

MAKERERE



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**ACQUISITION OF CHILD CARE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS BY
RURAL NON- LITERATE WOMEN THROUGH
INFORMAL LEARNING PROCESSES**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Although rural and urban parents differ in family resources, structure, kind of child care used, and services needed, little information is available. Significant rural/ urban differences in maternal education levels have been found with rural women having a fewer level of education and fewer advantages(Scanzori & Arnett, 1987). Rural women have been considered to be more likely to assume a traditional role of home care and maker than urban women. The central concern of the study was to understand the informal learning processes through which rural non-literate women who are mothers acquired childcare knowledge and skills, In trying to understand the informal learning processes through which rural non-literate women in Wabulungu village acquired childcare knowledge and skills, the researcher employed a qualitative case study approach in order to gain an in- depth understanding of the learning processes involved. In-depth interviews and informal observations were the main data collection methods used. Findings from the study show that non-literate women in Wabulungu village acquired child care knowledge and skills through informal learning processes that included modeling, coaching, and trial and error. Social gatherings were also an important source of information regarding childcare. Most mothers acquired child care knowledge and skills from more experienced people The knowledge and skills acquired were cumulative starting from when they were growing up, right up to date when they were married.

This thesis concludes that the informal learning processes through which women acquire knowledge and skills in child care are never organized, but are contextual and always negotiated in social interaction. An important understanding which is raised when discussing child care practices and approaches is the ease that these understandings are accepted, reinforced and often go unchallenged.

This study therefore recommend that Informal learning should be highly appreciated and considered in the curricular and the entire community in order to promote women groupings or meetings for the acquisition of childcare knowledge and skills .A possible explanation for this easy acceptance is that attributing maternal behaviour to nature is a comfortable and known position to justify behaviours and judgments about women as they learn to mother.