

**FACTORS INFLUENCING PROVISION OF EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN KENYA: A CASE OF
MADIANY DIVISION**

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for any award in any other University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved wife Joyce Beatty Achieng', my son Ian Mark Ogetta, my late brother Peter Ochieng' and my parents Mr. Duncan Owuor and Mrs. Anne Owuor for showing me unwavering love and support during my study.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome
DICECE	-	District Centre for Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	-	Early Childhood Development
ECEC	-	Early Childhood Education and Care
EFA	-	Education for All
FPE	-	Free Primary Education
GER	-	Gross Enrolment Ratio
ICDS	-	Integrated Child Development Services
MOE	-	Ministry of Education
MOEST	-	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NACECE	-	National Centre for Early Childhood Education
NGO	-	Non Governmental Organizations
UN	-	United Nations
WGCED	-	Working Group of Early Childhood Development
UNESCO	-	United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Children Education Fund

ABSTRACT

Education is a tool for empowerment and so it is important to ensure that every Kenyan acquires relevant and quality education. According to KESSP (2005), early childhood development and education intervention are significant to the social and economic development of a country as they provide children with a fairer and better start in life. There is also a high probability that these children who acquire ECDE will have improved school performance and cognitive abilities than those who do not attend early childhood care and development education. One of the major education challenges in Kenya is the provision of early childhood education. This is so because it has been left in the hands of the community, private providers and parents, resulting in a big variation in type and quality across the country. Moreover, the government fully funds free primary education, subsidized secondary and university education while allocating fairly small amount of money to the ECD sector, yet it is the foundation of learning. The purpose of this study was to establish factors influencing provision of early childhood education in Madiany division. The study was guided by specific research objectives and questions. These included: examination of socio-economic challenges facing ECDE provision, establishing characteristics of ECDE centers, and exploring strategies that can be used in strengthening ECDE. This study was anchored on Sigmund Freud's Psycho-Analytic Theory which states that early childhood experiences play a major role in personality development and continue to influence behavior later in life. The emphasis is that early childhood is a critical and sensitive period in an individual's life and any experience one is exposed to has a permanent impact on a person's future life. The study adopted descriptive survey methodology with both qualitative and quantitative approaches to source and analyze data. The study used probability random sampling as well as purposive sampling procedure. Two sets of questionnaires and an interview schedule were administered to ECD teachers, parents and a DICECE officer respectively in order to elicit appropriate responses. The data obtained was analyzed, synthesized and presented using statistical packages for social sciences. This program enables variety of analysis giving rise to frequency distributions and percentages presented in tables. The analysis was done based on demographic attributes of respondents such as age, gender and academic backgrounds followed by thematic analysis. Findings revealed that socio economic factors undermined provision of ECDE services. Moreover, teacher, structural and operational characteristics of ECD centers equally contributed to low standards of ECD Education. The study established that the best strategy of improving ECDE is through collaborative partnerships among stakeholders. The study concluded that the government should support the sector through sound policy framework and budgetary allocations. The study recommended that the government should offer free ECD services, professionalize the career by establishing training colleges for ECD teachers and collaborate with other stakeholders to provide holistic services to children. The study recommended the need to replicate this study to other parts of the country, focus on other tiers of education and establish factors which influence access and participation in the ECD sector.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Societies throughout history have provided early childhood education to children ranging from 3-6 years of age. This has been done either formally in well organized centers or institutions or informally at home under the tutelage of nannies, parents or sibling. Early childhood education refers to education programs and strategies geared towards children from birth to the age of eight. This period is considered to be the most vulnerable and crucial stage in a person's life (<http://k6educators.about.com/od/educationglossary/g/earchildhoode.htm>). Early childhood education and development consists of activities and/ experiences that are intended to effect developmental changes in children prior to their entry into elementary or primary school ([http://www.answers.com/topic/early childhood education](http://www.answers.com/topic/early_childhood_education)).

Recent years have seen a global endeavor to prioritize early childhood care and education as a foundation for later learning and development. This emanates from the belief that early learning begets later learning and success, just like early failure breeds later failure, which has been validated in both economic and educational research as quoted from (Boococ, 1995: Heckman, 1999) in Mbugua (1996). According to World Development Report (as quoted by Mbugua (2000) from Jaycox (1999). education and economic development are positively correlated. making education intrinsic in development. Early Childhood Education and care policies and programs in Europe and the Anglo American countries evolved out of remarkably

similar historical streams: Child protection; early childhood education; service for children with special needs; and services to facilitate mothers labour force participation (Kamerman,2006). For example in Britain, day nurseries and infant schools stressing education were established in the early 19th Century. The former were not very extensive but the latter expanded rapidly, and then largely disappeared to be replaced by part time kindergartens. The infant schools provided an inferior form of care and education to the children of poor working women and covered 20% of three year olds in 1851(Kellmer and Naidoo, 1974). In contrast, middle and upper class children were cared for at home by nannies or their equivalent, supplemented by part day kindergartens organized on the model of the German, Friederich Froebel. The failure to improve the quality of infant schools for children of the working class, or to integrate these programs with new educational philosophy of the kindergarten, and the inclusion of five year olds in primary schools, contributed to the decline in the popularity of nursery education in 20th century England.

One other result was the continuity of a pattern of fragmentation between early childhood education as an enrichment program and daycare as a ' protective service.' It took to the present time for there to be a significant increase in coverage and a renewed and successful effort at integrating the two parallel streams, now all under education auspices. (Kamerman, 2006). In ADEA (2002), as cited in Kamerman (2006), Africa is described as having the youngest population in the world (half of the population are children under age 14 years and 20% are under 5 years). It is the region with the highest infant mortality rate, malnutrition, inadequate supply of food, and experiences severe poverty, and children are likely to live in the midst of armed conflicts and become orphans due to AIDS pandemic. In addition he /she will not

receive any early childhood development care, since such services are still rare in Africa.

Towards the end of 1990s, a study was carried out by the Working Group of Early Childhood Development (WGECD) of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) (Tokington, 2001), and the conclusion was that there were many ECD projects and programs in Africa but were uncoordinated, underfunded and many were of low quality and that the majority of them depended on the support of NGOs, national and international organizations for their existence. There was little financial commitment by governments to development of ECDs and provision and financing were left to the civil society (Tokington, 2001). The report further pointed out that little attention was paid to monitoring and evaluation or systematic data collection. This report painted a gloomy picture of Africa and a bleak future of children in the continent.

Kenyans perceive education as a key to success in life, facilitating social mobility and personal development (Nkinyangi, 1982). As a result Kenya has seen a clamoring for the expansion of education, at all levels (Mutero,2001 :Mwiria,1990), including nursery schools, childcare centers, kindergartens and pre-schools. According to the World Bank (1990), the demand for early childhood development services in Kenya resulted in the establishment of a large network of child development centers, mostly in rural areas, by parents of children who did not have access to privately owned nursery schools. About 19,000 centers covering approximately one million children (mostly in the 3-6 year group) had been set up. The community was the most important participant in the development of these centers, taking the programs and provision of learning and play materials (World Bank, 1990).

In the 1970's, the government of Kenya stepped in to provide training support and supervision of centres. National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) was established at the Kenya Institute of Education with a mandate to train the trainers, curriculum development, research and coordination. District Centers (DICECE) were to be responsible for training teachers at the district level, inspection, community mobilization and the evaluation of local programs (World Bank, 1990). Despite some significant gains in enrolment and community initiative, there is wide variation in the type and quality of services provided by these centers.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Recent years have seen a global endeavour to prioritize early childhood care and education as a foundation for later learning and development, as evidenced in the global guidelines for early childhood education and care in the 21st century (Kamerman, 2006). According to Essa (1999) as cited in Kamerman (2006), children may be seen as plants that need nurturance, miniature adults, natural and national resources that need to be nurtured or future investments critical in the technological age. This points out that if indeed early childhood experiences influence a child's future, the individual and social consequences of inadequate services and protection are dire; and the implications for early childhood policies are compelling (Schaffer ,2000). This view is shared by Mbugua (1996) who states that early learning begets later learning and success, just like early failure breeds later failure.

According to KESSP (2005), Early Childhood Development and Education intervention are significant to the social and economic development of a country as they provide children with a fairer and better start in life. Children from low income families who access ECDE services will be more likely to enroll in primary school at

the right age and less likely to drop out of school or repeat grades. There is also high probability that these children will have improved school performance and cognitive abilities than those who do not attend ECDE (KESSP, 2005).

In recent years, a great deal has been achieved in ECDE sector through the Government, development partners, community and parental investment in ECDE. Despite these achievements made, access to ECDE services remains low in Kenya with 65% of the children aged 3-6 years not accessing ECDE services. In ASAL areas, this situation is much worse with only 9% of children aged 3-6years accessing ECDE services (KESSP, 2005). This is worsened by the government's focus on primary and secondary education at the expense of ECDE. The government provides free primary education and subsidized secondary and university education but commits minimal funds to ECDE sector (KEESP, 2005). The situation is even compounded by the fact that the government trains and employs primary and secondary school teachers but pay little attention to ECDE yet it is the foundation of learning. This situation creates a gap in the type and quality of ECDE services offered by ECDE centres across the country, which further undermines provision of early childhood education. The gap raises the need to conduct a study to establish factors that influence the provision of Early Childhood Education in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study.

The purpose of this study was to establish the factors that influenced provision of Early Childhood Education in Madiany Division

1.4 Objectives of the Study.

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To examine socio-economic challenges facing Early Childhood Education in Madiany Division.
2. To establish characteristics of Early Childhood Education centres in Madiany Division.
3. To explore strategies that can be used to strengthen Early Childhood Education in Madiany Division.

1.5 Research Questions

This study answered the following research questions:

1. What are the socio-economic challenges facing Early Childhood Education in Madiany Division?
2. What are the characteristics of Early Childhood Education centers in Madiany Division?
3. What strategies can be used to strengthen Early Childhood Education in Madiany Division?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The outcome of the study is useful to the researcher as it forms a foundation for future research work. It was believed that the study outcome would assist policy makers in the education sectors to strengthen ECDE services and provide an insight to the funding organizations in determining which aspects of the program needed urgent attention and funding. It was further believed that the findings would help in

furthering knowledge for those interested in the research area. If the findings are utilized, the welfare of the child would equally be improved.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Ideally, the study should have covered all the divisions of Kenya, but due to large population of Kenyans, the researcher was constrained of resources and therefore limited the study to Madiany Division. The researcher further sampled the respondents used in the study because the finances and time available could not allow everyone to be involved in the study. The researcher sampled 81 ECDE teachers, one DICECE officer and 162 parents, but left out other stakeholders in the education sector though they may have been knowledgeable in the research area.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to Madiany Division of Rarieda District of Nyanza Province. The area was chosen because of the existence of the lakeshore where child labor was rampant in the fishing industry and education standards were reported to be receding. The study covered all the 81 ECD centers registered by the Ministry of Education and the respondents included one DICECE officer, 162 parents and 81 ECD teachers. This study was motivated by the researcher's special interest of contributing to the academic body of knowledge in the field of early childhood education, especially on factors influencing its provision in rural Kenya. The researcher had vast knowledge of the geographical locations of various ECD centres.

1.9 Basic Assumptions of the study

The study assumed that all parents were aware that basic education was a fundamental right of all children. Another assumption was that ECDE providers were

aware and conversant with national goals and objectives of education as well as universal ones and were working towards its achievement. Lastly, the researcher assumed that all information which was received from respondents was correct and true and that the respondents were willing to give the desired information.

1.10 Definitions of Significant Terms used in the Study.

Early childhood: Covers a period of 3-6 years of age

Early Childhood Development (ECD): Used in study to refer to the area of discipline that concerns the care, development, and learning of young children of 0-6 years. ECD is under the Ministry of Education and consists of the following: Nursery school, Pre-unit class, kindergarten, Day Nursery, Play group, Madrassa and HBCC.

Early Childhood Development Centers: Refers to various early childhood services provided under the framework of ECD.

Early Childhood Services: Refers to all types of formal, non-formal and informal early childhood care and/or education services catering for children from 0-6 years old and/or their parents.

Socio-economic challenges: These are difficulties resulting from social and economic factors.

Stakeholders: These are people who have an interest or a stake in ECD services and are involved actively or passively in its provision.

Factors influencing: These refer to any determinant that contributes positively or negatively to provision of ECDE.

Characteristics of ECDE centers: these are features of teachers such as ; level of education

and ECDE training; structural features such as infrastructure; and operation features such as teacher wages and turnover.

Strategies: These refer to other measures that should be put in place to strengthen ECDE provision.

1.11 Organization of the study

This study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter covers the introduction of the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, limitations and delimitations of the study, significance of the study, basic assumptions, and definitions of significant terms and organization of the study. The second section deals with literature related to the research problem. It provides insight into previous works and trends that has been recorded in the research area. The chapter reveals the gap that existed and needed to be researched on. The third chapter deals with research methodology. It presents a detailed description on the research areas. These include study design, study population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments and techniques of data analysis. The fourth chapter carries a detailed analysis of the findings based on the objectives outlined earlier. Lastly, chapter five covers the conclusions and recommendations from reasoned judgment of issues raised in the study. It also gives suggestions on areas for further research

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains review of literature and contributions of various scholars in the field of Early Childhood education. The chapter is organized into the following thematic areas; Socio-economic challenges facing provision of early childhood education; Structural and teacher characteristics of ECD centers; and strategies that can be used to strengthen early childhood education provision.

2.2 Socio-economic challenges facing the provision of early childhood education.

Socio-economic factors play a major role in determining the provision and quality of any type of Education globally. The main challenges to early childhood education provision in Gambia include; inadequate access to health, water and sanitation, food and nutrition, early learning and stimulation resulting in low enrollment rates, with 76% of children being out of the centres. Repetition rates (6%) and drop out rates (5%) are high particularly in centers annexed to the lower basic schools (Pan Africa ECE Seminar Report, 2009). The country experiences a high under 5 mortality rate of up to 133 per 1000, high infant mortality of 84 per 1000, vulnerability to abuse, harassment and exploitation, disease, social exclusion and poverty among others. In addition, the educators face the problem of high educator-child ratio, unattractive conditions of service, low levels of professionalism, low salaries and inadequate teaching and learning materials (Pan Africa ECE Seminar Report, 2009).

Similarly, Togo has a number of challenges facing provision of ECDE. The general poverty of most of the people in the area makes it difficult for mothers to patronize the centers. This is worsened by the fact that there is persistence of ignorance about the importance of early childhood education, and the numbers of ECD centers remain inadequate. Also the ECD staff is inadequate; these include educators, inspectors and administrative personnel. The continued closure of Teachers Training Colleges for early childhood education is also a contributing factor to the total quality of ECDE (Pan African Seminar Report, 2009).

As a result of the sensitization on early childhood education programs in Nigeria, there has been a high level of awareness and demand by the educator and some heads and proprietors for the training of their personnel who yearn to benefit from the program. Unfortunately, the large numbers and the inadequate resources would not allow everyone to be trained. The reality is that most of the educators are not professionals and would need the training. The educators in the private sector neither have a voice nor a sense of identity. This is why their working and living conditions are so poor. Another problem has to do with the high rate of transfer of educators who have benefitted from the training under the program. The training makes them very sharp and emboldens them to do their work well. But instead of maintaining them in the same centers, they are normally transferred to primary schools. This constitutes a brain drain on the program (Pan Africa ECE Seminar Report,2009). Moreover, most centers in the public sector are under resourced and under staffed.

In Tanzania mainland, the major socio-economic challenge is lack of suitable infrastructure facilities in child care centers, thus affecting achievements of the aspired building of a strong foundation of education and training. There is a lack of

proper facilities and infrastructure, materials and professional capacities to suit the provision of education in child care centers and pre primary education classes for children with special needs education. There is also lack of coordination and control of environments of non-governmental institutions that run day care centers (Pan African ECE Seminar Report, 2009).

One of the existing challenges in Zambia is the high poverty levels of about 67% of the total population. The poverty levels are exacerbated by the rural urban migration that causes shortage of human resources in rural areas and are causing congested unplanned shanty compounds in urban centers where there are no basic amenities and early childhood centers. The other challenge is that institutions that support ECE services are not readily available in rural areas and unplanned settlements where the majority of poor and vulnerable children are located. In addition, the public ECE services in the urban areas are not close to the communities as expected, while the private ECE services are at a fee that cannot be afforded by poor majority households, (Pan Africa ECE Seminar Report, 2009). In addition, children in disadvantaged household are subjected to child labor that reduces their chances of accessing ECE services. The ravages of HIV/AIDS coupled with high levels of divorce have also exposed children to destitution. As regards the education policy, the current education policy is limited to training of pre-school teachers, provision of the national curriculum and education materials and maintaining standards in schools. It does not include parental education. Furthermore, the policy does not commit the government to provide ECE services, placing the responsibility on private and church providers. This disadvantages the poor children, thereby perpetuating the poverty cycle (Pan Africa ECE Seminar Report, 2009).

A study conducted in Cameroon revealed that the number of children enrolled in early childhood education programs fell during the 1990s from 93,771 in 1990 – 1991 to 91,708 in 1997 – 1998, this situation is said to be the outcome of the adverse effects of the economic recession which has affected the country since the late 1980's and led to drastic reduction of funds allocated to education. Moreover, the pre school facilities are still concentrated in the major urban centers. This situation has made disparities between social groups more acute, as rural children have little opportunity to benefit from early learning programs owing to its high cost, pre-school education remain a preserve of a small, affluent segment of the population (EFA ,2007).

In the 1974 survey (Milaret, 1976) several socio-economic challenges were identified as affecting early childhood education provision globally. These were, inadequate supply of places, ECD centers were primarily located in urban and affluent communities, there were inadequate physical facilities, unqualified and inadequately trained staff, a short day care in many countries which was inadequate to meet the needs of working mothers, insufficient places for disadvantaged children and/or handicapped children, fragmentation across government ministries with policy making responsibility, especially education, social welfare and health.

A study conducted in Wisconsin, USA by the department of public instruction and partners in 2003 established that the current supply of early childhood education and care opportunities does not meet the demand. It is estimated that the present statewide availability of child care options meets approximately 80% of the demand, in other words, 20% of the present demands for child care is not being met. This is worsened by the fact that majority of the parents in this state are in the workforce (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2003)

Kenya faces a number of constraints in the ECDE sector. The number of untrained teachers in ECDE centers is still high at 56% in the public ECDE centers. There is also a high turnover rate of 40% of trained ECDE teachers annually due to poor remuneration and lack of support. Inadequate supervision has also affected the quality of services. Quality assurance and standards officers are not adequately equipped to handle inspection and assessment of ECDE services, including issues relating to transition. Primary school managements and lower primary teachers are also inadequately prepared to support ECDE services (KESSP, 2005).

The current guidelines on the management of ECDE centers, as well as activity books and resource materials need to be updated. Only 11% of school management committees have been sensitized on ECDE management. There is also a need to expand community awareness on the importance of ECDE. However, the fact that 56% of Kenyans are living below the poverty lines limits the capacity of parents to support ECDE services. Therefore there is need to provide targeted support to enhance access to and adequacy of these services among the poor and disadvantaged communities across Kenya (KESSP, 2005).

A survey conducted in Kenya by the World Bank revealed the following challenges; (1) access to ECDE services was poor, particularly for the lowest income groups. (2) wide variations existed between centers in the level of physical facilities, trained personnel, supporting services, and activities. (3) There was a lack of both policy and services for children up to three years of age, although children in this age group are increasingly using these centers and much developmental damage occurs during this period. (4) There was low public awareness of the importance of early childhood development. (5) The level of care giver wages varied widely, and

payments were irregular (6) Monitoring and supervision were in adequate. (7) There were no linkages between pre-primary and primary schools.(8) The levels of funding were too low to allow efficient and effective program implementation. (9) The ability and willingness of communities to finance and manage their pre-schools was lacking (World Bank, 1990).

2.3 Structural and teacher characteristics of Early Childhood Education Centers.

Over the past decades, the number of children in early childhood programs before kindergartens has been increasing. Currently, more than 65% of mothers with children under the age of 6 are in the labor force (US Department of Labor, 2001). According to data from the center for education statistics, in 1995, 67% of 3 year olds and 77% of 4 year olds spent sometime each week in non parental care (Hofferth, Shauman, West and Henke, 1998). These numbers are bound to increase, given the increase in numbers of mothers in the work force and given the emphasis on sending children to kindergartens “ready for school.” Young children are being served in variety of settings including centers based programs, family child care, and care provided by relatives other than parents.

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The current study focuses on centers based care, which vary with regard to: for-profit status versus non-profit status. Within profit status, they further vary with regard to organizational affiliation. For example, within the for-profit sector, settings can be independently operated or operated by a national or local chain. Within the non-profit sector, settings can be affiliated with Head Start, a public school, a religious organization or an NGO. Both the settings have implications for many aspects of the programs operations. Head start, for instance, has specific guidelines

governing class size, teacher education, and curriculum (US Department of Health and Human Services, 1996). Likewise, according to several states guidelines (e.g. Arkansas, Missouri and North Carolina) religiously affiliated settlements may operate within guidelines put forth by the sponsoring church or synagogue (National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Childcare, 2000).

Data from the Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study (Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study Team, 1995) suggest that several structural characteristics of care settings are associated with quality provision of early childhood programs. These characteristic are; teacher education levels and specialized training, teacher wages, child to teacher ratios, teacher turnover and administrators prior experience. Generally speaking, higher quality programmes employ teachers who have completed more years of education than do lower quality programs. Further, teachers in high quality programs tend to have more specialized training in early childhood education and child development, and they are more informed about developmentally appropriate practices and teaching strategies for use with young children (Whitebook, Howes and Phillips, 1989).

According to data from the 1990 profile of childcare settings (Kirsker, Hofferth, Phillips and Farquhar, 1991), 47% of teachers in USA had a four year college degree, 13% had an associate degree, 26% had some college qualification, 13% had graduated from high school and 1% had less than a high school degree. Teachers in non- profit settings tend to be more highly educated than teachers in for-profit settings. Approximately, 33% of teachers in for-profit settings had a college degree. Further, teachers in public schools based settings were more educated than teachers in other settings. 80% had a college or graduate degree compared to 50% of teachers in religious settings and 45% of teachers in Head start settings. (Early, Pianta

and Cox, 1999). According to Whitebook, Howes and Phillips (1989), teacher education is highly correlated with teacher wages and turn over. As in other professions, teachers with more years of education tend to be paid more than teachers with fewer years of education. Furthermore, teachers who are paid more tend to stay at their jobs longer than those who are paid less. Data from the cost, quality and outcomes study indicates that higher quality settings have half as much as turnover as lower quality settings (Cost, Quality and Outcomes Team, 1995).

Research has shown that children can be affected by consistency of the caregivers. Children with multiple care givers in a child care center can form insecure attachment with their mother and can have difficulty adjusting to school (Howes and Stewart, 1987) as cited in Kirsker, Hofferth, Phillips and Farquhar (1991). Child staff ratios are another important feature of quality childcare provision. Generally speaking, higher quality early childhood programmes have more staff per child than lower quality programs. Children in high quality settings are likely to receive more individualized attention than children in centers where there are fewer teachers and more students. According to Bredekamp and Copple (1997) as cited in The National Association for Education of Young Children (1995), the recommended ratio is 8 children per staff member for the 3 year olds and 10 children per teacher for 4 year olds. Other important features that contribute to early childhood provision include; the cultural representation of teachers of young children and the hours that these programmes operate. As our population grows more diverse, it becomes increasingly important to have a diverse group of teachers. Horn and Hyson (2000) argue that a more diverse teaching pool encourages a sensitive multilingual and multi racial early childhood educators. Further, early childhood educators who speak more than one language are an invaluable resources in early childhood settings (NAEYC, 1995).

Little information is available with regard to hours of operation for early childhood programs, but this program feature is clearly of importance to parents. If programs aimed at providing enriching early educational experiences only operate for half a day, parents who are employed full time must find other care options for their children,. The inflexible work schedules of working class and low income parents may prevent some children from attending programs that are designed specifically for them. This problem may even be more challenging for the 7.3% of women and 9.3% of men with children under 6 years of age who work second or third shifts (US Department of Labour, 1997).

According to NAEYC (1995), all programs in early childhood education are not equally effective in promoting the learning and development of young children. The overall effectiveness of an early childhood program is dependent upon several early childhood education characteristics. These are; quality staff, suitable environment, appropriate grouping practices, consistent schedules and parent involvement. Decisions about these factors are made early in the planning and organizing process for an early childhood program. These decisions have important ramifications because they affect the child, the family the classroom, the school and the community.

According to Schwenhart (1998) as cited in NAEYC (1995), long term benefit result from high quality development programs, ones characterized by a child development curriculum, trained teaching staff, administrative leadership and curriculum support, small classes with a teacher and a teaching assistant. and systematic efforts to involve parents as partners. The first factor in planning for effective early childhood program is quality staff who have training and experience in teaching young children. The National Association of Elementary School principals

(1990) notes quality indicators in staff selection; “The staff is composed of people who have taken course work not only in elementary education but in teaching young children. Specifically, teachers and administrators who work with young children should have a background in ECD or ECDE; these courses emphasize child development, learning style of the young child, and the need to develop partnerships with parents. In addition to coursework, teachers and administrators should have completed supervised training in working with young children.

According to the National Association for the Education of Children (1991), early childhood teachers also need adequate time to focus on and interact personally with children and their families. If teachers are unable to spend time interacting with individual children, the benefits will be limited. The teacher-child-ratio and group size are important planning considerations. The younger the child, the more important it is to have adequate numbers of staff in the classroom. Appropriate teacher-child ratios encourage the bonding of children and teachers. The National Elementary School Principals (1990) recommends the following students ratios 20:2 for three to five years olds; 15:1 for six to eight year olds; and not more than 15:1 for the children at risk. The second factor in planning for effective early childhood programs is effective grouping practices. Research indicates that non-graded, mixed age groupings are particularly appropriate for young children (Gaustad, 1992) as cited in the Nation Elementary school Principals (1990). Within a classroom, teachers can use flexible grouping ranging from whole class to small groups to individual work to facilitate learning.

The third factor in planning for effective early childhood programmes is a suitable environment for learning styles of young children. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (1990) notes; young children learn best through

direct sensory encounters with the world and not through formal academic processes. Young children acquire knowledge by manipulating, exploring and experimenting with real objects. They learn exclusively by doing and through movement. The physical environment which includes the classroom setting as well as the outdoor environment can be created by subdividing a large classroom into learning areas or centers. The room arrangement of shelving and furniture clearly designates these centers and also provides a spacious area for group gathering. Furniture should be child sized, sturdy and comfortable. The quality of the physical space and materials provided affects the level of involvement of the children and the quality of interaction between adults and children (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1991).

A fourth factor in planning for an effective early childhood program is a consistent daily schedule. Dodge and Colker, (1992) as cited in National Association for the Education of Young children (1991) notes the importance of consistency in the daily routine. Young children feel more secure when they can predict the sequence of events and have some control over their environment. In addition, predictability provides rudimentary sense of time, as they begin to learn what comes first in the day, second next and last. The fifth factor in planning for effective early childhood programmes is parent involvement. Schweinhert (1998) as cited in National Association for the Education of Young Children (1991) asserts that early childhood staff should form a partnership with parents through home visits, frequent communication and a welcoming attitude towards volunteering and classroom observations.

A study conducted in Guinea and Cape Verde revealed that choice of language of instruction had a significant impact on cognitive development scores, Even more,

the same variable-bilingual instruction, had different effects. In Guinea, children receiving pre school instruction in French and a local language experienced the largest negative effect than produced by any school characteristic. Even when teacher characteristic are taken into consideration, this large negative effect remains. Also, there appears to be no inherent value to the language of instruction; children taught solely in French or solely in a local language scored better. One methodological explanation is that households self select the pre schools which use the language employed at home thus ensuring compatibility between child and the language of instruction. A developmental explanation is that a child's first language has to be developed to the level where he/she has the conceptual and linguistic pre requisites for the acquisition of literacy and pre-literacy skills. These findings are consistent with other research (Cummins 1979; Tucker 1977; Dutcher 1982).

In the same study, several teacher variables were examined; sex, Professional experience, training, age, and place of residence. Of these, none exerted a significant influence on cognitive scores in Cape Verde, although several did in Guinea. In Guinea, female teachers appear to be more effective in teaching pre school children than men, accounting for 2.5 point increase unlike other countries, female pre school teachers are in the majority, comprising less than 40% of the teaching force) the tight job market makes any teaching post desirable and men are not reluctant to teach at this level (Dutcher, 1982).

A study was conducted in the US by The Cost, Quality and Outcomes Team (1995) to determine the age and gender characteristics of early childhood teachers. The findings revealed that; the average age of a teacher of 3-4 years olds is 39 years. For profit centers, the youngest average age is 35 whereas public schools have the oldest average age of 42. 90% of teachers were females. The study further established

that teachers' education varied across the type. For instance, teachers in public schools had more education than teachers in other program types. 80% of teachers in the public schools had a Bachelors degree, whereas less than 50% of teachers in religious for profit and Head start programs have a bachelor degree.

2.4 Strategies for strengthening the provision of Early Childhood Education

It is now widely recognized that early intervention programmes are one of the most effective ways to build human capital and break the cycle of poverty. Yet the amount of money spent on early childhood education varies considerably, and no single approach has been identified as a universal model to suit every cultural context. If poor countries are to initiate and maintain effective early childhood care and education programmes, it is necessary to identify interventions and strategies that are both cost effective and adaptable to meet different communities and countries needs (Jaramillo and Tiejjan, 2000).

Pre schools can have an equalizing effect on the cognitive development of poor children, compensating for disadvantaged socio economic backgrounds. Even if pre schools cannot entirely close the cognitive development gap between rich and poor children, lack of early stimulation programmes can widen the gap in a relatively well off country. Public policy should emphasize the support of early childhood programmes for poor and disadvantaged children. The provision of subsidized programmes for lower income families could, in addition to reducing disparities in school readiness among children from different socio economic status level, also free mothers to find employment thus improving household income levels (Jaramillo and Tietjan, 2001). According to the seminar conducted by Pan Africa Early Childhood Education Forum in Ghana in 2009, the participants explored strategies of

strengthening ECDE in Africa and made several recommendations; (1) Public authorities should provide integrated and holistic services for young children, services that meet their health, nutritional development and educational needs, (2) Governments should prioritize early childhood education in their policy making, planning and budgeting, with a view to increasing access and improving the quality of early childhood education services for the young children, (3) Public authorities should regulate and co-ordinate early childhood education services in order to ensure that services provided by various stakeholders, including private providers meet National standards, (4) There is need to professionalize the early childhood education sector and the teaching force, by ensuring that all teachers receive pre-service and in-service training, as well as continuous professionals development, (5) Teachers unions should continue unionizing staff in the early childhood education sector, (6) The stakeholders such as government, UN agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank), civil society organizations ,parents and other stakeholders should work together to promote ECE, (7) More men should be recruited into the ECD sector in order to provide both male and female role models to young children (Pan African ECE Seminar Report, 2009).

In Cameroon, the public authorities have made efforts to improve the provision of education for this age group, with support from various partners including; private sector partners, through the building and equipping of many schools in the major urban centers; UNICEF, joined the program to boost basic education and extend early childhoods facilities to the countryside and to the disadvantaged areas; French Development Cooperation through its continuous training program for the pre-school supervisory staff (EFA, 2007).

In Australia, the Common Wealth Support for ECEC is directed primarily to childcare and indigenous services and currently framed within the “stronger communities and family strategy” the majority of support is directed to funding fee subsidies for parents (A 800 million dollars) . the remaining A200 million dollars was spent in childcare support services including operational and establishment funding for family day care and occasional care; subsidies to facilitate the development of play group; capital programs to upgrade and replace community based centers; In service training and resources advisory agencies; support for quality initiatives, including QIAS; support for children with special needs via funding to support additional staff in service and to support training agencies facilitating the integration of flexible, innovative services; and the disadvantaged area subsidy, which provides support for services particularly in rural and regional Australia (OECD, 2000).

In July 2000 (after OECD visit), the new child care benefit (CCB) replaced the commonwealth childcare Assistance and Rebate. The rate of assistance of CCB is dependent on income level, the number of children in the care, the hours used in relation to the work status of the parents, and the school status of children in the care. Since the introduction of CCB, low income families now pay less than 10% of their incomes on childcare. Families using private, local government or community based care services are all eligible for the same CCB. Families with low income are eligible to receive maximum amount of assistance while families on higher incomes receive minimum level of CCB. All rules and income limits for child care benefits are indexed in July each year (OECD, 2000).

A study commissioned by World Bank was conducted in Cape Verde and Guinea by Karen Tiejn. Bruno Suchaut and Adriana Jaramillo in 2001 to establish strategies that can be used to strengthen ECDE provision in the two countries. The

findings were to be a blue print that can be replicated by the poor African countries. Based on their findings, the study recommended that the governments should establish a supportive policy framework that creates an environment in which private sector and community ECCD initiatives can flourish. This could take many different forms, such as :- (a) Support IEC and parental education campaigns about the importance of early childhood education and care. (b) Piloting low-cost community supported ECCD models based on promising indigenous program (c) Creating ECCD start- up credit funds or (d) Developing non burden some guidelines and guidance for community programmes (Jaramillo and Tiejjan, 2001).

The preschool that have enjoyed the greatest success at the least cost should be studied further and replicated. Focused ECD related training should be provided to teachers. Resources to benefit the poor could be redistributed by levying user charges on wealthier households, limiting public pre school access to poor families, or providing poor families with subsidies (scholarships, uniform, nutrition, or health services) to encourage enrollment. (Jaramillo and Tiejjan,2001). The report further recommends that government can act to improve the quality of ECD services available through public or private sector providers. Government can help to equip local organizations and parents with knowledge of what to expect from ECD providers in order to select or monitor their children's preschool program. The government and the donors should encourage and support communities in the creation of ECD services and target whatever assistance is feasible to those communities that have acted to provide pre -school ECD services.

According to KESSP (2005), Kenyan government is already implementing measures that seek to improve the performance of ECDE sub sector. These include: establishment of a National Center for Early Childhood Education (NACECE), and

District Center for Early Childhood Education (DICECE), for purposes of in servicing teachers, mobilizing communities and parents through awareness creation, and providing community support grants to support marginalized/ vulnerable communities in collaboration with other partners. Other measures aimed at enhancing the quality of ECDE services include: implementation of a 2 year in service training program for ECDE teachers; mounting 9 month training courses for trainers; developing guidelines and syllabus for ECDE program; and equipping NACECE and DICECE.

2.5 Justification for intervention

Enhancing the quality of young children's lives is now a national and international priority expressed through research and policy initiatives, programs development and advocacy. That the early years are formative of children's long term prospects is one of the most ancient, enduring and influential themes shaping early childhood policy. Comprehensive early childhood programs are a major vehicle for combating health risks and reducing long term outcomes (Pollit et al, 1993). According to Pollit (1990), the impact of early health risks, disease and malnutrition is well established as affecting physical growth, cognitive functioning and school achievement. According to the World Bank (1990), the existing frameworks for providing early childhood education is community based, in the sense that it is managed and run by the communities through committees. Kenyan communities are diversified and so are pre school experiences. This situation leads to variation of ECD services according to geographical regions, which does not auger well for National goals of education which are uniform.

An assessment study of FPE carried out jointly by MOEST and UNESCO in February 2004 found that ECD programs had almost "collapsed" because of

children's enrolment had decreased after the introduction of FPE. The study found that parents opted to send their children straight to standard one, which became free, without having them go through ECD, which was still fee-paying. Moreover, standard one teachers' reported that children who skipped ECD had difficulty coping with lessons in primary school and performed poorly (UNESCO, 2005). The Review team found widespread anecdotal evidence of drops in enrolment at ECD centres, especially in poor provinces, many parents bypassed ECD altogether, many other send their children only to the pre unit class of ECD to prepare them for primary school, while some keep their children at home until they reach the age of 6 years entitling them to free education (UNESCO, 2005). This tendency is pronounced in poor families who cannot afford ECD centres. This is compounded by parents understanding of ECD as early acquisition of learning skills hence turning ECD centres into de facto "early primary education" facilities. Early childhood education encompasses programs and experiences intended to effect developmental changes in children from 3-6 years (<http://www.answers.com/topic/earlychildhoodeducation>) yet gaps exists in the provision. While service delivery exists for children over three years by ECD centres, known by various names, (e.g. Kindergaten, nursery) and under various types of management (e.g. public, private, community based etc), no equivalent service structure exists for children under three years of age. The major policy initiatives of the MOEST focus mainly on children over three. The education Act being drafted within the MOEST singles out 3-5+ year olds as its target group. The Draft Session Paper No.1 of 2005 states that the focus will be on 4+ to 5+ years old and implies that provision for children under three is left out (UNESCO, 2005). The government policy places ECD services under the ministry of education yet the services required are multi- sectoral (e.g. health, social services etc). This hampers

child's holistic development in the emotional, physical, social and cognitive domain (UNESCO, 2005).

2.6 Theoretical framework

The study employed Child development theory as a major guiding principle. This is Sigmund Freud's (1856-1939) theory known as Psycho-Analytic Theory. According to this theory, personality is mostly established by the age of five. Early experiences play a major role in personality development and continue to influence behavior later in life. The theory further expounds that the way parents handle their children through this Early Childhood stage has a profound and lasting impact on the overall development of a child's psyche. The theory further explains that personality development passes through a series of childhood stages called psycho-social. If these stages are completed successfully, the result is a healthy personality, and if certain issues are not resolved at a certain stage, fixation may occur. This theory emphasizes that Early Childhood is a critical and sensitive period in an individual's life.

According to Essa (1999) as cited by Kamerman (2006), children may be seen as plants that need nurturance, miniature adults, natural and national resources that need to be nurtured or future investments critical in the technological age. This posits that if indeed early childhood processes influence a child's future, the individual and social consequences of inadequate services and protection are dire; and the implications for early childhood policies are compelling (Schaffer, 2000). According to Pollit (1990), early health risks, disease and malnutrition is also well established as affecting physical growth, cognitive functioning and school achievement. Comprehensive early childhood programmes are a major vehicle for combating health risks and reducing long term outcomes (Pollit et al, 1993), ensuring young children

are provided with adequate nutrition and their parents are provided with appropriate information and support. In many poverty contexts, physical and psychosocial risks co-occur and interact in long term outcomes. The major evidence these psycho-socio risks come from young children deprived of adequate parental care and reared in low quality institutional setting (Pollit et al, 1993).

Decades of research provide indisputable evidence of severe developmental delay and emotional disturbance. However, follow up studies of children moved into a positive environment with adoptive families paint a more optimistic picture, consistently demonstrating improvements in social, emotional and intellectual functioning. More recent studies of children whose earliest years were spent in orphanages in Romania during 1980's, but who were subsequently adopted within British families provides further insight into the 'partial truth' of the critical period hypothesis. This study was able to compare outcomes for children adopted before the ages of two with outcomes of later adopted children, demonstrating that all made marked improvements, but earlier intervention (before age of 2) produced much more rapid and complete catch up (Rutter et al, 1998). The headline, policy might be characterized as "Early is best" but it is (almost) never too late (Rutter et al, 1998).

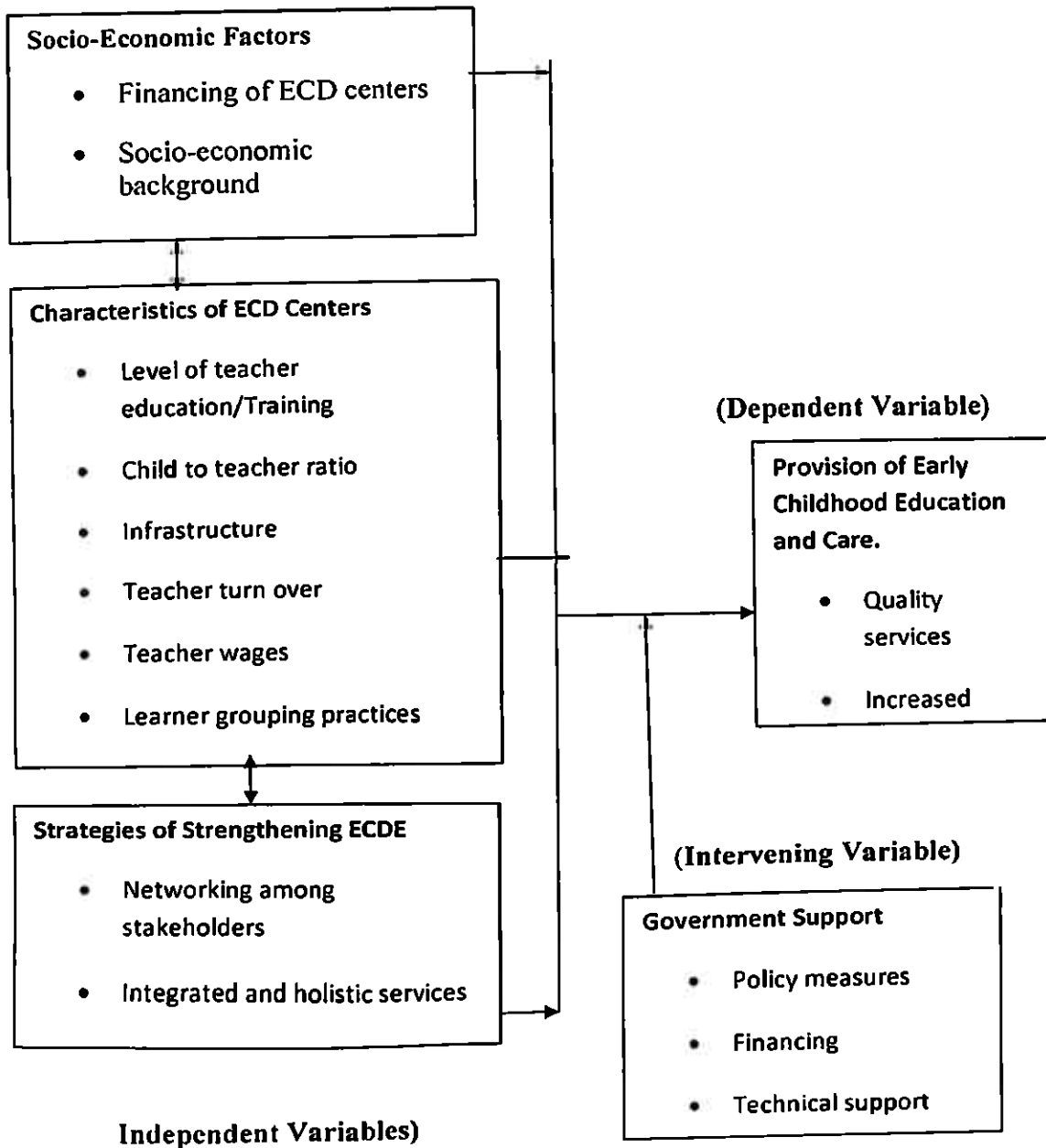
Scientific arguments for recognizing the early years as a sensitive period (development 'prime time') have received tantalizing endorsement in recent decades through advances in neuro science (Shankoff and Phillips 2000). For example, a widely cited Newsweek article made the dramatic claim that: "a newborn's brain is composed of trillions of neurons. The experiences of childhood determine which neurons are used, that wire the circuit of the brain. Those neurons that are not used may die" (Bergley ,1996) cited in <http://web.worldbank.org>). The human brain grows most rapidly during the pre natal period and the first few years of life, reaching 50 per

cent maturity by 8 (Rutter and Rutter, 1993). The core idea can be traced back at least as far as Plato (428 – 348): “And the first step is always what matters most, particularly when we are dealing with young and tender children. This is the time when they are taking shape and when any impression we choose to make leaves a permanent mark (Clarke and Clarke, 2000).

Research into early brain development is especially significant in drawing attention to the prenatal period and the very earliest months and years of life, and emphasizing the crucial importance of adequate nutrition, responsive care and a supportive environment at a time of successive, qualitative shifts in development. In the state of the World’s Children (2001), UNICEF writer asserts “...before many adults even realize what is happening, the brain cells of a new infant proliferate, synapses crackle and the patterns of a lifetime are established...choices made and actions taken on behalf of children during this critical period affects not only how a child develops but also how a country progresses” (UNICEF, 2001).

2.7 Conceptual framework for the perceived linkages between the variables.

Figure 2.1



2.7.1 Explanation of the conceptual framework

In the above conceptual framework, the dependent variable is the provision of Early childhood Education. The independent variables are; socio-economic challenges, characteristics of ECDE centers, and strategies of strengthening ECD. Socio-economic challenges facing an individual or a community determine the kind of Early Childhood Education services provided to them. The rich can afford the best ECD service because they have adequate finances while the poor may not afford the best and may opt for any ECD service available irrespective of quality. Characteristics of ECD centers have a direct bearing on the quality of ECD services provision i.e. availability of infrastructure, qualified teachers, learning resources dictates the quality of service. Strategies of strengthening ECD services may help to improve the quality of services offered to children by these ECD centers especially if supported by stakeholders. The intervening variable is the government support which may be policy measures, financial support or technical support.

2.8 Summary of Literature reviewed

This chapter explores the literature related to ECD provision. It carries out an in depth comparison of ECD services in various countries across the globe, revealing glaring gaps in ECD services in Kenya, reasons as to why more research needs to be done on ECD area which is still grey. The chapter further discusses the theoretical framework of the study. This study is based on Sigmund Freud's (1856-1939) Psycho-Analytic Theory which posits that early childhood is a critical and sensitive period in an individual's life and experiences at this stage can build or destroy an individuals' future. This is followed by a conceptual framework which highlights the perceived relationships between variables. The independent variable is the early

childhood Education provision while dependent variables are socio- economic challenges, Characteristics of ECD centers, and strategies of strengthening ECD services. The intervening variable is the government's support in terms of funding, technical support and policy initiatives. According to Jaramillo and Tieján (2001), it is now widely recognized that early intervention programs are one of the most effective ways to build human capital and break the cycle of poverty. Yet the amount of money allocated to ECDE sector varies considerably, and no single approach has been identified as universal model to suit every cultural context. If poor countries are to initiate and maintain effective ECDE programs, it is necessary to identify interventions and strategies that are both cost effective and adaptable to meet different communities and countries' needs (Jaramillo and Tieján, 2001).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, target population, sample and sample size, sampling procedure and data collection technique. It further describes the research instruments, validity and reliability of the research instrument and finally data analysis techniques

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used descriptive Survey design. This is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals (Orodho, 2003).It can be used when collecting data about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of educational or social issues (Orodho and Kombo, 2002).The researcher constructed questions to solicit the desired information, identified the individuals that were surveyed, the means by which the survey was conducted, and summarized the data that provided the designed descriptive information. Descriptive survey design was ideally suitable since it enabled the researcher to rapidly collect data for analysis .It was also suitable for collecting both qualitative and quantitative data.

3.3 Target Population.

The study was conducted in Madianya Division, Rarieda District in Nyanza Province. The division is situated to the extreme end of Nyanza Province bordering Lake Victoria. The division is approximately 200 square kilometers in size and the

main economic activities are fishing, peasant farming and small scale trading. The target population for this study was Early Childhood Education providers i.e. ECD teachers, the DICECE officers and ECD parents. In Madiany Division, there were 81 Early Childhood Education Centres registered under the Ministry of Education, 112 ECD teachers, 1 DICECE officer and 1640 ECD parents.

3.4 Sample Selection and Sample Size.

Sampling is the procedure a researcher uses to gather people, places or things to study. It is the process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains the elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group (Kombo and Orodho, 2002). Sample selection refers to the procedure to be used by the researcher to select the sample to be used in a study while sample size refers to the total number of subjects selected for use in the study (Mugenda and Mugenda,1999).

3.4.1 Sample Size

Wiersma (2000) defines a sample as a subset of the population to which the researcher intends to generalize the results. According to Mugenda (2008), a researcher would be advised to obtain data from the whole population if resources allowed and the number is relatively small. In such a case, inference would not be necessary because the measurement obtained represent the actual population parameters. According to Gay (2003) cited in Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), for descriptive studies, ten percent of target population is enough and for experimental studies, at least 30 cases are required per group. The researcher however, sampled 72% of ECD teachers which is 81 ECD teachers out of 112 representative of all ECD

centers in order to establish the characteristics of all centers and a total of 162 parents which is 10% of the target population which was 1640.

3.4.2 Sample Selection

The researcher used probability random sampling design to determine the respondents. This was done by writing numbers on small pieces of papers which were then folded and placed in a basket and turned several times to mix them up. A piece of paper was then picked at random and the selected number matched to the name corresponding to the number picked on the list of parents obtained per center. This process was similarly applied when selecting ECD teachers for the study. The researcher used purposive sampling to obtain DICECE officer used in the study. According to Mugenda (2008), purposive sampling is a technique that allows the researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objective of the study. The only DICECE officer available in the district was sampled for the study.

3.5 Research Instruments

The purpose of the study was to establish factors influencing provision of Early Childhood Education. Selection of research tools was guided by the nature of the data collected, as well as objectives of the study. The study employed self administered questionnaires for ECD parents and teachers and an interview schedule conducted by the researcher as the main tool for collecting data from the DICECE officer.

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), questionnaires are research instruments that gather data over a large sample. This study used a set of questions related to the objectives to which respondents answered. The questionnaires were structured such that they began with closed questions where respondents made

choices from options given, to open ended questions where the respondent gave elaborate answers. The questionnaire for ECD teachers was sub divided into three sections. Section A was entitled; Socio economic challenges facing ECDE provision and contained 10 questions. Section B was entitled; Characteristics of ECD centers and contained 11 questions while section C was entitled; Strategies for strengthening ECD Services and contained 3 questions. The questionnaire for ECD parents was divided into two sections. Section A was entitled; Socio-economic challenges facing Early Childhood Education and contained 7 questions while section B was entitled; Strategies for strengthening ECDE and contained 5 questions.

Structured interview involves subjecting every respondent in a sample to the same stimuli (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). This is important to the researcher because the reliability of the information gathered will be high. In addition, it provides an indepth information about a particular case of interest to the researcher (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The researcher used this instrument to obtain information from the DICECE officer sampled. This interview guide contained a total of 8 questions dealing with the three objectives.

3.5.1 Pilot Testing

Pilot testing is the process of subjecting the research instrument to a trial to determine its suitability in a given study area. This is done by administering the instrument to a sample of population with a similar desired characteristic to elicit desired responses. This is done with a view to adjust the instrument to yield desired responses in the actual research. A pilot test was done to refine the questionnaires and the interview schedule so that respondents would have no problems in answering the questions. This was conducted in Rarieda Division in Rarieda District. The

questionnaires were administered to 30 ECD teachers and 52 ECD parents who were selected through probability random sampling. Preliminary analysis using the pilot test data was undertaken to ensure that the data collected enabled the researcher to investigate the questions that were to be answered.

3.5.2 Validity of research Instruments

Validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The instruments were validated by the supervisors and experts in the ECD sector. Kerlinger (1973) points out that content validity can be achieved through an evaluation of the content by experts. A pilot test was done to refine the questionnaires and the interview schedule so that respondents would not have problems in answering the questions. Preliminary analysis using the pilot test data was undertaken to ensure that the data collected enabled the researcher to investigate the questions that were to be answered.

3.5.3 Reliability of the instruments

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Reliability refers to the consistency of data arising from the use of a particular research method. According to Gay and Airasian (2000), it is the degree to which a test consistently measures what it is measuring. This view is shared by Mugenda (2008), who states that reliability is the measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields the same results after repeated trials over a period of time. The researcher carried out pilot testing to help identify areas and questions that were not well framed so that they be modified. This was also to determine terminologies that were difficult to comprehend to the respondents. These were corrected before the actual process began. The pilot study further tested whether the methods intended for data analysis were appropriate and adjustments were made.

Simple and clear questions were used across all categories of respondents so as to make their responses consistent across variables. The pilot study was done in Rarieda Division to ensure that the Madiany Division ECD teachers were not subjected to the same instruments after pre tests. The reliability of the instruments was established by computing a test re test reliability coefficient. This was done by administering the test twice, but allowing an interval of two weeks to elapse between the tests. The responses in the two tests were compared and found to be consistent across the respondents.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

In this study, descriptive survey technique was used to collect data by making use of a questionnaire and interview schedule. The process started with a request for clearance to conduct a research from the university. This was followed by application for a research permit from The National Commission of Science and Technology. The researcher was instructed to report to the District Commissioner, District Education Officer and the DICECE Officer in charge of Rarieda District. This was followed by: Sourcing for the list of names and total number of ECD centres in the division, list of names and total number of ECD teachers in each centre and names of DICECE officers in the division from DICECE office. The researcher used letter of transmittal to access and brief the respondents about the study. Data was collected using two sets of questionnaires for ECD teachers and parents respectively and an interview schedule for the DICECE officer. The respondents were accessed through the school Head teachers since most ECD centres were attached to primary schools. The Head teachers were used to facilitate the dissemination of the questionnaires and the researcher collected the completed questionnaires personally. The researcher booked an appointment with DICECE officer on the date for an interview.

The questionnaires were conscripted in English because most respondents were assumed to understand and were able to communicate in this language fluently. The interview schedule was also conscripted in English. However, paraphrasing or reframing was done whenever the questioning process demanded. The questionnaire assisted to capture demographic characteristics of the respondents such as, levels of formal education, professional background, teaching experience among others. The interview was conducted with the DICECE officer at an appointed time. This entailed the management of the programme in the division and the challenges faced. The researcher conducted the study alone without assistance from research assistants.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

This is the separation of data into constituent elements. Data processing and analysis commenced at the pilot phase. The findings of the pilot study were processed and analyzed in the same way as the main study. All the data from the study was coded in the computer and this was done continuously during the course of research. Quantitative analysis was done by content. The researcher used SPSS [version 12] in quantitative analysis. Qualitative data was analyzed concurrently with data collection. The data was summarized on a daily basis and an interim report produced, analyzed and interpreted to be integrated with the quantitative data in the main report. The outcome of the two analysis were used to establish the factors which influenced the provision of Early Childhood Education in Madiany Division.

3.8 Ethical Considerations.

The researcher sought permission from the relevant authorities before commencing the study. The respondents were assured that the study was meant for academic purposes only, and that their responses would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of socio-demographic attributes of the respondents followed by findings of the study which have been discussed under thematic sub-sections in line with the study objectives. The analysis was done to fulfill the study objectives. These are; To examine socio-economic challenges facing the provision of Early Childhood Education in Madiany Division; To determine characteristics of ECD Centres in Madiany Division; To explore strategies that can be used to strengthen Early Childhood Education in Madiany Division.

4.2 Response Return Rate

A total of 81 questionnaires were issued to the ECD teachers and all were returned constituting 100% return rate. This was made possible because the researcher personally briefed the respondents, disseminated the questionnaires and collected them. Call backs were made in cases where the respondents were absent on the agreed dates. 162 questionnaires were issued to ECD parents and all were returned constituting 100% return rate. This was made possible because the researcher made appointments with the respondents through respective head teachers. The questionnaires were filled on the spot and returned.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Three categories of respondents were identified, namely the Early Childhood Education teachers, DICECE Officer and ECD parents. The teachers sampled were

between the ages of 20 – 50 years and comprised both males and females. Purposive sampling was done for DICECE Officer, who was only one in the district at the time of the study. He was a male aged 45 years. The parents sampled comprised males and females between the ages 20 – 50 years. Of the 244 respondents surveyed, 81 were teachers of which 7 (8.6%) were males and 74 (91.4%) were female. 162 were parents of which 58 (36%) were males and 104 (64%) were females. There was one male DICECE Officer surveyed. The study sought to establish the respondents characteristics based on age, gender, and level of education.

4.3.1: Distribution of Teachers Sampled for the Survey by Age

The study sought to establish the age characteristics of ECD teachers in the Division. This was achieved by asking the respondents to state their ages in years. The researcher then grouped the ages into classes for easy analysis. Table 4.1 presents the age distribution of teachers sampled for the study. Out of 81 teachers sampled, 9 (11.1%) were between 20 – 25 years, 19 (23.5%) were between 26 – 30 years, 21 (25.9%) were between 31 – 35 years, 14 (17.3%) were between 36 – 40 years, 15 (18.5%) were between 41 – 45 years and 3 (3.7%) were above 46 years.

Table 4.1 Teachers sampled disaggregated by Age

Ages in years	Frequency	Percentage
20 – 25	9	11.1
26 – 30	19	23.5
31 – 35	21	25.9
36 – 40	14	17.3
41 – 45	15	18.5
45 and above	3	3.7
Total	81	100.0

A similar study conducted in the United States by Cost, Quality and Outcomes Team (1995) revealed that the average age of ECD teachers in USA was 39 years. In the private centers the youngest teacher was 35 years, while the oldest in the public centers was 42 years. This contradicts the findings of this study where the average age of the teachers is 33 years. 11.1% of the teachers are 25 years and below while in USA the youngest teacher is 35 years old.

4.3.2 Distribution of Teachers sampled for the survey by Gender

The study sought to establish the gender characteristics of teachers. Observations were made on the gender composition of teachers surveyed. As shown in table 4.2, out of 81 teachers surveyed 74 (91.4%) were females while 7 (8.6%) were males.

Table 4.2 Gender distribution of teachers surveyed

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	74	91.4
Male	7	8.6
Total	81	100.0

A similar study conducted in USA revealed that 90% of early childhood teachers were females while 10% were males. (Cost, Quality and Outcomes Team, 1995). This concurs with the findings of this study which show that more female teachers 74 (91.4%) are in the Early Childhood Education career compared to 7 (8.6%) males. However, a study conducted in Guinea revealed that female teachers appear to be more effective but comprise a minority of less than 40%, unlike most countries where female teachers are the majority in the sector. This clearly indicates gender imbalance in the ECD sector globally.

4.3.3 Distribution of Teachers Surveyed based on Formal Education Levels

The study sought to establish level of formal education of ECD teachers. Out of the 81 teachers sampled, 19 (23.5%) had standard 8 certificate, 34 (40.7%) had form 4 certificates while 29 (35.8%) had academic qualifications above form 4. Table 4.3 presents distribution of teachers disaggregated by levels of formal education.

Table 4.3 Teachers disaggregated by levels of formal education

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
STD 8	19	23.5
Form 4	33	40.7
Above form 4	29	35.8
Total	81	100.0

According to data from the 1990 profile of childcare settings (Kirsker, Hofferth, Phillips and Farquhar, 1991), 47% of teachers in the USA had a four year college degree, 13% had an associate degree, 26% had some college training, 13% had graduated from high school, and 1% had less than a high school degree. According to The National Association of Elementary School Principals (1990), the first factor in planning an effective early childhood education provision program is quality staff who have training and experience in teaching young children. They further note: "The staff should be composed of people who have taken course work not only in elementary education but in teaching young children." This is contrary to the study findings where 23.5% have less than a high school qualification compared to 1% in the USA. Moreover, only 35.8% have qualification above high school compared to 86% in the USA. This outcome could impact on provision of ECD

services offered to children who are in their formative years and therefore need specialized care.

4.4 Socio- economic challenges facing the provision of ECDE services

Socio-economic factors play a major role in determining the provision and quality of any type of education globally. This section was divided into three sub themes for ease of analysis. These are: financing of ECD centers; socio-economic background of parents and other economic factors.

4.4.1 Financing of ECD centers

The study sought to establish the sources of finances for ECD centers. Table 4.4 gives a summary of responses.

Table 4.4 Teachers responses on sources of finance.

Source	Frequency	Percent
Parent	57	70.0
Proprietor	19	23.0
Church	5	7.0
Total	81	100.00

The findings revealed that the major source of funding for ECD centers are the parents at 57(70%), Proprietors provide 19(23%) funding mainly in private centers while churches provide 5(7.0%). This confirms the findings of a similar study in Zambia where the policy does not commit the government to provide ECE services, placing the responsibility on the private and church providers as well as the parents. This disadvantages the poor children, thereby perpetuating the poverty cycle (Pan African ECE Seminar Report, 2009). This study further sought to establish how often the parents honored their monthly payments to these centers. Out of 57 centers that

received funding from parents 55(96%) revealed that there was always a delay while 2 (4%) revealed that it was paid punctually.

Table 4.5 gives a summary of the responses.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Delay	55	96.0
Punctually	2	4.0
Total	57	100.0

The parents were asked to give their reasons for this delay. 71(70%) stated poverty as a major reason, while 31(30%) cited poor quality of services offered in the centers. This confirms the findings a study conducted in Cameroon, which confirmed that poverty was a major factor in ECD provision. This situation has made disparities between social groups more acute, as rural children have little opportunity to benefit owing to its high cost. Pre-school remains a preserve of a small, affluent segment of the population (EFA, 2007).

4.4.2 Socio-economic status of parents

The study also sought to establish the socio-economic status of ECD parents. The teachers were asked to rate the learners in terms of socio-economic background. Out of 81 respondents, 34(42%) rated the learners as poor, 23(28%) rated them as very poor while 24(30%) rated them as average.

Table 4.6 Summary of the responses of teachers on socio-economic status of parents.

	Frequency	percent
Poor	34	42.0
Very poor	23	28.0
Average	24	30.0
Total	81	100.0

The findings confirms a similar survey done in Zambia which revealed that 67% of the total population were very poor, and found difficulty in affording ECDE services (Pan African ECE Seminar Report, 2009).

The study further sought to establish the economic status of parents whose children were in private centers versus parents whose children were in community centers. Parents were asked to state their means of livelihood, and out of 50 parents sampled from 25 private ECDE 47(94%) were in government employment while 3 (6%) were in private business. Out of 112 parents sampled from 56 centers, 72 (64%) were jobless and doing peasant farming while 40(36%)were in employment.

Table 4.7 Comparison of socio-economic background of ECD parents in public versus private centers

Parents in public centers	Frequency	Percent
Unemployed	72	64.0
Government employee	40	36.0
Total	112	100.0
Parents in private centers		
Government employee	47	94.0
Business	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0

This reveals that socio-economic status determines the choice of ECD centers by parents since private ECD centers charge more fees compared to public centers. This confirms findings of a similar study in Cameroon which confirmed that poverty was a major factor undermining quality ECD services provision, leading to disparities between social groups as rural children have little opportunity to benefit owing to its high cost, hence quality preschool services remain a preserve of a small, affluent segment of the population (EFA, 2007).

4.4.3 Other economic factors

The study also sought to establish the adequacy of teaching and learning resources in the centers. Out of 81 respondents, 24 (30%) stated that the resources were adequate, 53 (65%) stated that they were inadequate while 4 (5%) stated that they were very adequate.

Table 4.8 Summary of responses on adequacy of learning resources

	Frequency	percent
Inadequate	53	65.0
Adequate	24	30.0
Very adequate	4	5.0
Total	81	100.0

According to Milaret (1976), a survey conducted in 1974 revealed several social-economic challenges affecting early childhood education provision globally. These were, inadequate physical facilities, unqualified and inadequately trained staff. This is similar to the situation in Tanzania mainland, where lack of suitable infrastructural facilities in child care centers are perceived to be affecting the achievement of the aspired building of a strong foundation of education and training (Pan African ECE Seminar Report, 2009). These two studies concur with the study findings that ECD centres have inadequate facilities.

The study sought to establish the challenges faced by DICECE office in executing its duties. Findings revealed that there was only one DICECE officer in the District against the expected number of four. Moreover, the office had no independent means of transport and had to rely on the goodwill of the District Education Officer to facilitate their transport during routine inspections. This confirms the Pan African ECE Seminar Report (2009) which stated that ECD staff are inadequate in Africa. These include educators, inspectors and administrative personnel

The study sought to establish the rating of the salary scale of ECD teachers. The respondents were asked to rate the salary of ECD teachers. Out of 81 respondents, 38 (46%) rated it as low, 39 (48%) rated it as very low while 4 (6%) rated it as average.

Table 4.9 Summary of salary ratings

Response	frequency	percent
Very low	39	48.0
Low	38	46.0
Average	4	6.0
Total	81	100.0

The findings reinforce the Pan African ECE Seminar Report (2009), which stated that the educators face the problem of high teacher-child ratios, unattractive conditions of service, low level of professionalisms, low salaries and inadequate facilities

4.5 Characteristics of ECD centers

According to data from the Cost, Quality and Outcomes Team (1995), several structural, operational and teacher characteristics of care settings are associated with quality provision of ECD programs. These are: Teacher-child ratios, teacher education levels and specialized training, teacher wages and teacher turn over.

4.5.1 Characteristics of ECD teachers

This section dealt with analysis of teacher characteristics in ECD centers. The study sought to establish the level of teacher training in early childhood education. The respondents were asked to state the training background of teachers in their centers. Table 4.8 gives a summary of the training background of teachers in the division.

Table 4.10 Teachers disaggregated by levels of ECD training

	Frequency	percent
Untrained	60	54.0
Certificate	35	31.0
Diploma	17	15.0
Total	112	100.0

The study findings revealed that 60 (54%) of teachers are untrained in ECD, 35 (31%) have certificates in ECD while 17 (15%) are holders of Diploma qualifications in ECD. This finding was confirmed by an interview with the DICECE officer which confirmed that 60 teachers were untrained in ECD, 17 had Diploma in ECD while 35 had certificates in ECD. Generally speaking, higher quality programs employ teachers who have completed more years of education than do lower quality programs. Furthermore, teachers from high quality programs tend to have more specialized training in ECD and child development, and they are more informed about developmentally appropriate practices and teaching strategies for use with young children (White book, Howes and Phillips, 1989). The findings of this study contradict the scenario in USA. According to data from the 1990 profile of childcare settings (Kirsker, Hofferth, Phillips and Farquar, 1991), 47% of teachers had a four year college degree, 13% had an associate degree, 26% had some college training, 13% had graduated from high school and 1% had less than a high school degree. Majority of teachers in USA were highly trained in ECD compared to the Kenyan set up.

The study further sought to establish the number of teachers per ECD center. Table 4.9 gives a summary of number of teachers disaggregated by centers.

Table 4.11 Teachers disaggregated by centers

No. of Teachers	frequency	percent
1	24	30.0
2	49	61.0
3	3	3.0
4	5	6.0
Total	81	100.0

Analysis showed that 49(61%) centers had two teachers, 24(30%) had one teacher, 3(3.0%) had three teachers while 5(6.0%) had 4 teachers. Child to staff ratios is another important feature of quality provision. Generally speaking, higher quality early childhood programs have more staff per child than lower quality settings. Children in higher quality settings are likely to receive more individualized attention than children in centres where there are fewer teachers and more students. According to Bredekamp and Copple (1997) as cited in the National Association for Education of Young Children, the recommended ratio of teacher to child is 8 children per teacher for 4 years olds and 10 children per teacher for 4 year olds. According to Schewart (1998) cited in NAEYC (1991), long term benefits result from trained teaching staff, small classes with a teacher and a teaching assistant. This is contrary to the study findings where 24(30.0%) centers have only one teacher without an assistant. Moreover, even centres with more than one teacher do not meet the ratios recommended above.

The study sought to establish teacher wages and turnover in the ECD sector. Out of the 81 respondents, 70(86%) earned 2,000/= per month and 11(14%) earned 2500/= per month. An interview conducted with the DICECE officer confirmed the average salary as 2000/= per month in most centers. According to Howes, Whitebook

and Philips (1989), teachers who are paid more tend to stay at their jobs longer than those who are paid less. The study further sought to establish the teacher's willingness to remain in the profession. Out of 81 respondents, 45 (56%) expressed willingness to quit if offered better paying jobs, 23 (35%) expresses willingness to stay while 6 (9%) were unsure. This confirms the assertion by Whitebook, Howes and Philips (1989) that teachers who are paid more tend to stay at their jobs longer while teachers who are paid less tend to quit. Research has shown that children can be affected by consistency of the caregivers. Children with multiple caregivers can form insecure attachments with their mothers and can have difficulty adjusting to school (Howes and Stewarts, 1987) cited in Kirsker, Hofferth, Philips and Farquhar (1991). This is reinforced by observation by DICECE officer that ECD teachers often complained of low wages which are irregular hence tendency to stay in their jobs for shorter durations.

4.5.2 Operational and structural characteristics of ECD centers

Operational characteristics are practices carried out in the ECD sector while structural characteristics are features such as infrastructure and teaching and learning resources in ECD centers. The study sought to establish the grouping practices of learner in ECD centers. Out of the 81 respondents 65 (80%) grouped learners into cohorts by age, 8 (10%) grouped learners based on entry behavior, while 8 (10%) grouped learners based on time of entry.

Table 4.12 Summary of grouping practices disaggregated by ECD centers.

	Frequency	percent
Age	65	80.0
Entry	8	10.0
Time of entry	8	10.0
Total	81	100.0

According to NAEYC (1991), one major factor in planning for effective early childhood program is effective grouping practices. Research indicates that non-graded mixed-age grouping is particularly appropriate for young children (Gaustad, 1992) as cited in the National Elementary School Principals (1990). This contradicts the study findings which revealed that most centers grouped children according to age whereas 8.0% used grades, that is, entry behavior of learners. The study sought to establish the adequacy of learning materials and infrastructure in ECD centers. Teachers were asked to state adequacy of these materials in their respective centers. Table 4.11 gives a summary of the responses.

Table 4.13 Summary on adequacy of teaching and learning materials

	Frequency	percent
Inadequate	53	65.0
Adequate	24	30.0
Very adequate	4	5.0
Total	81	100.0

Findings revealed that 53 (65%) of the centers had inadequate teaching and learning materials, 24 (30%) had adequate, while 4(5%) had very adequate teaching and learning materials. This finding was affirmed by the DICECE officer in an interview. He asserted that the learning materials were grossly inadequate in most

ECD centers. According to NAEYC (1991), suitable learning environment contributes to quality ECDE provision. The quality of the physical space and materials provided affects the level of involvement of the children and the quality of interaction between adults and children. The National Association of Elementary school principals (1990) notes; Young children learn best through direct sensory encounters with the world and not through formal academic processes. Young children acquire knowledge by manipulating, exploring and experimenting with real objects. The physical environment includes the classroom settings as well as the outdoor settings which encompass furniture, play materials, room arrangement outdoor facilities. The finding of this study are in the contrary, in that 65% of centers lack adequate facilities, thus do not provide suitable learning environment to children.

The study sought to establish the language of instruction used in ECD centers. Respondents were asked to state their language(s) of instruction in their respective centers. Out of 81 respondents, 70 (86%) used Dholuo, 6 (7.5%) used English while 5 (6.5%) used both Dholuo and English. Table 4.12 gives a summary on language of instruction.

Table 4.14: Summary of ECD centers disaggregated by language of instruction

Language	Frequency	percent
Dholuo	70	86.0
<i>English</i>	6	7.5
Both	5	6.5
Total	81	100.0

The findings of this study affirms the findings of a similar study in Guinea and Cape Verde which revealed that the choice of language of instruction had significant impact on cognitive development scores. Even more, the same variable, bilingual

instruction had different effects. In Guinea, children receiving preschool instruction in French and a local language experienced the largest negative effects than produced by any school characteristics. Even when teacher characteristics are taken into consideration, this large negative effect remains. Also, there appears to be no inherent value to the language of instruction; children taught solely in French or solely in a local language scored better. One methodological explanation is that households select the pre schools which use the language employed at home, thus ensuring compatibility between child and the language of instruction. A developmental explanation is that a child's first language has to be developed to the level where he/she has the conceptual and linguistic pre-requisites for the acquisition of literacy and pre-literacy skills. These findings are consistent with other research (Cummins 1979, Tucker 1977, Dutcher 1982).

The study sought to establish the length of operation hours of early childhood centers. Out of the 81 centers, 75 (92.6%) operated a half day program while 6 (7.4%) operated full day programs. Table 4.13 gives a summary on type of program.

Table 4.15 Summary of length of learning day in ECD centers.

	Frequency	percent
Half Day	75	92.6
Full Day	6	7.4
Total	81	100.0

The findings of this study seem to contradict US Department of Labor views, since 92.6% of centers operate half day. According to US Department of Labor (1997), little information is available with regard to hours of operation for early childhood programs, but this program features is clearly of importance to parents. If program aimed at providing enriching early educational experiences only operate for

half a day, parents who are employed full time must find other care options for their children. The inflexible work schedules of working class and low income parents may prevent some children from attending programs that are designed specifically for them. This may even be more challenging for the 7.3% of women and 9.3% of men with children under 6 years of age who work second or third shifts (US Department of Labor, 1997).

4.6 Strategies that can be used to strengthen ECDE provision

These are measures that can be explored to improve services in the ECD sector. This section was organized into four sub themes for ease of analysis. These are; other services that should be provided in ECD centers; roles the government should play to strengthen ECDE; roles the development partners should play to strengthen ECDE; and policy related issues to be addressed to improve ECDE.

4.6.1 Roles of the government in strengthening ECDE

The study sought to explore strategies that can be used to strengthen early childhood Education provision. In order to achieve this, teachers were asked to suggest the role the government should play to strengthen the ECDE provision. Out of the 81 respondents, 48 (59%) suggested that the government should employ teachers in the ECD sector, 10 (12%) suggested provision of learning materials, 15 (19%) suggested provision of free ECD education and 8 (10%) suggested provision of support grants. Table 4.14 gives a summary of teachers' responses.

Table 4.16 : Summary of teachers' responses on roles of government

Type of support	frequency	percent
Employ teachers	48	59.0
Provide T/L Materials	10	12.0
Free ECD education	15	19.0
Grants	8	10.0
Total	81	100.0

Similarly, parents were asked to state the roles they expected the government to perform in strengthening ECDE. Out of 162 respondents, 131 (81%) suggested that the government should employ teachers, 22 (14%) suggested provision of teaching and learning materials while 9 (5.0%) suggested nutrition and healthcare services.

Table 4.17 Summary of parents' responses on government roles in strengthening EDCE.

Roles	frequency	percent
Employ teachers	131	81.0
Learning resources	22	14.0
Nutrition & healthcare	9	5.0
Total	162	100.0

The findings of this study reveal that both teachers and parents prioritize teacher employment and provision of learning facilities as the role government should play to strengthen ECDE. This view was shared by the DICECE officer who suggested that the government should prioritize employment of ECD teachers. These findings affirm the strategies that are used in Australia to strengthen ECDE. The Australian government funds fee subsidies for parents at a cost of A800 million dollars. Another A200 million dollars is spent in childcare support services including

operation and establishment funding for family day care and occasional care; in services training and resources advisory agency; support for children with special needs via funding to support additional staff. (OECD,2000). Moreover, a seminar held in Ghana in 2009 by Pan Africa ECE Forum recommended that governments in Africa should prioritize early childhood education in their policy making, planning and budgeting with a view to increasing access and improving quality of ECDE services for young children (Pan Africa ECE Seminar Report, 2009).

4.6.2 Roles of the development partners

The study sought to explore strategies that can be used to strengthen ECDE. The teachers were asked to suggest the roles the development partners should play to improve ECDE provision. Out of the 81 respondents, 30 (37%) suggested provision of teaching and learning materials, 17 (21%) suggested teachers pay, 5(6.0) suggested teacher training, 3 (4%) suggested sponsorship of workshops for teachers. The study reveals stakeholders conviction that nongovernmental partners should collaborate with other stakeholders to strengthen ECDE.

Table 4.18: A summary of responses of teachers on roles of development partners should play in strengthening ECDE.

Roles	frequency	percent
Feeding program	30	12.0
T/L materials	12	15.0
Teachers pay	17	21.0
Workshops	10	12.0
Teacher training	5	6.0
Play materials	4	5.0
Furniture	3	4.0
Total	81	100.0

Similarly, parents were asked to suggest the roles they expected the development partners to play in strengthening the ECD sector. Out of 162 parents, 65 (40 %) suggested feeding program, 45(28 %) suggested teaching and learning resources, 30 (19 %) suggested teachers salary while 22 (13 %) suggested teacher training.

Table 4.19 Summary of Parents responses on roles of development partners

Role	Frequency	Percent
Feeding program	65	40.0
T/L materials	45	28.0
Teachers salary	30	19.0
Teacher Training	22	13.0
Total	162	100.0

The findings of this study confirm EFA (2007), study findings conducted in Cameroon. The public authorities made efforts to improve the provision of education for this age group, with support from various partners including, private sector

partners, through the building and equipping of schools; UNICEF, boosting basic education and extending early childhood facilities to the country side and to the disadvantaged areas; French Development Corporation, through its continuous training program for the preschool supervisory staff (EFA, 2007). This is further affirmed by the recommendations of Pan Africa ECE forum that the stakeholders such as government, UN agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF and World Bank), civil society organizations, parents and other stakeholders should work together to promote ECDE (Pan African ECE Seminar Report, 2009).

4.6.3 Other services that should be provided under ECD services

The study sought to establish parents' views on other services that should be offered to their children in ECDE centers. Out of the 162 respondents, 102 (63%), suggested healthcare, 55 (34%) suggested feeding program, while 5 (3.0%) suggested others.

Table 4.20: Summary of the responses of parents' on other services to be provided in ECDE.

	Frequency	percent
Healthcare	102	63.0
Feeding program	55	34.0
Others	5	3.0
Total	162	100.0

Findings of this study revealed that apart from academics, parents would wish other services such as healthcare, feeding program to be incorporated into ECD services. The findings support a recommendation put forth by the Pan Africa ECE Seminar Report (2009) that public authorities should provide integrated and holistic

services for young children, services that meet their health, nutritional, developmental and educational needs. According to Jaramillo and Tiejjan (2001), this can be achieved by levying user charges on wealthier households, limiting public pre-school access to the poor families, or providing poor families with subsidies (scholarships, uniform, nutrition or health services) to encourage enrolment.

4.6.4 Policy related issues to be addressed

The study sought to establish policy related issues that should be addressed in order to improve ECDE provision. An interview conducted with the DICECE officer revealed that ECD sector received meager allocations from the ministry of education. Moreover staffing was inadequate as there was only one officer in the entire district. It was suggested that more allocation of funds be channeled to ECDE sector as well as improvement of staffing. This is similar to findings of a study commissioned by World Bank in Cape Verde and Guinea to explore strategies of improving ECDE in poor African countries. The study recommended that government can establish a supportive policy framework that creates an environment in which private sector and community initiatives can flourish. This could take many different forms such as; support of IEC and parental education campaigns about the importance of education and care; piloting low- cost promising indigenous programs; creating ECD start-up credit funds; or developing non burdensome guidelines and guidance for community programs. (Jaramillo and Tiejjan, 2001) Similarly, Pan African ECE Seminar Report (2009). recommended that the government should prioritize ECE in their policy making. planning and budgeting, with a view to increasing access and improving quality of services provided to young children

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study. This is followed by conclusion arising from the findings and then recommendations for policy direction targeting to improve the provision of quality early childhood education and care. Finally, the chapter explores areas for further research envisaged to contribute towards improvement of ECD services. The chapter also outlines what the study has contributed to the body of knowledge in early childhood education.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study examined the factors influencing the provision of early childhood education in Madiany Division in Rarieda District. The study was guided by three research objectives namely: to examine socio-economic challenges facing early childhood education in Madiany Division; to establish characteristics of early childhood education centers in Madiany Division; and to explore strategies that can be used to strengthen early childhood education in Madiany Division. A total number of 81 teachers and 162 parents were selected for the study using a probability sampling design discussed in chapter three of this report. One DICECE officer was also sampled using purposive sampling. Data was collected by means of questionnaires for teachers and parents and an interview schedule for the DICECE officer.

The study revealed that parents were the major source of funding for ECD centers. This was so because the current education policy does not commit the

government to provide free early childhood education and care services, placing the responsibility on private, church and community providers. The studies further revealed that majority of parents were poor and thus were unable to honour their monthly payments for ECD services in time. This compromised the ECD services provision as it led to delay in teacher salaries, inadequate teaching and learning resources. The study further revealed that ECD teachers were lowly paid compared to other cadres of education providers such as primary or secondary school teachers. This was irrespective of academic qualifications of individual teachers.

The study also established that the DICECE office was experiencing several challenges in executing its duties. There was acute understaffing in the DICECE office, as there was only one officer in charge of 270 centers in the District. This made routine inspections difficult due to workload. Moreover, the office had no means of transport assigned to it, and basically relied on the good will of the D.E.O' s office to facilitate their transport. The study further revealed that socio-economic status of parents determined the choice of ECD centers for their children. Majority of parents whose children were in private centers were in paid employment compared to those in community centers. This perpetuates disparities between social groups in the community.

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The study revealed that ECD sector was characterized by high level of unprofessionalism as majority of teachers were untrained in ECD. This is likely to compromise the quality of services provided to the learners because teachers with sound ECD training are equipped with more information about developmentally appropriate practices and teaching strategies for use with young children (Whitebook, Howes and Philips. 1989). Moreover, the study revealed that ECD centers did not meet the teacher to child recommended ratios. According to Bredekamp and Copple

(1997) cited in National Association for Education of Young Children, the recommended ratio is 8 children per teacher for three year olds and 10 children per teacher for 4 years olds. Furthermore, 30% of the centers had one teacher against the recommendations of Schewart (1998) cited in NAEYC (1991) that long term benefits result from trained teaching staff, small classes with a teacher and a teaching assistant. The study established the following characteristics of ECD center; most ECD centers grouped learner into learning cohorts according to age. This is contrary to scholarly findings that non-graded, mixed aged grouping is particularly appropriate for young children (Gaustad, 1999) cited in the National Elementary School Principals (1990). Moreover, most centers had inadequate teaching and learning resources which undermined quality provision of ECD services. According to NAEYC (1991), suitable learning environment contributes to quality ECDE provision.

The study established that most ECD centers used Dholuo as a language of instruction and socialization. The choice of language of instruction has a significant impact on cognitive development scores. According to Cummins (1979), Tucker, (1977) and Dutcher (1982), children taught solely in local or foreign language scored better than children receiving bilingual instructions. The study further established that most centers operated for half a day (92.6%) compared to 7.4% that operated full day. This may undermine parents' income generation participation as they have to work for half a day when their children are in school and take care of them in the remaining half day. Similarly, parents who work full day must have alternative arrangements for care of their children after school hours. This may prove to be expensive or unattainable to low income cadre of parents.

A cross sectional view of respondents indicates that the government should play a major role to strengthen ECDE provision. These roles are employment of ECD

teachers, provision of teaching, and learning materials as well as provision of other care service such as nutrition and medical care. Since ECDE is the foundation of learning, respondents felt that it should be made free and compulsory just like primary education. Similarly, a cross sectional view of respondents indicate that development partners should supplement the efforts of parents and the government in ECDE provision. They should fund the feeding provision as well as teacher development workshops. Moreover, ECD centers should provide other fundamental services such as healthcare and feeding program on top of academics. This ensures holistic development of children. In terms of policy related issues, the study established that there was inadequate funding of the sector by the government and more resources should be allocated to it. Moreover, there is need to improve the staffing in the DICECE office to improve efficiency in the sector.

5.3 Conclusions

In conclusion, it is important to note the fact that socio economic factors have a great impact on provision of ECDE. The government has not been able to provide adequate early childhood education services as compared to other tiers of education such as primary, secondary and university. This is despite the fact that scientific arguments recognize the early years as a sensitive and critical period in human development (Shankoff and Phillips, 2000). Moreover, ECDE is the foundation of learning and has a major implication on the future life of a child. There is need for a concerted effort between the parents, the government and development agencies to provide quality early childhood education. This should be supported by sound policy framework and budgetary allocations for the sector.

It is worth noting that structural and teacher characteristics have a major impact on the provision and quality of ECDE services. There is need to provide adequate structural facilities to all ECDE centers. Teacher characteristics such as qualifications and training background should be enshrined in policy framework so that only qualified personnel are allowed to handle children. Moreover, strategies for strengthening ECDE services should be explored. There is need for all the stakeholders such as the government, parents, non-governmental partners and UN agencies to collaborate in their effort to strengthen the sector.

5.4 Recommendations

In view of the above findings, the following recommendations should be adapted in order to improve the provision of ECDE services. The government should commit itself to provision of early childhood education services as is the case with other levels of education. Majority of parents are poor and unable to offer quality ECD services for their children perpetuating gap between the rich and the poor. Moreover the funds allocated to the sector are inadequate to offer quality services to all. There is need to increase funding for the sector so that adequate learning resources can be availed to all centers. The government should professionalize the ECD sector by establishing training colleges for ECD teachers, and insisting that only trained staff should handle young children. Routine inspections should be done to ensure all centers have the recommended teacher to child ratios as well as basic teaching and learning resources.

The government and civic society organization should partner to provide quality early childhood education. This can be done in areas such as teacher training, teacher development workshops, provision of teaching and learning resources, sensitizing the parents on the importance of early childhood education among others.

There is need to provide holistic care package encompassing academics, healthcare and nutrition.

5.5 Contributions to body of knowledge

Table 5.1 outlines the knowledge gaps that were identified before the commencement of the study and which have since been fulfilled by the study.

Objectives	Contribution
1. To the examine socio-economic challenges facing provision of ECDE	- Identification of the socio-economic challenges and addressing them
2. To establish the characteristics of ECD centers	- In depth knowledge of teacher and Structural characteristics and addressing them to improve ECDE provision
3. To explore strategies for strengthening ECDE	- Identification of practical an effective ways of improving ECDE services provision.

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5.6 Suggestions for further research.

1. This research study concentrated on factors influencing the provision of early childhood education in Madiany Division. There is need to replicate the same study in another part of the country where the sample can either be the same, smaller or bigger.
2. Further research should be done targeting different tiers of education as opposed to early childhood education tier only.

3. This study concentrated on factors influencing the provision of early childhood education. A study should be done to establish factors influencing access and participation in early childhood Education sector.

4. A similar study should be carried out focusing on other stakeholders in the ECD sector

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Appendix A
Letter of Transmittal

DAVID OGETTA OWUOR

P.O. BOX 110 – 4060

BONDO-KENYA.

DATE: 9TH JANUARY, 2010

Dear Sir/Madam,

In partial fulfillment of the requirement of the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management, the University of Nairobi instructed me to collect data as part of the research project and complete a report for onward submission to the board of post graduate studies for examination.

The research topic is Factors Influencing the Provision of Early Childhood Education in Madiany Division. The research findings will inform future decisions about early childhood Education and efforts to improve its provision.

Your prompt response will hasten the data analysis and compilation of the final report. For further information, kindly contact me through cell phone number 0733613205.

Thank you,

Yours faithfully,

DAVID O. OWUOR.

M.A STUDENT/RESEACHER

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.

Appendix B

Questionnaire for ECD Teachers

I am a Master of Arts student of the University of Nairobi conducting a research on Factors Influencing the Provision of early Childhood Education in Madiany Division. You have been selected as a respondent in this study. Kindly provide responses without reservation as this is purely for academic purposes. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Personal details

SEX _____ MARITAL STATUS _____

AGE _____ ECD CENTRE _____

LEVEL OF EDUCATION _____

TOTAL NO. OF PARENTS _____

Section A: Socio Economic challenges facing ECDE provision

Instruction: Tick the answer that best suits your views.

1. How adequate are your teaching and learning resources?
a) Adequate b) inadequate c) very adequate
2. Who provides the teaching materials?
a) Self b) parents c) donor d) government e) proprietor
3. Which kind of institution do you teach in?
a) Private b) church sponsored c) community sponsored
d) NGO sponsored e) municipality sponsored.
4. Who pays your salary?
a) Parents b) Church c) N.G.O d) Government e) Municipality
f) Proprietor
5. If the answer above is Parents, how regularly do they honor the payment?
a) Rarely b) promptly c) Regularly e) Punctually
6. If the answer above is rarely, what reasons do they cite for the delay?
a) Poverty b) High cost c) very low

7. How do you rate your salary?
 - a) Low
 - b) Fair
 - c) High
 - d) very low
8. How do you rate your learners Socio-economic background?
 - a) Poor
 - b) very poor
 - c) average
 - d) Rich
 - e) Very rich
9. Given an alternative job to ECD teaching, would accept?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Neutral
 - d) unsure
10. If the answer above is yes. Why would you leave your current job?
 - a) Low pay
 - b) Greener pasture
 - c) Low self esteem
 - d) Change of profession

Section B: Characteristics of ECD centres

1. How long has your centre existed?
 - a) 0-5 years
 - b) 5-10 years
 - c) 11-20 years
 - d) Above 20 years
2. Which is your language of instruction?
 - a) Dholuo
 - b) Kiswahili
 - c) English
 - d) others
3. How long does your learning day last?
 - a) Full day
 - b) Half day
4. Do you have furniture for learners?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
5. If yes, which type of furniture?
 - a) Plastic chairs and tables
 - b) wooden desks
6. Are the children divided into learning groups?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
7. If yes, how many? (specify number)

8. What criterion is used to divide them into these groups?
 - a) Age
 - b) Time of entry
 - c) Entry behavior
9. How many teachers are there in your centre? (specify by gender)
 - a) No of males
 - b) No of females
10. State their level of training in ECD
 - a) Certificate
 - b) Diploma
 - c) Degree
 - d) Untrained

b) How do you rate your centre in terms of learning facilities?

- a) Highly satisfactory b) Just satisfactory c) unsatisfactory d) No idea.

Section C: Strategies for strengthening ECD Services

1. Are there any development partners assisting your centre?

- a) Yes b) No

2. If yes, what kind of assistance do they offer?

- a) Financial support b) Learning resources c) Feeding programme
d) Health programme e) Others f) all above

e) Give suggestions on the role the government should play to strengthen ECD services

- a).....
b).....
c).....
d).....

If any development partner (NGO) were to help your centre, what kind of assistance would you request for?

- a).....
b).....
c).....
d).....

Appendix C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DICECE OFFICERS.

A. Personal Details.

NAME OF OFFICER:

SEX:

AGE:

MARITAL STATUS:

ZONE:

B. Questions

1. (a) How many ECD centers do you have in the division?
(b) Give a breakdown of their numbers and proprietorship. (Church, private, government)
2. (a) How many ECD teachers are there in the division?
(b) How many are trained in the ECD? (Give a breakdown based on qualifications)
3. (a) Which difficulties do you face in executing your duties?
(b) Are there any which are policy related? (Specify)
4. (a) In your routine interaction with ECD teachers, which challenges do they cite?
(b) Are there any related to policy? (Specify)
- 5 (a) Are there partners working in ECD in the Division currently? (Specify)
(b) If yes, which aspects do they focus on? (Specify: health, education, nutrition)
6. (a) Briefly comment on the current government policy on ECD?
(b) Do you feel it is adequate?
(c) If no, what amendments would you suggest to be made? (Specify)
7. Give a comment on the salary scale of ECD teachers.
8. (a) What are the challenges faced in ECD provision?
(b) Give suggestions on the best ways to overcome them

Appendix D

Questionnaire for ECD Parents

I am a Master of Arts student of the University of Nairobi conducting a research on Factors Influencing the Provision of early Childhood Education in Madiany Division. You have been selected as a respondent in this study, kindly provide responses without reservation as this is purely for academic purposes. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Personal Details

SEX: _____ MARITALSTATUS: _____

AGE: _____ ECDCENTRE: _____

LEVEL OF EDUCATION: _____

Section A: Socio economic challenges facing Early Childhood Education.

Instruction Tick the most appropriate answer

1. How much money do you pay towards the teacher's salary per month?
a) Below 100/= b) 100 – 150/= c) 150 – 200/=
2. Do you feel it is adequate?
a) Yes b) No
3. If asked to pay more, would you be willing to do so?
a) Yes b) No
4. If No, what are your reasons
a) Poverty b) Poor quality of service c) High cost
5. What made you take your child to the current ECD centre?
a) Proximity from home b) Affordable cost c) Quality of service
6. Do you feel the services offered by this centre are adequate?
a) Yes b) No
7. If No, what do you think is the contributing factor?
a) Incompetent teachers. b) Lack of teaching /learning resources

Section B: Strategies for strengthening ECDE.

8. Apart from academics, what other services would you wish your child to get?

- a) Health care b) Nutrition care c) All

9. Are you aware of any donor supporting the centre where your child learns?

- a) Yes b)No

10. If yes, what kind of support do they give?

a) Medical services b) Feeding program c) Financial assistance

d) Learning resources

b) What do you think the government should do to improve ECD services?

c) If any development partner were to assist the centre where your child learns, what kind of assistance would you request for?

Appendix E
Research Permit

PAGE 2

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss DAVID
OGETTA OWOUR

of (Address) UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
P.O. BOX 30197 NBI

has been permitted to conduct research in.....

.....Location,

RARIEDA District,

NYANZA Province,

on the topic FACTORS INFLUENCING

THE PROVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

EDUCATION IN KENYA: A CASE OF

MADIANY DIVISION.

for a period ending 31ST JULY 2010

CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit
2. Government Officers will not be interviewed with-out prior appointment.
3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.
5. You are required to submit at least two(2)/four(4) bound copies of your final report for Kenyans and non-Kenyans respectively.
6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice

PAGE 3

Research Permit No. NCST/RRI/12/1/SS/27

Date of Issue.....

Fee received SHS 1,000



David Owour
Applicant's
Signature

[Signature]
Secretary
National Council for
Science and Technology



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**RESEARCH CLEARANCE
PERMIT**