

**INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' CHARACTERISTICS ON PRE-SCHOOL
CHILDREN IN LEARNING READING ACTIVITY IN LANGATA SUB-
COUNTY, NAIROBI COUNTY**

BY

KAMAU NORAH NYANDIKO

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE CONFERMENT OF A DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION,
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, COMMUNICATION AND
TECHNOLOGY**

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

2016

DECLARATION

I, Kamau Norah Nyandiko, do hereby declare that this is my original work and has never been submitted to any institution of higher learning.

Kamau Norah Nyandiko

The research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor.

Dr John Kamau Mwangi

Lecturer, Department of Educational Communication and Technology

University of Nairobi.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my entire family for the tireless assistance they gave me physically, morally, and spiritually to enable me complete the project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank the Almighty God for His inspiration without which this project could not have been written. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the University of Nairobi's College of Education and External Studies, School of Education, particularly, the Department of Educational Communication and Technology, for making it possible for me to undertake this study. I specifically owe special gratitude to my supervisor Dr. John Kamau Mwangi for accepting to supervise this project, and more importantly, for guiding me through the whole process of this project. I would like to thank all my lecturers at the University of Nairobi for their helpful lectures that helped me to realize my potential. I thank my colleagues and course mates without whom I could have not been this far. I also thank all the head teachers, and teachers who allowed me to carry out my research in their schools. I am also grateful to the pre-school children for being attentive and obedient as I observed the way they were being taught. Finally, I feel heavily indebted to my family who supported me in various ways throughout the study. Since it not possible to mention by name each and every one who supported me, I pray that the Almighty God reward all abundantly.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	xi
ABSTRACT.....	xii

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	3
1.3 Purpose of the study	4
1.4 Research objectives.....	4
1.4.1 General objective.....	4
1.4.2 Specific objectives.....	5
1.5 Research questions.....	5
1.6 Significance of the study.....	5
1.7 Limitation of the study.....	6
1.8 Delimitation of the study	6
1.9 Assumptions of the study.....	7
1.10 Definition of key terms	7
1.11 Organization of the study.....	8

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 Reading process	9
2.3 Characteristics of an effective early childhood teacher	11
2.4 Teachers' experience and performance of pre-school children in reading activity.....	12
2.5 Teachers' qualification and performance of pre-school children in learning reading activity.....	14
2.6 Teacher's salary and performance of pre-school children in learning reading activity.....	16
2.7 Teachers' content knowledge and performance of pre-school children in learning reading activity	18
2.8 Theoretical framework.....	20
2.9 Conceptual framework.....	22

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction.....	23
3.2 Research design	23
3.3 Target population	24
3.4 Sample and sampling procedure	24
3.5 Research instruments	24
3.6 Validity and reliability of the instruments	25

3.7 Procedure for data collection	26
3.8 Data analysis	26
3.9 Ethical issues.....	27

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction.....	28
4.2 Questionnaire return.....	28
4.3 Demographic information of respondents	29
4.3.1 Teachers’ gender.....	29
4.3.2 Teachers’ experience	30
4.3.3 Teachers’ qualification	31
4.3.4 Teachers’ salary.....	33
4.3.5 Teachers’ content knowledge	34

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction.....	36
5.2 Summary.....	36
5.3 Conclusion	37
5.4 Recommendations.....	38
5.5 Recommendation for further research	39
REFERENCES.....	40

APPENDICES

Appendix I: A questionnaire for pre-school teachers	43
Appendix II: Interview for Head teachers	46
Appendix III: Observational for children	48
Appendix IV: Introduction Letter	49
Appendix V: Research Authorization Letter	50
Appendix VI: Research Permit	51

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Questionnaire return	28
Table 4.2: Head teachers' gender	29
Table 4.3: Teachers' gender.....	30
Table 4.4: Teachers' experience	31
Table 4.5: Teachers' level of education.....	32
Table 4.6: Teachers' salary.....	33
Table 4.7: Reading challenges	34
Table 4.8: Time for reflection.....	35

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework	22
--	----

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- ECD** - Early Childhood Development
- KICD** - Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
- MKO** - More Knowledge Other
- SPSS** - Statistical Package for Social Sciences
- TSC** - Teachers Service Commission
- ZPD** - Zone of Proximal Development

ABSTRACT

This study endeavoured to find out the influence of teachers' characteristics on pre-school children in learning the reading activity in Langata District, Nairobi County. Four objectives guided the study and these were; to establish the influence teachers' experience has on performance of pre-school children in reading activity, to determine the influence of teachers' qualification on performance of pre-school children in reading activity, to establish the influence of teachers' salary level on performance of pre-school children in reading activity, and to determine teachers' content knowledge on performance of pre-school children in reading activity in Langata District of Nairobi County. The study adopted a descriptive survey design that employed quantitative and qualitative approaches. The study was anchored on Vygotsky's Social Constructivist theory of cognitive development. This theory focuses on social interactions that play a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from head teachers and teachers, while observation was used to collect data from pre-school children respectively. The findings of the study revealed that teachers who have been in the profession for a long time easily influenced pre-school children more than those who are fresh from colleges. They were found to encourage the children in the reading activities. However, it was found that the teachers who are certificate holders have poor concept of content knowledge, and do not spare time for reflection which incidentally lowers the performance of children in reading. The study concluded that there is a need to have regular in service training for the pre-school teachers in order to equip them with new teaching methodology and content. The government should also provide teaching and learning materials instead of teachers and parents providing the same. Also teachers' salary should be enhanced.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

An early childhood teacher needs to have learned effective skills for working with young children and for communication with them at their level. They should be able to communicate with the child's parent about his needs, skills, problems and achievements so that both parties (teacher and parents) can help the child overcome his/her emotions Bandura (1971). The teacher should also communicate with other teachers who come to his/her class on daily basis in order to achieve a more rewarding and positive outcome. In our global society teachers must be prepared for multi-cultural classrooms with many ethnic, culture, and traditions. This is because every child comes to school with a unique personality and learning style. In order to reach and teach this child effectively, teachers must respect these differences and work with each child's style. This will help the teacher to create a warm and friendly atmosphere for learning.

The teachers must also be able to work co-operatively and communicate effectively with other teachers, support staff, parents and members of the community. Howes (1997) argues that teacher's level of education such as professional status and experience have been reported to be one of the factors that have great impact on children's performances.

A pre-school teacher is one who instructs children from 3 to 5 years of age which stands as the youngest stretch of early childhood education. These pre-school teachers nurture, teach and care for these young children. They provide early childhood care and education through a variety of teaching strategies. The teachers plan and implement a curriculum that covers various areas of a child's development, such as motor skills, social and emotional development, and language development. Their role in the development of children is very vital since they introduce children to reading and writing, expand vocabulary, creative arts, science and social studies. Pre-school children learn mainly through investigation, play and formal teaching and this is why the pre-school teachers capitalize on children's play to further language and vocabulary and development using storytelling, rhyming games and acting games to improve social skills by having children work together.

In addition to being knowledgeable about the subject they teach, pre-school teachers must be experienced in the profession, have knowledge content of the profession, and be qualified and motivated to help children succeed in their studies. Pre-school teachers must also recognize and respond to individual and cultural differences in the children and employ different teaching methods that will result in higher children achievement. They should be organized, dependable, patient and creative. They should employ multicultural methods of teaching.

Teachers working with young children should have patience. The nature of their age makes young to have short attention spans and little self-control. Every child learns differently thus making the teacher's work more challenging. Patience combined with a sense of humour helps the teacher to control and manage the children's behaviour while focusing on the end goal.

Lesson plans should suit the activity and objectives for individual learning styles. The teacher should be knowledgeable and ready to adjust the approaches of teaching in order to cater for individual differences.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Teacher characteristics is a crucial aspect of teaching and learning activity. Pintrich, Marx, and Boyle, (1993), argue that learning and teacher characteristics are so interdependent that it is almost impossible to understand learning without understanding teacher characteristics. Evidence for this relationship is the strong positive correlation between teacher characteristics and achievement. Children who are highly motivated to learn are more likely to achieve high grades as compared to those who are less motivated by teacher characteristics (Weinstein, 1998).

Teacher characteristics can be defined as the psychological process that directs and sustains children's behavior towards learning. There is intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. In intrinsic motivation, children are involved in a learning activity because they find it interesting to solve a problem or a challenge on their own,

while in extrinsic motivation children engage themselves in a learning activity in order to receive an award.

Studies by Bandura (1974) have shown that certain teacher characteristics motivate children to learn. They include teacher professionalism, experience, qualification, content knowledge, and salary. A teacher who is the custodian of knowledge, instructor and care giver to these children should keep in mind that the type of motivation a child brings to the classroom is highly dependent on the condition of learning that he/she creates in the classroom (Muller, 1999). Therefore, a teacher needs to have a mastery of classroom strategies that will support students' motivation to learn. This is why the researcher seeks to find out whether teacher characteristics influence the children's performance in learning reading in Langata Sub-County, Nairobi County.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to find out the relationship between influence of teachers' characteristics and performance of pre-school children in reading activity in Langata Sub-County in Nairobi County.

1.4 Research objectives

1.4.1 General objective

To find out the influence of teacher characteristics and pre-school children's performance in reading activity in Langata District, Nairobi County.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

- i. Establish the influence teachers' experience has on performance of pre-school children in reading activity.
- ii. Determine the influence of teachers' qualification on performance of pre-school children in reading activity.
- iii. Establish the influence of teachers' salary level on performance of pre-school children in reading activity.
- iv. Determine teachers' content knowledge on performance of pre-school children in reading activity.

1.5 Research questions

- i. What is the influence of teachers' experience on performance of pre-school children in reading activity?
- ii. How does the teachers' qualification influence the performance of pre-school children in reading activity?
- iii. What is the impact of teachers' salary level on performance of pre-school children in reading activity?
- iv. What is the influence of teacher's content knowledge on performance of pre-school children in reading activity?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study is useful to the many Early Childhood Development (ECD) stakeholders and the language teachers whose aim is to achieve quality education in line with vision 2030. The policy makers and other stakeholders will also

benefit from the findings of this study because the findings guide them in formulating new policies on learning and teaching reading in ECD centers. The study is also useful to Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) because it has shed some light on the type of experiences teachers have in schools and the curriculum needed to improve performance of learners. The policy makers such as Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) will find this valuable in their objectives to provide quality education at ECD level.

1.7 Limitation of the study

The study was limited by financial constraints in terms of transport. In addition, the researcher assumed that the respondents could be sincere in filling the questionnaire as this was to affect the outcome of the study. The researcher experienced time limitations because she sometimes used lunch breaks in order to avoid absenteeism from work place.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

The study was carried out in Langata Sub-County, Nairobi County only. The study was limited to five public pre-schools and six private pre-schools. The respondents for the study included head teachers, pre-school teachers, and pre-school children.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The study assumed that all the pre-school teachers managing the schools have some form of teacher training, that is, they have acquired at least an early childhood certificate from a college. It also assumed that the participants were to answer the questions honestly.

1.10 Definition of key terms

Academic level: The highest level of Education the teacher has attained e.g. Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.

Qualification: A set of perceptions, beliefs or feelings of the teacher as far as motivating the children is concerned.

Characteristics: Distinguishing features of the teacher.

Impact: The effect or visible help that a pre-school child gets from learning.

Influence: The extent to which teachers characteristics have effect on learning.

Professional level: The training the teacher has received as far as early childhood education is concerned. e.g. college certificate/diploma or degree.

Teacher: Learner's instructor.

Teaching Experience: The number of years a pre-school teacher has taught in a pre-school.

1.11 Organization of the study

The research study is organized into 5 chapters. The first chapter covers the background to the problem followed by statement of the problem. In the same chapter the purpose of the study is outlined followed by highlighting of the research objectives and research questions. The limitation and delimitation of the study follows. The significance of the study is also outlined and the chapter concludes with the basic assumption. Chapter two comprises of literature review of the study, theoretical, and conceptual framework. Chapter three deals with research methods which includes research design, the target population covered in the study and the method of sampling procedures. The instruments used in data collection as well as their validity and reliability are also covered. Chapter four includes data analysis, presentation of findings and discussion. Chapter five has the summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This section deals with characteristics of an effective Early childhood teacher, teachers' experience and influence of pre-school children in learning reading activity, teachers' qualification and influence of pre-school children in learning reading activity, teachers' salary level and influence of pre-school children in learning reading activity, and teachers' content knowledge and influence of pre-school children in learning reading activity.

2.2 Reading process

Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning. Reading is a means of language acquisition, communication, and of sharing information and ideas. Like all languages, it is a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, qualification, and language community which is culturally and socially situated. The reading process requires continuous practice, development, and refinement. In addition, reading requires creativity and critical analysis. Consumers of literature make ventures with each piece, innately deviating from literal words to create images that make sense to them in the unfamiliar places the texts describe. Because reading is such a complex process, it cannot be controlled or restricted to one or two interpretations. There are no concrete laws in reading, but rather allows readers an escape to produce their own

products introspectively. This promotes deep exploration of texts during interpretation.

Gough and Juel (1991) have described a 2-stage account of reading, an early visual association stage and a second stage of decoding-based learning. In the first stage, the child, absent of any knowledge of decoding, uses any conceivable source information in order to discriminate one word from another. In doing this, the child builds up a visually accessible lexicon. They refer to this first stage as 'selective association', because the basic learning mechanism establishes idiosyncratic association between some part of a printed word and the name of the word. Under the right circumstances, including an increase in phonological awareness and an intention to encode all rather just some of the letters of the word, the child can move into the cipher stage of true reading. As the child reaches the limits of learning associations, there is pressure to adopt a new procedure, one based on the alphabetic principle.

According to Ehri and Wilce (1985), an alternative model of what pushes the child through the acquisition process is that there is no purely visual stage. Children use the names of the sounds of the letters as cues to word identification from their very first opportunity. It is the names of the letters of the alphabet that provide the opportunity. Although letter names do not generally represent the phonemes of words in which they appear, they have enough phonetic overlap to be useful. For example, a child might use the names of the letters J and L to remember the sound of the word 'jail'.

2.3 Characteristics of an effective early childhood teacher

The question on what it takes to be an effective early childhood teacher has gnawed at reflective teacher educators, idealistic teachers and worried families who place their young children under the care of another adult. Effectiveness as a teacher stems from a combination of knowledge, skills and personal characteristics (Katz, 1993). While aspiring teachers can increase their knowledge and develop their skills, their personal characteristics, which involve the social-emotional and spiritual realms in addition to the cognitive, are likely to be more fixed. Cantor (1990) notes that one can have both knowledge and skill, but without a disposition to make use of them, very little will happen. Since personal characteristics are rooted feelings and beliefs, we can neither observe them directly nor assess them through traditional methods, which makes them difficult to identify. The teacher should also conduct thorough instructional, plan and organize learning. She/he should be child-oriented.

According to Taylor and Wash (2003), The teacher knows which battles are winnable and when to apply their resources in support of the child. In line is the characteristic of patience. The teachers should have patience both when dealing with the system and when working with children and their families. Not every child learns quickly, others have behaviors that can even challenge the most effective teacher.

According to Taylor and Wash (2003), early childhood education demands that you be able to deal well with change and the unexpected. An example is when a teacher has to cancel an outdoor play because of unexpected rain. Respect as a teacher's characteristic is very important and especially when the teacher respects children and their families.

Creativity, according to Taylor and Wash (2003), is another characteristic that a teacher should possess. It takes creativity to teach in a physical environment that is less ideal or when resources are limited. It takes creativity to teach children from diverse backgrounds that might not approach education in the same way. It takes creativity to teach children with differing learning styles and most of all it takes creativity to make learning fun. Creativity is a hallmark of an effective early childhood teacher. This comes as a result of a teacher being knowledgeable in the learning styles.

2.4 Teachers' experience and performance of pre-school children in reading activity

It is expected that an experienced teacher should be able to provide psychological needs of the child which include the need for love, friendship and intimacy in an attempt to motivate the learner in reading activity. The teacher of pre-school should be able to develop good teacher-child relationship, children need to feel that their teacher loves them as individuals and are genuinely concerned about them. Teachers should ensure that the environment is secure for children and there is no bullying. Discipline should be child-friendly so the teacher should

avoid caning, abusing and sending them home for minor offences. Children will learn better in a school where they feel safe and secure. Past experience can help an individual to learn new concepts, which are somehow similar to the earlier ones (Bandura 1971 & Gumo 1977).

Research suggests that experience can be a factor acting as a teacher and sharpener for better understanding of a subject to be learnt (Weinstein, 1998). The experience might be significant or insignificant to an individual depending on what one has acquired earlier and how one applies to new learning (Gumo, 2003). Teaching experience can be perceived as reliable prediction of a person's ability to handle a certain task.

Bell (1978), continues to say that teaching experience can be useful in teaching by ensuring that the teacher selects appropriate models of instructions. It is believed that an experienced teacher is knowledgeable and has gained a variety of skills of teaching by teaching for a long period of time. However according to Hanushek (1971), Hanushek (1997), and Hanushek (2001), this is only applicable in the first five years of teaching. Teachers seem to incrementally contribute to student learning. This experience of the first five years in the classroom is positively associated with children achievement in reading at the elementary and middle school level.

According to Goe (2007), teachers' experience may entail classroom practices that the teacher employs. They include ways in which teachers interact with children and the teaching strategies they use to accomplish specific teaching tasks.

The practice may involve aligning instruction with assessment, communicating, performance, providing intellectual challenges, allowing the children to explain what they are learning. Using formative assessment to understand to what degree to which experience and subscribing to cohesive sets of best teaching practices. Teachers' practices refer to a process view of teacher quality, which could be described as instructional quality.

2.5 Teachers' qualification and performance of pre-school children in learning reading activity

Teachers' qualification is believed to an important factor in determining the teaching and learning of reading. If teacher's qualification is high towards reading activity, this will in turn affect the pupils learning and hence their performance. Irumbi (1990), and Cockcroft (1982), noted that during his/her professional life, a teacher may influence for good or ill the qualifications of several thousands of young people, and decisively affect many of their career choices. This indicates that teacher's qualifications towards reading have great impact in reading as an area of knowledge.

Oketch (1986), found that teacher's qualification towards reading is significantly related to the children's qualification and achievement. Mwangi (1986), had similar findings when he found that teacher's negative qualification was being reflected in the children's poor performance. Alvidrez (1999), documented the relationship between teacher's qualification towards reading and pupils achievement, found out that pupils taught by teachers with negative qualification

are low achievers. Thus teachers' qualifications have a significant role in children achievement in the subject. Addie (1999), in her study revealing what urban early childhood teachers think about reading and how they teach it; found out that, qualification towards reading was significant in relation to years of experience. Teachers with 30 or more years of experience had more positive qualification towards reading than teachers with 1-3years of experience.

Muller (1999), noted that teachers who set high standards and have high expectations for their children are likely to elicit motivation to do well in the pre-school children during the learning of reading. If the child senses that a teacher believes that they can accomplish certain goals in a classroom, they tend to believe that they can also make it and so are motivated to learn reading and achieve set goals. Teachers must be on guard against allowing stereotypes and judgment to influence their expectations. Teachers can develop their expectation for individual characteristics such as race, behaviour and academic work such as homework completion.

Johnson (1967), noted that it is the qualification which is built that are highly involved in the qualification the teacher builds that are basis of your rank as a successful teacher. This indicate that if a child develops a positive qualification towards a given subject, then the chances of liking that subject and performing well in it are increased. Aiken (1970), studied the relationship between qualification and performance and concluded that; the relationship between qualification and performance is certainly the consequence of reciprocal influence

in that qualification affects achievement and in turn affects qualification. Mwangi (1986), had similar findings. When he found out that teachers' qualification was being reflected in children performance.

If teachers like and value their subjects, this positive qualification will show through and will have a powerful influence on the motivation of children. Positive qualification of the teacher towards reading plays a positive role in causing the children to learn the subject effectively and thus achieve good grades in the subject. A teacher who accepts the fact that low achievers are teachable, a teacher who has missionary spirit and a respect for the worth of pupils with limited ability, a teacher who is concerned and interested in individuals, a teacher who can make a pupil feel he/she not only belongs but is important, a teacher who can install a sense of worthiness, responsibility and desire to achieve. A teacher who cares enough to give his/her best to the low achievers will make the programme a success.

2.6 Teacher's salary and performance of pre-school children in learning reading activity

Wayne (1998) asserts that a reward in form of pay has a strong impact on the employees' performance. Bratton (2003), agrees with Wayne that pay is one of the most powerful motivating tools. Similarly, Armstrong (1996) emphasizes the value of extrinsic motivation when he says that money provides the means to achieve a number of different ends. Above all he asserts that money in form of pay is the most obvious extrinsic reward. Kiseesi (1998), in her study about job

satisfaction of workers recommends that salaries of workers should be paid promptly and that promotion of workers should be accompanied by a corresponding increase in the salary they earn. She observes that salary was a strong force that kept teachers at their jobs. This therefore translates to the teacher's high morale, which is ultimately translated to good performance of pre-school children in learning reading activity.

Kavarlemo (2000) on the other hand re-affirms this in a study by the application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory where he stated that teachers need a wage sufficient to feed, shelter and protect their families if they are to dedicate their energies and time to school obligations other than for survival.

Carron (1996) noted that the teaching profession has suffered greatly from the negative influence, from the economic crisis and adjustment policies which have had severe impact in the standard of living of teachers. This phenomenon has had severe effect on their morale, their sense of commitment, and motivation. Coombs (1985), explains that when teachers' salaries fail to keep pace with the cost of living, they undergo a reduction in real income, their morale suffers and some of them shift to better paying jobs thus pulling down the quality of instruction. Gavinda and Varghese (1993) affirmed that where teachers are disillusioned and frustrated about conditions of service, the quality of education is likely to deteriorate even with substantial input of equipment and material. However, they conclude that if a teaching force is reasonably paid, and well-motivated, they can achieve much for the quality of education.

According to Farrant (1997), in many countries, the morale of teachers is low because they possess no great status, lack promotion opportunities, are poorly paid and have to teach under unsatisfactory conditions. Farrant's argument reflects the situation in Langata Sub-County where pre-school teachers have inadequate and at times poor accommodation, limited teaching and learning facilities amidst poor supervision and inspection. In addition, there is a problem of poor remuneration reflected in inadequate salaries or low or no allowances because these teachers are not on Teachers Service Commission pay roll. Consequently, poor working environment and low remuneration have attracted few qualified teachers in the area and have contributed to low morale of teachers in general thereby leading to the low levels of children's performance.

2.7 Teachers' content knowledge and performance of pre-school children in learning reading activity

Any job in early childhood education demands that you be able to deal well with change and unexpected turns. Whether it's raining outside and you have to cancel outdoor play, or leaning materials are in short supply, you need to be able to switch gears at a moment's notice and find an alternative that works. Sometimes the challenges are both drastic and sudden (Taylor & Wash 2003).

An early childhood teacher will be challenged to find new experiences to share with children. Guide children, do not lead them, and move in a direction that interests the child. As a guide, allow the child to choose their learning and playing style while making safety your number one concern. Give up the notion that a

teacher knows everything. Become a partner in learning and encourage children to find their own answers instead of providing the answers for them. By being a partner, teachers learn with the children and share in their experiences.

Early childhood teachers support learning by providing activity and materials that children find engaging. By facilitating learning, supplying a developmentally appropriate environment, interesting materials, and adequate time to explore, play, and interact, children find learning easy and fun. To nurture is to nourish. Nurturing a child encompasses all aspects of development: social, emotional, cognitive, and physical. In every interaction, a teacher should nurture appropriate growth and development. Teachers must also take care to listen to a child including interpreting words and actions. Listening carefully helps teachers determine a child's needs and aids in furthering the child's development. Teachers communicate with many people throughout the day: parents, children, support staff, the general public, and administrators. Early childhood teachers must be prepared to communicate with all of these people. One should feel comfortable opening up, asking questions, seeking advice, and sharing one's experiences.

Paperwork, lesson planning, preparing materials and the environment, and negotiating require teachers to have strong management skills. Managing a classroom requires organizational skills, attention to detail, and commitment. There are many balls in the air and it is the teacher's job to keep them up and moving. Teaching is full of many responsibilities, roles, and challenges. Like most worthwhile endeavours, it brings both challenges and rewards. Content

knowledge makes one to more readily enjoy the rewards of teaching young children.

2.8 Theoretical framework

The study was anchored on the Vygotsky's Social Constructivist theory of cognitive development. This theory focuses on social interactions that play a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Vygotsky (1978) wrote; 'every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first on the social level and later, on the individual level; first between people (inter-psychological) and then inside the child (intra-psychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the functions originate as actual relationship between individuals.

The potential for cognitive development depends upon two principles; the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and More Knowledgeable Other (MKO). ZPD is the difference between what learners can do without help. It is the distance between the actual development levels as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development determined through problem solving under adult guidance, and for that matter is the preschool teacher. Full development of the ZPD depends upon social interaction in that, the range skills can be developed with social guidance or collaboration thus it often exceeds what can be attained alone.

The implication is that the MKO is a teacher or an old adult. Taken together, the two form the basis of scaffolding component of the cognitive apprenticeship model of instruction. For Vygotsky, development and learning are not the same; they are dynamic processes that result to these gaps of development level that must be addressed through social cooperation and interaction with the more capable peers and adults. Preschool teachers are among the most important persons in children's inter-psychological (interpersonal) relationships.

One of the most important influences on the children's psychosocial environment therefore is the preschool center teacher characteristics. Relevant strategies should therefore be geared towards improving teacher characteristics and providing a child-friendly environment. Level of teacher academic qualification, training, experience, teacher's qualification towards reading, and the teacher's salary level, are likely to influence children's achievement in reading. This, in turn, is likely to result in teachers becoming effective in stimulating and nurturing children, responding sensitively to their needs, encouraging them and using few disciplinary actions. Consequently, teachers would achieve the ultimate psychosocial developmental goals in children, that is, the development of high cognitive and language skills, positive emotional adjustment and social competence.

2.9 Conceptual framework

The basis of the study's conceptual framework is that pre-school teacher's background characteristics are the core determinants of pre-school children's achievements in the reading activity although other extraneous variables may influence. The study perceives reading achievement by children as a function of teacher characteristics.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

Independent variables

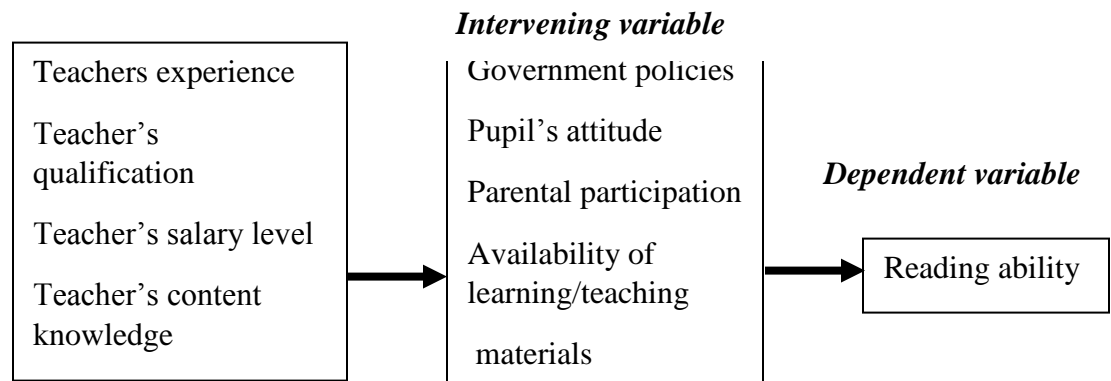


Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The teachers' characteristics include experience, qualification, salary level, and content knowledge he/she will utilize in order to come up with the appropriate methodology for imparting the reading concepts. This eventually influences the whole learning process, culminating to either successful learning outcomes or non-successful learning outcomes that is gauged by learner's achievement in the reading activity. The moderating variables which might likely influence learning outcomes and are not controlled include government policies, pupils' attitude, parental involvement and availability of teaching and learning materials.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The main focus for this section is to describe the research design, the target population, the sample size and sampling procedure, research instruments for data collection, validity and reliability of the instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research design

The study employed a descriptive survey design which uses a mixed methods approach of quantitative and qualitative data. According to Orodho (2002), descriptive survey designs are used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow the researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), on the other hand gives the purpose of descriptive research as determining and reporting the ways things are without manipulating the variables. Borg and Gay (1989), notes that descriptive survey research is intended to produce stratified information about aspects of education that interest policy makers and educators.

3.3 Target population

Target population refers to a complete set of individuals, cases or objects with common observable characteristics (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The target population was 14 public schools and 20 private schools, comprising of 34 head teachers, 68 teachers, and 1028 pre-school children in Langata Sub-county.

3.4 Sample and sampling procedure

Sampling means selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population. Sampling is the process by which a relatively small number of individuals are selected and analyzed in order to find out something about the entire population. However, it is agreed that the larger the sample size the smaller the sampling error. In the study, the sample was taken at 35% of the target population which translated to a sample comprising of 12 head teachers, 24 pre-school teachers, and 360 pre-school children. The study employed both probability and non-probability sampling techniques.

3.5 Research instruments

In this study, questionnaires, interview, and observation were used. Questionnaires give respondents' freedom to express their opinion and also to make suggestions. The questionnaires were used to gather data from the pre-school teachers, while interview was used to collect data and information from head teachers, observation was used to collect data from the children. The questionnaire for the pre-school teachers consisted of two parts. Part one was about demographic data of teachers. Part two dealt with information on influence

of teacher characteristics and performance of pre-school children. Interview guide for the head teacher was on the influence of teacher characteristics and children's performance. In this study, Interview guide for the children was used to get information on influence of teacher characteristics and children's performance.

3.6 Validity and reliability of the instruments

According to Orodho (2005), validity is concerned with the degree to which empirical measure or several measures of a concept accurately represent that concept. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), explain that validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represent the phenomenon under study. It has to do with how accurately the data obtained in the study represents the variables of the study to validate the research instruments of the study. The researcher sought the opinion of the expats in the area of education on content, clarity, ambiguity, level of language and any other additional information on the questionnaire to make the instrument more comprehensive and to ensure it measures the variables intended for the study.

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), define reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. Fraenkel and Wallen (1993), refer to reliability as the consistency of an instrument to yield the same results at different times. In the pilot study, items that were left blank or unanswered in ways that the researcher could not predict were modified and clear instructions were given to respondents so as to avoid misinterpretation. Reliability of the instruments was also determined by

establishing whether there were ambiguities in any item and whether the instruments could elicit the type of data anticipated and also if the type of data desired could be meaningfully analyzed in relation to research questions.

3.7 Procedure for data collection

The researcher first sought permission from the relevant authorities including the head teachers of the selected schools in writing. The researcher was informed by the head teachers of the days to visit the schools to collect data. Data collection was done by the researcher herself. The questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher to the respondents. The researcher then allowed the respondents sufficient time to respond to the items on the questionnaires. The researcher then collected the questionnaires on subsequent days. The researcher personally interviewed the respondents and kept all data in safe custody.

3.8 Data analysis

There is qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Qualitative analysis of data refers to non-empirical analysis. Thematic analysis was done on qualitative data derived from open ended questionnaire items. The main themes and patterns in the responses was identified and analyzed to determine the adequacy, usefulness and consistency of the information. All the collected data was coded and analyzed by use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) which determined the frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings of the data analysis were then presented in tables.

3.9 Ethical issues

The issue of Ethics is very important because despite the high value of knowledge gained through research, knowledge cannot be pursued at the expense of human dignity (Yuko, 2009). Each individual's right to privacy was respected and cherished. The respondents were not required to write their names on the questionnaires. They were also assured that the information they were going to give could be treated with a lot of confidentiality. The ethical considerations involved explaining to the head teachers and pre-school teachers the purpose and method of data collection. This enabled the researcher to obtain their informed consent before data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and discussion of the study findings. The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of teachers' characteristics on pre-school children in learning reading activity in Langata District, Nairobi County.

4.2 Questionnaire return

The study collected data on response rate of the head teachers, teachers, and children. The information is presented in table 4.1. Note that observation was used for children in place of questionnaires.

Table 4.1: Questionnaire return

Category	Target	Respondent	Rate %
Head Teachers	12	12	100%
Teachers	24	24	100%
Children	360	342	95%

Table 4.1 shows data on the response rate of the head teachers, teachers, and children who responded to the questionnaires and observation. Data reveals that the head teachers' response to the questionnaires was 12 out of 12 (100%), as was

the case with teachers whose response was 24 out of 24 (100%). Therefore, 100% of the target teacher population responded to the questionnaires. However, out of the target 360 children, 342 were observed (95%). This is a very good response rate because according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the allowed response rate for analysis is 50%.

4.3 Demographic information of respondents

4.3.1 Teachers' gender

The demographic information sought to establish the number of male teachers against female teachers in the target population. The study established that there were more female head teachers than male head teachers. This is presented in the table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Head teachers' gender

Head teachers	Number	%
Male	4	33%
Female	8	67%
Total	12	100%

Table 4.2 shows that out of the target population of 12 head teachers, the study found that 4 (33%) were male while 8 (67%) were female. This shows that most schools in the study are headed by females. The study also sought to find out the gender distribution of teachers in the target population. The findings are presented in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Teachers' gender

Teachers	Number	%
Male	5	22%
Female	19	78%
Total	24	100%

Table 4.3 shows that the percentage of male teachers was 22% while female teachers was 78%. The dominance of female teachers show that gender has a great impact on the study on the influence of teacher characteristics on pre-school children in learning reading activity in Langata District, Nairobi County.

4.3.2 Teachers' experience

The first objective sought to establish the influence teachers' experience has on performance of pre-school children in reading activity. The study therefore sought to establish the number of years each individual teacher has had in the teaching of pre-school children. This could further establish whether the teachers' experience had an influence on children in the learning of reading activity. The findings are presented in table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Teachers' experience

	Number of years					Total
	0 – 5	6 – 10	11 – 15	16 – 20	>20	
Number of teachers	1	5	10	5	3	24
Percentage	6%	22%	42%	19%	11%	100%

Table 4.4 shows that majority of the teachers have between 6 and 15 years of teaching experience, with a combined total of 15 out of 24 teachers (64%). 10 (42%) of the teachers have experience of 11-15 years, 5 (22%) have 6-10 years of experience, 5 (19%) have 16-20 years of experience, 3 (11%) have over 20 years of experience, while those with 5 years of experience and below is only 1 (6%). This shows that majority of the teachers have between 11-15 years (42%). The average number of years in the profession which falls between 6 and 15 years of experience indicates a good command of the challenges of learning reading activity. This is in line with findings by Bell (1978) who said that teaching experience can be useful in teaching by ensuring that the teacher selects appropriate models of instructions.

4.3.3 Teachers' qualification

The second objective sought to establish the level of education for teachers responsible for pre-school education. Out of the target 24 teachers, the study established that there were no untrained teachers (0%). It further established that 3 (14%) of the 24 teachers had attained certificate level of education, 18 (75%) of

the 24 teachers had attained diploma level of education, while 3 (11%) of the teachers had attained university degree level of education. This is presented in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Teachers' level of education

Category	Level of education				Total
	Untrained	Certificate	Diploma	Degree	
Teachers	0	3	18	3	24
Percentage	0%	12.5%	75%	12.5%	100%

Table 4.5 shows that majority of pre-school teachers have attained Diploma level of education with 18 (75%) teachers while those of certificate level are 3 (12.5%), and 3 (12.5%) have attained degree level of education. It was noted that there is no single teacher who is untrained. This is an indication that teachers responsible for pre-school education are pursuing higher education in institutions of higher learning, hence improving their knowledge in handling pre-school children. The information above shows that most teachers are academically qualified in teaching the reading activity in pre-school despite their personal characteristics.

This is an indication that teachers sacrifice a lot to ensure that their children get what is required for maximum delivery of the reading activity. These findings confirm those by Oketch (1986) who found that teacher's qualification is significantly related to the children's qualification and achievement.

4.3.4 Teachers' salary

The third objective sought to establish the influence of teachers' salary on performance of pre-school children in reading activity. The study therefore sought to find out whether salary influences children's performance. The findings are presented in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Teachers' salary

Amount in (KShs per month)	Number of teachers	Percentage
4000.00	8	33%
5000.00-10000.00	10	42%
10000.00-50000	6	25%
Total	24	100%

Table 4.6 indicates that the majority of the respondents 10 (42%) earned between 5,000 and 10,000 shillings per month. A further 8 (33%) reported to be earning 4,000 shillings per month. Only 6 (25%) earned over 10,000. This implies that the majority of the teachers; salary was inadequate to meet their needs in the current increase of the cost of living. As a form of motivation, therefore, salary was insufficient to motivate teachers to perform efficiently. This was further revealed by all the head teachers who participated in key informant interviews. The above finding reveals that salary has not been able to increase teachers' morale to perform their professional duties. This study finding is therefore contrary to Armstrong (1996) who emphasizes the value of financial rewards when he says that money provides the means to achieve a number of different ends.

4.3.5 Teachers' content knowledge

4.3.6.5 Reading challenges

The fourth objective was to determine the influence of teachers' content knowledge on performance of pre-school children in reading activity. The study therefore sought to find out whether there was a relationship between children's performance in learning reading activity and teacher's content knowledge. First, the study considered the challenges in reading as experienced by the teachers. The teachers' response indicated that unguided reading was more challenging than guided reading. This is indicated in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Reading challenges

Category	Number of teachers	Percentage
Challenges in guided reading	6	23%
Challenges in unguided reading	18	77%
Total	24	100%

Table 4.7 shows that guided reading was less challenging at the rate of 23% while unguided reading was more challenging with a rate of 77%. This shows that in order for children to master reading activity, they should be guided by their teachers. This therefore indicates that teachers had good content knowledge which helped them to guide the children through the learning of reading activity. The challenges mainly came from pronunciation and letter sound recognition which leads to reading activity. 77% of the teachers felt that unguided reading activities are the most difficult for the children as opposed to guided reading activities at

23%, an indication that many children would easily read when guided than when they are reading alone unguided.

4.3.6.2 Time for reflection

The study also sought to find out whether time for reflection by the teachers on the content delivered had a relationship with the performance of the children in the reading activity. This is because reflection is part of ascertaining the teacher's content knowledge towards teaching reading activity. The findings are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Time for reflection

Category	Number of teachers	Percentage
Those who spare time to reflect	17	70%
Those who do not spare time to reflect	7	30%
Total	24	100%

Table 4.8 shows that more teachers at a rate of 70% have time for reflection during their reading activity while 30% do not spare time for reflection during reading activity. This indicated that most teachers use their knowledge content capacity to reflect in the conduct of their reading activity. The high rate of teachers who have time for reflection is an indication that there is a relationship between reflection and content knowledge, hence, the influence of pre-school children in learning reading activity.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study based on the objectives of the study. It also gives the areas for further research in the same area of study.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of teachers' characteristics on performance of pre-school children in reading activity in Langata Sub-County in Nairobi County. After the data was presented, interpreted, and discussed, the researcher came up with the following findings: The teachers had developed a close relationship with the children due to their long teaching experience which draws a positive relationship between the teacher and the child, hence, influences the children in the reading activity.

The teachers had the required minimum academic qualifications and were professionally qualified in the handling of the pre-school children in the reading activity.

Salary was found to have a big influence in the learning of reading. All teachers were in the view that low salary demotivated the teachers making them not to put all their energy in their work, hence, impacting on the children's performance in the reading activity. However, the teachers confirmed that they normally help the

children learn reading better through guided reading. The teachers have also devised ways of making reading become fun by reading anything and anywhere even during outdoor activities.

Content knowledge in teachers was found to be very crucial in influencing children to learn reading faster. The teachers' views were that unguided reading was more difficult because children found it difficult to pronounce words correctly on their own. Majority of teachers were also found to factor in some time for reflection during teaching. Reflective teaching was found to contribute a lot in the improvement of learning reading by pre-school children.

5.3 Conclusion

It is the researcher's humble conclusion that the teacher's characteristics are crucial in the role they play in influencing the pre-school children in learning reading. Those teachers with longer teaching experience tend to develop a closer relationship with children than those with shorter teaching experience. Teachers with a better qualification tend to encourage children to read easily through guided reading as opposed to those with lower qualifications who tend to let children read on their own, hence giving the children a challenge. Better salaries tend to motivate teachers in order to work harder and this translates to better results from the children. However, low salaries demoralize teachers hence producing poor performance in reading activity for pre-school children.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

First and foremost, academic and professional qualification of a teacher, coupled with teacher experience, was found to be an important ingredient in influencing the pre-school children towards the achievement of learning reading, hence, it is important for the government and other educational stake holders to promote continuous teacher development through in-service and pre-service training programs.

It was also established that teachers' salary level has a big influence on pre-school children in learning reading. Enhancing salaries for pre-school teachers will enhance their performance, hence, better performance by the pre-school children in learning reading activity.

The study established that teacher's content knowledge informed the teacher's employment of guided reading which was found to be very influential in learning reading activity. It also influences teachers to spare time for reflection during their lessons in reading which consequently influences the reading activity. It is therefore recommended that the government should endeavor to enrich the teachers' content knowledge by conducting more training and workshops for the teachers for them to continuously enhance their knowledge for the betterment of their performance in teaching the children to easily learn to read.

5.5 Recommendation for further research

The outcome of the study calls for the need for further research to explore other teacher background characteristics such as perseverance, willingness to take risks, respect, patience, passion, and sense of humour, among others, which influence the achievement of preschool children in reading activity.

REFERENCES

- Addie, Y.V. (1999). *Revealing What Urban Early Child Teacher Think about English and How They Teach It*. Dallas: University of North Texas Press.
- Aiken, L.R. (1970). *Qualification towards English. Review of Educational Research*.
- Alvidrez, J. & Weinstein, R.S. (1999). *Early Teacher Perceptions and Later Student Academic Achievement*. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 91(4).
- Bandura, A. (1971). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs Cockcroft, New York: General Learning Press.
- Bandura, A. (1974). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs Cockcroft, New York: General Learning Press.
- Bell, F.H. (1978). *Teacher and Learning English in Schools*. Lowg: W.M.C Brown Company Limited.
- Borg, W. R. & Gay, M.D. (1989). *Guide for Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation Proposal in Education*. New York: Longman.
- Cantor, N. (1990). *From Thought to Behavior: "Having" and "Doing" in the Study of Personality and Cognition*. *American Psychologist*.
- Cockcroft, W. (1982). *English Counts: Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Teaching of Mathematics in Schools*. London: HMSO.
- Ehri, L. C. & Wilce, L. S. (1985). *Movement into reading: Is the first stage of printed word learning visual or phonetic?* *Reading Research Quarterly*, 20.
- Fraenkel, & Wallen, N.E. (1993). *Research in Education*. McGraw-Hill.

- Goe, L. (2007). *The Link Between Teacher Quality and Student Outcomes: A Research Synthesis*. Washington DC National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
- Gough, P. B. & Juel, C. (1991). *The first stages of word recognition*. In L. Rieben & C. A. Perfetti (Eds), *Learning to read: Basic research and its implications* (pp.47-56). Hillsdale. NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Gumo, A. (2003). *Teacher's Factors Related in the Teaching of Art and craft in Pre-school in Kaloleni and Kikambala Division in Kilifi District*. Kenyatta University, Nairobi: Kenya.
- Hanushek, E. A. (1997). *Assessing the Effects of School Resources on Student Performance: An Update*. Education Evaluation and policy Analysis.
- Hanushek, E.A. (1971). *Teacher Characteristics and Gains in Student Achievement*. American Review 6 (1971).
- Howes, C. (1997). *Children's Experiences in Center-Based Childcare as a Function of Teacher Background and Adult-Child Ratio*. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly.
- Irumbi, S. (1990). *A Study of Teachers and Pupils Characteristics that Affect the Performance of Standard Eight Pupils in English*. Nairobi: Acts Press.
- Johnson, D. A. (1987). *Teachers Qualification in Classroom Activities*. California: Woods Worth Publishing Company Inc.
- Katz, L.G. 1993. *Dispositions as Educational Goals*. ERIC EDO-PS-93-10.
- Miettinen, R. (2006). *Epistemology of Transformative Material Activity: John Dewey's Salary and Cultural-Historical Activity Theory*. Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour.

- Mugenda and Mugenda, A.G (1999). *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualification Approaches*. Nairobi: Acts Press.
- Muller, W. (1999). *Mentor, Philanthropist, Community Organizer*. New York: Time-Warner.
- Mwangi, D.T. (1986). *Factors Influencing Performance and learning English*. Bureau of Educational Research, Kenyatta University, Nairobi: Kenya.
- Oketch, J.G. (1986). *Analysis of Qualification towards English of Std 6 Pupils and their Teachers*, Nairobi, Bureau of Educational Research, Kenyatta University, Nairobi: Kenya.
- Orodho, A, J. (2002). *Techniques of Writing Research Proposals and Reports in Education and Social Sciences*. Nairobi: Masola Publishers.
- Pintrich, P. R., Marx, R. W., & Boyle, R. A. (1993). *Beyond Cold Conceptual Change: The Role of Motivational Beliefs and Classroom Contextual Factors in the Process of Conceptual Change*. Review of Educational Research, 62.
- Taylor, B., & P. Wash. (2003). *3,000 Educators Respond to Preferred Dispositions*. Paper presented at the Second Annual Symposium on Educator Dispositions, November 20–21, in Richmond, Kentucky.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in Society*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Weinstein, C. S. (1998). “*I want to be Nice, but I Have to be Mean*”: Exploring Prospective Teachers’ Conceptions of Caring and Order. Teaching and Teacher Education, 14(2).
- Yuko, A.C. (2009). *Imprisoned in English: The Hazards of English as a Default Language*. Hiroshima: Japan.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: A questionnaire for pre-school teachers

This questionnaire is for the purpose of research only. Please give your honest response to the questions, for the researcher’s truthful assessment of the programme and no individual school will be identifiable when responses are analyzed. Do not write your name.

Tick where appropriate (✓)

Name of the school.....

Location

Part I: Demographic Information

1. Which is your gender? Male [] Female []

2. Which is your highest level of academic qualification?

Primary CPE/KCPE []

Secondary KCSE []

University Diploma []

University Degree []

Part II - Influence of teacher characteristics on pre-school children in learning reading.

4. How long have you been a Pre-school teacher?

0-5 years []

6-10 years []

11-15 years []

16-20 years []

Over 20 years []

5. What do you do to encourage children to participate fully in reading activity?

6. What do you do when learning materials are not adequate?

7. Who provides the learning materials?

Teacher []

School []

Parents []

8. Do you have intelligent dynamics in your class? Yes [] No []

9. If yes, what do you do to make sure that all intelligent dynamics are taken care of?

10. Is reading activity affected by different first languages in your class?

If yes, how do you help each child develop proper reading?

11. Is your reading activity always taken in class? Yes [] No []

12. If No, where else do you carry out the reading activity and why?

13. Which of the following reading activities do you find difficult for children?

Guided reading []

Unguided reading []

14. Do you have time for reflective teaching? Yes [] No []

Appendix II: Interview for Head teachers

Please answer the following questions by providing the most appropriate answer and explain where necessary. The information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

1. How many teachers have been teaching in the following year bracket?

0-5 years []

6-10years []

11-15years []

16-20 years []

Over 20 years []

2. How many of the teachers have the under listed qualifications?

Certificate []

Diploma []

Degree []

3. Which language is used by the school community?

4. Which language is used in teaching ECE classes?

5. How do you ensure that the ECD teachers have adequate learning materials for reading lessons?

6. What other support do you give the ECD teachers to ensure proper learning of the reading activity?

7. What are the challenges encountered in teaching reading in ECD classes?

8. Suggest three ways of enhancing reading in ECD?

Appendix III: Observational for children

Name of the
school _____

Tick [] as appropriate

Child

A []

B []

C []

D []

The Observer to tick “Yes” or “No” to indicate the influence of the child through various methods.

Ways of influence	Child A		Child B		Child C		Child D	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Child encouragement e.g. well done								
Clapping for a child’s response								
Giving tokens such as sweets								
Calling children by name								
Complementing e.g. thank you, good boy/girl								

Appendix IV: Introduction Letter



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & EXTERNAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 020-2500759, 020-2500760

P.O. BOX 30197, 00100 NAIROBI

020-2500762, 020-2460056

P.O. BOX 92, 00902 KIKUYU

20 September 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: NORAH NYANDIKO KAMAU REG. NUMBER E57/71040/2013


This is to certify that **Norah Nyandiko Kamau Reg. Number E57/71040/2013** is a student of the University of Nairobi, Department of Educational Communication and Technology pursuing M.Ed degree in Early Childhood Education. She has completed the course work and now working on the project. Her project is titled **"influence of teacher characteristics in preschool children in learning reading activity."**

Any assistance accorded to her will be highly appreciated.



PROF. PAUL A. ODUNDO
CHAIRMAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY

Appendix V: Research Authorization Letter



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Telephone: +254-20-2213471, 2241349, 3310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
when replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No: **NACOSTI/P/16/79838/14560**

Date: **21st November, 2016**


Norah Yuventina Nyandiko
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Influence of teachers’ characteristics on pre-school children in learning reading activity in Langata Sub County Nairobi County,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **21st November, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.



**DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.
DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:


The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO 9001:2008 Certified

Appendix VI: Research Permit


THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT: **Permit No : NACOSTI/P/16/79838/14560**
MISS. NORAH YUVENTINA NYANDIKO **Date Of Issue : 21st November,2016**
of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 72870-100 **Fee Received :Ksh 1000**
NAIROBI,has been permitted to conduct
research in Nairobi County
on the topic: INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS
CHARACTERISTICS ON PRE-SCHOOL
CHILDREN IN LEARNING READING
ACTIVITY IN LANGATA SUBCOUNTY,
NAIROBI COUNTY
for the period ending:
21st November,2017



Applicant's Signature **Director General**
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

CONDITIONS

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



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
NACOSTI
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT
Serial No.A 11963
CONDITIONS: see back page