THE INFLUENCE OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES ON PERFORMANCE OF EARLY GRADE LITERACY PROGRAMMES: A CASE OF TUSOME PROGRAM IN MBEERE NORTH SUB COUNTY, EMBU COUNTY, KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project report is my original work and has not been presented in any other university or institution of higher learning for an award of a degree.

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L50/ 79324/ 2015

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family: Anne, Lillian, Lizzie and Wendy; accept my deepest expression of love and appreciation for the encouragement, psychological and spiritual support that you gave me.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABC - African Braille Centre

ADB - Asian Development Bank

CBOs - Community Based organizations

CDF - Constituency Development Fund

CICT - Christian Industrial Training Centre

CSI - Corporate Social Investment

GEFK - Global Education Fund Kenya

GOK - Government of Kenya

JA - Junior Achievement

LATF - Local Authority Transfer Fund

MOE - Ministry of Education

PISA - program for International Students Assessment

OECD – The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

ABSTRACT

Since Independence in 1963, the Government of Kenya has recognized basic education both as a basic right as well as a tool for achieving social economic development. To this end, basic education, that demands achievement of full secondary education, is now guaranteed through the introduction of Free Primary Education by the Government in 2002 and other interventions. These other interventions include provision of school infrastructure, adequate instructional and learning resources and materials, besides sourcing external collaboration. All this effort has seen primary school population rise to an estimated 10.4 million children in both public and private primary schools all over the country. Further, this effort has greatly aided the country towards the achievement of the manpower requirements for the delivery of Vision 2030; besides achieving the Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Commitments by 2015. However, across Kenya, literacy rates in primary schools are significantly lower than expected, despite this commendable effort.The purpose of this study is to establish the influence of project activities on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya: a case of Tusome Program in Mbeere North, Embu County. The study was guided by the following objectives: to determine how training influences performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; to establish the influence of resource adequacy on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; and to determine how stakeholders' participation influences on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya.The study adopted the descriptive research design, with its target population being all stakeholders involved in early literacy programmes, in Mbeere North Sub County, totalling 76 respondents. The study revealed that all the three variables of the study had a high influence on the performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya.The study recommends that the authorities ensure genuine participation of stakeholders and target beneficiaries at all levels of the project cycle. It also suggested that two studies be undertaken: one, similar to this one, be conducted in other counties in the country; and another study on sustainability of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools, funded by other corporate organizations in Kenya.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Primary education is the basic education which aims at preparing children to attain the competence needed to advance further in making a worthwhile contribution to an ever-changing society. In order to fulfil this objective, teachers must keep abreast with current thinking, and engage in training that will enhance the teaching - learning process. Central to the success of the teaching - learning process is the level of attainment by children in the area of reading. Unfortunately, this has created cause for concern in many societies, as the high rate of illiteracy continues to adversely affect the progress of a technological advancing world.

Learning to read is among the most important skills that a child has to master in order to succeed later on at school. Early grade reading experiences are also essential in expanding development in different knowledge domains. Students who do not learn to read in the first few grades are ore likely to repeat and eventually drop out of school, and the education attainment gap between readers and non-readers increases over time. (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). Not surprisingly, literacy skills (that is, reading and spelling skills) have gained an enormous amount of attention during the recent decades.

Various nations have come up with programs to improve literacy rates. In Finnish schools, reading and spelling is taught through an alphabetic strategy, in which the learning of sound-symbol correspondences is important. This emphasis is explained by the fact that the orthography (conventional spelling system) of Finnish is almost perfectly transparent, which makes reading and spelling acquisition parallel processes. Reading and spelling instruction in Finland in general, and also in the classrooms of this particular study, includes learning of letter names as well as listening, segmenting, and blending phonemes and syllables (Holopainen, Ahonen, &Lyytinen, 2002). Teaching starts typically with the introduction of one letter sound correspondence per week, which means it requires approximately six months to progress through all the 21 standard Finnish sounds.

In Norway, pupils have scored poorly in reading skills. National tests based on the Norwegian curriculum and also Programme for International Students Assessment

(PISA) report low scores in both reading in Norwegian and reading in English (Hellekjær, 2007; Ueland, 2013). According to the PISA results, Norwegian pupils aged 15 perform at, or just above the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average when it comes to reading, but more poorly in accurate reading. These results suggest that the current approaches to teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in Norwegian schools are not successful. This could imply that there is a lack of effectiveness in approaches to improve pupils' reading skills.

Across Kenya, Literacy levels in primary schools remain lower than expected. The Kenyan Educational system has sought to improve literacy and numeracy levels by instilling better instructional practices, expanding resources for teacher training and developing learning materials that support multilingual literacy.

The Kenyan government introduced free primary education in 2003 in order to fulfil the commitments of the World Education Forum of 2000 as well as to make education accessible to all school age children irrespective of their social class. This initiative led to an upsurge in primary school enrolments with the resultant effects of numerous strains on human and material resources, high dropout rates and poor performance in national examinations. As a result of this, the government has been undertaking many reforms aimed at addressing the challenges resulting from education service expansion. The overall purpose of these reforms has been to improve efficiency in education provision by addressing factors that influence learning. (Education for All, Global Monitoring Report, 2010).

In 2015, the US agency for International Development (USAID) joined with the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) to fund a program known as Tusome ("Let's Read" in Kiswahili) aimed at drastically improving literacy outcomes. Tusome is implemented in all public primary schools and 1,500 Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training (APBET) institutions (low-cost private schools) across Kenya through the Ministry. The goal for Tusome is to improve the literacy outcomes of 7.4 million pupils by 2019. The Tusome technical approach employs research-driven learning materials, proven teaching methodologies and a cutting-edge tablet-based feedback and monitoring system. To ensure sustainability, the

funding, oversight and implementation of Tusome will transition to the GoK and local entities during the final year of the activity.

The Tusome activity is supporting literacy development and fostering a reading culture among early-grade pupils, including those visually-and-hearing- impaired, across Kenya. Tusome will develop and distribute over 24 million English and Kiswahili textbooks, workbooks and supplemental readers by December 2019 to pupils in classes one, two and three, ensuring a pupil to textbook ratio of 1:1. Tusome uploads real-time learner performance data and makes it available to local and national education stakeholders. This helps create reading champions and fosters accountability throughout the system.

Tusome trains Curriculum Support Officers, administrators, teachers and instructional coaches based on practical classroom-based experiences. The trainings help develop teachers' pedagogical skills in critical technical areas such as phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, lesson planning, and curriculum coverage. Head teachers (principals) are trained to provide instructional leadership for their schools while managing the acquisition, utilization and maintenance of the new learning materials.

In addition, Senior County and national education leaders are trained on new reading techniques, and address gaps in the relevant laws, policies, strategies, and regulations that impact early-grade reading. Tusome includes two special funds to encourage community accountability for better reading outcomes: The Youth Fund and the Partnership Fund. The Youth Fund empowers local youth groups to work with younger children in their communities to improve reading skills. The Partnership Fund links public and private-sector partners to develop local reading programs and instil a reading culture across the country. Since 2014, Tusome has achieved the following; It has empowered over 1,100 Curriculum Support Officers in all 47 counties with innovative teaching methodologies to provide instructional support to teachers; trained every lower primary school teacher in 23,890 schools with state-of-the-art interventions that define how Kenyan children learn to read; Tusome has developed and distributed specialized teaching and learning materials for sight- and hearing-impaired pupils; Provided more than 20 million new textbooks to schools to date; Delivered results 68% of learners demonstrate reading fluency and comprehension of grade level text in English at the end of grade 2, while 67% do so in Kiswahili.

For any project or programme performance to outlast activity, many factors need to be in place. There has to be performance in the first place – i.e. the activity has to cause some change of value. In addition, to overcome the pressure of competing alternatives: there must be strong stakeholder commitment particularly, but not only, from leaders; incentives and accountability systems must be conducive to keeping the work going; supportive processes and structures must be institutionalised in the relevant organisations; there need to be the right people with the right skills and attitudes to implement; and the programme must be affordable given the future fiscal context.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Since Independence in 1963, the Government of Kenya has recognized the importance of education both as a basic right as well as a tool for achieving social economic development. Education and training are critical in providing the necessary and appropriate manpower requirements for the delivery of Vision 2030.The current primary school population is estimated at 10.4 million children in both public and private primary schools. This rapid growth in primary school population is largely attributed to the introduction of Free Primary Education by the Government in 2002 and other interventions. The enrolment in our schools indicates that Kenya is on track to achieve the Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Commitments by 2015. However, across Kenya, literacy rates in primary schools are significantly lower than expected despite increased access and enrolment. The Kenyan education system is seeking to improve learning outcomes by instilling better instructional practices, expanding resources for teacher training, and developing learning materials that support multilingual literacy. Kenya's approach to the challenge of raising literacy and learning outcomes is unique in its ambitious goals.

A midline assessment in October 2016 concluded that the Tusome program is significantly improving reading outcomes, tripling the number of children who read at Kenya's benchmark for oral reading fluency in Grade 2 from baseline to midline. While impressive gains have been made under this program, the successes must be sustained and improved. For this to happen, there is need for County or zone specific data on the performance of the program. There is no data on the influencing of project activites on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya, including those in Embu County. This study intends to fill this gap.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of project activities on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; a case of Tusome program in Mbeere North Sub County in Embu County.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

i. To determine how training influences performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; a case of Tusome program in Mbeere North, Embu County.
ii. To establish the influence of resource adequacy on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; a case of Tusome program in Mbeere North , Embu County
iii. To determine how stakeholders' participation influences on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; a case of Tusome program in Mbeere North, Embu County

1.5 Research Questions

The study was be guided by the following research questions;

i. How does training influence performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Mbeere North, Embu County, Kenya?
ii. To what extent does resource adequacy influence performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Mbeere North, Embu County, Kenya?
iii. How does stakeholders' participation influences on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Mbeere North, Embu County, Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study findings are significant in three folds: they will enrich the concerned bodies, such as private and public policy makers, by bringing an understanding of the strategies to put in place to ensure performance and sustainability of programmes. The outcome of this study will help the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders to understand the influencing of project activities on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya.

1.7 Limitations of the study.

The researcher had expected to face the challenge of raising the extra funds needed for the research work, besides that of completing the research work by the deadline set, mainly because full time employment requirements. These challenges were overcome by reorganising her finances and work schedule and proper time management.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

This work seeks to investigate the influence of project activities on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya. It focuses specifically on the Tusome program in Mbeere North, Embu County. The study was restricted to following three variables: training, resource adequacy and stakeholders' participation.

1.9 Study Assumptions

The study assumed that respondents would be available, and that they would answer the questionnaires adequately and honestly. As appears in 4.2 of Chapter Four, the respondents were very cooperative, as 92% of them returned the questionnaires.

1.10 Definition of Significant Terms

The following are the significant terms of the study.

Training- Acquisition of appropriate knowledge, teaching skills any other useful competencies, besides high commitment, by early grade literacy program staff.

Resource adequacy- Availability of adequate and quality school infrastructure, teaching and learning resources, as well as qualified and motivated teachers and support staff in primary schools

Stakeholders' Participation- Engagement and support of Tusome program in terms of ideas, financial resources, etc. at all stages of the program mplementation, by interests organization and individuals

Performance of early grade literacy programmes -Accomplishment of the Tusome Programme, a nationwide early grade literacy program, through ensuring literacy development and fostering a reading culture among early-grade pupils in Mbeere North.

1.11 Organization of the study

Chapter One covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives and research questions. It also covers the significance of the study, delimitation, limitations of the study, assumptions of the study, definitions of the significant terms as well as the organization of the study. Chapter Two presents a review of literature relevant to the study from global to local perspectives. It then presents a theoretical framework on the subject matter and finally offers the conceptual framework on which the study is based. Chapter Three presents the research methodology, target population of the study, research instruments, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, and ends with presentation of an operationalization of variables table. In Chapter Four the research data are analysed, presented in table and finally interpreted. Chapter Five presents a summary of the key findings of the study and then discusses these findings against those from similar studies. The chapter then makes a conclusion of the whole study and concludes by offering policy recommendations and areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature on the factors that influence performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools from global, African and local perspectives. It also presents theoretical frameworks on the subject matter; and finally, it offers the conceptual framework on which the study is based.

2.2 Performance of Early Grade Literacy Programmes Performance of Early Grade Literacy Programmes in Primary Schools

In 2007, the Brazilian government reported that more than 70 percent of pupils who reach the last grade of primary education had inadequate literacy skills. Findings from the National Survey of Brazil (PNAD) showed that the proportion of children between 7 and 14 years old who didn't know how to read a small piece of paper was 5.4 percent in 2011, and in rural areas the proportion was 10 percent. More than 97% of these illiterate children had attended school, suggesting that the quality of education plays a role in whether children attain minimal levels of literacy. To resolve this problem, the Brazilian government initiated a nationwide Public-School Literacy Improvement Program in 2012—the PNAIC.

As in many past expensive programs created by the Ministry of Education in Brazil, no rigorous impact evaluation was implemented to assess the possible effect of the PNAIC before launching it on a national scale. Nevertheless, the government did have some evidence that the PNAIC might be successful. PNAIC was based on Ceara's state wide PAIC program and other international interventions. Ceara is one of the poorest states in Brazil. In 2011, 55 percent of children in Ceara finishing fourth grade of elementary school faced serious difficulties in reading, writing and comprehending simple texts. However, the state has significantly lowered its illiteracy rate among children from 7 to 14 years old from 18 percent in 2001 to 6 percent in 2011.

The PAIC program was launched in 2007 (fully implemented in 2008) based on cooperation with municipal governments, which are the administrative entity most responsible for preschool and early primary education. The program was intended to have all children reach appropriate proficiency levels in reading, writing, and arithmetic skills by age eight. The PAIC is organized to support five relatively interrelated areas of the early grades in Ceara's municipal schools (184 municipalities) designed to help achieve five program goals: reading promotion; supporting municipal literacy strategies; iii) strengthening municipal and management; supporting early childhood education; and providing external learning evaluation. In terms of implementation, the program is divided into three broad activities related to three program areas: a) teacher and administrators training; b) municipality network mobilization; and c) provision of books to students.

In 2012, the Brazilian Ministry of Education launched the National Pact of Literacy at the Right Age (PNAIC) in an effort to significantly improve the literacy and mathematics skills of 6 and 8-year-olds in public schools. Usually, such large-scale initiatives designed to change classroom instruction have a low probability of being effective (Elmore, 1996). However, the decision to implement PNAIC was based on the apparent success of an extensive professional development initiative in Ceara state—the Literacy Program at the Right Age (PAIC). Since its implementation in 2007, primary school students in the State of Ceara have made significant gains compared to other states in reading and math scores on Brazil's national test.

In the Year 2008 children joining most schools in Mali faced steep odds against their learning to read or write. Reading materials in French and national languages were scarcely available. The school schedule did not allow enough time for reading instruction. Neither teachers, nor teacher trainers, nor ministry officials were aware of recent research regarding effective reading instruction in the early grades. Moreover, teachers and parents expressed beliefs that young children were simply not able to learn to read. Consequently, reading scores of students tested in grades 2 and 4 were among the lowest in West Africa. While Mali had made notable strides in improving its school system, early grade reading instruction still suffered.

Three years prior to the coup d'état, the Ministry, with support from a USAID-funded project (PHARE), had introduced the Balanced Literacy program to teach reading and writing in grades 1 through 3. Balanced Literacy asks teachers to implement specific, research-based, mutually reinforcing techniques in language mechanics (phonics), reading comprehension, and writing. The program was delivered through Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI), an audio program broadcast daily that guided teachers and students through 30 minutes of literacy instruction. A subset of schools received supplementary reading texts and more intensive training in Balanced Literacy. USAID/ PHARE also enriched the policy environment with clear standards and guidelines on reading instruction. Because the USAID/PHARE program was halted midstream after the coup d'état, no final evaluation was carried out. In 2013, EDC, in collaboration with the Ministry, launched a six-month effort in ten schools to consolidate the implementation model for Balanced Literacy and undertake an evaluation of the impact of the intervention on student learning gains in reading. This study allowed the Ministry and other stakeholders to take a close look at the effectiveness of the strategies of Balanced Literacy through an evaluation of the gains in performance in reading and writing of grade one students who had participated in just six months of the program

Kenya has made progress in moving forward the quality of Education. This can be reflected in the number of programmes specifically designed to address the quality issues. MOEST has had an increasing focus on quality of education in Lower Primary, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. In 2007, the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGMA) was piloted to assess literacy outcomes in Malindi. After piloting of Programmes that aimed at improving English, Kiswahili and Mathematics between 2007-2009. The country adopted the two models and carried out a research on Literacy and numeracy where the findings indicated that pupils in at class 1 to 3, have low literacy and numeracy skills.

The analysis of the research suggested that Lower Primary received less interest and attention from Head teachers, parents and teachers who were found to be using instructional methods that were wanting. The results of the studies formed the basis of the Primary Math and Reading(PRIMR) Initiative, a program implemented by MOEST with financial support from USAID and technical support from an NGO namely RTI International from 2011 to 2014. PRIMR implementation indicated that Teacher Advisory Centre (TAC) tutors and teachers can improve the quality of Instruction and

pupil outcomes significantly. The results indicated that PRIMR initiated well designed syllabus based teacher guides, intensive teacher training and targeted ongoing support through TAC Tutors can improve instruction leading to significant gains in Pupil Literacy and Numeric Performance.

2.3 Training and Performance of Programmes

Training for effective project management skills both in public and NGO sectors serves as a key strategy for attaining project sustainability. It is paramount that such training begins on the onset of the project and run throughout the project period, if any sustainability is to be attained. Successful training should 'be customized to the nature of the project and not be a randomized process. The process should be very informative, such that it should be offered on merit so as to be relevant to the purpose and object of the project. New skills should be taught to the trainees in the form of in-country and on-job trainings.

Mentoring forums and short courses on the appropriate skills should be undertaken, and information sharing plans and programs should be prepared in advance of the project start-up. Awareness programs should be incorporated in plans with a view of reaching a wider scope of stakeholders. A wide range of media should be used during the program implementation so as to reach as much a wider scope of beneficiaries and stakeholders as possible. Such training targeted at skill development should applied as an experience that facilitates acquisition of new behavioral attributes. Deficiencies in skills required to perform certain tasks are contributed to by factors such lack of the necessary training, as organizations which continuously train their staff equally continue to experience benefit from excellent performances and improved outcomes (Marching, 2006).

A number of factors discourage organizations from training their staff. Such include cost cutting processes and the risk of losing staff to better employers after training. These factors arise mostly during periods when most organizations are hit by recessions, where managers fear losing their best staff. Training processes are majorly intended to enhance the capacity of worker to effectively and efficiently carry out certain assigned tasks, this is in contrast to education, which is a long time process. It involves the evaluation of needs and matching them with the appropriate trainings. This will in overall entail finding out what the needs are, agreeing the purpose of the needs and the overall objectives of the training identified and profiling the candidates or learners to be

trained.A strategy then in formulated for the training and a continued evaluation is done as the trainings are conducted Lloyd, (2002).

Methods such as interviews are particularly useful in identifying training needs, not just with the job-holder, but also with line mangers, as well as with customers or clients. Self-observation is important here, and in some respects this is one of the best ways to determine precisely what the job entails. However, individuals may be too close to their jobs to identify training needs effectively, they may not keep an accurate record of events during the course of the day, and they may overemphasize certain aspects of the job they enjoy or dislike in order to gain training. There is also the problem that confusions arise between training needs which are identified for the job, irrespective of who undertakes it, and those which relate to the person who is currently in the post. Personal Training Needs level of analysis is the final stage and involves the use of interviews and questionnaires, observation and work sampling, testing the knowledge of job-holders on specific issues, and performance appraisal and assessment centres (Reid et al 2004).

The traditional approach to devising training and learning plans focuses on the need to determine clear aims (why the learning event is taking place) and objectives specifying the attitudinal, behavioural or performance outcomes to be achieved. The most helpful objectives are those which describe not only the kinds of behaviour to be achieved, but also the conditions under which that behaviour is expected to occur, and the standards to be reached in that behaviour. The clearer the objectives, the better the chance of success, as well as ease of evaluation, (Marchingtone, 2006).

2.4 Resource Adequacy and Performance of Programmes

For a project to be workable, it needs the necessary resources. This is going by terms of project management, and the deprivation of the requisite resources to any project will act as a constraint to its success. The resources could be in either storable or non-storable form. Storable resources could still be available for use in the future unless they are run down through improper usage. Such resources are reproduced by the very processes in the project. While storable resources may be reproduced, the non-storable resources are renewable in time periods and it's mandatory that this is done despite the instances when they are not put into use in the preceding periods. For the success of a project to be realized, there has to be proper allocation of resources through the process of planning,

where priorities are considered for allocation. Scheduling of resources, reviewing of their availability and output optimizations are considered key to a successful management of projects. Feuerstein, (1986) observed that projects seek to use it resources more efficiently in time where resources are constrained. This could be done through minimizing the project time as much as possible and employing the scarce resources in a manner that optimizes output from the project as much as possible too.

According to Gasper,(1999), the successful progress of a project directly hinges on the processes of fruitful fundraising and also on how to keep the funds at adequate levels. This funds need to be exclusively committed to the running of the project and Jack et al, (2006) add that inadequacy of funds is top factor that leads to most failures of projects. Such resources include the natural ones, human skills and infrastructures. These resources should be directed towards bringing benefits to the beneficiaries (Gasper, 1999).

The commitment of resources to a project clearly illustrates the expected value that the beneficiaries have assigned the project (Natasha,2003. The process of recovering the costs incurred in running the project contributes towards the sustainability of the project by adding to the available resources, and not only this, but it establishes a form of accountability of all the resources available for the project. Khan et al, (2005) observe that for donor project to work properly, effective strategies need to be laid down and implemented together with finance generating structures that are well managed. With good project evaluation procedures, foundations for a sustainable project in the future could be achieved. This ensures that there is no wastage of finances and other resources and that there is preparedness for instances where the project faces unplanned challenges.

2.5 Stakeholders 'Participation and Performance of Programme

Pomeroy et al, (1997) observed that for any project to be sustainable, it is key that stakeholders are involved in the whole of its implementation. Stakeholders are the people who the project impacts in a direct or indirect manner. Sustainability cannot be possible without them identifying with the project and them offering their support towards it. Their involvement in the project means that they have a chance to directly in the decisions on which direction the project is to take. By this, they can critically participate in the identification of areas for improvement.A donor-led approach

basically fails to realize sustainability for the project Pollnac et al, (2005). This is because the stakeholders are not fully committed towards the object of the project. They do not also feel the ownership. The simple conducting of workshops to update the stakeholders on the progress of the project without involving them does not in any way buy their commitments and support for the project. This can only be attained if the project implementation strategy is demand-led and participatory in nature. Organizations need to realize that people in the community have to be allowed to realize the potential of shaping their future and reflect on Penzas, (2009). They need to be allowed to influence decisions touching on their future too. By allowing this to happen, the sharing of ideas and experiences will be much easier than thought Zmud, (2003).

The stakeholders should always have an outlined vision for bettering the decision making process by creating tools, information and appropriate trainings to help in the implementation of project activities. All the effort should be guided towards facilitating the project running and not so much towards making decisions on the project. It is also important to share and disseminate information regarding the project while it runs. The predictive power of the information shared to support the project is a good tool for managing the project and a model for attaining Pollitt, (2007). If this method of project management is not used, the project leaders should be advised to involve the third parties as much as possible and also to ensure that people understand it better Erlbaum, (2003).In order for the community to be certain of the way the project is going to have an impact on them, they then need to assured about this Balagun, (2003).

2.6 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a combination of well-articulated ideas that serve to break down a certain phenomenon by giving variables of the laws that then relate the variables to each other. (Kothari, 2004). The study will be guided by a program theory. The program theory is a proposition with regard to the transformation of input into output and how to transform a bad situation into a better one through inputs (Lipsey, 1993). It is also illustrated as the process through which program components are presumed to affect outcomes. Rossi (2004) argued that a program theory consist of an organizational plan on how to deploy resources and organize the activities of the program activities to ensure that the intended service system is developed and maintained. Uitto (2000) illustrates the advantages of using a theory based framework in monitoring and evaluation. It includes the ability to attribute project outcomes of specific projects or

activities as well as identification of anticipated and undesired program consequences. Theory based evaluations as such enables the evaluator to understand why and how the program is working (Weiss, 2013).

Occasionally, it will also show other incidental factors that contribute to producing results and the context in which this happens. Programme theory provides a conceptual framework used in developing an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework and guiding these two important project functions. Programme theory also helps bring together available information that supports a programme providing clarity about how a programme is understood to work or not to work, thereby aiding to bridge the gap towards optimal performance (Rogers, 2011). Programme theory principles may apply for a single evaluation, planning multiple evaluations of different projects that are funded under program, or to collate data and information from multiple evaluations both midterm and final. A programme theory develops during the planning stage of a new intervention. It may be applied during implementation, close-out and post implementation. When planning for an evaluation, it is particularly useful to review the programme theory applied and review or contextualize as may be necessary.

2.7Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the Conceptual Framework of the study.

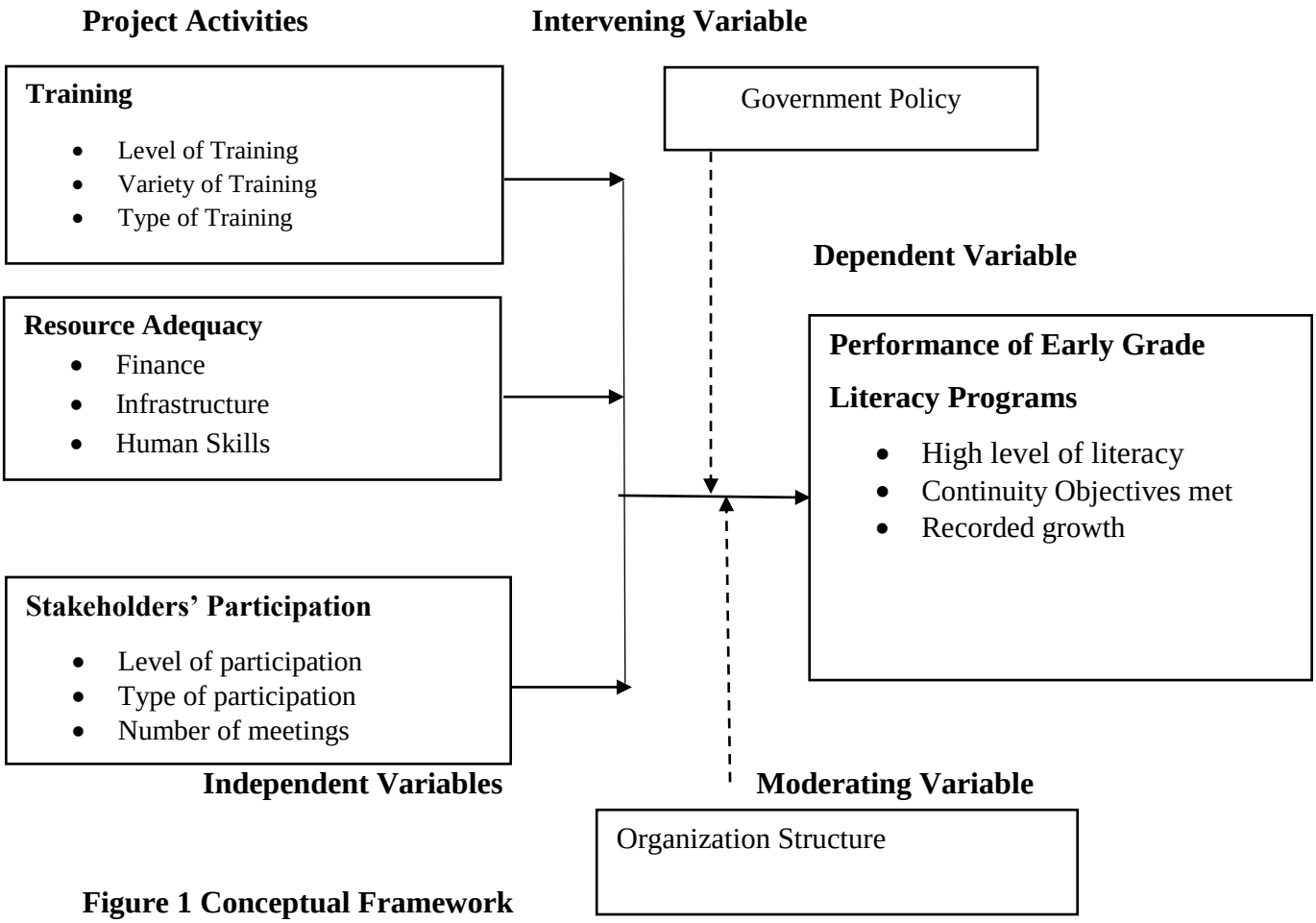

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

2.7. Research Gap

Donors usually have the objective of helping to improve the livelihood of the locals either through direct participation or providing funding to supplement government's budgetary allocation to the various sectors. Unfortunately, the funds provided by most of these donors are project-driven short-term funds, which do not factor into the whole funding mechanism policies that will ensure that such projects become sustainable after donor funds have been withdrawn (Heeks and Baark, 1998). The presence of a well thought out strategy that not only looks at how a donor funded project is completed, but also the means to continue with the project after donor funds have been withdrawn is critical to the project's sustainability (Young & Hampshire, 2000).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology of the study, that includes research design, target population and its sample size, research instruments and data collection and data analysis procedures. Finally, the chapter presents the conceptualization of study variables table.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted descriptive research design. According to Zikmund (2000), descriptive research design is significant in a research data gathering since it allows the researcher to gather information, summarize, present and interpret data.

3.3 Target Population

Target population is the total number of the subjects of interest to the researcher (Oso and Onen 2005). The target population for this study included all stakeholders involved in early literacy programmes in Mbeere North Sub County of Embu County; made up of 9 Curriculum Support Officers, 21 Administrators, 32 Lower Primary Teachers and 14 Instructional Coaches. Therefore, the study targets a total population of 76 respondents this is shown in the Table 3.1

Table 3.1 Target population

Respondents	**Target Population**
Curriculum Support Officers	9
Administrators	21
Lower Primary Teachers (Trained)	32
Instructional Coaches	14
Total	76

Source; County Department of Education (2018)

3.4 Sampling procedures and Sample size

The study employed census method; this type of sampling procedure is such that, existing subgroups in the population are reproduced in the sample. A sample is a smaller

group or sub-group obtained from the accessible population (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The sample is selected in such a way as to ensure that certain sub-groups in the population are represented in the sample proportion. Since the target population was small, the study employed census which involved capturing the entire population of 76 participants as the study sample.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

This study used questionnaires for data collection. Questionnaires increase the chances of getting honest responses since they ensure anonymity of the respondent. The questionnaire will use both open ended and closed ended questions. The use of open-ended questions offers flexibility for the respondent to provide more details. Closed ended questions allows for quantitative analysis. This balance is useful for a comprehensive analysis.

3.6. Validity of Research Instruments

Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research results pretesting questionnaires helps the researcher find ways to increase participants' interest; helps in discovering question content, wording and sequencing problems before the actual study and also helps in exploring ways of improving overall quality of study (Mugenda, 2003).To establish the validity of the research instrument the researcher sought opinions of experts in the field of study especially the university supervisor and other lecturers in the department that teaches Project Planning and Management

3.7 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability of instrument is the extent to which a research instrument produces similar results on different occasions under similar conditions. It's the degree of consistency with which it measures whatever it is meant to measure (Bell, 2010). According Rousson, (2012) a construct composite reliability co-efficient (Cronbach alpha) of 0.7 or above, for all the constructs, is adequate for this kind of study. Reliability coefficient of the research using Cronbach's alpha (α) method.

3.6 Data Analysis

The researcher checked the data collected through questionnaires and interviews, for the purpose of checking on completeness, clarity and consistency in answering research

questions. The data was then coded, tabulated and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences based on study objectives. Descriptive statistics was computed, and study findings presented using tables and percentages and interpretations made.

3.7 Ethical Issues

Ethical consideration issues are important when dealing with people with diverse cultural backgrounds. Rules and regulations should be there to guide conduct of researcher when collecting data for the study from people in various fields and areas. Ethical consideration requires that research ethics be observed and respected when relating with people in research undertakings especially in field data collection and in research reporting. The respondents assured the source of the findings never disclose to any third party and so their outmost accuracy is expected. This ensured the respondent has built sufficient confidence in giving responses (Cress, 2014). The researcher sought permission from Embu County Government, and also sought consent from research respondents. Confidentiality was assured, and data collection instrument did not bear their names and those not willing to participate in the study were not forced to do so.

3.8 Operational definition of variables

According to Martyn (2008) operationalization is the process of strictly defining variables into measurable factors. This process defines fuzzy concepts and allows them to be measured, empirically and quantitatively. Table 3.2 presents the operationalization of variables of this study.

Table 3.2 Operational of Variables

Objective	Variable	Indicator(s)	Scale	Data collecting method	Data Analysis
To determine how Training influences performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; a case of Tusome program in Embu County	Independent variable **Training**	• Level of Trainin • Variety of Trainir • Type of Training	Ordinal	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics
To establish the influence of Resource Adequacy on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; a case of Tusome program in Embu County	Independent variable **Resource Adequacy**	• Finance • Infrastructure • Human Skills	Ordinal	Questionnaire	Descriptive
To determine how stakeholders' participation influences on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; a case of Tusome program in Embu County	Independent variable **Stakeholder Participation**	• Level of participatio • Type of participatio • Number of meeting	Interval	Questionnaire	Descriptive
	Dependent variable performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya	• High level of literac • Continuity Objectives me • Recorded growth	Interval;	Questionnaire	Descriptive

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses, presents and interprets study findings on the factors influencing performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya based on the three objectives of the study. The study uses descriptive statistics in data analysis and then presents the data in frequency tables.

4.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

The study administered 76 questionnaires to the respondents. Out of the 76 participants, 70 successfully filled and returned the questionnaire. The sample, therefore, had a 92% rate of response. Mugenda (2008), regards such response rate to be very reliable and good for this kind of study.

4.2 Respondents' Personal Information

To get the general information of the respondents, they were requested to indicate information on personal characteristics, specifically, their age group, gender, education level, and finally, the position held and duration in the Tusome project. This information is crucial as awareness of the characteristics of the respondents would expose their ability to participate in the study.

4.2.1 Study responses by gender

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender. The responses are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Respondents' Gender

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Male	30	42%
Female	40	58%
Total	**70**	**100%**

Based on the information in Table 4.1, both genders were adequately represented thus ensuring a balanced set of responses

4.3.2 Education Level

The respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of education. The findings are as presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Education Level

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma	42	60
Degree	11	16
Masters	10	14
PhD	7	10
Total	**70**	**100%**

As Table 4.2 depicts, all the respondents were well-educated, not only to teach at this level, but also in their ability to respond with knowledge on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya.

4.3.3 Duration in Tusome Programme

The respondents were requested to indicate the length of their involvement in the Tusome Programme. Their responses appear on Table 4.3

Table 4.3 Duration in Tusome Programme

Duration	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 6 months	2	3
Between 6 months- 1 Year	20	29
Between 1-2 years	14	4
Between 2-3 years	17	24
Total	**70**	**100%**

The findings on Table 4.3 show that almost 70%of respondents had held their positions in Tusome Programme for more than one year; hence, they had accumulated the necessary experience to respond adequately to the questions of the study.

4.4 Influence of Staff Training on Performance of Tusome Programme

The first objective of the study was to determine how staff training influences performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; a case of Tusome program in Embu County. Likert scale for rating questionnaires was employed. Scale: 5- Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Neutral, 2 – Disagree and 1 - Strongly Disagree. Table 4.4 records the respondents' views on the influence of staff training.

Table 4.4 Training of Staff and Performance of Tusome Programme

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Training has increased accountability and responsibility among staff in the program ensuring its sustainability	43	61	27	39	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff training has improved competence of the staff hence continuity in the operation of the program	40	57	30	43	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training has contributed to better performance of staff which is important to programme sustainability	50	71	20	29	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training has led to increased staff motivation which influences the direction and execution of the program	52	74	18	26	0	0	0	0	0	0

Based on the findings in Table 4.4, all the respondents agreed that staff training influences performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya. Perhaps, this kind of response from this experienced group of respondents should be as expected, noting that training processes are intended to enhance the capacity of workers to effectively and efficiently carry out the assigned tasks.

4.5 Influence of Resource Adequacy on Performance of Tusome Programme

The study's second objective was to establish the influence of resource adequacy on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya. Likert scale for rating questionnaires was employed: Scale: 5- Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Neutral, 2 – Disagree and 1 - Strongly Disagree. The respondents' views of this issue appear on Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Resource Adequacy and Performance of Tusome Programme

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

	F		%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Availability of funding is crucial for program operation and sustainability.	5	8	83	12	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skilled and semi-skilled labour within a program promotes continuity in the operation of the project	4	5	64	15	21	5	7	0	0	0	0
Suitable and quality infrastructure and equipment within the program ensure programme objectives are achieved and hence important to program performance	6	0	85	10	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
In your view, do you think the available resources will enable this program to be a success	6	8	97	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0

As per the findings in Table 4.5, all the respondents agreed, at a petty high level, that resource adequacy had great influence on performance of early grade literacy programme in primary schools in Kenya. Resource adequacy ensures that the needed numbers of qualified teaching and other essential staff are recruited and sustained; crucial program operations are adequately funded; besides ensuring availability and maintenance of infrastructure and teaching and learning equipment.

4.6 Stakeholders 'Participation and Performance of Tusome Programme

The third objective of the study was to establish how stakeholders' participation influences performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya. Likert scale for rating questionnaires was employed: Scale: 5- Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Neutral, 2 – Disagree and 1 - Strongly Disagree. The respondents' views of this issue appear on Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Stakeholders 'Participation and Performance of Tusome Programme

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

	F		%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
This program is fully owned by the target beneficiaries of the program	3	5	5 0	1 9	3 8	1 6	2 3	0	0	0	0
This program is fully owned by the stakeholders of the program	2	7	3 9	4 2	6 0	1	4	0	0	0	0
The stakeholders of the program are involved in key decision-making	6	5	9 3	5	7	0	0	0	0	0	0

Based on the finding in Table 4.6, majority of the respondents, at 73%, agreed that beneficiaries and stakeholders had a great influence on the Tusome program. The remaining 27% did not offer any opinion. The beneficiaries and stakeholders need to feel that they owned the program to ensure its sustainability.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study findings and then discusses these findings by subjecting them to results of similar studies globally. Finally, the chapter gives a conclusion of the entire study and ends by offering policy recommendations and possible areas of further study in general area of performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This section gives a summary of the findings based on the three objectives on the study, and as generated from Chapter Four.

5.2.1 Training of Staff and Performance of Tusome Programme

The study has established that staff training had a high influence on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya. Staff training was found to enhance staff capacity and competence to effectively and efficiently carry out their assigned tasks, as teachers or in other roles in the program; through increased accountability and responsibility; besides increased staff motivation.

5.2.2 Resource Adequacy and Performance of Tusome Programme

The study has established high relationship between adequacy of resources and performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya. For resource adequacy to be of high influence, as established by the study, it should provide adequate funding to ensure availability of skilled teaching and other types of staff; as well as of good quality infrastructure and learning and teaching materials that would guarantee program operation and sustainability.

5.2.3 Stakeholders' Participation and Performance of Tusome Programme

The study confirmed the crucial role of stakeholders' participation in early grade literacy program in primary schools in Kenya for it to perform as expected. The stakeholders, in this case, included the target beneficiaries and other supporters, such as the national and county governments, besides the supportive non-governmental organizations and

community-based bodies; all who should feel that they owned the program for it to perform as expected.

5.3 Discussions of Findings

In this section, the key findings of this study are discussed against findings from other scholarly studies on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools

5.3.1 Training of Staff and Performance of Tusome Programme

The study has established that staff training had a high influence on performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya. Staff training was found to enhance staff capacity and competence to effectively and efficiently carry out their assigned tasks, as teachers or in other roles in the program; through increased accountability and responsibility; besides increased staff motivation. The findings of the study agree with those of training processes are majorly intended to enhance the capacity of worker to effectively and efficiently carry out certain assigned tasks, this is in contrast to education, which is a long time process. It involves the evaluation of needs and matching them with the appropriate trainings. This will in overall entail finding out what the needs are, agreeing the purpose of the needs and the overall objectives of the training identified and profiling the candidates or learners to be trained. A strategy then in formulated for the training and a continued evaluation is done as the trainings are conducted (Lloyd, 2002)

Training targeted at skill development should be applied as an experience that facilitates acquisition of new behavioural attributes. This is important as organizations which continuously train their staff equally continue to experience benefit from excellent performances and improved outcomes (Marching, 2006). Lloyd, (2002) Training processes are majorly intended to enhance the capacity of worker to effectively and efficiently carry out certain assigned tasks. It involves the evaluation of needs and matching them with the appropriate trainings.

5.3.2 Resource Adequacy and Performance of Tusome Programme

The study has established a high relationship between adequacy of resources and performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya. For resource adequacy to be of high influence, as established by the study, it should provide adequate funding to ensure availability of skilled teaching and other types of staff; as well as of good quality infrastructure and learning and teaching materials that would

guarantee program operation and sustainability. This implies that resource adequacy influences performance of Tusome Programme. This goes in line with Gasper (1999) who, states that successful progress of a project directly hinges on the processes of fruitful fundraising and on how to keep the funds at adequate levels. The funds need to be exclusively committed to the running of the project; while Jack et al, (2006) add that inadequacy of funds is top factor that leads to most failures of projects. Such resources include the natural ones, human skills and infrastructures.

5.3.3 Stakeholders 'Participation and Performance of Tusome Programme

The study confirmed the crucial role of stakeholders' participation in early grade literacy program in primary schools in Kenya for it to perform as expected. The stakeholders, in this case, included the target beneficiaries and other supporters, such as the national and county governments, besides the supportive non-governmental organizations and community-based bodies; all who should feel that they owned the program for it to performs as expected. According to Pollitt, (2007).The stakeholders should always have an outlined vision for bettering the decision making process by creating tools, information and appropriate trainings to help in the implementation of project activities. All the effort should be guided towards facilitating the project running and not so much towards making decisions on the project. It is also important to share and disseminate information regarding the project while it runs. The predictive power of the information shared to support the project are a good tool for managing the project and a model for attaining

5.4 Conclusion

Based on objective one, the study concluded that there is a great influence of training of staff on performance of Tusome programme. The study revealed that training of staff ensures performance of program. The study established that adequacy of resources influences performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; this study also established that stakeholders were greatly involved in the activities of the early grade literacy program in primary schools inMbeere North, Embu County, Kenya. In addition, stakeholders were directly involved in decision making processes of the programme.

5.5 Recommendations of the Study

The following are the study's recommendations:

a) Stakeholders' participation and involvement in projects at all levels of the project cycle should be emphasized to ensure that their views are fully represented.

b) The Ministry of Education should ensure genuine participation of the target beneficiaries, including the teachers and other program staff, at all relevant levels of the project cycle.

5.6 Suggestion for Further Research

The study offers the following suggestions for further research.

a) A study needs to be done in other sub counties and counties to assess the factors influencing performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya.
b) A study should be conducted on sustainability of education programmes funded by other corporate organizations in Kenya.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

EMILY WANJIKU GITAU

TEL: +254 724 772 400

P.O. BOX 1583 EMBU

EMAIL: mlygit@gmail.com

Dear respondent,

RE: RESEARCH PROPOSAL QUESTIONNAIRE

This is to inform you that I am carrying out a research study for my Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management at the University of Nairobi. The study is on **"FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF EARLY GRADE LITERACY PROGRAMMES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA; A CASE OF TUSOME PROGRAM IN EMBU COUNTY**" I kindly request for your assistance in filling the attached questionnaire to enable me complete my research. The questionnaire is for academic purposes only and any information given shall be treated with strict confidentiality; please give the information as accurately as possible.

Thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Wanjiku Gitau

L50/79324/2015

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS

Please tick as appropriate

Section A Demographic Information:

1. Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )

2. What is your highest qualification achieved? Diploma ( ) Degree ( ) Masters ( ) PhD ( ) Others (please specify) _____

3.What is your current designation Curriculum Support officer ( ) Administrator ( ) Lower Primary Teachers( ) Instructural Coach( )

4. How long have you been working on this programme?

Less than 6 months ( )

Between 6 months- 1 years ( )

Between 1-2 years ( )

Between 2-3 years ( )

Above 3 years ( )

Section B: Training and performance of early grade literacy programmes

The following statements relates to how the extent of Training influence performance of early grade literacy programmes. Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree with each of the statement by selecting one category that mostly corresponds to your desire. Use the scale: 5- Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Neutral, 2 – Disagree 1 - Strongly Disagree

S t a t e m e n t s	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Training has increased accountability and responsibility among staff in the projects ensuring their sustainability					
Staff training has improved competence of the staff hence continuity in the operation of the program					

Training has contributed to better performance of staff which is important to program sustainability					
Training has led to staff motivation influences the direction and execution of the program					

Section C: Resource Adequacy and Performance of Programme

The following statements relates to how the extent of resource adequacy influence performance of early grade literacy programmes in primary schools in Kenya; Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree with each of the statement by selecting one category that mostly corresponds to your desire. Use the scale: 5- Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 - Neutral, 2 – Disagree 1 - Strongly Disagree

S t a t e m e n t s	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	Strongly disagree
Availability of funding is crucial for project operation and sustainability					
Skilled and semi-skilled labour within a project promotes continuity in the operation of the project					
Good infrastructure within the projects ensures project objectives are achieved and hence important to project sustainability In your view, do you think the available resources will enable this project to be a success story to point to?					

Section D: stakeholder's participation and Performance of programme

To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statement as relate to stakeholders and target groups involvement and participation in this project? Rate as follows;

l= Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree.

S t a t e m e n t s	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
This project is fully owned by the target beneficiaries of the project					
This project is fully owned by the stakeholder of the project					
The target beneficiaries of the project are involved in key decision-making					

The project stakeholder are involved in key decision-making					

In your view, what measures do you think has been put in place to ensure the project sustainability**?**

_____

_____

What are your recommendations in order to have sustainable donor funded projects in Kenya?

_____