

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**



**PRACTICE AND CHALLENGES OF PRE-
SCHOOL EDUCATION IN NEFASILK LAFTO
SUB CITY OF ADDIS ABEBA**

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LETTER OF APPROVAL

**Practice and Challenges of Pre-School Education
In Nefasilk Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa.**

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Art in Educational Leadership and Management

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DECLARATION

I, the under signed, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University, and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been properly acknowledged.

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This Thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor.

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ABSTRACT

Pre-primary school Education is an area which needs special attention due to it is a place where to build foundation for the children's successful life-long learning. Consequently the sub sector has a profound impact on the consecutive educational achievements of the children's long-life. Hence this study is conducted to assess the practical situations and challenges of the sub sector in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa. The practices are assessed through main determinant factors which includes: the physical and learning environment that encompass the materials used for children holistic development, Curriculum guideline, Scheduling and Structuring, Teachers know how, teaching learning methodology, assessment used to engage and follow up, Health and Nutrition, the relationships With Parents and Community, administrative issue.

The study was conducted by using questionnaire, interview and observation; 250 principals and teachers were draw on for the study through using simple random sampling and the questionnaire were distributed and collected personally via the researcher. It was distributed to thirty nine kindergartens' principals and teachers from the distributed questionnaires 216 were returned and used for analysis. Interview was conducted with AAEB and NLSCEO preprimary education professionals. To analyzed the date; Frequency, percentage, and mean value have been used to investigate the research objectives and basic questions. The overall results of the survey shows positive connotation i.e. the principals and teachers rate the determinant factors of the pre primary education sector as good. The study was also identifies challenges like, Shortage of trained man power and employee turnover, parent's limited support to children's development, government insufficient support, unavailability of text books, Shortage of input materials, and lack of decision making body like board of director for managing KG are some of the threat that could be dimmed the good start. Generally emphasis should be given to the sub sector since it is a foundation for competent future citizens.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This part of the study deals with the background of the study which is about the overall theoretical concepts of education and the essence of preschool education. The second content is the Problem of the study that is what the researcher is intended to do and what basic questions had to answer in the study. Additionally this chapter includes the general objective, the specific objectives, and the significance of the study and organizational structure of the study.

1.1. Background of the study

Education is a pathway to every development and technological improvements. The current advancement in economic growth and world's sophisticated technology is the result of educational researches. Therefore, education is an ignition for every sector to start the right way of development.

As indicated by USAID, (2011) education is essential for human development and critical to lay basic ground for economic growth for every nation. It is difficult to achieve a sustainable economic growth or to be a developed nation without first investing in expanding access to quality education. Further, education has vital role for developing an informed and active citizen, required for healthy democratic practice and implementing good governors for enabling individuals to make smarter choices affecting health and household welfare. Education remains the key for solving the individual's intellectual and creative potential through increasing individual income, improving health outcomes and reasonable resource allocation.

Moreover, education is considered as a tool for processing the transition of experiences, new findings, and values accumulated through time, in human struggle for survival and development, from generation to generation. Education enables individuals and society to make all-rounded participation in the development process by acquiring knowledge, ability, skills and attitudes.

In line with this four major aims are set for Ethiopian education. First education is aimed to develop the physical and mental potential and enhance problem-solving capacity by providing basic education for all, Secondly education is expected to bring up citizens and enabling them proper resources utilization by raising the private and social benefits of education, Thirdly education has produce citizens who respect human rights, stand for the well-being of people, as well as for equality, justice and peace, endowed with democratic culture and discipline, Fourthly bring up citizen who differentiate harmful practices from useful ones, and the fifth is to cultivate the cognitive, creative, productive and appreciative potential of citizens by properly relating education to environment and societal needs (MOE,1994).

Early childhood education is a sensitive period marked by rapid changes in physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development. It represents a window of opportunity for a lifetime development of a person (UNESCO, 2010).According to Barnett, (2008) a well-designed preschool education has long-term and progressive effects in school success, including higher achievement test scores, lower rates of grade repetition and special education, and higher educational attainment. In addition, it is also associated with reducing delinquency and crime in childhood and adulthood.

New approach of early childhood learning was started since 18 century in Europe. The first infant school was opened in German by Prince Pauline in1802 (Rusk, 1993) as cited by (Adane, 2008).The crossing of early childhood education

from Europe to the rest of the world periodically spread and resulted in the opening of kindergartens to different countries in the following years.

In the earlier period Pre-primary school education in Ethiopia was basically given by elder brother/sisters and faith based institutions namely Orthodox Church “Abinat” school, Mosque /mederesas/ missionaries... for the sake of maintaining the moral values and serving the religious purpose. According to Aregash, (2005) in Ethiopia the first modern kindergarten was established by French railway workers in 1908 at Dire Dawa. International communities and foreigners are main contributors to introduce kindergarten in Ethiopia. In 1963 the community service based kindergartens were established by the government in different parts of the country namely, Ras Desta sefer (A.A), Debrezeit, Debrebirhan, Hawasa and Asmara (UNICEF, 2007) as cited by (Adane, 2008).

Recently Early Childhood Care and Education has become one of the priorities for the education sector. Pre-primary education is one of the potential inputs to the overall improvement of quality of education and reduction of drop out and repetition rates in later stages of formal schooling. Moreover, participating in ECCE is the right of the child and it is a foundation of Education for All. It also has significant contribution in economic return (ESDP IV, 2010).

In order to achieve the above benefit The Education Sector Development Program (ESDP IV) designed four main strategies for Early Childhood Education. The strategies cover four main areas.

The first strategy is to mainstream Early Child Care Education (ECCE) by clarifying the mandate and role of the various stakeholders and establishing a national steering committee, regional councils and woreda technical committees. The second strategy is to enforce the monitoring and regulating the quality of ECCE delivery while the third strategy is to give direct support to quality improvement. Finally, this intention is to give more attention to early child care education teacher training and development.

For implementing the above strategies, MOE develop standards for Per-primary school education since 2010 by considering educational structure, educational work guidelines and educational organization to improve the quality of education. The curriculum for pre-primary education was developed on major themes of children's developmental activities, namely proper care for appropriate development and physical strength, enabling to create reasonable relationship with others through proper use of language, using mathematical and conceptual ideas in children's day to day activities for studying and testing environmental interaction (MOE, 2010).

According to MOE, (2012/13) the current total population of Ethiopian children of the appropriate age group (4-6) is estimated to 7.71 million. Out of this, only about 2.01 million (26.1%) children got access to pre-primary education all over the country. This means the majority of the children didn't get access to preprimary education, implying the need to give more emphasis to this sub sector of education. Hence this study tries to assess the practice and challenges of pre-primary education in Nefasilik Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa.

1.2. Problem of Statement

Pre-primary school Education is an area which needs special attention for various reasons. First children are vulnerable to different hazards. Secondly, the pre-primary school education is a place where to build essential foundation for the children's successful lifelong learning. Thirdly, it has multi socio economic benefits. In spite of this benefit of pre-primary education, UNESCO, (2005) in most developing countries large share of children start education late in their ages and directly join primary schools skipping the nursery and kindergarten. As a result of this practice, it is very common to see that low quality, high grade repetition and dropout rates are the main characteristics of the sector. On the other hand the Government of Ethiopia has prepared policy framework for

strategic operational plan and guidelines for early childhood care and education since 2010.

It is offered in accelerating realization of Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals. The framework encompasses different policies for early childhood care and education services and programs for children from prenatal to seven years. It provides a frame of reference for key sectors involved in the provision of services for infants and young children. It provides standards and guidelines for ensuring provision of quality services for all children in their earliest years of life (MOE, 2010).

Even though, this start is a good input for developing children and setting their future destination, the government limited its duties on regulatory areas such as: developing curriculum, training teachers, and providing supervisory support. On top of this, unlike primary education for which clear targets were set, there is no specific target plan in GTP for kindergarten education, though its importance is understood.

Since the sub sector has a profound impact on the consecutive educational achievements of the children's long-life, this study is intended to assess the practical challenges of this crucial sub sector of education. Besides, uneducated elder person who lived in the researcher's early village said "The children and the seedling are the asset of the nation so that everyone has a responsibility to care them." Consequently, pre-primary school education is a crucial educational sub sector that needs more effort and appropriate attention from all stakeholders

Hence, the study will attempt to investigate the practical trends and major challenges of pre-primary school education in Nefasilk Lafto sub City of Addis Ababa. The following main questions were raised for deep investigation.

1. What are the administrative and children's caring practices in Nefasilk Lafto sub city government administration education office?

2. To what extent the standard, the syllabus and the pedagogical tools of education are appropriate for children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development?
3. What are the major challenges with regard to operation of KGs in Nefasilk Lafto sub city government administration education office?
4. What opportunities exist in pre-school education to direct children's future?

1.3. Objectives

Pre- School Education is an area which needs special attention. To address this essential area the researcher set out the following general and specific objectives of the study.

1.3.1. The General objective

The main objective of this study was to assess the current practice and challenges of pre- primary school education in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa.

1.3.2. The specific objectives

- To examine the administrative and children's caring practice of pre-primary school education in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City Education Office.
- To see the standards of pre-primary education, syllabus of education & the pedagogical tools used in KG.
- To assess the challenges faced in KG's education of Nefasilk Lafto Sub City Education Office.
- To identify the major opportunities for future development of the pre-primary education.

1.3.3. Significance of the study

The study is important to provide inputs to the policy makers for further and progressive improvement to be done in the area. Secondly, the result of the study may initiate and encourage social workers who give voluntary service to reinforce their support to the sub sector. Thirdly, the findings of the study may help to give possible recommendation to overcome the problems faced in kindergarten. Fourthly, other researcher may be used as a reference document and to make further study in the area.

1.3.4. Delimitation of the study

The study was delimited to the practices and challenges of kindergarten in Addis Ababa specifically the KGs which are found in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City. Due to financial and time constraint and to make the study more manageable the researcher was also limited to thirty nine kindergartens in the sub city

Moreover the study was also focused on practice of kindergarten's administrative characteristics; the standard of preprimary education, the syllabus of preprimary education, the pedagogical tools, and opportunities in preprimary education are the major themes that were investigated.

1.3.5. Limitation of the study

Because of financial and time constraints the study was not consider all kindergartens as participants; hence the study was focused on Addis Ababa; Specifically, Nifasilk lafto sub city. Moreover there were no sufficient reference books and researches works in preprimary education. While this study is focused only on Addis Ababa a further study can be done by incorporating all regional States.

1.4. Organization of the study

The study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter is the introductory part which consists of background of the study, a statement of the problem, objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the delimitation of the study and organization of the study. The second chapter consists of review of related literatures that covers theories and different factors of preschool, some practice and the overview of Ethiopian pre-primary school education.

The third chapter elaborates the method of the study which includes research method, sampling technique, data collection instrument and method of data analysis used in conducting the study. Under the fourth chapter, findings from the survey results are discussed. The final chapter of the study incorporates summery, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

The chapter of this study deals with review of related literature. It incorporates the per-primary school education theories, the preprimary education environment which includes physical environment, learning environment, teaching- learning materials and methodology, the principles of the montessori approach of education and the role of teachers, the curriculum, health and nutrition in preprimary education. Additionally the chapter includes about collaborative partnership with parents and communities, the assessment, administrative aspect and the practices of preprimary education. An overview of preprimary school education of Ethiopia and operational definitions of the terms are also presented in the chapter.

2.1. Pre Primary School Education Theories

Preschool is an important phase where the children prepared for primary school and helped to develop their senses and learning. Pre-schools education includes the process where the educational environments are set based on the needs of the children's ages in terms of building, tools and equipment, location, teacher, education system and education programs.

According the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) leveling strategy early childhood education is leveled at 0. This stage is designed with a holistic approach to support children's early cognitive, physical, social and emotional development and introduce young children to organized instruction outside of the family context. Early childhood education program has an aim to develop socio-emotional skills necessary for participation in school and society and also develop some of the skills needed for academic readiness and prepare children for entry into primary education.

This stage is not necessarily highly structured but is designed to provide an organized and purposeful set of learning activities in a safe physical environment. This allows children to learn through interaction with other children under the guidance of staff/educators, typically through creative and play-based activities. The program may refer in many ways, for example early childhood education and development, Kindergarten, play school, reception, pre-primary, pre-school (ISCED, 2011).

Kindergarten's children learn by experiencing the world around them. They explore, examine, and try to figure out what everything means. Children cannot yet do things perfectly, but every day, they learn something new. It doesn't happen all at once, yet as they progress, they get closer and closer to speaking clearly, recognizing letters and sounds, understanding and creating stories, counting real things, adding and subtracting, and dividing their blocks evenly among their friends. Understanding how children learn is Critical to creating an environment that will encourage growth and support success. And it should be a priority for all adults who are charged with encouraging children to develop and grow- whether family members or educators.

Children learn through different mechanisms: They talk with friends and commenting on what they are doing, want to do and naming things surround them, They can Explore their environment and materials by sliding, running, jumping or building houses with blocks, Practicing in new skills that seen from older children. They can also rehearsing what they see around them through playing house or pretending to go to the doctor, store, or bank. Children approximate the standard way of doing things. They learn to do things one small step at a time. Children make Meaning from their experience of day to day activities. Children try to understand what they see and hear.

Even though children have their ability, adults should support them to expand their understanding by telling stories, reading books, and explaining what is going on wherever they go.

Children should have opportunities each day to enjoy physical activities indoors and outside. A consistent, flexible schedule offers plenty of time for learning and making choices. It also creates a minimal number of transitions, and limits time in whole groups or seat work.

Learning should take place throughout the day in large and small groups and in one to one interactions between the child and the teacher. This helps teachers understand the emerging skills of each child and to plan experiences that accommodate each child's own style of teach (E. Davy, 2007).

Montessori principles pay great attention to the respect shown for the child. As every child is single, the education has to be individualized for each child. Children's lives should be kept apart from adults' and should be dealt differently. Individual has to be educated by himself and not by someone else. Adults use their minds to learn; and children use their senses to absorb and learn friendly manner.

During this absorbent mind process, there are unconscious and conscious steps. Unconscious absorbent mind is usually between the ages 2-5 and it is enabled through tasting, smelling and touching. Between the ages 3-6, the child separates his affectionate observations from the environment and develops conscious absorbent mind senses. The child learns differentiating and matching (Morrison, 1988).

2.2. Pre primary education environment

2.2.1. Physical Environment

The Physical environment of pre-primary school needs to be safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences for promoting children's learning and development. Appropriate designing and locating the premises for the operation of a service is necessary.

A well-designed and richly decorated learning environment not only creates a relaxed and pleasurable atmosphere, but also promotes effective learning for children.

Teachers should pay attention to properly setting up the classroom with the help of a comprehensive and detailed plan of how the classroom can best be arranged. These arrangements aim at providing an environment with adequate space for free movement and easy access to toys and learning materials, and serve the purpose of stimulating children to learn.

The kindergarten classroom should be organized into interest areas or centers filled with a variety of materials and equipment including blocks, dramatic play supplies, science activities, books, art supplies and more.

Children must have time to experiment with measuring, counting, pouring, and making predictions using sand and water areas. Paper, scissors, markers, puzzles, and other hands-on materials that foster children's thinking and problem solving skills should be readily available. Books, printed words and samples of children's writing should be in every area of the room (NAEYC, 1997).

2.2.2. Learning Environment

It is a learning center where children to play, experiment and create their pace. This environment helps children to develop problem solving skills by trying different ways of doing things. They expand and refine their language as they talk with and listen to other children. Learning environment is also a place where children learn about their peers as they try out different roles and adjust to work together.

Learning environment is a center where Children interact through emotional and social aspects. This environment helps children to engage intellectually and socially build positive relationships with others and also develop friendship & regulate their behavior.

Learning environment enhance children's willingness to take risk and make decision confidently. This encourages children to create a suitable, Healthy and

respected environment and also to build appropriate social behavior & correct use of language and to facilitate Positive interaction between children and teachers. When the learning environment is convenient to children they can talk through conflicts and express their feeling. They can use the guidance to foster children's self regulation appropriate social interaction & social competence (HKSAR, 2006).

2.2.3. Teaching Learning Materials

Montessori defends the idea that children should be enabled to learn on their own in a set environment where they choose their own materials. The learning environment is set by the teacher in organizing the materials from simple to complex. Teachers should be good observers and only intervene when the child requires guidance.

Children to understand the order, harmony and beauty of the nature and they should be please with it. The rules of the nature form the basis of science and art fields. That is why; learning the rules of the nature is the foundation of science (Montessori, 1966).

In this approach, it is crucial that the child makes mistakes by searching and trying and then, realized his own mistake and corrects it himself. If the children are not able to realize their mistake, this shows that they are not developed enough. When the time comes, the child realized their mistake and corrects it (Temel, 1994).

Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources have to be suitable for the purpose. Premises, furniture and equipment need to be safe, clean and well maintained.

To make environment is complete, encourages competence, independent exploration and learning through play. Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organized to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments. Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number and organized in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program.

Therefore, teaching and learning materials, should be convenience to children's in variance aspects such as: they have to be relevance to preschool's curriculum policy and program based on the standards and recreational needs of children, Materials encourage understanding of children, hence they have important contributions to multi cultural societies of diverse cultural, linguistic groups and people with disabilities and minority groups and help to create respectful relations with others.

Materials motivate children and educators to examine their own attitudes and behavior to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges in society and they have to be appropriate to children's age, emotional, intellectual, social and cultural development.

Hence children have opportunities to find, use, evaluate and present information to develop the critical capacities and make discerning choices, hence, they are prepared for exercising their freedom of access, with discrimination, as informed and skilled adults .The material's representativeness has to be range in views of all issues (State of South Australia, 2004).

Children have to chose and use their materials properly. They practiced different tasks with the materials. At the end of time, the child puts the materials back into their places. This behavior becomes habitual after repeating it constantly. Some materials are worked with on a special carpet. It is the child's responsibility to carry these materials to the carpet and back to their shelves after the activity. The child is guided towards that behavior. The child actively learns as he uses these materials. Prepared information is not permanent and efficient in a child's mind.

Materials are meaningful for the child in different aspect: the challenge or the mistake the child experience through exploring should be a part of the material, the shape and usage of the materials should be ordered from simple to complex, Materials should prepare the child for the next learning; Materials provide not the concrete shape of an idea but its abstract form and they are prepared for the child's individual learning (Morrison, 1988).

According (Calvert, 1986) the materials in the classroom have to be natural and reliable. Hence children will complete the task with the materials they have chosen; without interference of adult; after completion of tasks the materials will be put back into their places according to class order. This will develop responsibility and personal discipline.

2.2.4. Teaching and Learning Methodology

Learning and teaching strategies in early childhood education has to be Child-centre. Hence children's active participation is pivotal to the effectiveness of learning. In this strategy teachers have no dominant role in the learning activities, but engage in various roles such as that of facilitator, information provider, learning assessor, etc.

No matter which learning and teaching strategy is adopted, play is an indispensable and important tool for facilitating children's learning. It helps children know their surroundings and experience the joy of co-operating and sharing with others. Through play, children can develop their physical, intellectual, social, creative and thinking abilities.

Play is also considered to be the best activity for promoting children's physical and mental development. Suitable play not only enables children to express their emotions and gain pleasurable experience, but also promotes their learning and growth. Therefore, play and children's development are interrelated. Teachers have to make good use of play as a major element for constructing the curriculum (HKSAR, 2006).

Principles of the Montessori Approach

There are three main factors in Montessori education: These are: environment, child and teacher (Malloy, 1989). Montessori Education principles show that the movement and cognition are closely related and increases thinking and learning. Learning and well-being are improved when people have a sense of control over

their lives. People learn better when they are interested in what they are learning. Tying extrinsic rewards to an activity, like money for reading or high grades for tests, negatively impacts motivation to engage in that activity when the reward is withdrawn. Collaborative arrangements can be very conducive to learning when learning situated in meaningful contexts is often deeper and richer than learning in abstract contexts. Particular forms of adult interaction are associated with more optimal child outcomes. Order in the environment is beneficial to children (Wilbrandt, 2011).

Montessori Approach mainly serves motor education, affective education and language education, Literacy and Calculation.

Motor Education: This education starts with daily practical skills like dressing, bathing, carrying stuff, sweeping outside, taking care of plants or pets. Montessori states that flawless movements should be repeatedly observed; that the child should be taught what to do not verbally but only by demonstration. Gymnastics and rhythmic exercises are important as well as physical coordination and balance development in motor education. Montessori believes that activities required for motor education provide self-discipline, attention and good working habits. It emphasizes that these are important to develop senses and movement skills of the child for future academic learning.

Affective Education: Montessori prepared the learning toy materials for the development of senses. Doing coordinated exercises with these materials enables the child to make comparisons between materials. This enables learning through questions the similarities-differences between materials in terms on unquantifiable concepts like; shapes, colors, opposites, softness; length. The child becomes the observer. This eventually enables the child to make comparisons, make judgments and finally make a decision.

Language Education: Montessori emphasizes that the child has to realize all kinds of sounds around him and question the meanings of the sounds and thus learn the relationship between the different sounds. It is stated that this prepared the child to produce the correct sounds in the language. It is crucial that the teacher speaks clearly. It requires teaching the most commonly used tools by children.

Literacy and Calculation: It states that after the age of 4, children start to work on developing motor and sensual skills and prepare for academic life. Activities appropriate for literacy should also be included in this process.

Arithmetic education should be prepared to help children learn about compare-contrast and numbers.

The Role of Teacher

According to Montessori approach the role of the teacher is changing and organizing the environment in convenient way to the children's need and their development. The materials should be ordered from simple to complex by the teacher as well. Montessori teacher is called guide/router. The teacher gives the child a chance to use his/her potential. (Linard, 1972)

The teacher has to set an example with the outlook, appearance and personality for the children; the teacher has to give a sense of respect. Teacher is required to be flexible, humanist, affectionate, patient and understanding (Temel, 1994).

Montessori teacher makes a lot of time for family and social life. Teacher organized the environment in a way that the children will be free to move, communicate and share with their friends.

Teachers are the implementers of the curriculum. As the curriculum implementers, teachers should also consider play, learning, and care as a whole, as these are inter-related in the holistic development of children.

Moreover in the changing social situations, teachers should be knowledgeable and have ability in mastering new concepts and skills, in order to satisfy the

needs of children who are highly inquisitive, creative and imaginative. When guiding children to become life-long learners, teachers must set themselves as good models by ever improving and enriching themselves in the pursuit of knowledge. They must also have the awareness, ability and attitude to support life-long learning.

Teachers not only transmit knowledge, but also help children construct knowledge

2.2.5. Curriculum in pre-primary education

“Curriculum is defined as all planned and unplanned interactions, experience, transitions and routines that occur within an environment designed to foster children’s holistic development”(MOE; 2012:11 Singapore)

Curriculum comprises the update framework, an educator’s guide, and teaching and learning resource to support the teachers in nurturing and developing children’s knowledge, skills and disposition.

NAEYC defines curriculum as “...the goals for the knowledge and skills to be acquired by children and the plans for learning experiences through which such knowledge and skills will be achieved” (NAEYC, 2003).

A high quality early education program recognizes and understands how children’s goals for learning are framed within the context of learning standards and aligns planning of activities and design of environment to stimulate children’s learning across content areas (social-emotional, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, physical development and health and fine arts). In high quality programs, instructors place as much emphasis on the process of learning as they do on the content and capitalize on children’s natural curiosity to promote language, thinking and problem-solving. Effective early education programs provide a wide variety of planned experiences within an intentionally designed environment that enable children to learn through interaction, exploration, manipulation and self-discovery. Research clearly

demonstrates that children learn more in programs where there is a well planned and implemented curriculum (Landry 2007).

Therefore, it is essential for every early childhood setting – school, center, and family child-care faith-based programs – to have a high quality curriculum which incorporates thoughtful planning and design

2.2.6. Health and Nutrition

A child's overall wellness, including adequate nutrition, social emotional well-being, and physical activity are all parts of a comprehensive early education program and directly affect social, emotional and cognitive development. Some activities that enhance children's health include addressing individual health issues, modeling healthy food choices and eating patterns, promoting physical activity and increasing the families' knowledge of and children's access to preventive health care. The goal of the early education program is to help staff, children, and families understand how nutrition, physical activity and health impact a child's readiness to learn. Ideally, healthy habits are established in early childhood and carried through later in life.

As scholars show that health and nutrition have a major effect on children's chances of enrolling in school. The main reason of this is when children are affected by ill-health; the disease may leads to serious physical or mental disabilities. Such conditions typically affect children's educational opportunities to a greater extent in low-income countries than in high-income countries (DFID, 2001).

2.2.7. Collaborative partnerships with parents and communities

According to children's right convention (CRC) both parents have the main responsibility to bring up their child and should always consider what is best for children, while the Government is expected to help parents care for their children properly. Beside to this Schools should help children develop their skills and

personalities fully, teach them about their own and other people's rights, and prepare them for adult life. Personal and social development programs in schools as well as drama, music and art help raise awareness of the message to respect other cultures and to respect each other. (Art.18 &29)

Children's learning and development are mainly influenced by family, school and society. Under the major foundation of understanding and respecting children, appropriate co-ordination among the three parties will enable children to develop their potential and lead them to a healthy life. By developing good learning habits and interest in learning, children will be well prepared for lifelong learning.

Pre-primary schools must observe the social environment in order to help children develop their potential and prepare for future learning. Children are the leaders of tomorrow. The challenge ahead for early childhood education is how to proactively meet the demand for talent in our future society. In a co-operative and harmonious environment, society, family and school can work together to build a bright future for children

Collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieve quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that focus on active communication, consultation and collaboration also contribute to children's learning and wellbeing.

Parents and teachers are jointly responsible for ensuring that children are successful in school, thus making communication between the two is essential.

Information should be exchanged with families on a regular basis. It has to be about the service and documentation of their children's learning, development and participation in the program.

In pre- primary school education Parents' co-operation and support are very important for institutional improvements and their children development. Pre-primary institutions encourage parents to work closely with them in order to

support the healthy and happy development of children at this critical stage of their growth.

The service collaborates with other organizations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing. Links with relevant community and support agencies are established and maintained. Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing relevant information and clarifying responsibilities.

Local culture can be a source of curricular topics in offering options and solutions for implementation and extension of ECD support. It is also a tool for information sharing and behavioral change.

Moreover, incorporating local culture into an ECD program can also provide cross-cultural exposure from the earliest years. Nurturing children is a fundamentally local challenge in every community. To tackle this challenge policy makers and program implementers has to use the internal source and locally developed programs and pass policy that complement local child nurturing efforts.

Collaborative exploration of the total environment of the child builds in local situation analysis and leads into group problem-solving, skill building and the formulation of partnerships to meet needs. Community participation helps to formulate a dual agenda which brings traditional cultural and religious values together with secular, modern learning and theories of child development to strengthen children's readiness for primary school.

In establishing Community participation agreement, acceptance of an ECD intervention and commitment are important to support as a contingency and as partnership in constructing the program activities. Community participation is also incorporate local knowledge as a resource in curriculum development. Therefore, the use of community resources to formulate program content applies

to the field of continue Community-based activities can provide a sustainable foundation (Barnett, S. (1997).

Pre-primary institutions may choose the appropriate approaches according to their needs in communicating with parents. Effective communication is the foundation for all types of co-operation. The most important factor in establishing effective communication is honesty. If the parents feel that their views are being understood, accepted and considered seriously, a trusting relationship will be built. Parents have different expectations of their children, varied beliefs about early childhood education, and different expectations towards the institutions. Parents' working hours and educational background will directly affect their involvement in the activities of the institutions. In order to introduce parental involvement for the development of home-school collaboration, it is advisable for pre-primary institutions to engage parents by planning various types of activities to meet their needs.

The relationship between parents and children is life-long and intimate. However, the relationship between teachers and children is a temporary one, and surely not as intimate as the former. As pre-primary education professionals, teachers should understand children's developmental needs and learn through daily contact and observation. They should then formulate reasonable requirements and expectations towards the children. With respect to the guidance given to children, teachers should have sufficient knowledge of parents' preferences and expectations. They should also explain patiently to parents the institution's educational policy and the children's needs, with a view to enhancing parents' understanding and recognition of the institution's mission and approach. It is important for parents and pre-primary institutions to communicate adequately, so as to eliminate any conflicting views on early childhood education and create ahead for a harmonious and co-operative relationship

Every pre-primary institution has its own educational mission, environmental resources, and level of teacher training and development. When planning home-school co-operation activities, pre-primary institutions should consider not only

the needs of children and parents, but also their own conditions, and should make good use of community resources to improve on the less satisfactory areas. For example, they may invite professionals, such as preprimary education specialists, social workers and psychologists, to conduct parental education seminars; encourage and render support to teachers to take relevant training courses offered by professional organizations or the community; and introduce relevant information on community resources to parents to arouse their interest in joining a related project of their own choice and ultimately benefit to the institutions through the collaborative use of resources.

2.2.8. Assessment In pre-primary Education

Assessment is the process of collecting and documenting information on individual student learning. The purpose of assessment is to inform teaching and improve learning. Hence, assessment of learning and assessment for learning are integral parts of the teaching and learning process in the kindergarten classroom. Learning is active in the kindergarten classroom. Therefore, assessing the process of learning is critical and it should occur while the learning is happening rather than assessing the final product. Ongoing assessment informs the approach needed to design and deliver developmentally appropriate instructional activities. Assessment should be frequent, well planned, and well organized so that teachers are able to assist each child in progressing towards meeting the kindergarten curriculum outcomes.

In assessing kindergarten children the considered basic principles are using consistently with the purpose for which the instrument was designed, apply for appropriate age, Collect information on a range of indicators of a child's development, Being naturalistic or authentic is important, Be culturally and linguistically sensitive, Accommodate children with disabilities, Collect information from more than one source, Provide information that schools can be

confident about, Have a data collection process that is realistic for schools and school systems.

Contrarily Kindergarten assessments should not be used to make high-stakes decisions. To do so it is advisable to use the Scores on standardized assessments that should be complemented with information from instructional assessments, teacher observations, parent input, and any other data that is relevant when making decisions about whether an individual child should be retained in kindergarten. Pencil-and-paper standardized tests are not appropriate for children in kindergarten; Assessment should not be used for a purpose other than for what they were designed (Scott and Niemeier, 2001).

2.2.9. Pre- School Education Administration

The administering style of every institution determines the current situation and future end of the organization. Effective administration style in preschool education contributes to sustained quality relationships and environments practices that facilitate children's learning and development. To administer preschool education ethically, well designed policies frame work needs to be formulated and their implementation have to be regularly evaluated in partnership with educators, coordinators, staff and families.

Since good administrative systems is a vital to effective provision of a quality preschool education. To implement such system education leaders should focus on the following issues: Preparing effective planning and evaluation process, developing statement of principles to guide all aspects of the preschools' operations, making committed personnel through appropriate communication channels and reasonable training, which initiate the ongoing improvement.

Therefore, the main duties of Kindergarten education administrator are: promoting positive organizational culture and builds a professional learning community, developing suitably qualified and experienced educator or coordinator and establishing clear goal and expectations of curriculum for

teaching and learning process, which may help for the continuity of educators and coordinators at the school. Moreover records and information that are available from preschool education has to be stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality. It is also maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.

Adults working with children and those engaged in management of the preschool education premises are fit and proper. Reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the fitness and politeness of educators, coordinators, staff and any frequent visitors while children are in care. Challenges and complaints have to be addressed and managed effectively. All challenges and complaints are, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner. Administering standard should be notified about complaints which allege a breach of legislation or a serious incident. (Australian Governments, 2009)

2.3. Some Interesting Practices of Preschool education

Now days the developed countries are worry about the improvement of their education system quality and effectiveness. According to European commission the Europe's future will be based on Smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. They believe that, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is the essential foundation for successful lifelong learning, social integration, personal development and later employability. Supplementing the central role of the family, ECEC has a profound and long lasting impact which measures taken at a later stage cannot achieve. Children's earliest experiences form the basis for all subsequent learning. If solid foundations are laid in the early years, later learning is more effective and is more likely to continue life-long, lessening the risk of early school leaving, increasing the equity of educational outcomes and reducing the costs for society in terms of lost talent and of public spending on social, health and even justice systems.

'Youth on the Move', is EU's main strategic plan for Europe 2020 to highlights the role of creativity and innovation for competitiveness and protection of your standards of living in the longer term. It underlines that they have to offer *all* our

young people the chance to develop their talents to the fullest possible extent. ECEC lay a ground to give all young people a good start in the world of tomorrow and to break the cycle which transmits disadvantage from one generation to another.

The benefits of high-quality ECEC are wide-ranging: social, economic and educational. It has crucial role to play in laying the foundations for improved competences of future citizens, and enabling them to meet the medium- and long-term challenge to create a more skilled workforce capable of contributing and adjusting to technological change. Quality ECEC enables parents better to reconcile family and work responsibilities, so boosting employability. ECEC supports children, not only in their future education but also in their integration into society, generating well-being, and contributing to their employability when they become adults and also enabling and empowering all children to realize their potential(European Commission, 2011).

According Alberta Education Kindergarten program is implemented by the guiding principles. The significant impact of social and cultural circumstances has to be recognized, children's early experience plays an important role in their development and long-term impact on learning outcomes hence Young learners need rich and diverse opportunities to explore their environment; use language; engage with peers and interact with responsive adults at home, school and in their communities. Close partnership between schools, families and communities can strengthen the connections between children's learning and experiences to enhance Children interact with various contexts and make them more meaningful. Children are more likely to be successful in negotiating transitions among the diverse environments in which they live if they are intellectually engaged and challenged, while feeling socially comfortable and safe. Kindergarten program provides opportunities for children to develop language and accomplish new leanings through social interaction and cooperation with others as they are co-constructors of knowledge and partners in learning. Children are unique and

active contributors to their learning. They bring their unique prior learning experiences and their existing understandings, capabilities, attitudes and dispositions to the learning environment. Purposeful play is an important mode of learning for children. Children at play are highly motivated and capable of intense concentration.

The Kindergarten program fosters creative thinking, stimulates the imagination, and encourages children to express their ideas in a variety of ways. In constructing and representing knowledge, language is central to identity and a defining feature of cultures. Language is the basis of communication and one of the symbolic tools used to create meaning. Language is dynamic, with meanings and structures that are constantly negotiated and modified through human interaction.

Kindergarten program provides a secure environment that encourages risk-taking and that leads children to value themselves as capable, competent learners and active citizens. Children should participate in democratic dialogue and decision making about their learning and the classroom environment. They should be heard and listen to others, critically assess their words and actions, and have the opportunity to participate fully in class and school activities.

In Kindergarten classroom, assessment is an ongoing part of each child's daily learning. Opportunities are created for children to demonstrate their understandings in a variety of ways. Assessment is used to provide feedback to the child and parents and to plan the learning environment. If the teacher shares the assessment criteria with the children, they will be more likely to be successful and complete the task.

Children may require specialized programming and supports to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for later learning.

Some children are identified with special education needs and receive specialized programming and supports prior to the Kindergarten year. The more structured learning environment of Kindergarten places increased demands on children's language, social, motor and attention skills and provides further opportunity to

identify children who are experiencing difficulties with learning. Kindergarten program plays a vital role in the coordination of community services by providing information to parents about availability of community services to be assisted in meeting the needs of their children.

Coordination of services supports the physical, emotional, social and learning needs of children. Community services may include health, social and family support agencies; recreational and cultural associations; and a wide variety of other groups that work with children in the community. The Kindergartens program provides services to reach the learner expectations though concentrating on the main learning themes. These themes are early literacy, early numeracy, citizenship and identity, environment and community awareness, personal and social responsibility, physical skills and well-being and creative expression (E. Geiser, M. Horwitz & Gerstein, 2013).

On the other hand the ministry of education of Singapore has an experience of implementing the iTeach Principles in their curriculum of pre-primary education to guide teachers in planning, designing and implementation of meaningful and relevant learning for children.

The iTeach Principles are elaborated as an integrated approach to learning, Teachers as facilitators of learning, engaging children in learning through purposeful play, authentic learning through quality interactions, children as constructors of knowledge and holistic development

Sound principles can lead to a good teaching practice. It influences children's development and learning, based on belief that children are curious, active and competent learner. Therefore they learn by constructing their own knowledge.

Teachers need to plan & provide opportunities for children to acquire the necessary knowledge skill and disposition in the way of appropriate approach of facilitating holistic development.

Learning environment has to be effectively organized and purposefully constructed to provide attractive stimulating and challenging experiences to promote children's holistic development.

In facilitating learning-teaching, play has a vital role in stimulating children's thinking and extending their learning via providing opportunities for purposeful play and authentic learning through quality interactions.

On the other hand observing and assessing children's learning is an integral part of teaching and learning process. This includes observing, documenting and interpreting information to find out what children know and understand. What they can do in order to plan and construct their learning.

An important determinant of quality pre-school education is the quality of professionalism of teachers since they have great impact on how children learn. Teachers must also engage in reflective practice and continual professional learning. This equip with the knowledge and skills to change children's learning and development. Hence teachers can reflect by analyzing events and evidence from multiple sources, such as their observations, research articles, families and other professionals.

Teachers plan and provide learning experience to nurture the logistic development of children's by collaborating with families and the community. They can tie together the strength proficiency of families to enrich the teaching learning in and beyond the classroom.

When families involved in the pre-school learning process strong ties and commitment can be created. In working by collaboration with teachers and families could have a better understanding of children's need and enhance their healthy and development. Community connection with the pre-school can also provide meaningful and engaged learning that draws on the children's experience to enhance educational out comes

The ministry of Singapore design quality kindergartens' curriculum for the holistic development of children in pre-school education. To achieve this holistic

development of children the identified learning areas are: Aesthetics and Creative Expression, Discovery of the World, Language and Literacy, Motor Skills Development, Numeracy and Social and Emotional Development (MOE Singapore, 2012).

2.4. An Overview of pre primary school education in Ethiopia

Pre-primary school education in Ethiopia demanded a comprehensive approach to Early Childhood Care and Education to ensure all children reach their full potential. Strategies build on existing policies, structures and resources to form the foundation for ECCE. This calls for efforts and smooth cooperation among sector ministries. Government policy frame work offer short-term to long-term roadmap to all stakeholders to joint and well-coordinated action. With this framework of Ethiopia expects to give all the country's children the best start and early stimulation in life; enhance the quality, accessibility and equitable distribution of services for children through more efficient partnerships and capacity-building programmes. These increase access to pre- primary schools or alternative forms of early stimulation.

Ethiopian Early Childhood Care and Education Policy are guided by the following principles: These are protecting and reinforcing beneficial Ethiopian cultural values, and ensuring the holistic needs of children, providing equitable access to quality early childhood care and education for all, Inclusive approach is followed to address vulnerable and marginalized children, particularly children with special needs. Inter-sectoral and integrated coordination are created among relevant ministries and organizations working on child care, rights, health, education and development. Community-based approach is used to be cost-effective and sustainable. Moreover ECCE is serving the needs of all groups of children from prenatal to seven years.

Family is the first responsible body for supporting the holistic development of their children. Hence they need to be empowered and supported to ensure they are effective in their roles. The policy documents of Ethiopia about health, family,

education and social welfare articulate different statements that support the protection, care, health and optimal development of the child.

These statements interrelate with the following three issues, namely :(i) the objective to promote the child's holistic development, (ii) a recognition of the role and need for empowerment of the family in the harmonious development of the child; and (iii) an expressed commitment to address the needs of children requiring special protection.

The National Education and Training Policy developed in 1994 states that Kindergarten will focus on all round development of the child in preparation for formal schooling. Generally these policies recognize the importance of early life experience. They form a solid umbrella and legitimisation for ECCE. The overall strategic objectives of setting the policy framework are to promote early stimulation and the best start in life for all children from parental to seven years. The main purposes are: to enhance the quality, accessibility and equitable distribution of services for children through more efficient partnerships and capacity building programmes. Responsibilities of Ministry of Education are: curriculum development, provision of training services for preschool teacher training, development of play and teaching materials as well as supervise and quality assurance.

Children come to class with different incidence, hopes, feeling, views, and skills. Children develop their conceptual understanding through continuous interaction with environment. Understanding these essential behaviors of children, nurturing and developing is important. The children of pre-primary school are in vital period for ensuring proper physiological growth and for significant health and nutrition interventions. They learn and acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes quickly and with minimal effort.

Pre- primary education program will accommodate for the acquisition of basic skills (pre-reading, pre-writing, counting and arithmetic) in preparation for the

child's formal schooling. Social-emotional competence, including self-regulation, intrinsic learning motivation and the ability to cooperate with other students are some of the benefits that children may gain from attending pre- primary school. Pre-primary school can also be a place where children learn basic life skills such as hand-washing and good eating habits.

The program will be child-centered and promote the child's holistic development. It will include culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate and inclusive indoor and outdoor materials and activities to that effect. Its design should follow a play-based approach. Play is used as the main means of enhancing the child's learning experiences. The mother tongue or the language spoken in the schooling area will be used as medium of teacher/caregiver-child interaction, as it is the best instrument towards realizing the full potential of the learner.

Pre- primary schools will continue to promote high quality mother/ caregiver-child interaction. Parents will learn the importance of play and getting their children ready to go to school at the right age. The social and the physical environment in the kindergartens will be safe and secure as well as receptive and child-friendly. Joint involvement of teachers/caregivers and parents will be maintained in order to discuss the child's progress and the type of support he/she needs in the family.

Besides the pre- primary school teacher is the first responsible person for the pre-school program while, the role of the health worker is providing awareness-raising and health training to pre- primary school children. Full immunization programs, growth monitoring and preventive health care interventions will be included in the pre- primary schools' program. Therefore, pre-primary school has to encourage children to search and investigate their environment for the following reasons: adapting with new findings and challenges, proper communication with elders, asking their need peacefully and understanding the difference and uniqueness.

To accomplish this basic grounds of Pre-primary school education the following major objective is targeted: Firstly to enable children accomplish different activities and show how to care their health and use their physical and emotional feelings, secondly to develop children's conceptual understanding about environmental continuous interaction, and how to learn from day to day activities .These help them to overcome challenges and make their own solution, thirdly to develop children's skill and enabling them to receive appropriate information, thinking, evaluating and expressing themselves properly and be ready to believe in difference and uniqueness, fourthly to enabling children to create good relation with others ,respect values of community and understand leanings.

For the attainment of the targeted major objectives creating a suitable environment for children's playing is a determinant factor. Even though the approach is different according to the conditions, children's interest and ability were the main theme. To implement pre primary school education curriculum of Ethiopia are focusing on the following major areas: first giving appropriate care for reasonable physical strength, second creating acceptable communication with others, third using appropriate language, fourth using arithmetic skills and concepts in day to day activities and examining and testing the activities created by their environmental interaction(MOE, 2010)

Table 1. Number of Kindergartens, Children enrolment status and number of teachers in preprimary schools in Ethiopia

Years	No. of KGS	No of Children enrolled	No of Teachers
2008/09	2893	292641	13763
2009/10	3318	341413	9643
2010/11	3418	382741	13963
2011/12	3580	1622762	12480
2012/13	3688	2013214	12639
AAGR	6.3%	61.9%	(-4.1%)

Source: Education Statistics Annual Abstract (2005 E.C.)

Table .1 shows the numbers of Kindergartens and the number of children enrollments were grown for the past five years by an average of 6.3% and 61.9% respectively. Even though, both number of kindergartens and number of children enrollments are increasing in the past five years the later one is increasing in an increasing rate that implies parents have positive attitude to send their children to pre-primary education. On the other hand the numbers of teachers were reversely grown by (-4.1%). This may creates great challenges to pre-primary education.

Expected Outcome of Pre-primary Education

After completing their preprimary education Children are expected to have the following behavior: Children have to be developed physically and mentally enable to appreciate beauty and express their feeling freely, they have to be disciplined and self confident who love creativity and research work. At this stage children know how to write different alphabets and numbers, listen others idea and respond properly and they are also be conscious of social life and ready for formal education (MOE, 2010).

2.5. Operational Definitions

Environment: It is constitutes of an immediate surroundings that include physical, human and natural elements.

Physical environment: It includes the entire school environment like Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources that have to be used suitably for the purpose teaching-learning process and developing children.

Teaching Learning methodology: is a mechanism used in learning and teaching strategies to implement childhood education through teacher-child interaction.

Community: A group of people with commonalities that may include culture, language, values and beliefs, interests, practices and ways of life, history, and/or geographically defined shared space.

Parents: They are stakeholders as well as the key partners of pre-primary schools which have the most intimate contact with their children.

Working with Parents and Communities: It is a communication way or information sharing system to strength the relationship among pre-primary school, parents and communities as a whole to solve the children's problem in their developmental process and make them a good citizen of future.

Assessment: It is the way how teachers get Information with helpful hints to improve the learning and teaching arrangements. It is a significant component of the curriculum and an indispensable constituent of the learning and teaching process.

Kindergarten is an institute where children of age 3-7 to develop and learn. Kindertartens & pre-primary schools are interchangeably used in this study. It is a place where children learn basic life skills such as hand-washing and good eating habits.

Learning Environment: It is a place for children to learn, run and play games together with other children in a friendly manner.

Outdoor equipment: It is equipment which is made for the purpose of children play to create an ample opportunity and appropriate development.

Curriculum: It is an approved guide for incorporating developmentally appropriate content, concepts and activities in the pre-school program.

Scheduling and structure of pre-school activities: It is a program designed to accomplish the school activities in certain time.

Management of pre-schools: It is an administrative body which leads the school activities to determine the current situation and future end of the school.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the research methodology of the study which includes research design, data source, sample and sampling techniques, data gathering instruments and method of data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

The main purpose of this study was to assess the practice and challenges of the pre- primary education in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa. To investigate the practices and challenges faced in pre-primary education the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative research method in this survey research design.

3.2. Data Sources

Primary and Secondary data were used in conducting this study. The primary data was collected from kindergartens' principals and teachers in Nefasil lafto sub city of Addis Ababa through a questionnaire.

Secondary data were collected from the report, related books, journals, research papers and web-site.

3.3. Sampling and Sampling Technique

The total populations of this study were one hundred eighty six kindergartens found in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa. Because of financial and time constraints the study did not consider all the kindergartens as target for data collection. The researcher used a sample to undertake the research. In order investigate the practice and challenges of kindergartens in Nefasilk Lafto sub city of Addis Ababa,20% of the population was taken as a sample as suggested by Gay & Diehl, (1992) for descriptive survey of this nature.

Therefore, thirty nine kindergartens (20.97%) were selected as a sample of the study. In these selected sample kindergartens, altogether the total number of principals, teachers and assistance teachers was 479. Since Krejcie & Morgan, (1970) table of sample determination for 480 population 214 sample sizes is assumed to be enough. Accordingly from this total number of population, the questionnaires were distributed to 250(52.2%) sample respondents (197teachersand 53 principals).

This research use both probability and non probability sampling technique to select the participants. Specifically, area cluster sampling technique was found appropriate to this study.

3.4. Data Gathering Instruments

In this study, the data gathering instruments used was both close-ended and open-ended questionnaire, observation and interview.

The questionnaire was designed on the basis of policy guidelines of pre-primary education. It focused on the main factors which have direct implication on pre-primary education operations. Major theme included are environment and physical, learning environment, outdoor play equipment, curriculum, scheduling and structure aspect, teachers' and assistance teachers' perspective, teaching and learning methodology, health and nutrition, relationship with patents and communities, assessment and management aspects of kindergartens.

The questionnaire; used to obtain the data from kindergartens in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa was organized in three parts. The first part incorporates personal information of the respondents which include sex, age, marital status, educational level, and the ownership of kindergarten, job position and working experience. The second part of the questionnaire was employed with typical form of fixed response rating by using linker scale that requires the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with set of statements dealing

with the aforementioned issues. The items in the questionnaire were designed to be rated on a five point liker scale type (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree). Respondents were asked to make tick (√) mark on the space to show their level of agreement with each statement. The third part of questionnaire was formulated as an open ended form so as to capture respondents' views and opinion on the practice and the challenges faced in pre-primary education and their suggestions.

Interview is conducted with Addis Ababa education bureau and Sub City education office in parts to gather information about strategic policy issue. Observation was also conducted using checklist

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

The pilot survey was conducted by distributing questionnaires for two principals & six teachers of one selected kindergartens to identify, whether the questionnaire was easily understandable as well as if there any vague and confusing questions in the questionnaire. The pilot test was intended to check whether the questionnaire has the potential to enable get the required data as expected by the researcher. The result of the pilot study shows that the questionnaire is easily understandable and no confusing question except the minor corrections. By making the given corrections, final copies of the questionnaire were printed. To get the cooperation and easily administer the instruments, the researcher contacted the respondents of the study in person.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

After collection of data, qualitative data was organized using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19 Application program. Descriptive statistics were applied to analyze the demographic characteristics i.e. sex, age distribution, educational level, marital status, occupation, work experience of the participants and ownership of kindergartens.

To assess the practice and the challenges of pre-primary education, the ratings given by respondents were analyzed. Consequently the data were interpreted using the theoretical framework of the study to arrive at meaningful conclusions. The study specifically used mean value to investigate the major factors that have direct impact on kindergartens teaching learning process in practical situations of pre-primary schools in Nefasilk Lafto sub city of Addis Ababa.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the data presentation, analysis and interpretation of the study. It consists of respondent characteristics, analysis of the major factors that have direct impact on teaching learning practices and challenges of pre-primary education in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa. A total of 250 copies of the questionnaire were distributed. The respondents were returned 227 questionnaires. From returned questionnaires eleven were discarded due to incompleteness. The data from remaining 216 copies of questionnaire (86.4%) was employed in the data analysis.

4.1. Response Rate and Respondent Characteristics

Table 2. Respondents demographic information

Respondents' profile	Frequency	Percent
SEX		
Male	24	11.1
Female	192	89.9
Total	216	100.0
AGE		
Below 20 years	2	.9
21to 25 years	84	38.9
26 to30 years	75	34.7
31 & above	55	25.5
Total	216	100.0

Respondents' profile	Frequency	Percent
Educational Level		
Less than 12 grade	10	4.6
Certificate	106	49.1
Diploma	68	31.5
First degree	32	14.8
Total	216	100.0
Marital Status		
Married	84	38.9
Single	132	61.1
Total	216	100.0
Ownership of KG		
Government	35	16.2
Private	143	66.2
Faith based	38	17.8
Total	216	100.0
Position		
Principal	25	11.6
Owner& principal	21	9.7
Teacher	151	69.9
Asst. Teacher	19	8.8
Total	216	100.0
Experience		
Less than 2 years	16	7.4
2to 5 years	84	38.9
More than 5years	116	53.7
Total	216	100.0

Source: Survey data

The table reveals the demographic information of the respondents. The first demographic variable is sex of the respondents. Accordingly majority (89.9%) of the respondents were female, representing a large part of the sample size. This shows that the proportion is in line with the standard of pre primary education which shows that principals, teachers, assistance teachers and guardians are preferable to be female.

Regarding age of respondents the above table shows that 38.9%,34.7%, and 25.5% were in the age category of 21-25years,26-30years and 31years and above respectively. The remaining respondents (0.9%) were below the age of 20years.This implies that majority of the respondents (teachers and principals) were young and in their productive age. The third demographic variable is the level of education. As presented in the table most of the principals and teachers 106 (49.1 %), 68 (31.5%), 32 (14.8%) have certificate, diploma and first degree respectively, while only 10(4.6%) were below12 grade.

This means the educational level of the participants is above the minimum standard of MOE which states that the minimum standard of pre-school teacher's education level is 10 grades complete. Hence from perspectives of educational level of teachers, the pre-school education system has qualified teachers.

The other demographic variable is marital status of the respondent. Accordingly 132 (61.1%) are single and 84 (38.9%) are married. The other variable that the respondents are asked was the ownership of kindergartens. Of the total KGs there were 143(66.2%). Private owned, 38(17.8%) Faith base kindergarten and (35(16.2%) Government owned kindergartens. This shows, the research includes all kinds of kindergartens (KGS owned by government, faith based and private sector).

The position of the respondents as presented in the table were Teachers, Principals, Owner& principal , and Assistant teachers 151(69.9%), 25(11.6%), 21 (9.7%) 19 (8.8%)respectively. The respondents work experience shown in the table were more than 5 years116 (57.7%), ranges between 2 to 5 years 84(38.9%) and

the remaining 16(7.4%) experienced less than 2 years. This shows even if the teachers are young, yet they have good experience to deliver the required child nurturing and development. From the data of the respondents the researcher observes that the sample is diverse and representative.

Table 3.Region wise preprimary education and kindergartens enrolment, GER and CTR

Region	School Age Population Enrolment Rate in preprimary Education			Kindergarten Enrolment and GER, No. of Teachers and children teacher ratio			
	School age population.	Enrolment	GER	Enrolment	GER	No. of Teacher	CTR
Tigray	429387	278147	64.8	19117	4.5	436	44:1
Afar	123735	6915	5.6	2845	2.3	47	61:1
Amara	1604565	464283	28.9	40579	2.5	312	130:1
Oromia	3143818	472988	15.0	146531	4.7	3979	37:1
Somali	391050	6393	1.6	5059	1.3	-	-
Benshangul Gumz	74432	17294	23.2	3170	4.3	51	62:1
SNNP	1730340	561718	32.5	76274	4.4	2333	33:1
Gambella	32627	7680	23.5	2048	6.3	51	40:1
Harari	16482	11909	72.3	4419	26.8	57	78:1
Addis Ababa	139571	175922	126.0	170559	122.2	5292	32:1
Dera Dawa	28949	9965	34.4	8376	28.9	81	103:1
Total	7714956	2013214	26.1	478977	6.2	12639	38:1

Source: Report of MOE 2012/13 Education Statistics Annual Abstract

Approaches in Pre-primary Education

Pre-primary education of Ethiopia has been implemented in different approaches. The first approach was community-based kindergartens program which accommodate the acquisition of basic skills (pre-reading, pre-writing, counting and arithmetic) in preparation for the children's formal schooling. The second approach was Community-based Non-formal school readiness program/O class strategy/. This approach is a part of the pre-primary education system which involves children of age 5-6 that do not have access to kindergarten. The children of this program are coached by selected teachers from the respective primary schools. This program plays great role in assisting the pre-school children to get ready for formal education. The third approach - Child-to-Child program is established to engage in structured play-oriented activities with their younger sisters/ brothers and neighboring children. The program is facilitated by older children in the community. They do so in their own houses or in a place close to the participating children's homes. The activities are adapted to the local context and fit in with the children's daily life. To sum up in pre-primary education those three approaches have their significances in accessing the service to the children. The other strategic program implemented in preprimary education is parental education program which is a mechanism of creating collaboration with parents to strengthen children care and education. It is a continuous and long-term activity that focuses on awareness-raising and empowerment of parents. All parents have to be empowered and supported to ensure that they are effective in their roles and responsibilities for bringing up children. Parental education also focuses on improving the practical nurturing skills of parents and caretakers. The program promotes high quality mother/ caregiver-child interaction. Parents may learn the importance of play and getting their children ready to go to school at the right age.

Table 3. shows the country wise pre-primary education enrollment and GER. It also includes the kindergartens contribution and the status of teachers served in

the sub sectors. The overall nationwide school aged children (GER) of preprimary was 26.1%, whereas the contribution of kindergartens' GER was only 6.2% which is very insignificant. The remaining were accessed through O class and child-to - child non formal preprimary education service. The growth enrollment rate of pre primary education (non-formal and formal) and kindergarten in Addis Ababa were 126.0% and 122.2% respectively. This is an over achievement for Addis Ababa City Government Education Bureau which shows the bureau may serves the under aged and over age of the projected school age population(4-6 age) or the estimated number of School age population were under estimated.

Moreover, the GER for preprimary education of Harari and Tigray were 72.3% and 64.8% respectively i.e. it is relatively an encouraging achievement as compared to the other regions. The GER of preprimary education in the remaining regions were rages from 1.6%- 34.4%. This means the accessibility of preprimary education in some regions is very few. Similarly the GER for kindergarten of Dere Dawa and Harari were 28.9%, 26.8% respectively. Whereas the GER of the remaining regions like Somali, Afar, Amara ... were ranges between 1.3% - 6.3%. This means the accessibility of kindergartens' education in those regions were very limited. Additionally, the data shows the status of teaching staff in kindergartens. The kindergartens' children teacher ratio /CTR/of Amara, Dere Dawa, Harari, Benishangul gumz, Afar and Tigray regions were (130:1, 103:1, 78:1, 62:1, 61:1,44:1) respectively, which were below the required standards i.e. 40:1.

4.2. Determinant Factors in Pre-primary School

4.2.1. Physical Environment of pre-primary school

To enhance children’s learning and development, physical environment of pre-primary school should be conducive in every aspect. It should be safe, suitable, appropriately designed and basic facilities like sanitation facilities; Pipe water well ventilated classrooms should be available.

Table 4.The mean values of environment physical aspects

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Easily Identifiable area						4.42
2	Physically safe area						4.27
3	Free space for movement						4.28
4	Free from pollution						4.43
5	Available basic Sanitation Facility						4.38
6	Pipe water available						4.46
7	Well Ventilated Classroom						4.24
Aggregate mean							4.35

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: survey data

Tables. 4 show detailed elements of physical environment necessary in pre-primary school. Accordingly all the items (easily identifiable area, physically safe area, free space for movement, area free from pollution, availability of basic sanitation facilities, pipe water and well ventilated classroom) were rated ‘good’ with an aggregate mean value of 4.35. This indicates that the kindergartens are located in easily identifiable area, safe place and in area that allows free

movement for children and adults. Moreover the area of kindergarten is also free from pollution with having basic sanitation facilities like water for hand washing & other consumptions and the class rooms are well ventilated. The environment organized in such a way is creating a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere. It also promotes effective learning development for children and has positive implication for delivering quality education for child.

4.2.2. Learning Environment of Pre-primary School

The second factor which is used to assess the situation of pre- primary education of children is a learning environment. The environment in this sense refers to a center where children play, experiment and create a suitable, healthy and respectful communication. Children are engaged in this environment to build appropriate social behavior and correct use of language to facilitate positive interaction between their peers and teachers.

Learning environment has to be friendly to encourage children to develop problem solving skills by trying different ways of doing things. It should help them expand and refine their language as they talk with and listen to other children. In the learning environment they should be allowed to try out different roles and adjust to work together.

When the learning environment is convenient to children they can talk through conflicts and express their feeling confidently to reach an agreement. Therefore, learning environment is a determinant factor for effective kindergartens' practice.

Table 5.The mean values of environment physical aspects

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Adequate materials						4.24
2	Used Visual materials						3.94
3	Environment is friendly						4.49
Aggregate mean							4.22

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

Table 5. shows responses on issues related to the learning environment was rated with aggregate mean value of 4.22 for availability of adequate materials, usage of visual materials and the environment is friendly . From the response of respondents it was observable that usage of visual materials in the kindergartens had a minimum mean value of (3.94) which implies some respondents had reservation about the usage of visual materials in kindergartens.

Generally the study shows that the kindergartens learning environment was encouraging i.e. the respondents' agreement is strong and they confirm that the kindergartens use visually appealing materials to enhance children learning and creativity. The learning environment of kindergartens' was also running in friendly manner.

4.2.3. Outdoor Play Equipment for Pre-primary School

To make pre-primarily education environment complete for encouraging children's competence and independent exploration of their learning through purposeful play, outdoor and indoor equipment have to be designed and organized to engage every child in quality experiences. When playing materials

and equipment are sufficient in number and organized appropriately, the kindergartens' program implementation has to be enhanced and be effective.

Teachers can make the materials meaningful to the children through exploring the shape and usage of the materials by ordering from simple to complex. Materials motivate children and educators to examine their own attitudes and behavior to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges in society.

Therefore, materials have to be appropriate to children's age, emotional, intellectual, social and cultural development and be relevant to preschool's curriculum policy and program based on the standards and recreational needs of children.

Table 6. The mean value of outdoor play equipment's aspect

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Developmentally appropriate						4.18
2	Opportunity to creativity						3.90
3	Accident free arrangements						4.14
Aggregate mean							4.07

1=strongly agree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

Table 6. survey result shows the rating responses of the details about outdoor play equipment in kindergartens. The mean values for (developmentally appropriate, opportunity to creativity and accident free arrangements) were 4.18, 3.90 & 4.14 respectively. The mean value for “opportunity for creativity of children” is relatively small as compared to others which imply that some respondents have limitation on using materials to enhance opportunity for creativity of children. The aggregate mean value 4.07 indicates that majority of the respondents assure that outdoor equipments were available and

developmentally appropriate for children and their arrangement and organization allows accident-free play.

4.2.4. Curriculum in Pre-primary School

Curriculum is a goal targeted for acquiring knowledge and skills to children and it is also a plan for learning experiences through which knowledge and skills will be achieved. It is also a guide for early education program to lead by understanding how children’s goals for learning are framed within the context of learning standards and make parallel planning of activities and design of environment to stimulate children’s learning across content areas of all aspects in holistic development of children.

Table 7. The mean values of curriculum aspects

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Curriculum is adapted to local context						4.25
2	Incorporates all developmental activities						4.39
3	Give emphasis to all aspects						4.31
4	Opportunity to practice skills						4.30
5	Consistent With approved curriculum						4.31
Aggregate mean							4.31

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

Table 7. shows the response of teachers regarding curriculum related issues in the kindergartens. The teachers response point out the variables used to evaluate the curriculum are the adaptability with local context, the completeness and

having of it all developmental activities, the emphasis it give to the whole aspects of learning, the opportunity it gives to practice skills and its Consistency. The replies of the respondents were 4.25, 4.39, 4.31, 4.30, and 4.31 respectively.

This implies most of the respondents have strong agreement about the practice in kindergartens' curriculum i.e. the respondents confirm curriculum used in kindergarten is adapted to the local context and it was a guide which incorporates all developmental activities of children's mental, physical & social the curriculum gives emphasis to all aspects of children's development. This show the teacher perceive the curriculum as adaptable, complete, give attention to the whole developmental activities, opportunity for practicing skills and it is consistence.

Hence to make the curriculum well designed it has to be formulated according to the basic values of children's development and learning. In designing the curriculum it is advisable to use the fundamental concepts and principles as well as Learning and teaching of the curriculum planning. In addition pre-primary schools have to take into account their background, characteristics and mission, as well as children's abilities and developmental needs to make the curriculum well designed and nurturing the child.

4.2.5. Scheduling and Structure of Pre-primary Schools

The bench mark of the pre primary school scheduling and structure has to be curriculum guide. Even if where there is no curriculum, teachers develop a structured weekly and day-to-day programme. Scheduling and structure is one of the factors which can affect KG activities, hence it is advisable to see the KG practice from this aspect also.

Table 8. The mean value of scheduling and structure aspect

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Child Need accommodation						4.37
2	Full day service for family convenience						4.14
3	No need tutorial program arrangement						4.18
4	Includes variety of learning activities						4.21
5	Program compatible with age group						4.31
6	Adequate time for play						4.47
7	Prepared & displayed in Classroom						4.50
Aggregate mean							4.31

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

Table 8. survey result shows that the kindergartens practice of Scheduling and structure of kindergartens. Accordingly all the detailed items with this aspect were rated with an aggregated mean value of 4.31. These imply that the practice of scheduling and structuring in kindergartens was in a good situation. The respondents assuring that the scheduling program accommodate the need of children and family, since tutorial program is not advisable in KG the respondent also perceive the program should not be given, they have positive attitude in accommodation of varies learning activities and time also given for play, discovery and rest. The program should be compatible with the age group.

4.2.6. Teachers and Assistant Teachers in Pre-primary School

Teacher's profession is one of an important determinant of pre –primary school education quality, since they have great impact on how children learn and they are also the first responsible person for the pre-school program. In view of the fact that the role of teacher are changing and organizing the environment in convenient way to the children's need and their development, they are required to be flexible, humanist, friendly, and patient.

The Teachers must also engage in reflective practice and continual professional learning to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills to change children's learning and development. Consequently teachers can reflect by analyzing events and evidence from multiple sources, such as their observations, research articles, families and other professionals. Teachers also plan and provide learning experience to nurture the holistic development of children's in collaboration with families and the community. In the mine time they can also tie together the know-how of families to enrich the teaching learning in and outside the classroom.

Table 9. The mean value teacher & assistant teachers' aspects.

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	KG Related Knowledge and Skill						4.48
2	Necessary Know how to work with children						4.55
3	commitment to development children						4.55
4	Love & respect to children						4.67
5	Advocate of right						4.56
6	Qualified to teach						4.47
7	Know how about health care						4.31
8	Certified in child development						4.17
Aggregate mean							4.48

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

Table 9. survey results show the practice of kindergartens teachers and assistant teachers' abilities in relation to their profession. With this aspect the respondents reply with respective mean value are listed as follows: the knowledge and skill they have (4.48), the necessary know how to work with children (4.55), commitment to develop children (4.55), giving love and respect to children (4.67), activist for child right (4.56), their qualification to teach (4.47) know how they have about health care (4.31), and their certification in child development (4.17). These shows teachers have knowledge and skills related to holistic child development and necessary know how to work well with children, parents and others in the pre-school setting. Teachers are committed to enhance the development of children with providing necessary love and respect to all children regardless of their culture, ethnicity, family beliefs and practices or any other difference. They are also advocates of the children's' rights to protect them from

different hazards and Teachers are qualified to teach in kindergarten. Moreover assistant teachers also have know how about children health care and support the work of the main teachers.

Additionally as it is seen by the researcher check list the total number of children (students) in thirty nine kindergartens are 6554 and the total number of teachers and assistant teachers are 413.therefore, the children teacher ratio is 32:1.which means 32 children are served by one teacher and one assistant teachers. The children to teacher ratio are above minimum standard i.e. “There are no more than 40 young children for one teacher and one helper” (MOE, 2010:23).

4.2.7. Teaching Learning Methodology in Pre-primary Education

In pre-primary school education, the teaching learning methodology has to be child-centered. Hence, children’s active participation is pivotal to the effectiveness of learning. Here the roles of teachers are facilitating, providing information, assessing learning assessor, and so on.

Table 10. The mean value of teaching learning methodology aspects

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Child-center						4.36
2	Appropriate materials						4.33
3	Opportunity to explore& use materials						4.08
4	Freedom to choose						4.12
5	Use mother tongue						4.39
6	Need adult support						4.29
7	Social interaction						4.36
8	Sharing experience						4.22
Aggregate mean							4.27

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

Table 10. survey result shows kindergartens practice of teaching learning methodology in providing preprimary education. The rating responses of the detailed items about teaching learning methodology were scored an aggregate mean value of 4.27. This implies in teaching-learning process appropriate materials used, opportunities are given to explore, manipulate, combine and transform the materials. Children can choose what to do freely. Hence Teaching learning was child-centered. Children use their mother tongue to describe what he or she is doing. Social interaction with peers is employed to develop children's communication skill via sharing experiences in a communal setting to develop group problem-solving skills. It is believed that Children need adult support to reasoning, creativity and problem-solving.

In preprimary school teaching learning process play is an indispensable and important tool for facilitating children's learning. It helps children know their surroundings and experience the joy of co-operating and sharing with others. Through play, children can develop their physical, intellectual, social, creative and thinking abilities. Consequently Play also considered being the best activity for promoting children's physical and mental development. Therefore, play and children's development are interrelated. Hence, teachers have to make good use of play as a major element for constructing the curriculum. Since teaching learning methodology is a core factor to education.

4.2.8. Health and Nutrition

Health and nutrition is a profound for children's overall wellness. Adequate nutrition, social emotional well-being, and physical activities are all parts of a comprehensive in early education program. They have direct impact to social, emotional and cognitive development. Therefore, health and nutrition have a major contribution in children's learning and development in all aspects.

Table 11. The mean value of health and nutrition aspect

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Regular health check-up is given						3.80
2	Growth monitoring chart used						3.80
3	First aid kit is employed						4.31
4	Free from contagious disease						4.38
5	Parents Pack nutritious meals						4.10
6	Feeding in hygienic area						4.40
Aggregate mean							4.13

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

Table 4.10 survey result shows the kindergartens health and nutrition. The researcher tries to see this aspect from the following variables: Regular health check up, monitoring chart, first aid, contagious disease, nutritious meals, and hygienic area. The respondents rate the variables as follows: about regular check-up and the use of growth monitoring chart the respondents give their rate as (3.80) and (3.78) respectively. On the other hand feeding in hygienic area, using first aid kit, free from contagious disease, parents pack nutritious meals have the mean values of 4.31, 4.38, 4.10, and 4.40 respectively. This show the previous two variables have less value as compared with the other variables. This Implies respondent' kindly agrees about the proper implementation of the first two variables.

Since health and nutrition have direct impact on children learning and development it has to be researched periodically, so the overall survey result demonstrate the respondent have positive perception about the practice of

kindergartens operations like the availability of regular health check-up by health workers, using growth monitoring charts and providing first aid kit properly through teachers. The respondents assure that people who work with the children has to be free from any contagious disease, child feeding is done in a hygienic and clean environment. Parents are also encouraged to pack nutritious and balanced meals.

4.2.9. Relation with Parents and Community

In pre- primary school education Parents' co-operation and support are very important for institutional improvements and their children development. The collaboration between teachers and families create better understanding of children's need and enhance their healthy development. The interaction between Community and pre-school society provides meaningful learning that draws on the children's experience to enhance educational out comes. Hence family, school and society are the mainly influencer of education.

Table 12. The mean value of relation with parents& community aspect

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	The relation Creates good opportunity						4.62
2	Regularly share information						4.52
3	Regular PTA meeting held						4.37
4	Parents get comprehensive information						4.33
5	Participate in community						4.06
6	Collaboration with community						4.24
Aggregate mean							4.36

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: survey data

Table 12. survey result shows the relationship of kindergartens with parents and community. The aggregate rating responses of the detailed items in the relationship of kindergartens with parents and community were scored the mean value of 4.36. These show the kindergartens create good relationship with parents and community through making different Participation in community and strengthen parent's relations with regular PTA meetings with in the academic year to share information on the child's progress. All parents get clear and comprehensive information about the kindergartens. The implications show that Interaction and communication between the parents and the teachers create good opportunity for the kindergarten.

The challenge in front for early childhood education is how to proactively meet the required talent in the future society .Hence proper nurturing children is fundamental assignment of every community. To do this assignment working in collaboration with society, family and school is not an option rather than strong

obligation. Bright future for children can be reached through integrative work of the responsible bodies.

4.2.10. Assessment in pre-primary school Education

Since learning is active in the kindergarten the assessing process is critical and it should occur while the learning is happening rather than assessing the final product. Ongoing assessment informs the approach needed to design and deliver developmentally appropriate instructional activities.

The frequent, well planned, and well organized assessment provides important information to the teachers to assist each child in progressing towards meeting the kindergarten curriculum outcomes. Assessment information is also help to follow changes in the characteristics of children over time and to provide data that can be used to evaluate programs.

Table 13. The mean values in assessment aspect

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Assessment focus on all aspects development						4.21
2	Assessment is a Continuous process						4.41
3	Assessment is can't be as a basis for scale up						3.75
4	Strength & weakness indicator						4.34
Aggregate mean							4.18

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

Table 13. survey result shows the assessment practice of kindergartens from the following point of view; the area it give attention, its continuity, its use, and as indicator of strength and weakness. As we have seen from the above table the respondent rate the items with the following mean values it focus on all aspects of children development, It is a Continuous process, It can't be used as a basis for scale up, it indicates strength and weakness were 4.21, 4.41, 3.75 and 4.34 respectively. This implies that assessment of children is focusing on all aspects of their development, it is continuous process, and achievement tests are not used as a basis for promotion, retention or selection rather to indicate the child's strengths and weaknesses.

4.2.11. Management of Pre-primary School Education

Managing the kindergartens means making the current situation suitable for children learning and development that might lead them to the bright future. Effective managing system in preschool education contributes to sustaining quality relationships and creates convenient environment practices that facilitate children's learning and development.

Kindergarten education management is engaged in promoting positive organizational culture and builds a professional learning community, establishing clear goal and expectations of curriculum for teaching and learning process may help for the success and the continuity of education.

Table 14. The mean value in management aspect

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Prepare strategic plan						4.41
2	Follow up implementation						4.49
3	Role model						4.44
4	Protects children's right						4.54
5	creates good relationship						4.48
6	Works towards development						4.47
Aggregate mean							4.47

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

Table 14. survey results show the kindergartens management practice. The researcher sees this aspect from preparation of strategic plan, follow up, protection of right, creating relationship, work towards development. The respondents' rating on the issues were presented with their respective mean values: prepare strategic plan (4.41), follow up implementation(4.49), act as role model (4.44), protects children's right (4.54), creates good relationship(4.48) and Works towards development(4.47).This implies that kindergarten administration prepare strategic plan and creates a good relationship with internal and external bodies. They administer follow up every activities and implementation. They also work as a role model to create friendly environment and to assure the developments of children in all aspect.

4.2.12. The Summary of Determinant factors in Pre primary School

The study is attempted to examine and interpret the main determinant factors in preprimary education practical situations. Table below shows the summary of respondents rating score of the major factors that have direct impact in kindergartens teaching learning process. These ratings were used to examine the practical situation in pre-primary schools in Nefasilk Lafto sub city of Addis Ababa.

Table 15. The mean values of determinant factors

No.	Item	Rating sale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Environment and Physical aspect						4.35
2	Learning Environment						4.22
3	Outdoor Play Equipment						4.07
4	Curriculum						4.31
5	Scheduling and Structure						4.31
6	Teachers and Assistant Teachers						4.47
7	Teaching Learning Methodology						4.27
8	Health and Nutrition						4.13
9	Relation With Parents & Community						4.36
10	Assessment						4.18
11	Management						4.47
Aggregate mean							4.29

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Source: Survey data

The overall results of the survey shows positive connotation with the aggregate mean value of 4.29. This implies the responses rate for different factors which may affect the teaching learning processes of kindergartens as good.

4.3. Practical Challenges of pre-primary school

Even though the quantitative survey result is positive about the practice situation of kindergartens in Nefasilk Lafo sub city of Addis Ababa. The qualitative data point out some challenges which can be an obstacle for the good start of preprimary school educations. These challenges are presented by categorizing in to the following major aspects.

Table 16. Respondents' responses in kindergartens challenges

Description	No. of respondents	Frequency	Percentage
1. Kindergartens human resource			
Shortage of trained man power	180	67	37.22
Employee turn over	180	47	26.11
2. Material resource			
Text books not available for KG	180	60	33.33
Shortage of teaching aid materials	180	71	39.44
Inadequate playing space	180	46	25.56
Inadequate playing equipment	180	74	41.11
3. Behavioral aspects			
Teachers' lack of interest to demonstrate the materials	180	19	10.56
Problem of handling children's	180	49	27.22

behavior			
Problem of teachers' conduct	180	36	20.00
Parents pressure to use foreign language as medium of instruction.	180	62	34.44
4.Location			
Inconvenience of school location	180	17	09.44
5.Relationship and Support			
KG has no positive relationship with their stakeholders.	180	16	08.89
Parents didn't know their obligation to assist children which limits the relationship	180	115	63.89
Inappropriate perception of community to the kindergarten.	180	31	17.22
Inadequate support of government to kindergarten.	180	55	30.56
Parents compliant about unfairness of tuition fee.	180	31	17.22
Parents' complaint about inappropriate child care & support.	180	43	23.89

Source: survey data

Table 16. represent the summery of respondents reply on the challenges faced the kindergartens. NB: a single respondent has more than one chance to indicate challenges faced by kindergarten. From 216 respondents 180 of them select at least one challenge from the predetermined challenge lists.

4.3.1. Human Resource problem

Human resource of kindergarten is a key resource, that facilitate and implement every activities performed in the preschool. They can be KG administrators, coordinators, Teachers, Assistant teachers, guardians etc. The respondents' give their feeling about the KG that teachers are dissatisfied; due to their less payment, lack of training opportunity to improve their profession, be short of opportunity to be upgrade (no carrier structure for their future expectation), even they can't get summer training course Teachers have inappropriate perception about their profession (the profession of KG teachers is seen as simple task). Beside respondents show that there is no sufficient qualified kindergarten teachers available in the market. The report of MOE in annual statistical abstract of 2012/13 as it is summarized on the table 1. shows the incompatible increase of students and teachers i.e. the average growth rate of teachers for the past five years was (-4%)

4.3.2. Problem of Behavioral aspects

The behavioral aspects of teachers and parents also have influence on kindergarten practical situations. The respondent also point out some problems; these are teachers' lack of interest to demonstrate properly the teaching learning materials to children, the way of handling children's behavior, and teachers' misconduct these are some of teachers behavioral aspects which makes negative impact on kindergartens day to day operations. On the other hand the Parents push the KG to use foreign language as medium of instruction; it has also its own impact on children teaching learning process.

4.3.3. Materials and facility problem.

The other fact we have seen from Table 16. is that; the kindergartens faced lack of Text books availability, Shortage of teaching aid materials, Inadequate playing space and playing equipment. Moreover Text books are not provided with

expected quantity and quality and lack of toilet and water supply. Moreover, some private kindergartens' institutional capacity is very limited. Additionally, the researcher observes that most of the private kindergartens do not have their own compound hence they are forced to rent private compound; this make them to face two problems. Firstly they incurred unnecessary cost, Secondly getting appropriate compound to kindergarten teaching and learning is too difficult due to this some kindergartens are renting two or three private compounds in the same area this may due additional cost.

4.3.4. Relationship and Support Problem

Establishing a good partnership and commitment with stakeholder are important to support and constructing the kindergartens activities. Regarding to the relationship of kindergartens, respondents point out that some kindergartens do not build positive relationship with their stakeholders. Parents didn't know their obligation to assist their children which limits the relationship between school and parents contributions.

On the other hand the respondents list out different relationship problems. Parents didn't give attention to their children due to different reasons. i.e. economic factor family's income background determines where their children to learn and how they behave to care their child properly, illiteracy (which includes lack of knowledge about child care, limited know how about KG benefit and their obligation, less participation in such community work), Parents assume that their obligation is only pay tuition fee, sent their children before age three, Parents are complaining about unfairness of tuition fee and inappropriate child care and support.

The other problem raised by the respondents is lack of government support for preprimary education. They are conforming that attention is not given to preprimary education. In addition to this the respondents show that sufficient budget is not allocated for kindergartens especially in government kindergartens.

4.3.5. Administrative problems

The other core issue raised by the respondent is about kindergarten administration are; kindergartens Administrators do not guided by proper plan, Separate administration practice is not seen in some kindergartens especially in government KG, Some principals and teachers also specify that private and faith base Kindergartens are faced administrative and coordination problems since they do not have strong decision making body like a board of directors for administering kindergartens , illiteracy of kindergarten's owner also one of the obstacle in some kindergartens regular operation; since the owners make decision on teaching learning process that may hurt the children learning and development.

The researcher also observing that the pre-primary education framework guideline of ECCE prepared by MOE 2010 didn't include about administrators' detail such as responsibilities, experience and educational background. The other document which used as a guideline for principals and teachers is Addis Ababa city Administration Office Curriculum Development in teaching learning Department which is prepared in 2010 for business process reengineering (BPR) also not include about preprimary education administration.

Additionally, interview was also conducted to assess the role of government, and to seek what opportunities are available in preprimary education. The interview was conducted with pre–primary education professionals of Addis Ababa City Education Bureau and Nefasilk Lafto Sub City Education Office.

The first question was all about the major roles of government to expand and improve pre-primary school education.

According to AAEU pre-primary education professional response, the role of the government was briefly discussed by categorizing it in to four major roles. The first major role of the government is to expand the accessibility and to promote early education stimulation for all children. Secondly, providing support to the

stakeholders who are engaged in preprimary education namely the private sector, the NGOs and Faith based organizations considered as one of the roles. The support is given by encouraging their participation, facilitating through licensing them to work in the area. Thirdly the government is engaged in direct operation of preprimary education. Under Addis Ababa Education Bureau there are one hundred forty seven government owned kindergartens serving the community in charge free. The other core government role is establishing rules and regulation for pre-primary education sub sector which includes setting standards, guidelines, procedures, and providing supervisory support and follows up. The Education Office of Nefasilik Lafto Sub City's pre- primary education professional response is also substantiating the answer given about the government role.

The second question raised was about the major challenges faced in this sub sector.

According to the educational bureau professional response, the main challenges are some private owned kindergartens are setting high tuition fee which is burden to the community. At the same time they do not follow the guidelines and the standards set by the government. The second challenge is shortage of input materials for preprimary education i.e. no sufficient indoor and outdoor materials in government kindergartens. Besides to this there are no supplementary (story) books which, is supportive materials for pre-primary education.

The education office professional also shared the above identified two problems. In addition to these, the office has no sufficient budget and manpower to support the kindergartens day to day activities. According his response, the sub city has about one hundred ninety kindergartens and of which seventeen are government owned. The office also focuses on government KGs due to the limited resource.

The third question raise was about the concerns of stakeholders (private, NGOs, Faith based organizations...) and the opportunities exist.

According to the Addis Ababa education bureau professional response, all the stakeholders are the governments' partners that they are doing in collaboration. There are one thousand sixty eight kindergartens operating under Addis Ababa education bureau. Out of these, about 80-85% is owned by private sectors. This shows how the private sector creates a good opportunity for preprimary education.

The NGOs and Faith based organizations are supporting pre primary education in two ways. Firstly, they support by direct engagement in preprimary educational operation. Secondly, they support the government in different ways to expand the preprimary education. Therefore, all stakeholders play a vital role in preprimary education progress.

The fourth question raised was about pre-primary school administrators' roles and if there is any standard about their personal character, education level, knowledge/skills, experience and responsibility.

According to the Addis Ababa education bureau professional response, the role of preprimary educational administrator is recognized as a core and determinant to school success. Since previously the government was not involved in preprimary education, the document was not adopted. But now the administrator's operational manual and required benefit is under preparation and it will be presented in the near future.

Moreover, kindergartens practical activities are carried out by Government, Faith based and private sectors. This may create a good opportunity for preprimary education sectors, Hence the private and faith based operators support makes great contribution by holding the lion share in the progress of preprimary education. It is also observable that the communities are well aware to send their kids to kindergartens for seeking better children education. In this case it is a good opportunity for the developments of our future generations' education.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with summary of the findings of the study, the conclusion and the recommended statements based on the findings

5.1. Summary

The major purpose of the study was to assess the practices and challenges of preprimary education in Nefasilk Lafto sub-city of Addis Ababa. In order to realize the purpose, the following questions were set as guiding questions.

1. What are the administrative and children's caring practices in Nefasilk Lafto sub city government administration education office?
2. To what extent the standard, the syllabus and the pedagogical tools of education are appropriate for children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development?
3. What are the major challenges with regard to operation of KGs in Nefasilk Lafto sub city government administration education office?
4. What opportunities exist in pre-school education to direct children's future?

In order to answer these basic questions data was collected from thirty nine randomly selected KGs. Participants were 170 teachers and assistant Teachers who were selected randomly, 46 purposely selected principals, Addis Ababa Education Bureau and Nefasilk Lafto sub-city Education Office preprimary education professionals . The researcher used questionnaire and interview to collect data from the respondents and employed document review to secure secondary data. The collected data were analyzed using frequency, percentage and mean. From the analysis made the major findings could be summarized as follows.

- Kindergartens administrators are strategic leader which creates a good relationship with internal and external bodies in every activities implementation. They work as a role model to create friendly environment and to assure children holistic development. On the other hand Pre-primary education faced administrative and coordination problems so they do not have strong decision making body like a board of directors for administering kindergartens. In addition to that the government was not adopted the policy guideline for pre-primary school administrators' roles which includes the standard about their personal character, education level, knowledge/skills, experience and responsibility.
- The finding shows that, the situations in kindergartens are almost positive in all determinant factors. They have convenient physical and learning environment which have different indoor and outdoor playing equipment to enhance opportunity for the creativity of children learning in friendly manner as reflected by the mean value of greater than four.
- The curriculum guides incorporated all developmental activities of children's mental, physical and social development to accommodate the needs of children. Moreover, the children teacher ratio is 32:1 which is above minimum standard. Additionally, teachers and assistant teachers use their potentials to enhance the development of children with providing necessary support and Continuous assessment practice focus on all aspects of children's development.
- The methodology used in the teaching learning is child-centered involving purposeful play as a major element. It focus on the appropriate care for reasonable physical strength, creating acceptable communication with others via using appropriate language, developing arithmetic skills and concepts in day to day activities to examine and taste the activities created by environmental interaction. Furthermore, the relationships with others through Interaction and communication between the parents and the

teachers create good opportunity for the kindergarten. On the other hand, in this study Health and nutrition are also considered as major contributor to children's learning and development.

- From the study the researcher identified challenges which may hinder Kindergartens' education like Shortages of trained man power and employee turnover, Lack of teachers' training opportunity and low level of salary, parent's limited responsibility to care and develop their child, some teachers' inappropriate conduct and their un willingness to provided appropriate support in children nurturing. Moreover, the government insufficient support made negative impact on KGs education. The education office has no sufficient budget and manpower to support all kindergartens education. This enforced the office to give emphasis only to government owned KGs.
- Kindergartens' were faced materials and facility problems which include unavailability of text and supplementary (story) books for KG, Shortage of input materials like teaching aid materials, inadequate playing space and equipment.
- The government has played four major roles in pre primary education. First ensure accessibility, second promoting early education for all children, third providing support to stakeholders through encouraging participation, facilitating and licensing them to work in the area. Fourth engaged in preprimary education direct operation to render charge free service to the community and establishing rules and regulation for pre-primary education sub sector which includes setting standards, guidelines, procedures, and providing supervisory support and follows up.
- All the stakeholders (private sector, NGOs and Faith based organization) play a vital role in preprimary education progress. The private sectors hold the lion share in kindergartens operation 80-85%. These create a good

opportunity for preprimary education. On the other hand NGOs and Faith based organizations also have a great share to support pre primary education through direct engagement in operation and supporting the government in different ways to expand the preprimary education. However some private owned kindergartens are setting high tuition fee which create burden to the community, simultaneously they do not follow the guidelines and the standards set by the government.

5.2. Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to assess the practice and challenges of pre-primary school education in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa. In so doing the focus was given to teaching- learning process in pre-primary education. The practical situations in kindergartens are almost positive in all determinant factors. The finding shows that the kindergartens have convenient physical and learning environment which have different indoor and outdoor playing equipment to enhance opportunity for creative children learning. They are administered to creating a good relationship with internal and external bodies in every activities implementation to enhance friendly environment and to assure holistic children development.

The kindergarten follow the curriculum guides which incorporated all developmental activities of children's mental, physical and social development that accommodate the needs of children. On the hand Teachers and assistant teachers identified to use their potentials to enhance the development of children with providing necessary support and Continuous assessment practice focus on all aspects of children's development. Moreover, the children teacher ratio is 32:1 which is above minimum standard.

The kindergarten used child-centered methodology which focuses on the appropriate care for reasonable physical strength, creating acceptable communication with others by using appropriate language, developing arithmetic skills and concepts in day to day activities. Furthermore positive relationships

have been created through smooth communication and Interaction between parents and teachers to build good environment for children and kindergarten. On the other hand, in this study Health and nutrition are also considered as major contributor to children's learning and development which were in line to MOE pre primary education guidelines.

Pre-primary educations of the country have faced many problems the typical problems are: administrative and coordination problems, consequently they do not have strong decision making body like a board of directors to administering kindergartens, the government also not able to implement the detailed policy guideline for pre-primary school administrators' roles, Shortages of trained man power and employee turnover, Lack of teachers' training opportunity and low level of salary, parent's limited responsibility, teachers' inappropriate conduct, insufficient support from the government. The Kindergartens' are also have materials and facility problem which includes unavailability of text and supplementary (story) books for KG, Shortage of input materials like teaching aid materials, inadequate playing space and playing equipment. On the other way some private owned kindergartens are setting high tuition fee which makes burden to the community. At the same time they do not follow the guidelines and the standards set by the government.

The government plays its role in establishing rules and regulation which includes setting standards, guidelines, procedures, and providing supervisory support and follows up, ensuring accessibility, and promoting early education for all children, providing support to stakeholders through encouraging their participation and licensing them to work in the area it also engaged in preprimary education direct operation to render charge free service to the community. Preprimary education stakeholders (private sector, NGOs and Faith based organization) also play a vital role in the sub sector development. The private sectors hold the lion share in kindergartens operation. On the other hand NGOs and Faith based organizations also supporting pre primary education through direct engagement in operation and supporting the government in different ways to expand the preprimary

education, these create a good opportunity for preprimary education development. It is also observable that the communities are well aware to send their kids to kindergartens for seeking better children education. In this case, it is also a good opportunity for the developments of our future generations' education.

5.3. Recommendations

The overall strategic objective of Ethiopian pre-primary education is to promote early stimulation and the best start in life for all children with the main purpose of enhancing the quality, accessibility and equitable distribution of services for children through more efficient partnerships for the holistic development of children. This approach is also used in many civilized countries in their early education curriculum to facilitate and provides opportunities for children to acquire the necessary knowledge, skill and disposition of the children holistic development. Hence, the approach is acceptable and leads to success for nation and children.

The practical situation of kindergartens of Nefasilk lafto sub city of Addis Ababa has positive indication in providing appropriate care for reasonable physical strength, creating acceptable communication with others by using appropriate language, developing arithmetic skills and concepts in day to day activities and provide opportunities for children to acquire the necessary knowledge, skill and disposition in the way of appropriate approach of facilitating holistic development. Therefore, to sustain and improve such encouraging practice the partnerships between kindergartens, families and communities should be closer through strengthen the connections between children's learning and experiences to enhance Children interact with various contexts and to build their identity. This makes children learning development more significant and be socially comfortable and safe.

To overcome the challenges faced regarding shortage of trained manpower the government has to give more attention to kindergartens teachers training. Since the government is the only operator in kindergartens' teachers training. It's also an opportunity for Kotebie University of Teachers to expand and to improve the kindergartens teachers' section. It has to be used as a good chance for the University to produce more graduates in the field.

The kindergartens' teachers have to be motivated via regular and continuous training to improve their profession and carrier structure and also to improve their payments. The training and development programs should be designed in collaboration with those who work on children's care and every pre-primary institution. The program should consider the needs of children and parents, which is home-school co-operation activities, the good use of community resources by inviting professionals; such as preprimary education specialists, social workers and psychologists, to conduct parental education seminars; persuade and give support to teachers to take relevant training courses.

Introducing relevant information about collaborative use of community resources and stimulate parents interest in joining a related issues of their children education progress and eventually benefit to the institutions. The parental education program/strategy/ should be strengthen via involving all concerned bodies for awareness-raising and empowering the parents to be effective in their roles and responsibilities for bringing up children. Public Medias also should do more to enhance the participation of pre-primary schools, parents, and the community as a whole to create a good group effort for constructing competent future citizens.

To solve KGs' text book and supportive teaching materials the Government, NGOs (who work on education sector) and other concerned bodies like school leaders, educators, and KG professionals, should be collaboratively apply their efforts to prepare, publish and distribution. On the other hand to overcome the challenges of input materials of preprimary education like indoor and outdoor equipment

Mechanisms should be designed to solving the problem by means of using locally available resources.

The Kindergartens administrators should be empowered through encouraging and focusing on preparing effective planning and evaluation process, developing statement of principles to guide all aspects of the preschools' operations, making committed personnel via appropriate communication channels and reasonable training that may initiate the ongoing improvement of preprimary education. These will be achieved through developing a system for preprimary education leadership styles i.e. the kindergartens administrator's operational manual details which includes the responsibilities, accountabilities, expected educational background and experience should be clearly identified and Preparing guidelines for establishing decision making bodies like executive management and board of directors. These may also help the kindergartens for institutional capacity building and enforce the educational institutes have to be governed by educated leaders.

Generally emphasis should be given to pre-primary education since the accessibility of kindergartens is 6.2%; it is solid foundations that build for improved competences of future citizens, who could face the challenge of technological change. Early education makes later learning is more effective and is more likely to continue life-long, lessening the risk of early school leaving, increasing the equity of educational outcomes and reducing the costs for society in terms of lost talent and of public spending on social, health and even justice systems

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