of understanding that with rights comes responsibility and respect, become hurdles for the UPE to fulfill its mandate.

In chapter 6, while answering the research questions, I weaved together elements that were captured in the study on the nexus between local aspirations of Ugandans and the global educational goals. I adopted a reflective approach in writing while considering critical pedagogy, *Eituŋanane* philosophy and education as a weapon metaphor. There were pertinent questions that resonated with the UPE policy implementation that underpin this chapter's conclusions and recommendations. The notable ones were whether or not the global education goals should be the basis for determining education at the local levels, and whether or not education should be organized for ultimate economic growth and for holistic achievement of societal aspirations, and whether education should be the weapon to change the Ugandan society.

Finally, this thesis was about understanding the link between the externally grown education goals and the realities of their application at the local level to meet local needs. Therefore, based on the recommendations from the participants in the study, I offer an imagined *Eituŋanane*-inspired education approach, to articulate how education in society could be imbued with inclusiveness or equity and equality towards humanity. For "if we do not reform our education system, we will be letting down future generations of pupils' (Skidmore & Carmichael, January 2013). Hence, the findings offer an imagined long-term future direction in

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education. Education at national and local levels would not only be developed to shape minds and address inequality while promoting equity, but also to strongly embrace humanness with cultural connectedness.

Consequently, in the following sections I provide a series of conclusions and implications for each of the three research questions and link them to the overall research aims and how the study contributes to knowledge in education. I start with the first question on the local perceptions about the purpose of education.

Local Aspirations and Perceptions on the Purpose of Education

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between the local aspirations and the purpose of education depicted in the national goals?

This question and its subsidiary questions focused on local aspirations, local perceptions about the purpose of education, discrepancies between the local aspirational and the national goals of education, and how UPE goals address local aspirations. Perspectives from the cultural leaders and elders indicate that the purpose of education for the indigenous Iteso societies was mainly to ensure that cultures were upheld by each clan. This was emphasized as an important element for human survival. The approaches used were in touch with the realities of the particular society's need to understand their world at the time and in the future. Despite the accumulated effects of historical domination during colonization, conflicts, wars, insecurity, globalization, and the changing social and economic environments, perspectives about the purpose of education have changed little at the local level. Communities strongly believe that education, while an important key to economic progress (employment), should build the social fabric of their society and develop the moral aspects and character of an individual, which maintains cultural knowledge and values. The idea of encouraging students to be responsive to

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the needs of their community was in line with the aspirations expressed by the local stakeholders. They had the notion that schooling should empower students to become individuals who can apply the knowledge and skills acquired to strengthen the cultural capital of their community in the future, rather than striving to escape the very communities that shaped them.

However, in contrast, the purpose of formal education was to teach the Western values, through the teaching of reading and writing and other curriculum contents. As observed, access to this education had discriminative tendencies between boys' and girls', the wealthy and the poor, the rulers and the ruled, the educated and the uneducated. The notion of education for a better life was imported and education has continued to be valued as critical for economic development, wellbeing, and for success and competition at the global economic arena. This economic view of education requires a disconnection from self and community and to focus on global competitiveness, which is the opposite of what is needed by the local communities. More so, the global goals as presented and promoted by UPE, exist to primarily remove poverty through ideologies exhibited as the only ways to achieve the desired change.

As a result, the national goals place particular emphasis on certain aspects of economic development, and thus lead to a focus to Sciences and Mathematics. Consequently, the teaching of Science, Mathematics, and English subjects is over emphasized at the cost of other relevant disciplines that contribute to a holistic view of the human condition (Apple, 1999). There could be a danger in that the learners risk losing an understanding of their culture and become 'helpless' when they get exposed to hegemonic cultures (Durakoglu, 2013). In addition, over emphasis on the teaching and national assessment of literacy and numeracy at the primary school levels overshadows the need to lay a foundation for further development of complex concepts and critical thinking skills. Emphasis on a balance between the need for competencies in literacy

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and numeracy and other subjects does not mean that these are less important for children's future learning, choices, and lives, but that complex concepts and critical thinking skills might essentially make children more ready, not only for secondary education, but also for lifelong learning (Alexander, 2013).

Meanwhile, under the UPE goals, the local stakeholders perceived the education process as being directed by the central government. They were not clear about the intentions of some policies for example, supplementary policies developed to enhance UPE, such as automatic promotion and the thematic curriculum. Thus, the national aspirations correspond to the identified Ugandan National goals, which highlight wealth creation, economic development, and competitiveness in the global market (GOU, 2010). These are further presented in the government policies and laws, which however remain in English, a language not easily understood by local stakeholders. Instead, government chooses some parts of laws into circulars, procedures, and strategies (in English) that are sent to the local governments for application. It makes the national purpose of education remain only known to the national government level and to a few district leaders who participate at the national level meetings. The rest of the stakeholders did not have a clear understanding of education policies and are therefore, not able to articulate what they should expect from the education policy of UPE. This was interpreted as lack of a shared understanding of the purpose of education by the government and the local education actors.

Therefore, I draw four conclusions from this question. First, the perspectives about the purpose of education have changed little at the local level since independence from Britain in 1962.Education is still viewed as a human achievement, which should, among other things, reflect the community social and cultural values and their ways of seeing the world. This was

significant in the local aspirations more specifically on the achievement of an education for

moral development and building of societal fabric. In fact, communities relate the purpose of

education to the connectedness to family, clan, and society in which it takes a supportive role.

Those educated are expected to "… remain part of the larger community, and should return to

their roots no matter what or who they become" (personal communication with the cultural

leader, March 2014). It is also closely related to what people were passionate about in their local

contexts, that a person belongs to a community and that culture remains strong no matter how

'modernized' we become.

Second, the global economic view of education promotes a separation between the

individual students and their community, hence from their roots. This is tantamount to the

proverbial "uprooting of the roots of the pumpkin". As pointed out earlier, the view of formal

western education provided, as a door to better life was imported to Uganda. Indeed, at global

level, education continues to be valued as critical for economic development, for better life,

wellbeing, and for success and global competition at the global arena. However, in the current

schooling realities at the local level, many students exiting schools are poorly prepared to engage

in any meaningful gainful employment or work. Furthermore schooling raises their expectations

of better things to come, more money earned from good jobs, good houses and cars. Hence, these

students fail to go back and participate in the improvement of their community. This was

associated with the values schools teach which are geared towards the industrialized societies'

'ways of life.' Third, the government efforts to simplify and disseminate policies presented in the

national education documents, to all the stakeholders at the local level, remains insufficient. The

local stakeholders have not been given opportunities to read and debate these documents using

the language familiar to them. Fourth, national education goals indicate a universal view of a

future for the Ugandan society, but priorities in implementation are influenced by external pressure towards economic development and global participation, which is far removed from the local realities. The District Development Plan (2010), the MOES Sector Strategic Plan (2007-2015) and the Government Development Plan (2010-2015) and UPE documents (MOES, 2008) point to the alignment of education for poverty eradication and economic development.

Recommendations

Based on the above conclusions, four recommendations are proposed for the government, district and schools/communities respectively.

1. **The government of Uganda**: For education to be meaningful to the needs and aspirations of the Ugandans, the national government should undertake an analysis of research and other studies on UPE to provide the necessary data and information for players in education to use for effective planning, management and monitoring of future education programs. This would allow for the purpose of education to be revisited and for the critical local (bottom) to inform policy makers (top).

2. **The government** should further endeavour to translate the national policies into a simplified version of English but also translate into a local language for better understanding.

3. **The local district government** should develop a strategy to reconcile school experiences with the local cultural realities to ensure better educational outcomes that would integrate conversations on key policy concepts and issues. This should further place greater emphasis on links between that which the school has to offer and the community experiences that shape how the young learners understand and value what is to be learned.

4. **The primary schools** should involve students in the life of the community, and through vigorous engagement of the school in the community's everyday living.

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The Local Understanding and Ownership of UPE

Question 2: Do local district stakeholders understand and own UPE?

This question with its subsidiary questions, focused on the ways UPE is interpreted, the coordination and communication among stakeholders, stakeholders participation and how much power they felt they had (ownership) in UPE. It has been argued that the ways the local actors at the district level interpreted and owned any education policy change, and its impact on education, is critical to understanding the probability that the initiatives from outside the local level can succeed (Fullan, 2008, Spillane, 2000). UPE was appreciated at the district level from the district leadership to the schools and villages. Different metaphors including *UPE as a seed, UPE as eye opener, and UPE as light* were used to express the stakeholders' perception of UPE. Emphasis was that UPE demanded all children to go to school. This offered local stakeholders opportunities to educate their children, something they repeatedly pointed out was a huge challenge if they had to do it on their own. The removal of user fees was highlighted as the main achievement of UPE, the construction of more classrooms and new schools allowed more boys and girls to enroll in primary education.

However, one example that indicates ownership of a program is when the local people feel they have power to suggest changes, about what is happening in the schools. "Power means ability to make decisions and to influence others to act to one's benefit" (Ballantine, 1993, p.71). Education decision-making is dominated by the politicians and technocrats. By contrast, the majority of the rural district population is uneducated and poor, and so have no opportunity to participate in decision making. That is why parents were so desperate to have their children get jobs (occupation) as income is closely associated with power. Moreover, occupation comes with different amount of prestige, including the ability to influence others. Critical pedagogy

Unfortunately, given the small number of students graduating from UPE with good grades and opportunities to transition to secondary education or skills training, it is unlikely that many will obtain careers and be able to influence others.

Besides, the level of understanding of UPE policy has conflicting interpretations by politicians, administrators and managers, community leaders, teachers, parents and students. There have been concerns about the purpose of UPE policy. As a result, there are conflicting messages to the communities about UPE. The main dilemma was on the terminology "free education" and the accompanying 'thematic' curriculum with 'automatic' promotion. Communities, based on their cultural understanding of something offered as 'free', interpreted UPE as a program about which they do not have to do anything, but send their children to school and the government would do the rest. It was observed that the use of the language "free for all" in political discourse hides the essence of UPE. Education is never just free. If it is free from something then it is enslaved to something else (Pring, 2012). Hence, the local stakeholders see UPE as "a basketful of colorful flowers, but empty inside" (informal discussions with CSO, April 2104). Meaning, the flowery words used to introduce the policy have not been matched with the appropriate actions to deliver the promise.

Furthermore, the level of commitment to the real change in education, weak mobilization of communities, inadequate funding with many pressures on its utilization at the local level, and un-streamlined accountability and monitoring procedures of the implementation processes, makes local stakeholders feel overstretched. Coupled with other economic pressures, these become an onset of helplessness (Ekaju, 2011) which leads to "… anger, mistrust, hostility, bitterness" (interview with a head teacher, May 2014), "abuse of children" (talking circles with parents, April, 2014), "school discipline issues" (informal meeting with CSO, April, 2014), and

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to some extent, absenteeism from schools by teachers, head teachers and pupils (interview with a

district stakeholder, May 2014).

As a result, there is low attitude towards work, community participation, and poor

attitude towards schooling. There is increased reference to "*Ilipit apugan iŋaraki isio…*"

(Talking circle with parents) translated to mean "we request the government to help us …" This

understood further, literally means that it is the government's responsibility to address all these

problems. In this case, the stakeholders view the external locus of control as the problem and

therefore see the world (government and donors) as responsible for their situation. Hence, the

problem is only solvable by the world that created it. Powerlessness breeds hopelessness, which

in turn nurtures dependency mindset (Ekaju, 2011). "What can we do when politicians say they

know?"(Interview with a district stakeholder). This means that they perceive themselves as

victims. They felt they were the victims of a system that is making them lazy and dependent. In

other words, the system is the elephant that needs to be got out of the room. All these mean that

the district stakeholders did not share the same understanding about community involvement,

and that ownership of UPE at the local government was weaker.

What's more, the community's 'pseudo' participation in education lacks genuine dialogue

with the government and hampers meaningful partnership and program ownership. This dialogue

would develop appropriate strategies to address local educational issues. As a result of lack of

genuine dialogue with all stakeholders at the local level, it was observed that government

struggles with education interventions. The metaphor by the then Minister of Education, "putting

districts-on-drip" (MOES, 2008) was a powerful metaphor used by the government to describe

the dire condition of education in some poorly performing districts, including Bukedea district.

The metaphor provided a powerful image driven by concerns that the local districts lagged

behind (another metaphor) in educational indicators (MOES, 2008). The government laid a great share of the blame at the feet of teachers and teacher education, supervision and support (MOES, 2008). There were high expectations of schooling under UPE and the disciplined effort to achieve the expected results. However, such metaphors of an ailing education system at the local district levels, conjured hopelessness that could only be remedied by quick fixes, which pave ways for more policy recommendations (Cochran-Smith, 2003).

In summary, communities viewed government actions as a message to them that the government has taken over the responsibility of their children. The implementation of child rights, removal of school fees, the emphasis that parents should not pay for PTA at schools were all signals that the government 'owns' the children. While government has seen that UPE should be the responsibility of all including the private sector, "the private sector is also torn between going for the money and providing quality education" (interview with an elder, April, 2014).

Conclusions that were drawn from this question include, first that the local district activities targeted the same local communities and yet there was limited information flow from the communities to the district, indicating that power flows from the national level through the funding and policies, and is mainly nested at the district level. Second, different groups of people in the district have different understanding, needs and expectations. However, the approaches used by the district to mobilize local communities, have resulted in different conceptions held by teachers, politicians, district leaders, parents and the students about UPE policy. This points to a weakness in embracing the program as their own.

Recommendations

Based on the above conclusions, 3 recommendations are drawn for government, the local district and the schools that:

1. **The government of Uganda** invests in capacity development at the district and school levels to empower the communities to make decisions that work within their contexts.

2. **The Local district government** organizes public community education (creating awareness about policies) that would build the commitment to the real change in education. In addition, the district stakeholders should have a shared understanding of what the UPE program is trying to achieve and talk to these groups in a language that is simple enough (local) to foster shared understanding of UPE at the schools and community levels.

3. **Schools through the SMC and PTAs** should intentionally create opportunities for engaging with parents according to grades of their children, to deal with not only policy issues, but also attitudes of local education players.

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UPE Objectives on Equality, Equity and Quality

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Question 3: How does UPE reduce inequality and improve equity and quality at the local level?

This question is based on the underlying assumption of the UPE goals, that UPE reduces inequality, improves equity and quality. The question therefore, examines the district initiatives to promote equality and equity, the presence of local *Eituŋanane* philosophy in UPE implementation, how education could be a weapon for change, and the community's envisioned solutions to the UPE challenges in the district. The EFA and the MDG goals focus on equal access to education achievements for both boys and girls. Stakeholders' views were that the UPE policy is important as it aims at ensuring that all children are educated by expanding schools to areas where they did not exist, an indication that there are initiatives to provide equal opportunities for both boys and girls. More boys and girls are in school. However, despite the efforts and progress in access, pupils to teacher ratio remain high, textbooks to pupils at an average of 1:4 pupils in most subjects, and the retention rates are equally poor. All stakeholders

shared the challenges of big classes, differences in pupils' ages, needs, and experiences. Besides, the resources provided have not matched the expectations of the policy. The provision of School Capitation Grant (SCG) showed that equal opportunities were limited in some very poor rural schools. The equality question here is: should students' capitation calculations follow the same funding formula and be exactly the same throughout the country? This is precisely what the government follows for all districts and schools throughout the country. Equal access to resources is one of the important Ugandan government educational goals. All students should have equal access to resources.

However, the equity and justice question is: does this make all students meet their needs in school regardless of location of school and the students' economic background? Should students coming from poor rural schools get more to ensure they can catch up with those in urban well-resourced schools? Rural schools lag behind (often because of factors outside the school) both in academics and social progress (Kagoda, 2012). However, the government's funding provides exactly the same amount of capitation per child, as in the higher income schools throughout the country. Students furthest, especially those in rural and hard-to-reach schools in Bukedea, require more of those resources to catch up, succeed, and eventually close the gap between urban and rural, rich and poor, girls and boys.

In addition to better funding, these schools need exceptionally well-trained and committed teachers. In this case, equality becomes synonymous with "leveling the playing ground" and giving the same treatment to everyone else, while equity becomes "more for those in dire need." Educational expectations or outcomes serve as examples of equality, because they provide for everyone without regard for individual needs. Equity means everyone has the same quality of outcomes, but with consideration to individual differences like learning styles and

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home life, which are taken into account as well. At the district level, only enrollment focused on reducing gender differences in that the numbers at the start of primary schooling show that it is possible to remove inequality especially in terms of access to schooling by boys and girls in the rural areas of Uganda.

However, numerous issues do not sustain the gain in access, especially the conditions in the schools: classrooms, teachers, desks, sanitation and in some cases water. The discourse on equality does not link with equity in UPE policy. For example, teachers are not trained to teach through the lens of equity in the classroom. So, by indicating in the national goals of education that equity and equality should be achieved, does not automatically translate into the practice of the schools, classrooms, homes and families. Above all, the concept of teaching more than 30 children with individual needs seems harsh and unrealistic. Teaching equitably can be very challenging for teachers not only with the large numbers of pupils in a classroom, but also rigid curriculum that does not allow for individual innovation and creativity. Students with different abilities especially those physically, mentally or socially challenged were reported as left behind in learning.

Therefore, the task is how to train teachers to identify when they are taking advantage of privilege, where it exists, and provide an unfair advantage to children from advantaged situations. This does not always work well for many children especially in the development of difficult concepts. Thus, teaching equitably is more difficult than teaching equally. The question to ask when attempting to address equity and equality is, 'Who is it about?' This question should guide equity in the school and classroom, in school finance (SCG), and in education system in general. It is also important to note that inequity in other sectors such as health care and financing has a huge impact on education.

Accordingly, *Eituŋanane* characteristics were examined to link with solutions to the equity and equality puzzles. The concepts were identifiable within the district through characteristics such as tolerance, kindness, selflessness, and commitment. The understanding about local values was evident in the ways the stakeholders compared what was and what is today in offices, schools, communities, and families. The reference to the people they served as "our own people" (talking circles with stakeholders), showed a deeper understanding of the cultural value of human-ness. Teachers 'sacrifice' by rendering service more than 'doing a job to be paid' (talking circle with teachers) was clear, in that the local values existed even though there were no discussions about them. The district stakeholders' joint supervision of schools (similar to working together or community help) *Eitunganane* values showed a cultural connection to the communities and their ways of working.

However, among some communities and schools, *Eituŋanane* was clearly missing. "The Iteso do not have that togetherness. It's not there, we have lost it, those days we all used to care for each other's children as *our children*" (talking circles with parents). Education as a weapon was understood as "education should empower students to become champions of change in our community. Through education, they should be able to better handle otherwise hazardous situations and disasters could be foreseen and thus prevented" (talking circle with education officials).

The conclusions drawn from here is that the government has made program and policy efforts to improve education access. However these initiatives have neither sufficiently impacted education provision at the local level as reflected in the dropout rate, retention, school achievement, school effectiveness, and outcome measures; nor fully addressed pupil, parents and

teacher concerns and every day needs. Thus global indicators do not adequately capture daily educational experiences and outcomes from schools.

Recommendations to the government

From the above conclusions, four recommendations were made to the government:

1. **The government** should develop a policy that revives and inspires a culture of consultations at all levels to address the needs and aspirations of the community In order to address the attitude of apathy amongst the teachers and students, there is a great need to revise the objectives of the Parents Teachers Associations through active consultation between the parents and school heads in the presence of at least on member of the inspectorate of schools to address this challenge. Addressing aspirations of the youth requires revision of the school curriculum to match the demands and needs of communities while maintaining the positive aspects of culture such as consultation that was the center of *eituŋanane* those days.

2. **The government** should de-emphasize quantitative aspects of education policy and balance emphasis put on the daily school experiences with qualitative traits.

3. **The government** should develop insights into teachers' aspects that influence teaching and children's schooling within which polices come into fruition. Government policy analysts and planners should look inside the schools to understand system factors that determine whether policies will be adopted, institutionalized and continued. This understanding will help policy makers to design policies that are more likely to succeed because they pay attention to important local dynamics.

4. **District Local government** on the professional development of teachers: The DEO as well as school principals should take the mantle and empower their teachers to better their skills by encouraging them to go for further studies and initiating competence based trainings

to better knowledge dissemination during their lessons. This training could also be used as avenues to disseminate policy messages, collect teachers' views as feedback to the district and government. Already the CCTs do part of this but should be reinforced.

UPE and Local Needs and Aspirations

Many attempts to align education to address the needs of Ugandans at the national level have been through the 'Commission' strategy. Many commissions were designed to look into specific policy related issues. Key landmarks in commission reports included the Education policy in British Tropical Africa (1924), and African Education in Uganda also known as the De Bunsen Commission (1952), E. B. Castle Commission (1963), and the W.S. Kajubi Commission (1987) Education for National Integration and Development. The reports from each commission formed the legal framework and the education ordinances that guided the education systems. For example, the Castle Commission (1963) proposed merging primary and junior secondary, and stressed the quantitative expansion of primary and secondary education with emphasis on quality. The commission also underscored the need to expand girls' education. The Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC, 1978) recommendations became the main policy document guiding the structure of education to date. Expansion of education for all Ugandans by 2000 (MOES, 1989) was a key highlight in its recommendations. It means that in all these commissions, the attempts were made to realize equitable and relevant education for the Ugandans. However, despite all their good intentions, education expansion did not happen until the global pressure to implement EFA goals became apparent in the early 1990s. Access, equity, and quality remained the main focus even from the global goals. Generally, the delays in providing universal education, help illustrate that successful change cannot be achieved unless it

is addressed at a policy level, with a country supporting the program in terms of a national policy for educational advancement (Cox, 2010).

Therefore, the global pressure to expand primary education and the deadline to achieve these goals was arbitrarily shifted from 2005 to 2015. However, the use of economic and market-oriented phrases that show the market view of education, does not work well with the local aspirations and purpose of education. It reflects a system that has not achieved its intended goals of schooling. In addition, the education policy implementation is a complex process. Therefore, achieving successful change requires paying attention to the choices we make, and what we do with the policy, becomes our responsibility as a country (Cox, 2010). The term 'successful change" too is baffling, as we do not know what this would really look like. Yet, the top-down hierarchical approach in education makes it difficult to realize equitable access and calls for ingenuity at the level of implementation. In order to develop and maintain a shared understanding, education needs dialogue, a dialogue in education and about education (Alexander, 2006, McIntyre & Dunne, 2002). Dialogue is also one technique to be used in problem posing education advocated by Freire (Freire, 2000).

The narratives I gathered really capture how the top down authority is not effective, and as a result, it has impacted the ability of the government to meet the needs at the local level. The decentralized management of education within a highly hierarchical and strongly centralized policy essentially decontextualizes education. Furthermore, the policy debates have not reached deeper into the mechanisms that produce educational inequality and focus attention on the goals of program equity and program adequacy, and relevance of education. They have not also examined whether the ideologies promoted in education leave room for Ugandan children to be themselves, that is, Ugandans, rather than aspire to become what other cultures promote.

Education as weapon is supposed to be empowering communities but instead it has dismantled their ways of being at the local level. In this case, education has become a double-edged sword, well-meaning but not accomplishing the intended goals. The insisting on teaching English and using it as a medium of instruction is one way of being controlled. In this case, schools can be a place of possibility, but also of oppression (Freire, 2000). Is education to enable an individual to develop stronger connections to their cultures, environments, languages, or to uproot individuals from all these?

Moreover, interventions that have been put in place to address educational challenges have used approaches that might have made some changes possible, but carried unexamined assumptions and some risks. "The most basic and common assumption is that the schools can be fixed and education made equal or at least adequate by some kind of changes within schools produced by policy decisions about methods of instruction, curriculum testing and sanctions" (Orfield, 1994, p. 405). These ideas still operate within the same basic worldview that motivated the reforms in the past decade assume that the problem is located in the schools and there are solutions that can be imposed from outside to fix it. A combination of more resources, more requirements, and monitoring backed by threats of any action against teachers and schools is expected to produce education equity. The focus has, therefore, mainly been so much in finding solutions to the educational problems through provision of more inputs.

Thus, by embracing *Eituŋanane* attributes, more children would stay and complete primary education cycle. More girls would join secondary schools, and a better quality of education would be provided to all children. Consequently, the type of leadership and nature of parental involvement would result in better learning outcomes and student's performance. In addition, my reading of the stakeholder interpretation of UPE, relates to the unquestioning

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acceptance of education at the local level, and the failure of the government to clearly make a connection between the global measure of economic development and the local human living. The government's reluctance to strengthen the connection between the local and national, means there is a gap in genuine dialogue with the local levels, resulting in the weakening of the human connection and between education, family, and the community which mattered before. Instead, it has been reconstructed in favor of external values and knowledge, which constitutes the voice of the dominant, maintains privilege, power, and control (Shizha, 2005). This has not significantly met the purpose of education aspired by the local communities.

Indeed, the stakeholders' disillusions, mistrust, and frustrations, has created a mindset that expects someone else to be the cause of the problems or responsible for the solutions. People do not want to take personal responsibility. Moreover, politics and power, instead of addressing these issues, arguably worsen the problems. This was intensified by the impact of conflict that ravaged communities, causing long-term psychosocial suffering, which seems to persistently manifest itself as a deterrent to the economic and social improvement in people's lives.

Conclusions

Based on the data gathered and analyzed on these questions, four conclusions were formed. First, meeting aspirations at the local levels requires social and resources to negotiate with various power structures. However, the inadequate funding of UPE means that EFA has given the local people, in the words of Martin Luther, 'a bad check, a check returned and marked insufficient funds'. Second, global goals have good intentions, to reach all people with education, but fulfilling the needs and achieving aspirations valued for primary education, will require a genuine change of UPE trajectory. Kendall (2007) while discussing EFA in Malawi, argues that globalized EFA interacts with national and local politics, social norms, and relations

to create on-the-ground outcomes that are quite different from those imagined in the international discourses on EFA. Third, EFA, UPE and free education concepts are used monolithically as though it means the same thing to all. The achievement of universal primary education under the rubric of EFA then begs the question, is EFA a misleading rubric?

Recommendations

The recommendation gleaned are directed to the government, district local government and the schools and community.

1. **The government** should re-evaluate its funding framework and strategically focus appropriate funding to schools based on the school's actual need and not just the number of students enrolled.

2. **The district local government** should reorient the focus by district leadership and their school and community leaders towards teachers' renewed respect and support to these providers as professionals.

3. Collaborative relationship between **Iteso Cultural Union and the local governments** should step up the revival of *Eituŋanane* through knowledge exchange amongst clans, and acquisition of skills. Furthermore, some recommendations were incorporated into the responses to the research questions.

The next section explores a little more how the recommendations could realistically be actualized at the local level. The key players being the government of Uganda in close collaboration with all stakeholders at global to local. The level in which the Ugandan education system and goals address the local needs of Ugandans in this study can be reflected under the heading:

Towards a critical reflective strategy for community dialogue

Chaplin Kevin, once said:

> How do we rebuild the moral fabric of society that has degenerated so much
>
> and where values have disappeared? A very real challenge is facing nations all
>
> over the world. The social challenges prevailing in society require urgent and
>
> real attention. Where do we start? Let's go back to basics and instill the spirit
>
> of Ubuntu (Chaplin Kevin, Date/unknown).

The persistent issues of quality, equity and relevance ultimately capture the attention of moral

fabric of society and lack of social justice in education. What goes on in the classroom, and

indeed in educational institutions, is significant in building a society that is empowered to

provide social justice. The teachers are responsible in creating welcoming classrooms and

schools free of discrimination but offer support regardless of gender, disability, religion, age,

socioeconomic status and any other circumstances that may reflect differences in individual

students. Teachers therefore play a crucial role, and the community (SMCs, PTAs and school

leaders) is critical in supporting them to improve what goes on in the classroom. "If we do not

reform our education system, we will be letting down future generations of pupils" (Skidmore &

Carmichael, January 2013).

      Therefore, to undertake this in a more meaningful manner, reflective practice becomes a

key strategy for professional development for teachers, and an avenue for community and district

leaders and education actors to offer a safe and respectful environment for engaging in a

sustainable dialogue about education that is connected to immediate practice of what is learned.

It requires stakeholders at the community, district, regional, and national levels to become

mindful of the influence they have on the service delivery at the local level. The development of

critical thinking and reflection, therefore, through a structured study group format, would envisage a safe and nurturing space for exploring how our education experiences and practices may have influenced our attitudes and abilities to promote or deter education in our local areas.

Eituŋanane as habit mind, problem posing, and social justice

The started by showing that Ubuntu philosophy (*Eituŋanane*) primarily relates to more than personal and community development; and extends to the economy, education and health and others while attaching great ethical value to sharing and generosity (Spalthoff, 2013). Therefore, I contend that *Eituŋanane* concepts and ethical values could be transferred to practice and ask how they might help develop critical thinking about, not only provision of quality education, but also how to cultivate deep understanding and develop abilities for local education policy actors to act in social justice. *Eituŋanane*, as the habit of the mind, "… would protect us from hurting others, being selfish, negligent of our duties to humanity, and focused on the good for self, community and society," (interview with Iteso Cultural Union elder).

This section addresses questions such as: how *Eituŋanane* could inform primary education quality improvement and relevance in Teso region and, by inference to the *Ubuntu* in other regions in Uganda. What could be imagined locally to promote an education system grounded on social justice through the indigenous philosophies, and cultural concepts? The section promotes an understanding of *Eituŋanane* and the national goals of education while considerations are also made to the local aspirations. The section is organized in three parts. First, I present and discuss UPE goals using the E*ituŋanane* lens and in relation to the national goals of education and local aspirations. Second, I examine how the current challenges of UPE could be linked to 'human factor decay' (Muzvidziwa et al, 2012, p. 28) and how *Eituŋanane*

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concepts could be used to address these factors? Third, I examine the relationship between Eitunanane and the provision of equitable, quality education at the local level.

Eitunanane and National Education goals

The notions of being human were discussed under concepts of Eitunanane with a strong value to family, clan, community, commitment (and responsibility), compassion (and generosity), teamwork, selflessness (and sharing), and good behavior. Among the education goals was an emphasis on how Eitunanane might provide guidelines for educational concepts to support the UPE education policy. These are aimed at awakening thinking (concscientization) in practice and develop an imagined thinking locally to support the current education system in overcoming its limitations. From the discussions, the perceived presence or absence of Eitunanane amongst the local education stakeholders (district, schools and communities) were documented.

The local schools and their villages/communities articulated what they thought their education would look like if they had or did not have Eitunanane. Eitunanane, while borrowing from the Ubuntu concept '…compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity in the interests of building and maintaining a community with justice and mutual caring" (Nussbaum cited in Muzvidziwa et al. 2012, p.27). These are common African human virtues, characteristics and "… interconnectedness and the responsibility that deeply follows from our deep felt connection" (Muzvidziwa et al. 2012, p. 27). I understand this to mean that education is centrally about the making and maintaining of human connections. Alexander (2010) argues that as educationists, we pursue,

> an area of making connections assumed vital or essential, … between what we
>
> strive to achieve as a nation for our children in the classrooms, and how we

operate in a wider public, civic, or political spheres; and between discourses of pedagogy and power (Alexander, 2010, p. 111).

Furthermore, the Ugandan goals of education indicate: "… appreciation of the value of national unity, patriotism and cultural heritage, and beneficial inter-dependence; and …inculcation of moral, ethical and spiritual values in the individual and to develop self-discipline, integrity, tolerance and human fellowship" (MOES, 1992, p. i and ii). As human beings, our desire is to live in a society where we are connected to each other, respect human dignity, have liberty, justice, equity, and other aspects of collective needs of society. *Eituŋanane* "… celebrates the people's lived experiences and their potential" (Muzvidziwa et al, 2012, p.28). Spalthoff (2013) observes that Africans remain connected and are interdependent as opposed to the system that pushes for independence and self-centeredness. In a situation where the spirit of *Eituŋanane* is embraced by individuals and communities in homes, schools and public offices, there should be positive outcomes in terms of responsibility, and being accountable to other humans: children, teachers, parents, leaders, and community. From the field experiences during this study, this is lacking in the current Ugandan education system.

Weaving into Freireian' 'problem-posing'

Eituŋanane, when applied to the local education stakeholders at district, school and community, requires dialogue about education and in education. The problem posing and awakening of human conscience involves critical reflection and interrogation of the banking concept to education. In the current education system, a high performing district or school is likely to be characterized by the performance in education indicators such as enrolment, attendance, examination scores, and in learning outcomes among others. The challenges that UPE has faced in the poor morale leading to attrition of teachers, diversion of funds (and

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corruption) could creatively be addressed through *Eituŋanane* problem pausing. Specifically

focusing on an understanding of the school and community relationship and engaging in critical

dialogue about education.

Equity, relevance, and quality primary education

The learning today in Africa generally, and in Uganda in particular, is extrinsically driven

and lacks the link of African sensibility (Murithi, 2007). If education's role is to transmit culture,

then the "transmission of a culture across generations justifies … the central powerful, purpose

of education" (Akala, 2006, p. 366). Based on thse ideas, I concur that the ideological

cornerstone of an education that deserves to be seen as meeting the aspirations and needs of

Africans is to be examined under the lens of local philosophy such as *Eituŋanane*. For education

to be meaningful it must respond to the needs of a people; and to do so, it must be directed by a

people's philosophy and worldview. The worldview in turn dictates the peoples' actions

including the content of what they learn (Akala, 2006). Therefore, like Tirivangana (2013), I

opted to re-visit *Eituŋanane* as the common guiding philosophy to the Iteso with the aim of

developing a new conceptual framework to address the challenges and gaps that exist in primary

education in the district. Indigenous education had *Eituŋanane* embedded in every form of life

and could, therefore, be a strong foundation of the social fabric. Reviving this thinking and

practices would ensure tomorrow's society is able to stand their ground as Africans, and be able

to negotiate values dear to them and ensure that education is relevant, is of quality and is

accessible to every child.

Social justice, and helplessness

Eituŋanane as a habit of the mind can awaken and sensitize the local stakeholders to the

collective responsibility of educating our children. There is still a lot of work to update

perceptions; therefore conversations should not only be focused on problems. It requires internal stakeholders to be mindful of the influence they have on the service delivery at the local level. Helplessness is the opposite of what *Eituŋanane* promotes: confidence in the people to be able to explore, observe and try out new ideas, experiment, negotiate, discuss and agree or disagree, debate and express oneself, negotiate; make agreements or pacts with friends and neighbors and so forth. *Eituŋanane* promoted the spirit of commitment or hard work (*akukuranut*), *arimarit* (followership), trust, and integrity. However, integrity is missing from officially sanctioned approaches, which have resulted in selfishness and corruption and ultimately limit local experiences and subjugate the local people to lives of quiet desperation, isolation, and powerlessness. For development will not take place unless enough people and their leaders are prepared to make the changes in their habits, attitudes and thinking necessary to achieve it (IBRD, 1962)

Future Research

The results from this study have pointed to the need for further investigations or explorations of how the local district can promote its understanding of global educational issues through research partnerships between the higher educational institutions and the district and the schools involving teachers as the primary beneficiary in the classroom. In order to support schools to ensure children are the centerpieces of educational initiatives, engagements with communities through participatory research/learning approaches would be beneficial to community ownership of and support to education policies and goals. Finally, the problem of non-completion of primary schooling cycle needs a multifaceted approach including an indigenous ways of understanding transitions in education. Politicians, parents and educators seem to overlook transitioning dilemmas and challenges that often disadvantage many children

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once they get there. An ethnographic study would illuminate the psychosocial, sociocultural, economic, and political and other factors that could be not only pull-in factors to these levels, but also could be detrimental to progression in education. Below are briefs about each.

1. Beneficial research partnerships.

The district should develop mutual beneficial partnerships with the neighboring universities to carry out evaluations and research of specific areas of concern to the district. This would provide the district with in-depth, free research and would give the students a real-world research experience. It is important for students to have a look at things that are perplexing us, and get an outsiders' objective views, possibly without a cost to the district. Graduate students would present findings to the District Council teams, DEO, CAO for further action. These evaluations and research would provide the district with a snapshot of where the district is at in education reform efforts, confirm specific areas for the district leadership to be more intentional, and clearly articulate the reform work they are trying to accomplish. In return, it would give the students a passion knowing that they can do something to help the districts. This would strengthen efforts toward building community dialogue about education.

2. School level action research

In collaboration with the departments of education of education in the universities, schools should be placed at the forefront in improving quality and equity and should involve working closely with those directly engaged in school (UNESCO, 2004). Universities would need to develop necessary skills for the head teachers and teachers that will make the school part of its own attempt to understand education reform. Action research in the classroom, linked to the reflective groups would address implementation of educational reforms especially teacher-led research. Furthermore, teachers are central to teaching and learning process. Schools therefore,

need to empower teachers with skills which will enable them identify their own problems and seek solutions to these problems. Such studies would complement what is usually lacking from the formal teacher training systems.

3. Studies on community participation using Participatory Research Approach (PRA)

 "Solutions to the global crisis in education will have to be built on the foundation of partnership between governments and local communities and organizations working with the poor" (Chimombo, 2005, p.146). The 2005 global EFA global report also calls for "a strong partnership within schools, between the proactive support from distinct education authorities" (UNESCO, 2004, p. 171). Bukedea district, like many rural districts in Uganda, is struggling with high dropout rates, which need to be addressed through an understanding of the linkage in transition from homes to schools. The PRA would also expose the intricate factors that contribute to either staying at school or leaving early from cultural perspectives. The home-school relationships link the global goal of EFA through UPE, to the realities in the communities. The perspectives of local stakeholders about education implied that there is something wrong at the classroom levels especially in the teaching and learning. So understanding the link between home and school and how they both prepare or not prepare a student for transitioning to secondary or other institutions is critical. This, it is argued, is core to UPE (EFA) making a contribution to the local level needs and aspirations. Therefore, collaborations between actors is crucial for any policy to successfully contribute to the desired change (Spillane, 2002).

My concern is that the traditional, cultural, and ideological settings are places where problems of schooling need to be understood. Children enter school at six years with a lot of knowledge, values, and attitudes which are key pointers to their overall behavior and morals

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portrayed in school, their interests to stay in school, their abilities to form relationships, their attitudes towards right and wrongs and others. The schooling based on Western values continue to be the main education in the Ugandan setting, but the values it transmits should not constitute to the Ugandan child a discontinuity between the school and the rest of his/her environment. There is need to explore how indigenous forms of education could be used to enhance the delivery of basic education by the formal school system. As stated by UNESCO (2004) education should be inclusive and able to address diverse needs and situations of learners and cognizant of their abilities, skills and knowledge they bring to the teaching and learning process.

Finally, the study examined the relationship between the local aspirations of Ugandans and the global education goals. Metaphors described the lived experiences of stakeholders, thus indicating that adoption of global goals with little or insufficient preparation is like selecting a good seed and planting it on unprepared ground. Global education goals could be high yielding seeds, but imported from outside and yet expected to offer a good harvest. However, without enough knowledge about the type of soil, the climate changes, the skills of the farmers and their cultural practices, the good seed seems to have fallen into an unprepared ground yet are expected to come to bear fruits. This study is an important reading to the global actors in the UN, the World Bank and the country's leaders so that they understand how problems they purport to solve at the local levels arise and persist. There is need for these key players at the global level, to rethink how to ensure more specifically, that they meet the local people's needs within their (local) cultural framework.

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APPENDIX A. THE STRUCTURE OF A LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The structure of the district local government starts with a village, the lowest political administrative unit comprising of fifty to seventy households with two hundred fifty to one thousand people. Each village is run by the Village Council chair (Local Council 1) with a committee to oversee some sectors like women and children. Each Primary school in the district is therefore located within the jurisdiction of an LC1. The Parish comprises of five to seven villages as Local Council II headed by a chief, a government employee, who provides the leadership. They are responsible for settling family, or land disputes and others. Sub-county is Local Council III headed by an elected Chair with elected executive committee made of representatives from the parishes.

In rural areas, government funding for government projects in health, education, and environment and NGO/Community Based organizations is facilitated at this level. The county comprises of sub-county elected representatives: Members of Parliament (MPs). Each District has one representative or MP and a woman representative or MP at the national level in Parliament (Legislative Body). According to the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES, 1998; MOES, 2008) guidelines on UPE policy, roles, and responsibilities; the MPs are representatives of the people in the Legislature and are expected to, among others:

> interpret policy to his/her constituents; mobilize communities; monitor use of funds and materials in schools; liaise with the ministry on implementation of UPE through the Parliamentary Social Service Committee; participate in school development activities; and solicit NGOs to support educational programs in their constituencies
> (MOES, 1998, p. 9; MOES, 2008, p.11).

The district comprises of County and Municipal elected members headed by elected Chair (Local Council 5 Chair). The technical staffs are led by Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) while the political arm is led by the Resident District Commissioner (RDC). The education department is headed by a District Education Officer (DEO) supported by District Inspectors of Schools (DIS).

The local government structure is complex. Schools are found at the lowest level of administration that is the village or cell/zone. It shows a number of responsibility points all of which could have a bearing on the type and level of coordination, information flow, and performance at the school levels. It also demonstrates the flow of power skewed from top to bottom with little consideration for inputs coming from the bottom. At the senior level of Local Council V (District chairperson- LC5) are the Resident District Commissioner (representative of the President at the district) and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), (representative of the Central government). The CAO is in charge of the overall implementation of government programs, and accountability. CAOs office plays the role of mediating between and coordinating the central government and the local district in line with the proposed plans generated by the district. The LC5's role in the district as the political leader includes overseeing all the government programs in the district and enforcing the policies on the ground; oversight of all the development projects and also monitoring some activities. LC5 and the RDC are lead politicians in the district including the two elected Member of Parliament (including a Woman representative). RDC is also involved in monitoring, evaluation and inspecting government programs and projects in the local government or NGOS.

The CAO therefore monitors government programs in the district. "In regard to education, the CAO and politicians can intervene where necessary but it has to be expressly stated in the DEO's work plan" (interview with a district official). The school Management Committees (SMCs) and local council secretaries send their comprehensive reports to the CAO's office on the activities in the schools. "For instance they get to up to date with reports on ongoing construction in schools of boreholes, new buildings as well as on student enrollments" (interview with a district official, May 2014). The Local District government has leaders at different levels. The most commonly referred to are the top 3 leaders namely the RDC, LC V and the CAO. However under each of these 3 leaders are other leaders at the sub county/council levels, local councils/parishes and schools. Each leader plays a role even though, sometimes in overlapping roles. Because of these overlaps, there are discrepancies in management capacities to implement programs in the districts (Naidoo, 2005).

APPENDIX B. INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL

NDSU NORTH DAKOTA
STATE UNIVERSITY

April 1, 2014   FederalWide Assurance FWA00002439

Dr. Elizabeth A. Roumell
School of Education
FLC 210D

Re: IRB Certification of Exempt Human Subjects Research:
       Protocol #HE14225 , "The nexus between local needs and aspirations and Education global
                     education goals - case study in Uganda"

Co-investigator(s) and research team: **Christine Okurut-Ibore**

Certification Date: 4/1/14   Expiration Date: 3/31/17
Study site(s): **varied locations in Uganda**
Funding: **n/a**

The above referenced human subjects research project has been certified as exempt (category # 2) in
accordance with federal regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46, *Protection of Human
Subjects*). This determination is based on revised protocol materials and informed consent document
(received 3/31/2014).

Please also note the following:
- If you wish to continue the research after the expiration, submit a request for recertification
  several weeks prior to the expiration.
- Conduct the study as described in the approved protocol. If you wish to make changes, obtain
  approval from the IRB prior to initiating, unless the changes are necessary to eliminate an
  immediate hazard to subjects.
- Notify the IRB promptly of any adverse events, complaints, or unanticipated problems involving
  risks to subjects or others related to this project.
- Report any significant new findings that may affect the risks and benefits to the participants and
  the IRB.
- Research records may be subject to a random or directed audit at any time to verify compliance
  with IRB standard operating procedures.

Thank you for your cooperation with NDSU IRB procedures. Best wishes for a successful study.
Sincerely,

Kristy Shirley

Kristy Shirley, CIP, Research Compliance Administrator

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
NDSU Dept 4000 | PO Box 6050 | Fargo ND 58108-6050 | 701.231.8995 | Fax 701.231.8098 | ndsu.edu/irb

Shipping address: Research 1, 1735 NDSU Research Park Drive, Fargo, ND 58102

NDSU is an EO/AA university.

APPENDIX C. UNCST RESEARCH APPROVAL

Notice of UNCST approval: SS 3443

2 messages

Beth Mutumba <mutumba.beth@yahoo.com>   Thu, Apr 17, 2014 at 4:22 AM
Reply-To: Beth Mutumba <mutumba.beth@yahoo.com>
To: "chrimibore@gmail.com" <chrimibore@gmail.com>
Cc: Lea Tabo Nawegulo <leahtabo@gmail.com>

Dear Ms. Okurut-Ibore,

RE: THE NEXUS BETWEEN THE LOCAL NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS AND GLOBAL EDUCATION GOALS: CASE STUDY   UGANDA

This is to notify you that the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) approved the above protocol on **15th April 2014.**

The approval is subject to the following condition:

1. Payment of the research administration and clearance fee of 50 US Dollar.

   Payment is made to Standard Chartered Bank Speke Road Branch; the account title is UNCST and the account number is 8705611811400. If however you wish to pay in Uganda shillings, the account number is 0105610632101. If you intend to wire the research fees, the swift code is SCBLUGKA. Note that bank charges will entirely be the researcher's responsibility.

2. Obtaining of clearance to the study districts from the Research Secretariat, Office of the President; The process of obtaining clearance from the Research Secretariat, Office of the President is handled by UNCST on behalf of the researcher. Once approval has been secured, you will be notified.
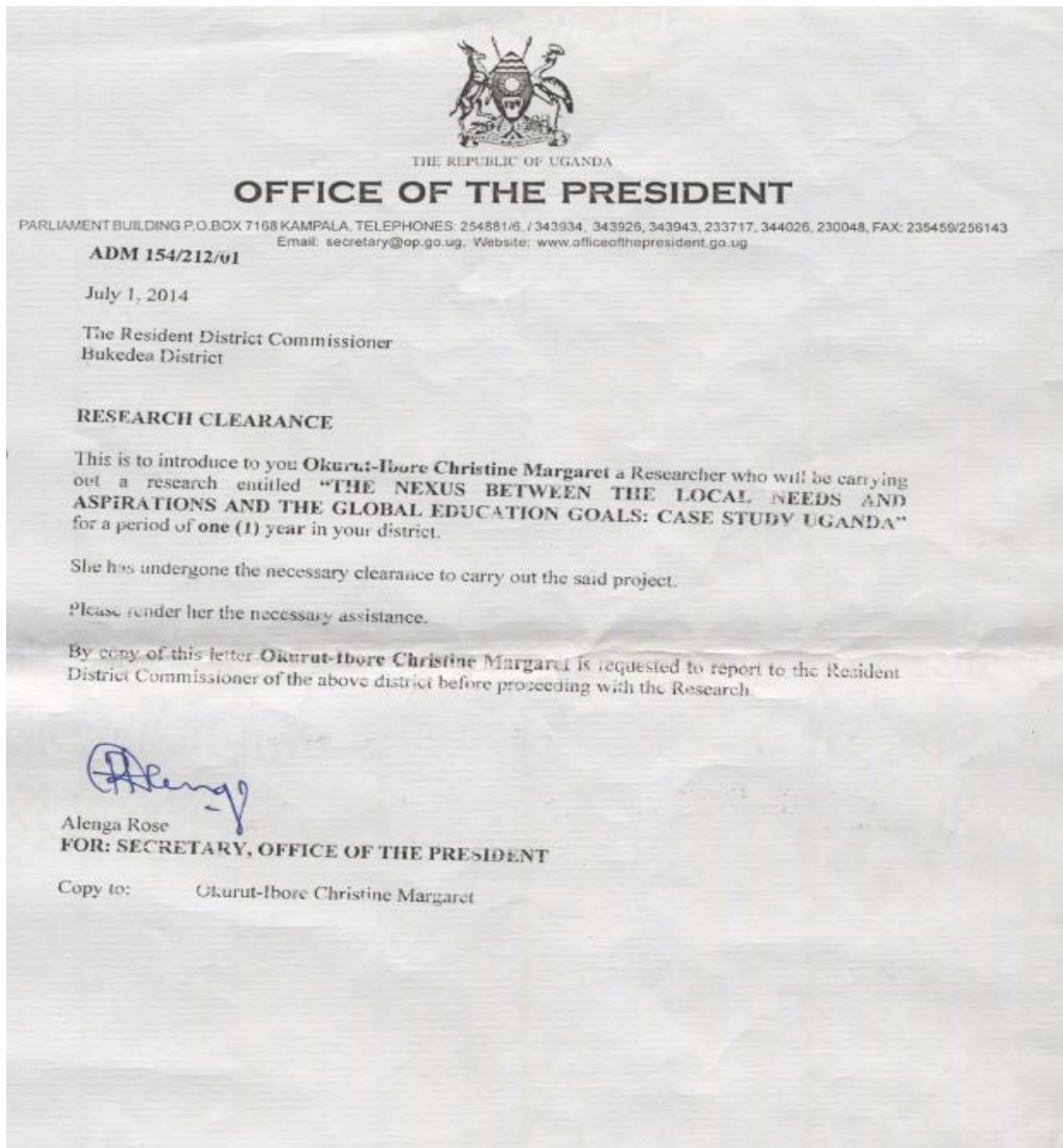
Yours sincerely,
Beth Mutumba
for: Executive Secretary
UGANDA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

APPENDIX D. LETTER OF APPROVAL BY PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE, UGANDA

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

PARLIAMENT BUILDING P.O.BOX 7168 KAMPALA, TELEPHONES: 254881/6. / 343934, 343926, 343943, 233717, 344026, 230048, FAX: 235459/256143
Email: secretary@op.go.ug, Website: www.officeofthepresident.go.ug

ADM 154/212/01

July 1, 2014

The Resident District Commissioner
Bukedea District

RESEARCH CLEARANCE

This is to introduce to you **Okurut-Ibore Christine Margaret** a Researcher who will be carrying out a research entitled **"THE NEXUS BETWEEN THE LOCAL NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS AND THE GLOBAL EDUCATION GOALS: CASE STUDY UGANDA"** for a period of **one (1)** year in your district.

She has undergone the necessary clearance to carry out the said project.

Please render her the necessary assistance.

By copy of this letter **Okurut-Ibore Christine Margaret** is requested to report to the Resident District Commissioner of the above district before proceeding with the Research

Alenga Rose
FOR: SECRETARY, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Copy to: Okurut-Ibore Christine Margaret

APPENDIX E. INFORMATION AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

North Dakota State University
School of Education
NDSU Dept 2625
PO Box 6050
Fargo ND 58108-6050

Information sheet for interview, talking circles (focus group) consent
Title: *The nexus between the local needs and aspirations of Ugandans and the global education goals: case study*

This study is being conducted by Okurut-Ibore Christine Margaret, a graduate student in the School of Education at the North Dakota State University (NDSU). The purpose of the study is to examine whether or not the UPE has met the needs and aspirations of the people at the local district and how the local people participate in improving the quality of education guided by *eituŋanane* philosophy. You have been selected to participate in this study because you have been actively involved in the UPE implementation as a politician, a teacher, head teacher, District Official, an elder, parent, education official or an elder and cultural leader. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to contribute in an audio-recorded interview or talking circle (focus group). You will be asked a series of questions about your and your children's experiences with education and with the UPE program in particular.

Your answers to these questions will later be transcribed from the audio-recording, analyzed for common themes, and written in a report which will be presented to the university, and will also later be published in specific Journal articles. If citing any of your words or ideas, your names will not be used so as to protect your identity.

The interviews and focus groups will take place at the place convenient to you and is free of noise and interruptions. The interviews are with one person or two people, if they share an office. The talking circle will have a maximum of 6 people and a minimum of 3 people. The length of each session will vary depending on your personal experiences, and how much you are willing to share. Some of the questions really want you to deeply and critically reflect on your personal experiences with the UPE program and education generally.

However, by participating in this study, you will have an opportunity to let your voice be heard on issues important to you. You will also be helping researchers learn more about how education services may be improved to benefit all. Your participation in this research is your choice. If you decide to contribute ideas to the study, you may change your mind and refuse to answer any question, for whatever reason, or stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are already entitled.

Access to the information that you give

We will keep private all research records that identify you. The tapes of the interviews will be kept in a locked cabinet, that only the researchers have access to until they can be transcribed. Once transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed. Your name and any personally identifying information will be changed in the transcription of the tapes and in any report produced from your contributions. Data and records created by this project are owned by NDSU and the researchers. You may view information collected from you by making a written request to the researcher. You may only view information collected from you, and not information collected about others participating in the project. If you decide to take part in the study, you will receive an equivalent of Uganda shillings 15,000 (about $ 6) as 'a thank you' for your participation.

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to participate in the research study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have any questions about the study, you can contact the researcher, Christine Okurut at 0777274052 or christine.okurut@ndsu.edu .You have rights as a participant in research. If you have questions about your rights, or complaints about this research, you may talk to the Principal Investigator Dr. Elizabeth Roumell, telephone 701 231 5778 or contact the NDSU Human Research Protection Program at:

- Telephone: 701.231.8908 (local) or 855.800-6717 (toll-free)
- Email: ndsu.irb@ndsu.edu
- Mail: NDSU HRPP, 1735 NDSU Research Park Dr., NDSU Dept. 4000, PO Box 6050, Fargo, ND 58108-6050

The role of the Human Research Protection Program is to see that your rights are protected in this research; more information about your rights can be found at: www.ndsu.edu/irb .

Documentation of Informed Consent:

You are freely making a decision whether to be in this research study. Signing this form means that

1. you have read and understood this consent form
2. you have had your questions answered, and
3. you have decided to be in the study.
4.

_____   _____
Signature of person agreeing to take part in study   Date

_____
Printed name of person agreeing to take part in study

_____   _____
Signature of researcher explaining study   Date

_____
Printed name of researcher explaining study

APPENDIX F. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS BY CATEGORY

Category	Group(s)	Number and gender of participants	Method(s)
Windows to outside world	Members of Parliament (MPs)	1 (Female)	Semi-structured interview
Controllers	District Local Council Chair	1 (Male)	Semi-structured interview
	Resident District Commissioner	1 (Male)	Semi-structured interview
	Chief Executive Officer	1 (Female)	Semi-structured interview
	District Planners	2 (Males)	Semi-structured interview
	District Secretary for Production	1 (Female)	Semi-structured interview
Checkers	District Education Officer	1 (Male)	Talking circles
	District Inspector of Schools	2 (1 Female,1 Male)	Talking circles
	Center Coordinating Tutors	2 (Males)	Talking circles
	District Service Committee	2 (Males)	Talking circles
	Local Council III	1 (Male)	Semi-structured interview
Forerunners	Head teachers (Headmasters)	8 (4 males, 4 females)	Talking circles
	Teachers	8 (4 Males, 4 females)	Talking circles
	College Tutor	1 (female)	Semi-structured interview
Beneficiaries	Parents	7 (4males, 3 females)	Talking circles
	School Management Committee (SMC) and PTA	5(3 Males, 2 females)	Talking circles
	Community elders and cultural leaders	5 (3 males, 2 females)	Talking circle and informal discussions
		49 (29 males, 20 females)	

APPENDIX G. LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Title	Attention to
Uganda Development Plan	Phase I (2010/11-2014/15)
Education and Sports Sector Strategic Plan	Sector strategy 2007-2015
Education and Sports Sector Annual Review Reports	Performance of the Education sector 2008, 2010, and 2012
Uganda Constitution 2005	Legal document
Education Act 2008	Legal document on Education
Education Policy Commission Review Report 1989	Key recommendations on policy directions
Government White Paper on Education 1992	Key Government Education Policy from 1992 to date. Plans to review underway
Education Strategic Investment Plan 1998-2003	Action-based approach to implementation of the education policies
Bukedea District 5 year Development plan 201/11-2014/5	District priorities in activities and expenditure
Global EFA Monitoring Reports	EFA progress, achievements, challenges and recommendations
Local Government Act 2007	Decentralization
Poverty Eradication Action Plan	The role of Education in poverty eradication
Aide Memoirs	Key undertakings (priorities) agreed upon in the Education Sector reviews
Ministerial Policy Statements 2008, 2010 and 2012	Highlights sector performance and policy thrust/priorities for the year
Annual Education Review Field Visit reports by region and district	Reports of particular regions and districts performance by indicators.
Millennium Development Goal report For Uganda	Monitors specific country performance on MDGs

APPENDIX H. RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

A. Questions for the Local Level Stakeholders - Individual semi-structured interviews

1. Briefly describe your role in the District Local Government

2. Does your district have an education vision?

3. a) Uganda government is implementing Universal Primary Education (UPE). What does UPE mean to you?

4. Please describe UPE in a sentence or two, using your own words for example: UPE is ----- or UPE is like ----

5. a) What has UPE so far contributed towards the realization of your district education vision, and/or needs and aspirations? Please explain.

   b) What success and challenges has it encountered?

6. What has the district done to improve the quality of education for all children especially girls and the children with disabilities? Please explain.

7. a) Please describe the process your district follows in making decisions about education.

   b) Do you get advice from the central government? In what ways?

8. Please explain how communication takes place in your district. a) What kind of information flows within the district structures? b) How does this communication mobilize communities to participate in UPE?

9. Does the current funding meet the needs of schools and students? Please explain.

10. What do you understand by *Eituɲanane* from the Iteso people? In your view, is the current education guided by *Eituɲanane*? Why or why not?

11. What does '*Education is a weapon to change society*' (Nelson Mandela, 2003), mean?

12. What educational changes do you envisage for your district beyond UPE 2015?

B. Talking Circles for Head teachers (Principals)

1. a) Should schools have vision statements? b) How was your school vision developed?

2. In your opinion, what would you describe as a) needs and b) aspirations of your school?

3. How do you help pupils under the UPE to aspire for the future beyond primary schooling?

4. Should all school-age children acquire *Primary Education*? Why or why not?

5. a) Primary schools in the district are under the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy. What does this mean to you?

6. a) How has UPE responded or not responded to the parents' need to send and keep their children in school?

   b) Please describe Universal Primary Education in a sentence or two using your own words for example: UPE is ----- or UPE is like ----

7. From your experience so far with UPE, what have the students who went through the UPE program in your school been able to do? Please explain with examples.

8. How does the current funding to your school meet the needs of your students?

   a) What type of information flows to and from the school to the community and from the community to the school?

   b) In which ways does the community participate in your school?

10 a) What do you understand by *Eituŋanane* from the Iteso philosophy?

   b) Explain, what practices in your school show that you practice *Eituŋanane*?

   c) In which ways do you think *Eituŋanane* spirit could be revived to improve primary education delivery?

11. a) "*Education is a weapon that can be used to change society*" (Nelson Mandela, 2003).

Do you agree? Please explain.

b) If *education is a weapon*, what type of change would you expect in your school to ensure better teaching and learning?

C. Talking circles with Teachers

1. Why did you join teaching?

2. From your experience in teaching so far, what do you see as the purpose or role of primary education?

3. In your opinion, has UPE so far met this assigned purpose/role? Please explain.

4. Please describe what UPE has prepared students in your school or community to be or able to do.

5. Please describe UPE in a word, phrase or a sentence. UPE is ------- or UPE is like -----

6. How does the current funding of UPE meet the needs of teachers and students?

7. What support do you get to improve your teaching and from whom?

8. a) What do you understand by Iteso's *Eituŋanane*?

   b) In your view, is the current UPE education guided by *Eituŋanane*? Why or why not?

9. In which ways do you think Eituŋanane spirit could improve primary education delivery? What would be your new role under this new thinking and practice?

10. a) Is "Education a weapon that can be used to change society"? (Nelson Mandela, 2003). Do you agree? Please explain.

    b) If education is a weapon, what type of change would you expect in your school to ensure better teaching and learning?

D. Talking circles for Elders, Parents/ Community leaders/ SMCs and PTA

1. Why do parents take their children to school?

2. What do you hope your children's education will do to and for them?

3. Can you describe to me how UPE has or has not met this purpose?

4. a) What kind of information do you get from school?

   b) What information do you give to school?

   c) How does this information help you to participate in UPE?

5. What kinds of activities do you participate in the schooling process of your child?

6. What challenges do you meet at home and in school in supporting your child's education?

7. Describe your views about what education has provided your child or children who have attended UPE schools. What are they able to do as a result of schooling?

8. Specifically describe how UPE prepares your children to:

   a. become prosperous, and b) be competitive

   b. What active role do you play as a parent in the education of your child/children?

9. What does *Eituɲanane* mean to you? What attributes does it promote?

10. How does education currently reflect those attributes?

11. In your view, is education 'a weapon that can be used to change society'? Please explain.

12. What do you propose as changes that should happen to improve primary education under UPE approach?

APPENDIX I. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

TARGETS	INDICATORS
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	
1. Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	1. Proportion of populations below $1 per day. 2. Poverty gap ratio (incidence x depth of poverty) 3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
2. Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	4. Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age 5. Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education	
3. Ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	6. Net enrolment ratio in primary education 7. Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 8. Literary rate of 15-12 years old.
4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015	9. Ratios of girls to boys in primary , secondary, and tertiary education 10. Ratio of literate females to males of 15-24 year-olds 11. Share of women in wage employment in the nonagricultural sector 12. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality	
5. Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	13. Under-five mortality rate 14. Infant mortality rate 15. Proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles.
Goal 5: Improve maternal health 6. Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	16. Maternal mortality ration 17. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases 7. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	18. HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women 19. Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate 20. Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS
8. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	21. Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria 22. Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures 23. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis 24. Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course (DOTS)

Goal 7: Ensure environment sustainability

9. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	25. Proportion of land area covered by forest 26. Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area 27. Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per $1 GDP (PPP) 28. Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita) and consumption of ozone-depleting CFCs (ODP tons) 29. Proportion of population using solid fuels.
10. Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water 11. By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	30. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural. 31. Proportion of urban population with access to improved sanitation 32. Proportion of household with access to secure tenure (owned or rented)

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

12. Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally 13. Address the special needs of the least developed countries. Includes: tariff and quota free access for least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction 14. Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly) 15. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term	Some of the indicators listed below are monitored separately for the least developed countries (LDCs), Africa, landlocked countries and small island developing States Official development assistance 33. Net ODA, total and to LDCs, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors gross national income 34. Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation) 35. Proportion of bilateral ODA of OECD/DAC donors that is unified 36. ODA received in landlocked countries as proportion of their GNIs 37. ODA received in small island developing States as proportion of their GNIs Market access 38. Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and LDCs, admitted free of duties 39. Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries 40. Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as percentage of their GDP 41. Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity

42. Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative)
43. Debt relief committed under HIPC initiative, US$
44. Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services
45. Unemployment rate of 15-24 years-olds, each sex and total

16. In co-operation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth
17. In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries
18. In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

46. Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis
47. Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100 population
48. Personal computers in use per 100 population and internet users per 100 population

The Millennium Development Goals and targets come from the Millennium Declaration signed by 189 countries, including 147 Heads of State, in September 2000 (*www.un.org/documents/ga/res/55/a55r002.pdf* - A/RES/55/2). The goals and targets are inter-related and should be seen as a whole. They represent a partnership between the developed countries and the developing countries determined, as the Declaration states, "to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which is conducive to development and the elimination of poverty."

*For monitoring country poverty trends, indicators based on national poverty lines should be used, where available.

Amongst contraceptive methods, only condoms are effective in preventing HIV transmission. The contraceptive prevalence rate is also useful in tracking progress in other health, gender and poverty goals. Because the condom use rate is only measured amongst women in union, it will be supplemented by an indicator on condom use in high risk situations. These indicators will be augmented with an indicator of knowledge and misconceptions regarding HIV/AIDS by 15-24 year-olds (UNICEF – WHO).

To be measured by the ratio of proportion of orphans to non-orphans aged 10-14 who are attending school.

Prevention to be measured by the % of under 5s sleeping under insecticide treated bednets, treatment to be measured by % of under 5s who are appropriately treated.

OECD and WTO are collecting data that will be available for 2001 onwants.

An improved measure of the target is under development by ILO for future years.