

**FACTORS INFLUENCING ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION IN IMENTI NORTH SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A Research Project Report Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management of the
University of Nairobi**

2018

DECLARATION

This research project report is my original work and has not been presented to any university for academic award

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely daughter Arielle, my siblings Linda, Phelgona, Judith, Geoffrey, Morris and Maureen for their constant encouragement and reminder to study hard. I am truly thankful to my late parents Mr. and Mrs. Riungu for instilling spirit of hard work, love for education and their huge financial, emotional, and moral support. In addition, I dedicate this work to Prof Mbaabu and his wife Auntie Joy for holding my hand when I started my undergraduate degree and their support throughout the study. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of this research project and I am grateful for your immense support, guidance, constant love, and encouragement

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank the Almighty God for the wisdom and strength He accorded me in the entire process of report writing. I would also like to acknowledge my supervisor Dr. Dismus Bulinda for the technical advice and tireless efforts in fine-tuning my work. I also thank all the lecturers in the department of Education who shaped my destiny towards earning this degree. I am grateful to my friends Daniel, Koome, Ngeera, Gideon, Mary Njiiri, Lamech, among many others that I may not be able to mention, study group members Catherine, Shammah and all my classmates in Masters class of 2012. I appreciate my employer, Dr. Kumar, my immediate supervisor Andrew and my colleagues for their immense support during my study. Lastly, I acknowledge the University of Nairobi for giving me a chance to acquire knowledge in a conducive environment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	xi
ABSTRACT.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.3 Purpose of the Study	6
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	7
1.5 Research Questions.....	7
1.6 Significance of the Study	8
1.7 Limitations of the Study.....	8
1.8 Delimitations of the Study	8
1.9 Basic assumptions of the Study	9
1.10 Definitions of Significant Terms	9
1.11 Organization of the Study	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Enrolment of Children in Early Childhood Education	11

2.3 Access to teaching and learning resources on enrolment of children in early childhood education	13
2.4 Free primary education and enrolment of children in early childhood education	15
2.5 Transitioning of early childhood education learners to primary school level and enrolment of children in early childhood education	17
2.6 Teachers' remuneration level and children's enrolment to early childhood education	19
2.7 Theoretical Framework.....	19
2.8 Conceptual Framework.....	21
2.9 Knowledge and Research Gaps	22
2.6 Summary of Literature Review	24
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25
3.1 Introduction.....	25
3.2 Research Design.....	25
3.3 Target Population.....	25
3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques	26
3.5 Instruments of data collection.....	26
3.6 Pilot Study.....	27
3.7 Validity of Research Instruments.....	27
3.8 Reliability of the Instruments.....	28
3.9 Data Analysis Techniques.....	28
3.10 Ethical Considerations	29
3.11 Operationalization of Study Variables.....	29
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION ...	31

4.1 Introduction.....	31
4.2 Questionnaire Return Rate.....	31
4.3 Socio-Demographic data of the Respondents.....	32
4.3.1 Gender of the respondents.....	32
4.3.2 Age of the respondents.....	33
4.3.3 Marital status of the respondents.....	34
4.3.4 Professional qualification of the respondents.....	34
4.3.5 Teaching experience of the respondents.....	35
4.3.6 Duration of service for head teachers.....	36
4.5 Influence of teaching and learning resources on enrolment of children in early childhood education.....	37
4.6 Influence of free primary education on enrolment of children in early childhood education.....	43
4.7. Influence of transitioning of early childhood education learners to primary school level on enrolment of early childhood education.....	49
4.8 Influence of teachers' remuneration level on enrolment of children in early childhood education.....	53
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	60
5.1 Introduction.....	60
5.2 Summary of the Study.....	60
5.2.1 Influence of teaching and learning resources on enrolment of children in Early Childhood Education.....	60

5.2.2 Influence of Free Primary Education on enrolment of children in Early Childhood Education	61
5.2.3 Influence of transitioning of ECE learners to primary school level	62
5.2.4 Influence of teachers’ remuneration level on enrolment of children in Early Childhood Education	62
5.3 Conclusions.....	63
5.4 Recommendations.....	63
5.5 Suggestions for further research	64
REFERENCES.....	65
APPINDICES	73
Appendix I: Letter of Introduction.....	73
Appendix II: Sub-County Assurance and Standards Officers Interview Guide	74
Appendix III: Questionnaire for Head Teachers.....	75
Appendix IV: Questionnaire for ECDE Teachers	79

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Summary Knowledge gaps	22
Table 3.1: Sample Size	26
Table 3.2: Operationalization of variables table	30
Table 4.1: Questionnaire Return Rate.....	31
Table 4.2: Gender of the respondents	32
Table 4.3: Age of the respondents	33
Table 4.4: Marital status of the respondents	34
Table 4.5: Professional qualification	35
Table 4.6: Teaching experience	36
Table 4.7: Duration of service	37
Table 4.8: Available resources.....	38
Table 4.9: Level of satisfaction on the available teaching/learning resources	40
Table 4.10: Free primary education and ECE enrolment	44
Table 4.11: Aspects of FPE that affected enrolment of ECE	44
Table 4.12: Causes of ECE dropout.....	46
Table 4.13: Effect of FPE on ECE enrolment.....	48
Table 4.14: Language of instruction	49
Table 4.15: Continuity of language of instruction	50
Table 4.16: Skills learned in ECE.....	52
Table 4.17: Role of ECE in the transition of learners.....	52
Table 4.18: ECE teachers' monthly salary	55
Table 4.19: Causes of ECE teachers' retrenchment.....	58

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework	22
Figure 2: Adequacy of teaching and learning resources	39
Figure 3: Suppliers of teaching and learning resources	41
Figure 4: Teaching/learning resources and enrolment of ECE.....	42
Figure 5: Dropouts from ECE classes.....	46
Figure 6: Rate of attendance of learners	47
Figure 7: Needs of primary school level and ECE enrolment	51
Figure 8: ECE employers.....	54
Figure 9: Salary satisfaction.....	56
Figure 10: Salary and ECE teachers' turnover	57
Figure 11: Cases of retrenchment	58

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECDE	Early Childhood Development and Education
EFA	Education for All
FEP	Free Education Policy
FPE	Free Primary Education
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
LAFT	Local Authority Transfer Fund
MOEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
DQA&SO	Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors that influence enrolment of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Imenti North Sub County. The study objectives were; to establish how access to teaching and learning resources influence the enrolment of early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County, to assess how free primary education influences the enrolment of early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County, to determine the influence of transitioning of ECE learners to primary school level on enrolment of early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County, and to establish the extent to which teachers' remuneration level influence children's enrolment to Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) in Imenti North Sub-County. This study used the descriptive survey design. The sample consisted of 1 Data Quality Assessment and Standards (DQA&S) Officer, 62 head teachers and 72 ECE teachers. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview guide. Validity of the instruments was assessed through being scrutinized by the specialists in the area and supervisors from the department of Educational Administration and Planning and reliability was assessed by use of the test-retest method. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) in the form of descriptive statistics, which included frequencies and percentages. The researcher presented the data in tables, bar graphs, and pie charts. The study established that most of the ECDE centres in Imenti North Sub-County do not have adequate teaching and learning resources. The study concluded that inadequate teaching and learning resources affected enrolment of ECE in this particular region. Further, the findings of the study revealed that FPE led to the decline of enrolment of learners in ECE through transfer of ECE infrastructure to primary schools, less frequent supervision of the centres because of concentrated focus on FPE, and difficulties in resource mobilization for ECE. Moreover, the findings revealed that the needs of primary school level required learners to enroll in ECE, thereby influencing the overall enrolment. The study findings further revealed that teachers' remuneration affected their turnover and subsequent enrolment of learners in ECE. The Ministry should address the funding of ECDE in Kenya, particularly in the procurement of teaching and learning materials. The management of ECE centres should aid the development of more infrastructure through resource mobilization. The Ministry of Education through the Teachers Service Commission to employ ECE teachers and improve their remuneration to improve the staffing level of ECDE centres.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The Early Childhood Development (ECD) is a very crucial stage in Child Growth and Development. This fact has been emphasized by most founders of Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE), especially Johann Froebel, Heinrich Pestalozzi and John Dewey among others (Murunga, 2015). Early childhood is a critical phase of life in terms of a child's physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. Growth of mental and physical abilities progress at an astounding rate and a very high proportion of learning take place from birth to age six. It is a time when children need high quality personal care and learning experiences.

Heinrich Pestalozzi posited that education had enormous contributions to children lives. According to Pestalozzi, formal education within a school is needed for children to integrate knowledge of home life, vocational education, and reading and writing. Further, he asserted that the teacher's role is one that should focus on teaching children, not subjects, and education should follow the child's nature, and mothers are children's most important teachers. Today, it is evident that Pestalozzi contributed to the idea of children's development following a natural timetable, as well as the idea that the environment is an essential facet of the educational process (Heikka & Waniganayake, 2011). Equally, the work of Robert Owen has been instrumental on the role of early education as a progressive experience that can serve to overcome environment deficits in other areas of the child's life (Nutbrown & Clough, 2014). Friedrich Froebel contributed to the idea that formal curriculum, methodology, and teacher-training practices are necessary to support children's learning (Ailwood, 2007). In addition, Froebel established the idea that ECE is a formal process that occurs within organized setting (Ailwood, 2007).

ECE policies and programs in Europe and the Anglo-American countries evolved out of remarkably similar historical streams: child protection; early childhood education; services for children with special needs; and services to facilitate mothers' labor force participation (Kamerman, 2007). In all the countries, one overarching theme is the movement from private charity, beginning in the early and middle 19th century to public responsibility, evolving largely after World War II. The extent of public responsibility does vary, however, across the countries. However, it is the relative emphasis given in public policy to custodial care of poor and disadvantaged children of working mothers, on the one hand, and education and socialization of all children, on the other, that appears to be the most distinguishing variation among countries (Kamerman, 2006).

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 later by part-day kindergartens (Lloyd, 2015). The infant schools provided an inferior form of care and education to the children of poor working women and covered 20 percent of three year olds and 40 percent of 4 year olds in 1851. In the ADEA Newsletter (2002) Africa is described as having the youngest population in the world, whereby a half of the population are children under 14 and 20 percent under 5 years. It is the region with the highest infant mortality rate, with children likely to suffer from chronic malnutrition and an inadequate food supply, experience severe poverty, likely to live in the midst of armed conflict and/or becoming an AIDS orphan (African Ministers and Representatives of Ministers, 2005).

Enrolment rates improved during the 1990s in response to the 1990 Jomtien and Dakar conferences, the World Summit for Children, and the CRC, but coverage remains very low. Most African countries have pre-primary enrolment rates of less than 10 percent, but rates vary greatly

in the region from over 90 percent in Mauritius to less than 1 percent in the Congo and Djibouti (World Education Forum, 2000). The situation varies across the countries, with eastern and southern Africa accounting for 62 percent of the participating children. The programs are largely private with 80 percent of the children enrolled in private programs. International organizations, such as UNICEF and the World Bank; the Bernard van Leer and Aga Khan Foundations, have played an especially important role because ECEC is still viewed as a luxury, primarily the responsibility of families and communities, and investments in ECEC not viewed as important (Kamerman, 2007).

Pence (2004) points out that ECEC has a much longer history as a part of colonization activities in Africa than many seem to have realized. The first nursery school in Kenya was established for European children in Nairobi in 1942, for example, when the country was under British administration. Kenya was at the forefront of ECEC developments in Africa. Likewise, Kipkorir and Njenga (1993) pointed out that the first preschools in Kenya were started in the 1940s by and for the exclusive use of the European and Asian communities. Later preschools were developed in African locations in urban areas and on coffee, tea and sugar plantations. After independence, preschool education expanded throughout the country.

The Sessional Paper. 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and Its Application to Planning in Kenya examined Kenya's educational needs from an ideological aspect, which was different from colonial administration approaches (Republic of Kenya, 1965). The paper emphasized the need for the country to work towards the universal primary education as well as expansion of secondary schools to facilitate higher education in order to hasten economic and national development.

While presenting a paper on the state of the nation's economy in 2003, Anyang' Nyong'o the then Minister for Planning and National Development, suggested the various principles that could guide Kenya's development strategy. The paper recommended broad based improvement in the standard of living for the future generation in the country, and this required among others, a reduction in the incidence of poverty, reduced maternal and infant mortality, higher levels of education attainment, more productive jobs for Kenyan's and greater domestic control of the country's assets. High level of education was seen as a critical area that could improve people's standards of living, and as such, the government could bolster free primary education program.

The experience in several African countries is used to show the advantage of eliminating primary school fees. In Uganda, for example, primary school enrolment reportedly rose from 3.6 to 6.9 million between 1996 and 2001 (World Bank, 2003), after free enrolment was introduced. Similarly, in Tanzania, after FPE was introduced in 2002, an extra 1.6 million children started attending school (Oxfam International, 2005). Furthermore, Save the Children UK (as cited in Tooley, Dixon, & Stanfield, 2008) suggests that in Malawi, the abolition of primary school charges in 1994 saw a 50 per cent rise in primary enrolment almost overnight. Most recently, in Kenya, the government introduced FPE in January 2003, leading in the first year to a reported increase in enrolment of 1.3 million, from 5.9 to 7.2 million. At the provincial level, Nairobi showed the largest increase in primary school enrolment of 48.1 percent (Lauglo, 2004).

Meanwhile, an assessment study of FPE carried out jointly by the MOEST and UNESCO in February 2004 found that ECD programs had almost "collapsed" because children's enrolments 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. In this regard, decreased enrolments have meant reduced salaries for

ECD teachers. In Kenya, ECD teachers' salaries are in most cases covered by parental fees, unlike their counterparts in primary schools who are paid by the government according to an official teacher salary scale (UNESCO, 2006). In ECD Centres, parental fees are paid in proportion to the number of children one enrolls and are mostly, if not entirely, used to cover teachers' salaries. Thus, the level of teachers' remuneration depends on the total number of children enrolled as well as parents' ability to pay fees. As a result, the reduced number of ECD enrolments brought about by FPE has been a blow to teachers, whose remuneration was meagre and unstable already before the introduction of FPE. With parents increasingly reluctant to pay for ECD, FPE has made it even more difficult to mobilise resources from parents for ECD. Cases of increased job insecurity and ECD Centre closures are on the rise, particularly in poor communities.

In Meru County, there has been concerted effort to introduce specific measures that are geared towards addressing a myriad of challenges that ECDE centres face in terms of learners enrolment and staffing. In fact, Meru County government has already introduced a feeding program for learners in various ECDE centres located in all the sub counties, an initiative that seeks to improve enrolment rate and retention of pupils (The Council of Governors, 2018). To this end, it is evident that some reports and/or studies have shown free primary education program to impact negatively on early childhood education, whereas others do not point out its shortcomings. This is the gap that the current study seeks to fill.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The gross enrolment rate in primary education jumped from 86.8% in 2002 to 101.5% in 2004 after the introduction of the Free Primary Education (FPE) program (UNESCO Policy Brief on Early Childhood, 2006). Though intended to boost primary education, FPE has had consequences in other areas of education, including early childhood development (ECD). Studies have been

conducted to assess the effects of FPE on ECD Centres. Some reported on negative effects (Oketch & Somerset, 2010; Mathooko, 2009), while others note no major drawbacks (Lucas & Mbiti, 2012; Sifuna, 2005). While the overall impact of the policy is yet to be determined, the UNESCO/OECD Early Childhood Policy Review Mission, which took place in September 2004, observed that the policy did have a negative impact on ECD Centres serving poor children. In most disadvantaged regions, a 2006 UNESCO policy brief on childhood notes that there has been a sharp decrease in ECD enrolments since the implementation of FPE. Declining enrolments appear to be so acute and widespread that there is a serious concern about the collapse of ECD services (UNESCO Policy Brief on Early Childhood, 2006). Despite the government and other relevant education stakeholders introducing many measures, such as quality, equity, and access, to this sub-sector, it continues to face a myriad of challenges that include inadequate ECDE centres, lack of enough trained teachers, lack of clear entry age guidelines, and lack of a clear policy on transition from pre-primary to primary school (Garcia, Pence, & Evans, 2008; Jaluo, 2013).

Besides, a lot of attention has been placed on the problems faced in accessing the Free Primary Education in Kenya with little focus on how FPE influences enrolment of early childhood education (Khakasa, 2011; Kabiro, 2011), thus paucity of literature on factors influencing enrolment of early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County. Against this backdrop, this study sought to investigate factors influencing enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following objectives;

- i. To establish how access to teaching and learning resources influence the enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County
- ii. To assess how free primary education program influences the enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County
- iii. To determine the influence of transitioning of early childhood education learners to primary school level on enrolment of early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County
- iv. Establish the extent to which teachers' remuneration level influence children's enrolment to early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County

1.5 Research Questions

- i. To what extent does access to teaching and learning resources influence the enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County?
- ii. To what extent does free primary education influence the enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County?
- iii. To what extent does transitioning of early childhood education learners to primary school level, influence enrolment of early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County?
- iv. To what extent does teachers' remuneration level influence children's enrolment to early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings from this study may provide useful knowledge in the formulation of policies by the Government and other stakeholders in the education sector, particularly a policy framework that is able to address a wide array of challenges facing ECDE, such as increasing its access to disadvantaged and vulnerable children.

The findings could also institute a basis for further research in the area of enrolment of children in early childhood education, which will be beneficial to scholars and academicians interested in the study.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The researcher anticipated documentation challenges in terms of putting together the available information because the literature on the current study is scanty. To overcome this limitation, the researcher visited ECDE centres to get first-hand knowledge on factors influencing enrolment of ECE. The researcher anticipated that some respondents could not be willing to give information or may give inconsistent information because of confidentiality concerns. To mitigate this challenge, the researcher assured all the respondents that their identity was to be treated with utmost confidentiality.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

Delimitations of the study refer to the specific boundaries of a study. The current study focused on the factors influencing enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County. The study was delimited to ECDE centres next to public primary schools in Imenti North Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya, because such centres are under the supervision of head teachers and are directly impacted by government school support programmes, such as free primary education.

1.9 Basic assumptions of the Study

It was assumed that the respondents have prior experience and would be available and willing to give accurate information about the area under study. Equally, the study assumes that all public primary schools in the area under study are affiliated or adjacent ECDE centres.

1.10 Definitions of Significant Terms

Enrolment of early childhood education; the number of learners who are enrolled at an ECDE centre.

Free Primary Education Program; is a program widely assumed to be required to ensure that the poor gain enrolment in primary schools.

Teaching and learning resources; these are text books, exercise books, charts, wall maps and other materials which facilitate teaching and learning process in school.

Teachers' remuneration: The salary package paid to ECE teachers and their satisfaction regarding their employment and what they are compensated for their services.

Transitioning; moving from preschool to primary school, extending through all subsequent levels of education. Successful transitions enable children to adapt to new settings where they quickly grasp teaching and learning methods, the processes, rules and regulations, which will enhance their performance in school.

1.11 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one constitutes the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, delimitations, assumptions of the study, and definition of significant terms. Chapter two constitutes the literature review related to the factors influencing enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County. This includes access to

teaching and learning resources, free primary education, transitioning of ECE learners to primary school level, and ECE teacher's remuneration level and conceptual framework. Chapter three provides an overview of the research methodology that this particular study has utilized. This includes research design, target population sample and sampling procedures, research instrument validity, data collection procedures and analysis techniques. Chapter four includes the analysis of data collected from the identified respondents and interpretation of the findings. Chapter five accounts for summary of the findings, conclusion, recommendations as well as suggested areas of further study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study reviews relevant literature in relation to the aspects of early childhood education. The aspects include access to teaching and learning resources, free primary education, transitioning of ECE learners to primary school level, and ECE teachers' remuneration level.

2.2 Enrolment of Children in Early Childhood Education

The government has been committed to Education for All (E.F.A) goals by providing basic education in pre-primary, primary and secondary school level. At pre-primary level, it has been offered in E.C.D.E centres often attached to existing public and private primary schools or private pre-primary schools. Many parents and guardians have been unaware of the importance of Early Childhood Education, which promotes holistic development of children (Mutua and Wasike, 2010). This has contributed to the low enrolment in public E.C.D.E. centres. Early years of life need to be utilized because these are the years that the child develops rapidly either physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. They form the milestone that lay the foundation of adulthood.

A presidential circular in 1980 mandated that the education sector of government be responsible for the pre-school education of 3 to 5 year-olds (UNESCO, 2005a). After the 1990 Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA), the education sector embraced the care and education of children under 3 within its mandate. A World Bank project on early childhood development (ECD) from 1997 to 2004 further provided an opportunity for the government to expand its vision on early childhood. ECD, emphasizing the principle of holistic development, came to replace the concept of pre-school education, and the government ultimately changed the name of the discipline from 'pre-school education' to 'early childhood development'.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Kenya concerns the holistic development of children between 0+ and 5+ years old. ECD is under the responsibility of the MOEST (UNESCO, 2005b). The current Education and Training Act does not include ECD; the only policy framework that directs the MOEST's provision of ECD is the Partnership Policy, first stipulated in the Session Paper No. 6 of 1988 and the National Development Plan of 1989/1993. The Children's Act of 2001 safeguards the rights and welfare of children from early childhood to adolescence (UNESCO, 2005a).

A policy review policy by UNESCO (2005a) noted that FPE seemed to have had a significant impact, at least, on poor families, whose decision to send their children to ECD Centres or to schools is affected by whether they have to pay for the services. Considering that most parents view ECD as an early form of schooling, one does not need elaborate data to predict that Kenyan parents have not been willing to pay ECD Centre fees when primary education, which they consider "real" schooling is free. When parents withdraw their contributions, drops in ECD enrolment and eventual closures of ECD Centres are all but inevitable.

Access to ECD Centres is inequitable, with poor children from semi-arid, arid and urban slum areas less likely to enrol in them. A relatively large gap between gross and net enrolment ratios implies the presence of over-age and under-age children in ECD Centres. The presence of over-age children explains, in part, the heavy focus on pre-primary education. The presence of under-age children points to the difficulty of delivering quality ECD services (UNESCO Policy Brief on Early Childhood, 2006). Equity should be a key policy objective.

2.3 Access to teaching and learning resources on enrolment of children in early childhood education

Many ECDE centres in Kenya lack adequate teaching and learning resource and facilities suitable for ECDE in their learning environment. This implies that teachers do not have adequate teaching and learning resources to enable them to implement ECDE Curriculum effectively. This affects implementation of ECDE Curriculum negatively as creation of a sustainable learning environment helps deprived children to improve their academic performance (MOEST, 2005).

Besides, FPE has also had unintended consequences for ECD in terms of resource allocation. ECD classrooms set up on the premises of public primary schools have been shut down in order to accommodate the surge of enrolment in primary education sparked by FPE (UNESCO Policy Brief on Early Childhood, 2006). In some cases, ECD children and teachers must put up with reduced space; in others, they have been moved to the worst classrooms on the premises. For instance, classrooms appeared to be generally congested and there was hardly any space for free movement during lessons. Also a number of classroom conditions were poor, for instance, lighting depended only on sunlight, which was sometimes inadequate. In addition, in some schools they had introduced school mats for children to sit on since there were no sufficient desks. Nevertheless, a majority of the teachers felt that the sitting on the mats affected the children's writing skills and general physical development.

A study conducted by Shinali, Githui, and Thinguri (2014) on the assessment of the Early Childhood Development capitation grant on ECDE centres in Narok south Sub County showed that ECD capitation grant has led to an increase in the enrolment of children in ECDE centres. Moreover, the programme has led to adequacy of the teaching and learning materials and this in turn has enhanced learning despite the fact that the grant was considered inadequate. The ECDE

capitation grant programme was started in 2007. The purpose was to enhance access, quality, and equity to early childhood development education (ECDE) services. It targets all children aged 4-5 years and of great concern are the most vulnerable living in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), pockets of poverty and the urban slums. The capitation programme was to cater for 65% of children in Kenya who particularly come from poverty stricken households and have no access to quality pre-school programmes.

According to a report by Kenya policy framework on early childhood development (2006), the government has been shouldering a heavier burden of financing the cost of primary school education since the cost of free primary education is high. The upkeep of the children and general school development consisting of putting up buildings, upgrading facilities, furniture and paying for maintenance of facilities. For the ECDE programme to be effectively implemented, it needs adequate financial support from all the stakeholders, that is, the parents, local communities, and NGOs. The government support is minimal but acts as a motivation to others to contribute towards the programme. The ability of parents and communities to give financial support has been hindered by poverty in supporting the programme. Although there has been a rapid growth of education in Kenya since independence, enrolments in ECDE especially in the ASAL and urban slums has been low.

Chepkonga (2017) investigated the influence of learning facilities on provision of quality education in early childhood development centres in West Pokot County, Kenya. The study used mixed method research methodology to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The respondents for the research consisted of ECDE officers, head teachers and teachers. The research found out that there was significant relationship between learning facilities and provision of quality ECDE in West Pokot County. Majority of public ECDE centres in West Pokot County were found not to

have enough classes, desks, water, kitchen stores among others. The lack of adequate learning facilities influenced negatively provision of quality education.

Sitati and Kennedy (2017) examined the provision of teaching/learning resources in the early childhood education centres in Kakamega County, Kenya. The motivation of the study was early childhood education sector in Kenya does not receive direct funding from the government like the primary and secondary sectors. This then calls for stakeholders to provide finances for procurement of teaching/learning resources and other resources. The findings of the study revealed that stakeholders had made good efforts to buy instructional materials in both the public and private ECE centres. The study recommended the government to streamline ECE within the policy of free primary education and expand the school equipment production unit (SEPU) to institute ECE equipment and materials.

2.4 Free primary education and enrolment of children in early childhood education

According to a study carried out by the KIE in 2003, with responses from 52 districts, the policy's impact on ECD enrolments is by no means all negative: about equal numbers of districts reported declines and increases. Meanwhile, an assessment study of FPE carried out jointly by the MOEST and UNESCO in February 2004 found that ECD programmes had almost "collapsed" because children's enrolments 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.

Without a doubt, the team tasked to review FPE found widespread anecdotal evidence of drops in enrolment at ECD Centres, especially in poor provinces such as North Eastern (UNESCO, 2005b).

Since the introduction of the FPE policy in the North Eastern Province, which is one of Kenya's poorest, many parents have bypassed ECD altogether; many others send their children only to the Pre-Unit Class of ECD to prepare them for primary school. In some areas, parents are keeping their children at home until they reach the age of and above, entitling them to free education. This tendency is particularly pronounced among poor families who cannot afford ECD Centres (UNESCO, 2005b). The problem is compounded by the refusal of some parents to pay for ECD on the grounds that it, too, should be free. ECD managers and local authorities are now faced with parents who resist contributing to ECD Centres. Since teachers' salaries in most ECD Centres depend entirely on parental contributions, the lack of funding leads to the loss of teachers and eventually the closure of ECD services.

A study carried out by Mwangi and Serem (2013) on impacts of free primary education and subsidized secondary education on public ECDE centres in Nyahururu Sub-county, Kenya, revealed that while kitties led to rising enrolment in primary, secondary school and private Early Childhood Development and Education centres, enrolment declined in public centres. The two have lowered the quality of education in public Early Childhood Development and Education centres since parents were unwilling to raise finances enough to employ and motivate teachers, buy teaching/learning resources, school facilities and school feeding program. High enrolment after Free Primary Education also took up classrooms meant for Early Childhood Development and Education in public centres. In this regard, FPE has significantly contributed to the low standards of ECDE in Kenya.

At the sub-county level, inspection and supervision of ECD Centres, some of which is carried out by the inspectors of schools, have reportedly become less frequent. Instructed by the government

to closely monitor the progress of FPE, the zonal inspectors are spending more time visiting primary schools, leaving little room for work with ECD Centres (Murugi, 2011).

2.5 Transitioning of early childhood education learners to primary school level and enrolment of children in early childhood education

The aim of preschool education in Kenya is to prepare children for primary education, grades 1 to 12. However, the government does not require preschool attendance. On average, approximately 35% of Kenya's children have access to preschool education (UNESCO, 2006). In addition to preparing children for primary education, preschools provide childcare services for most families (Nganga, 2009). To meet this need, preschool programs are mushrooming in different parts of the country at rates never seen before (Garcia et al., 2008). Indeed, a 2005 report by UNESCO estimated that Kenya had roughly 32,000 preschools due to the developing partnership between communities, the government and parents. In this partnership, the government does the coordination and parents and members of the community make decisions regarding the types of programs they would like to have (UNESCO, 2005b).

A policy review on transition from early childhood education to primary schools by O'Kane (2016) confirms that a positive experience during this important transition is a predictor of children's future success in terms of social, emotional and educational outcomes. Furthermore, the review notes that in addition to the transfer of relevant information, the roles of all stakeholders in the process must be considered in order to support children making the transition from preschool to primary school. The review is relevant to the present study as it sheds light on various aspects that support effective transition of learners from preschool to primary school level.

Research done by Mwonga and Wanyama (2012) revealed that teaching and learning materials not only enhances a child's acquisition of music and movement skills but also ensures that the transition from pre-primary to primary school is smooth. This therefore means that all the education stakeholders should ensure that the teaching and learning materials are available in preschool centres.

Roopnarine and Johnson (2011) note the increasing emphasis on quality early childhood education and make recommendations to ease the transition from preschool to primary school. Stronger partnerships between the home and school environments must be encouraged since family functioning has an enduring effect on children's academic performance as they embark on their educational journey. Improving teacher training is key, as teachers appear to be ill prepared to facilitate successful transitions, paying more attention to academic skills and less to the social and psychological difficulties that children encounter when they move to primary school. Acknowledging early childhood development curricula, based on Caribbean goals and learning outcomes, together with partnerships amongst children and their families, educational agents and Ministries of Education, appear to be a more culture specific and appropriate approach to the transition process.

As children move from preschool to primary school, many are able to easily navigate the change but for some it can be quite daunting (Skouteris, Watson, & Lum, 2012). Obviously, this experience is perceived to have long term effects on their future development and learning, extending through all subsequent levels of education. Successful transitions enable children to adapt to new settings where they quickly grasp teaching and learning methods, the processes, rules and regulations, which will enhance their performance in school.

2.6 Teachers' remuneration level and children's enrolment to early childhood education

Preschool is a critical means of expanding educational equity and opportunity by giving every child a strong start. Studies show that attending high-quality early education can result in children building a solid foundation for achieving the academic, health, and social outcomes that are of benefit to individual families and to the country as a whole (Campbell et al., 2014). Yet, preschool teachers are paid less than other professions. Undervaluing nation's early childhood educators is detrimental because ECE is critical in brain development and the optimal time for learning. Educating children before kindergarten requires significant knowledge, expertise, and skill, especially in light of the critical importance of the early years for children's growth, development, and future academic and life success (Campbell et al., 2014).

Inconsistency in policy from the Teachers Service Commission, and the lack of recognition of the important role Early Childhood Development Education teachers play in child development, has led many to either move to better paying opportunities in the private sector, or go back to the teacher's college to train to be primary school teachers (Ndani & Kimani, 2011). Obviously, this situation has greatly affected enrolment of learners into ECE because most centres located next to public primary schools have closed down due to lack of funds to pay teachers. The absence of public nursery schools has given rise to private nursery schools, locking out children from poor backgrounds whose families cannot afford the fees charged at the private institutions

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The study adopts general systems theory by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy (1966), and educational production function as postulated by Coleman (1996) and Psacharapoulos and Wood (1985). Bertalanffy (1966) defines a general system as any theoretical system that is of interest to more

than one discipline. The systems are integrated wholes whose properties cannot be reduced to those of smaller units. Instead of concentrating on smaller units, the systems approach emphasizes the principles of the organization.

Pre-schools are complex interdependent social systems. Pre-primary administration involves professionally working with and through teachers and all members of a school community in order to achieve the goals of the school. Government, teachers, pupils, resources, and facilities are units in a system, which is the school. ECE administrators integrate the units and make each unit play its role in order to improve enrolment. This study therefore embarks on this theory as it investigates factors that influence enrolment of children in ECE.

The theory on educational production function states that different education inputs are provided in certain quantities to produce good results. The level of output from an education institution depends on the initial inputs that were introduced, coupled with how well they were utilized for the realization of high output. For early childhood education, the inputs include learners, finances, and learning and teaching resources. The internal performance of the inputs is measured along the prevailing indicators that include enrolment and participation, rate of competition, retention, and scores of learners during tests and/or examination. This theory provides important insight into the assessment of education in ECE. The theory avers that it is important to have adequate resources for education centres, which are meant for the procurement of physical and teaching facilities, as well as for teachers' salaries. To achieve the overall aim of schools, it is important that the available resources be used sparingly. Accordingly, this particular theory is relevant in the assessment of the factors influencing enrolment of learners in early childhood education.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The independent variables in this study are resources, free primary education, transition to primary school level, and teachers' remuneration. The dependent variable is enrolment of children in early Childhood Education (ECE), while the intervening variable is government policies. The conceptual framework shows the relationship between various factors associated with enrolment of children in early childhood education. This is as shown in figure 2.1.

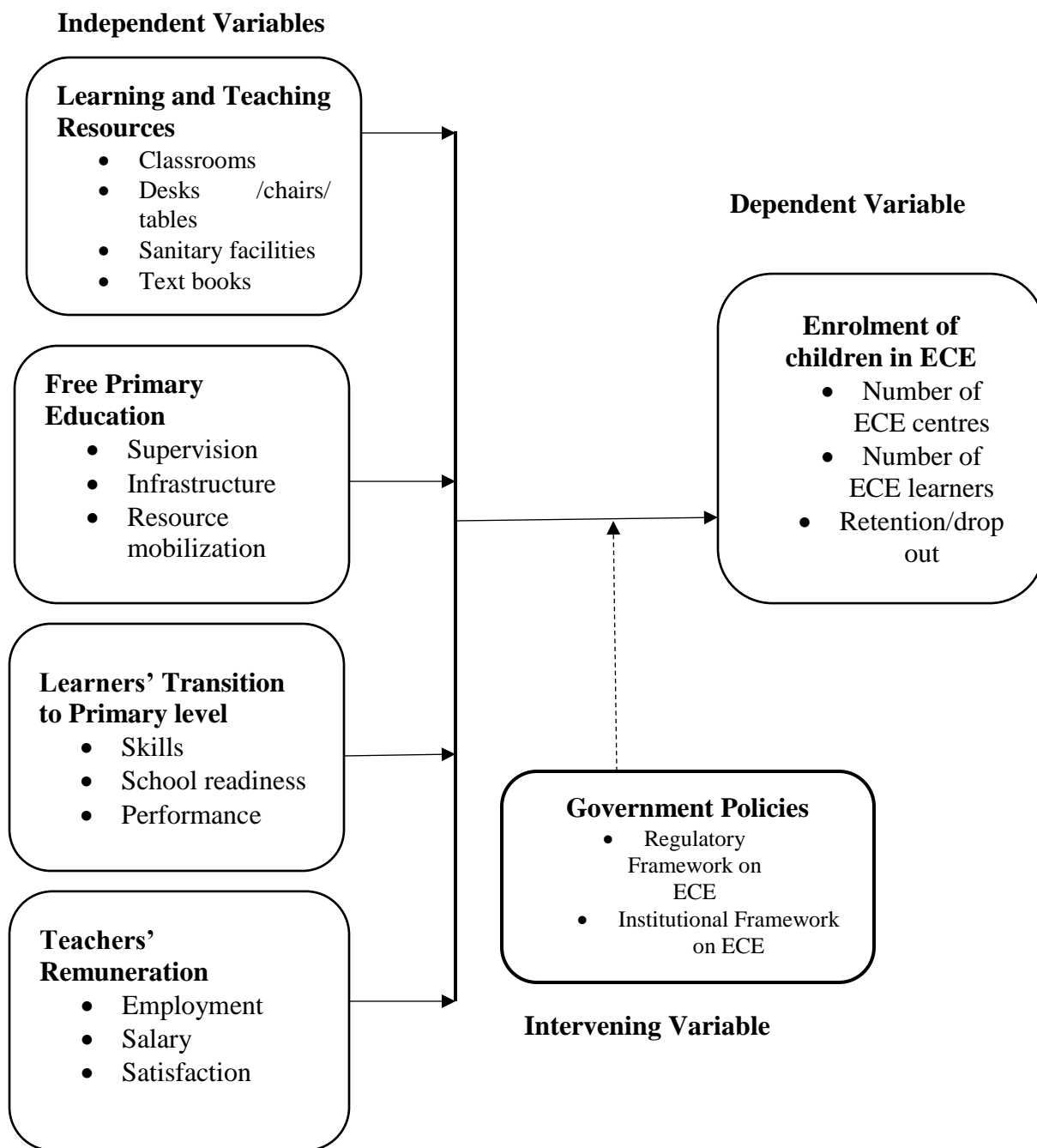


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.9 Knowledge and Research Gaps

Table 2.1 provides a summary of the conceptual and empirical studies that were reviewed. Information provided include the methodologies used in the studies, findings and the gaps, which can inform future studies.

Table 2.1: Summary Knowledge gaps

Researcher(s)	Focus of the Study	Methodology	Findings	Knowledge Gaps and Focus of the Current Study
Shinali, Githui, and Thinguri (2014)	Assessment of the Early Childhood Development capitation grant on ECDE centres in Narok south Sub County.	The study used descriptive survey design, and involved 50 respondents from 20 ECDE centres.	ECD capitation grant has led to an increase in the enrolment of learners in ECDE centres, as well as adequacy of the teaching and learning materials.	This study assessed ECE capitation grant as the independent variable instead of the specific independent variables identified in current study, such as resources, FPE, and teachers' remuneration.
Chepkonga (2017)	Influence of learning facilities on provision of quality education in early childhood development centres in West Pokot County, Kenya	The study used mixed method research methodology to collect qualitative and quantitative data from 204 respondents.	There is a significant relationship between learning facilities and provision of quality ECDE.	The study considered provision of quality ECDE as a dependent variable and not enrolment of ECE. A gap that the current study will address in objective one.
Sitati and Kennedy (2017)	Provision of teaching/learning resources in the early childhood education centres in Kakamega County, Kenya.	The study adopted a descriptive survey design, involving 3 sub-counties (30 % of the population) that comprised both public and private ECEs to participate.	Stakeholders had made good efforts to buy instructional materials in both the public and private ECE centres.	The study considered the general provision of teaching/learning resources in ECE, negating the independent role that they play in enrolment of ECE.

Table 2.1:Cont'd.....

Mwangi and Serem (2013)	Impact of free primary education and subsidized secondary education on public ECDE centres in Nyahururu Sub-county, Kenya.	The study adopted a descriptive survey design and utilized a population of 1 D.E.O's office, 225 E.C.D.E teachers, 137 E.C.D.E managers and 225 E.C.D.E parents	Kitties led to rising enrolment in primary, secondary school and private Early Childhood Development and Education centres, whereas enrolment declined in public centres.	This study considered two dimensions of the independent variable, FPE and subsidized secondary education, whereas the present study focuses specifically on FPE and its influence on the ECE enrolment.
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Source: Literature Review (2018)

2.6 Summary of Literature Review

The literature reviewed indicates that some studies have been undertaken on the factors influencing enrolment of children in ECE. However, several gaps have been identified above which need scholarly attention. Given the above critical review about enrolment of children in ECE, the study addresses some of the gaps by looking at how learning/teaching resources, FPE, and transitioning to primary school level, as well as teachers' remuneration influence enrolment of children in ECE. Indeed, the works, which has been reviewed above, are just a selected few. There is thus little doubt that from the review very little research has been conducted on the Kenyan context, more specifically in North Imenti Sub County. Local studies have focused on the role of stakeholders in the provision of resources in ECE centres, the impact of FPE on the quality of ECDE, and the factors that influence transitioning of ECE children to primary school level. The study makes use of many sources in related fields to harness relevant data to address this gap.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the process and strategies that are to be used in carrying out the study. It is divided into the following subsections; research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, research instruments, validity of research instruments, reliability of research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This study used descriptive survey design. According to Kothari (2004), descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by administering the questionnaires to a sample of individuals for collecting data with an aim of answering questions concerning current status of the subject under study. The design is good for the study because it provides adequate information on the relationship among the variables that is; institutional factors and enrolment of ECE. The other advantage of the study is that it is not restricted to fact-finding only as it may lead to formulation of solutions to problems (Kerlinger, 2000).

3.3 Target Population

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the target population is the total population the researcher wants to generalize the results. In this study, the target population was comprised of 449 respondents. The researcher targeted 1 DQA&S Officer at Imenti North Sub-County Education Office, 208 primary school head teachers and 240 ECDE teachers of the Imenti North Sub-County (Imenti North Sub-County Education Office, 2017).

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), recommends 30% of the target as adequate sample for a study in social science research. The Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (DQA&SO), 72 ECDE teachers and 62 primary school head teachers will be included in the study. Accordingly, the sample size of the study comprised of 135 respondents. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) advise that the whole population can be used when the target population is small. Table 3.1 indicates the study's sample size.

Table 3.1: Sample Size

Respondents	Target	Sample size	Percentage (%)
DQA&SO	1	1	100%
Primary Head teachers	208	62	30%
ECDE Teachers	240	72	30%
Total	449	135	30%

DQASO was purposively selected as this is a key informant position. 62 primary school head teachers out of 208 schools were selected by random sampling method. 72 ECDE teachers were randomly selected. Stratified sampling was used to obtain the main strata, which are the zones in Imenti North Sub-county. Random sampling was used to allocate schools in each strata and purposively sampled to obtain data from the DQASO. The goal of stratified random sampling technique is to achieve the desired representation from the various subgroups in the population (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

3.5 Instruments of data collection

For this study, data was collected using questionnaires and an interview guide. According to Mugenda and Mugenda, the questionnaires is considered appropriate because the respondents are

literate and able to complete questionnaires on their own. In addition, the tool saves time and allow uniformity in the way the questions are asked, ensuring greater comparability in the process. The primary school head teachers' questionnaire was divided into five sections. Section A background information, section B access to teaching and learning resources, section C FPE, section D transitioning of ECE learners to primary school level, and section C ECE teachers' remuneration. The teachers' questionnaire was organized in a similar way. The interview guide had open ended questions covering all the dependent variables.

3.6 Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out with a view to establishing the validity and reliability assessments of the questionnaire. The pilot study entailed administration of questionnaire to 5 respondents in Imenti North Sub-County. The purpose of piloting was to determine the correctness and suitability of tools of data collection. The outcome of the pilot study was not part of data analysis.

3.7 Validity of Research Instruments

Best and Kahn (2006) pointed out that validity of research instruments is ensured through expert judgment. The instrument used was first scrutinized by specialists in the area and the supervisors from the departments of project planning and management. The researcher pre-tested the instrument for current validity in order to assess the clarity of the instrument items. The researcher ensured that all the objectives of the study were thoroughly addressed and that the respondents were to give the intended answers to the research question. Based on the analysis of the pre-test, the researcher was able to make corrections, adjustments, and additions to the research questions.

3.8 Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which the research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). It provides a degree of confidence (Coleman and Briggs, 2002). In this study, the researcher used the test-retest method. The advantage of this method is that the researcher prepares only one test. The method involve the researcher to administer the same instrument twice to the same group of respondents at an interval of one week, administer the first questionnaires to the subjects, and administer the same questionnaires to the same respondents for the second time after one week. The scores from both tests were be used to compute (r) using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) formula to determine whether the two tests correlate. Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient formula is as under:

$$R = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

Since the 'r' value obtained represents one-half of the test, a correlation measure, the spearman – Brown prophecy was used to establish reliability of the full instrument.

$$Re = 2r / 1 + r$$

Where: Re- Reliability coefficient

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that data obtained from the field is in raw and is difficult to interpret. It must therefore be cleaned, coded, entered into computer, and analyzed. The researcher edited the returned instruments by checking the unfilled spaces, spelling mistakes and responses that were not applicable. The data was then be coded and entered in the computer using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive

statistics, such as frequencies and percentages. The researcher presented the data in tables, bar graphs, and pie charts. The qualitative data from open-ended items was put into various categories according to the themes, information was then reported through narratives, and where necessary, appropriate tables and figures.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

During data collection, the researcher explained the aim and significance of the study to the respondents in order to get their consent. The researcher avoided acts of misconduct in research, such as data fabrication and falsification. All cited authors were listed in the references list to avoid plagiarism. The researcher assured all the respondents that their identity was to be treated with utmost confidentiality using study codes on the questionnaires instead of recording identifying information/names. Moreover, the researcher assured the respondents that the study was not to attract any monetary gain, as it was to be purely academic. All through the study, the researcher was guided by the principles of integrity and respect to all the respondents (Best & Khan, 2006).

3.11 Operationalization of Study Variables

To realize the purpose of this study on the factors influencing enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County, the researcher operationalized the following objectives; to establish how access to teaching and learning resources influence the enrolment of children in early childhood education, to assess how free primary education influences the enrolment of children in early childhood education, to determine the influence of transitioning of ECE learners to primary school level on enrolment of early childhood education, to establish the extent to which teachers' remuneration level influence children's enrolment to ECD.

Table 2.2: Operationalization of variables table

Objectives	Independent variables	Indicators	Level of measurement	Tools for analysis
To establish how access to teaching and learning resources influence the enrolment of children in ECE	Teaching and learning resources	-Available learning and teaching resources, such as text books, classrooms, and chairs -Suppliers of learning and teaching resources -ECE teachers' level of satisfaction about the available resources	Nominal Interval	Descriptive statistics -Frequency distributions -Percentages
To assess how free primary education influences the enrolment of children in ECE	Free Primary Education (FPE)	-Supervision of ECE centres after introduction of FPE -Number of ECE learners after the introduction of FPE -Resource mobilization/funding of ECE centres after introduction of FPE -Available infrastructure for ECE	Ordinal Interval	Descriptive statistics -Frequency distributions -Percentages
To determine the influence of transitioning of ECE to primary school level on enrolment of children in ECE	Transition of ECE learners to primary school level	-Skills needed in primary school level, such as, motor skills, social skills, and attention span -Type of language of instruction -Skills gained by learners that support learning -ECE learners' readiness for primary school level	Ordinal Interval	Descriptive statistics -Frequency distributions -Percentages
To establish the extent to which teachers' remuneration level influence children's enrolment to ECDE	Teachers' Remuneration level	-Employer of ECE teachers -Amount of salary received by ECE teachers -Level of satisfaction of ECE teachers about their monthly salary -Number of ECE teachers retrenched -Causes of retrenchment	Ordinal Interval	Descriptive statistics -Frequency distributions -Percentages

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers data presentation and analysis. The main objective of the study was to investigate the factors influencing enrolment of children in Early Childhood Education in Imenti North Sub-County. During the study, respondents were presented with statements describing the various aspects on the specific objectives. The study applied a questionnaire as the main tool of data collection, supplemented by an interview guide. Quantitative data from the questionnaires was coded and entered into the computer for computation of descriptive statistics. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20.0) was used to run descriptive statistics, which included frequencies and percentages. In order to simplify the discussions, the researcher provided tables and figures that summarize the collective reactions and views of the respondents.

4.2 Questionnaire Return Rate

The sample size of this study comprised of 135 respondents. Those filled and returned questionnaires were 107 respondents making a response rate of 79.3%, while the non-response sample was 28 respondents who constituted 20.7% as shown in table 4.1. While most scholars do not seem to agree on the acceptable level of response rate to form the basis for data analysis, Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) argues that a response rate of 50% is adequate for reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent.

Table 4.1: Questionnaire Return Rate

Category	Frequency	Percent
Response	107	79.3
Non-Response	28	20.7
Total	135	100.0

This high response rate can be attributed to the researcher use of phone calls follow-ups and reminders and good data collection procedures, where the researcher notified the respondents in advance then later administered the questionnaire on a drop and pick basis.

4.3 Socio-Demographic data of the Respondents

The study sought to find out the demographic information of the respondents regarding their gender, age, highest academic qualification, and years they had been ECE teachers and/or head teachers. Their age was intended to appraise their teaching capabilities in terms of handling ECE technical teaching related issues. Information on their highest academic qualification was intended to establish their expertise in the teaching and leadership roles. The years they had been teachers intended to determine their level of roles experience.

4.3.1 Gender of the respondents

The study sought to establish the gender of the respondents because it was intended to capture equal attention to males and females in ECE teaching positions as well as the leadership of the centres under study by primary school head teachers. The table below provides a summary of the results of this sub-section.

Table 4.2: Gender of the respondents

Gender	Head Teachers		ECDE Teachers	
	f	%	f	%
Male	23	59	20	29.4
Female	16	41	48	70.6
Total	39	100	68	100

The findings presented in the table above show that majority (59%) of the head teachers were males, whereas 41% of the primary school head teachers under the study were females. On the other hand, majority (70.6%) of the ECE head teachers were females, whereas less than a third

(29.4%) of the ECE teachers were male. Therefore, there are many females ECE teachers than males, and this could be attributed to culture, which considers ECE as a female profession. The higher number of male head teachers in primary schools could be a result of the region under study selecting the leadership preferentially based on gender. The DQSASO in Imenti Sub-County was a male. The DQSASO ensures that schools have quality in terms of teaching, and they oversee proper utilization of the available resources through effective capacity building to achieve the intended quality education.

4.3.2 Age of the respondents

During the study, it was important to collect data on the age of the respondents since the researcher intended to evaluate their teaching capabilities in terms of handling technical teaching related to ECE issues. Based on the findings of this study, more than two-thirds (69.2%) of the primary school head teachers were aged 49-60 years, whereas majority (60.3%) of the ECE teachers were aged below 30 years. Table 4.2 indicates other findings.

Table 4.3: Age of the respondents

Age	Head Teachers		ECDE Teachers	
	f	%	f	%
30 and below	-	-	41	60.3
31 – 39	4	10.3	17	25
40 – 48	8	20.5	10	14.7
49 – 60	27	69.2	-	-
Total	39	100.0	68	100.0

The above findings indicate that majority of head teachers are aged between 49-60 years, which implies that they are old, and experienced enough to respond to issues pertaining education sector and oversee crucial management of ECE centres.

4.3.3 Marital status of the respondents

The researcher sought to establish the marital status distribution of the respondents as outlined in table 4.4. According to the analysis of the collected data, majority (61.5%) of the primary school head teachers were married, while 60.3% of the ECE teachers were not married. Majority of the ECE teachers being single is probably a consequence of their age, where two-thirds of them were below the age of 30 years.

Table 4.4: Marital status of the respondents

Marital Status	Head Teachers		ECDE Teachers	
	f	%	f	%
Single	-	-	41	60.3
Married	24	61.5	24	35.3
Separated	4	10.3	3	4.4
Divorced	11	28.2	-	-
Total	39	100.0	68	100.0

4.3.4 Professional qualification of the respondents

Implementation of various activities in ECE, primary, and secondary schools requires head teachers with the requisite skills to stimulate an effective culture of promoting curriculum implementation that addresses the fundamental demands and objectives of stakeholders, parents, and teachers. Thus, it was important to establish the skills and knowledge of the respondents of the current study to comprehend their capacity to undertake their mandates. The table below indicates the highest professional qualification of the respondents.

Table 4.5: Professional qualification

Qualification	Head Teachers		ECDE Teachers	
	f	%	f	%
Master's degree	6	15.4	-	-
B.Ed. degree	5	12.8	9	13.2
Diploma	28	71.8	6	8.8
ECED	-	-	53	77.9
Total	39	100.0	68	100.0

Based on the findings of the study, majority (71.8%) of the head teachers were diploma holders, with 15.4% and 12.8% of them having a Master's Degree and a Bachelor's Degree in Education respectively. On the other hand, slightly above three-quarters (77.9%) of the ECE teachers were holders of Early Childhood Education Development, while 13.2% had a Bachelor's Degree in Education as their highest level of education, with only 8.8% of the ECE teachers being diploma holders. The findings indicate that all the ECE teachers had the minimum required qualifications to teach in ECE centres, and, therefore, they could be relied upon to provide crucial information for this study. The professional qualification for the DQASO was a Master's Degree in Education from a Kenyan University.

4.3.5 Teaching experience of the respondents

The researcher sought to find out the number of years respondents had been teachers to determine their level of roles experience. Considerable teaching experience by ECE teachers is an indicator that children will learn better since the former understands the expectations and bottlenecks that may face learners in this initial stage of school. However, most preschools in Kenya are facing a myriad of challenges occasioned by factors such as lack of a clear financing policy, poor remuneration of teachers, and poor infrastructure in many centres across the country. Most trained

ECE teachers opt to look for other better paying jobs, thereby jeopardizing learning, and subsequent enrolment.

Table 4.6: Teaching experience

Experience in years	Head Teachers		ECDE Teachers	
	f	%	f	%
0 – 5	-	-	45	66.2
6 – 10	4	10.2	13	19.1
11 – 15	-	-	7	10.3
16 – 20	19	48.7	3	4.4
21 and above	16	41	-	-
Total	39	100.0	68	100.0

According to the results presented in the table above, majority (48.7%) of the head-teachers had a progressive teaching experience of 16-20 years, whereas 41% of them had a teaching experience of 21 years and above. For ECE teachers, majority (66.2%) of them had taught for 5 years or less, 19.1% of teachers had a teaching experience of 6-10 years. To this end, majority of the respondents had considerable teaching experience to understand various aspects that affect enrolment of ECE, including Free Primary education, teaching and learning resources, transition of learners from preschool to primary school level, and remuneration. The DQASO indicated that he had previously taught in many schools for a period of 20 years prior to his present position, which he had held for 3 years.

4.3.6 Duration of service for head teachers

The researcher sought to establish the number of years of service that primary school head teachers had with the current school. It was important to collect data on this aspect because most primary school head teachers understand how FPE has influenced enrolment of ECE. Similarly, they

possess first-hand information on ECE centres that they manage as well as coordination and mobilization of resources for teaching and/or learning.

Table 4.7: Duration of service

Duration of service	Frequency	Percent
0 – 5	17	43.6
6 – 10	22	56.4
Total	39	100.0

The results shown above demonstrate that majority (56.4%) of the head teachers have headed their current location for 6-10 years. This could be attributed to desire of stakeholders to ensure that the head teachers have enough time to facilitate stability of school programs. The findings indicate that head teachers have sufficient information regarding the management of the ECE centres.

4.5 Influence of teaching and learning resources on enrolment of children in early childhood education

The first objective of the study was to investigate how teaching and learning resources influenced enrolment of children in ECE. Teaching and learning resources included furniture, play material, textbooks, exercise books, and supplementary books, among other resources. Availability of teaching materials helps ECE teachers to teach conveniently, whereas learning materials play an enormous role in improvement of learning, and subsequent enrolment. Accordingly, it was important to establish how teaching and learning resources influenced enrolment of ECE learners. ECE teachers were asked to indicate all the available resources in their centres, such as ventilated classrooms, furniture suitable for children, kitchen, safe clean water, playground, toilets, and play material. The analysis of the collected data yielded the findings summarized in the table below.

Table 4.8: Available resources

Available Resources	N=68	Frequency	Percent
Properly ventilated classrooms		48	70.6
Furniture suitable for children		23	33.8
Kitchen		21	30.9
Safe clean water		11	16.2
Playground		59	86.8
Toilets		43	63.2
Play material		37	54.4

**Multi Response*

Based on the findings presented above, almost three-thirds (70.6%) of ECE teachers indicated that their ECE centres had properly ventilated classrooms, slightly above a third (33.8%) were of the view that the centres had sufficient and suitable furniture for the learners, whereas less than two-tenths (16.2%) suggested that the institutions where they taught had safe clean water. Respondents further pointed out that their centres possessed adequate playground (86.8%), toilets (63.2%), and play material (54.4%).

Besides, head teachers were asked to state the overall adequacy of teaching and learning resources in the ECE centres that they supervise. To achieve this aim, respondents were to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the adequacy of the available teaching and learning resources. The results presented in the figure below demonstrate that the head teachers were of the opinion that the ECE centres they supervised did not have adequate teaching and learning resources because they either disagreed (48.7%) or strongly disagreed (23.1%) with the statement as to whether there is adequate resources.

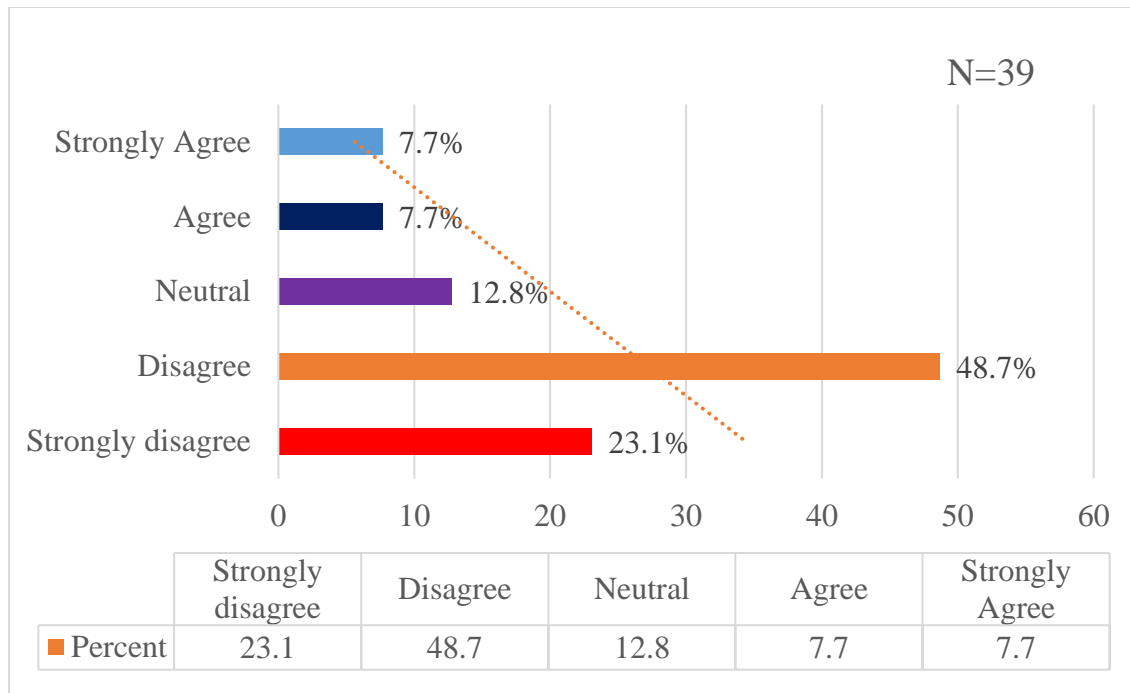


Figure 2: Adequacy of teaching and learning resources

The findings discussed above mirror a study conducted by Chepkonga (2017) in West Pokot County, which found out that majority of public ECDE centres did not have enough classes, desks, water, kitchen stores, among others. The lack of adequate learning facilities influenced negatively provision of quality education. Consequently, lack of adequate teaching and learning resources in North Imenti Sub-County may affect provision of quality early childhood education.

Further, ECE teachers were required to indicate their level of satisfaction regarding the availability of teaching and learning resources in their centres. In this regard, respondents were expected to state the extent to which they were either satisfied or dissatisfied with the available resources, which included textbooks, exercise books, chalkboard, maps, posters, handbook, supplementary books, and syllabus. Based on the findings tabulated below, majority (36.8%) of the ECE teachers were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the available textbooks in their centres, whereas 22.1% and 32.4% were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied respectfully with the available textbooks.

Moreover, the analysis of the collected data showed that 41.2% of the ECE teachers were dissatisfied with the available exercise books, while 26.5% of them were very satisfied with this particular resource. Majority (27.9%) of the ECE teachers in Imenti North Sub-County were of a neutral view on the chalkboards available in their centres. A third (30.9%) of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the available globes, maps, and posters, whereas 29.4% were dissatisfied with this particular teaching resource. Overall, 69.1% (29.4%+39.7) of the respondents were dissatisfied with the available handbooks; while on the other hand, 82.3% (42.6%+39.7%) were dissatisfied with the available amount of supplementary books in their centres. Lastly, slightly above two-thirds (61.8%) of the ECE teachers were satisfied with the available syllabus that they used to teach learners in preschools.

Table 4.9: Level of satisfaction on the available teaching/learning resources

Teaching/Learning resources	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Text books	2.9%	5.9%	36.8%	22.1%	32.4%
Exercise books	26.5%	8.8%	16.2%	41.2%	7.4%
A good chalkboard	20.6%	11.8%	27.9%	17.6%	22.1%
Globes, maps, and posters	-	30.9%	19.1%	29.4%	20.6%
Hand book	-	20.6%	10.3%	29.4%	39.7%
Supplementary books	-	-	17.6%	42.6%	39.7%
Syllabus	4.4%	61.8%	5.9%	-	27.9%

The findings of the current study are comparable with a study carried out by Onyango (2014) in Rachuonyo South Sub County, which established that majority of the ECE centres lacked the basic teaching and learning resources, and thereafter concluded that teaching and learning materials should be used in teaching the preschool children. Conclusively, teachers should ensure the

acquisition, appropriate storage, and use of teaching/learning materials to enable performance of the learners in early childhood.

The researcher further sought to establish the main suppliers of teaching and learning resources in ECE centres within North Imenti Sub-County. Respondents to the study were expected to indicate whether suppliers were Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), parents, or the Ministry of Education. The figure below contains the summary of the findings.

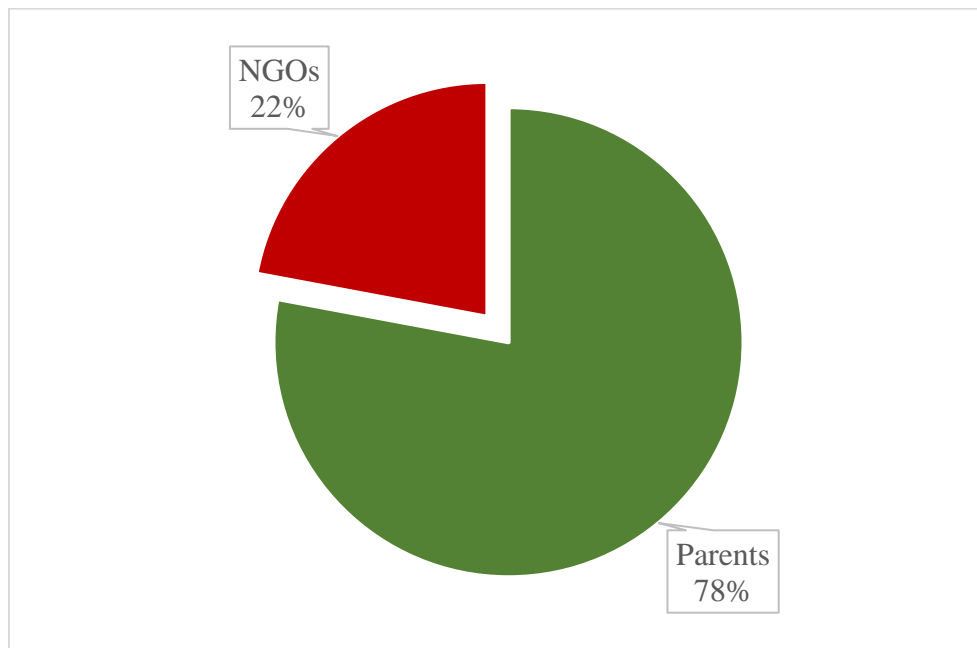


Figure 3: Suppliers of teaching and learning resources

Based on the results presented in the figure above, parents (78%) were the main suppliers of teaching and learning resources in North Imenti Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya. NGOs (22%) in the region were also involved in the provision of resources.

This finding agrees with an ECE report developed by Nganga (2009), which stated that government funding for early childhood education in Kenya is minimal. The government plays a critical role in the development of curriculum materials and remuneration for program coordinators

at the National and Sub-County levels only. In addition, the report averred that early childhood education is funded primarily through donations from local and international organizations, including the World Bank, with parents shouldering the biggest burden.

On top of the above, the researcher posed a question to the respondents as to whether adequacy of teaching and learning materials influenced enrolment of ECE learners. Respondents were required to either strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree (neutral), disagree, or strongly disagree to the question regarding influence of teaching and learning resources on enrolment of ECE. The findings from the analysis of the collected data are presented in the figure below.

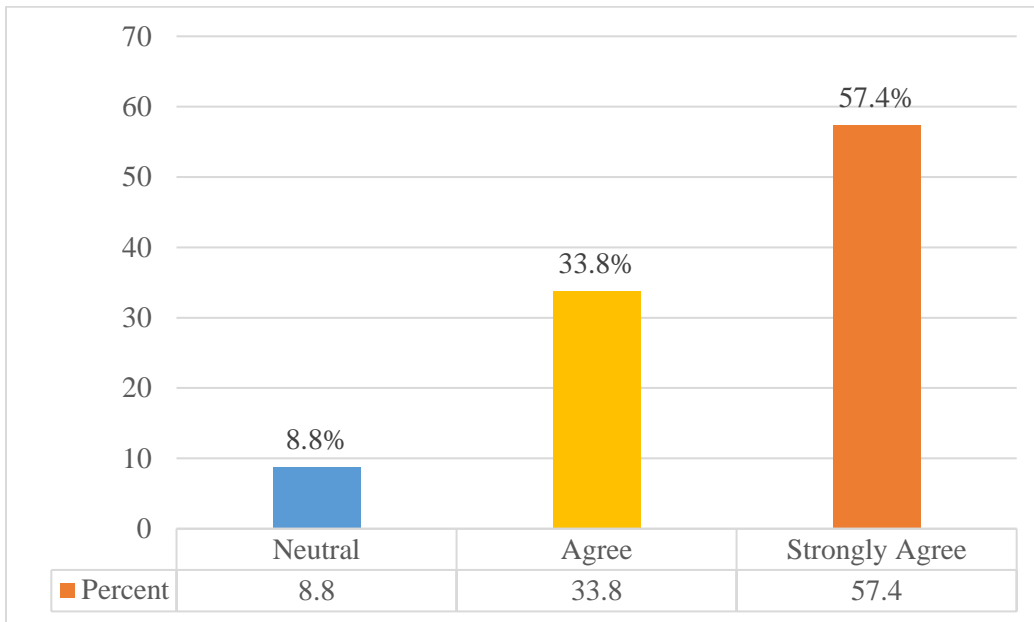


Figure 4: Teaching/learning resources and enrolment of ECE

According to the findings presented above, more than a half (57.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that adequate teaching and learning resources influenced enrolment of learners in ECE centres in North Imenti Sub-County, with 33.8% of them agreeing that resources influenced enrolment of pupils in preschools. On the other hand, less than a tenth (8.8%) were neutral on the role played by resources on the enrolment of learners. The findings of the present study are

consistent with a study carried out in Nigeria by Oluwafemi Nma, Osita, and Olugbenga (2014), which found out that provision of necessary teaching and learning resources by local governments (county governments for the Kenyan Context) enhanced effective implementation of ECE programs.

During the interview with the Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (DQA&SO), it was revealed that ECE enrolment continues to plummet in poorer areas where parents could not mobilize funds for the provision of teaching and learning resources. Moreover, the DQA&SO stated that lack of ECE teachers and other instructional materials frustrated parents who opted to withdraw their children from public ECDE centres, and send them to private centres, a situation that culminated to the closure of some of them.

4.6 Influence of free primary education on enrolment of children in early childhood education

The second objective of the study was to assess how free primary education program influences the enrolment of early childhood education in Imenti North Sub-County. Accordingly, the researcher sought to establish whether enrolment of boys and girls in ECE centres had increased or decreased after the introduction of free primary education. To realize this aim, respondents were required to indicate if the overall enrolment of learners had increased or decreased since the introduction of FPE. According to the findings tabulated below, nearly all (87.2%) head teachers were of the view that ECE enrolment had decreased after the introduction of free primary education, with only 5 (12.8%) head teachers indicating otherwise. Equally, slightly above two-thirds (63.2%) of the ECE teachers, were of the opinion that enrolment had decreased, whereas 36.8% stated that enrolment of ECE learners had increased after the introduction of free primary school.

Table 4.10: Free primary education and ECE enrolment

FPE and ECE enrolment	Head Teachers		ECDE Teachers	
	f	%	f	%
Increased	5	12.8	25	36.8
Decrease	34	87.2	43	63.2
Total	39	100	68	100

The findings presented above are similar to a study carried out by Mwangi and Serem (2013) on impacts of free primary education and subsidized secondary education on public ECDE centres in Nyahururu Sub-county, Kenya, which revealed that FPE led to rising enrolment in private ECDE centres, whereas enrolment declined in public ECDE centres.

In addition, respondents were required to indicate the specific aspects of FPE that led to decreased enrolment in ECE centres. This was a follow-up question on respondents who had stated that enrolment in ECE centres had decreased after the introduction of FPE. The table below summarizes the findings.

Table 4:11: Aspects of FPE that affected enrolment of ECE

Aspects of FPE	Head Teachers N=34		ECDE Teachers N=43	
	f	%	f	%
Transfer of ECE infrastructure to primary school	20	58.8	24	55.8
Supervision of ECE centres become less frequent	8	23.5	9	20.9
FPE made it difficult to mobilize resources for ECE	6	17.6	10	23.3
Total	34	100	43	100

The results contained in the table above demonstrate that transfer of ECE infrastructure to primary schools was the main aspect of FPE that caused enrolment to decrease in ECE centres in North

Imenti Sub-County since majority of the head teachers (58.8%) and ECE teachers (55.8%) had selected this particular aspect. Likewise, 23.5% of the head teachers and 20.9% of the ECE centres pointed out that enrolment had decreased because supervision of ECE centres had become less frequent, while 17.6% and 23.3% of the head teachers and ECE teachers respectfully suggested that enrolment had decreased since FPE made it difficult to mobilize resources for ECE.

The findings above are in agreement with a previous study done by Mwangi and Serem (2013), which established that high enrolment after Free Primary Education took up classrooms meant for Early Childhood Development and Education in public centres. Furthermore, the results of the current study are consistent with a study carried out by Murugi (2011), which found out that supervision and inspection of ECE centres had become less frequent for the reason that the government had put much focus on FPE, and, therefore, paying little attention to the needs of ECE.

Besides, teachers in ECE centres under the study were asked to indicate whether there have been any dropouts from the ECDE classes since the introduction of free primary education. Based on the findings of the study, majority 49(72%) of the ECE teachers acknowledged that there have been cases of learners dropping out of preschools, with 28% of them stating that there have been no dropouts. The figure below summarizes the results.

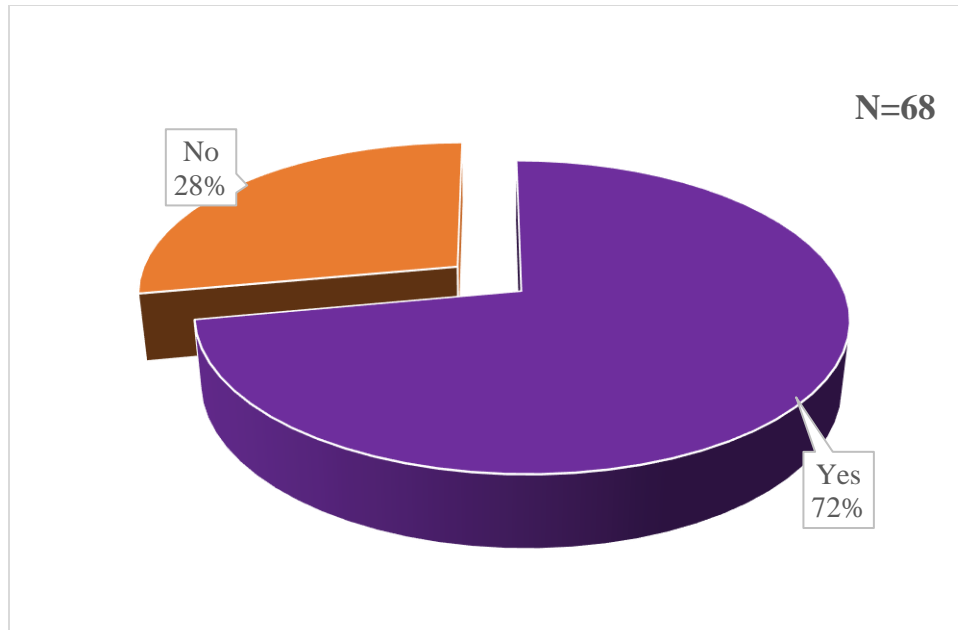


Figure 5: Dropouts from ECE classes

Respondents were further required to indicate the causes of ECE dropouts in the centres that they teach. They were provided with various causes of ECE dropout, which included lack of school fees, child labor, migration, illness/disability, lack of ECE teachers, and security reasons. One or a combination of factors can lead to learners dropping out of preschools, and as such, it was necessary to provide a snapshot of other causes through a multi-response analysis. Thus, respondents could select more than one cause of ECE dropout.

Table 4:12: Causes of ECE dropout

Cause of ECE dropout N=49	Frequency	Percent
Lack of school fees	43	87.8
Child labor	17	34.7
Migration	35	71.4
Suffers from illness/disability	4	8.2
Lack of ECE teachers	26	53.1

**Multi-response*

The results shown above comprised of the ECE teachers who had indicated that they had experienced cases of learners dropping out of the ECE centres (N=49). Based on the findings, it

was evident that majority of the pupils had dropped out of preschools because of lack of school fees (87.8%) and migration (71.4%). The other causes reported by respondents include child labor (34.7%), illness/disability (8.2%), and lack of ECE teachers (53.1%). These findings are in agreement with a study by Rashid (2015), which revealed the causes of dropout as poverty, illiterates of parents, parents' separation and in adequate of schoolteachers. Similarly, a study conducted in Ghana by Adam, Adom, and Bediako (2016) found out that teacher's attitude, corporal punishment, death, and sickness of parents lead to dropouts in schools.

In addition, the researcher sought to establish the rate of attendance of learners in ECE centres across Imenti North Sub-County. In this regard, respondents were to rate the attendance of learners as either low, average, or high. According to the results summarized in the figure below, majority (66.2%) of the ECE centres experienced average rate of attendance of learners, while others had low (22.1%) and high (11.8%) attendance of learners.

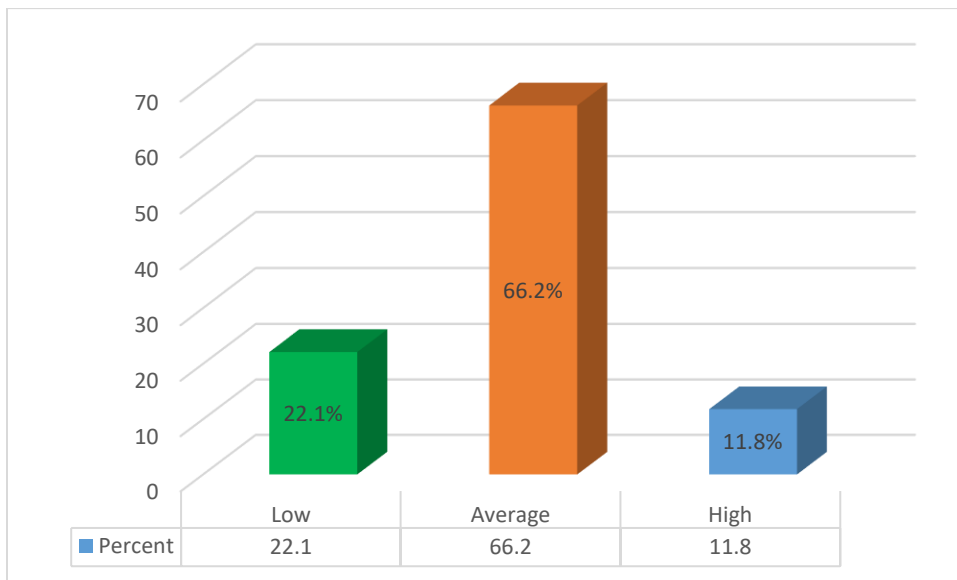


Figure 6: Rate of attendance of learners

On top of the above, respondents were provided with various statements on the effect of FPE on ECE enrolment, and were required to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of them. The findings of this sub-section are outlined in the table below.

Table 4.13: Effect of FPE on ECE enrolment

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
FPE led to ECE classrooms shutdown for primary schools	29.4%	0.0%	19.1%	33.8%	17.6%
FPE occasioned shortage of supplementary reading books in ECE	8.8%	13.2%	48.5%	20.6%	8.8%
FPE led to insufficient desks at ECE centres	17.6%	13.2%	25.0%	30.9%	13.2%
FPE led to sharing of desks at ECE centres	13.2%	19.1%	5.9%	41.2%	20.6%
As a result of FPE, there was reduced space/congestion in ECD classrooms	4.4%	4.4%	39.7%	16.2%	35.3%

Based on the findings of this study, slightly above a third (33.8%) of the respondents agreed that free primary education led to ECE classrooms shutdown for primary schools, with less than two-tenths (17.6%) of them strongly agreeing to this particular statement. On the other hand, almost a half (48.5%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement that FPE occasioned shortage of supplementary reading books in ECE, whereas two-tenths (20.6%) agreed that this statement. The statement that FPE led to insufficient desks at ECE centres was supported by 44.1% (30.9%+13.2%) of the respondents, whereas 61.8% (41.2%+20.6%) of the respondents were of the view that free primary education was responsible for the sharing of the desks in ECE centres. Lastly, 51.5% (16.2%+35.3%) of the respondents suggested that FPE led to congestion in various ECE centres across Imenti North Sub-County. The findings of the current study are comparable to

a UNESCO policy paper (2016), which noted that infrastructure meant for ECD was shutdown to house the rising number of pupils in primary schools. In fact, the report noted that ECD learners had to put up with congested classrooms since much of the premises had been surrendered to primary schools. Thus, enrolment of learners in ECE reduced instantaneously owing to the myriad of factors discussed above.

4.7. Influence of transitioning of early childhood education learners to primary school level on enrolment of early childhood education

The third objective of the study was to establish the influence of transitioning of learners from preschool to primary school level on enrolment of early childhood education. The researcher endeavored to assess how the needs of primary school level made it necessary for learners to enroll in ECE. The language of instruction utilized during the early years of learning determines the adaptation of learners in primary schools. Therefore, during the study, it was critical to find out the language of instruction that ECE teachers use as well as the one that primary schools apply in teaching. To achieve this aim, respondents were provided with a list of languages, which included English, Kiswahili, and mother tongue, and were required to choose the ones they use to instruct in both ECE and primary schools. The table below summarizes the findings of this subsection.

Table 4.14: Language of instruction

Language of instruction	Head Teachers		ECDE Teachers	
	F	%	f	%
Mother Tongue	5	12.8	36	52.9
Kiswahili	20	51.3	22	32.4
English	14	35.9	10	14.7
Total	39	100	68	100

Based on the results shown above, slightly above a half (51.3%) of head teachers indicated that the primary schools they lead use Kiswahili as the language of instruction, whereas above a third (35.9%) stated that they utilize English, with only a tenth (12.8%) acknowledging that they use mother tongue as a language of instruction. Conversely, more than a half (52.9%) of the ECE teachers reported that they use mother tongue as a language of instruction, while 32.4% and 14.7% stated that they teach by means of Kiswahili and English respectfully.

Respondents to the study were further asked to indicate whether there is continuity of language of instruction from preschool to primary school level. For primary school head teachers, they were expected to state if the language of instruction in their schools was a consequence of continuity from early childhood education. The table below contains the results.

Table 4.15: Continuity of language of instruction

Continuity of language of instruction	Head Teachers		ECDE Teachers	
	f	%	f	%
Yes	30	76.9	58	85.3
No	9	23.1	10	14.7
Total	39	100	68	100

The findings presented in the table above demonstrate that three-quarters (76.9%) of the head teachers posited that the language of instruction in primary schools was as a result of continuity from ECE, while 23.1% stated that ECE did not influence the language of instruction in other levels of education. On the other hand, 85.3% of the ECE teachers suggested that there is continuity of language of instruction from preschool to primary school, with 14.7% of the teachers disagreeing.

Besides, the researcher posed a question to the head teachers as to whether the needs of primary school level require learners to enroll in ECE. This was a five-point scale question requiring respondents to either strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. According to the findings indicated in the figure below, 62% of the head teachers strongly agreed whereas 38% agreed to the question that the needs of primary school level require learners to enroll in ECE. There were no responses to the other options in the five-point scale.

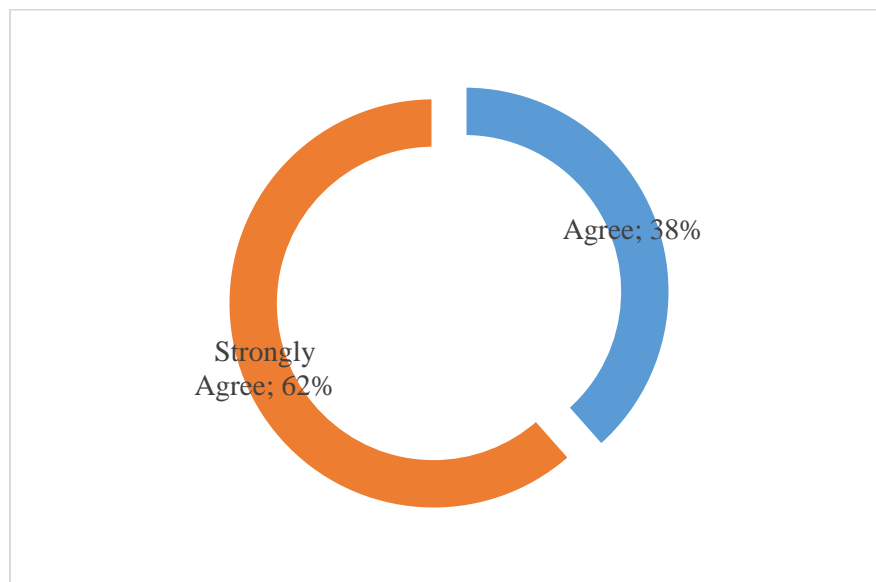


Figure 7: Needs of primary school level and ECE enrolment

The researcher sought to establish from the ECE teachers some of the skills and needs in primary school level that makes it necessary for learners to enrol in ECE before transitioning. Respondents were expected to choose all the skills that learners acquire in preschools before transitioning to primary school level.

Table 4.16: Skills learned in ECE

Skills learned in ECE	Frequency	Percent
Early writing/reading skills	62	91.2
Social skills	28	41.2
Listening skills	29	42.6
Creativity	26	38.2
Attention span	47	69.1

**Multi-response*

The results presented above show that nearly all (91.2%) respondents were of the view that early writing/reading skills are acquired during Early Childhood Education before learners' transition to primary school level. Moreover, respondents identified other skills needed in primary school level, but acquired in preschool, which included social skills (41.2%), listening skills (42.6%), creativity (38.2%), and attention span (69.1%).

Respondents were further provided with various statements on the role of ECE in the transition of learners to primary school level, and were required to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed them. The table below presents the results.

Table 4.17: Role of ECE in the transition of learners

Role of ECE in transition of learners	Strongly disagree	Disagree	neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
ECE increases pupils attentiveness later in school	0.0%	4.4%	5.9%	48.5%	41.2%
ECE prepares pupils better	0.0%	0.0%	11.8%	29.4%	58.8%
ECE has great influence on how pupils perform later in school	0.0%	19.1%	0.0%	41.2%	39.7%
ECE is not important in later pupils performance	67.6%	23.5%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%

Based on the findings tabulated above, majority (48.5%) of the respondents agreed that ECE increases pupils' attentiveness later in school, while 41.2% strongly agreed to this particular statement. More than a half (58.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement that ECE prepares pupils better, with 29.4% agreeing that ECE prepares pupils adequately. Moreover, 80.9% (41.2% + 39.7%) of the respondents pointed out that ECE has great influence on how pupils perform later in school. Above two-thirds (67.6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed to the statement that ECE is not important in later pupils performance.

The findings of the present study are supported by an earlier study by O'Kane (2016), who stated that ECE plays an enormous role in the transition of learners to primary school as well as improving their future educational, emotional, and social outcomes. ECE provides learners with a rich experience that affects their future learning and development across the spectrum of other educational levels. In this regard, enrolment of learners in ECE is important because it enables them to develop early skills that foster easier and quicker comprehension of different regulations, rules, processes, and learning and teaching methods, which are paramount in the enhancement of school performance.

4.8 Influence of teachers' remuneration level on enrolment of children in early childhood education

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the extent to which teachers' remuneration level influences children's enrolment to ECDE in Imenti North Sub-County. Job satisfaction and labor turnover are some of the issues that affect ECE in Kenya, and, therefore, the salary package received by teachers is important towards addressing such issues. To increase enrolment in ECE, it is important to address the fundamental issues that motivate teachers and reduce their overall turnover.

In Kenya, ECE teachers are employed by different entities that include county governments, NGOs, and parents. Accordingly, the researcher sought to establish the employer of ECE teachers in Imenti North Sub-County. The results presented in the figure below show that majority (47.1%) of the ECE teachers were employed by the county government, 20.6% by NGOs, 17.6% and 14.7% were employed by parents and churches respectfully.

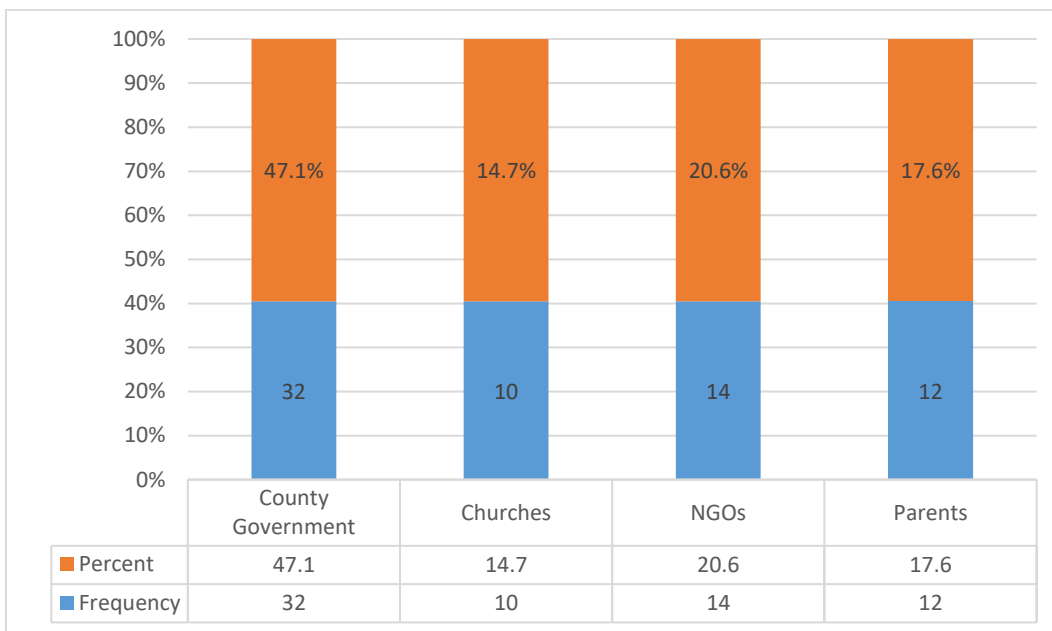


Figure 8: ECE employers

The researcher further endeavoured to find out the amount of salary that ECE teachers were paid on a monthly basis. Respondents were provided with various salary scales and were to select the scale that reflected their actual monthly salary. The table below contains the findings of this sub-section.

Table 4.18: ECE teachers' monthly salary

Monthly salary	Frequency	Percent
2000 - 5000	12	17.6
5000 - 8000	27	39.7
Above 8000	29	42.6
Total	68	100.0

Based on the results presented above, majority (42.6%) of the teachers were paid above 8,000 Kenyan Shillings, 39.7% received a monthly salary ranging between 5,000-8,000 Shillings while 17.6% of the teachers were compensated between 2,000-5,000 shillings per month. Most ECE teachers are receiving more than 8,000 Kenyan Shillings probably because they are employed by the County Government or NGOs. In fact, in the year 2014, the County Government of Meru employed more than 800 ECDE teachers, who were deployed across all the sub-counties; Imenti North Sub-County included (Daily Nation, 2014).

The researcher sought to establish whether ECDE teachers were satisfied with their monthly salary. To achieve this aim, respondents were expected to state the extent to which they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the salary they were compensation with every month. The findings are indicated in the table below.

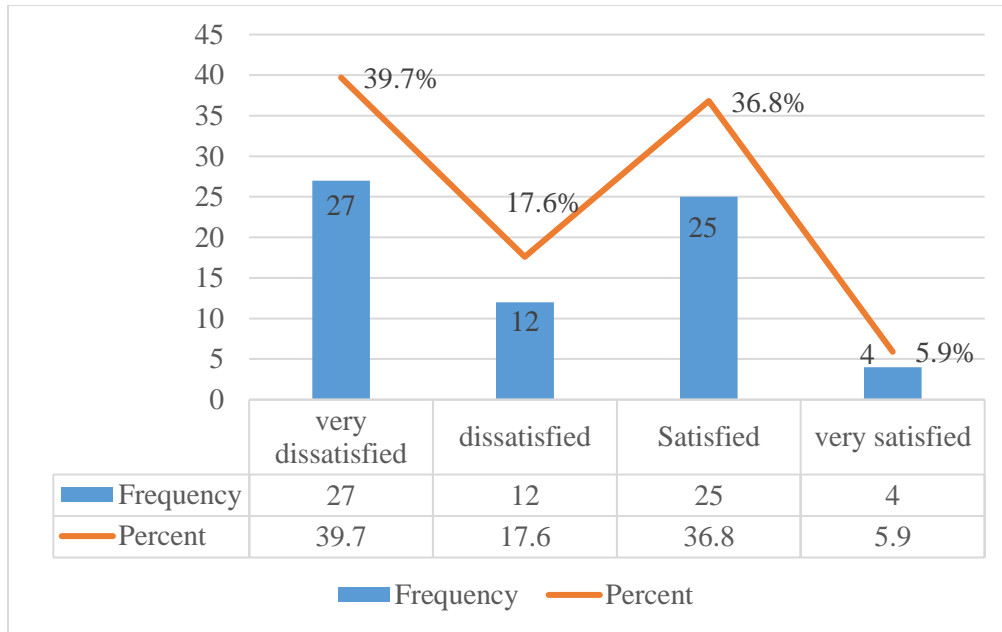


Figure 9: Salary satisfaction

Based on the findings contained in the figure above, majority (39.7%) of the ECE teachers were very dissatisfied with the salary that they received at the end of the month, while slightly less than two-tenths (17.6%) were dissatisfied with monthly salary package. On the other hand, 36.8% of the respondents were satisfied with their salaries, with only 5.9% of them being very satisfied. Overall, more than a half of the teachers who took part in this study were dissatisfied with the salaries they were paid at the end of the month, implying that they are more likely to leave their current teaching positions in search of better jobs that offer competitive salaries. In Kenya, most ECDE teachers are paid a flat rate of less than 15,000 by County Governments despite them holding degree and diploma certificates, a situation that continues to affect their job satisfaction and motivation. Campbell et al. (2014) asserted that preschool teachers in Kenya receive lower salaries when compared to other professions regardless of the enormous role they play in children's growth, development, and future academic and life success.

On top of the above, head teachers who supervise and manage several ECE centres were asked to give their views on whether the amount of salary paid every month to ECE teachers could affect their turnover, and subsequent enrolment of learners. In this question, they were to provide a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. According to the results presented in the figure below, nearly all (90%), head teachers suggested that the monthly salary paid to ECDE teachers influenced their turnover.

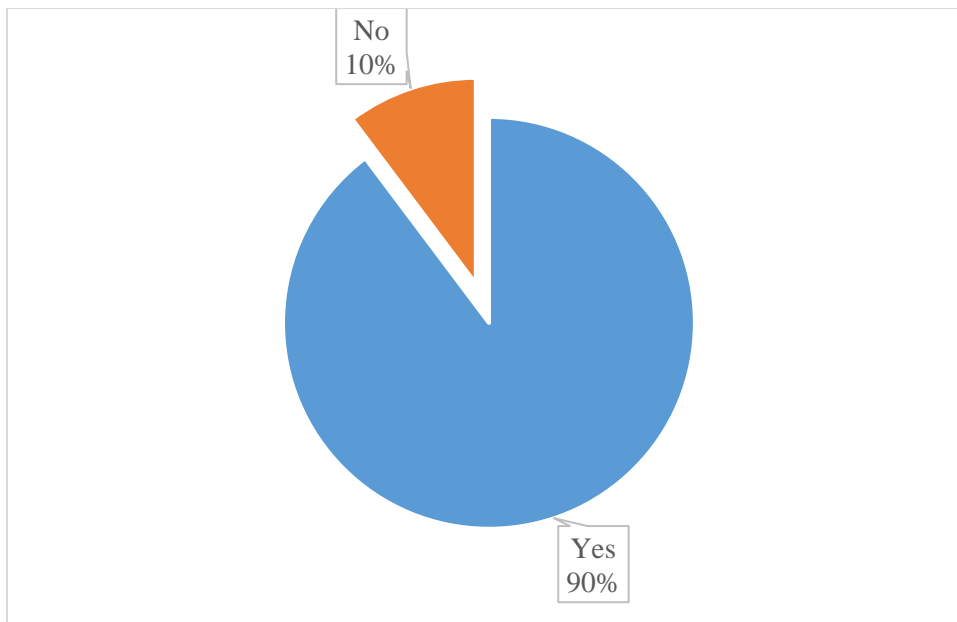


Figure 10: Salary and ECE teachers' turnover

The researcher sought to establish if there had been any cases of retrenchment of ECDE teachers in Imenti North Sub-County. The findings presented in the figure below show that majority (55.9%) of the ECE teachers indicated that there had been cases of retrenchment in some centres within the region under study, whereas 44.1% suggested otherwise.

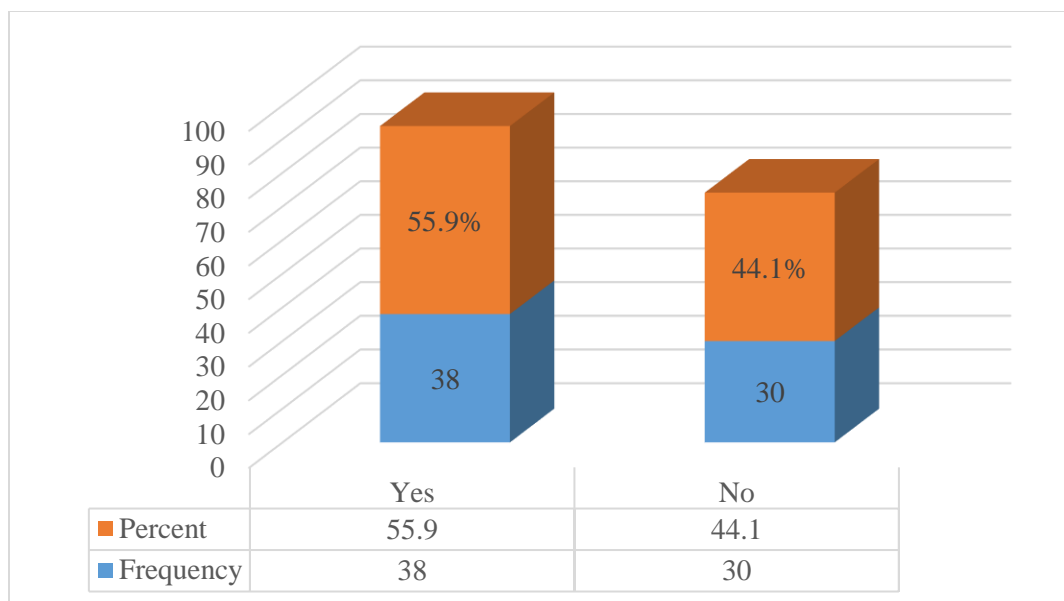


Figure 11: Cases of retrenchment

Further, respondents to the study were required to identify various aspects that led to the retrenchment of ECDE teachers. This was a follow-up question to the teachers who had indicated that there had been cases of retrenchment in the ECE centres under the current study. Respondents were to choose all the aspects that led to retrenchment of the teachers.

Table 4.19: Causes of ECE teachers' retrenchment

	Frequency	Percent
Lack of ECDE funding	33	86.8%
Reduced enrolment of children in ECE	28	73.7%
Lack of classrooms for ECE	4	10.5%

**Multi-response*

Based on the multi-response analysis of the collected data, 86.8% of the teachers suggested that lack of ECDE funding led to retrenchment, whereas almost three-thirds (73.7%) of the respondents were of the view that reduced enrolment of learners in ECE culminated to retrenchment of the teachers in ECE centres. Lack of classrooms (10.5%) was another cause identified by respondents to have caused retrenchment of ECE teachers.

Overall, the findings of this study show that more than 50% of the ECE teachers are not satisfied with their remuneration, a result that is in agreement with a study done by Ndani and Kimani (2011), which concluded that unsatisfied ECE teachers moved to better paying opportunities in the private sector, or went back to the teacher's college to train to be primary school teachers. Lack of teachers affected enrolment of learners in public ECE centres because some parents opted to send their children to private nursery schools, locking out children from poor backgrounds whose families could not afford the fees charged at the private institutions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations according to the objectives set out in this study.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The independent variables of this study are teaching and learning resources, free primary education, transition from ECE to primary school level, and remuneration of ECE teachers. This study was grounded on the tenets of the systems theory postulated in 1966 by Ludwing Von Bertalanffy and educational production function as postulated by Coleman (1996) and Psacharapolous and Wood (1985). The study utilized the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised of 1 DQA&S Officer at Imenti North Sub-County Education Office, 208 primary school head teachers, and 240 ECDE teachers within Imenti North Sub-County. The study utilized random sampling technique to sample primary school head teachers and ECE teachers to take part in the study. The sample of the respondents consisted of 62 head teachers, 72 ECDE teachers, and the DQASO. For the researcher to realize the objectives of the study, questionnaires were used to collect data from head teachers and ECE teachers, whereas an interview guide was utilized on the DQASO. The Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) was used in the analysis of the collected data. The presentation of the analysed data was done using graphs, charts, and tables.

5.2.1 Influence of teaching and learning resources on enrolment of children in Early Childhood Education

The study revealed that most of the ECE centres had adequate properly ventilated classrooms (70.6%), playground (86.8%), and play material (54.4%). Further, the study established that most

of the ECE centres did not have adequate teaching and learning resources because the head teachers who supervise such preschools either disagreed (48.7%) or strongly disagreed (23.1%) with the statement as to whether there is adequate resources. As illustrated in table 4.9, less than a half of the ECE teachers were not satisfied with the available textbooks, exercise books, chalkboard, handbooks, and supplementary books. Moreover, the study revealed that parents (78%) were the main suppliers of teaching and learning materials in the region under study, whereas NGOs (22%) were partly involved. Nearly all respondents to the study (91.2%) agreed (agree and strongly agree) that adequate teaching and learning resources influenced enrolment of learners in ECE centres in North Imenti Sub-County.

5.2.2 Influence of Free Primary Education on enrolment of children in Early Childhood Education

The study revealed that nearly all (87.2%) head teachers were of the view that ECE enrolment had decreased after the introduction of free primary education. It was further established that 63.2% of the ECE teachers were of the opinion that enrolment had decreased. The study revealed that Head teachers (58.8%) and ECE teachers (55.8%) were of the view that transfer of ECE infrastructure to primary schools had occasioned decline in enrolment. The other aspects of FPE identified by respondents to have led to decline in enrolment of ECE learners were; supervision of ECE centres had become less frequent, as well as FPE had made it difficult to mobilize resources (table 4.11). The study further established that ECE teachers (72%) had suggested that there had been cases of learners dropping out of ECE because of lack of school fees (87.8%), child labor (34.7%), migration (71.4%), illness/disability (8.2%), and lack of ECE teachers (53.1%). The study found out the overall rate of attendance of the learners to average (66.2%). In addition, the study revealed that respondents had suggested that FPE led to ECE classrooms shutdown for primary schools (51.4%), sharing of desks in ECE (61.8%), and congestion in ECD classrooms (51.5%).

5.2.3 Influence of transitioning of ECE learners to primary school level

The study revealed that the head teachers (51.3%) had posited that primary schools mainly use Kiswahili as the language of instruction, whereas ECDE teachers stated that they use mother tongue as the language of instruction. The study further found out that head teachers (76.9%) had stated that the language of instruction in primary schools was as a result of continuity from ECE while 85.3% of the ECE teachers suggested that there is continuity of language of instruction from preschool to primary school. It was established that respondents (62%) were of the view that the needs of primary school level require learners to enrol in ECE, and thereby influencing enrolment. In fact, the study established that ECE teachers were of the opinion that early writing/reading skills (91.2%) and attention span (69.1%) were some of the skills that learners acquire in preschools before transitioning to primary school level. Overall, the study found out that respondents had suggested that ECE increases pupils' attentiveness later in school (89.7%), prepares pupils better (88.2%), and influences how pupils perform later in school (80.9%).

5.2.4 Influence of teachers' remuneration level on enrolment of children in Early Childhood Education

The study revealed that majority (47.1%) of the ECE teachers were employed by the county government, 20.6% by NGOs, 17.6%, and 14.7% by parents and churches respectfully. It was further established that majority (42.6%) of the teachers were paid above 8,000 Kenyan Shillings. This could be probably a consequence of the decision by the County Government to employ ECE teachers. The study revealed that more than a half of the teachers were not satisfied with the salary that they received at the end of the month, implying that they are more likely to leave their current teaching positions in search of better jobs that offer competitive salaries. It was further revealed that the head teachers (90%) were of the view that the amount of salary paid every month to ECE teachers could affect their turnover, and subsequent enrolment of learners. Lastly, the study further

established that there had been cases of retrenchment. This was supported by 55.9% of ECE teachers who suggested that they had been retrenched because of lack of ECDE funding (86.8%), reduced enrolment of learners (73.7%), and lack of classrooms for ECE (10.5%).

5.3 Conclusions

According to the findings of this study, most of the ECDE centres in Imenti North Sub-County do not have adequate teaching and learning resources. The study concluded that inadequate teaching and learning resources affected enrolment of children in ECE in this particular region.

The study further concluded that FPE led to the decline of enrolment of children in ECE. The study concluded that transfer of ECE infrastructure to primary schools, less frequent supervision of the centres, and difficulties in resource mobilization for ECE had occasioned decline in enrolment.

Based on the findings of the study on the influence of transitioning of learners from ECE to primary school level, it was concluded that the needs of primary school level required learners to enrol in ECE as this stage of education determined future achievements and academic success.

The study further concluded that ECE teachers were not satisfied with the salary that they received at the end of the month, implying that they were more likely to leave their current teaching positions, and, therefore affecting enrolment in public ECDE centres.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. The Ministry of Education and the County Governments should develop a framework that addresses the funding of ECDE in Kenya, particularly in the procurement of teaching and learning materials.

2. The management of ECE centres should aid the development of more infrastructure by mobilizing resources from CDF, fundraising, and LATF.
3. The head teachers should ensure that learners enrol in ECE before transitioning to primary school level so as to gain fundamental skills that are needed in other levels of education.
4. The ministry of Education through the Teachers Service Commission to employ ECE teachers and improve their remuneration to improve the staffing level of ECDE centres.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

The current study was restricted to Imenti North Sub-County, and, therefore, a replica of this study be carried out in a large area, for example the whole of Meru County. In addition, a study be conducted on other factors that influence enrolment of ECE apart from the factors considered in this study.

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APPINDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

Dear Respondent,

I am carrying out an important research on **the factors influencing enrolment of children in early childhood education in Imenti North Sub County**. This is a requirement for the Award of the Degree of Masters of Arts in Project Planning and Management of the University of Nairobi.

Attached is a questionnaire, kindly provide answers to the questions with your own true agreement to each of them. There are no wrong responses for any of these statements. All information given in the questionnaire will be treated with strict confidentiality and used for the purpose of this research only.

Thank you for taking your time to fill in the questionnaire.

Thank you in advance,

Yours sincerely,

Winfred Riungu

Appendix II: Sub-County Assurance and Standards Officers Interview Guide

This interview guide is designed to gather data about factors influencing enrolment of children in ECE in Imenti North Sub County. You are kindly requested to provide responses to the questions contained in the interview guide. Please do not write your name

1. How old are you?
2. For how long have you been an Assurance and Standards Officer in Imenti North Sub County?
3. What is your professional qualifications?
4. In your opinion do all ECE centres in Imenti North Sub County have enough teaching/learning resources?
5. Do you think access to teaching and learning resources affect enrolment of learners in ECE centres within Imenti North Sub County?
6. In your view, did the introduction of FPE affect enrolment of learners in ECE centres?
7. What areas of ECE were affected by FPE?
8. From your experience as an Assurance and Standards Officer, does transition of learners from ECE to primary school level affect enrolment of ECE, particularly because ECE creates a background for other levels of education?
9. In your opinion, does the level of teachers' remuneration affect their motivation and subsequent job morale?
10. How do the salaries paid to ECE teachers affect enrolment of children in ECE in Imenti North Sub County?

Thank you for your participation

Appendix III: Questionnaire for Head Teachers

This questionnaire is designed to gather data about the factors influencing enrolment of children in ECE in Imenti North Sub County. You are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire indicating your honest response by placing a tick (✓) against your opinion and fill in the blanks []. Please do not write your name or the name of your school.

Section A: Background Information

1) What is your gender? Male [] Female []

2) In which age bracket do you belong in years?

30 and below [] 31 - 39 [] 40 - 48 []

49 – 60 []

3) What is your marital status?

Single [] Married [] Separated [] Divorced []

4) What is your religion?

Christian [] Muslim [] Hindu [] Others (Specify).....

5) What is your professional qualification?

Master's degree [] B.Ed. degree [] Diploma [] Early Childhood Education

Development []

Others (Specify)

6) What is your teaching experience in years?

0 – 5 [] 6 – 10 [] 11 – 15 [] 16 - 20 []

21 and above []

7. How many years have you headed your current institution?

0 – 5 [] 6 – 10 [] 11 – 15 [] 16 - 20 []

21 and above []

Section B: Teaching and learning resources and enrolment of children in ECE

8. On average, teaching and learning resources in the ECE centre that you supervise are adequate?

- Strongly agree []
- Agree []
- Neutral []
- Disagree []
- Strongly Disagree []

9. Generally, who supplies teaching/learning resources in the ECE centre that you supervise?

- i) Ministry of Education []
- ii) Parents []
- iii) NGOs []
- iv) Others (Specify)

10. The amount of books, text books, exercise books, good chalkboard, globes, maps, and posters, hand book, supplementary books, and syllabus contribute to the enrolment of learners in ECE centres?

Teaching and learning resources	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Text books					
Exercise books					
A good chalkboard					
Globes, maps, and posters					
Hand book					
Supplementary books					
Syllabus					

Section C: Influence of FPE program on enrolment of children at ECDE centres

11. In your view, did FPE affect ECE in terms of enrolment?

- Yes
- No

12. If yes (11), which aspects of FPE affected enrolment of children in ECE?

- i. Transfer of ECE infrastructure to primary schools
- ii. Supervision of ECD Centres become less frequent
- iii. FPE made it difficult to mobilize resources for ECE
- iv. Others (specify)

Section D: Transitioning of ECE learners to primary school level

13. Please indicate the language of instruction that is used in the primary school that you head.

- i) Mother tongue
- ii) Kiswahili
- iii) English

14. Does the language of instruction stated above (13), as a result of continuity from ECE?

- Yes
- No

15. Overall, does the needs of primary school level require learners to enrol in ECE?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

Section E: Teachers’ remuneration level and children’s enrolment to ECDE

16. In the ECE centre that you supervise, who employs the teachers?

- County government
- Churches
- NGOs
- Parents
- TSC

Other (specify)

17. In your view, do you think the amount of salary paid every month to ECE teachers affect their turnover, and subsequent enrolment of learners?

Yes
No

Thank you

Appendix IV: Questionnaire for ECDE Teachers

This questionnaire is designed to gather data about the factors influencing enrolment of children in ECE in Imenti North Sub County. You are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire indicating your honest response by placing a tick (✓) against your opinion and fill in the blanks []. Please do not write your name or the name of your school.

Section A: Background Information

1.) What is your gender? Male [] Female []

2.) In which age bracket do you belong in years?

30 and below [] 31 - 39 [] 40 - 48 []

49 – 60 []

3) What is your marital status?

Single [] Married [] Separated [] Divorced []

4) What is your religion?

Christian [] Muslim [] Hindu [] Others (Specify).....

5) What is your professional qualification?

Master's degree [] B.Ed. degree [] Diploma [] Early Childhood Education

Development []

Others (Specify)

6) What is your teaching experience in years?

0 – 5 [] 6 – 10 [] 11 – 15 [] 16 - 20 []

21 and above []

Section B: Teaching and learning resources and enrolment of children in ECE

7. Please indicate the available resources in your ECDE centre.

(Can tick more than one)

- i) Properly ventilated classrooms
- ii) Furniture suitable for children
- iii) Kitchen
- iv) Safe clean water
- v) Playground
- vi) Toilets
- vii) Play material

8. Kindly indicate the extent to which you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the availability of the following teaching and learning resources in your ECE centre, where where 1=very dissatisfied 2= dissatisfied 3=neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 4=satisfied 5=very satisfied

Influence of teaching and learning resources on enrolment of children in ECE	5	4	3	2	1
Text books					
Exercise books					
A good chalkboard					
Globes, maps, and posters					
Hand book					
Supplementary books					
Syllabus					

9. What learning resources are available in your school?

(Tick all that apply)

- i. Real objects like bottle tops
- ii. Improvised shop
- iii. Class nature corner

iv. Others (Specify).....

10. Who are the main suppliers of the teaching and learning resources?

- i) Ministry of Education []
- ii) Parents []
- iii) NGOs []
- iv) Others (Specify)

11. Overall, adequacy of teaching/learning materials influence enrolment of children in ECE?

- Strongly agree []
- Agree []
- Neutral []
- Strongly disagree []
- Disagree []

Section C: Influence of FPE program on enrolment of children at ECDE centres

12. In your own opinion, has enrolment of children increased or decreased in your centre since the introduction of free primary education?

- Increased []
- Decreased []

13. If enrolment decreased above (12), which aspects of FPE contributed?

- i. Transfer of ECE infrastructure to primary schools []
- ii. Supervision of ECD Centres become less frequent []
- iii. FPE made it difficult to mobilize resources for ECE []
- iv. Others (specify)

14. Are there any drop outs from ECDE classes?

- Yes []
- No []

15. If yes, what has caused ECDE dropouts?

(Can tick all that apply)

- i) Lack of school fees
- ii) Child labor
- iii) Migration
- iv) Illness/disability
- v) Lack of ECE teachers
- vi) Security reasons
- vii) Others (specify)_____

16. Kindly rate the attendance of learners in your ECDE center.

- Low
- Average
- High

17. Kindly indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements concerning the effect of FPE on ECE enrolment in your centre where 1=strongly disagree 2= disagree 3=neither disagree nor agree 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Access to teaching and learning resources	SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1
FPE led to ECE classrooms shutdown for primary schools					
FPE occasioned shortage of supplementary reading books in ECE					
FPE led to insufficient desks at ECE centres					
FPE led to sharing of desks at ECE centres					
As a result of FPE, there was reduced space/congestion in ECD classrooms					

Section D: Transitioning of ECE learners to primary school level

18. Please indicate the language of instruction that you use in classroom

- i) Mother tongue
- ii) Kiswahili
- iii) English

19. Is there continuity of language of instruction from preschool to primary school?

- Yes
- No

20. Does the language of instruction interfere with learners' transition from preschool to primary school?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how.....

21. In your view, what are some of the skills and needs in primary school level that make it necessary for learners to enroll in ECE before transitioning?

(Tick all that apply)

- i. Early writing/reading skills
- ii. Social skills
- iii. Listening skills
- iv. Creativity
- v. Attention span

22. Please indicate the level of your agreement or disagreement regarding the role of ECE in transition of learners to primary school level where 1=strongly disagree 2= disagree 3=neither disagree nor agree 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Transitioning of ECE learners to primary level	SA	A	N	D	SD
	5	4	3	2	1
ECE increases Pupils attentiveness later in school					
ECE prepares pupils better					
ECE has great influence on how pupils perform later in school					

ECE is not important in later pupils performance					
--------------------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--

Section E: Teachers’ remuneration level and children’s enrolment to ECDE

23. Who has presently employed you as an ECE teacher in your centre?

- County government
- Churches
- NGOs
- Parents
- TSC
- Other (Specify)

24. Please indicate the amount of salary that you are paid every month

- Below 2000
- 2000 – 5000
- 5000 – 8000
- Above 8000

25. Overall, are you satisfied with your monthly salary?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

26. Has there been any case of retrenchments of ECDE teachers in this Sub County?

- Yes
- No

27. If yes above (26), what aspects led to the retrenchment of the ECDE teachers?

(Tick all that apply)

- i. Lack of ECDE funding
- ii. Reduced enrollment of ECE
- iii. Lack of classrooms for ECE
- iv. Other (specify)

THANK YOU