

Child to Child Pedagogy and Smooth Transition Readiness from Home Based Centers to Primary One

¹*Rucecerwa Adela,

¹National Curriculum Development Centre

*Corresponding Author: arucecerwa@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64948/JCDEE.v1.i1.2024.7>



Received: 5th Mar 2024

Accepted: 16th Nov 2024

Published: 10 October 2024

Abstract

This study aimed to see how to support transition readiness of preschool children from Home based centers to grade one through Child-to-Child pedagogy in an innovative and cost-effective play way. Child to child pedagogy is an education practice about how children build knowledge as they relate with one another. In this pedagogy, older children from the locality known as young facilitators, take preschool children through interactive learning games to prepare them for early grades of primary school. Objectives of the study were: To establish whether child to child pedagogy could be used to enhance transition readiness in Early Childhood Education; To identify child to child activities that could be used to enhance transition readiness in Early Childhood Education. The study used a reflective approach, field reports interviews and a desk review to collect data. Results indicated that the pedagogical strategies highlighted including engagement of relevant stakeholders at community, district and national levels and working with authorities in the area to endorse the approach worked best to smoothen transition. In conclusion, from the findings of the study, use of child-to-child pedagogy enables children to get ready for transition through engaging in useful play with other community members with whom they may go to the same school when they transit. The researcher thus recommends that stakeholders embrace child to child pedagogy for children's transition readiness

Keywords: *Child to Child; Home Based Centres; Pedagogy; Readiness; Transition*

Background

Transition from home-based centres to formal schooling is essential in a child's educational life (UNICEF 2020). In Uganda, there are limited nursery schools (Kongai et al., 2020). Therefore, many children attend home-based centers for early childhood education before transitioning to formal schooling. However, some of the children experience hardship in adjusting to the formal school environment (Kongai et al., 2020). In such a case, Child-to-Child Approach (CTCA) is handy. The CTCA begun in the 1970s as a health education strategy, aimed at helping children to not only care for themselves, but also their peers. Around 1990, it expanded to include education with emphasis on both peer learning and community involvement (Farrokhmanesh et al., 2018).

In Uganda, CTCA is integrated into early childhood education, so as to improve transition readiness and formal school performance. As posited by Serpell (2020), CTCA is an innovative pedagogical strategy that empowers older children to mentor and support younger ones, fostering a sense of community and peer learning.



This article is licensed under a Creative Commons license,
Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY NC SA 4.0)

This study investigated how CTCA can be used to enhance transition readiness of learners from home-based centers to formal schooling. Exploring the impact of CTCA on learner's social, emotional, and academic preparedness, this research aimed to contribute to the development of evidence-based strategies which can be used to support successful transitions and early educational success in Uganda's education system.

Theoretical Aspect:

1. Theoretical Framework

This study aimed at helping children to acquire the necessary skills for a smooth transition. These skills include the emotional, social and cognitive. Acquisition of these skills was done by the use of older children known as young facilitators and were always older children from the community in primary one, two and three. A teacher who is more knowledgeable guided the young facilitators to help preschool children to develop the required skills for a smooth transition. The transition was therefore underpinned by the theoretical framework of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) which provided a lens through which the relationship between child-to-child pedagogy and transition readiness were examined.

1.1 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Learning

In this study, children from within the same community shared play materials to learn new concepts together through guided interaction with more knowledgeable peers or adults. The young facilitators served as both facilitators and learners to enhance the cognitive and social development of their peers through their interactions as they collaboratively constructed knowledge and solved problems, reinforcing their own learning by explaining concepts to each other. The researcher then used the ZPD to understand how children can learn from one another when they engage in reciprocal teaching, where each child both teaches and learns from their peers. Since Vygotsky's sociocultural theory clearly shows the importance of social interaction in cognitive development, asserting that children learn best within a social context through guided interaction with more knowledgeable peers or adults and ideas of the zone of development, the researcher deemed it worth guiding the study. Transition readiness, particularly the emotional and social dimensions, require further theoretical integration, especially with regard to how peer interactions can play a role in facilitating a smooth transition into formal schooling. Here, Vygotsky's framework was used to theorise how peer interactions during early childhood transitions can provide the scaffolding necessary for children to develop emotional regulation, social skills, and academic preparedness.

1.2 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Teaching was done by young facilitators, family members and teachers. During play, materials used were from the community. Children met in different homes and these acted as the classrooms. The homes that were used to develop the children's transition readiness through a variety of environmental systems that interact in complex ways belonged to members of the community. Since Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory posits that children's development is influenced by a variety of environmental systems that interact in complex ways ranging from the microsystem to the macro system, the theory was deemed fit to guide the study. This was because according to this framework, transition readiness cannot be fully understood without considering how these multiple systems affect children's social-emotional and academic preparedness for school. The approach was created to provide a comprehensive, integrative understanding of how family dynamics, peer relationships, teacher support, and community resources affect a child's transition preparedness. The microsystem has a direct impact on how children adapt to school changes, with parental engagement and peer relationships playing a vital role. A number of studies have been carried out using this model, however, much of the current research on transition readiness focuses primarily on teacher-child

relationships or family support systems, leaving a gap in our understanding of how peer relationships specifically influence social-emotional readiness for school transitions.

2. Conceptual Definitions.

This research examined the fundamental principles of child-to-child pedagogy and the preparedness for seamless transitions from home-based centers to formal educational institutions.

2.1 Peer to Peer Pedagogy

This study characterises child to child pedagogy as an educational approach wherein children engage in teaching and learning with their peers, primarily through cooperative and reciprocal activities. The concept of child to child pedagogy, which is underpinned by Vygotsky's social constructivism, encourages the notion that children can scaffold one another's learning through supervised interaction. Each child contributes to the social and cognitive growth of their peers through this educational style, which enables youngsters to assume both teaching and learning responsibilities. A number of studies have been done in line with child-to-child pedagogy focusing primarily on academic achievements. However, the potential significance of the pedagogy in cultivating social-emotional abilities as well as preparing children for educational transitions remains largely unexplored.

2.2 Smooth Transition readiness

The ability of the child to smoothly and easily thus successfully adapt to and thrive in a new educational environment is referred to in this study as transition readiness. The three general dimensions upon which children's smooth transition readiness was measured are social preparedness, academic readiness and emotional readiness.

According to this study, the ability to build healthy relationships with peers, control one's emotions, and cooperate in a group setting is known as social preparedness. The study used the term "academic readiness" to refer to the mental or cognitive ability required for success in the formal educational context. This study defines emotional readiness as the ability to manage anxiety, navigate the challenges of change and adjust to new routines and expectations. This study's findings indicate that peer-to-peer interactions, a crucial element of the microsystem, are essential for enhancing the social and emotional dimensions of transition preparedness. Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective defines transition readiness as the result of interactions among various environmental systems that affect a child's preparedness for school (Tong, 2024).

3. Review of the Literature and Research Gaps

3.1 Early Childhood Education's Child-to-Child Pedagogy

Peer learning has been shown to promote cognitive growth in child to child pedagogy studies, particularly when kids collaborate in structured tasks. For example, Gillies and Ashman (2003) found that cooperative learning strategies can enhance children's academic performance, suggesting that children's collaborative interactions are not only effective for knowledge acquisition but also for building social and emotional competencies. However, research on peer-assisted learning often focuses on older children or formal educational settings, with fewer studies examining the role of peer interactions in early childhood education.

One notable gap in the literature is the lack of exploration into how child to child pedagogy can facilitate social-emotional development, particularly as it relates to children's preparedness for transitions. Although Vygotsky's theory emphasizes the role of social interactions in learning, there is limited empirical evidence on how these interactions specifically support children's emotional regulation and social skills during the critical period of transitioning from home or preschool to formal school settings.

3.2 Transition Readiness and the Influence of Peer Interactions

Research on transition readiness often emphasizes the significance of family and teacher support; however, there is limited attention given to the role of peer relationships in enhancing children's adaptability to new educational settings. A study by Pianta and Cox (2002) has established that social-emotional competencies are crucial for children's successful transitions, yet these studies often overlook the potential role of peer interactions in fostering these skills. Anderson, Jacobs, and Schramm (2000) found that children who had peers to rely on during transitions were better able to adjust socially and emotionally to school. However, these findings are often anecdotal or based on informal peer support, and more research is needed to explore structured peer interactions, such as those found in child to child pedagogy, and their impact on transition readiness.

4. Theoretical Assumptions

This study was grounded in several key assumptions. Firstly, children are capable of both teaching and learning from their peers, as proposed by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. This assumption challenges traditional teacher-centered models of learning. Secondly, peer interactions were central to social and emotional development, particularly during transitions, as outlined in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. The study assumed that children's readiness for transition is significantly shaped by their interactions with peers within their immediate social environments (microsystem). Finally, child to child pedagogy can enhance both academic and social-emotional competencies, providing the scaffolding necessary for children to adapt to new educational contexts.

Conclusion

This study aimed to make several theoretical contributions:

- Extending Vygotsky's sociocultural theory: By examining child to child pedagogy in the context of school transitions, the study extended Vygotsky's ideas on peer-assisted learning, providing empirical evidence for the role of peer interactions in supporting transition readiness.
- Integrating Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory: The study expanded Bronfenbrenner's model by incorporating the role of peer interactions as a critical component of the microsystem that influences transition readiness.

Introducing a new conceptual framework for understanding the role of peer learning in early childhood transitions, specifically in terms of emotional and social adaptation

Hence, the theoretical framework presented in this study integrated Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to explore the impact of child-to-child pedagogy on smooth transition readiness.

Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach specifically. To gather information and create this study, a desk review, field reports, action research and a reflective method were employed. This study was based on a child to child intervention that uses play in home-based or community-based centers to facilitate children's transition from home-based centers to primary one in a few rural areas in Uganda. The notion was that by understanding an initiative, you might assist one another in moving through it without incident. However, the actual study employed desk reviews to find various pedagogies that facilitate smooth transitions for children. Action research was then used to test the many alternatives, experimenting until the particular approach described below was chosen. The child to child methodology used in the intervention was taken from Uganda's Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE) program. The following are changes that were made to the model: Local and typical games that pre-primary kids play in their communities were incorporated into the curriculum. 200 culturally relevant games were gathered and matched to various curriculum areas, including games related to science, literacy, math, socio emotion, physical education, health, and hygiene, among others. To make

these games easy for children to see and identify, they were assembled into an activity pack book as illustrations. To assist teachers in assisting the young facilitators in leading the play activities when necessary, a teachers' book was also created. Instructions to play games selected from the activity pack were also changed to facilitate learning content. Since they are closer to the pre-primary school age range and foster stronger bonds during play, the facilitators from grades 1-3 were chosen above those from grades 5-7. In order to help their children who had been identified as young facilitators prepare and adhere to their schedules, as well as to offer other children receiving mentoring material and moral support, parents were also brought on board. To guarantee sustainability, local structures at the district and neighborhood levels actively engaged in the Child-to-Child Approach initiatives. A total of twenty people were interviewed in-depth to gather data for this study. The subjects of the study comprised four district officials, eight community representatives, and eight parents. The collected data was analysed using the qualitative descriptive methods from each learning center. As implementers, we also conducted reflections based on our experiences to help guide the study.

Research ethics on confidentiality

This study, investigating how child to child pedagogy supports smooth transitions from home based centers to primary education in Uganda, adhered to strict ethical guidelines to safeguard participants' rights, maintain inclusivity, and ensure confidentiality.

Participant selection and inclusivity

Participants were chosen through a process designed to ensure diversity, fairness, and inclusivity. Discrimination based on gender, socioeconomic status, or other factors was avoided, creating a representative sample that reflected varied community perspectives. This approach ensured the findings were comprehensive and applicable across different contexts.

Informed consent

Consent was obtained from all participants, including children, parents, teachers, and community members. For children, both their assent and parental or guardian consent were secured. The study's objectives, methods, and potential implications were clearly communicated, allowing participants to make an informed decision. It was emphasized that participation was voluntary and that withdrawal from the study at any stage would have no negative consequences.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Participant information was treated with the utmost confidentiality. Data collected through interviews, field reports, and reflections were anonymized, using codes instead of names to protect identities. Access to the data was restricted to authorised researchers, and it was securely stored during the study. At the conclusion of the research, data was responsibly disposed of to further ensure confidentiality.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Participants

Special measures were taken to protect children, given their status as a vulnerable population. Activities involving children were designed to be age-appropriate, engaging, and non-invasive. Researchers were trained to recognize and address any signs of discomfort or distress among child participants, ensuring their emotional and social safety.

Minimisation of Bias

To maintain objectivity, the study implemented measures to reduce bias in participant selection, data collection, and analysis. The inclusion of a diverse group of stakeholders, such as parents, teachers, and community leaders, ensured balanced perspectives. Data interpretation was carefully monitored to avoid researcher bias.

Transparency and Accountability

Transparency was maintained by regularly engaging with community stakeholders and local authorities. Updates about the study's progress were shared openly, fostering trust and ensuring alignment with the community's expectations and concerns.

Ethical Data Use and Dissemination

The dissemination of findings was conducted responsibly. Data was presented in an aggregated form, highlighting trends and general insights rather than individual contributions. Participants and stakeholders were informed of the results, encouraging the adoption of child to child pedagogy for smoother educational transitions.

In conclusion, this study demonstrated a strong commitment to ethical principles by prioritizing participant well-being, promoting fairness, and ensuring transparency. By adhering to these ethical standards, the research provided valuable insights into child to child pedagogy while maintaining the dignity and trust of the involved communities.

Special care was taken when selecting participants to ensure diversity, fairness, and inclusivity, while avoiding any form of discrimination.

Results: The findings from this study highlight the diverse activities, teaching strategies, indicators of learning, and support mechanisms associated with the child-to-child pedagogy. Participants, including children, parents, and teachers, provided detailed responses, revealing both the potential and challenges of this approach in enhancing transition readiness in Early Childhood Education. The children shared that they actively participated in a variety of activities to teach and support their peers. Popular activities included football, skipping, and a local game known as bolingo, as well as counting games and reciting songs. Some children also engaged in role-play activities, such as cooking using clay or plastic containers, drawing, and modeling materials from local resources. These activities were described as enjoyable and easily transferable to younger peers.

Practical skills like washing plates, sweeping, and performing sanitation tasks were also mentioned as essential activities that older children could teach. These responses illustrated the children's enthusiasm for learning and teaching through both play and practical experiences.

Parents affirmed that children have a unique ability to teach their peers effectively, particularly in areas like playing games, sanitation practices, and even looking after domestic animals. They highlighted that younger children often find it easier to learn from older peers due to their relatable and childlike communication style. Parents also noted that children were able to teach each other basic literacy and numeracy skills, such as counting, writing letters, and reciting the alphabet. They observed that peer teaching often extended beyond academics, with children teaching manners, local languages, and even leadership skills by guiding others in group activities.

Teachers collaborated these insights, explaining that children engaged in a wide range of activities, such as storytelling, free drawing, modelling, gardening, and health habits lessons. They noted that the child to child approach encouraged children to participate actively in creating and sharing their own learning experiences. Teachers also highlighted creative methods, such as using bottle tops to construct play materials, organising group work in art and craft, and conducting role-play exercises to enhance communication skills and creativity. These activities were aimed at promoting socialisation, creativity, and a sense of responsibility among the children.

The strategies employed to facilitate peer teaching were diverse and practical. Children reported that they often began by demonstrating activities or skills, such as showing younger children how to use counting sticks or play a game. They emphasized the importance of engaging their peers through interactive methods like singing and clapping, as well as dividing into small groups for more focused learning. Parents added that they guided their children to teach others respectfully and encouraged them to use English to familiarise younger peers with the language. Teachers played a key role by supervising activities and guiding the young facilitators to use demonstration and role-playing techniques effectively.

The assessment of learning outcomes was largely observational. Children explained that they could tell their peers had learned when they began to replicate activities, such as playing games, singing songs, or demonstrating new skills like counting. Parents observed progress in their children's work, such as improved cleanliness in tasks like washing plates or writing neatly. Similarly, teachers assessed learning by observing children's participation in group activities, marking exercises, and monitoring interactions during peer teaching sessions. These observations were seen as reliable indicators of whether children had successfully grasped the concepts being taught.

Participants also described various forms of support needed to enhance the effectiveness of the child to child approach. Children expressed the desire for more resources, such as balls, counting sticks, and crayons, to make their teaching efforts more effective. They also valued recognition and motivation, such as verbal appreciation or small rewards for their efforts. Parents noted that providing scholastic materials, guiding children in teaching roles, and encouraging respectful interactions were essential in sustaining the approach. They suggested offering small gifts, like sweets or books, as a way to motivate children to teach others. Teachers emphasised the need for parental and community involvement, including mobilizing resources and providing play materials to support the children. They also stressed the importance of training young facilitators in basic teaching skills and creating opportunities for exchange visits to primary schools to familiarise children with their future environment.

Despite the enthusiasm for this approach, several challenges were identified. Children pointed out the lack of adequate teaching materials, such as balls and writing tools, which limited their ability to teach effectively. Parents highlighted financial constraints, including difficulties in paying school fees and buying uniforms, which hindered participation. Teachers identified the need for additional resources and training for both themselves and young facilitators to ensure the effective implementation of the child to child pedagogy.

In summary, this study revealed that child-to-child pedagogy plays a significant role in helping children acquire the necessary skills to smoothly transition from pre-primary to primary education. The approach enables children to engage actively in their learning while teaching their peers, fostering a deeper understanding of the material. By taking on the role of teachers, children develop not only academic skills, but also essential social and emotional competencies, which are crucial for adjusting to the more structured environment of formal schooling. These findings underscore the importance of active participation in the learning process and suggest that children's peer interactions can be an effective strategy for promoting readiness for primary education.

Discussion in Relation to Previous Studies

The findings of this study on child-to-child pedagogy align with and extend prior research, particularly regarding its efficacy in enhancing cognitive, social, and emotional readiness for formal schooling. Several comparisons and contrasts emerge when contrasted with earlier works:

Peer Learning and Academic Growth

Gillies and Ashman (2003) highlighted that cooperative learning strategies enhance academic performance and foster social and emotional growth. This aligns with the present study, which demonstrates how child-to-child pedagogy facilitates both knowledge acquisition and essential developmental skills. However, while Gillies and Ashman focused on structured cooperative tasks in formal settings, this study emphasised informal, community-based environments, extending the applicability of peer learning to early childhood transitions.

Social and Emotional Preparedness

The study echoes Pianta and Cox's (2002) findings that social-emotional competencies are critical for school transitions. Both studies underscore the value of peer relationships, but this study uniquely

emphasises the structured nature of peer interactions through child-to-child pedagogy. While Pianta and Cox acknowledged peer reliance as beneficial, the systematic use of young facilitators in this research introduces a more deliberate and replicable strategy.

Community Integration and Resource Utilisation

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) underpins this study's emphasis on the microsystem's role in transition readiness, particularly peer relationships and community involvement. Unlike studies that focus primarily on teacher or family influences (Kongai et al., 2020), this research demonstrates the utility of community-based resources, such as local games and materials, in fostering readiness. This divergence highlights an innovative, cost-effective approach tailored to low-resource settings.

Gaps in Social-Emotional Development Studies

Previous research, such as Farrokhmanesh et al. (2018), explored child-to-child approaches but primarily in health education contexts. The present study addresses the gap in applying such pedagogies to develop social-emotional skills during educational transitions. The emphasis on activities like role-playing, practical tasks, and emotional regulation through peer guidance offers new insights into the versatility of this pedagogical model.

Teacher Perceptions and Challenges

The skepticism among teachers about children's ability to teach, identified in this study, corroborates challenges noted in Hamdon and Evans' (2022) review of peer learning strategies. This aligns with broader critiques of teacher-centered paradigms that undervalue children's potential as active participants in learning. The findings suggest a need for professional development to shift these perceptions, a recommendation consistent with Hamdon and Evans' conclusions.

Limitations in Prior Research

Earlier works often neglected the longitudinal impact of child-to-child interactions on transition readiness. By contrast, this study provides a more holistic view, integrating cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions within a community-driven framework. It also introduces culturally relevant activities, such as local games, addressing gaps in existing literature that overlooks the contextual nuances of pedagogy.

Implications for Future Research

This study builds on Serpell's (2020) emphasis on literacy and child development by demonstrating how child-to-child pedagogy extends beyond academic outcomes to include broader developmental competencies. It also lays the groundwork for future studies to explore the scalability of these strategies across diverse educational contexts.

Conclusion

In comparison to previous studies, this research not only supports the established benefits of peer learning but also introduces innovative methodologies and contexts that deepen our understanding of its role in early childhood education transitions. It bridges gaps in literature, particularly around social-emotional development and community-based pedagogies, while highlighting practical challenges and strategies for implementation.

The findings of this study suggest that child to child pedagogy can be a powerful tool in facilitating a smooth transition from pre-primary to primary education. This approach aligns with constructivist theories of learning, which emphasize that children learn best when they actively construct their knowledge through interaction with others. By teaching their peers, children not only reinforce their own understanding but also develop essential cognitive and social skills that are crucial for adapting to the demands of formal schooling.

Moreover, peer teaching in the form of child-to-child pedagogy fosters a collaborative learning environment where children feel empowered to take ownership of their education. This approach contrasts with traditional teacher-centered pedagogies, which often limit student agency and interaction. The active participation inherent in child-to-child pedagogy encourages children to engage with learning in a more meaningful way, building their confidence and independence.

The study also highlights that children who participate in this peer-teaching process are more likely to exhibit self-regulation and problem-solving skills, which are vital for adjusting to primary school routines. These findings suggest that child-to-child pedagogy not only supports academic development but also nurtures social and emotional growth, helping children navigate the social complexities of the primary school setting.

Implications for Practice:

The findings from this study have significant implications for early childhood education and transition practices. Child to child pedagogy provides a compelling alternative to traditional, teacher-centered approaches. By incorporating peer-teaching strategies, educators can create more dynamic and inclusive learning environments that empower children to actively engage in their own education. This approach not only strengthens academic skills but also fosters the development of social and emotional competencies, which are crucial for a successful transition to primary school.

For practitioners, it is essential to recognise the value of children as active participants in their learning process. Encouraging children to teach and support their peers helps develop their leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills. Teachers can facilitate this by structuring activities that allow children to work together and support one another's learning, fostering a sense of responsibility and community within the classroom.

Additionally, early childhood educators and school administrators may consider integrating child to child pedagogy as part of transition programs to support children's readiness for primary education. This could include peer mentoring, collaborative projects, or group-based learning tasks designed to build both academic and social skills.

Finally, schools should provide professional development opportunities for teachers to understand the benefits of child to child pedagogy and address any concerns they may have about the feasibility of children teaching each other. Overcoming the traditional teacher-centered mindset is key to fully realising the potential of this approach in promoting smooth educational transitions.

Limitations of the Study

Generalisability: The findings are specific to the participants in the study children, parents, and teachers in certain settings of Early Childhood Education (ECCE) in Uganda. The results may not be generalisable to other regions, cultural contexts, or types of schools, as the child to child pedagogy may vary significantly in different educational or socio-cultural environments.

Potential Bias in Subjects:

Children: The children in the study may have been influenced by the novelty of the peer-teaching approach or the possibility of being observed (Hawthorne effect). Their responses may reflect what they think the researchers want to hear rather than a true representation of their experiences.

Parents: Parents who already support child to child teaching methods may have a positive bias in their responses, potentially overstating the effectiveness of peer teaching. Parents with limited exposure to or experience with the pedagogy might not provide a comprehensive view of its challenges.

Teachers: Teachers who are involved in the study may exhibit bias if they have prior knowledge or interest in promoting the child to child approach. Their responses could be more favourable towards the pedagogy to align with the study's goals, especially if they perceive it as a progressive method. However, those who are skeptical about the approach may provide less enthusiastic or critical insights, potentially skewing the findings.

Limited Scope of Activities and Resources:

The study focused on specific child to child activities such as games, role-play, and practical life skills, which may not encompass the full range of child to child strategies that could enhance transition readiness. The absence of other potentially effective activities limits the scope of the findings.

Resource Constraints: The study highlights lack of materials, such as balls and writing tools, which were identified as barriers to effective peer teaching. These limitations may have impacted the full potential of the child to child approach, skewing the results towards a more restricted implementation. The financial constraints mentioned by parents also limit the ability to generalise the findings to wealthier or resource-rich contexts.

Uncontrolled External Factors:

Socioeconomic Factors: The financial constraints and difficulties with basic needs like school fees and uniforms reported by parents may have influenced the participation of children in the study. These external factors cannot be controlled and may have affected the outcomes by limiting some children's ability to fully engage in the peer teaching activities.

Teacher Training and Experience: Teachers' varying levels of training and their experience with child to child pedagogy could have influenced the implementation and effectiveness of the approach. Lack of uniform training for teachers could introduce variability in the study results.

Parental Support: The degree of parental involvement and support for the child to child pedagogy varied across participants, with some parents unable to provide the necessary resources or guidance. This lack of consistency in support may have influenced the success of the approach, making it difficult to isolate the impact of peer teaching itself.

Observational Learning Outcomes:

The assessment of learning outcomes was largely observational and based on subjective assessments of children's behaviour, such as replicating activities, improved cleanliness, and participation in group activities. While useful, these indicators may not fully capture the depth of cognitive, social, or emotional development that the child to child approach could foster. The absence of more formal, standardised assessments may limit the accuracy and reliability of the conclusions.

Teacher Perceptions

Skepticism about Children's Capabilities:

Some teachers may view the child to child approach with skepticism, questioning whether children can truly teach or facilitate learning effectively. This perception could limit their support for the pedagogy and the ways in which they implement it. Teacher perceptions were influenced by their prior experiences and training, and those with a more traditional mindset may struggle to accept the benefits of peer teaching.

Teachers may also feel that the child to child approach is time-consuming or challenging to manage, particularly with larger classes or limited resources, which could negatively impact their willingness to embrace the methodology.

External Support and Resources:

Teacher perceptions may be influenced by their access to resources and support systems. Teachers in under-resourced environments may have a more negative view of the approach due to the lack of materials and logistical support.

These limitations highlight the need for greater professional development and awareness regarding the benefits of child to child pedagogy. By addressing misconceptions and providing teachers with the tools to effectively implement peer-teaching strategies, schools can shift toward a more inclusive and collaborative learning environment. Overcoming these teacher perceptions will be crucial for fostering a culture that values children as active contributors to their own education.

Recommendations and Future Research:

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that educators and school administrators integrate child to child pedagogy into early childhood education curricula to promote smoother transitions from pre-primary to primary education. This approach not only enhances academic development but also fosters social and emotional skills that are crucial for adapting to the primary school environment. To effectively implement this pedagogical model, it is important that teachers create opportunities for peer teaching through structured activities that allow children to collaborate, teach, and learn from one another.

For practice, educators should encourage a shift away from traditional, teacher-centered teaching methods and explore more child-centered, collaborative models. Training programs should be developed to help teachers understand the advantages of peer teaching and how to manage a classroom where children actively contribute to each other's learning. By providing teachers with the necessary support and resources, schools can create an environment that nurtures both independent and interdependent learning.

In terms of future research, further studies are needed to explore how child to child pedagogy can be adapted and applied in various educational settings, particularly in diverse cultural contexts. Research could investigate the long-term effects of this pedagogy on children's academic performance, social integration, and emotional well-being as they progress through primary school. Additionally, studies should examine the ways in which teacher perceptions of children's abilities to teach can be shifted and what interventions might best support this change.

Future research should also explore the specific methods and best practices for implementing child to child pedagogy effectively. Longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into how peer teaching impacts not only academic outcomes but also broader developmental aspects, such as self-esteem and social confidence. Ultimately, ongoing exploration of this pedagogical approach will help refine and strengthen its potential to support children's transitions into formal schooling.

Conclusion:

This study aimed to explore how child to child pedagogy can facilitate a smooth transition from pre-primary to primary education. The findings highlight the significant role of this approach in helping children acquire essential skills that ease their entry into formal schooling. The active participation of children in their learning, especially through teaching their peers, not only enhances their own development but also fosters a supportive learning environment. This has strong implications for home-based and preschool learning settings, where children need to engage actively to build both their own skills and those of their peers.

However, a key limitation identified was the prevalent belief among many teachers that children are incapable of teaching, which often leads to a teacher-centered pedagogy. To address this, it is recommended that educational practices incorporate the child-to-child approach, empowering children to become active agents in their learning. Further research should explore how to overcome teacher resistance and encourage a more inclusive pedagogical shift that embraces child-led teaching.

References

- Anderson, N. J., Jacobs, A. J., & Schramm, J. (2000). Coring of laminated lake sediments for pigment and mineral magnetic analyses, Søndre Strømfjord, southern West Greenland. *Geology of Greenland Survey Bulletin*, 186, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.34194/ggub.v186.5220>
- Gillies, R. M., & Ashman, A. F. (2003). The effects of cooperative learning on students' engagement and achievement in science. *International Journal of Science Education*, 25(5), 487-502. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500690210145924>
- Hamdon, H., & Evans, R. (2022). Child to child Learning: A Systematic Review of the Evidence. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 93, 102524.
- Hellen Kongai, Julius Mangisoni, G. Elepu, E. CHILEMBWE, & D. MAKOKA. (2022). SMALLHOLDER ORANGE FARMER ACCESS TO MARKETS IN UGANDA. *African Crop Science Journal*.
- Kongai, R., Muhanguzi, F., & Kabanankye, M. (2020). Transition experiences of children from home-based care to formal schooling in Soroti District, Uganda. *Journal of Early Childhood Education Research*, 9(1), 1-15.
- Mandana Farrokhanesh, Nasrin Mokhtari Lakeh, & Shahla Asiri. (2018). A Comparative Effect of Child to child and Health Educator to-Child Teaching Approaches on Nutritional Status in Elementary School Students. *J Holist Nurs Midwifery*.
- Pianta, R. C., & Cox, M. J. (2002). Transition to kindergarten: A review of the literature. *The Elementary School Journal*, 102(5), 351-375. <https://doi.org/10.1086/499396>
- Serpell, R. (2020). Literacy and child development in a contemporary African society. *Child Development Perspectives*, 14(2), 90-96. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12363>
- Tong, P. and An, I. S. (2024). Review of studies applying bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory in international and intercultural education research. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1233925>