INFLUENCE OF LANGUAGE TEXT BOOKS CHARACTERISTICS ON PRE SCHOOL CHILDRENS' PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH IN EMBU NORTH SUB- COUNTY, KENYA

BY

REBECCA WAITHIRA NGUMBA

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTERS OF EDUCATION IN THE DEGREE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

2016

DECLARATION

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

Signature: ---------- Date: ----------

REBECCA WAITHIRA NGUMBA
REG NO: E57/ 63806/2013

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

Signature---------- Date ----------

DR BONIFACE NGARUIYA
SENIOR LECTURER
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my family, my husband Simon Mbau, who has encouraged me every step of the way; I say thank you and God bless you. My daughter sharlyne Wamucii and my Son Ian Mugai for their moral support throughout my studies. I also dedicate this study to my late mother Laura Wangui who always reminded and prayed for me to be strong and keep going when everything seemed to come to a standstill

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to almighty God for his protection and guidance during my entire study period. I sincerely owe an appreciation to my entire family especially my husband who financed my course and gave me moral support. I am most grateful to my supervisors; Dr Ngaruiya untiring encouragement, guidance, corrections and useful suggestions he offered to me from the start to completion of my project Thanks to my classmates for the moral support and encouragement as we journeyed together. Special thanks goes to all my course lecturers for their support and encouragement, and more so for adding value to me at University of Nairobi. I appreciate and acknowledge the contribution of all my respondents. Finally I like to thank Redobs printing services for the assistance accorded to me in typing and printing this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ..... **ii**
DEDICATION ..... **iii**
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ..... **iv**
LIST OF TABLES ix
LIST OF FIGURE ..... **x**
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ..... **xi**
ABSTRACT ..... **xii**

CHAPTER ONE **1**
INTRODUCTION **1**
1.1 Background to the Study 1
1.2 Statement of the Problem 3
1.3 Purpose of the Study 4
1.4 Objectives of the Study 4
1.5 Research Questions 4
1.6 Significance of the Study 5
1.7 Basic Assumptions of the Study 5
1.8 Limitations of the Study 5
1.9 Delimitations of the Study 5
1.10 Definition of Significant Terms 6
1.11 Organization of the Study 6

CHAPTER TWO **7**
LITERATURE REVIEW **7**
2.1 Introduction 7
2.2Global Review of Language Textbooks in Preschools 7
2.3 An African Review of Language Textbooks in Preschools 8
2.4 Review of Language Textbooks in Preschools from a Kenyan Perspective 9
2.5 Language Textbooks in Preschool Children 11
2.5.1 Preschool Children's Perceptions and pre school children's performance in English 11
2.5.2 Simplicity and Ease of Language and pre school children's performance in English. 13

2.5.3 Preschool Teacher's Qualification and pre school children's performance in English. 14
2.5.4 Nature of Learning Institutions and pre school children's performance in English in Embu north Sub County 16
2.6 Theoretical Review 17
2.7 Conceptual Framework 18
2.7.1 Relationship of the Variables 19
2.8 Research Gap 20
2.9 Summary of the Literature 20

CHAPTER THREE 22
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 22
3.1 Introduction 22
3.2 Research Design 22
3.3 Target Population 22
3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size 23
3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Method 23
3.5.1 Questionnaires 23
3.5.2 Language Activity Test Work Test 24
3.6. Validity of Instruments 24
3.7 Reliability of Instruments 24
3.8 Data Collection Procedure 25
3.9 Data Analysis 25
3.10 Ethical Considerations 26
3.11 Operational Definitional of Variables 27

CHAPTER FOUR 30
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION 30
4.0 Introduction 30
4.1 Response rate 30
4.1.1 Gender of the Respondents 30
4.1.2 Pre school-Head Teachers and pre Teachers' age. 31
4.1.3 Distribution of the respondents by their level of education 32
4.1.4 Teacher's teaching experience 33

4.1.5 Total number of children per class..... 33
4.1.6 Vocabulary used in the textbooks easy enough for the children to understand 34
4.1.7 Does the content of the books draw the attention of the children?..... 34
4.1.8 Do the children find it easy to read aloud to the books?..... 34
4.2 Can the children identify the pictures and colours in the books?..... 35
4.2.1Number of years teaching in preschool: 35
4.2.2 Which language skills do you find most difficult to teach?..... 36
4.2.3 How do you group children during activity time? 36
4.2.4 What additional learning materials do you use in class? 37
4.2.5 How often do you assess language activities? 38
4.3 Nature of Learning Institutions 38
4.3.1 What is the pupil to book ratio in your school? 39
4.3.2 How often do you interact with the preschool children's parents?..... 39
4.3.4 Do you have school events, for instance spelling bees that supplement what you teach in class? 40
4.3.5 What would you like to be done to ensure that the textbooks used are well utilized to ensure quality language learning?..... 41
4.4 Language activity test to be administered to preschool children oral activities..... 42
4.5 Reading activities 43
4.6 writing activities..... 44

CHAPTER FIVE 45
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 45
5.0 Introduction..... 45
5.1 Summary of the Study findings 45
5.2 Discussions and Findings..... 45
5.2.1 Preschool Children's Perceptions and language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance 45
5.2.2 Simplicity and Ease of Language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance..... 46
5.2.3 Preschool Teacher's Qualification language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance 46
5.2.4 Nature of Learning Institutions language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance..... 47

5.3 Conclusion: 47
5.4 Recommendations 48
5.5 Suggestion for further study 49

REFERENCES 50
APPENDICES 53
APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION 53
APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRESCHOOL TEACHER 54

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Target population 22
Table 3.2 Sample size 23
Table4. 3 Operational definitional of variables 27
Table 4.4 Response rate 30
Table4. 5 Gender of the Teachers 31
Table 4.6 Age of the Teachers 32
Table 4.7 Respondents level of education 32
Table 4. 8 Teachers teaching experience 33
Table 4.9 Total number of children per class 33
Table 4.10 Vocabulary used in the textbooks 34
Table 4.11 Does the content of the books draw the attentions of the children? 34
Table 4.12 Do the children find it easy to read aloud to the books? 35
Table 4.13 Can the children identify the pictures and colours in the books? 35
Table 4.14 Number of years teaching in preschool: 35
Table 4.15 Which language skills do you find most difficult to teach? 36
Table 16 How do you group children during activity time? 37
Table 4.17 What additional learning materials do you use in class? 37
Table 4.18 How often do you assess language activities? 38
Table 4.19 Nature of Learning Institutions 38
Table 4.20 What is the pupil to book ratio in your school? 39
Table 4. 21 How often do you interact with the preschool children's parents? 40
Table 4. 22 Do you have school events, for instance spelling bees that supplement what you teach in class 40
Table 4. 23 What would you like to be done to ensure that the textbooks used are well utilized to ensure quality language learning? 41
Table 4.24 Language activity test to be administered to preschool children oral activities 42
Table 4.25 Reading activities 43
Table 4.26 Writing Activities 44

LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 1 Conceptual frame work ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ECE: Early Childhood Education.

ECD: Early Childhood Development.

ECDE: Early Childhood Development Education.

NACECE: National Centre for Early Childhood Education.

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Services

UNESCO: United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research project was to identify and evaluate the main influence of language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance in english in embu north sub county, Kenya. The study was guided by the following objectives; To determine how children perception towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya To establish how simplicity and ease of language textbooks towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya; to determine how pre school teacher's qualification towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya ;to examine how nature of learning institution towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya. The Study targeted 23 pre schools, 120 preschool children and 80 pre schools teachers hence a total target population of 223 participants Simple random sampling was used for 23 preschools, 120 preschool children and 80 pre schools teachers in Embu north Sub County. The response rate was 88% (57). Out of 65 questionnaires and interview schedules issued out, 57 were brought back while 8 were not brought back. 88% represents a reliable response rate, since it is above the minimum acceptable threshold of 70% (Garland and Tweed, n.d.). To ensure equal chances, names of all the preschools were written down, folded, put in a box and shuffled. 20 percent of the total population were selected which were (20/100 *23), which was 5, pre-schools. Therefore the respondents consisted of 5 pre-schools among twenty three pre-school within the Embu North sub county. On the other hand to get the sample size for preschool children and teachers the researcher used the rule of the thumb in social sciences is by taking 30% of the population as a sample size. Therefore the sample size for preschool children was (30/100*120) which became 36 respondents and the sample size for preschool teachers (30/100*80) was 24 respondents. Data collection instruments used included questionnaires, observation schedules and children test. Data was analyzed qualitatively using descriptive methods and quantitatively using pie charts, tables, frequencies and percentages. Data was analyzed based on the research questions of the studies. From the results of the study, it was concluded that a variety of factors influence how pre schoolers utilize language text books. How children perceive the language books is a determinant of how well they utilize the books. Children's books need to have characteristics that appeal to a child's sensibilities. Vivid imagery, exciting stories, captivating stories, and language and illustrations t expand words of the story. Simplicity and ease of the language also influences how children utilize the language books. Simple words enable a faster grasp of reading activities. Emphasis should be placed on the reading activities since these improve performance of the writing skills. Repeating words and sounds, singing songs and recoting poems are oral activities that should be emphasized on since this also means better performance in the reading and writing activities. The professional level of the teacher indicates the performance of the activities done. In addition, the study concluded that parents have a major role in implementation of preschool learning. The parents a role includes laying the child's foundation beginning with provision of the learning materials. Financial and material support by donors and parents supports learning and the utilization of books since this improves the book to pupil ratio.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Early Childhood Education and Development is often misinterpreted to mean merely an academically oriented school program. In fact, the term is used to describe a range of service that promotes those conditions of socialization and education in the home, community that enhances a child's total development (Steiner Waldorf Education, 2001). Education and care of young children is of crucial importance for their development. It ensures that children grow up into strong and healthy adults mentally, physically, emotionally and intellectually. Psychologists generally agree that the period below five years is critical in the development of a human being. Theories of intellectual development suggest that intellectual development takes place in stages. It follows therefore that certain concepts must be developed at particular periods in a child, failing which such concepts can be stunted or missed completely.

According to Getao (1996), Pre School is expected to provide an opportunity for a child to develop social relations with other children and adults outside the confines of family. This helps the child to mature emotionally through different activities performed through learning which is performed through language activities like singing, drama, modelling and poetry writing. This provides a child with the opportunities to explore their feelings by talking to others. A good preschool provides language activities in ECDE centres exposes a child to all fields including better performance in language activities. Early childhood institutions aim at developing the cognitive and effective potential at an early age, Anderson (2002 is of the view that children who are exposed to Early Childhood Education develop superior communication skills, physical ability and social unity. A good foundation at pre-primary school is important since it has positive effect on a child's performance.

Language is a means of communication. Through language, children express their ideas, desires, excitement, amusement and disappointment. Language activities are things which children do in to enable them perform well in language. By using language children talk to each other and discuss their interests and also their surroundings. Management and

language activities (K.I.E 1990). Most children develop speech and language without effort, although there is considerable variation in the rate at which children acquire language with approximately 7% of children demonstrating impairments in these skills. There is increasing evidence of the links between children's early language and their success in school. Awareness of this is reflected in a number of policy and practice developments that focus on a child's language as a means of raising attainment.

According to the Council of Europe (1979) the first function of pre-school services developed to provide substitute care for children whose parents both worked or where conditions of home living were considered detrimental for development. The second trend was more positively educational and advocated the value of complementing children's experiences at home by providing carefully planned learning activities in the company of other children, which would promote all aspects of their personal development. Homes (1997) agree with this by saying that the teachers' factors such as professional status and experience have been reported to be positive teachers' factors. Teachers' professional status is related to teaching behaviours and interactions they have with children. Teachers who are more experienced on early childhood education have positive relationships with their pre- school children as compared to their colleagues who are less experienced

Preschool language activities and text books play an important role in the development of a child's vocabulary, listening skills and communication skills. From birth to the age of five children develop language skills at a fast pace. Language performance is dependent on the three language skills namely oral, reading and writing. Development of oral skills involves helping children speak clearly as they listen and differentiating of letter sounds. Reading readiness involves looking at and differentiating details in pictures and objects and moving their eyes according to the accepted reading style for example on Roman Style reading from right to left and top to bottom. In writing readiness, the child learns how to write, draw, paint and colour pictures. ECDE syllabus K.I.E (2002).

Textbooks often reach remote schools well after the beginning of the school year if they arrive at all (Tietjen, Raman, and Splaulding, 2003). In Kenya for example, for less than half of the seventh and eighth grade students' present in class had required text books (Lloyd, Mench and Clerk, 2000). Availability of books in general poses a challenge to education in the poorest developing countries. More than half of all the sixth grade

students in eight countries participating in the southern and eastern Africa consortium for monitoring educational quality (SACMEQ) sample attended school without books. Providing books in second and third languages, especially those that are tailored to the language requirements of the minority groups, is out of the question. Even when basic textbooks are available, schools in poor areas often lack other instructional materials. Study of poor district in India found that while most schools in these districts have sufficient textbooks and learning materials for students, classrooms lack supplementary materials as teacher guides, dictionaries, maps, globes and instructional kits (World Bank, 1997).

According to Whitbread (2003) performance in language activities aimed at developing the oral skills involves doing the following news telling discussion and play pretend activities. Reading skills performance includes activities such proper use of books, interpret details in objects pictures symbols and signs, and describe objects while writing performance is done through the following language activities colouring objects, writing letters, scribbling, writing patterns drawing and modelling. In Embu north sub- county has many pre schools therefore the research intend to examine factors influencing utilization of language text books in pre-school children and its effect on performance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Preschool program build a strong foundation for cognitive, social, emotional and health development that will enable the child to maximize learning potential. Preschool language text books play an important role in the development of a child's vocabulary, listening skills and communication skills. From birth to the age of five children develop language skills at a fast pace. Language performance is dependent on the three language skills namely oral, reading and writing. Development of oral skills involves helping children speak clearly as they listen and differentiating of letter sounds. Utilization of language text books lead to better performance in language activities to preschoolers.

The Kenyan government has given the preschoolers the attention and the support required to support the learning of language activities. Despite a significant amount of investigation already being undertaken to examine the use of pre school children language text books. Previous studies have addressed the influence of activities on the performance of language activities in preschools; however those studies have given little attention to

utilization of pre schools language text books in Kenya giving a dearth gap in the existing literature, this study will address the above gap by addressing pre school children language text books This research therefore sought to look into the factors influencing utilization of language text books in pre-school children a case study of primary schools in Embu north sub- county Kenya**.**

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine influence of language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives;

i. To determine how children perception towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya
ii. To establish how simplicity and ease of language textbooks towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya.
iii. To determine how pre school teacher's qualification towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya.
iv. To examine how nature of learning institution towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

i. To what extent does children perception towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya?
ii. Does simplicity and ease of language textbooks towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya?

iii. To what extent does preschool teacher's qualification towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya?

iv. To what extent does nature of learning institution influences utilization of language text influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the research could be useful to different institutions in a number of ways. It would help curriculum planners and implementers in selecting and developing strategies on the language activities to improve performance. It would also help preschool teachers and management to develop a positive attitude towards activities done during language lessons and therefore provide teaching and learning materials to enhance performance. It would also provide information to the ministry of education in amending polices dealing with writing of pre-school language textbooks. It would also help preschool children in developing positive attitude towards reading language text books.

1.7 Basic Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions; it is assumed that the relevant concerned authorities would give their full cooperation. It was also assumed that all the respondents would answer all the questions as asked and honestly. It was also assumed that the gaps and challenges to be highlighted would be a cause for review on plans and policies as well as the implementation process.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of the study is that the respondents may give false information to please the researcher. To do this, the researcher will explain the importance of the research to respondents and request them to be honest in their responses. The researcher will also promise confidentiality.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

The study was carried out in Embu north sub- county Runyenjes constituency. The area is estimated having a population of 23 primary school with a total population of 92 preschool teachers and 3,220 pre- school children. The study focused on five preschools,

thirty six preschool children and twenty four preschool teachers. This is because they are the ones directly involved in utilization of language text books.

1.10 Definition of Significant Terms

Materials: these are teaching learning aids used to pass information when teaching.

Instructional materials: materials used by the preschool teacher in the teaching and learning process

Text books: Book used in the study of a subject

Language: System of communication in speech and writing

Perception: Noticing things with the senses

Learner: this is the preschooler who is aged between three and six years.

Preschool: this is a learning institution for children aged between three and six years.

Performance: results obtained by administering oral and written tests after learning activities.

Utilization - usage.

Vocabulary –A list or collection of terms or codes available for use.

1.11 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter explores the background, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, justifications and the scope of the study as well as definition of key terms. Chapter two addressed both theoretical and empirical literature and gave an overview of the reviewed literature. Chapter three focuses on the research methodology. It contains research design target population, sample of the study sampling procedures, each instrument, and piloting of the research instrument and data analysis technique Chapter four is concerned with data analysis and discussion of the findings while chapter five deals width summary of research findings, conclusion and recommendations

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The Chapter contains review of literature and contributions of scholars in the field of Early Childhood education. It focuses on the concept of language, language activities, textbooks used in preschools, summary, theoretical framework and conceptual framework**.**

2.2Global Review of Language Textbooks in Preschools

The availability of textbooks and other reading materials have a positive effect on school effectiveness (Wood hall, 1985). Learning to read is a crucial milestone for children (Kuo, Franke, 2004). Reading skills are important building blocks for children's academic success (Whitehurst &Lonigan, 2001). In learning to read, children need to develop an understanding of written language through exposure to different kinds of reading material, especially books. Children need to learn that words are made up of letters, to recognize letters, and the recognize words.

On January 8, 2002 President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB)Act. A major goal of this act is to decrease the achievement gaps between different groups of children (Blaustein, 2005). One component of NCLB is the development of the Early Reading First Program. Through this program, the federal government provides funding for preschools and early childhood programs serving children ages three through five from low-income families to support the development of pre-reading skills. The support of these early childhood programs is intended to help attain the goal set forth in NCLB that every child learns to read on grade level by third grade (Kauerz, 2002).One concern expressed by early childhood educators regarding NCLB is that with increasingly higher expectations in reading skills for children in kindergarten, teachers in preschool programs will revert to using developmentally inappropriate practices in order to push children to learn how to read (Blaustein, 2005). According to the joint position statement by the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (1998), preschool classrooms should be print-rich environments that "provide opportunities for

children to see and use written language for a variety of purposes, with teachers drawing children's attention to specific letters and words".

An empirical study conducted by the World Bank in Brazil revealed the impact of pre-school education in making children effectively school ready for primary education as well as yielding economic benefits through pre-school education as a policy intervention in redressing developmental distortions. The study indicates that early childhood education serves as a social and economic policy intervention especially for improving the status of the poor. It is a preparatory stage of making children school ready with fundamental skills, competencies and dispositions that ensure higher school enrolment, less class repetition, fewer dropouts and an increased participation of females in the work force of countries.

2.3 An African Review of Language Textbooks in Preschools

Language is a unique human characteristic. It's the basis of interaction between people and it binds people together as well as gives people an identity and a sense of belonging. In addition, it enables people to cooperate and work together for the common good. At the national level, it makes good economic, social and political sense to have one common language for it is through such common language that a country can coordinate towards the achievement of national goals and the presentation of a united front to the world (Dutton, 1976). Language plays a central role in the modernization and development of a country.

However, many African countries are linguistically diverse thus a country has to make a choice out of a range of possibilities. Spenser (1973), states that a choice of a first national language in Africa often falls upon a European language that historically has the largest associations with the country. The association has majorly been colonial and has led to categorization of African countries into two major linguistic blocks, those that were colonized by France and speak French(Francophone) and those that were colonized by Britain and speak English(Anglophone), (Carrol,1967).

In many African countries, the language of power is linked to the language of the colonizer which therefore enjoys high status as many studies (e.g. Bagwasi, 2004; Sonaiya, 2004) have shown. This language isusually the official language and/or

language of instruction. It becomes the most important language overshadowing the local languages. In Kenya, former British colony, English is a high status language; a factor which largely shapes the prevailing language attitudes (Muthwii, 2007; Kioko etal., 2008). Simire (2004) explores the linguistic complexities of Nigeria whereabouts 500 languages are spoken. The language situation of post colonial Nigeria is a direct reflection of the colonial administration linguistic policy. English is the dominant language with three local languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba recommended for national use by virtue of the large population of speakers. On the other hand, in Botswana, where English has the high status, Setswana, a common mother tongue is spoken by 80% of the population and only 35% to 40% can speak English either fluently or just at a basic level.

Linguists and educational psychologists agree that the use of the mother tongue as the language of instruction in the early years of education has proven advantageous, especially where the development of cognitive faculties is concerned (Trudell and Schroeder, 2007). Conversely, it has been demonstrated that classroom use of a language which is not the language already spoken by the child, results in cognitive and pedagogical difficulties. This was attested by research on experiences in six African countries: Botswana, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania (Okombo and Rubagumya, 1996). However despite all this, there in limited access to vernacular textbooks to aid in preschool education, coupled with the fact that English is the accepted language in schools. Hence, preschool language textbooks must be tailored in a way as to encourage learning and language development.

2.4 Review of Language Textbooks in Preschools from a Kenyan Perspective

Kenya, like all countries in Africa, is a multilingual country. It is situated in East Africa and comprises of a population of 40 million (2009population census). In contrast to most countries in Africa, Kenya has a unifying African language, Kiswahili1, which is understood and spoken as either a first or second language by most Kenyans. There are many factors defining language choice and use in Kenya. Kenya boasts of a rich language landscape with at least 42 local languages, one national language– Kiswahili, and English as the official language. In terms of status, Swahili and especially English are equally prestigious as compared to the vernaculars. Kiswahili is seen as a unifying language since it can be usedby nearly all groups in such domains as trade, public rallies and so on. English is used in offices, the judiciary, big businesses and education.

The first recorded school for young children in Kenya was founded at Rabai (a coastal province) in 1886 by the Church Missionary Societies (Bogonko, 1992; Eshiwani, 1989). The first early care centres can be traced to the 1940s, when British colonists established centers to serve both European and Asian children. During the same period, the colonial government established early childhood care centers for Kenyan children living on the tea, coffee, and sugar plantations. These centers were set up in response to Mau Mau. According to Kabiru (2009) the first African pre-school institutions were initially started as feeding centres in restricted camps in the area affected by emergency. After independence the Kenya Government was directly involved in early childhood education under the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health charged with the responsibility of inspecting nursery schools and day care centres to ensure the health and safety of children. Therefore about 200,000 children were enrolled in 4,800 day care centres throughout the Nation.

English is mainly associated with the elite and therefore the well to do. Mother tongues or ethnic languages or vernaculars on the other hand, are relegated to local communities as home languages. People get united or linked along ethnic lines and express their identity through their mother tongue. English and Kiswahili therefore enjoy prestige whereas mother tongue is taken for granted. Preschools in Embu North Sub County, therefore, face the challenge of effective teaching of language in schools due to the major shift between the home language and the school language, usually English and Kiswahili, for the young learners.

Parry (2000) argues that the use of mother tongue as a language of instruction is used to facilitate children's development of concepts that enable them to acquire knowledge in a second or third language and to further help in exposing the children to the cultures of their communities. Anderson (1970) complements this when he says that long term experience now seems to suggest that a vernacular medium is educationally preferable because sound teaching must, to some degree, interact with the home lifeof the child and must initially be based on concepts formed during the child's pre-school experiences. Eshiwani (1983) conducted a study in Western Province of Kenya on factors influencing performance among primary school pupils and noted that school facilities such as textbooks, visual aids and libraries are vital to performance. ElimuYetu Coalition (2003) says that there is a positive correlation between availability of textbooks and three other

variables namely: Pupil's achievement, enriching of teaching- learning and professional development of poorly trained teachers in developing countries.

The free primary education policy requires that every child attend school. English is the official language and the main medium of instruction from preschool to tertiary levels of education. The national language, Kiswahili is taught from preschool to high school. English however, is viewed as the language of education and upward mobility. In 1951, there was a call by the Education Department's Annual Report to start teaching English in lower classes in primary schools to eliminate Kiswahili and mother tongue. English was then used as the medium of instruction in the Asian schools. Eventually it English was used as the medium of instruction in all grades of primary schools throughout the country.

2.5 Language Textbooks in Preschool Children

Preschool language activities play an important role in the development of a child's vocabulary, listening skills and communication skills. From birth to the age of five children develop language skills at a fast pace. Language performance is dependent on the three language skills namely oral, reading and writing. Development of oral skills involves helping children speak clearly as they listen and differentiating of letter sounds. Reading readiness involves looking at and differentiating details in pictures and objects and moving their eyes according to the accepted reading style for example on Roman Style reading from right to left and top to bottom. In writing readiness, the child learns how to write, draw, paint and color pictures, ECDE syllabus K.I.E (2002).

2.5.1 Preschool Children's Perceptions and pre school children's performance in English

The National Reading Panel states that Children who enter kindergarten exhibiting early literacy skills (Retelling nursery rhymes, recognizing letters in the alphabet, or displaying an awareness that words flow from print) demonstrate higher levels of reading achievement 1, 2, and 3 years later than children who enter kindergarten lacking these skills." (Cusumano et al., 2006, p363).The 1953 UNESCO Conference on the use of vernacular languages in education declared that the mother tongue was the best medium in initial education (Letsie, 2002). The researcher is of the opinion that presenting new information and ideas to young children in a language they are familiar with (mother tongue) lessens their burden as opposed to doing so in an unfamiliar one which slows

their progress. She further argues that the use of mother tongue further promotes better understanding between the home and school as what the children learn can easily be expressed or applied at home. The children's parents are also in a better position to understand the children's problems at school and be of some help.

The ECDE Syllabus (2002) states that the materials used should also consider the age of the child to use them. For example, a 3-5 year old may not be able to listen to a 30 minutes long story because of their concentration span. Preschool children have significantly higher reading scores when their parents provide literacy materials and activities compared to children of those who do not.

Reading material for preschoolers should be tailored in a way as to supply situations that the children can relate to. Hornsby (1972) therefore attempts to show how pictures may be used to supply situations outside the classrooms. The children are given a task to perform and the task may involve activities like describing a picture, naming colours and telling the differences in photographs. They can also match words and pictures. As such, the classroom, being the backbone of any school physical infrastructure needs to have a pleasant look. The walls should be preferably painted by some colours and rooms carefully decorated with the images and pictures of characters presented in the language books. When children are allowed these visual aids, pronunciation and spelling are hastened since they can relate to the drawing in the textbooks and those projected on the walls.

For complete acceptance and liking of a book, children need relate to that book, the book setting needs to be familiar, clear and authentic. They should connect to the characters presented in the books. These characters, mostly cartoons need to change, and touch their hearts by being consistent, believable and whole. The nature of the story in language textbooks for children also to a great extent influences just how much they will accept a book and subsequently utilize it fully. Language more often than not will include storybooks. The plot of the story should develop in way that arouses a child's curiosity. It needs to be honest, with a sense of wonder, and shows respect for the young child. The text and illustrations are integrated to raise the quality of the book. These illustrations should be bold and in good taste.

2.5.2 Simplicity and Ease of Language and pre school children's performance in English.

Preschool textbooks that are chosen as part of syllabus coverage need to appeal to the interests of children, furthermore, these books are comprised of varying levels of difficulty. Books must also reflect the identity, primary language and culture of the children. To begin with, toddler will require an introduction to rhymes and rhythm, songs, chant books and "pointing" and identification books. To effectively capture the children's attention, simple chants that they can mimic are a way to make them utilize a book fully. Textbooks should have captivating images of words, with bold and simple illustrations that the teacher can read aloud. Pages should also be in hardcover, with lesser pages since at this age group, frequently a book is not read cover-to-cover; there is a lot of back-and-forth of page turning and pointing.

Research has found that adding literacy props to children's play environments can significantly increase literacy behaviours during play (Morrow & Rand, 1991; Neuman & Roskos, 1994). As such, the language textbooks should be age-appropriate and should be well displayed so that children can readily find what they want. A good preschool textbook needs to provide mind expanding illustrations, vocabulary and can tell just as much story through the artwork and offer an opportunity to expand young minds through interesting poetic language. Books with vivid imagery, exciting stories and strong characters will not only entertain your child but set them up to enjoy reading for the rest of their life.

Children's books must convey an entire story using very few words. Children love the security of predictable books with rhythm and repetition. Reading the same book at least four times every few days allows the child sufficient exposure to words and the story theme to enhance the child's understanding of the story (e.g., Carger, 1993; Crowe, 2000) Language textbooks, whether English or Kiswahili, should be comprised of good stories that can teach simple concepts about numbers, letters or colors. These textbooks should guide children to; identify colors, read pictures, letters of the alphabet and group and match objects. This will develop their reading skills. For their writing, preschoolers can trace and copy letters, model cast and paste letters, they can also write their own names or even write words with three to four letters. Scribbling and doodling is also part of the

writing activities. To develop their writing skills further, the children can be guided in threading patterns coloring and painting pictures.

2.5.3 Preschool Teacher's Qualification and pre school children's performance in English.

The professional role of a teacher is a demanding one and stretches from classroom teaching, curriculum development, examination processing pedagogical material preparation and evaluation to modelling the behaviour of the students and acting as role models to the society. According to Wamai (1991), a study carried out in the Kenyan schools indicated that the academic qualification of teachers is one of the most important factors that determine academic achievement of learners. Therefore teachers in preschool are supposed to have undergone training available in Kenya. There are ECDE training colleges training at different levels certificate, diploma and degree levels.

Somerset 1980, noted that the academic and professional qualifications of teachers were crucial factor in influencing performance. The differences in teaching effect performance and those schools with best qualified teachers tended to be the most successful in examinations. Ndavi, 1999 adds that language does merely involve the learning of facts but learning communication skills and the use of language that improve performance. These are oral, reading and writing skills.Preschool literacy is the building block for future literacy success in school (Beauchat, Blamey & Walpole, 2009; Arthur and Makin 2001). Many teachers strive to create a rich environment to aid students through the process of learning, through activities, stories, and songs. Critical literacy skills are continuously developed to guide learning. "The literacy and language attainments children have at the start of kindergarten set the stage for their short- and long-term reading success" (Adams, 1990; Beauchat et al., 2009, p.26; Arnold, Zelijo, Doctor off& Ortiz, 2008).

Preschool teachers will incorporate lessons through songs, development basics such as speech and language, identifying colours, numbers, shapes and letters. Instructional materials are an integral component of the learning process. Their adequacy and suitability are important. Andesine (1994:244) says that the quality of education the learners receive bears direct relevance to the availability or lack thereof of instructional materials. Textbooks are part of the instructional materials and the teachers in a preschool

should use these teaching materials to enhance learning of language activities in preschool in order to improve performance. To ensure that they effectively carry out the impacting of knowledge in preschool children, teachers need to be qualified and possess the necessary experience. Creativity is important for teachers since keeping young children's attention needs it. They need to think of new and innovative ways to engage children to learn. Instructional skills are critical, as this will enable them to communicate concepts to the preschoolers. People skills are of paramount importance since teachers have to be empathic to children's emotions. They must come to appreciate diverse interpersonal styles or temperaments that are part of the child's biological heritage. Teachers should also adopt classrooms to meet the unique inborn traits of individual children, by being animated, using facial expressions, gestures and using sound effects rather than expect children to adapt to their classrooms.

Vocabulary development must be built into literacy skills. Teachers need to teach word meanings explicitly which they can do through labeling objects, using child-friendly definitions, as well as picture cards and props (Beauchat et al., 2009). Labels do not have to be used just during a story; they can by moved around the room and included in playtime.

Experience possessed by preschool educators will also influence how well they utilize the instructional material. Teachers must have a clear understanding of the curriculum standards for preschool classes, and the knowledge and skills reach those standards. The repeated reading of a picture book or story book by an adult to a child is a frequently recommended practice to enhance young children's early language and literacy development (Justice, Meier, & Walpole, 2005; Miller, 1998; Penno, Wilkinson, & Moore, 2002; Thielke, 1997). Studies have shown that student engagement is a key component to acquiring new skills.

Engagement, for this research, is defined as listening and participating in the given activity. It is also interesting to note that teacher enthusiasm was a key indicator to the level of student engagement. Experienced teachers will: simplify or shorten sentences to match what the child can understand and/or produce, guide children bringing their attention to the content, choose books with fun pictures, animals, numbers and letters, read at a natural rate, encourage turn-taking and finally establish joint attention with

children by making learning fun. The time allocated for the language activities is five lessons a week in ECDE syllabus (2008).

2.5.4 Nature of Learning Institutions and pre school children's performance in English in Embu north Sub County

Beginning reading starts before children enter kindergarten. The phases of literacy development begin at birth as parents and caregivers respond to the needs of infants. By eight to ten months of age, children begin to grab at books. Around age two, children begin to read logos as well as their favourite books while concurrently learning that alphabet symbols represent sounds. Between age three to four, children begin experimenting with writing whether it is with scribbles or letter-like forms. And finally between ages and five and seven children begin to understand that letters make-up words, words make sentences and sentences produce stories (Cusumano, Armstrong, Cohen & Todd, 2006).

A study by Heinemann in 1984 explored the relationship between teaching materials and other related material inputs, and, students learning and achievement in developing countries. The study evaluated a textbook programme in the Philippines which was introduced there to raise the national level of academic achievement among three subjects: Phillipino, Mathematics and Science in two grades. The programme reduced the ratio of pupils per book per subject from an average of 10:1 to 2:1 and there was a marked improvement.

As such, the nature of the learning institution will influence how effectively the textbooks are utilized. In Kenya, public schools have a higher ratio of pupils per book as compared to private schools. Not surprisingly, performance in language subjects is much better in private schools as compared to public institutions. Reading skills performance includes activities such proper use of books, interpret details in objects pictures symbols and signs, and describe objects while writing performance is done through the following language activities colouring objects, writing letters, scribbling, writing patterns drawing and modelling.

The main task of schools is to provide education which involves a series of programmes and activities. The successful conduct of these programmes and activities depends mainly

upon the availability of proper infrastructure in the school. School infrastructure includes buildings, grounds, furniture and apparatus along with equipment essential for imparting education (Imazeki, 2004). The availability of textbooks and other reading materials have a positive effect on school effectiveness (Psacharopoulos and Wood hall, 1985). It is only with such materials that pupils can learn to work independently or in groups (Republic of Kenya, 2001).ElimuYetu Coalition (2003) says that there is a positive correlation between availability of textbooks and three other variables namely: Pupil's achievement, enriching of teaching- learning and professional development of poorly trained teachers in developing countries

Private schools often have fewer student populations as compared to their public counterparts. This means teachers are able to focus solely on fewer students and with the essential reading material. As a result, language textbooks are better utilized in these private institutions. School policies also influence how efficiently textbooks are utilized. Private schools have closer associations with parents. Parents may be able to contribute to curriculum in a variety of ways, by talking to children about their jobs as key resource teachers, telling a story in another language or bringing in special materials or equipment. Ayot (1990) suggested three things that occur when school and parents co-operate, parents and children's self-concept increases, children's motivation accelerates and children's achievements advances.

2.6 Theoretical Review

The study is based on the maturationist theory. The theory was advanced by the work of Arnold Gesseli. The maturationist theory holds that most of what children become is inherited at birth. Behaviours and abilities simply manifest as children mature. Maturationists believe that development is a biological process that occurs automatically in predictable sequential stages over time. (Hunt, 1969). This perspective leads many educators and families to assume that young children will acquire knowledge naturally and automatically as they grow physically and become older provided that they are healthy (Damarest, Reisner, Anderson, Humphrey, Farquhar & Stein, 1993). School readiness, according to maturationists, is a state at which all healthy young children arrive when they can perform tasks such as reciting the alphabet and counting. These tasks are required for learning more complex tasks such as reading and arithmetic.

Because development and school readiness occur naturally and automatically, maturationists believe that the best practices are for parents to teach young children to recite the alphabet and count while being patient and waiting for children to become ready for kindergarten. If a child is developmentally unready for school, maturationists might suggest referrals to transitional kindergartens, retention or holding out of school for an additional year. These practices are sometime used by schools educators and parents when a young child developmentally lags behind their peers. The young child's underperformance is interpreted as the child needing more time to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to perform at the level of their peers.

Applying the theory to the study, teacher should understand that some characteristics of children are genetically determined at birth. They must come to appreciate diverse interpersonal styles or temperaments that are part of the child's biological heritage. Teachers should also adopt classrooms to meet the unique inborn traits of individual children, rather than expect children to adapt to their classrooms. This theory makes teachers to understand that certain factors concerning language activities are genetically determined. The teacher is also able to cater for the class diversities like the age, economic and social background.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a brief explanation of the relationships between the variables identified for study in the statement of the problem, objectives and research questions. In this research, the conceptual framework will be the concise description of the phenomenon under study accompanied by visual depiction of the variables under study (Mugenda and mugenda 2008**)** In figure 1 below shows the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables, intervening variables and the moderate variable

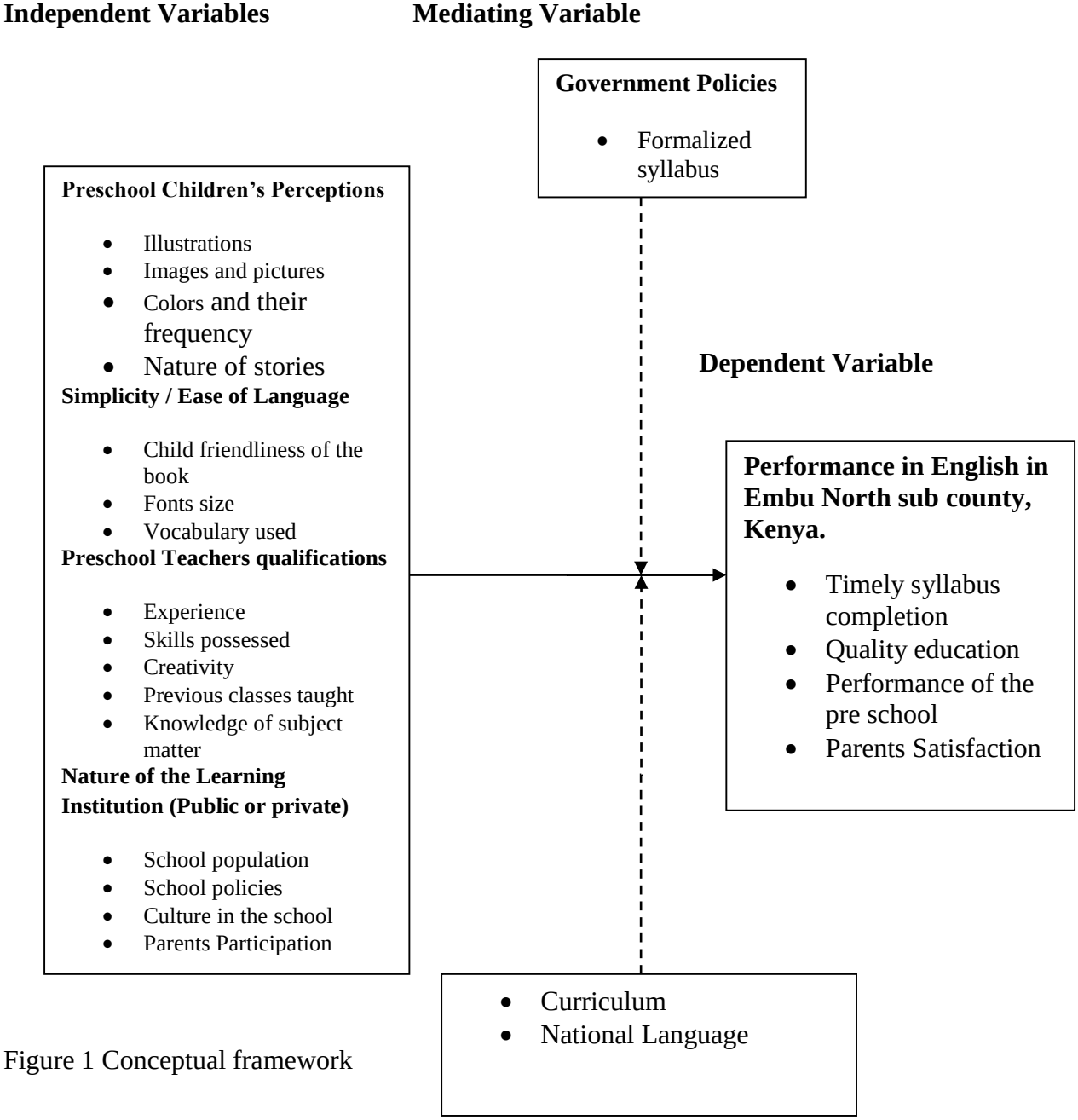


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

2.7.1 Relationship of the Variables

Variables are measurable characteristic that assumes different values among the subjects. It is a variable that a researcher manipulates in order to determine its effect or influence on another variable while Independent variables also called predictor variable in this case the independent variables are; Preschool children perception; simplicity and easy of language; pre schools teachers qualification and nature of learning institution all predict the amount of variation that occurs in the dependent variable which is Utilization of language text books. The intervening variables and moderate variable also contribute in

predicating the amount of variation that occurs in the dependent variable. In this case the intervening variable includes; Curriculum and the national language, while moderate variables government polices and formulized syllabus.

2.8 Research Gap

Researchers have shown that there are many different and usually very complex causes for the difference in the achievement level. For example, often those are factors beyond school influence, such as the income level and education, which correlates with the academic achievements of students, but there are quite many factors that influence students' learning achievements at school (Goodwin, 2000). Socio-economical conditions are significant for early achievements in reading; it is important whether parents read aloud for their children at home (more frequently than 3 times a week), are salubrious and have a positive approach (attitude) to learning. At early school age reading comes easier for girls (Denton, 2002). The more knowledgeable child starts schooling, the better learning achievements are anticipated during the primary school years.

Despite a significant amount of investigation already being undertaken to examine the use of preschool children language text books. Previous studies have addressed the influence of activities on the performance of language activities in preschools; however those studies have given little attention to utilization of pre schools language text books in Kenya giving a dearth gap in the existing literature, this study will address the above gap by addressing preschool children language text books This research therefore sought to look into the factors influencing utilization of language text books in pre-school children a case study of primary schools in Embu north sub- county Kenya**.**

2.9 Summary of the Literature

According to Smidt (1998) materials used during language activities should be of good quality and safe for children to use. A child may not use a mobile phone to repeat what is said by the sender as the phone will be complicated for the child to use. The materials used should be durable so as to cut down on learning costs. The materials used should also consider the age of the child to use them. For example, a 3-5 year old may not be able to listen to a 30 minutes long story because of their concentration span ECDE

Syllabus (2002). The materials used to teach children should also be subjected to the objectives of the lesson and the themes of the day.

In Kenya, there is no official preschool entry age. The free primary education policy requires that every child attend school. Andaroga(1997), recommends that preschools should be a prepared environment where children's learning needs are proportional including the learning of language activities. The materials used should be easily within reach in order to facilitate their learning. He noted that young children needed both rest and activities. ECD centres have learning corners which have language activity where children display their work after the teacher's assessment. In 1984, the Ministry of Education launched the National centres for Early Childhood at the Kenya Institute of Education, and it became an organ of early childhood education programmes which includes coordination of training of preschool teachers who teach` language.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is comprised of research design, the target population , the sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability data collection procedure and data analysis method.

3.2 Research Design

This study takes the form of descriptive study research design. This is a method that involves collecting information from members of a target population by administering a questionnaire. It describes more appropriately the nature of the phenomenon and examines actions as they are or as they happen rather than manipulation of variables (Orodho 2005). Descriptive survey research design enables the researcher to explain as well as explore the existing status of two or more variables of a phenomenon or population. According to Gray (1992) this helps in determining the current status of that population with respect to one or more valuables.

3.3 Target Population

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) population is as an entire group of individuals, events or objects having common characteristics; it is the sum total of all that conforms to a given specification. The target population of this study is the preschool teachers in Embu north sub- County. The Study targeted 23 pre schools, 120 preschool children and 80 pre schools teachers hence a total target population of 223 participants. The table 3.1 below shows the target population.

Table 3.1 Target population

Participants	**Target population**
Pre schools head teachers	23
Preschool children	120
Preschool Teachers	80
Total	**223**

3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals or units in a research study in a way that, estimates of the characteristics of the large group (population) from which they are chosen have no bias and have known confidence limits. Simple random sampling was used for 23 preschools, 120 preschool children and 80 pre schools teachers in Embu north Sub County. To ensure equal chances, names of all the preschools will be written down, folded, put in a box and shuffled. 20 percent of the total population was selected which be (20/100 *23), which gave 5, pre-schools. Therefore the respondents consisted of 5 pre-schools among twenty three pre-school within the Embu North sub county.

On the other hand to get the sample size for preschool children and teachers the researcher will use the rule of the thumb in social sciences according to Gay (1992) that is by taking 30% of the population as a sample size. Therefore the sample size for preschool children was (30/100*120) which was 36 respondents and the sample size for preschool teachers (30/100*80) was 24 respondents. The table 3.2 below shows the sample size of respondents.

Table 3.2 Sample size

Participants	**Sample size**
Pre schools Head teachers	5
Preschool children	36
Preschool Teachers	24
Total	**65**

3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Method

The study used both primary and secondary data source of data. The research instruments in this study include questionnaires, interview schedule and Language test activity for the children.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

According to Owens (2002), questionnaires have potential in reaching out to a large number of respondents within a short time; give the respondents adequate time to respond to the items and offer a sense of security (confidentiality) to the respondents. The

questionnaires have both open and closed ended questions to facilitate in analysis as they are in immediate usable form; while the unstructured questions will be used to encourage the respondent to give an in-depth response without feeling held back in revealing of any information. In this study the questionnaires will be administered to pre-school teachers to gather information on utilization of language text books among preschool children.

3.5.2 Language Activity Test Work Test

The number work test will be given to the preschoolers and the scores will compile, analysed and report compiled.

3.6. Validity of Instruments

According to Kothari, (2004) validity means the research instrument should measure what it is intended to measure. It is the degree to which the test items measure a particular quality for which the test was designed Validity is the accuracy, soundness or effectiveness with which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Kumar, 2005). Validity of the instruments was established by availing the research instruments to peers and a panel of experts from the Department of Education Communication and Technology who will establish its validity in order to ensure that the questionnaire and observation schedule include adequate and representative set of items which contain the dimension and elements of concepts under study. The panel ensured that the items adequately represent concepts that cover all relevant issues under investigation, which complies with recommendations by Mugenda and Mugenda (2008).

3.7 Reliability of Instruments

Reliability of a measuring instrument refers to the instrument's ability to yield consistent results each time it is applied (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999), when this systematic arrangement is employed, the odd-even procedure yields approximations to equivalent half-scores because each half score is based upon the same type of items which progress in approximately the same degree. From hence will (r) be calculated. Orodho (2005) recommends a reliability coefficient of at least 0.7 or above. If the test scores produce a reliability coefficient of below 0.7, then the reliability of instrument will be improved by amending or revising it. Items lacking in clarity will be removed while wrong items will be rephrased, before using the instruments for actual data collection.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Once the researcher was given a go ahead to collect data, he collected data by administering the instruments to the subjects, but first has to fulfil some legal and ethical conditions as follows: First the researcher sought for authorization (Research Permit) to collect data and permission for the study was sought from the District Development Officers being facilitated by a letter of introduction from the University. Then the researcher made a courtesy call at the REA offices to notify key officials of the intended study. The researcher proceeded to arrange to fulfil the other necessary pre-field work logistics such as carry out a pilot study. Finally, the researcher visited administration offices for introduction. The researcher then informed them the purpose of the intended study, their role and then sought their consent to participate in the study.

The researcher personally administered the instruments to the target population after assuring them that the information they gave was to be kept private, confidential and anonymous. This partly contributed to high response rates. In order to increase the return rate, the researcher waited to collect the filled questionnaires from the respondents who were in a position to do so immediately. For the rest, enough time was allowed to fill them. The researcher requested them to response to the questions within one week after which the instruments will be collected.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of editing, coding, classification and tabulation of the collected data with the purpose of summarising data and organising it in a manner that they answer the research questions as per the objectives of the study (Kothari, 2004). The researcher with the help of experts validated and edited the instruments before coding the data. Validation determines the return rate of questionnaires (acceptable at ≥70%. In editing, the instruments will be scrutinised to determine whether they are filled up, have errors or have irrelevant answers the response rate will also be determined (acceptable at ≥ 50%). Finally, coding was done whereby categories of responses were identified and classified on a prepared sheet as per objectives of the study.

The data was analysed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques since both qualitative and quantitative data was collected. Qualitative data was subjected to content analysis involving the analysis of themes while critically establishing patterns of

relationships among the responses. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (the mode, mean and percentages).

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The study took into account all possible and potential ethical issues. The measures undertake to ensure compliance with ethical issues included keeping the identity of respondents confidential. Wimmer and Dominick (2001) identify the principle of confidentiality and respect as the most important ethical issues requiring compliance on the part of the researcher. The basic ethical requirements demand that the researcher respects the rights, values and decisions of respondents. In this study, the values of the respondents will be given due respect.

3.11 Operational Definitional of Variables

Table4. 3 Operational definitional of variables

Objectives	Type of Variables	Indicator(s)	Measure(s)	Level of scale	Approach of analysis	Level of analysis
To determine how children perception towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya	Independent Preschool children perception	Illustrations	Frequency of the illustrations	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Images and pictures	Number of images and pictures used	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Colours	Types of colours used	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Inferential
		Nature of the stories	Types of stories used	Interval	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
To establish how simplicity and ease of language textbooks towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya.	Independent Simplicity and ease of text books	Child friendless of the book	Type of the cover page of the book used	Nominal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Font size	Type and size used in the book	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Vocabularies	Type and nature of the of the words used	Nominal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive

To determine how pre school teacher's qualification towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya.	Independent Pre schools teachers qualification	Experience	Level of experience	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Skills possessed	Level of skills	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Creativity	Nature of the teacher	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Previous classes taught	Number of years taught in a particular class	Interval	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Knowledge of subject matter	Knowledge of the contents	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
To examine how nature of learning institution towards Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya.	Independent Nature of leaning institutions	School population	Number of children	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		School policies	Type of policies	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Culture in the schools	Type of culture in the schools	Nominal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Parents participation	Level of engagement	Ratio	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
Language text books characteristics influences pre school children's	Dependents utilization of language text books in pre-school children	Children's performance	Level of performance	Nominal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Completion of syllabus	Time of completion of syllabus	Nominal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive

performance in English in Embu north sub county, Kenya.		Quality education	Quality level	Ordinal	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive
		Parent satisfaction	Level of satisfaction	Ratio	Qualitative and Quantitative	Descriptive

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

The chapter represents the research findings. It begins with information on rate of return, the major finding of the study relates to the research questions. It represents summary of the research findings, recommendations, conclusion and suggestions for further research. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the factors influencing utilization of language text books in pre-school children in primary schools in Embu north sub- county, Kenya

4.1 Response rate

The response rate was 88% (57). Out of 65 questionnaires and interview schedules issued out, 57 were brought back while 8 were not brought back. 88% represents a reliable response rate, since it is above the minimum acceptable threshold of 70% (Garland and Tweed, n.d.). The analysis of the response rate was as follows;

Table 4.4 Response rate

Respondent	Distributed	Returned	Percentage (%)
Pre school Head Teachers (Questionnaire)	5	4	7
Preschool Teachers (Questionnaire)	24	22	39
Preschool Children (language activity test)	36	31	54
Total	**65**	**57**	**100**

4.1.1 Gender of the Respondents

The issue of gender was important in the study as it would indicate whether there was gender balance in the responses given. On gender the analysis of the findings were as follows;

Table4. 5 Gender of the Teachers

Gender of Head Teachers	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Male	2	50
Female	2	50
Total	**4**	**100**
Gender of Teachers	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Male	8	36
Female	14	64
Total	**22**	**100%**
Gender of Children	**Frequency**	**Percentage%**
Male	16	52
Female	15	48
Total	**31**	**100%**

Based on the analysis the total number of male and female respondents in head teachers category was 50%, while teachers 36% were male and 64% were female. Gender of the pre school children was 52% were male while 48% female. This means that there was gender equality in all categories of the respondents.

4.1.2 Pre school-Head Teachers and pre Teachers' age.

The study wanted to find out the age of pre-school teachers and head teachers' .The analyses were as follows;

Table 4.6 Age of the Teachers

Age of respondent in years	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25	1	4
26-35	7	30
36-50	10	38
Above 50	8	31
Total	**26**	**100**

The findings show that 1 respondent (4 %) were below 25 years of age, 7 respondents (30) are between the ages of 26-35, 10 respondents (38%) were between the ages of 36-50 and 8 respondents (31%) were Above 50 years . Therefore the research findings show that the majority of the teachers were of the age between 36-50years (38%)

4.1.3 Distribution of the respondents by their level of education

The respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of education and Table 4.8 shows the results.

Table 4.7 Respondents level of education

Level of education	Frequency	Percentage
ECD Certificate	6	23
ECD Diploma	12	46
P1	5	20
Bachelor	3	12
Total	**26**	**100%**

Based on the table above the findings show that 6(23%) of the respondents had attained a ECD certificate, 12(4%) had a ECD diploma, 5 (20%) had a P1 while 3 (12%) had attained a Bachelor. From this analyses majority of the respondents had attained a ECD diploma this implies high level of literacy among teachers

4.1.4 Teacher's teaching experience

The teaching experience of a teacher enables the teacher to interact more freely with the children especially during activity time's .The table below shows the teachers experience in the pre-schools sampled.

Table 4. 8 Teachers teaching experience

Period	Frequency	Percentage
0-5 years	6	23
5-10 years	16	62
10+ years	4	15
Total	**26**	**100%**

Based on the above analysis 23% of teachers had been teaching for 0-5 years, 62% of the respondents had a teaching experience of 5-10 years, 15% of the respondents had a teaching experience of more 10 years. From this analysis majority the respondents had teaching experience of 5-10 years.

4.1.5 Total number of children per class.

The number of children in a class determines how best a teacher is able to influence the activities taking place. The table below shows the number of children in the pre-school sampled

Table 4.9 Total number of children per class

No: Classes	Frequency	Percentage
0-20	5	19
20-40	21	81
40-50	-	-
Total	**26**	**100%**

Based on the analysis 19% of the respondents indicated that the number of pre school children per class were 0-20 children while 81% of teachers indicated the number of the children per class were 20-40.

4.1.6 Vocabulary used in the textbooks easy enough for the children to understand

The respondents were asked to indicate if the vocabulary used in the textbooks easy enough for the children to understand.

Table 4.10 Vocabulary used in the textbooks

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	16	62
Strongly Disagree	10	38
Total	**26**	**100%**

From the analysis above 62% of the respondents indicated Vocabulary used in the textbooks was easy enough for the children to understand while 38% disagreed. This implies majority of the respondents agree that Vocabulary used in the textbooks easy enough for the children to understand while reading text books.

4.1.7 Does the content of the books draw the attention of the children?

The respondents were asked to indicate whether the content books draw the attention of the children. The analysis was as follows

Table 4.11 Does the content of the books draw the attentions of the children?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	20	77
Disagree	6	23
Total	**26**	**100%**

Based on the analysis majority of the respondents 77% agreed that the content books draw the attention of the children while 23% of disagreed

4.1.8 Do the children find it easy to read aloud to the books?

The respondents were asked to indicate whether the children find it easy to read aloud to the books. The analysis was as follows 69% of the respondents indicated children find it easy to read aloud to the books while 31% disagreed.

Table 4.12 Do the children find it easy to read aloud to the books?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	18	69
No	8	31
Total	**26**	**100%**

4.2 Can the children identify the pictures and colours in the books?

Teachers were asked to indicate whether children identify the pictures and colours in the books. Based on the analysis below 96% of the teachers indicated that children identify the pictures and colours in the books while 4% disagreed

Table 4.13 Can the children identify the pictures and colours in the books?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	25	96%
No	1	4%
Total	**26**	**100%**

4.2.1Number of years teaching in preschool:

The respondents were asked about the number of years they had been teaching in preschool. The table below shows the responses given by the teachers.

Table 4.14 Number of years teaching in preschool:

Number of Years	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 – 5	8	31
5 – 10	14	54
10 -15	4	15
Total	**26**	**100**

The findings from the respondents indicated that 31% of them had been teaching in preschool level for a duration ranging between one and five years. A further 54% indicated that they had been teaching for a duration ranging between five and ten years. Lastly, 15% of the respondents indicated that they had been teaching at the preschool level for between ten to fifteen years.

These findings indicate that there is a good mix of youthfulness and solid experience in the teaching staff.

4.2.2 Which language skills do you find most difficult to teach?

The respondents were asked to state which language skills they found most difficult to teach. The findings, as indicated in the table below indicated that the majority of the teachers, 42%, felt that reading was the most difficult skill to teach the children. A further 39% of the respondents indicated that writing was the most difficult skill to pass on to the children. The least number of teachers however, at 19% stated that oral skills were the most difficult to teach.

Table 4.15 Which language skills do you find most difficult to teach?

Language Skill	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Oral	5	19
Reading	11	42
Writing	10	39
Total	**26**	**100**

The findings reveal that children's book need to have details that appeal to a child's sensibilities while more illustration in the books were important as they expanded words to the children, and as such, they were more likely to acquire language skills.

4.2.3 How do you group children during activity time?

The researcher sought to find out how the teachers grouped the children during activity time. The findings were as shown below.

Table 16 How do you group children during activity time?

Grouping Children	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	22	85
Ability	3	12
Sex	1	3
Total	**26**	**100**

The vast majority of the teachers, 85%, indicated that they grouped their children on the basis of age. The rest, 12% and 3% respectively indicated that they grouped the children by their abilities and sex respectively. The respondents further stated that grouping the children according to age enabled wholesome learning since at the same age, children are most likely captivated by the same things whilst studying and they are able to engage each other in lively language. This helps the children to acquire language skills.

4.2.4 What additional learning materials do you use in class?

The researcher sought to find out what additional materials that teachers used in the classes to teach. The mentioned materials were posters with colour drawings, white boards, black boards and origami. Origami is an art of folding papers into shapes representing objects that children can relate to, such as flowers. The results were as shown in the table.

Table 4.17 What additional learning materials do you use in class?

Teaching Materials	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Posters	16	61
White Boards	7	27
Origami	3	12
Total	**26**	**100**

The findings indicated that that the large majority of the teachers, 67%, used posters as the additional teaching materials. The other respondents indicated that they used white boards and origami, accounting for 27% and 12% respectively. The respondents indicated that these additional materials captivated the children and they made it easier for the children to recall words and letters, hence improving performance in language lessons.

4.2.5 How often do you assess language activities?

The researcher sought to know how many times the teachers assessed language activities among the preschool learners. The teachers' responses were as shown in the table below;

Table 4.18 How often do you assess language activities?

Frequency of assessments	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily	1	4
Weekly	19	73
Monthly	6	23
Total	**26**	**100**

Most of the teachers, 73%, conducted weekly assessments on the children. Only 4% conducted daily assessments. The final 23% conducted monthly assessments. The respondents also indicated that the test involved the children being instructed by their teachers to write within 30 to 45 minutes, all the alphabets and numerals they had learned on a plain sheet of paper. Inaccurate letters were anticipated because the children are used to writing in their exercise books which had guiding strokes of the numerals and alphabets to remind them of the letters and numbers required for the exercises.

4.3 Nature of Learning Institutions

The study examined the source of the learning materials in the children's' classrooms. The findings were as shown below.

Table 4.19 Nature of Learning Institutions

Source of materials	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Parents	5	19
Donors	9	35
The School	12	46
Total	**26**	**100**

The findings revealed that the majority of the learning materials were provided by the school; as indicated by 46% of the respondents. A further 35% indicated that external donors provided the learning materials for the children while the remaining 19% of the respondents stated that parents provided the learning materials for their children.

4.3.1 What is the pupil to book ratio in your school?

The ratio of pupils to books in the schools positively or negatively affects the learning of preschool children. The table below illustrates the number of pupils in relation to the number of books.

Table 4.20 What is the pupil to book ratio in your school?

Pupil to Book ratio	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1:1	2	7
2:1	5	19
3:1	16	62
4:1 and Above	3	12
Total	**26**	**100**

Large enrolments adversely affect the utilization of language books in schools. When the pupil to book ratio is high the children do not have adequate time to read properly. The findings of the study indicate that the majority of the respondents, 62%, reported a pupil to book ratio of 3:1. This is appropriate enough to ensure the utilization of the books. A section of respondents, 19% showed a pupil to book ratio of 2:1 while 7% reported a 7% ratio. However, 12% of the respondents indicated a pupil to book ratio of 4:1 or higher, thus indicating overcrowded class rooms and scarcity of learning materials. This adversely affects utilization of the books.

4.3.2 How often do you interact with the preschool children's parents?

The respondents sought to find out the frequency of interaction with the parents of the preschool children. The findings indicated both formal and informal meetings, with formal parent – teacher meetings happening twice a term. Informal meetings were also highlighted,

with the teachers stating that they interacted with the parents when they were picking up the children and in other social gatherings outside of the school environment.

Table 4.21 How often do you interact with the preschool children's parents?

Frequency of Interaction	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily	5	19
Weekly	9	35
Monthly	11	42
Never	1	4
Total	**26**	**100**

The vast majority of the respondents, 42% stated that they only met the parents monthly; 35% indicated weekly meetings, 19% daily and 4% indicated that they had never met the parents.

4.3.4 Do you have school events, for instance spelling bees that supplement what you teach in class?

Events like spelling bees have an effect on the learning of children and also influence how they utilize the language books. The researcher sought to find out whether any of the schools had such events to supplement the teacher's efforts in class. The findings were as illustrated in the table.

Table 4. 22 Do you have school events, for instance spelling bees that supplement what you teach in class

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	20	77
No	6	23
Total	**26**	**100**

4.3.5 What would you like to be done to ensure that the textbooks used are well utilized to ensure quality language learning?

The researcher asked the respondents to state what they felt could be done to ensure proper utilization of the textbooks. The teachers offered a couple of useful suggestions including the use of more illustrations, vivid imagery and exciting stories.

Table 4. 23: What would you like to be done to ensure that the textbooks used are well utilized to ensure quality language learning?

Suggestion	Frequency	Percentage %
Illustrations	15	58
Vivid Imagery	4	15
Exciting stories	7	27
Total	**26**	**100**

The use of illustrations was suggested by 58% of the respondents; 15% suggested the use of imagery while 27% suggested the use of more exciting stories to appeal to the children. The respondents also added that a great children's book can tell just as much story through the artwork and offer the teacher an opportunity to expand the young minds through interesting poetic language and fun reading aloud sessions.

4.4 Language activity test to be administered to preschool children oral activities

Table 4.24 Language activity test to be administered to preschool children oral activities

Activity	**number of children**	**Marks 70 – 100**	**Percentage%**	**Marks 50 - 70**	**Percentage %**	**marks less than 50**	**%**
Repeat sounds	31	31	100	-	-	-	-
Repeat words	31	24	77	5	16	2	7
Do as instructed	31	31	100	-	-	-	-
Singing	31	31	100	-	-	-	-
Dictation	31	21	68	5	16	5	16
Reciting poems	**31**	**31**	**100**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**

The researcher administered a test to the children upon acquiring consent forms from the schools. The results of the oral activities indicated that the school children performs excellently in sound repetition, word repetition, singing and poem recitation with all children passing the test. However; only 77% of the children got an average 70 marks and above; with 16% scoring between 50 to 70 marks and 7% failing to achieve 50% when asked to repeat words. Finally when given a dictation quiz, 68% of the children scored between 70 and 100 marks, 16% achieved between 50 and 70 marks while the remaining 16% also got less than 50%. These findings imply that the learning content is well utilized for the children's oral activities.

4.5 Reading activities

Table 4.25 Reading activities

Activity	**number of children**	**Marks 70 – 100**	**percentage %**	**marks 50 – 70**	**percentage %**	**marks less than 50**	**%**
Shapes	31	27	88	4	12	-	-
Letters	31	18	57	10	31	4	12
Words	31	17	54	12	38	2	8
Identifying colours	**31**	**24**	**77**	**5**	**15**	**2**	**8**

The researcher administered a test to the children upon acquiring consent forms from the schools. A reading test was administered to the children, with the results as indicated in the table above. For reading shapes, 88% of the children acquired 70 and above marks while 12% achieved between 50 and 70 marks while none of the children got less than 50 marks. Results for reading letters, 57% of the children acquired 70 and above marks, 31% achieved between 50 and 70 marks while 12% of the children got less than 50 marks. The children were asked to read words aloud; 54% of the children acquired 70 and above marks, 38% achieved between 50 and 70 marks while 8% of the children got less than 50 marks. Lastly the children were asked to identify a variety of colors; 77% of the children acquired 70 and above marks, 15% achieved between 50 and 70 marks while 8% of the children got less than 50 marks. These findings imply that the learning content in the language textbooks was significantly utilized for the children's reading activities.

4.6 writing activities

Table 4.26 Writing Activities

Activity	**number of children**	**Marks 70 – 100**	**Percentage %**	**marks 50 - 70**	**percentage %**	**marks less than 50**	**%**
Drawing	31	20	65	7	23	4	12
Filling in blank spaces	31	25	81	6	19	-	-
Writing small letters	31	31	100	-	-	-	-
Colouring Objects	31	31	100	-	-	-	-
Copy Patterns	**31**	**31**	**100**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**

The researcher administered a test to the children upon acquiring consent forms from the schools. The last test to be given was a writing test administered to the children, with the results as indicated in the table above. For drawing objects, 65% of the children acquired 70 and above marks while 23% achieved between 50 and 70 marks while 12% less than 50 marks. Results for filling in blank spaces, 81% of the children acquired 70 and above marks, 19% achieved between 50 and 70 marks while none of the children got less than 50 marks. All of the children obtained between 70 to 100 marks when they were asked to write in small letters, color objects and copy patterns. These findings imply good writing skills hence significant utilization of the language textbooks for the children's writing

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the main findings of the study and gives conclusions, which attempt to answer to the specific questions that were under investigation. In addition, there are recommendations provided herein for possible actions and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary of the Study findings

The major purpose of this study was to identify and evaluate the main factors influencing utilization of language text books in pre-school children in primary schools of Embu north sub-county. The study will be guided by the following objectives; to determine how preschool children perception influences utilization of language text books; to establish how simplicity and ease of language textbooks influences utilization of language text books; to determine how preschool teacher's qualification influences utilization of language text books; to examine how nature of learning institution influences utilization of language text books.

The study used two types of research design; quantitative and qualitative research.

5.2 Discussions and Findings

This is focused on the major findings of the study as indicated in the variables discussed below.

5.2.1 Preschool Children's Perceptions and language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance

The respondents were asked to indicate whether the children find it easy to read aloud to the books. The analysis was as follows 69% of the respondents indicated children find it easy to read aloud to the books while 31% disagreed.

5.2.2 Simplicity and Ease of Language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance

Teachers were asked to indicate whether children identify the pictures and colours in the books. Based on the analysis below 96% of the teachers indicated that children identify the pictures and colours in the books while 4% disagreed. The respondents were asked to indicate whether the children find it easy to read aloud to the books. The analysis was as follows 69% of the respondents indicated children find it easy to read aloud to the books while 31% disagreed.

5.2.3 Preschool Teacher's Qualification language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance

The researcher sought to find out how the qualifications of the preschool teachers. The findings from the respondents indicated that 46% of the teachers in the study had achieved a diploma level of education, 23% had certificate, 20% had higher diplomas and 12% had bachelors degrees. In addition the majority of the teachers had been teaching in preschool level for a duration ranging between one and five years. A further 54% indicated that they had been teaching for a duration ranging between five and ten years. Enhancing the quality of young children's lives is now a national and international priority, expressed through research and policy initiatives, programme development and advocacy (Woodhead, 2007). These findings indicated that there was a skilled and experienced workforce to teach the children and ensure proper utilization of the language books hence quality in learning. Various activities were used by the teachers in the pre-school to enhance learning of the language activities to develop the three language skills.

The teacher applied their skills to ensure proper learning since they had pointed out the most difficult lessons they taught. The respondents were asked to state which language skills they found most difficult to teach. The findings, as indicated that the majority of the teachers, 42%, felt that reading was the most difficult skill to teach the children. A further 39% of the respondents indicated that writing was the most difficult skill to pass on to the children. The least number of teachers however, at 19% stated that oral skills were the most difficult to teach. The teachers reported that that the children's books needed to have details that appeal to a child's sensibilities while more illustration in the books were important as they expanded words to the children, and as such, they were more likely to acquire language skills.

5.2.4 Nature of Learning Institutions language text books characteristics on pre school children's performance

The nature of the schools and their way of doing things influences the utilization of the language books. The researcher sought to find whether the school teachers interacted with parents in the course of learning. Parents play a major role in the educational growth of the children. The findings indicated that 42% of the teachers interacted with parents on a monthly basis, 35% on a weekly basis and 19% on a daily basis. By doing this, the teachers are able to make progress reports and inform the parents of ways to supplement the lessons learnt on class thereby ensuring efficient utilization of the books.

Learning events such as spelling bees are included in the school programmes and have an effect on the learning of children and also influence how they utilize the language books. The researcher sought to find out whether any of the schools had such events to supplement the teacher's efforts in class. The vast majority of the respondents, 77%, reported that they had such events at their schools. Schools also have their way of providing assessments and as per the findings, 73%, conducted weekly assessments on the children. Only 4% conducted daily assessments. The final 23% conducted monthly assessments. In learning times and playtimes the schools have their own ways of grouping children, from the study, the vast majority of the teachers, 85%, indicated that they grouped their children on the basis of age. The respondents further stated that grouping the children according to age enabled wholesome learning since at the same age, children are most likely captivated by the same things whilst studying and they are able to engage each other in lively language. This helps the children to acquire language skills.

The enrolment number in preschools also affects the pupil to book ratio. When the pupil to book ratio is high the children do not have adequate time to read properly.

5.3 Conclusion:

From the results of the study, it was concluded that a variety of factors influence how pre schoolers utilize language text books. How children perceive the language books is a determinant of how well they utilize the books. Children's books need to have characteristics that appeal to a child's sensibilities. Vivid imagery, exciting stories, captivating stories, and language and illustrations t expand words of the story. Simplicity and ease of the language also influences how children utilize the language books. Simple words enable a faster grasp of reading activities. Emphasis should be placed on the

reading activities since these improve performance of the writing skills. Repeating words and sounds, singing songs and recoting poems are oral activities that should be emphasized on since this also means better performance in the reading and writing activities.

The professional level of the teacher indicates the performance of the activities done. In addition, the study concluded that parents have a major role in implementation of preschool learning. The parents a role includes laying the child's foundation beginning with provision of the learning materials. Financial and material support by donors and parents supports learning and the utilization of books since this improves the book to pupil ratio.

5.4 Recommendations

i. Preschool teachers should sensitize parents on the importance of activities such as reciting poems, singing songs and repeating words since these improve the children's language learning.
ii. Pre-school teachers encourage the preschoolers to work in small groups since these children will engage in lively language.
iii. There should be should have positive altitude on language activities.
iv. More materials should be provided for language activities to pre-scholars.
v. Schools should request for more supplementary learning aids from parents and donors to improve language learning.
vi. More time should be used for reading activities in the schools.
vii. Teachers should use available teaching and learning material at their disposal to deliver the curriculum.
viii. Workshops and seminars can be organized for teachers to keep them abreast with trends in teaching, assessment and class management.
ix. Well-resourced playgrounds and classroom environments should be made in a way as to make learning fun for the children.

5.5 Suggestion for further study

Although research has documented on how teachers can effectively utilize the learning resources to complete curriculum. More research is needed on the specific ways that teachers can effectively utilize the learning materials. Future research should also examine the long-term ways of ensuring that books are well utilized and benefits of language studies achieved.

REFERENCES

Amisi, O (1997), Sheng‟ Vernacular Affects Performance in English, Daily Nation.

Anderson R.H. Shane H.G(2002). Implication of Early Childhood Education for the Long- Learning, Chicago National Society for the Study of Education , Year Book 2.

Anderson R.H. Shane H.G(2002). Implication of Early Childhood Education for the Long- Learning, Chicago National Society for the Study of Education , Year Book.

Ayot, R (2000)"How Children Fail in Schools", Educational Research and Publications.

Balster-Liontos, L. (1992). At-risk families & schools: Becoming partners. ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, USA.

Beck, I. and Juel, C. (1999). The role of decoding in learning to read. In Reading research anthology: 78-88.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *The handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education.* New York, USA: Greenwood Press, pp. 241–259.

Whitbread, D (2000). Teaching and Learning in Early Years. 2nd Edition. Routledge

Olorsk1,D et. al (1984), Educational Administration Today, Charles E. Merrill Company.

Essa, E. (2000) Introduction to Early Childhood Education 4th Edition, Reno, University of Nevada.

Farrant J.S, Principles and Practices of Education, Longman.

Gass S.M (2001), Second Language Acquisition, USA, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Gigioli P.P. (1972), Language and Social Content, London, Penguin Books.

Gass S.M (2001), Second Language Acquisition, USA, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kerlinger F.W (1978), Foundations of Behavioral Research, New Delhi, Surfeit Publications.

Kothari, R (2004), *Research Methodology-Methods and Techniques. 2nd Edition.* New Age International Publishers, New York, USA.

Maliyamkono T.L, Tema O. and Ogbu(1999) Cost sharing in Education and Health., Publisher Company Limited.

Ministry of Education (1987), Evaluation of NACECE-DICECE Program Research Findings and Recommendations, Nairobi Kenya. Ministry of Education (2001), Teaching and Learning in the Classroom.

Ministry of Education, (2008), Handbook for Early Childhood Development Education Syllabus, K.I.E.

Mugenda, A. G. (2008). *Social Science Research Theory and Principles*. Nairobi: Applied Research &Training Services.

Ngaroga J.M(1996), professional Studies for the Primary Teacher Education ,East African Educational Publishers Ltd.

Nolan Y. (2002) Early Years, U.K, Heinemann.

Republic of Kenya (1976), National Committee on Education Objectives and Policies (Gachathi Report), Nairobi, Government Printer,

Republic of Kenya (1999) Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training (TIQET Koech Report) Government Printer.

Stern H.H (1983) Foundation Concepts of Language Teaching, New York, Oxford University Press.

Whitbread ,D (2003), Teaching and Learning in Early Years 2nd Edition., New York..

Olembo J.O et, al (1992) Management in Education.

Ministry of Education (1987), Evaluation of NACECE-DICECE Program Research Findings and Recommendations, Nairobi Kenya.

UNESCO.(2011). Early Childhood Education. Retrieved September 29, 2011, from http//www.wikipedia.com/Early_childhood_education.html

World Bank.(2001). *Brazil Early Child Development. World* (p. 65).

World Education Forum. (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action* (pp. 26-28).

Woodhead, M. (2007). Changing perspectives on early childhood : theory , research and policy. *Childhood A Global Journal Of Child Research*, 43.

Walpole, S. & Blamey, K.L. (2008). Elementary literacy coaches: the reality of dual roles. *The Reading Teacher, 62*, 222-231.

Sloat, E.A., Beswick, J.F. &Willms, J.D. (2007). Using early literacy monitoring to prevent reading failure. *Phi Delta Kappan, 88*, 523-530.

Taylor, J., B., Branscombe, A., N., Burcham, G., J., & Land, L. (2011).*Beyond early literacy.* New York and London: Routledge.

United Nations (UN) (1987) *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. New York: United

Wai-Yum, W. (2003). The dilemma of early childhood teachers required to carryout a curriculum implementation process: case studies. *Early Child Development and Care, 173(1),* 43–53.

Wortham, S. C. (2006). *Early childhood curriculum.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

University of Nairobi,
P.O Box 30197,
Nairobi Kenya

Dear respondent,

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH STUDY.

I am a graduate student undertaking a degree in Master of Arts Degree in Master of Education in Early Childhood Education in the Department of Educational Communication and Technology, University of Nairobi. I am conducting a research study on factors influencing utilization of language text books in pre-school children a case study of primary schools in Embu north sub- county Kenya

You have been selected to assist in providing the required information because your views are considered important to this study. I am therefore kindly requesting you to fill this questionnaire. The purpose of this letter is to request for permission for preschool teaching staff to fill the attached questionnaire and to conduct number work test for preschoolers. The information obtained is strictly for academic purpose and shall be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank You

Yours Faithfully;
Signature----------
Rebecca Waithira Ngumba
Reg No:E57/ 63806/2013

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRESCHOOL TEACHER

The aim of this questionnaire is to study the factors influencing the utilization of textbooks in preschool children in Embu North Sub County. This questionnaire is required to be filled with exact relevant facts as much as possible. All data included in this questionnaire will be used only for academic research. After all questionnaires are collected and analyzed, interested participants of this study will be given feedback on the overall research results

Part (A): general information:

Name of the school----------

Type of the schools----------

1. Please indicate your gender(a) Male [ ] (b) Female [ ]
2. Please indicate your age. (a) Below 25 [ ] (b) 26 – 35 [ ] (c) 36 – 50 [ ] (e) above 50 [ ]
3. What is your marital status? (a) Married [ ] (b) Single [ ]
4. What is your highest level of education?
   a) Certificate holder [ ] b) Diploma Holder [ ] any other----------
5. Number of years teaching in preschool: 1 – 5[ ] 5 - 10 [ ] 10 – 15 [ ]

Part (B): Preschool children's perceptions:

6. How many children do you teach? Tick one
   0-10[ ] 11-20 [ ] 21-30 [ ] 31-40 [ ] Above 40 [ ]
7. What is the age bracket of children you teach at your school:
   3-4 years [ ] 4-5 years [ ] 5-6 years [ ] above 6 years [ ]
8. How enthusiastic are your children about learning? ----------
   ----
9. What Visual aids do you use to supplement the textbooks? ----------
   ----
10. In your opinion how well presented are the textbooks you use in terms of colours and illustrations? ----------
11. Do the children relate well with these books? ----------

Part (C): Simplicity and ease of language

12. Is the vocabulary used in the textbooks easy enough for the children to understand? ----------
    ----
13. Does the content of the books draw the attention of the children? ----------
    ----
    ----
14. Do the children find it easy to read aloud to the books? ----------
    ----
    ----
15. Can the children identify the pictures and colours in the books? ----------
    ----

Part (D): Pre School Teachers Qualification

16. Number of years teaching in preschool:
    1 – 5 [ ] 5 - 10 [ ] 10 – 15 [ ]
17. Which language skills do you find most difficult to teach?
    Oral [ ] Reading [ ] Writing [ ]
18. How do you group children during activity time?
    Age [ ] Ability [ ] Sex [ ]
19. What additional learning materials do you use in class? ----------
    ----

    ----
20. How often do you assess language activities?
    Daily [ ] Weekly [ ] Monthly [ ]

Part (E): Nature of Learning Institutions

21. Who provided learning materials used in class?
    Parents [ ] Donors [ ] the school [ ]
22. What is the current population of preschool children at the school? ----------
    ----

---

23. What is the pupil to book ratio in your school? ----------

For the answer provided above, do you think that ratio is good enough to ensure proper learning? ----------

---

24. How often do you interact with the preschool children's parents? ----------

---

---

25. Do you have school events, for instance spelling bees that supplement what you teach in class? Yes [ ] No [ ]
26. What would you like to be done to ensure that the textbooks used are well utilized to ensure quality language learning? ----------

---

APPENDIX III: LANGUAGE ACTIVITY TEST TO BE ADMINISTERED TO PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

School Number ……. Date ……

Oral Activities

1. Repeat the given sounds.
   A, E, I, O, U

2. Repeat the words given
   Cat.
   Jug
   Man
3. Do as instructed
   Jump

   Sit
4. Sing a Song

5. Dictation
   Eye

   Ship

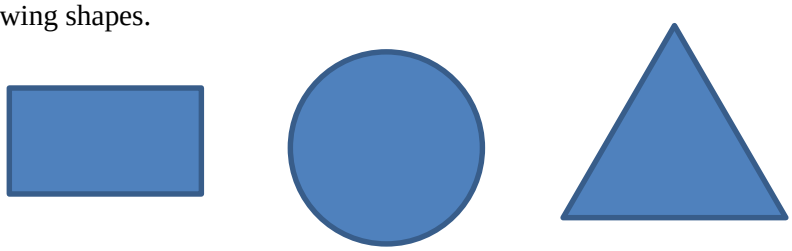
   Book

   Home
6. Recite the poem

   Baby Jesus, Baby Jesus
   I love you
   You are my saviour

READING ACTIVITIES

1. Read the following shapes.



2. Read the letters.

K

H

G

T

3. Read the words

Cup.

Cat.

Book.

Pencil.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

1. Draw

BALL	CAR	TREE	HOUSE	BOOK

2. Fill the missing letters.

   T_ble

   K_tt_n

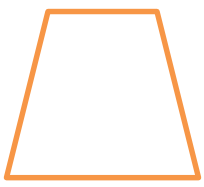
   C_w

   B_at

3. Write the small letters.

   G Y C R E

4. Colour the shape.



5. Copy the pattern.

AAAAAAAAAA.BBBBBBBBBBB CCCCCCCCCCC DDDDDDDDDD