



Pursuit of equitable teaching practices in resource-constrained contexts: Evidence from Ugandan classrooms

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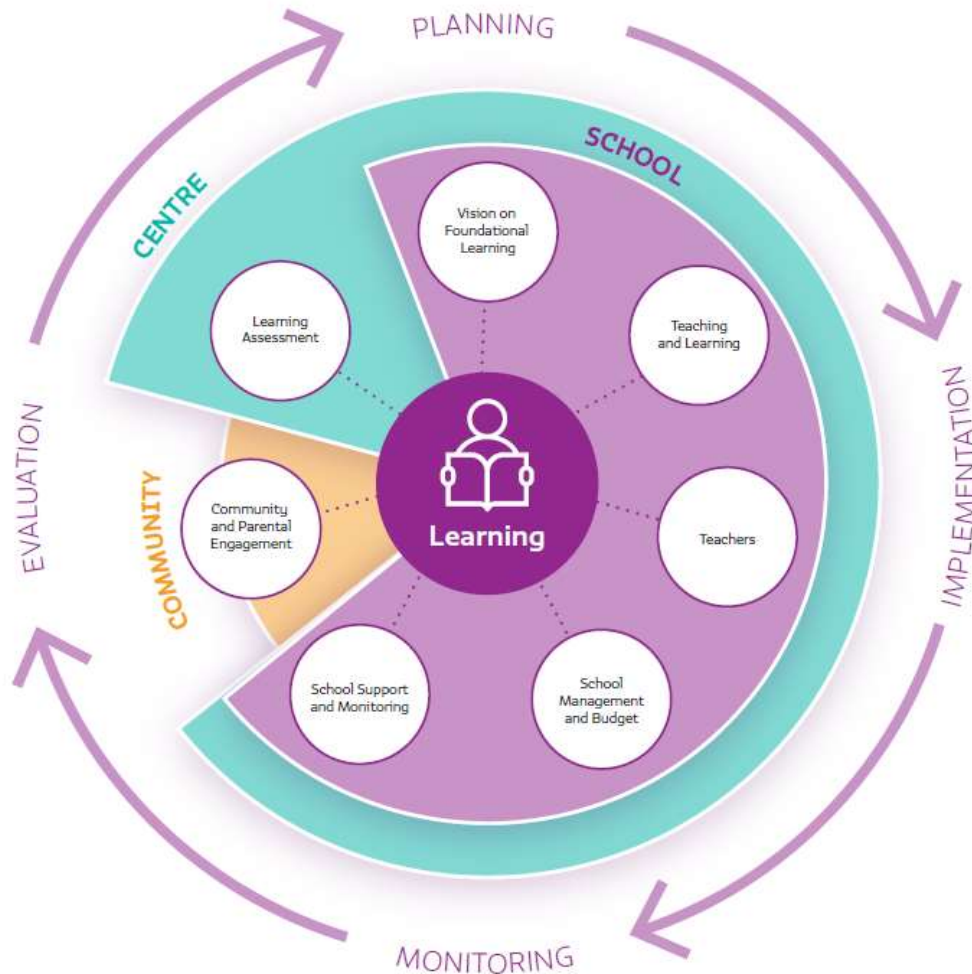


Introduction



- This paper is concerned with provision for children's learning of **literacy** and **numeracy** in primary education in Uganda.
- We draw on research we conducted for the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) 2023 Spotlight series on foundational learning in Africa (Nakabugo, et al 2024)

Framework and focus



Focus of the 2023 GEMR Spotlight **research cycle**:

- ▶ Curriculum and textbooks
- ▶ Teacher guides and other support mechanisms
- ▶ Classroom and system-wide assessment and
- ▶ Alignment of the three and classroom implementation.
- ▶ Our paper focuses on classroom implementation and equity



Data sources, purpose and analysis



- **Primary education in Uganda: For children aged 6-13 and has a seven-year cycle (P1-7).**
- **Data was generated from research in 12 primary schools in four districts in Uganda.**
- **Source: Interviews and focus group discussions with district officials, headteachers, teachers, parents and community leaders; and from observations of mathematics lessons in P3 and P7 (a total of 24 teachers i.e. 12 for P3 and 12 for P7).**
- **Purpose: To gain insights into issues affecting quality and equitable foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) teaching and learning.**

Qualitative and descriptive statistics to show trends and compare cases.





Characteristics of the districts and schools studied





Selection of the four districts

- One is located in each of the four major regions of Uganda.
- Two (Maracha and Pallisa) are in poorer sub-regions and two (Bundibugyo and Wakiso) in wealthier ones, as indicated by poverty rates.
- The two districts in poorer sub-regions have contrasting rates of combined P2-level competence in reading and numeracy, for children in P3-P7 (Uwezo Uganda, 2021), and the same applies to the two districts in wealthier sub-regions.
- The poverty rates used are from the Uganda Poverty Status Report (Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 2014). (% of the district population below the poverty line i.e. below \$1 per day).





Sample assessment tool (highest level) Uwezo Uganda (2021)



4. Story

The Sun and the Moon

The sun and the moon are good friends. The sun shines during day time. The moon appears at night. Today the moon came out during day time. It covered part of the sun. Day time changed into darkness.

Birds started singing on trees. We thought this was end of life. The sun was not seen for some time. It was seen again after thirty minutes. Children were happy to see light again. My sister left her hiding place.

Questions:

1. When does the moon always appear?
2. Why were the children happy?

6. Division

$4 \div 2 = \text{---}$

$24 \div 2 = \text{---}$

$15 \div 3 = \text{---}$

$6 \div 2 = \text{---}$

$21 \div 3 = \text{---}$

$3 \div 3 = \text{---}$



The four districts

TABLE 1. DISTRICTS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

District	Region	Competence rate (2021)	Poverty rate (of sub-region)
Wakiso	Central	56.7 (high)	3.7 (low)
Maracha	Northern	32.2 (high-medium)	42.3 (high)
Bundibugyo	Western	18.8 (low)	9.8 (low)
Pallisa	Eastern	14.7 (low)	24.7 (high-medium)

The four districts' performance in PLE (2018)

TABLE 2. DISTRICT INDICATORS OF PLE PERFORMANCE, 2018

District	Candidates sitting	Passes	Population cohort aged 12 (projected)	Percentage placed in Divisions 1 & 2	Passes as % of cohort (gross ratio)
Wakiso	49,150	42,272	49,690	74	95
Maracha	2,428	2,226	6,690	39	34
Bundibugyo	4,187	4,021	5,440	61	74
Pallisa	5,304	4,491	10,110	31	44



School characteristics and differences





TABLE 3: SCHOOL CATEGORIES AND ESSENTIAL STATISTICS

Seriously under-staffed schools (pupil-teacher ratio > 50) are shaded in yellow.

Code name of school	Perceived performance	Ownership	Location type	Total enrolment	Attendance rate (%)*	Pupil-teacher ratio	Pupil-classroom ratio	Pupil-stance ratio
Wakiso School A	High	Public	Urban	1,036	94.69	23.55	60.94	28.78
Wakiso School B	Medium	Private	Urban	148	87.84	14.80	21.14	14.80
Wakiso School C	Low	Public	Urban	580	80.86	48.33	72.50	48.33
Maracha School A	High	Private	Urban	530	95.09	27.89	75.71	53.00
Maracha School B	Medium	Public	Rural	1,763	28.70	103.71	251.86	146.92
Maracha School C	Low	Public	Rural	1,282	31.98	58.27	320.50	183.14
Bundibugyo School A	High	Public	Rural	1,326	50.30	57.65	110.50	66.30
Bundibugyo School B	Medium	Private	Rural	239	73.22	15.93	23.90	15.93
Bundibugyo School C	Low	Public	Urban	1,075	59.16	67.19	82.69	71.67
Pallisa School A	High	Private	Rural	492	99.59	28.94	49.20	24.60
Pallisa School	Medium	Public	Rural	968	84.19	74.46	88.00	107.56
Pallisa School C	Low	Public	Rural	981	47.91	81.75	122.63	89.18

*The attendance rate is the headcount as a percentage of the enrolment.



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TABLE 4. SCHOOL'S LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION (LOI) IN P1-P3 AND CONTEXT

School name	code	LOI in P1-P3	Are teachers competent in the LOI?	Are there materials for the local LOI (if applicable)?	Percentage of pupils with first language different from local language used in the school*
Wakiso School A		English	All		Between 11% and 30%
Wakiso School B		Luganda	Some	Yes	Between 11% and 30%
Wakiso School C		English	Some		Between 1% and 10%
Maracha School A		English	All		Between 1% and 10%
Maracha School B		Lugbarati	All	Yes	None
Maracha School C		Lugbarati	Some	Yes	None
Bundibugyo School A		Lukonzo	All	Yes	Between 1% and 10%
Bundibugyo School B		English	All		More than 60%
Bundibugyo School C		Lubwisi	All	Yes**	Between 1% and 10%
Pallisa School A		English	All		None
Pallisa School B		English	Some		Between 1% and 10%
Pallisa School C		English	All		More than 60%





Teachers' use of curriculum, textbooks and other sources for mathematics





TABLE 5: ALIGNMENT OF TEACHING WITH SOURCES



Scoring of alignment: 3 = Largely aligned; 2 = Partially aligned; 1 = Not aligned; 0 = Teacher did not have the item.

Lessons with apparent lack of planning are shaded in yellow.

School code name	Grade	Pupil headcount	Alignment of teaching with:			
			Scheme of work	Lesson plan	Textbook	Teacher's guide
Wakiso School A	P3	63	3	3	3	2
Wakiso School A	P7	62	2	2	2	2
Wakiso School B	P3	16	0	0	0	0
Wakiso School B	P7	21	3	3	3	3
Wakiso School C	P3	79	3	3	0	2
Wakiso School C	P7	49	3	3	2	2
Maracha School A	P3	94	0	0	3	0
Maracha School A	P7	44	3	3	3	2
Maracha School B	P3	96	0	0	2	0
Maracha School B	P7	29	3	3	2	2
Maracha School C	P3	67	1	2	2	1
Maracha School C	P7	17	3	3	3	2
Bundibugyo School A	P3	85	0	0	3	0
Bundibugyo School A	P7	42	3	3	3	1
Bundibugyo School B	P3	24	0	0	0	0
Bundibugyo School B	P7	24	0	2	1	0
Bundibugyo School C	P3	90	3	3	3	0
Bundibugyo School C	P7	30	0	0	2	0
Pallisa School A	P3	66	3	3	3	3
Pallisa School A	P7	39	0	0	0	0
Pallisa School B	P3	162	3	3	1	1
Pallisa School B	P7	49	3	3	3	3
Pallisa School C	P3	66	3	3	3	3
Pallisa School C	P7	21	3	3	3	3
Sum of ratings			45	48	50	32



FIGURE 1. FREQUENCIES OF PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

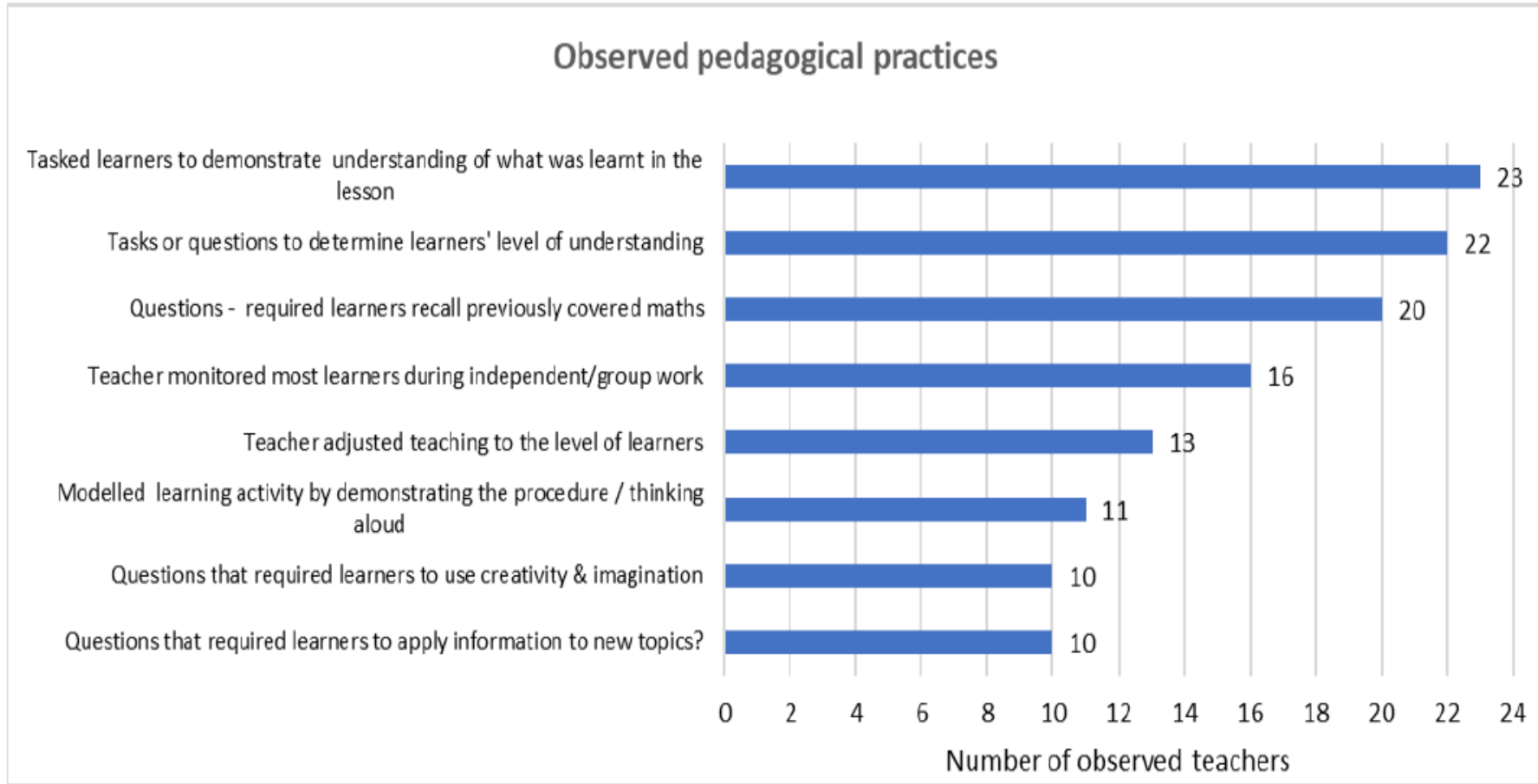
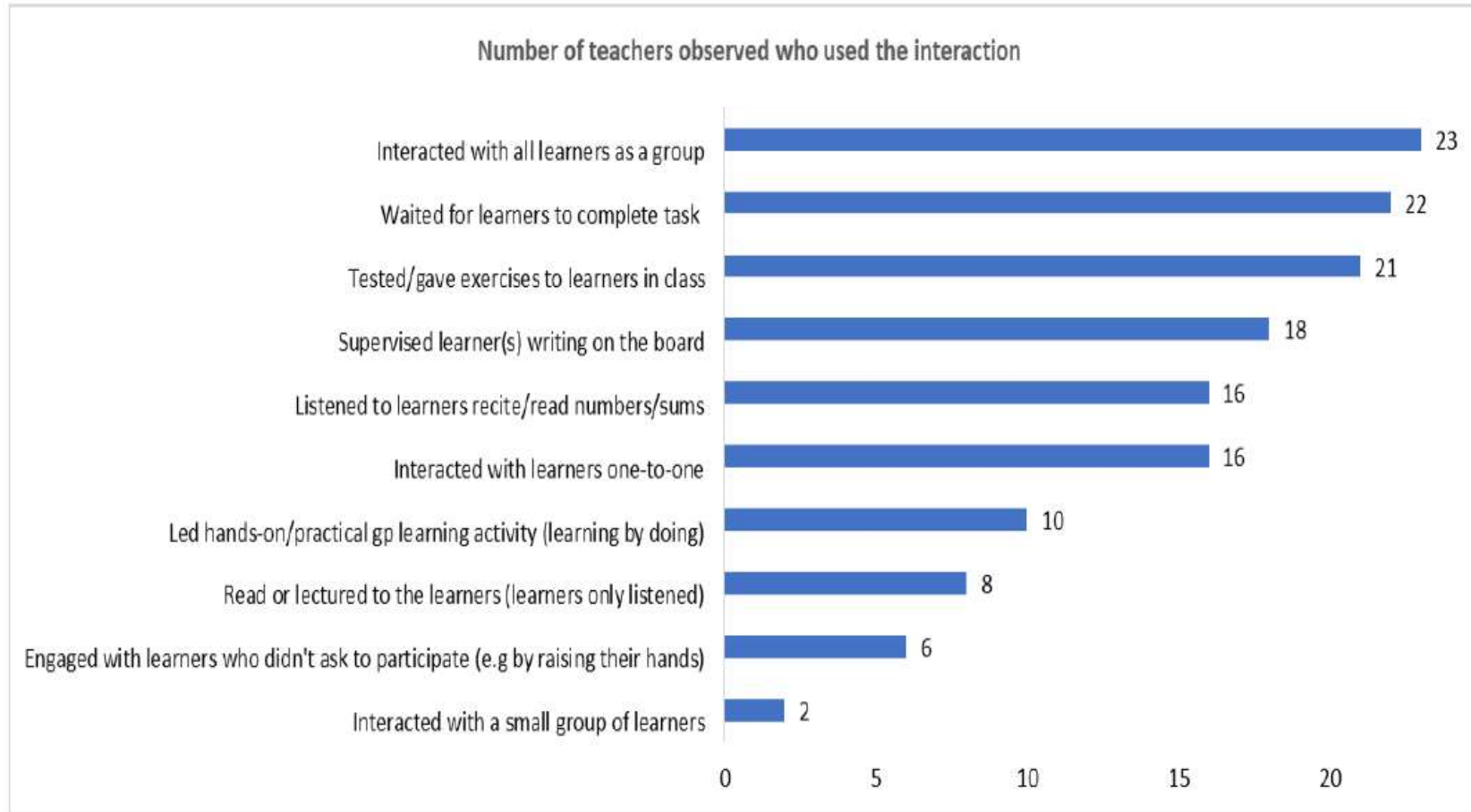


FIGURE 2. TYPES OF TEACHER INTERACTION WITH LEARNERS





Assessment practices at classroom and school level



TABLE 6. FORMS OF ASSESSMENT USED BY TEACHERS

Assessment form	P3	P7	All
Written only	4	5	9
Written & Oral	4	2	6
Written & Observation	2	1	3
Written & Practical	1	2	3
Written, Oral & Practical Observation	1	1	2
Written, Oral & Practical		1	1
Total	12	12	24

TABLE 7. NUMBER OF EXAMINATIONS PER TERM IN P3 AND P7: BASIC STATISTICS

Grade	Mean	Standard deviation	Number of schools
P3	2.67	0.88	12
P7	6.25	2.77	12

Key facts from the research



- A shortage of teachers, classrooms and learning materials limited the scope for interactive teaching methods and formative assessment.
- Textbooks were more widely used by teachers than by learners, since most learners did not have the books.
- There was also a tendency to whole-class teaching, rather than group work or individualised instruction.
- Differentiation of tasks was rare.
- Over-reliance on examinations at the expense of formative assessment

Policy & practice recommendations



Enhance accessibility of the curriculum, teacher guides and student textbooks

Improve teacher guides and teacher support.

Promote formative assessment at the school level supported with in-service teacher training.



Conclusion

Achieving equitable teaching practices goes hand in hand with supportive policies and practices enabling teachers to adapt their teaching approaches in ways that cater for the needs of each child.



References

- Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoEFPED). (2014). *Uganda poverty status report 2014*. Kampala: MoEFPED.
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- Uwezo Uganda. (2021). *Are our children learning? Illuminating the Covid-19 learning losses and gains in Uganda*. Kampala: Uwezo Uganda.

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