# ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS INFLUENCING ACHIEVEMENT OF BASIC READING LITERACY IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NYERI COUNTY, KENYA

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**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA**

**JANUARY, 2015**

## DECLARATION

## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis report is my original work achieved through personal and scientific research; it has not been submitted to any University or Institution for any academic award. All sources have been quoted and acknowledged

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## ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at assessing the factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy outcomes in public primary schools in Nyeri County, Kenya. The study was guided by five research questions generated from literature review. These questions were; to what extent is implementation of teaching and learning of literacy influencing achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County? Which factors in the home environment of the pupils are influencing achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County? To what extent are students' characteristics influencing achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County? What challenges are influencing achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County? How can reading literacy levels in public primary schools in Nyeri County be improved? The study adopted Cross-sectional survey design. Head teachers, teachers and class six pupils comprised the target population. Multi stage probability sampling technique was used to select the participants. The first stage involved random selection of 39 public primary schools from each of the six constituencies in Nyeri County and the second stage involved random selection of participants within the selected schools. From a representative sample of 39 public primary schools in Nyeri County, a sample of 156 pupils, 78 teachers and 39 head teachers was selected. Questionnaires, checklist, and a reading test were used to collect data. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science version 20. Among the study findings was that implementation of teaching and learning of literacy influence achievement of basic reading literacy to a moderate extent. Factors in the pupils' home environment that influence achievement of basic reading literacy include social economic status, parental educational level, educational resources at home and adequate reading literacy activities at home. Students' characteristics influence achievement of basic reading literacy to a small extent. Challenges influencing achievement of basic reading literacy include inadequate teaching and learning resources, lack of parental guidance and support and pupils' lack of motivation. Ways of improving basic reading literacy levels in public primary schools in Nyeri County include increasing the number and variety of teaching and learning resources, establishment and equipment of school libraries and motivating pupils to learn.

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I feel indebted to give special thanks to all my family members for their patience and understanding especially to my husband Martin Kiai who selflessly supported me throughout the entire work.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband Martin Kiai for persistently encouraging me to further my studies and eventually supporting me financially to do the same, and to my children Ashley, Elvis and Ryan. May this work be an inspiration to them all, to continue investing their abilities tirelessly in pursuit of knowledge and academic excellence.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| ALA | Annual Learning Assessment |
| ANCEFA | African Network Campaign for Education For All |
| ECDE | Early Childhood development Education |
| EFA | Education For All |
| ESOL | English as a Second or Other Language. |
| FPE | Free Primary Education |
| ICT | Integrated Information Technology |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MKO | More Knowledgeable Other |
| NGO | Non – Government Organization |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PIAAC | Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies |
| PISA | Programme for International Student Assessment |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for Social Sciences |
| TALIS | Teaching And Learning International Survey |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. |
| ZPD | Zone of Proximal Development |
| NACOSTI | National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation |

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Large numbers of children in East African region are simply not learning; basic reading literacy outcomes remain significantly deficient despite significant gains in expanding access to primary education. This is according to survey reports carried out annually by Uwezo East Africa, starting from the year 2009 in Kenya and other East African countries. Though access to education has improved worldwide, an estimated 250 million children of primary school age lack basic reading, writing and numeracy skills, whether in school or not (UN, 2013, p.17). The report by Uwezo East Africa on the 2011 survey in Kenya revealed that 4 % of class 8 pupils could not read a class 2 story (Uwezo, 2011, pp.14, 16, 18). The Annual Learning Assessment (ALA) carried out in Kenya in February year 2012 by Uwezo revealed that 7% of class 8 pupils could neither pass English or Kiswahili reading tests set at class 2 level.

Uneducated or out of school children are the next generation of illiterate adults (UNESCO, 2013). A global literacy rates report by UNESCO on year 2011 survey illustrated that the lowest literacy rates are observed in Sub-Sahara Africa and in South and West Asia. The report also revealed that the regions of South and West Asia are home to more than a half of the global illiterate population (53%). In addition 24% of illiterate adults live in Sub-Sahara Africa, 12% in East Asia and the Pacific, 6.2% in Arab States and 4.6% in Latin America and the Caribbean. It was estimated that 20% of the remaining global illiterate population live in the remaining regions combined (UNESCO, 2011, p. 66).

According to a National Research Council based in United States, (1998, 2001, 2002), early childhood is a critical time for skills development and emphasizes the centrality of literacy

as foundational of later success. Acquisition of basic reading literacy skills is better achieved during the early years of life. According to Wolf (2007), a child's first five years initiate reading's interrelated processes, and even infants can be viewed as emerging pre-readers. Paris (2005) demonstrated that language and literacy skills can be constrained or unconstrained based on whether they develop over a short period of time, or a long period of time. Teale, Paciga, and Hoffman (2010) add that the roots of language and literacy skills in early childhood cannot be disregarded.

Sensenig (2011) noted that the skills that become highly important in the third and fourth grade rely on rich interactions with print that begin much earlier which is why a narrow focus on basic decoding is especially detrimental for children. The literacy levels at a young age can predict the growth of literacy skills in future development (OECD, 2012). There is strong evidence that education has a substantial causal effect on basic literacy and formal schooling is the dominant determinant of this skill (Green & Riddlell, 2012). This indirectly emphasizes the reason why educational stakeholders have a cause to worry if formal education during the early years is not effective in enhancing basic literacy skills.

Basic reading literacy is one of the essential underpinning skills that enable people to be productive in their work, to continue to learn and develop, and to participate fully in society (Industry Skills Councils of Australia, 2011). The same councils (NSCs), add that language, reading literacy skills are fundamental to improved workforce participation, productivity and social inclusion and that their impact cannot be overstated. These core skills are crucial to higher educational outcomes which in turn lead to higher workforce participation and higher productivity.

Low scale proficiency reading literacy is associated with negative outcomes such as lower wages, greater chances of unemployment and disengagement from the labour market

(OECD, 2012). Given the evolution of the labour market and the growing penetration of ICT in all areas of life plus related changes in delivery of many services for example online banking, E-government, electronic shopping just to mention a few, low scale proficiency literacy is an issue for policy makers.

Abdzi (2004), in a concern to address the issue of adult illiteracy noted that the effect of literacy on people's quality of life, health, fertility and productivity are well known when these have been acquired in primary school. She added that people who have not gone to school perform less well in essential memory tasks linked to decision making; recalling a series of digits backwards and forward, remembering list of words, reproducing a short story or complex shapes, using readily available data for deductive reasoning. These abilities are developed in the first three years of primary school. She adds that the first three grades of schooling seem to have the most significant effect on these cognitive variables.

In the year 2000, the United Nations established eight international development goals during the Millennium Summit following the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted from the General Assembly which was held on September 6th to 8th in the year 2000 at the United Nations headquarters in New York. These goals are referred to as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). All the 189 United Nations member states and at least 23 international organizations committed themselves to help achieve these goals by year 2015. By 2015, $^{2}/_{3}$ of adults and ¾ of youth in Sub-Sahara Africa are expected to be able to read and write (UNESCO, 2008, p.11).

Millennium Development Goal 2 seeks to achieve universal primary education by 2015, and stipulate that Children everywhere, boys and girls alike, should be able to complete a full course of primary schooling (UN, 2013). According to the United Nations Millennium

Development Goals Report (2013) , enrolment in developing regions (Kenya belongs here) had reached 90% in year 2011 up from 83% in year 2000 (UN, 2013, p. 15). This indicates progress though at a slow pace. The report further added that abolition of school fees at primary level led to a surge in enrolment which in turn brought a new set of challenges. The same report concludes that if the current trends continue, the world will not meet the goal of universal primary education by 2015.

The UN 2013 report also revealed that 123 million youth aged between 15 years to 24 years globally lack basic reading and writing skills (UN, 2013, p. 14). The total global adult literacy rates are 84%. The illiterate adult population was 773.5 million. Youth literacy rate was 89.5%. Youth illiterate population was 123.2 million (UNESCO, 2013, p. 9). The UNESCO Institute for Statistics on Adult and Youth literacy (2013), report illustrated that the lowest literacy rates by year 2011, were observed in Sub-Saharan African and in South and West Asia. South and West Asia had more than a half of the global illiterate population (53%). Sub-Saharan Africa had 24% of illiterate adults (UNESCO, 2013, pp.10-12). Adult literacy can be improved to 100% if the efforts are concentrated in the early years of primary schooling.

According to Wachira (2013), when reporting for Standard Digital news (2013, October 9th), parents in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda must start facing the hard facts that their children in schools are not learning; children are not acquiring basic reading skills during their early years of primary education. The news reporter was quoting from a comprehensive study undertaken by Uwezo East Africa which is an initiative that promotes access to information and improved service delivery across the region.

Since 2009 Uwezo East Africa has been carrying out Uwezo Learning Assessments surveys in East Africa on literacy and numeracy levels. The year 2011 survey covered 320 Districts

which are about 90% of all the Districts in East Africa, 9,298 schools, and 151,316 households and involved 348,384 children (Uwezo East Africa, 2011, p. 7). The survey report revealed that vast majority of pupils were not acquiring basic competencies during the early years of primary schooling as expected in the national curricula. More than two out of every three pupils enrolled at standard 3 level in East Africa failed to pass basic tests in English, Kiswahili or numeracy set at standard two level. Only 32 % of class three pupils could pass reading test in Kiswahili set at standard two level and 16% in English reading test. Two out of 10 children in standard 7 in East Africa did not have standard two level reading literacy competencies (Uwezo East Africa, 2011, pp.11-12). Kenyan children outperformed children from the other East African countries in all tests (Uwezo East Africa, 2011). The situation was worse among the poor, where children from socially and economically disadvantaged households performed poorly in all areas in comparison to their counterparts from affluent backgrounds.

Uwezo Kenya carried out Annual literacy Assessment in the year 2011 that covered 124 out of 158 Districts, 72,106 households and involved 134,243 children between ages 6-16 years (Uwezo Kenya, 2012, pp.2-3). The report revealed that 4% of class 8 pupils could not read a class 2 story. Class six pupils who did not pass the reading literacy test were 18%. Also revealed was that only 3 out of 10 children in class 3 could read class 2 story and one out of ten children in class 4 and 5 could not comprehend a class 2 story even when they could read it. Only 3 out of 10 children in class 3 could read a class 2 *hadithi* (story in Kiswahili language). There are 4 out of 100 children in class 8 who could not read a class 2 level *hadithi* (Uwezo Kenya, 2011, pp.16, 18)

Nyeri County was among the regions in Kenya that was doing relatively better compared to other counties in Kenya; it ranked second after Nairobi in acquisition of basic literacy skills among children (Uwezo Kenya, 2011). This better performance of Nyeri county was however only

relative. In overall terms, it remained a case of low literacy achievement among the pupils. According to the Uwezo report (2012), class 3 pupils who could read *hadithi* were 48.91% compared to a national average of 32.9%. Class 3 pupils who could read a story were 42.39% compared to a national average of 27.2%. The *hadithi* and the story were set at class two level of primary education (Uwezo Kenya, 2011, pp.59).

Though the above report was disheartening to educational stake holders, Uwezo Kenya felt that the schools and districts that performed relatively better constituted a potential source of solution on how to improve children's learning. They added that there is an opportunity to help every child learn in East Africa. Hence this study was an attempt to assess those factors that influence learning outcomes in basic reading literacy and numeracy skills in public primary schools in Nyeri County in order to form a base for improvement interventions which may also be replicated in other counties to enhance basic reading literacy and numeracy. Of importance was that achieving gains in education would have an impact on all the Millenniums Development Goals (UN, 2013).

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of this study was to assess the factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County. There was an outcry on the low reading literacy levels witnessed among school going children in primary schools by various education stakeholders. Uhuru Kenyatta, the president of Kenya (2013) being one of the concerned stakeholders, in his speech at the opening of the Primary School Head Teachers' 9th Annual Delegate Conference for 2013 at Sheik Zayyed Children's Center, made the following remarks:

> Statistics showing that less than 50% of teachers have any actual contact with their pupils, or that most children remain both illiterate and innumerate at the end of primary school,

> spell a problem for the country… This situation cannot and will not persist further, because it is a reprehensible disservice to our children…In the interest of accountability, an explanation for the rise in these disturbing statistics is overdue (President Speech, 2013, 3rd Sept, para.1, 3)

Obala (2013), reporting on the launch of Uwezo Kenya-2012 Literacy and Numeracy Report' on 23rd July 2013 at Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, summarized the call of Kenyan Leaders for educationists to tackle the learning crisis urgently. "Various stakeholders have acknowledged that there is a serious crisis in the education sector that must be addressed urgently, following a damning report that suggested many Class Eight candidates can barely read or write" (Obala, 2013, para. 1). She was summarizing the concerns of Educational stakeholders who included the Vision 2030 Director- General Mugo Kibati, Baringo Governor Benjamin Cheboi and the Chairperson of the National Assembly committee on Education, Sabina Chege (2013) who were in attendance during the Launch of 2012 Literacy and Numeracy Report by Uwezo Kenya.

While there was evidence that reading literacy rates were low, there are few studies empirically conducted to examine the contributing factors to this phenomenon particularly in Kenya. The various research studies conducted in Kenya by Uwezo Kenya are concerned with the rates of reading literacy. There is an information gap on the factors that contribute to the observed low reading literacy levels that this study will attempt to fill.

Industry Skills Councils in Australia (2011), reported that some employers feel let down by the school system. The employers attribute the problem of having a significant number of employees with low numeracy and literacy skills to a grand scale failure of the school system. UN Millennium Development Goals Report (2013), Uwezo East Africa (2011), and Uwezo Kenya

(2011) among others, confirm that the reading literacy levels among school going children in African countries are way below the expected standards.

When reporting for digital news, Obala (2013) reported that leaders want learning in Kenya tackled. She added that various stakeholders had acknowledged that there was a serious crisis in the education sector that needed to be addressed urgently, following a damning report that suggested many class eight candidates could barely read or write. The stakeholders concerned included the vision 2030 Director- General Mugo Kibati, Baringo Governor Benjamin Chemboi and the chairperson of the National Assembly committee on Education, Sabina Chege. Obala (2013) argued that it was not enough that the government concentrate on increasing enrolment and teacher recruitment without addressing the issue of quality in education. Mugo (2013), the vision 2030 Director General, added that there was need for a radical shift to look at learning outcomes.

As such, there was a dire need to empirically analyze the factors influencing achievement of learning outcomes in basic education which include reading literacy in the country. Knowledge of these factors would help to mount appropriate interventions to address the problem of lack of reading literacy among the children who are graduating from primary schools. Achievement of reading literacy skills will in turn not only help to achieve Millennium Development Goal 2, but also, all the other seven MDGs as literacy is a major backbone of development.

Sifuna (2006) postulated that implementation of free primary education in Kenya was not a well thought out plan which did not include a prior situation analysis and this led to poor quality education as a result of overcrowding, lack of teachers and learning materials among other problems. Machila (2005) in a study on factors affecting effective implementation of free primary education identified availability and quality of teaching and learning resources as some of the

factors. Sifuna (2006) and Machila (2005) studies were addressing primary school education as a whole and therefore there is an information gap on whether these factors of inadequate teachers and teaching and learning resources influence achievement of reading literacy in public primary schools. This study sought to find out if the challenges of overcrowding, lack of teachers and inadequate materials observed by Sifuna (2006) and Machila (2005) are influencing achievement of reading literacy.

Geske and Ozola (2008) in their study on factors influencing reading literacy illustrated that there are factors in the home environment of learners such as social economic status, parental education and reading around to children that influence achievement of reading literacy. Since their study was carried out in Europe this study sought to find out what factors in the home environment of pupils influence achievement of reading literacy in the home environment of pupils in Nyeri County, Kenya. Geske and Ozola also found out that certain students characteristics such as self-efficacy influence achievement of reading literacy and numeracy. This study sought to establish if students' characteristics influence achievement of reading literacy among pupils in Nyeri County.

In summary, this study was an attempt to uncover the factors that influencing basic education outcomes in reading literacy among primary school pupils in Nyeri County. In particular the study sought to analyze the factors related to implementation of teaching and learning of literacy, pupils' home environment factors, pupils' characteristics and the challenges influencing achievement of reading literacy and ways of improving the reading literacy levels.

### 1.3 Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions.

1. To what extent is implementation of teaching and learning of literacy influencing achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County?
2. Which factors in the home environment of the learner are influencing achievement of basic reading literacy among the pupils in public primary schools in Nyeri County?
3. To what extent are the student characteristics influencing achievement of basic reading literacy among the pupils in public primary schools in Nyeri County?
4. What challenges are facing achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County?
5. How can literacy levels in public primary schools in Nyeri County be improved?

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

The aim of this study was to assess the factors that influence achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County. This particular research was imperative as it focused on the extent to which implementation of teaching and learning of basic reading literacy influence achievement of basic reading literacy, the factors in the pupils' home environment that influence achievement of basic reading literacy, the extent to which pupils' characteristics influence achievement of reading literacy. The immediate concern of this study was to provide information that is to be a base for corrective measures to arrest the unexpected learning outcome in basic reading literacy in Nyeri County, in order to achieve 100% basic reading literacy rates at the right level (class 2) among the primary school pupils. This study will increase available knowledge in the field of education about the factors influencing acquisition of basic reading literacy in education in Nyeri County, thus increasing the literature on factors that influence learning outcome in basic education.

The Knowledge derived from this study will assist school administrators and teachers to be aware of the factors associated with the learning environment, learning process, characteristic of the teacher and pupils that influence achievement of basic reading literacy so that they can adjust accordingly. It is also hoped that the study findings will promote the parents awareness on the factors that are preventing achievement of basic reading literacy among children and assist the pupils where necessary on the same.

The findings of this study will create awareness to the Ministry of Education, Government policy makers, Non-Government Organizations and United Nations Organization about the specific factors hindering achievement of basic reading literacy outcomes in Nyeri County so that they can mount interventions to enhance the achievement of the MDGs. The study will be of much help to the primary school pupils because they will be informed of the factors that are influencing their achievement of basic reading literacy skills. Finally, the findings from this study will add to the knowledge on which further research on related issues can be based.

### 1.5 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study focused on assessment of factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy (in English language) among primary school pupils. Basic reading literacy in this study was delimited to the ability to read and comprehend simple text set at class two level of the Kenyan primary education system. The factors studied were those emanating from school, home environments and from the characteristic of the pupils.

The study involved primary school pupils aged between 7 to 16 years. Literacy teachers in primary schools were involved since they are normally in direct contact with the pupils and are responsible for teaching and learning of reading literacy. The head teachers of primary schools were involved since they are normally in-charge of implementation of teaching and learning.

The study was carried out in public primary schools in Nyeri County, Kenya. From the Uwezo 2012 report, public schools face a bigger challenge in acquisition of literacy skills than in private schools. Nyeri County is situated about 150 kilometers from Kenya's Capital city Nairobi. The county covers an area of 3,337 square kilometers. The county has six constituencies; Nyeri town, Othaya, Tetu, Mathira, and Mukurwe-ini (Soft Kenya, n.d). There are 390 public primary schools of which a sample of 39 schools was drawn for this study. The study duration was one month in October 2014.

**1.6 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by Social Development Theory of learning under the constructivism paradigm. The theory was originated by Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist who lived between 1896 – 1934 during the Russian Revolution. His work was published in 1962 (McLeod, 2007).

Constructivism learning paradigm posits that learning is an active, contextualized process of constructing knowledge rather than acquiring it. Constructivists include Vygotsky, Piaget, Dewey, Vico, Rorty & Bruner. They believe that knowledge is constructed based on personal experiences and hypothesis of the environment. Learners continue to test these hypotheses through social negotiation. Each person has a different interpretation and construction of knowledge. The learner is not a blank slate but brings past experiences and cultural factors to a learning situation (McLeod, 2007).

The Social Development Theory of learning is anchored on three major themes. One of the themes is on the role of social interaction in the cognitive development. Vygotsky posits that Social interactions play a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development. He felt that social literacy precedes development. He argued that every function in the child's cultural development

appears twice; first on the social level and then later on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological) (McLeod, 2007).

The second theme is on the role of the 'more knowledgeable other' (MKO) in the cognitive development. More knowledgeable other refers to anyone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner in respect to a particular process (McLeod, 2007). The person can be a teacher, coach or older adult or could be a peer, or a younger person with more knowledge or an electronic device like a computer.

The third theme is on the role of the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD) on cognitive development. Zone of proximal development refers to the distance between a student's ability to perform a task under adult guidance and or with peers collaboration and the student's ability to solve problems independently. According to Orlich, Harder, Callahan and Gibson (1998), the zone of proximal development is the difference between the intellectual level a child can reach on his own and the level he or she can potentially reach if aided by an expert, peer or adult. They add that it's through trial and error that you discover the instruction appropriate for the child zone. Vygotsky points out that learning occurs in this zone (McLeod, 2007). Zone of proximal development is the area where the most sensitive instruction or guidance should be given. McLeod adds that the child should be allowed to develop skills they can use on their own to enable them develop higher mental function. Instruction outside ZPD is not effective (Orlich et al., 1998).

Vygotsky's theory was an attempt to explain consciousness as the end product of socialization. For example, in the learning of language, our first utterances with peers or adults are for the purpose of communication but once mastered they become internalized and allow 'inner speech'. Vygotsky believed that speech and writing are tools developed from the culture in order to mediate social environment. These tools first help children to communicate their needs and later

to develop higher order thinking skills. As a child listens to a discussion, the child can think along and eventually the child internalizes the ideas and can then work individually (Orlich et al., 1998).

Social constructivists posit that learning and human development are richly coloured by social and cultural context in which people find themselves. Ethnicity, social class, gender, family life, past history, self-concept and the learning situation all influence an individual perception, thoughts, emotions, interpretation and responses to information experience.

### 1.6.1 Strengths of Social Development Theory

The theory is holistic on the source of knowledge which leads to cognitive development. 'More knowledgeable other' who include the teachers, parents, peers, machines and any other individual with more knowledge who as sources of knowledge. The theory also recognizes that a learner is not a blank slate and brings past experiences and cultural factors into learning situation. Apart from classroom experiences, home experiences, community experiences and other out of classroom experiences all play a part in how a child acquires literacy and numeracy skills.

The theory extends the learning process beyond educator-learner to the larger social world. The theory gives suggestions on how educators can impart skills for example through collaborative learning and scaffolding. The instructor and the learner collaborate in learning and practicing key skills like summarizing, questioning, classifying and predicting and the instructor's role in the process is reduced over time. The theory also promotes learning contexts in which the student plays an active part in learning. This theory advocates collaborative learning suggesting that group members should have different levels of ability in order for the less able learners to learn from the advanced peers.

### 1.6.2 Weakness of the Development Theory of Learning

Collaborative learning may not be effective among small children who have not fully learnt how to share information. Also the theory assumes that 'the more knowledgeable other' imparts desirable knowledge and skills to the learner. Sometimes the peers can distort a concept or even the way words are pronounced in case of languages.

### 1.6.3 Application of Social Development Theory in This Study.

Interaction with peers is viewed as an effective way of developing skills and strategies. Therefore, teachers should use cooperative learning strategies in groups of different ability learners to enhance acquisition of numeracy and literacy skills. By doing this, less competent learners develop with the help from more skilled peers within the zone of proximal development. Also guided learning within the ZPD can lead to greater understanding or performance than working alone (McLeod, 2007). Guided learning can be structured by 'the more knowledgeable other'.

Since social interaction plays a fundamental role in the cognitive development process, the avenues of social interaction which include home and school environment should be consciously structured to promote learning from the 'more knowledgeable other'. Scaffolding and apprenticeship concepts of learning are validated by Vygotsky's theory (McLeod, 2007). The teacher or more advanced peer can help to structure or arrange a task so that a novice can work on it successfully. This theory also advocates collaborative learning suggesting that acquisition of numeracy and literacy skills can be enhanced by grouping different ability learners so that advanced learners can help the less skilled learners.

## 1.7 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a diagrammatic representation of how variables interact. It Provides a clear concept of the areas in which meaningful relationship are likely to exist (Cargan,

2007). Figure 1.1 presents the conceptual framework of factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy among school pupils.

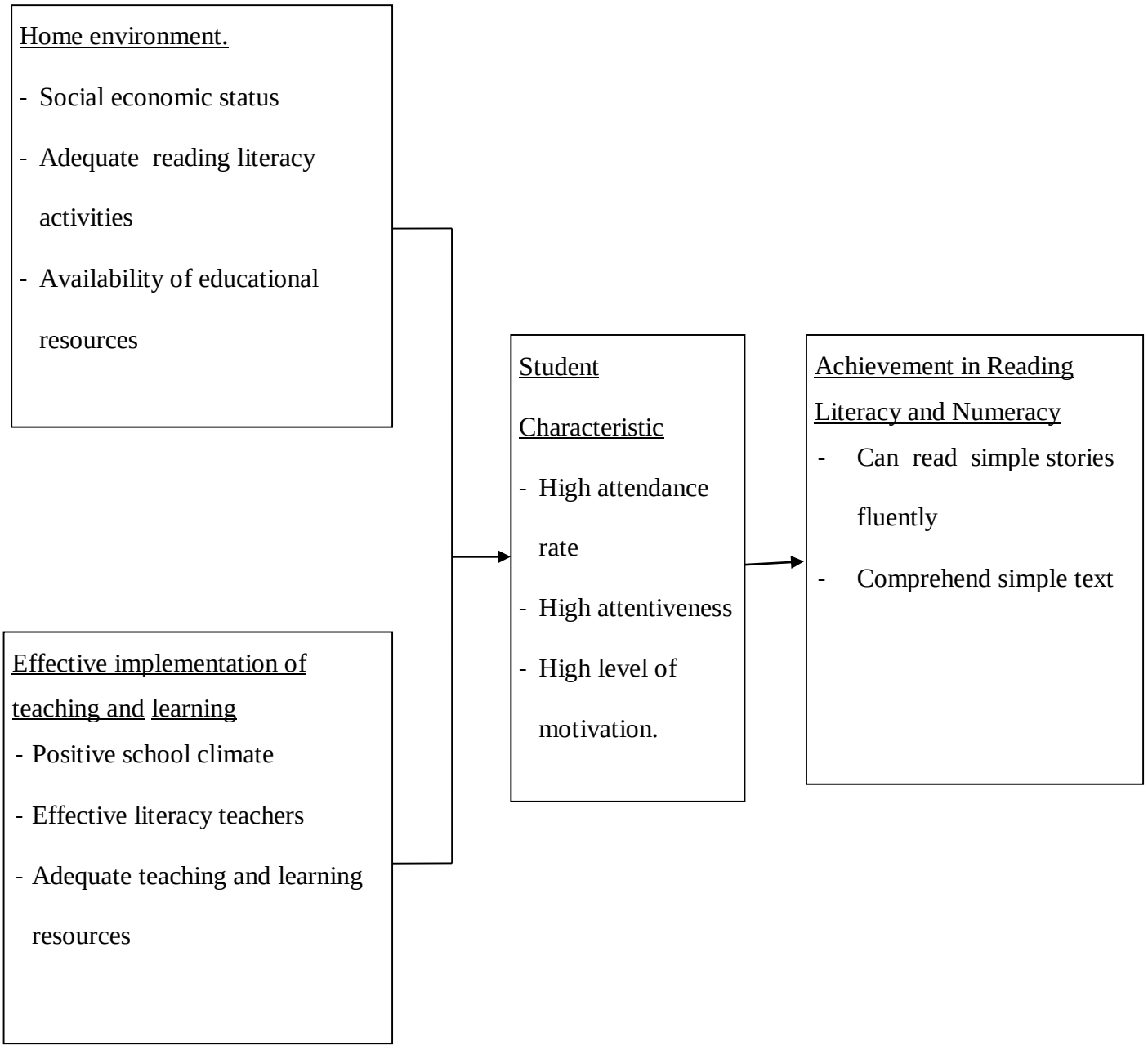


**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework**

Source: Author (2014)

Several factors interact during the process of developing reading literacy skills among pupils. These factors include the extent to which teaching and learning of literacy is implemented, the nature of the pupil's home environment, the pupils characteristics and the challenges faced at school, home and by the pupil as an individual. In the figure 1.1, achievement in basic reading literacy is the dependent variable. Effective implementation of teaching and learning and home environment are independent variables. Student characteristic is an intervening variable; it comes between the independent and dependent variable and it affects the dependent variable.

Achievement in reading literacy is dependent on effective implementation of teaching and learning. Relevant aspects in the implementation of teaching and learning that influence achievement of reading literacy include the school climate, availability of effective teachers and availability of adequate teaching and learning resources. Achievement in reading literacy is also dependent on some aspects of the pupil's home environment. These aspects include the social economic status, engagement in adequate reading literacy activities and availability of educational resources at home.

Certain characteristics of the Student, influence achievement in reading literacy irrespective of effective implementation of teaching and learning and the nature of the home environment. The student's characteristic that influence achievement of reading literacy include rate of school attendance, attentiveness and level of motivation. Achievement in basic reading literacy is demonstrated by the ability to correctly read simple stories fluently.

## 1.9 Operational Definition of Key Terms

| | |
|---|---|
| **Basic Reading** | Ability to identify and distinguish letters and sounds of the alphabet and use of the sound-letter correspondence to sound out words. Also known as decoding words. |
| **Basic Reading literacy** | Ability to decode and sound out one to four syllable words. |
| **County** | The second level administrative sub-division in Kenya |
| ***Hadithi*** | A story in Kiswahili language. |
| **Primary School** | School for children between the ages 5years to around 16 years. |
| **Preschool** | A school for children who are too young for nursery or kindergarten. Also referred to as baby class. |
| **Reading literacy skill** | Ability to effortlessly recognize and sound out words and text fast and accurately |

# CHAPTER TWO

# REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents review of related literature on effective implementation of teaching and learning of reading literacy, effects of home environment on acquisition of reading literacy skills, learner characteristics that influence acquisition of reading literacy skills, challenges facing acquisition of reading literacy skills, ways to improve acquisition of reading literacy levels among primary school pupils and finally a summary of where the research gap was identified.

## 2.2 Implementation of Teaching and Learning of Literacy

The literature on effective teaching and learning has a number of predominant themes related to three types of effect: whole school, teacher, and teaching learning resources. The whole school effect encompasses the school climate which essentially reflects a subjective view of the learning environment at the school level (OECD, 2009). Relevant aspects of the school environment are the physical environment, the social system, relationships between principals, teachers and students, a sense of community, teacher and student morale, norms among peers, and safety.

School climate is fundamental for the quality of schooling and instruction (OECD, 2009). School climate can influence student attainment and learning. A positive school climate has a positive impact on teachers and their working lives, it increases their job satisfaction and affects their productivity. It is also associated with higher levels of student achievement (OECD, 2004). School climate is the result of a variety of factors and actions that affect both students and teachers (OECD, 2009). Students' attitude, behavior and performance is potentially influenced by the school setting (De Bortoli & Thomson, 2010). Drawing form the results of PISA 2000 and 2003,

De Bortoli and Thomson suggest that a supportive environment characterized by among others high expectations and positive teacher - student relations can be a positive influence on students' performance. They add that disruptive behavior and negative attitudes towards school may be associated with low academic performance.

The OECD which has a country membership of about 30 countries conducted an international survey on the working conditions of teachers and the learning environment in schools between the years 2007 to 2008 in 24 countries. The sample comprised 200 schools per country and 20 teachers in each school (OECD, 2009, pp.19-20). The aim of the survey was to create effective teaching and learning environment through helping member countries to review and develop policies that foster effective teaching.

From the survey by the OECD, under the school climate theme, school principals reported on the extent to which fourteen aspects of teacher and student behaviour hindered instruction in their school. Information was collected on three types of teacher behaviour which can hinder instruction: These included teachers arriving late at school, teacher absenteeism, and teachers' lack of preparation. Information on student behaviour, which was more generally considered as hindering students learning included: students arriving late at school; absenteeism; classroom disturbances; cheating; profanity or swearing; vandalism; theft; intimidation or verbal abuse of other students; physical injury to other students; intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers or staff; and use or possession of drugs and or alcohol.

The survey findings revealed that Countries varied markedly in the extent to which school principals reported that teachers' actions hindered instruction. On average, across the Teaching And Learning International Survey (TALIS) countries, around one-quarter of teachers work in schools whose school principal reported that teacher absenteeism and lack of preparation hindered

instruction to some extent or a lot, the problem was greater in certain countries. Over half of teachers worked in schools whose school principal reported a lack of preparation by teachers (in Italy 53% of teachers and Mexico (70%). In Mexico, the problem appeared to be compounded by a similar proportion of teachers in schools whose school principal reported that instruction was hindered to some extent or a lot by teacher absenteeism and by teachers arriving late at school. On average across TALIS countries, only 15% of teachers worked in schools whose school principal reported that teachers arriving late at school hindered instruction (OECD, 2009, p. 40)

Students' actions were reported to hinder instruction to a greater degree than teachers' actions. The most important were classroom disturbances (60% of teachers worked in schools whose school principal reported that instruction was hindered to some extent or a lot by classroom disturbances), student absenteeism (46%), students arriving late at school (39%), profanity and swearing (37%), and intimidation or verbal abuse of other students (35%). School principals reported that intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers and other staff (17%), physical injury to other students (16%), theft (15%), and use or possession of drugs and alcohol (11%) were not considered problems hindering instruction to the same extent (OECD, 2009, p. 38)

Macneil, Prater and Busch (2009) carried out a study on effects of school culture and climate on student achievement in 29 schools located in a large suburban school district in southeast Texas. The purpose of the study was to investigate whether Exemplary, Recognized and Acceptable schools differ in their school climates, as measured by the 10 dimensions of the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI). The Texas Education Agency assigned one of three ratings to the schools based on student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Test results from 24,684 students were used as the basis for these ratings. Teachers in each of the

schools rated the organizational health of their respective unit using the OHI. A total of 1727 teachers completed the survey. The individual school was used as the unit of analysis for the study.

The findings revealed that each of the schools that demonstrated higher student achievement as shown by their Exemplary rating also demonstrated healthier climates than schools with Acceptable ratings. The Exemplary schools consistently demonstrated higher scores on each of the 10 dimensions of organizational health than Acceptable schools. The schools with higher student achievement consistently exhibited healthier school climates.

Teacher effect on effective teaching and learning plays a major role in achievement of literacy among pupils. Aspects of the teacher's qualifications, knowledge of the subject content, methods of content delivery (pedagogy), beliefs and attitudes are the themes emerging from literature review.

Wray and Medwell (1999) conducted a research in the United Kingdom aimed at comparing the practices, beliefs and knowledge of a group of teachers identified as effective at teaching literacy with those of a group of teachers not so identified. Their sample comprised 228 primary school teachers identified as effective and 71 primary school teachers not so identified (Wray & Medwell, 1999, p. 4).

Their major findings on teachers subject knowledge in literacy was that effective teachers apart from knowing the requirements of the national curriculum for English, they placed great emphasis on children's knowledge of the purposes and functions of reading and writing and the structures used to enable these purposes. They taught language structures functionally and meaningfully to children by contextualizing their teaching. The dual researchers also found that effective teachers of literacy knew the materials they were teaching in a way; they appeared to know and understand it in the form in which they taught it to the children.

Effective teachers of literacy were also found to be more diagnostic in ways in which they approached the task of judging samples of children's reading and writing. The teachers could even generate explanations as to why children read and write the way they did. These teachers were able to account for their conclusions and make detailed judgment quickly. This demonstrated that effective teachers have a firm command of subject knowledge relating to literacy processes.

Wray and Medwell (1999) also found that effective teachers placed a high value upon communication and composition and they favored teaching activities which explicitly emphasized the understanding of what was read and written. Effective teachers were also found to translate their beliefs and purposes into practices by paying systematic attention to the goals they had identified for reading and writing and to technical processes such as phonic knowledge, spelling and grammatical knowledge and punctuation. They also found that effective teachers gave explicit attention to word and sentence level aspects of reading and writing within whole reading text activities which were both meaningful and explained clearly to pupils. In summary, these effective teachers had coherent and consistent beliefs in the sense that their beliefs were internally consistent, their practices lived up to their aspirations and their belief included a connection between goal of teaching and learning activities themselves.

On teaching practices, Wray and Medwell found that effective teachers embedded their teaching into wider context implicitly and explicitly in order to show how specific connection aspects of reading and writing contributed to communication. They used extensive modeling. Effective teachers' lessons were conducted at a brisk pace within clear time frames, and they concluded their lessons by reviewing with the whole class what the children had done during the lesson.

The study of Wray and Medwell (1999) focused on habits of effective literacy teachers. However the study did not address whole school effect and the characteristic of pupils in the acquisition of reading literacy. Some schools have good climate for reading literacy learning while others do not have and that affects the effectiveness of the teachers. Student characteristic for example attentiveness, gender and social economic status also influence the efficacy of an effective teacher.

There is also a demand on specialist subject teachers to undertake cross-curricular work in the fields of reading literacy development. There is, however, insufficient research data concerning teachers' readiness for such broadening of their responsibilities. If teachers and trainees with differing subject backgrounds have significantly different concepts of the purpose and functions of reading literacy in education, this could potentially jeopardize the effectiveness of the Strategy, as well as informing a broader debate about the role of specialist subject knowledge in conceptualizing and operationalizing key educational ideas (Stables, Martin & Arnold, 2004).

Naoreen, Arshad and Aslam (2011) carried out a study on the Impact of in-service teacher training on students' learning achievement at Faisalabad in Pakistan. The sample comprised 4th grade students and their teachers in 48 schools from Faisalabad. Teachers in 24 schools were imparted in - service training while the remaining 24 were not. Thirty five students were taken as a sample from the schools and an achievement test was administered. The study showed that trained teachers were significantly better than untrained teachers.

Akinsulu (2010) carried out a study in Nigeria to examine the number of qualified teachers and its relationship to students' academic performance in public secondary schools in a sample of Local Government Areas (LGA) of Osun State. The research designed employed for the study was descriptive survey involving the use of a questionnaire, unstructured interviews and documents.

The population of this study included two hundred and ninety (290) public secondary schools in the 31 LGAs in the state. The findings of the study showed that teachers' qualifications, experience and teacher–student ratio were significantly related to students' academic performance.

The physical, human and financial resources invested in schools influence not only the education provided to students but also aspects of teachers and their teaching. The OECD international survey in 2007 to 2008 focused on this factor and it's effect on school learning. Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) shows that the more resource shortages are perceived to hinder instruction, the lower student performance (OECD 2007). In addition, inequalities in student's educational performance often reflect disparities in their individual resources and socio-economic status and in the resources invested in schools (OECD, 2008). In some education systems, there are concerns that schools not only lack the resources to meet the educational requirements of their students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with special learning needs, but that schools with more students from disadvantaged backgrounds may have fewer resources with which to educate their students than those with students from more privileged backgrounds (OECD, 2008).

Data were collected from school principals from the twenty four participating countries concerning the extent to which a lack of resources hindered instruction for students. The School principals were asked to consider eight categories: (availability of) qualified teachers; laboratory technicians; instructional support personnel; other support personnel; instructional materials; computers for instruction; other equipment; and library materials. On average across Teaching And Learning International Survey (TALIS) countries, between one-third and one-half of teachers taught in schools whose school principals felt that shortages in one or more of these areas hindered their school's capacity to provide instruction to some extent or a lot. This ranged from 33% of

teachers whose school principals reported that instruction was hindered to some extent by lack of laboratory technicians, to 50% of teachers whose school principals reported that instruction was hindered to some extent by a shortage of other equipment (OECD, 2009).

More than half of teachers in Brazil, Bulgaria, Ireland, Lithuania, Mexico and Turkey worked in schools whose school principals reported that a lack or inadequacy of materials in at least three of four kinds of resources (instructional materials, computers for instruction, library materials and other equipment) hindered instruction. More than half worked in schools where the school principal reported that instruction was hindered to some extent or a lot by a shortage or inadequacy of instructional materials. More than half worked in schools where the school principal reported that a shortage or inadequacy of library materials hindered instruction. More than half also worked in schools where the school principal reported that a shortage of computers hindered instruction. Given issues of school resources and tradeoffs in decision making, it is worth noting that countries with higher ratios of teachers to pedagogical or administrative personnel were not necessarily those in which school principals considered that this hinders instruction. Among countries with a relatively high average class size an above-average percentage of school principals considered a lack of qualified teachers as a factor hindering instruction.

In Korea, another country with a high average class size (35 students), only about 19% of teachers worked in schools whose school principal reported that a lack of qualified teachers hindered instruction, one of the lowest percentages among TALIS countries (OECD). However, in certain countries with smaller than average class sizes, a large percentage of teachers worked in schools whose school principal reported a lack of qualified teachers which hindered instruction. In Austria, Estonia, Italy, and Lithuania, with average class sizes of less than 22 students, around

one-half to two-thirds of teachers' school principals considered that a lack of qualified teachers hindered instruction in their school to at least some extent.

Eivers, Close, Shiel, Millar, Clerkin, Gilleece and Kiniry (2010) carried out a national assessment of mathematics and English reading in Irish primary schools in 2009 on behalf of the Department of Education & skills. The assessment sample included 4,000 second and 4,000 sixth class pupils (Eivers et al., 2010). Contextual data were obtained from questionnaires completed by pupils, parents, class teachers, and principals.

Among their major findings was that Classroom or teacher characteristics that significantly associated with achievement included teaching experience, possession of an additional teaching qualification such as masters in education, and teacher confidence in their ability to teach reading and mathematics. School level characteristics associated with higher achievement on both assessments included a high social economic status enrolment, high attendance rates, and few pupils in receipt of language or learning support. Principals' estimates of the percentage of their schools' enrolment likely to perform at or below the 12th percentile on English or mathematics tests showed stronger correlations with school-level achievement than did the percentage of enrolment in receipt of additional support for English or mathematics

Uwezo is an East African initiative with overall quality assurance and management under Twaweza. In 2012 Uwezo conducted a national wide survey in Kenya on basic reading literacy achievement among children between 6 to 16 years. The sample comprised 56 out of 158 districts, 153,900 children from 90,820 homes. In their report they also analyzed information from 20% of public schools (Uwezo, 2012).

In the introduction of the Uwezo 2012 Report, Sara Ruto (2012) the regional manager of the Uwezo East Africa reported that Kenyan public schools have well trained teachers. However,

the secondary findings of the survey revealed that 10 % of teachers in public primary school are absent at any given school day and that on average 30% of the teachers are employed by parents to curb teachers shortage. The report also revealed that absenteeism rate of pupils in public school on average is 9% at any given day. The learning environment was also found unconducive for leaning the average number of pupils being 64 children per class while the Kenyan Ministry of Education recommends 40 children per class. Pupils share books, with the rate in English subject being 3.2 per book. There is also little access to computers having only 12.4% of schools having computers (Uwezo Kenya, 2012).

The survey by Uwezo Kenya shed light on some of the limiting factors that could be affecting achievement of literacy among Kenyan primary school pupils. However the survey did not consider the influence of teacher's effectiveness and students' characteristic. This study addressed this gap.

Yara and Otieno (2010) carried out a study at Bodo district in Kenya to assess the effect of teaching and learning resources on academic performance in secondary schools. They utilized a descriptive survey design. The sample comprised 242 students randomly selected from nine school. Among their findings was that teaching and learning resources significantly influenced academic performance.

**2.3 Influence of Home Environment on Acquisition of Reading literacy skills**

Early literacy activities in family and preschool are considered important for promoting children's early reading literacy skills (Lehrl, Smidt, Grosse & Richter, 2013). The themes of home environment variable emerging from the literature review include social economic status, parent's educational level and occupation, pre-school literacy and numeracy related activities and educational resources found at home. Lehrl et al. (2013) conducted a longitudinal study in two

German federal states to identify patterns of literacy and numeracy activities in preschools and their relation to structural preschool characteristics and to attributes of the home learning environment. The sample comprised 421 children between the ages of 3-10 years attending 89 preschool classes (Lehrl et al., 2013). Among their key findings was that children who are less exposed to literacy-related educational experiences at home find themselves in a kind of 'double jeopardy': they are more likely to attend a preschool where the occurrence of literacy- and numeracy-related activities is comparatively low.

Their study was informative on the role of home literacy in determining which type of school and level the child joins in preschool. The study revealed that most of the children attended preschools which provided comparatively low levels of activities in the domain of literacy. The study did not however inform on whether the level of engagement in reading literacy activities at home have any effect on how the students continued to acquire the same skills in school.

William and Rask (2003), carried out a study in the UK to identify factors that enable young able children develop and extend their literacy skills. The study involved 4 classes of 6 year olds. In each class they interviewed 2 children, their parents and teacher (William & Rask, 2003). Their study also sought to find out if preschool experiences had a significant bearing in development of literacy processes and if there are any additional factors that influence their learning of literacy.

Their study findings revealed that early literacy experiences in everyday context in the home provided a useful foundation for successful literacy learning in school. In the view of the interviewed teachers, experiences that were actively encouraged by interested and supportive adults provided a useful foundation for successful literacy learning in school. The meaningful contexts offered through play helped children gain metacognitive awareness of why it is important

to be literate. In conclusion, William and Rask noted that the influence of home on literacy development among the interviewed pupils, had been considerable and through it, they readily initiated literacy activities in play settings at both home and school. They added that these children chose to undertake more reading and writing tasks than their peers because they were already motivated by their successes and knew that literacy was an important means of communicating and finding out information.

William and Rask (2003) study was very informative on the importance of home literacy experiences on development of literacy in school. However the sample of the study was too small and was not specific on reading literacy. There is no evidence that their findings can be generalized to all other cultures particularly in Africa.

From Eivers et al. (2010) study in primary schools in Ireland Lower pupil achievement was linked to a number of demographic characteristics, including familial low socioeconomic status (SES), parental unemployment, membership of the Traveler community, speaking a first language other than English or Irish, living in a lone-parent household, or being part of a large family. Home literacy activities that were positively related to achievement included parents reading for enjoyment, the availability of resources such as books in the home, parental confidence in their ability to assist their child with reading or mathematics homework, and pupils spending no more than a moderate amount of time on school days on the internet or playing computer games.

The studies above reveal that home literacy and experiences, social economic background of children and parents level of education influence achievement of literacy skills development which includes reading literacy. However there is no literature on similar studies carried out in Africa. There is no evidence that the findings in those countries are applicable in African cultures.

This study investigated the factors in the home environment that influence achievement of basic reading literacy skills among children in the African.

**2.4 Influence of Student Characteristics in Acquisition of Reading Literacy Skills**

Frigo, Corrigan, Adams, Hughes, Stephens and Woods (2004), on behalf of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) carried out a longitudinal study in Australia to monitor growth in the English literacy achievement of a group of Indigenous students through the early years of primary school prior to Year 3. The study explored the learning contexts experienced by the students and other factors associated with growth and achievement. Thirteen schools participated in the project which students commenced school in 2000 and completed English literacy assessments in 2000, 2001 and 2002. About 152 students completed at least one of the 5 sets of assessments while 111 students completed at least two or more of the same assessments (Frigo et al., 2004)

Among their key findings was that Initial achievement, language background, attendance and attentiveness of the students affected the students' literacy achievement. Student performance on the first assessment was found to be the strongest predictor of their subsequent achievement. Students who spoke standard Australian English at home consistently achieved at a higher level than those who did not. Students who had higher attendance rates achieved at a higher level. Students who were rated as more attentive achieved at a higher level on English literacy.

Frigo et al. (2005) study was comprehensive especially because it was longitudinal. However, whether the study findings can be generalized to other cultures needs to be proved through similar empirical studies. A similar study was conducted in Australia by De Bortoli and Thomson (2010) though their study involved analysis of results of an earlier study by OECD.

Eivers et al. (2010) study findings in Ireland primary schools, revealed that Pupil characteristics associated with higher performance included high attendance rates, positive ratings by themselves, their teachers and parents on the domain, positive mathematics self-concept (for mathematics performance), enjoyment of reading (for reading performance), and not being in receipt of additional support in school. Pupils in receipt of additional support for English or mathematics performed poorly on both assessments, while those receiving language supports performed poorly on reading and slightly below average on mathematics.

De Bortoli and Thomson (2010) carried out a research on contextual factors that influenced the achievement of Australian's indigenous students. Their report included analysis of PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) among OEDC and partner countries in years 2000, 2003 and 2006. The sample for their study comprised 15 years and 16 years old in educational institutions. The Australian sample from which these study findings were based comprised of 493 indigenous students in year 2000, 815 students in year 2003 and 1080 students in year 2006 (De Bortoli & Thomson, 2010).

During their study, they aimed among other things, to find out home influences and educational resources in the home, students attitudes, engagement, motivation and beliefs, students' learning strategies and preferences. Among their key findings was that reading performance of the indigenous students was significantly influenced by home educational resources, engagement in reading and academic self-concept. De Bortoli and Thomson (2010) study was comprehensive in its analysis of the contextual factors that influence the achievement of the indigenous students in Australia. This is attributed by the fact that it was longitudinal since it considered the change in variables from years 2000 to 2010. The study also included measurement of a wide range of variables in depth. These variables included the home and

educational background, attitudes, engagement, motivation and beliefs, learning strategies and preferences and the learning environment. However this study was not specific on reading literacy and did not look at the contextual factors of students in the lower grades, where basic reading literacy skills are actively acquired, which according to many studies, affect future learning and achievement in upper grades.

Staden and Bosker (2011) carried out a research study on factors that affect South African reading literacy achievement. The study aimed to determine the student aptitude factors that affect performance in reading literacy, the extent to which opportunity to learn affect reading literacy performance of grade 4 students and the effect of the quality of instructional events on grade 4 students achievement. The study involved a sample of 15,744 grade 4 students from 342 schools (Staden & Bosker, 2011).

An aptitude scale consisted items responding to reading motivation, student engagement and parental involvement. Among the key findings of the study was that students' motivation to read increases reading achievement scores, while student engagement in reading showed an increased effect on reading achievement. Staden and Bosker study revealed that aptitude factors in terms of parental involvement, student motivation and student engagement are important in reading achievement. Opportunity and quality of instructional events at classroom level were also found to affect reading literacy achievement. Staden and Bosker (2011) study though thorough in investigating the chosen variables failed to comprehensively address many other variable that play a major role on reading achievement among children below $4^{th}$ grade. Variables like school and home environment were conspicuously not considered though outside the chosen Carroll's model.

Reche, Bundi, Riungu and Mbugua (2012) carried out a descriptive survey study aimed at finding out the factors that contribute to poor performance in K.C.P.E. in public day primary

schools in Mwimbi Division, Maara District, Kenya. One of the study objectives was to establish the pupil based factors. The sample composed of 6 head teachers, 51 teachers and 146 standard eight pupils (Reche et. al., 2012). Among the key findings was that absenteeism and lateness of pupils plus lack of support from parents were student based contributing factors to poor performance.

The study by Reche et al. (2012) was general and involved many variables that are not discussed in this study. However it did not exhaustively address the issue of student factors in details as it only considered absenteeism, lateness, language use and the assistant the pupils get from home. Factors like students' attitude towards education, self-efficacy in various subjects plus among other student factors could have been addressed.

Onsomu, Kosimbei and Ngware (2005), carried out a study to examine gender parity in primary schools in Kenya and factors that explain differential performance in mathematics and reading including gender. One of their specific study objective was to establish the impact of gender differences and socioeconomic factors on learning achievements both in reading (English) and numeracy (Mathematics). Among their key findings was that gender differentials were manifested in schooling performance and that various gender related and socio-economic variables affect pupils' performance in reading. Overall, the study revealed that boys perform better than girls in both mathematics and reading. The study of Onsomu, Kosimbei and Ngware (2005) revealed an important variable on student characteristic which is gender in the context of an African country. This study however contradicts another study in Australia conducted by Frigo et al. (2005) whose findings indicated that gender has no influence on literacy skills development.

## 2.5 Challenges Facing Teaching and Learning of Reading Literacy

O'Connor and Geiger (2009) carried out a study in South Africa in Western Cape Town aimed at establishing the challenges facing primary school educators of English as second or other language learners. The study sample comprised of 100 educators from 21 schools. The educators were either grade 1, 2 or 3 teachers (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009). They used a mixed-methods descriptive design, self-administered questionnaire and three focus groups for data collection. Among the key findings on the challenges included having large classes, including large proportions of ESOL learners, shortage of educators able to speak isiXhosa, the most frequently occurring first (or home) language of the region's ESOL learners. Other Challenges faced by educators when teaching ESOL learners included learners' academic and socio-emotional difficulties and a lack of parent involvement in their children's education.

Each year since 2009, Uwezo has been undertaking a large scale survey of children and schools throughout Kenya, as well as in Uganda and mainland Tanzania. The objective of these surveys is to provide an independent assessment on the extent to which children aged six to sixteen years are actually learning, as well as to collect data about the characteristics of government primary schools across the country. Jones (2012) did an analysis focusing of the Uwezo survey findings on the characteristics of government primary schools across Kenya. He used data covering nearly three thousand and five hundred schools, which was representative at the district level. From the analysis, there are several challenges faced by the government public schools in Kenya which include pupils and teacher absenteeism, large class sizes beyond the recommended forty pupils per class. The arid regions in Kenya had more challenges especially in retention of both the teachers and the students. The regions had especially difficulty attracting and retaining experienced head

teachers. Jones (2012) analysis did not implicitly relate these challenges with the evidenced low academic achievement especially in reading literacy.

Bunyi (2006) in the paper commissioned for EFA Global Monitoring Report, advanced several challenges facing development of literacy in Kenya. Among the challenges is introducing children to literacy in three languages simultaneously – in mother tongue, Kiswahili and English which does not promote fast or effective reading literacy acquisition. Further, she adds that majority of Kenyan children do not enroll in any ECDE programmes. In addition, the Pre-primary syllabus does not directly teach reading and writing, yet there is an unofficial requirement that Standard one children are able to read and write. Literacy development is not given adequate attention in teacher training programnmes. For example, there is no special training for lower primary teachers who are expected to teach initial reading. Low morale and lack of commitment have also characterized the teaching profession for a long time. Gender insensitive and child unfriendly school environments are yet other contributory factors. Free primary education has compounded the quality issues with issues such as very large classes and increased diversity of pupils and over age emerging

**2.6 How Reading Literacy Levels in Public Primary Schools can be Improved**

From Eivers et al. (2010) study in primary schools in Ireland, they made several recommendations which when implemented can improve reading literacy levels in Ireland. These recommendations included among other encouraging pupils to engage in reading to the best of their ability. Class libraries should contain a balance of text types, rather than the current strong bias towards fiction texts. Schools should make greater use of aggregated data (particularly from standardized tests) to identify strengths and weaknesses across grade levels and curricular areas. The resultant planning and actions should be grounded in what research indicates are

characteristics of effective schools for example strong leadership, collaborative and consistent approaches to teaching, and ongoing appraisal of teaching and learning.

Eivers et al. (2010) recommends that Schools, led by principals, need to develop a more integrated approach to learning support and teaching resources. Where possible, provision needs to be restructured to increase in-class provision, and to support collaboration between class teachers and special education personnel. In all schools, the results of standardized English tests should be shared at least annually. Individual outcomes should be used to inform pupils and parents about progress, to plan learning programmes around key objectives, and to inform differentiated classroom instruction. Pooled outcomes should be used to identify school-level targets. To facilitate these activities, schools and teachers should have access to appropriate supports, including software.

Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq and Berhanu (2011) conducted a survey study to examine different factors influencing the academic performance of secondary school students in a metropolitan city of Pakistan. The respondents for this study were $10^{th}$ grade students; 300 male and 300 female (Farooq, et al., 2011). In their recommendation they noted that a survey process of identification of variables that influence achievement of literacy among students must be given full attention and priority so that the teachers may be able to develop instructional strategies for making sure that all the children be provided with the opportunities to arrive at their fullest potential in learning and performance.

Among the findings of Uwezo survey in Kenya in 2012 was that pupils share English and Kiswahili text books, the rate of teacher and pupils' absenteeism is also relatively high and the average number of pupils per class is above the recommended forty pupils. To improve reading

literacy the number of teaching and learning resources can be increased, not just the books but also classrooms and the number of effective teachers.

**2.7 Summary and Research Gap**

The reviewed literature from empirical studies revealed that effective teaching and learning of reading literacy encompasses among others, a positive school climate characterized by high levels of student achievement, high expectations and positive teacher-student relationship, motivated teachers and students. Effective teachers play a vital role on learners' achievement. Teaching and learning resources like classroom, books and additional materials are also very important.

Home environment characteristics that affect achievement of reading literacy skills that have been revealed from the reviewed literature include the social economic status, parental education and occupation and literacy activities done at home. Among the challenges facing teaching and learning of reading literacy the emerging themes are literacy and numeracy policy issues by the school management, competence of educators, lack of enough resources, absenteeism by teachers and students and competence of teachers.

Most of the studies on factors that contribute to learning of reading literacy have been done outside Africa and mostly in Australia. This study was therefore carried out in Kenya which is an African country to fill the knowledge gap on the factors that influence reading literacy among African children. Though assessment on reading literacy development among Kenyan children have been conducted severally by for example Uwezo organization, ASER, NASMLA, SACMEQ among others, these studies are mainly concerned with the levels of reading literacy and not the factors that contribute to the observed reading literacy levels. Assessments by Uwezo organization did not specifically focus on reading literacy in specific but literacy levels in general. This study

therefore filled the knowledge gap on the factors that contribute specifically to the reading literacy levels observed among primary school children in Nyeri County Kenya which is socially in the African context.

This study therefore filled the knowledge gap by assessing the factors that influence achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County Kenya.

# CHAPTER THREE

# RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes how the research was conducted in respect to the research design, the target population, sample and sampling procedures, description of the instruments and the data collection procedure.

## 3.2 Locale of the Study

The study was carried out in Nyeri County, Kenya in East Africa. Nyeri County is in the central region of Kenya situated about 150 kilometers from Kenya's Capital city Nairobi. It covers an area of 3,337 square kilometers with an approximate population of 661, 156 people (Open Data Kenya, 2014).

## 3.3 Research Design

Oppenheim (1992) defines Research Design as the basic plan or strategy of the research and the logic behind it, which makes it possible and valid to draw more general conclusions from it. This study utilized cross-sectional survey design, to study a sample of 273 participants comprised of pupils, teachers and head teachers, drawn from 39 sample schools from a population of 390 schools. According to Ogula and Onsongo (2009), Cross-Sectional Survey research method is used to study a large number of subjects drawn from a defined population. The target population for this study was relatively large prompting for sampling and subsequently the utilization of cross-sectional survey design to save on cost and time and to enable generalization of the research findings.

Ogula and Onsongo (2009) add that survey design is used to describe people and their beliefs, attitude and behavior for the purpose of building theories or generalization about a

population at present. This study aimed at describing the factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy and numeracy among primary school pupils. Cross-sectional survey collects data from a target population or sample at one point in time (Ogula & Onsongo, 2009). Thus this design provided current conditions of the phenomenon by collecting information using questionnaires, structured interviews and observation guide at one point in time and analyzing the data quantitatively.

### 3.4 Target Population

The target population comprised of primary schools head teachers, literacy teachers and class six pupils in public primary schools in Nyeri County, Kenya. The County has six constituencies with a total of three hundred and ninety public primary schools (PPS). The constituencies and their total number of public primary schools are; Nyeri Town 44, Kieni 92, Tetu 50, Mathira 78, Mukurwe-ini 70 and Othaya 56 . These schools are categorized into eight; Day Only Ordinary, Day Only Special, Day Only Integrated, Day and Boarding Ordinary, Day and Boarding Special, Day and Boarding Integrated, Boarding Only Ordinary and Boarding special public primary schools (Open Data Kenya, 2014).

### 3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedures

The sample size for this study comprised 156 class six pupils, 78 teachers and 39 head teachers drawn from a sample of 39 schools. To arrive at the sample, multi – stage random sampling method was used, which involves multiple selection of sampling units before arriving at the final sample unit. Sampling is carried out in stages using smaller and smaller units at each stage (Ogula and Onsongo, 2009). Based on Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), who propose that 10% of population for large samples is adequate, this study used 10% of the population at each stage to arrive at the sample.

A sample of 39 schools was selected representatively from 390 schools in the six constituencies using simple random sampling. To select the number of schools from each constituency, the researcher divided the sample size with population size and multiplied the results by the number of schools in the particular constituency ( $\frac{39}{390} \times n$ , where *n* is the number of schools in a constituency). Figure 2.1 presents the sampling matrix used in the study.

| County | Constituency | Number of School | Proportionate Sample ( $\frac{39}{390} \times n$) | Proportionate Sample (10%) | Sample Size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nyeri | Nyeri Town | 44 | $\frac{39}{390} \times 44 = 4$ | 11% | 4 |
| | Kieni | 92 | $\frac{39}{390} \times 92 = 9$ | 24% | 9 |
| | Tetu | 50 | $\frac{39}{390} \times 50 = 5$ | 13% | 5 |
| | Mathira | 78 | $\frac{39}{390} \times 78 = 8$ | 20% | 8 |
| | Mukurwe – ini | 70 | $\frac{39}{390} \times 70 = 7$ | 18% | 7 |
| | Othaya | 56 | $\frac{39}{390} \times 56 = 6$ | 14% | 6 |
| | 6 | 390 | $\frac{39}{390} \times 390 = 39$ | 100% | 39 |

Figure 2.1: Sampling Matrix

Source: Author (2014

The study chose 10% of the entire population (390) which is 39. Proportionately 11% of the schools in Nyeri town, 24% in Kieni, 13% in Tetu, 20% in Mathira, 18% in Mukurwe-ini and 14% in Othaya. Therefore, the researcher randomly selected 4 schools in Nyeri Town, 9 schools from

Kieni, 5 schools in Tetu, 8 from Mathira, 7 from Mukurwe-ini and 6 schools from Othaya. The researcher was satisfied with the proportional representation of each constituency amongst the sampled schools. Simple random sampling was used to pick the participant schools from each constituency. To accomplish this, the researcher printed out the names of schools per constituency and cut them out in small pieces of paper, folded the papers and reshuffled them in a container after which a blind folded assistant picked randomly the required number of papers representing the number of the sample size per constituency.

Four class six pupils (two girls and two boys) were selected from each sample schools by simple random sampling. All the pupils were asked to write their names on provided pieces of papers and to fold them. The researcher collected the papers from girls separately and the papers from boys separately. After reshuffling the papers, a blind folded assistant picked two papers from girls' bunch of papers and two from the boys' bunch. In each school, two English subject teachers were selected by simple random sampling. All the head teachers of the sampled schools were purposefully selected by virtue of their office. The total sample comprised 273 participants.

**3.6 Description of Research Instruments**

Data was collected using three kinds of instruments; questionnaires, checklist and a pupils' test. Questionnaires were used to collect information from teachers, head teachers and pupils. Questionnaires were appropriate for this study because they enabled the researcher to collect a lot of information at once. The checklist was used to collect information which helped to ascertain reliability of the information collected using the questionnaires. The pupils' test was used to collect information on the ability of the pupils to read simple words and text.

### 3.6.1 Head Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire was composed of four sections. Section A sought to obtain demographic information which included gender, academic qualification and duration of experience in school headship. Section B sought information on implementation of teaching and learning. Section C sought information on influence of home environment. Section D sought information on students' characteristics. Sections B, C, and D also sought to get information on challenges and recommendations for improvement.

### 3.6.2 Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire was composed of four sections. Section A sought the teachers' demographic information which includes gender, duration of experience as a subject teacher and as a teacher and academic achievement. Section B sought information on implementation of teaching and learning. Section C sought information on influence of home environment. Section D sought information on students' characteristics. All the sections from section B to D sought information on challenges and recommendations for improvement in literacy and numeracy skill acquisition by the pupils.

### 3.6.3 Pupils' Questionnaire

This questionnaire was composed of four sections. Section A sought the pupils' demographic information which includes gender and age. Section B sought information on implementation of teaching and learning. Section C will sought information on influence of home environment. Section D sought information on students' characteristics. All the sections from section B to D also sought information on challenges and recommendations for improvement in literacy and numeracy skill acquisition by the pupils.

### 3.6.4 Checklist

The checklist sought information on the state of the physical environment of the school which is a component of the school climate, availability of a school timetable and whether English subjects are allocated the recommended number of lessons per week. It also sought information on availability of the library and if it has a variety of English story books for junior classes. The checklist also sought information on pupils' attendance and the state of the classrooms.

### 3.6.5 Pupils' Reading Test

Pupils' test sought information on pupils' ability to read simple words and texts and comprehension of a simple story. The test was composed of eight words, two paragraphs and a short story from which the pupils answered questions to test the ability to comprehend. In order to pass the reading test, a pupil was expected to read correctly four words and one paragraph correctly, and answer correctly the three questions from the story.

## 3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher sought clearance from the department of post graduate studies at Catholic University of Eastern Africa first before seeking a research permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). After the research permit was granted from NACOSTI, further clearance was sought from Nyeri County Director of Education and District Education officers. There were two data collection sessions; the first was for pre-testing the tools and the second was the main study. The tools were pre-tested in one of the schools in Nyeri County. Data collection for the main study was carried out after the researcher had ascertained the administerbility and reliability of the research instruments.

First the researcher administered the questionnaires to the sampled teachers and the head teacher. Then the sampled class six pupils were assembled in an appropriate room that the

researcher requested the head teachers to provide. The researcher with the help of one of the school's teachers debriefed the pupils. The researcher then helped the pupils to fill the questionnaires by reading for them and offering clarification in pupils' mother tongues or in Kiswahili. After filling the questionnaires the reading test was administered to the pupils one after the other. The researcher with a teacher's help moved around the school filling the information needed on the checklist. The filled questionnaires and reading test were collected the same day to increase their rate of return.

### 3.8 Validity of the Instruments

Validity is the extent to which inference made on the basis of numerical scores is appropriate, meaningful and useful (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2001). The study used three types of data collection instruments (questionnaires checklist and a reading test) to foster an essence of triangulation which would increase validity. The researcher sought opinion of peers, supervisors and experts in the areas of Education and Research at the catholic University of Eastern Africa on validity of the tools. This assisted in examination of the content and the degree to which the instruments would collect the intended information.

### 3.9 Pilot Test

A pilot test of the instruments was conducted before the main study. This helped to establish the reliability and validity of the instruments. Participants were selected from one of the schools in Nyeri County. The selected school was not considered for the main study. The researcher administered the instruments personally. From the collected data, the researcher checked for any inconsistency on the items ability to collect the intended information. The irrelevant items were removed or replaced. Internal consistency reliability of the instruments was calculated with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.

### 3.10 Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability refers to the degree to which a test consistently produces the same scores (Wadsworth, 2006). Reliability is used to measure the extent to which an instrument will yield the same score when administered at different times, locations, or similar populations. The data from the pilot study was coded and entered into the computer and used to calculate the internal consistency reliability of the instruments. The items from the instruments were first grouped according to the variable they were representing. The variable for implementation of teaching and learning had 34 items, for home environment had 11 items and the variable for students' characteristics had 15 items. The internal consistency of the items for each variable was then determined by calculating the Cronbanch's alpha coefficient using SPSS version 20.

Cronbanch's alpha is expressed as a correlation coefficient ranging from 0 to +1. Its coefficient measures how well items in the instrument are positively correlated to one another. The closer the estimated Cronbach's alpha coefficient to 1, the higher the internal reliability of the instrument. According to the guidelines provided by DeVellis (2011) an alpha coefficient above 0.7 is acceptable. The items making up the three sets of variables in the pilot study produced an average alpha of 0.80 and this was considered satisfactory since it was above 0.7.

### 3.11 Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis is an attempt to summarize data collected for the study in a dependable and accurate manner (Gay, Geoffrey & Peter, 2009). After collecting data, the tools were sorted out and organized in five groups; those from teachers, pupils, head teachers and the checklists. Data was analyzed with the help of SPSS version 20. Data was coded, entered in the computer and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Summarized data was presented in tables and figures.

Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze demographic data from all the instruments. These includes age of pupils, gender, level of academic qualification, experience, and duration of experience in current school. The reading test for pupils was also analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Multiple regression analysis which is a form of inferential statistics was used to establish the extent of influence of teaching and learning, home environment factors and students characteristics on achievement of basic reading literacy. Multiple Regression helped to establish the percentage contribution of the variables on performance of reading literacy tests administered. Data for answering research question four and five on challenges affecting achievement of basic reading literacy and how basic reading literacy levels can be improved was coded and the frequency of the various answers established.

**3.12 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics refer to norms of conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior (Rensnik, 2011). Research ethics provide guidelines for responsible conduct of research. To ensure ethical considerations during this study, the researcher sought consent from the department of post graduate studies at Catholic University of Eastern Africa after defending the proposal. Consent was sought from NACOSTI which issued a research permit. Consent was also sought from Nyeri County Director of Education and District Education Officers.

In every school that the researcher went to collect data, permission was sought from the head teachers before embarking administration of tools. According to Fouka and Mantzorou (2011), informed consent is the major ethical issue in conducting research. It is one of the means by which participant autonomy is protected. It seeks to prevent assaults on the integrity of participants and protect personal liberty and veracity. Fouka and Mantzorou add that informed

consent helps individuals to make informed decisions in order to participate voluntarily by having information on possible risks and benefits of the research. The names of the participating schools and the individual participants remained anonymous to protect their identity. The data collected was treated confidentially. Fouka and Mantzorou (2011) notes that the issue of confidentiality and anonymity is closely connected with the rights for dignity and fidelity.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analyzed data, its interpretation and discussion based on the research questions. The chapter has seven sections. Section one presents demographic characteristics of the study participants. Section two presents information on implementation of teaching and learning of reading literacy. Section three presents information on factors in the home environment of the learner. Section four presents information on students' characteristics. Section five presents information on challenges facing teaching and learning of reading literacy. Section six presents information on ways of improving the level of reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County. Section seven presents analysis of the reading literacy test. Analysis of data is presented in frequency Tables and Charts.

## 4.2 Rate of Return of Data Collection Instruments

The study utilized five data collection instruments; questionnaires for head teachers, teachers and pupils, checklist and a test. Analysis of their rate of return is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Return Rate of Data Collection Instruments**

| Target Respondents | Expected Respondents | Actual respondents | Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Head Teachers Questionnaires | 39 | 36 | 92% |
| Teachers Questionnaires | 78 | 78 | 100% |
| Pupils' Questionnaires | 156 | 156 | 100% |
| Pupils' Reading Literacy Test | 156 | 156 | 100% |
| Check list | 39 | 39 | 100% |
| **Total** | **468** | **465** | **99%** |

Response rate of four out of five tools was 100%. This achievement could be attributed to administration and collection of tools in the same day. The response rate achieved for the four sets of data collection instruments was 99%. This was attributed to absence of three head teachers from the targeted schools during the duration of data collection. The 99% return rate was considered adequate in providing valid and reliable information.

### 4.3 Demographic Information of Respondents

To understand the characteristics of the different categories of the respondents in this study, the following demographic information was obtained; gender, pupils' age, teachers' and head teachers' highest academic qualifications and years of work experience. The findings are presented in Tables 2 to 7.

#### 4.3.1 Pupils' Gender and Age

Out of 156 pupils who participated in the study, 78(50%) of the pupils were males and 78(50%) were females. This indicates that there was a perfect gender balance and representation among pupils who participated in the study. Table 2 presents distribution of the pupils' age.

**Table 2: Distribution of Pupils' Age**

| Age Bracket (years) | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 9 – 10 | 3 | 1.9 |
| 11 – 12 | 120 | 77 |
| 13 – 14 | 29 | 19 |
| 15 – 16 | 3 | 1.9 |
| 17 – 18 | 1 | 0.6 |
| **Total** | **156** | **100** |

Table 2 shows that out of 156 pupils who participated in the study, majority (77%) belonged to 11 – 12 years age bracket. Those aged between 9-10 years were 3(1.9%), 13-14years were 29(19%), 15-16years were 3(1.9%), and there was only one pupil (0.6%) aged between 17-18 years. Primary school level of education in Kenya ideally caters for children between 7-15 years age bracket. Since in the 8- 4 – 4 system majority of the children start at age 7years in standard one and get to class six between age 11- 12 years. These findings indicate that majority of respondents were old enough to provide reliable information for the study. Thompson (1992) as quoted by Morrow (n.d), suggested that children from an early age can understand basic elements of the research process and their role within it, provided the information is presented in an age appropriate manner, which was the case for this study.

### 4.3.2 Gender of Head Teachers and Teachers

Table 3 presents findings on gender distribution among head teachers and teachers.

**Table 3: Head Teachers and Teachers' Gender Distribution**

| | Male | | Female | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Respondents** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Head teachers | 24 | 66.7 | 12 | 33.3 |
| Teachers | 36 | 46.2 | 42 | 53.8 |
| **Total** | **60** | **52.6** | **54** | **47** |

Table 3 shows there was an overall fair distribution of gender among the head teachers and teachers combined. However, most (52.6%) of the respondents were males while the remaining 47.4% were females. There was unequal gender representation among the head teachers; majority (66.7%) were males while the rest 33.3% were females. This indicates gender inequity in the top administration of primary schools in Nyeri County.

### 4.3.3 Work Experience of Head Teachers and Teachers

Table 4 presents the summary of total number of years of work experience for both teachers and head teachers.

**Table 4: Head Teachers' and Teachers' Years of Work Experience**

| | Head Teachers | | Teachers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Experience in Years** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Below 1 year | | | 1 | 1.3 |
| 1 - 10 | 22 | 61.1 | 40 | 51.2 |
| 11 – 20 | 14 | 38.9 | 27 | 34.6 |
| 21 – 30 | - | - | 10 | 12.8 |
| 31 - 40 | - | - | 1 | 1.3 |
| **Total** | **36** | **100** | **78** | **100** |

Table 4 shows that majority (61.1%) of head teachers had work experience of between 1- 10 years while the remaining 38.9% had experience ranging between11- 20 years. Most (51.2%) of the sampled teachers had work experience of between 1 – 10 years while 27(34.6%) had an experience ranging between 11 – 20 years, 10(12.8%) had an experience ranging between 21 – 30 years, 1(1.3%) had experience above 31years and 1(1.3%) had less than one year experience. When combined, most (54%) head teachers and teachers had working experience of between 1 – 10 years. These findings imply that most head teachers and teachers sampled had good experience to effectively implement teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy in their schools.

**Table 5: Head Teachers' and Teachers' Years of Work Experience in Current Schools**

| | Head Teachers | | Teachers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Experience in Years** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Less than one year | | | 4 | 5.1 |
| 1 - 10 | 35 | 97.2 | 69 | 88.8 |
| 11 – 20 | 1 | 2.8 | 3 | 3.8 |
| 21 – 30 | - | - | 2 | 2.8 |
| **Total** | **36** | **100** | **78** | **100** |

Table 5 shows that majority (97.2%) of the sampled head teachers had served in their current schools for a duration of between 1 – 10 years, while the remaining 1(2.8%) had served in their current schools for a duration of between 11 – 20 years. Among the sampled teachers majority (88.8%) had been teachers in their current school for a duration between 1 – 10 years. Four (5.1%) had served for less than one year, 3(3.8%) had served between 11 – 20 years and 2(2.8%) had served between 21 – 30 years. When combined, majority (91%) of head teachers and teachers had served in their current schools for a duration between 1-10 years. Based on these findings, it is evident that majority of the head teachers and teachers had enough experience in their current school to enable them to know their pupils well, and had enough knowledge regarding how to help pupils achieve basic literacy and numeracy. Akinsuli (2010) in a study in Nigeria showed that teachers' qualifications and experience are significantly related to students' academic achievement. This information points towards effective implementation of teaching and learning of basic reading literacy.

### 4.3.4 Head Teachers and Teachers Academic Qualification

Table 6 presents the summary of the distribution of the highest academic qualifications for both the head teachers and the teachers.

**Table 6: Head Teachers' and Teachers' Highest Academic Qualification**

| | **Teacher** | | **Head Teachers** | | **Total** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Education Level** | **f** | **%** | **f** | **%** | **f** | **%** |
| Masters | 1 | 1.3 | 1 | 2.8 | 2 | 1.8 |
| Degree | 8 | 10.3 | 3 | 8.3 | 11 | 9.6 |
| Diploma | 30 | 38.5 | 16 | 44.4 | 46 | 40.3 |
| P1 | 18 | 23.1 | 2 | 5.6 | 20 | 17.5 |
| A'Level | 2 | 23.1 | 1 | 2.8 | 3 | 2.6 |
| O',Level | 16 | 20.5 | 12 | 33.3 | 28 | 24.6 |
| ATS III | 2 | 20.5 | 1 | 2.8 | 3 | 2.6 |
| **Total** | **77** | **98.7** | **36** | **100** | **113** | **99** |

From Table 6, majority of the head teachers and teachers are qualified to teach in primary schools since majority (79.2%) have P1 certificate and above. The remaining 30.8% are not trained for primary school teaching, most (24.6%) of them being O'Level certificate holders Most (40.3%) of the qualified teachers are Diploma holders, 11(9.6%) have a bachelor Degree and 2(1.8%) have Masters. According to Okumbe (1999) professional qualifications determine effectiveness of

teachers and head teachers in carrying out their work. This study findings shows that majority of teachers and head teachers are qualified to handle their responsibilities effectively.

### 4.4. Effective Implementation of Teaching and Learning

The first research question sought to find out the extent to which implementation of teaching and learning of literacy was influencing achievement of basic reading literacy and numeracy. Its purpose was to find out from the respondents who included the head teachers, teachers and pupils if there was a positive school climate conducive for teaching and learning, how teaching and learning process was implemented, if the teachers of literacy are effective and if there were adequate teaching and learning resources.

#### 4.4.1 School Climate

According to Loukas (2007) school environments vary greatly, whereas some schools feel friendly, inviting, and supportive, others feel exclusionary, unwelcoming, and even unsafe. The feelings and attitudes that are elicited by a school's environment are referred to as school climate. According to Austin, Duerr, Poynor, & Truebridge (2011) a positive school climate meets the developmental needs of students without which learning cannot occur. It should be supportive, safe, caring, challenging, and participatory to the extent that students feel safe, cared for, appropriately supported, lovingly pushed to learn, and this develop a sense of autonomy, competence, and belonging and eventually leads to improvements in school connectedness, learning engagement, attendance, classroom behavior, academic aspirations, and, ultimately, performance.

According to Loukas (2007) most researchers agree that school climate is a multidimensional construct that includes physical, social, and academic dimensions. On the aspect of the school climate, this study sought information on the physical and the social dimension.

Information on physical dimension was collected using the checklist. From observation, the researcher checked whether the school buildings, classrooms and facilities were physically attractive, kept in good condition, clean and appealing. To establish the extent of safety in the schools which is another aspect of the physical dimension of the school climate, the researcher checked if there was a displayed list of school rules and regulation. The head teachers were also asked whether their school had written and clearly communicated rules and regulations and the average number of discipline cases on physical violence and verbal abuse they handle per term. Still on the safety aspect, the pupils were asked whether they feel safe in all areas of the school building and if they have ever been insulted, teased, beaten or abused more than once in the school. On the other hand, teachers were asked to respond to the extent to which they agreed with the statement that their school was a safe place for staff.

On the social dimension of the school climate the study sought information from all the respondents. The head teachers were asked about the proportion of the total number of workers in the school that treat each other with respect. The pupils were asked if they feel free to talk with their teachers to establish the kind of relationship between pupils and teachers. Still on the social dimension of the school climate the teachers were asked to give a response on the extent of agreement on two sets of statements. One of the statements was that 'Pupils in this school respect one another's differences for example gender and ethnicity' and the other statement was 'The staff in this school have a close professional relationship'.

On whether the school had written and clearly communicated rules and regulations on physical and verbal abuse, majority (77.8%) of the head teachers reported that they had written and clearly communicated rules on physical and verbal abused while the remaining 8(22.2%) reported they do not have written rules. This indicates that majority of the schools protects their

pupils and there is a consequence of violating the rules. This information points to a positive school climate which fosters safety.

On the number of average cases of physical and verbal abuse by pupils handled per term, majority (86.1%) of the head teachers reported less than five cases, 2(5.6%) head teachers reported between 6 – 10 cases, while 3(8.3%) head teachers reported above 10 cases. This indicates that in majority of the sampled schools, there are few incidences that threaten the feeling of safety among the pupils and this information points to a positive school climate.

On the proportion of the total number of workers that treat each other with respect, majority (69.4%) of the head teachers reported three quarter, while the remaining 30.6% reported that all the workers treat each other with respect. This indicates that in majority of the schools there was positive interpersonal relationship among the workers and this information points to a positive school climate.

Table 7 presents teachers' responses on level of agreement to three statements regarding the school climate.

**Table 7: Teachers' Response on School Climate Statement**

| Statement | Disagree | | Uncertain | | Agree | | Strongly Agree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| This school is a safe place for staff | 1 | 1.3 | 1 | 1.3 | 37 | 47.4 | 38 | 48.7 |
| Pupils in this school respect one another's differences for example gender and ethnicity | 6 | 7.7 | 1 | 1.3 | 35 | 44.9 | 35 | 44.9 |
| The staff in this school have a close professional relationship | 1 | 1.3 | 1 | 1.3 | 41 | 52.6 | 34 | 43.6 |

Most (48.7%) of the teachers strongly agree that their school is a safe place for staff, 47.4% agree that their school is a safe place, while 1(1.3%) was uncertain and 1(1.3%) disagreed. one participant did not respond to the statement. This indicates that majority of teachers feel safe in their places of work and this information ultimately points to positive school climate.

On the statement on whether pupils respect one another's differences, most (44.9%) of the teachers agreed and 35(44.9%) strongly agreed. Six respondents (7.7%) disagreed, 1(1.3%) was uncertain, while one participant did not respond to the statement. Smith (2005) as quoted by Austin et. al (2011) lists lack of respect & acceptance for diversity as a school factors that affect achievement of children. This indicates that in majority of the schools sampled, pupils exhibit good interpersonal relationship and this information ultimately points to positive school climate.

Most (52.6%) of the teachers agreed that the staff in their school had a close professional relationship. Thirty four (43.6%) strongly agreed with the statement, 1(1.3%) was undecided, 1(1.3%) disagreed while one teacher did not respond to the statement. This finding indicates that

there is a positive interpersonal relationship among the teachers which helps to establish that there is positive school climate in most of the sampled schools.

On school climate, pupils were asked if they feel safe in all areas of the school building and compound, whether they have been insulted, teased, beaten or abused by anyone more than once in school and if they feel free to talk to their teachers. Analysis of the pupils' responses displayed that majority (91%) of pupils feel safe in all areas of the school building while 14 (9%) do not feel safe. Majority (74.4%) of the pupils have never been insulted teased or abused more than once while 40(25.6%) have been insulted, teased or abused more than once. Majority (93.5%) of the pupils are free to talk to their teachers while 10(6.5%) are not free to talk to their teachers. These finding indicates that in majority of the school the pupils feel safe at school and there is a positive interpersonal relationship between teachers and pupils. These findings points to a positive school climate.

To establish the physical dimension of the school climate, this study sought information by use of an observation guide on whether the schools were physically attractive, buildings kept in good condition, with clean, orderly and appealing facilities and whether a list of school rules and regulations was openly displayed.

Analysis of the data revealed that majority (76.9%) of schools were physically attractive with pleasing architecture and were nicely decorated, while 9(23.1%) were not so described. Majority (61.5%) of the schools had their buildings kept in good condition while 15(38.5%) were not in good condition. Majority (66.7%) of the schools were observed to be clean, orderly and the facilities were appealing while 12(30.8%) were not so described. In majority (66.7%) of schools a list of school rules and regulations was displayed while in 13(33.3%) there was no displayed list of rules and regulations.

According to Austin et. al (2011) school climate must include the quality of the physical properties of the school and classroom. Austin et. al adds that it is considerable consensus that school facilities play an important, albeit indirect, effect on academic achievement. Relying on the study findings of Macneil, Prater and Busch (2009) carried out in Texas whose findings revealed that schools with higher student achievement consistently exhibited healthier school climates, this study findings indicate that majority of the sampled schools had a positive school climate with regard to physical dimension.

### 4.4.2 Effectiveness of Teachers and Teaching and Learning Process

To gauge the extent of effectiveness of implementation of teaching and learning process, information was sought on qualification and experience of the teachers, how the head teachers assesses the teachers, whether the teachers upgraded their skills through in-service training, forms of teachers' indiscipline, whether the subject are allocated the recommended number of lessons per week and if the teachers find the time allocated adequate, the average number of pupils per class, whether the teacher is able to give pupils personal attention or remedial teaching.

Information on teachers' qualification and experience was analyzed as demographic information and the findings revealed that 69.2% of head teachers together with teachers have attained P1 certificate and above. This indicates that majority of the head teachers and teachers are qualified to teach in primary school. Also revealed is that majority of the head teachers and teachers had over one year experience in their current position and in the current schools, Based on Akinsulu (2010) study in Nigeria which revealed that teachers' qualifications, experience and teacher student ratio were significantly related to students' academic performance this study findings points to effective implementation of the teaching and learning.

The head teachers were asked how they asses English teachers who are responsible for teaching reading literacy. Table 8 presents the assessment methods utilized by the head teachers.

**Table 8: Methods of assessing mathematics and English Teachers**

| **Assessment Method** | **Frequency (f)** | **Percentage (%)** |
|---|---|---|
| Subject mean score in exams | 31 | 86.1 |
| Inspection of learner's exercise books | 11 | 30.5 |
| Class observation | 5 | 13.8 |
| Checking records of work | 4 | 11.1 |
| Daily lesson attendance sheet | 2 | 5.6 |
| Syllabus coverage | 3 | 8.3 |
| Schemes of work | 2 | 5.6 |
| Lesson plan | 3 | 8.3 |

Some head teachers reported use of more than one method of assessing teacher. Table8 shows that majority (86.1%) of the sampled head teachers asses English teachers who are responsible for teaching reading literacy skills by checking their subject mean score in tests and examinations done by pupils. Eleven (30.5%) of the head teachers inspect the learners' exercise books, 5(13.8%) class observation, 4(11.1%) check records of work, 2(5.6%) use daily lesson attendance sheet, 3(8.3%) syllabus coverage, 2(5.6%) Check the schemes of work and 3(8.3%) check the teachers' lesson plan.

These results indicate that majority of the head teachers do not supervise the process of teaching and learning which can be done through class observation, checking the lesson plans, schemes of work and record of work. This points to ineffective implementation of teaching and learning which can affect achievement of basic literacy and numeracy negatively.

In order to establish whether the teachers in charge of teaching reading literacy enhance their skills regularly, the head teachers were asked how often the teachers attended in-service training or seminars. The teachers were asked a related question on whether they have ever attended any in-service course on teaching their subject. Table 9 presents the responses from the head teachers.

**Table 9: Teachers In-service Training or Seminars Attendance Frequency**

| **Often** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Once per term | 16 | 44.4 |
| Twice per year | 5 | 13.9 |
| Once per year | 9 | 25 |
| Rarely | 5 | 13.9 |
| Never | 1 | 2.8 |
| **Total** | **36** | **100** |

Table 9 shows that most (44.4%) of the head teachers reported that reading literacy (English) teachers in their schools attend in-service and or seminar once per term. Nine (25.5%) reported that the teachers attend in-service or seminar once per year, 5(13.9%) reported twice per year, while 5(13.9%) reported that they rarely attend, while 1(2.8%) reported that the teachers never attend in-service or seminars.

Analysis of teachers' responses on whether they have ever attended any in-service training showed that majority (61.5%) of the teachers have ever attended in-service training on how to teach their subject, while (37.2%) of the sampled teachers reported they have never. One teacher did not respond to the question.

The results from the head teachers' response on the frequency of in-service training indicated that most of the teachers update their skills regularly (once per term) and this was reinforced by the findings from the teachers' response which showed that majority of the teachers have ever attended in-service training. Based on Naoreen, Arshad and Aslam (2011) study on the impact of in-service teacher training on students' learning achievement which showed that trained teachers were significantly better than untrained teachers, the findings in this study points to having effective teachers which translates to effective implementation of teaching and learning.

To further establish the effectiveness of teachers the head teachers were asked if there are aspects of teaching that hinder pupils from acquisition of basic reading literacy. Table 10 presents the responses.

**Table 10: Aspects of Teaching that Hinder Learning**

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Mother tongues interference | 7 | 19 |
| Inappropriate teaching method | 5 | 13.8 |
| Inadequate skills in Early childhood Education | 5 | 13.8 |
| Inappropriate use of teaching Aids | 2 | 5.6 |
| Misconception about when serious teaching should be done | 1 | 2.8 |

Some head teachers gave more than one response. More (19%) head teachers reported mother tongue interference, 5(13.8%) inappropriate teaching method, 5(13.8) said that teachers

had inadequate skills in Early Childhood Education (ECD), 2(5.6) reported inappropriate use of teaching aid, and 1(2.8%) reported there was a misconception that serious teaching should only be done in examination classes. Since not a single aspect was reported by over 20% of the head teachers, it indicates the reported issues are not rampant in many teachers. However, they present concerns that should be addressed.

The head teachers were also asked which teachers' indiscipline if any, hindered teaching and learning of reading literacy. Table 11 represents the findings.

**Table 11: Teachers' Practices Hindering Teaching and Learning**

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Inadequate lesson preparation | 19 | 52.8 |
| Skipping lessons | 1 | 2.8 |
| Absenteeism | 3 | 8.3 |
| Failure to complete syllabus | 3 | 8.3 |

Table 11 shows that most (52.8%) head teachers gave inadequate lesson preparation as an indiscipline that hindered teaching and learning of reading literacy. Three (8.3%) head teachers reported absenteeism, 3(8.3%) reported failure to complete syllabus while 3(8.3%) reported no indiscipline. These findings concurs with those of OECD (2009) that inadequate lesson preparation and absenteeism by teachers hindering learning.

Though some teachers have various indiscipline forms, they are not rampant in majority of the schools since the highest frequency of indiscipline is 19%. Results from table 15 indicates that most teachers do not prepare adequately for their lessons. This points to ineffective teachers and ultimately ineffective implementation of teaching and learning.

To establish the effectiveness of teaching and learning process , teachers were asked if their subject was allocated enough time, the average number of pupils in their class, if they are able to give each pupil individual attention and if they have time set apart for remedial teaching for students with difficulties in learning. Analysis of the responses showed that majority (79.5%) of teachers have their subjects' allocated enough time while 14(17.9%) their subjects are not allocated enough time. Most (70.5%) of the teachers are not able to give pupils individual attention during teaching and learning in class, while 22(28.2%) are able to do it. Most (59.7%) of the sampled teachers have time set apart for remedial teaching for students with difficulties in learning, while 31(39.7%) do not have time set apart.

The teachers were further asked to state the average number of pupils in their class. The results showed that the average number of pupils per class in the sampled school was 34 pupils. Analysis of the responses indicated that in most schools English subject is allocated enough time, but the teachers do not give pupils individual attention during instruction despite the fact that the average number of pupils in the sampled schools is 34 pupils per class which is within the recommended 40 pupils per class in Kenya. Since most of the teachers set apart time for remedial teaching, this can cover up the problem of lack of individualized attention.

The check list was used to collect information on availability of a school time table and whether English was allocated the recommended number of lessons per week which is supposed to be 7 lesson per week. Analysis of the data revealed that in all the 39(100%) sampled schools, there were well displayed school time tables. In majority (87.2%) of the schools, English subject was allocated the recommended number of lessons, while in 5(12.8%) of the schools English subject was not allocated the recommended number of lessons per week. These results supports

the findings from the teachers that in majority of the schools English is allocated enough time. These findings points to effective implementation of teaching and learning.

### 4.4.3 Adequacy of Teaching and Learning Resources

To establish adequacy of teaching and learning resources which is an aspect of effective implementation of teaching and learning, information was sough on availability of school library, adequate availability of the recommended text books, availability of English story books and availability of other teaching and learning resources other than text books.

The head teachers were asked if their schools had enough teachers for basic reading literacy, if their school has a library and if so, how well the library was quipped in relation to resources that enhance acquisition of basic reading literacy.

Analysis of the head teachers' responses revealed that majority (63.9%) of the schools had enough basic reading literacy (English) teachers, while 13(36.1%) reported they did not have enough teachers. Majority (63.9%) of the head teachers reported their schools did not have a school library while 13(36.1%) reported they had a school library. All the head teachers who reported they had a school library reported that it was fairly equipped. Teachers were asked the same question on availability of a school library. Most (59.0%) of them reported that there was no school library while 31 (39.7%) reported there was no school library.

On whether there were adequate recommended course books for teaching and learning in their subject area, majority (64.1%) of the teachers reported that they had adequate while 28 (35.7%) reported they did not have enough books. This indicates that though in majority of the schools there are no libraries, there are adequate recommended text books.

To establish whether there are other teaching learning resources besides books the teachers were asked which other relevant resources they had in their schools. Table 12 summarizes the responses.

**Table 12: Other Relevant Teaching/Learning Resources**

| Teaching Learning resource | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Charts | 71 | 91.0 |
| Posters | 11 | 14.1 |
| Electronic Media | 3 | 3.8 |
| None | 3 | 3.8 |

Some of the teachers gave more than one response. Majority (91.0%) of the teachers reported they have charts in their schools. Eleven (14.1%) have posters, 3(3.8%) have electronic media and 3(3.8%) have none.

Pupils were asked two questions to generate information on adequacy of teaching learning resources. The questions were whether they have their own English text book and whether they have English story books in school.

Analysis of the pupils' responses showed that slightly above half (52.6%) of the interviewed pupils have their own English text book while 73(46.8%) share with other pupils. Majority (73.7%) of the pupils have English story books in school while 40(25.6%) reported they do not have story books in school. These findings indicate that there is a slight shortage of the recommended English text books since almost half of the pupils (46.8%) share English text books. These findings on sharing of text books among pupils due to their inadequacy concurs with those of Uwezo (2012)

The checklist was used to gather information on availability of a school library and whether the library was stocked with a variety (more than four different types) of story books for the junior classes. From the checklist, majority (63.9%) of the schools did not have a school library while 13 (36.1%) had a school library.

Analysis of the data from the checklist on availability of a variety of library story books revealed that most (59%) of the schools did not have a variety of story books while 16 (41%) had a variety of story books.

The findings from the head teachers, teachers and pupils indicates that in most schools there are enough reading literacy teachers, the recommended text books for English are available but not adequate, Most schools have no library though they have a variety of story books available. Besides text books, most of the schools have charts to enhance teaching and learning. In the few schools that have a library, they are fairly equipped as noted from the head teachers' response and specifically with a few (less than 4 types) story books as confirmed through the checklist.

**4.4.4 Extent of Influence of Implementation of Teaching and Learning on Achievement of Basic Reading Literacy.**

To establish the extent to which implementation of teaching and learning was influencing achievement of basic reading literacy , a two tailed multiple regression analysis at 95% confidence level was carried out. The average performance in reading Literacy test results which comprised the dependent variable (achievement of basic reading literacy) were analyzed against all the components of the independent variable (implementation of teaching and learning). The components of the implementation of teaching and learning comprised of availability of a variety of story books, highest academic qualification of teachers, ability to give attention to each pupil, allocation of recommended number of lessons(7 per week.), pupils having their own English text

book, availability of other teaching learning resources, highest academic qualification of head teachers, availability of adequate recommended course books , availability of library, attending in-service training, average number of pupils in class, Allocation of remedial teaching time, experience of teachers in the current school, allocation of enough time for the subject, frequency of in-service training attendance by teachers, head teacher's work experience, teachers' work experience, display of school rules and regulations, pupils respect for one another's differences , feeling safe in all arears of the school buildings and compound, having written and clearly communicated rules and regulations, proportion of total number of workers that treat each other with respect, building kept in good condition, cases of violence reported per term, physical attractiveness of the school, staff having a close professional relationship, pupils feeling free to talk to teachers, been insulted, teased, beaten or abused more than once in school, cleanliness, order and appeal of facilities and school being a safe place for staff. Table 13 presents the regression analysis summary using reading literacy performance results as the independent variable.

**Table 13: Regression on Implementation of Teaching and Learning Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .577[a] | .333 | .172 | .385 |

Table 13 shows that the multiple correlation coefficient is 0.577. This indicates there is a moderate positive relationship between achievement of basic reading literacy and implementation of teaching and learning. Implementation of teaching and learning influences achievement of basic reading literacy by 33.3% as indicated by the R square in the analysis table. This indicates that

implementation of teaching and learning influences achievement of basic reading literacy to a moderate extent.

Individual effect of school climate, effectiveness of teachers and adequacy of teaching and learning resources on achievement of basic reading literacy was established through separate regression analysis of each of these variables and the resulting coefficient are presented in the Table 14

**Table 14: Coefficients of individual variable in implementation of teaching and learning**

| Variable | R | R Square |
|---|---|---|
| School climate | 0.410 | 0.168 |
| Effectiveness of teachers | 0.728 | 0.530 |
| Adequacy of teaching and learning resources | 0.379 | 0.144 |

Table 14 shows that school climate has a coefficient of 0.410 indicating that it has weak positive relationship with basic reading literacy, which influence achievement of basic reading literacy by 16.8% as indicated by the R square of 0.168. Effectiveness of teachers has a coefficient of 0.728 indicating there is a strong positive relationship between the effectiveness of teachers and achievement of basic reading literacy. Teachers' effectiveness influence achievement of reading literacy by 53% as indicated by the R square of 0.530. Adequacy of teaching and learning resources show a weak positive relationship with reading literacy. Influence of Adequacy of teaching and learning resources on achievement of basic reading literacy is 14.4% as indicated by the R square of 0.144.

## 4.5 Pupils' Home Environment Factors That Influence Achievement of Basic Reading Literacy.

The second research question was seeking information on which factors in the home environment of learners are influencing achievement of basic reading literacy. The purpose of this question was to find out the social economic status of the parents, whether the pupils are involved in adequate literacy activities at home, and if there are educational resources at home which can enhance basic reading literacy achievement.

### 4.5.1 Social Economic Status of Pupils' families

To generate information on the social economic status of the pupils' parent, the head teachers were asked to rate the average social economic status of the parents in their school. Analysis from the head teachers' responses indicated that all the parents are average and below in social economic status. However, majority (63.9%) of the head teachers reported that the parents are of low social economic status while 13(36.1%) reported that the parents are of average social economic status.

To further establish the social economic status of parents, pupils were asked questions on who takes care of them at home, the type of work their parents' do, parents highest education level and the type of house their family lived in. From the analysis, the majority (89.7%) of pupils are taken care of by their parents while 16(10.3%) are taken care of by guardians. Table 15 presents findings on parents' occupation.

**Table 15: Parents' Occupation**

| Father's occupation | f | % | Mother's occupation | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Small scale farmer | 30 | 19.2 | Small Scale farmer | 65 | 41.7 |
| Small business entrepreneur | 27 | 17.3 | Small Business Entrepreneur | 26 | 16.7 |
| Teacher | 12 | 7.7 | Teacher | 14 | 9.0 |
| Technician | 6 | 3.8 | Nurse | 4 | 2.6 |
| Driver | 21 | 13.5 | House Wife | 17 | 10.9 |
| Carpenter | 7 | 4.5 | Manual Worker | 12 | 7.7 |
| Cashier | 2 | 1.5 | Accountant | 1 | 0.6 |
| Engineer | 2 | 1.3 | Secretary | 2 | 1.6 |
| Mason | 7 | 4.5 | Community health worker | 1 | 0.6 |
| Manual worker | 5 | 3.2 | | | |
| Plumber | 2 | 1.3 | | | |
| Gate keeper | 2 | 1.3 | | | |
| Tour Guide | 2 | 1.3 | | | |
| Game Ranger | 2 | 1.3 | | | |
| Soldier | 2 | 1.3 | | | |
| Preacher | 1 | 0.6 | | | |
| Designer | 1 | 0.6 | | | |
| Human Resource Person | 1 | 0.6 | | | |
| Mechanic | 4 | 2.6 | | | |
| Policeman | 1 | 0.6 | | | |
| Managing Director | 1 | 0.6 | | | |

Table 15 shows that most (41.7%) mothers and most (19.2%) fathers are small scale farmers, while 27(17.3%) father and 26(16.7%) of mothers are small business entrepreneurs. This indicates that most parents are involved in menial jobs which places majority of them in low or average social economic status.

Table 16 presents findings on parents' highest educational level.

**Table 16 Parents' Education Level**

| | **Father** | | **Mother** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Educational Level** | **f** | **%** | **f** | **%** | **Total** | **%** |
| University | 22 | 14.5 | 12 | 7.7 | 34 | 12.3 |
| College | 28 | 17.9 | 38 | 24.4 | 66 | 23.8 |
| Secondary School | 71 | 45.5 | 67 | 42.9 | 138 | 49.8 |
| Primary School | 13 | 8.3 | 24 | 15.4 | 37 | 13.3 |
| None | 1 | 0.6 | 1 | 0.6 | 2 | 0.7 |

The Table 16 shows that most (49.8%) of the pupils' parents have attained secondary school level in education, while 66(23.8%) have attained college level in education, 34(12.3%) have attained university degrees, 37(13.3) have reached primary school level and 2(0.7%0 have no education. These results indicate that only about 36.1% of the parents have education that can help them secure gainful employment given a chance, since they have college or university qualifications. The education level of majority of the parents (63.8%) places them in lower social economic status.

To get more information on pupils' family social economic status, they pupils were asked if their family owned a car. Majority (80.8%) of the pupils reported their family does not own a

car. The remaining 30(19.2%) reported their family owns a car. This indicates that majority of the families are below average in social economic status.

The pupils were asked to state the type of house their family lived in as an attempt to establish the social economic status of their families. Figure 4.1 presents the findings.

**Figure 4.1: Type of Family House**

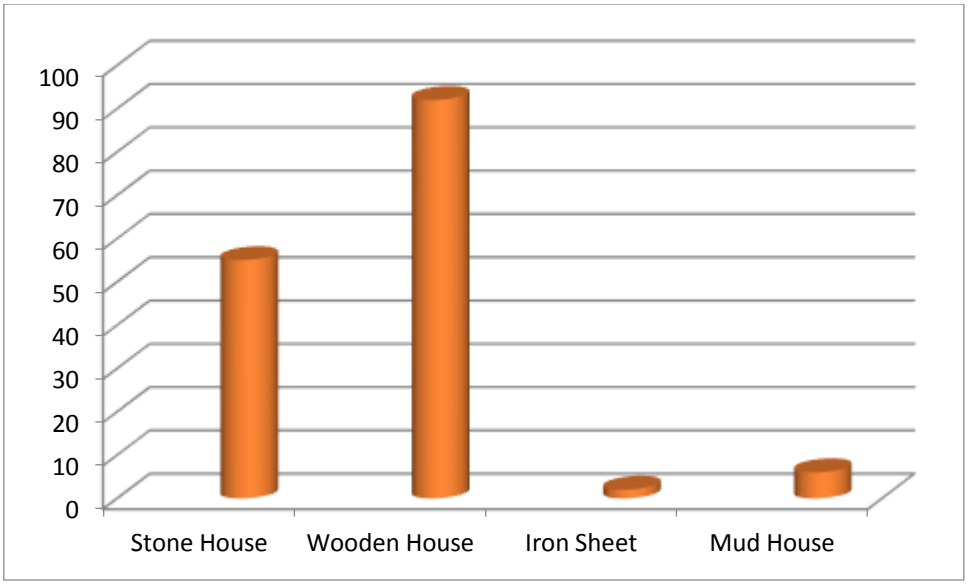


Figure 4.1 shows that most (59.0%) of the pupils' families lived in wooden houses. Fifty five (35.3%) of the pupils' families lived in stone houses, while 6(3.8%) live in mud houses and 2(1.3%) live in iron sheet houses.

Results from the pupils' responses on parents' occupation and educational level, whether their family owns a car and the type of house their family lived in all points to below average social economic status. Pupils' responses confirms the findings from the head teachers that most of the parents are in low social economic status. Based on Anders et al. (2012) study in Germany whose findings revealed that social economic status and mothers' educational level predict development of literacy skills, this study findings indicate that the social economic status of the pupils' family and parental educational level does not have a supportive influence on achievement of basic

reading literacy among the pupils in public primary schools in Nyeri County. This particular study finding concurs with that of Eivers et al. (2010) study findings in primary schools in Ireland which showed that pupils achievement was linked to a number of demographic characteristics which included among others familial low socioeconomic status (SES) and parental unemployment,

### 4.5.2 Availability of Educational resources at Home

The study sought information on availability of educational resources at home. Pupils were asked whether they have story books, newspapers, magazines, and calendar in their home. Table 17 presents the findings.

**Table 17: Educational Resources at Home**

| Type of Resource | frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Story books | 118 | 75.6 |
| Newspapers | 112 | 71.8 |
| Magazines | 76 | 48.7 |
| Calendar | 146 | 93.6 |

Table 17 shows that majority of the pupils have story books, newspapers and calendar in their homes. One hundred and forty six (93.6%) pupils' homes have calendars, 118(75.6%) have story books, 112(71.8%) have newspapers and 76(48.7%) have magazines. These results indicate that in majority of homes there are adequate educational resources to enhance achievement of basic reading literacy. Based on the findings of Eivers et al. (2010) study in primary schools in Ireland which revealed that availability of resources such as books were positively related to achievement in basic reading literacy, the findings of this study indicates that majority of pupils have educational resources at home to positively influence achievement of basic reading literacy and numeracy skills.

### 4.5.3 Adequacy of Literacy and Numeracy Activities at Home

The study sought information on whether pupils are involved in adequate reading literacy activities at home. Pupils were asked if anybody helps them do English homework. The researcher also enquired if they engage themselves in reading story books and number work books, checking time on the clock and if their mum or dad reads for them. Majority (87.2%) of the pupils responded that there is someone who assist them in doing English homework, while 17(10.9%) of the pupils said no one assists them. Table 18 presents the findings on other reading literacy related activities that the pupils are involved in at home.

**Table 18: Literacy and Numeracy Activities at Home**

| Type of Activity | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Reading story books | 146 | 93.6 |
| Reading number work books | 99 | 63.5 |
| Mum or Dad read books for you | 65 | 41.7 |
| Check time on the clock | 124 | 79.5 |

Table 18 shows that majority of the pupils read story books at home, check time on the clock and read number work books. One hundred and forty six (93.6%) pupils read story books at home,124(79.5%) check time on the clock, 99(63.5%) read number work books and 65(41.7%) are read for by their mum or dad.

Based on Eivers et al. (2010) study on primary schools pupils in Ireland which revealed that home literacy activities such as reading, parents reading for enjoyment were positively related to achievement of basic reading literacy, this study findings indicate that majority of the pupils are

involved in adequate activities at home which can positively influence achievement of basic reading literacy.

### 4.5.4 Factors in the Home Environment that Influence Achievement of Basic Reading Literacy.

To determine which factors in the home environment influence achievement of basic reading literacy, the variables comprising the home environment were analyzed separately using multiple regression analysis. The average performance result in the reading test was the dependent variable in each case. The home environment variables included the social economic status, parental educational level, adequacy of literacy activities at home and availability of educational resources at home. Table 19 presents the summary of the findings.

**Table 19: Regression Coefficients on Home Environment Aspects**

| Variable | R | R square |
|---|---|---|
| Social economic status | .215 | .046 |
| Parental educational level | .188 | .350 |
| Literacy activities at home | .042 | .002 |
| Availability of educational resources at home | .054 | .070 |

Table 19 shows that all the listed variable have a positive though very weak relationship with achievement in basic reading literacy. The home environment variables in this study explain or contributes to achievement in basic reading literacy by the following percentages as indicated by the R square in Table 19; parental education 35%, availability of educational resources 7%, social economic status 4.6% and reading literacy activities at home 0.2%. These study findings concurs with those of William and Rask (2003), De Bortoli and Thomson (2010), Anders et al., (2012) and Eivers et al.

(2010) on the influence of social economic status, educational resources at home, parental education and literacy activities at home on achievement of basic reading literacy.

### 4.6 Student Characteristics

The third research question sought to find out the extent to which student characteristic was influencing achievement of basic reading literacy among pupils in public primary schools. This study sought information on pupils' rate of school attendance, extent of attentiveness in class and level of motivation to learn literacy.

The head teachers were asked to estimate the percentage of the total number of pupils who arrive in school alert and well rested and motivated to learn in order to establish the pupils' level of motivation. Table 20 presents the analysis of the responses.

**Table 20: Well Rested, Alert and Motivated Pupils**

| Estimated percentage | Alert and well rested | | Those motivated | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Around 75% | 12 | 33.3 | 10 | 27.8 |
| Around 50% | 22 | 61.1 | 10 | 27.8 |
| Around 25% | 2 | 5.6 | 16 | 44.4 |

Table 20 shows that majority (61.1%) of the head teachers responded that around 50% of pupils in their schools arrive alert and well rested. Twelve (33.3%) of the head teachers reported that around 75% of the pupils arrive alert and well rested and 2(5.6%) of the head teachers reported that around 25% of the pupils arrive in school alert and well rested. Most (44.4%) of the head teachers have around 25% of the pupils motivated to learn, while 10(27.8%) have around 50% of the pupils motivated and 10(27.8) have 75% of their pupils motivated to learn.

This indicates that despite the fact that in majority of the schools 50% of the pupils arrive in school alert and well rested, only about 25% of the learners in majority of the schools are motivated to learn. Staden and Bosker (2011) study in South Africa and (De Bortoli & Thomson, 2010) study in Australia revealed that students' motivation to read increases reading achievement scores. In light of these findings, majority of pupils in this study low motivation may be lowering their achievement in basic reading literacy.

To establish the extent to which certain students' behavior hinder acquisition of reading literacy, the teachers were asked to respond the extent to which class disturbance, lack of attentiveness, absenteeism, skipping lessons, indiscipline cases and lack of motivation to learn hindered acquisition of reading literacy. Table 21 presents the findings.

**Table 21: Extent of Students' Behavior Hindering Learning**

| | **To no extent** | | **To a very small extent** | | **To a small extent** | | **To a large extent** | | **To a very large extent** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student Behavior** | **f** | **%** | **f** | **%** | **f** | **%** | **f** | **%** | **f** | **%** |
| Class disturbance | 10 | 12.8 | 35 | 44.9 | 15 | 19.2 | 13 | 16.7 | 5 | 6.6 |
| Lack of attentiveness | 7 | 9 | 22 | 28.2 | 26 | 33.3 | 14 | 17.9 | 9 | 11.5 |
| Absenteeism | 4 | 5.1 | 23 | 29.5 | 22 | 28.2 | 18 | 23.1 | 11 | 14.1 |
| Skipping lessons | 35 | 44.9 | 17 | 21.8 | 10 | 12.8 | 10 | 12.8 | 6 | 7.7 |
| Indiscipline cases | 13 | 16.7 | 26 | 33.3 | 16 | 20.5 | 12 | 15.4 | 11 | 14.1 |
| Lack of motivation to learn | 8 | 10.3 | 19 | 24.4 | 14 | 17.9 | 25 | 32.1 | 12 | 15.4 |
| Average | 13 | 16.7 | 24 | 30.8 | 17 | 21 | 15 | 19.2 | 9 | 11.5 |

Table 21 shows that on class disturbance, most (44.9%) teachers reported it hinders learning to a very small extent, while 15(19.2%) reported it hindered to a small extent, 13(16.7%) reported to a large extent, 10(12.8%) reported to no extent and 5(6.6%) to no extent.

On lack of attentiveness, more (33.3%) teachers reported that it hindered acquisition of reading literacy to a small extent, while 22(28.2%) reported it hindered to a very small extent, 14(17.9%) reported to large extent, 9(11.5% reported to a very large extent and 7(9%) reported it hinders to no extent. On Absenteeism, more (29.5%) teachers reported that it hindered acquisition of reading literacy to a very small extent, while 22(28.2%) reported it hinders to a small extent, 18(23.1) reported it hinders to a large extent, 11(14.1%) reported it hinders to a very large extent and 4(5.1%) reported it hinders to no extent. On skipping lessons most teachers reported that it hindered acquisition of reading literacy and to no extent, while 17(21.8%) reported it hinders to a very small extent, 10(12.8%) to a small extent, 10(12.8) to large extent and 6(14.1%) reported it hinders to a very large extent.

On lack of motivation to learn more (32.1%) teachers reported that it hindered acquisition of reading literacy to a large extent, while 19(24.4%) reported it hindered to a very small extent, 14(17.9%) reported to a small extent, 12(15.4%) reported to a very large extent and 8(10.8%) to no extent.

Results from Table 21 indicates that on average, most of the listed students' behavior hinder achievement of basic literacy to a small extent, though lack of motivation hinders learning to a great extent. This confirms the head teachers responses that only 25% of the pupils are motivated to learn.

During the process of administering the research instruments to pupils, the researcher checked the pupils' extent of attentiveness. In majority (76.9%) of the schools the pupils were

generally attentive while in 9(23.1%) of the schools the pupils were generally not attentive. This confirms the teacher findings that class attentiveness hinders learning to a small extent.

To establish the rate of absenteeism, the pupils were asked the number of times they missed school in the past term. Table 22 presents the findings.

**Table 22: Rate of Pupils' Absenteeism**

| Days Absent | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Zero Days | 84 | 56.4 |
| 1 – 5 | 61 | 39.1 |
| 6 – 10 | 6 | 3.8 |
| 16 – 20 | 1 | 0.6 |
| **Total** | **156** | **100** |

Table 22 illustrates that most (56.4%) of the pupils were not absent at all from school. Sixty one (39.1%) were absent between 1 – 5 days, while 6(3.8%) pupils were absent between 6 – 10 days and 1(0.6%) was absent between 16 – 20 days. These findings confirm the findings from the teachers' that absenteeism hinders learning to a small extent since majority of the pupils were not absent from school at all and the others were absent for less than 5 days except for 7 students in 39 schools.

The checklist was used to collect information on whether class six register was available and whether it was updated daily. This information was used to confirm the attendance of the sampled class six pupils who were participants in the study. Analysis of the data showed in majority (94.9%) of the schools class six register books were available while in 2(5.5%) the researcher did not see the register. In majority of the school 30(77%) the registers were updated daily while in 9 (23%) of the schools the registers were not updated daily. These findings confirms

that majority of the pupils' response on the rate of absenteeism from school was correct since it was confirmed from the available registers.

To gauge the level of motivation of the student in learning reading literacy, they were asked to state their best and second best subject. Table 23 illustrates the findings.

**Table 23: Pupils' Subject Preference**

| | **Best Subject** | | **Second Best Subject** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Subject** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| English | 30 | 19.6 | 33 | 21.6 |
| Mathematics | 59 | 38.6 | 41 | 26.3 |
| Social Studies | 17 | 10.9 | 22 | 14.1 |
| Science | 42 | 27.5 | 46 | 29.5 |
| Kiswahili | 5 | 3.3 | 11 | 7.2 |

Table 23 shows that most (38.6%) pupils prefer Mathematics as their best subject, while 42(27.5%) prefer Science, 30(19.6%) prefer English subject, 17(10.9%) prefer Social studies subject and 5(3.3%) of pupils prefer Kiswahili as their best subject. This indicates that most pupils are motivated to learn numeracy, while only a few are motivated to learn literacy which is learnt under the English subject.

Most (29.5%) pupils prefer Science as their second best subject. Forty one (26.3%) prefer Mathematics as their second best subject, while 33(21.6%) prefer English, 22(14.1%) prefer Social Studies and 11(7.2%) prefer Kiswahili as their second best subject. This indicates that most of the pupils are motivated to learn numeracy and only a few are motivated to learn English.

The results on preference of subjects indicates that most pupils are motivated to learn mathematics since most of them indicated it's their best or second best subject. This is not the case for English since more students prefer science to English.

Pupils were asked whether they read story books on their own in order to gauge if they are motivated to learn reading literacy. One hundred and forty five pupils (94.2%) said they read on their own, while the remaining 9(5.8%) of the pupils said they don't read on their own. This indicates that majority of the pupils are motivated to learn basic literacy through reading of story books but not when learning it as a subject.

The findings indicate that the level of motivation of pupils to learn reading literacy is low as demonstrated by head teachers' and teachers and teachers' responses. Almost half (43.6%) of the pupils have been absent from school at least once in the school term, though most of the teachers reported that this hinders learning to a small extent. Majority of the pupils are attentive in class and the attentiveness hinders learning to a small extent as reported by most of the teachers.

### 4.6.1 Extent of Influence of Students Characteristics on Achievement of Reading Literacy

To establish the extent to which students characteristics was influencing achievement of basic reading literacy, a two tailed multiple regression analysis at 95% confidence level was carried out. Literacy test performance result which comprised the dependent variable (achievement of basic reading literacy ) were analyzed separately against all the components of the independent variable (students' characteristics) variables which comprised students characteristics included reading story books on their own, extent of lack of attentiveness hindering acquisition of reading literacy, best subject, number of times missed school, proportion of students who are motivated to learn, second best subject, extent of lack of motivation hindering acquisition of reading literacy, extent of absenteeism hindering acquisition of reading literacy, proportion of students who arrive

in school alert and well rested, extent of lack of attentiveness hindering acquisition of reading literacy, extent of skipping lessons hindering acquisition of reading literacy, extent of class disturbance hindering acquisition of reading literacy. Table 24 presents the regression analysis summary using reading test performance results as the dependent variables.

**Table 24: Pupils' Characteristics Regression Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .307[a] | .095 | .019 | .419 |

The results shows that there is a very weak positive relationship between reading test performance and students characteristics. Students' characteristics influence achievement of basic reading test performance by 9.5%. This indicates that students characteristic influence achievement of basic reading literacy to a small extent. This study finding corresponds with that of Frigo et al. (2004), Staden and Bosker (2011) and De Bortoli & Thomson (2010) which revealed that achievement in Literacy is influenced by attentiveness, motivation and school attendance.

Individual effect of pupils rate of attendance, attentiveness and motivation on achievement of basic reading literacy was established through separate regression analysis of each of these variables and the resulting coefficient are presented in Table 25.

**Table 25: Coefficients of individual variable comprising students characteristic**

| Variable | R | R Square |
|---|---|---|
| Attendance | 0.129 | 0.017 |
| Attentiveness | 0.114 | 0.013 |
| Motivation | 0.600 | 0.360 |

Table 25 shows that attendance has a coefficient of 0.129 indicating that it has very weak positive relationship with basic reading literacy, which explains or predicts achievement in reading literacy by 1.7% as indicated by the R square of 0.017. Attentiveness of pupils has a coefficient of 0.114 indicating there is a very weak positive relationship between the attentiveness of pupils and achievement of reading literacy. Pupils' attentiveness explains or predicts achievement in reading literacy by 1.3% as indicated by the R square of 0.013. Pupils' motivation has a coefficient of 0.600 indicating a strong positive relationship between pupils' motivation and achievement of basic reading literacy. Motivation influences achievement of basic reading literacy by 36% as indicated by the R square of 0.360.

### 4.7 Challenges Facing Achievement of Basic Reading Literacy

To establish the challenges facing achievement of basic reading literacy emanating from teaching and learning, the head teachers were asked to mention the challenges that affect teaching and learning of basic literacy in their school. Table 26 presents the findings

**Table 26: Head Teachers' Suggestions on Challenges in Teaching and Learning**

| Type of Challenge | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Inadequate Teaching and Learning Resources | 19 | 52.8 |
| Lack of a Resource Center or Library | 1 | 2.8 |
| Lack of parents' cooperation | 2 | 5.6 |
| Lack of continuity of a teacher with his or her class to next level | 2 | 5.6 |
| Mother tongue interference | 10 | 27.8 |
| Lack of basic teaching aids | 6 | 16.7 |
| Inadequate teachers | 6 | 16.7 |
| High enrollment/ Large classes | 1 | 2.8 |
| Improper follow up of pupils by teachers and parents | 2 | 5.6 |
| Negative attitude by parents | 1 | 2.8 |
| Inadequate preparation at EC D | 1 | 2.8 |

Table 26 shows that most (52.8%) of the head teachers gave inadequate teaching and learning resources as one of the challenges affecting teaching and learning. Ten (27.8%) gave mother tongue interference as a challenge, 6(16.7%) gave lack of basic teaching aid, 6(16.7%) inadequate teacher, 2(5.6%) lack of parents' cooperation, 2(5.6%) improper follow up of pupils by teachers and parents, 1(2.8%) lack of a resource center,/ library, 1(2.8%) High enrollment or large classes, 1(2.8%) negative attitude by parents and 1(2.8%) of head teachers gave inadequate preparation at ECD as a challenge.

**Table 27: Teachers' Suggestions on Challenges in Teaching and Learning**

| Type of Challenge | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Inadequate Teaching and Learning Resources | 42 | 53.8 |
| Pupils' lack of self-esteem | 5 | 6.4 |
| Mother tongue interference | 7 | 8.9 |
| Inadequate time | 17 | 21.8 |
| Student absenteeism | 5 | 6.4 |
| Student inattentiveness | 5 | 6.4 |
| Negative attitude towards the subject | 9 | 11.5 |
| Inadequate preparation in ECD | 6 | 7.7 |
| High enrollment/ large classes | 3 | 3.8 |
| Inadequate teachers | 3 | 3.8 |
| Mixed ability learners combined in one class | 1 | 1.3 |
| Pupils' failure to complete homework | 1 | 1.3 |
| Lack of pupils' cooperation | 1 | 1.3 |
| Biased environment | 1 | 1.3 |
| Lack of individualized attention | 1 | 1.3 |

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Most (53.8%) of the teachers gave lack of adequate teaching and learning resources as a challenge. Seventeen (21.8%) gave inadequate time as a challenge, 9(11.5%) gave negative attitude towards the subject, 7(8.9%) gave mother tongue interference, 6(7.7%) Inadequate preparation in ECD, 5(6.4%) pupils' lack of self-esteem, 3(3.8%) highest enrollment or large classes, 3(3.8%) inadequate teachers, 1(1.3%) mixed ability learner combined in same class,

1(1.3%) pupils' failure to complete homework, 1(1.3%) lack of pupils cooperation, 1(1.3%) biased environment and 1(1.3%) of teachers gave lack of individualized attention to pupils as a challenge.

Pupils were asked to give the problems that affect them when leaning how to read in order to establish the challenges they face during teaching and learning of literacy. Table 28 illustrates the findings.

**Table 28: Pupils' Suggestions on Challenges in Teaching and Learning**

| Type of Challenge | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Stammering | 5 | 3.2 |
| Difficulty understanding words | 32 | 20.5 |
| Pronunciation | 24 | 15.4 |
| Eye Sight problem | 3 | 1.9 |
| Inadequate books | 17 | 10.9 |
| Inadequate time | 9 | 5.8 |
| Unconducive classroom environment | 8 | 5.1 |
| Speaking in Mother tongue | 3 | 1.1 |
| The language is hard | 1 | 0.6 |
| Lack of assistance | 1 | 0.6 |
| Lack of concentration | 1 | 0.6 |
| Lack of a library | 1 | 0.6 |
| Squeezing when sharing to read a book | 2 | 1.3 |

Table 28 shows that more (20.5%) pupils gave difficulty in understanding words as a challenge facing them when learning how to read. Twenty four pupils (15.4%) gave pronunciation

as a challenge, 17(10.9%) gave inadequate books, 9(5.8) inadequate time, 8(5.1%) unconducive classroom environment, 5(3.2%) stammering, 3(1.1%) speaking in mother tongue, 2(1.3%) squeezing when sharing to read a book, 1 (0.6%) the language is hard, 1 (0.6%) lack of assistance and 1 (0.6%) lack of a library.

Data from the head teachers, teachers and pupils indicated that the major challenge facing teaching and learning of basic reading literacy include among other inadequate teaching and learning, mother tongue interference, inadequate time, and pupils' inability to understand and pronounce words correctly.

In order to establish the challenges facing achievement of reading literacy emanating from home, head teachers and teachers were asked to mention the challenges that pupils' face at home that hinder their acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy. Table 29 presents the responses from the head teachers.

**Table 29: Challenges in Pupils' Homes**

| Type of Challenge | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of learning Materials | 4 | 11.1 |
| Poverty/ lack of basic needs | 6 | 16.7 |
| Lack of enough income | 4 | 11.1 |
| Illiterate parents | 5 | 13.9 |
| Unconducive learning environment | 4 | 11.1 |
| Lack of role model | 2 | 5.6 |
| Mother tongue interference | 1 | 2.8 |
| Lack of parental support | 10 | 27.8 |
| Ignorant parents | 2 | 5.6 |
| Living with aged parents | 1 | 2.8 |
| Poor Parenting | 1 | 2.8 |
| Lack of motivation from the society in general | 3 | 8.3 |
| Unstable families/ marital problems | 2 | 5.6 |
| Poor lighting. | 2 | 5.6 |

Table 29 shows that more (27.8%) teachers gave lack of parental support as a challenge facing pupils at home, while 6(16.7%) gave poverty income or lack of basic needs as a challenge, 5(13.9%) illiterate parents 4(11.1%) lack of enough income, 4(11.1%) unconducive learning environment, 3(8.3%) lack of motivation from society in general, 2(5.6%) unstable families, 2(5.6%) poor lighting, 2(5.6%) ignorant parents, 1(2.8%) mother tongue interference and 1(2.8%) of the head teachers gave poor lighting as a challenge at home.

Table 30 presents teachers' responses on the challenges that pupils face at home that hinder them from achievement of basic reading literacy.

**Table 30: Teachers' Response on Challenges at Home**

| Type of Challenge | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Poor teacher/ parent relationship | 5 | 6.4 |
| Poor lighting due to lack of electricity | 7 | 9 |
| Lack of parental guidance and support | 16 | 20.5 |
| Lack of learning resources at home | 10 | 12.8 |
| Poverty/lack of basic needs | 22 | 28.2 |
| Negative attitude from parents | 5 | 6.4 |
| Pupils given a lot of domestic work | 9 | 11.5 |
| Poor facilities and stimulation at home | 2 | 2.6 |
| Lack of learning space | 2 | 2.6 |
| Pupils' watching TV and movies at home | 3 | 3.8 |
| Illiterate parents | 5 | 6.4 |
| Family instability | 2 | 2.6 |
| Lack of follow up activities | 1 | 1.28 |
| Communicating in mother tongue | 4 | 5.1 |
| Lack of role models | 10 | 12.8 |
| Ignorant parents | 2 | 2.6 |
| Lack of time to study | 3 | 3.8 |

Table 30 shows that more (28.2%) teachers gave poverty or lack of basic needs as a challenge affecting pupils at home. Sixteen (20.5%) of the teachers gave lack of parental guidance and support as a challenge at home, 10(12.8%) gave lack of learning resources at home, 10(12.8%) lack of role models, 9(11.5%) said that pupils are given a lot of domestic work, 7(9%) poor lighting due to lack of electricicty,5(6.4%) poor teacher parent relationship, 5(6.4%) negative attitude from parents, 5(6.4%) illiterate parents, 4(5.1%) communicating in mother tongue, 3(3.8%) Pupils watching TV and Movies, 3(3.8%) lack of time to study, 2(2.6%) poor facilities and stimulation at home, 2(2.6%) lack of learning space, 2(2.6%) ignorant parents and 1(1.3%) gave lack of follow up activity as a challenge.

Pupils were asked to mention the challenges they face at home that prevent them from learning how to read. Table 31 presents a summary of the findings.

**Table 31: Challenge of Pupils' at Home**

| Challenge | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Too much domestic work | 46 | 29.5 |
| Insufficient lighting/lack of electricity | 15 | 9.6 |
| Lack of learning materials at home | 24 | 15.4 |
| Lack of time | 6 | 3.8 |
| Lack of someone to give guidance and support | 16 | 10.3 |
| Lack of space to study | 4 | 2.6 |
| Distraction by the television | 16 | 10.3 |
| Being stressed | 1 | 0.6 |
| A lot of noise | 1 | 0.6 |
| Lack of enough finances to buy necessities | 2 | 1.3 |

Table 31 shows that more (29.5%) sampled pupils gave too much domestic work as a challenge at home that prevents them from learning how to read well. Twenty four pupils24(15.4%) gave lack of learning materials as a challenge at home, 16(10.3%) gave lack of someone to give support and guidance, 16(10.3%) gave distraction by the television, 15(9.6%)gave insufficient lighting or lack of electricity, 6(3.8%) gave lack of time, 4(2.6%) gave lack of space to study, 2(1.3%) gave lack of enough finances to buy necessities, 1(0.6%) gave being stressed as a challenge and 1(0.6%) gave a lot of noise as a challenge preventing learning of how to read at home.

Data from the head teachers, teachers and pupils indicated that the major challenges from pupils' home environment affecting acquisition of basic reading literacy include among others lack of guidance and support from parents, poverty or lack of basic needs, pupils being given too much domestic work and lack learning materials at home. This study partly concurs with the findings of O'connor and Geiger (2009) who had carried out a research in South Africa aimed at establishing the challenges facing primary school educations of English as a second or other language. One of their findings was lack of parental involvement in their children's education.

Data regarding students' characteristic that poses a challenge in achieving reading literacy was sought and analyzed and presented in tables. Table 32 presents findings from the head teachers regarding pupils' characteristic that poses a challenge in acquisition of reading literacy skills.

**Table 32: Head Teachers' opinions on Challenges on Pupils' Character**

| Pupils' Characteristic | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Absenteeism | 7 | 19.4 |
| Negative attitude | 6 | 16.7 |
| Truancy | 4 | 11.1 |
| Lack of motivation and Commitment | 8 | 22.2 |
| Laziness | 4 | 11.1 |
| Malnutrition | 1 | 2.8 |
| Indiscipline | 3 | 8.3 |

A similar question was posed to the teachers on pupils' characteristics that poses a challenge in achieving reading literacy. Table 33 presents the findings.

**Table 33: Teachers' opinions on Challenges on Pupils' Character**

| Pupils' Characteristic | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Absenteeism | 14 | 17.9 |
| Indiscipline | 10 | 12.8 |
| Peer pressure | 3 | 3.8 |
| Lack of commitment and interest | 12 | 15.4 |
| Learning disability | 6 | 7.7 |
| Negative attitude towards the subject | 5 | 6.4 |
| Truancy | 4 | 5.1 |
| Lack of a reading culture | 2 | 2.6 |
| Mother tongue interference | 1 | 1.3 |
| Emotional behavior difficulties | 2 | 2.6 |
| Laziness | 5 | 6.4 |
| Poverty | 2 | 2.6 |
| Being a slow learner | 4 | 5.1 |
| Ignorance | 3 | 3.8 |

In order to establish the characteristics of pupils that hinder them from acquisition of reading literacy, pupils were asked to name the problems that prevent them from learning how to read well. Table 34 presents findings on pupils' opinion on problems that prevents them from learning how to read.

**Table 34: Problems that Prevent Pupils from Learning how to read**

| Characteristic | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of text books | 32 | 20.5 |
| Difficult words | 14 | 9 |
| Pronunciation | 4 | 2.6 |
| Being too playerful | 4 | 2.6 |
| Noise in class | 6 | 3.8 |
| Lack of enough basic things | 3 | 1.9 |
| Lack of time and adequate space | 3 | 1.9 |
| Lack of concentration | 6 | 3.8 |

Table 34 shows that more (20.5%) pupils gave lack of text books as a problem that prevent them from learning how to read. This challenge however does not emanate from pupils' character trait. Other challenges that they pupils gave include encountering difficult words, noise in class, lack of personal attention from teachers, pronunciation, being too playerful, lack of enough basic things and lack of time and adequate space.

Findings from the head teachers and teachers indicate that the most common challenge influencing reading literacy emanating from pupils' character is lack of motivation and absenteeism while most pupils suggest inability to understand. These findings partly concurs with Jones (2012) findings from the analysis of the Uwezo survey findings on the characteristic of government primary schools in Kenya. One of the major challenges that Jones' analysis revealed was pupils' absenteeism just like in this study.

### 4.8 How to Improve Reading Literacy levels

In order to gather information on how to improve Reading literacy levels in Nyeri county, all the participants were asked to give their suggestion on ways of improving implementation of teaching and learning , home environment of pupils and student characteristics. Table 35 presents a summary of the head teachers' views on how to improve implementation of teaching and learning.

**Table 35: Head Teachers' Views on how to Improve Literacy Levels**

| Ways of Improving | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Establishing and equipping a library | 7 | 19.4 |
| Provision of a variety of teaching and learning resources | 6 | 16.7 |
| Increasing teaching and learning resources | 15 | 41.7 |
| Early identification of challenges and mounting of intervention | 1 | 2.8 |
| Adequately preparing pupils at pre-school | 2 | 5.6 |
| Adequate preparation by teachers | 2 | 5.6 |
| Sensitizing parents to embrace their school | 1 | 2.8 |
| Giving make up and remedial teaching to pupils | 1 | 2.8 |
| Increase the number of teachers | 3 | 8.3 |
| Teaching the lower classes more seriously | 1 | 2.8 |

Table 35 shows that more (41.7%) head teachers suggested increasing of teaching and learning resources as a way of improving implementation of teaching and learning. Seven (19.4%) of the head teachers suggested establishing and equipping a library, 6(16.7%) suggested provision

of a variety of teaching and learning resources, 3(8.3%) suggested increasing the number of teachers, 2(5.6%) suggested adequately preparing pupils at pre-school, 2(5.6%) adequate preparation of teachers, 1(2.8%) early identification and intervention of challenges, 1(2.8%) sensitizing parents to embrace their school, 1(2.8%)giving make up and remedial teaching to pupils and 1(2.8%) teaching the lower classes seriously.

Table 36 presents a summary of teachers' views on how to improve implementation of teaching and learning.

**Table 36: Teachers' Views on Improvement of Implementation of teaching and learning**

| **Ways of Improving** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Provision of more teaching and learning resources | 48 | 61.5 |
| Establishment of a resource center or library | 5 | 6.4 |
| Guiding and motivating pupils to create interest in the subject | 5 | 6.4 |
| Use of English as a medium of communication | 6 | 7.7 |
| Increase number of teachers | 11 | 14.1 |
| Fair timetabling | 3 | 3.8 |
| Provision of individualized education program | 2 | 2.6 |
| Encouragement of follow up | 3 | 3.8 |
| Allocation of more time | 10 | 12.8 |
| Parents to help pupils with homework | 1 | 1.3 |

Table 36 shows that majority (61.5%) of the teachers suggested provision of more teaching and learning resources as a way of improving implementation of teaching and learning. Eleven

(14.1%) teachers suggested increase in number of teachers as a way of improving implementation, 10(12.8%) suggested provision of more time, 6(7.7%) suggested use of English language as a medium of communication, 5(6.4%) establishment of a resource center or library, 5(6.4%) guiding and motivating pupils to create interest in the subject, 3(3.8%) suggested fair timetabling, 3(3.8%) encouragement of follow up and 1(1.3%) suggested parents to help pupils with homework.

To seek pupils' opinion on ways of improving implementation of teaching and learning they were asked to suggest what the school can do to help them learn how to read better and learn better in mathematics. Table 37 presents pupils' opinions on how the school can help them learn how read better.

**Table 37: Pupils' Opinion on Ways the School can Improve Learning to Read**

| **Ways of improvements** | **Frequency** | **Percentage.** |
|---|---|---|
| Buy story books | 62 | 40.4 |
| Reading more story books | 12 | 7.7 |
| Establishment of a library | 20 | 12.8 |
| Provide more revision books and text books | 60 | 38.5 |
| Increase number of teachers | 5 | 3.2 |
| Allocation of more time | 7 | 4.5 |
| Making English the medium of Communication | 10 | 6.4 |
| Teachers to work harder and keep time | 2 | 1.3 |
| Personal attention | 4 | 2.6 |
| Doing more practice | 3 | 1.9 |

Table 37 shows that most (40.4%) of the pupils suggested buying of story books as a way of improving learning how to read. Sixty (38.5%) suggested provision of revision books and other text books, 20(12.8%) suggested establishment of a library, 12(7.7%) reading more story books, 10(6.4%) suggested making English language the medium of communication, 7(4.5%) allocation of more time, 4(2.6%) being given personal attention, 3(1.9%) doing more practice and 2(2.6%) suggested that teachers should work harder and keep time.

The findings from the head teachers, teachers and pupils indicate that the major way of improving the implementation of teaching and learning of basic reading literacy is by increasing the teaching and learning resources which encompass establishing and equipping libraries, providing a variety of text books and story books, increasing the number of teachers and allocating more time to teaching and learning. Among the recommendations of Uwezo (2012) was increasing the number of teaching and learning resources for example books and the number of effective teachers. This study findings concurs with Uwezo (2012) recommendations.

Table 38 presents a summary of the head teachers' suggestions on ways of improving the pupils' home background to enhance acquisition of basic reading literacy.

**Table 38: Head Teachers' Opinion on Improvement in Pupils' Home Backgrounds**

| Ways of Improving | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Provision of learning materials | 4 | 11.1 |
| Improve parental Social Economic Status | 10 | 27.8 |
| Educate Parents on their role in education | 11 | 30.6 |
| Co-operation between parents and teachers | 3 | 8.3 |
| Electrification | 2 | 5.6 |
| Use of Chiefs to address importance of childcare and stable marriages | 1 | 2.8 |
| Give pupils less household chores | 1 | 2.8 |
| Provision of reading space | 1 | 2.8 |
| Parents to support pupils | 4 | 2.8 |
| Provide a conducive learning environment | 1 | 2.8 |

Table 38 show that more (30.6%) head teachers suggested that parents should be educated on their role in education. Ten (27.8%) of the head teachers suggested that parents social economic status should be improved, 4(11.1%) suggested provision of learning materials at home, while 4(11.1%) suggested that parents should support pupils. Other head teachers suggested that there should be co-operation between parents and teachers, pupils' homes should be installed with electricity, the chiefs to address parents on importance of childcare and stable marriages, pupils should be given less household chore, be provided with reading space and parents to support pupils.

**Table 39: Teachers' Opinion on Improvement in Pupils' Home Backgrounds**

| Ways of Improving | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Educate parents on the importance of education and their role and how to support their children | 26 | 33.3 |
| Electrification or provision of solar | 9 | 11.5 |
| Parents should guide and support pupils | 15 | 19.2 |
| Provision of learning materials at home | 16 | 20.5 |
| Give guidance and counseling to pupils | 2 | 2.6 |
| Communicating in English at home | 2 | 2.6 |
| Teamwork between teachers, pupils and parents | 2 | 2.6 |
| Tuitioning at home | 1 | 1.3 |
| Giving pupils English homework | 1 | 1.3 |
| Switching off television | 2 | 2.6 |
| Set time for revision in the evening | 3 | 3.8 |

Table 39 shows that more (33.3%) teachers suggested that parents should be educated on the importance of education and their role in education and on how to support their children. Sixteen (20.5%) of the teachers suggested provision of learning materials at home, while fifteen (19.2%) suggested that parents should support pupils. Other suggestions from the teachers included electrification or provision of solar at homes, pupils to set time for revision in the evening, giving guidance and counseling to pupils, pupils to be communicating in English language at home, teamwork between teachers pupils and parents, switching off television, pupils to be given tuition at home and giving pupils English homework.

**Table 40: Pupils' Opinion on Improvement in Their Home Backgrounds**

| Ways of Improving | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Provision of proper lighting | 7 | 4.5 |
| Provision of space to do study | 7 | 4.5 |
| Doing revision | 26 | 16.7 |
| Be given guidance and support when revising | 28 | 17.9 |
| Provision of books and learning materials | 57 | 36.5 |
| Switching off television | 6 | 3.8 |
| Be given time to study | 11 | 7.0 |
| Reduce domestic work | 5 | 3.2 |
| More income to parents to pay fees | 1 | 0.6 |
| Being encouraged | 7 | 4.5 |

Table 40 shows that more (36.5%) of the pupils suggested that they should be provided with books and learning materials, while 28(17.9%) suggested they should be given support when revising and 26(16.7%) suggested doing revision at home. Other suggestions from pupils included being given time to study, provision of proper lighting and space to study, being encouraged, switching off of television, reduction of domestic work and more income to parents to parents to pay fees.

The findings from head teachers, teachers and pupils indicate that the most common ways of improving the home environment of the pupils in order to improve the levels of basic reading literacy is by educating parents on the importance of education, their role in education and how to

support their children. Also the parents should support the pupils and provision of learning materials at home.

**Table 41: Head teachers' Opinion on Improvement of Pupils' Character**

| Ways of improvement | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Cultivate a positive attitude | 6 | 16.7 |
| Motivation and cultivating interest | 13 | 36.1 |
| Strengthen pupils' Character | 2 | 5.6 |
| Guiding and counseling pupils | 6 | 16.7 |
| Inculcate a reading culture | 2 | 5.6 |
| Being exposed to newspapers and reading materials | 3 | 8.3 |
| Provision of balanced diet | 1 | 2.8 |
| Good discipline | 1 | 2.8 |
| Doing more practice | 1 | 2.8 |
| Cultivate self-drive | 1 | 2.8 |

Table 41 shows that more (36.1%) head teachers suggested motivation of learners and helping them cultivate interest in the subject while 6 (16.7%) of the head teachers suggested that pupils should cultivate a positive attitude and 6(16.7%) suggested guiding and counselling pupils. Other head teachers suggested that pupils should be exposed to newspapers and other reading materials, pupils should inculcate a reading culture, provision of a balanced diet to pupils, pupils to have good discipline, do more practice and cultivate self-drive.

**Table 42: Teachers' Opinion on Improvement of Pupils' Character**

| Ways of improvement | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Attending lessons | 4 | 5.1 |
| Good behavior and discipline | 3 | 3.8 |
| Motivating learners | 21 | 26.9 |
| Remedial teaching | 8 | 10.3 |
| Provision of specialized education program | 5 | 6.4 |
| Cultivating interest in learning and positive attitude | 13 | 16.7 |
| Guidance and counseling | 8 | 10.3 |
| Encouraging a reading culture and speaking in English | 1 | 1.3 |
| Grouping pupils according to their abilities | 2 | 2.6 |
| Doing more practice | 3 | 3.8 |
| Creating cohesion among students | 1 | 1.3 |
| Cultivating self-discipline | 12 | 15.4 |

Table 42 shows that more (26.9%) teachers suggested that learners should be motivated, while 13(16.7%) of the teachers suggested that pupils should cultivate interest and positive attitude towards learning, and 12(15.4%) suggested that pupils should cultivate self-discipline. Other teachers suggested guiding and counselling pupils, remedial teaching, provision of specialized education program, pupils to attend lessons, pupils to do more practice, encouraging a reading culture and speaking in English and finally creating cohesion among students.

**Table 43: Pupils' Suggestions Ways of Improving Reading Literacy**

| Ways of Improving | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Doing more practice | 85 | 54.5 |
| Become keen | 7 | 4.5 |
| Working harder | 17 | 10.9 |
| Develop interest in the subject | 2 | 1.3 |
| Cultivate a positive attitude | 3 | 1.9 |

Table 43 shows that most (54.5%) of the pupils suggested that they should do more practice in reading and doing mathematics, while 17(10.9%) suggested they should work harder and 7(4.5%) suggested they should be more keen. Two (1.3%) suggested that they should develop interest in the subject.

The findings from the head teachers, teachers and pupils indicate that the best way of improving reading literacy and numeracy through improving the pupils' character is through motivation, cultivating interest and positive attitude towards learning, self-discipline, and working harder.

### 4.9 Performance in Reading Literacy Test

To establish the pupils' performance on reading literacy, the researcher administered a reading literacy test to pupils. The test was marked and results analyzed as per Table 44.

**Table 44: Analysis of Literacy Test Performance**

| | Pupils that Passed | | Pupils that Failed | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Section of Test** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Reading of words and a Paragraph | 120 | 76.9 | 36 | 23.1 |
| Comprehension of a simple story | 154 | 99.7 | 1 | 0.6 |

Table 44 shows that majority (76.9%) of the pupils passed on reading of words and the paragraph, while 36(23.1%) did not pass. Majority (99.7%) of the pupils passed the comprehension test and only 1(0.6%) failed to pass. Compared to Uwezo findings from the annual learning assessment carried out in Kenya in February year 2012, the national average in literacy levels among class six pupils from the uwezo 2012 findings was 82% while in this study the average literacy level was found to be 88% (reading and comprehension combined) which is slightly higher. These findings indicate that approximately 10% of class six pupils have not achieved basic reading literacy.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the study, its conclusions and recommendations as well as suggestions for further research.

## 5.2 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to assess factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County Kenya. Specifically the study investigated the extent of influence of implementation of teaching and learning of reading literacy and students' characteristics on achievement of reading literacy , the factors in the pupils' home environment that influence achievement of reading literacy and challenges and ways of improving reading literacy levels in public primary school in Nyeri County. The study utilized cross-sectional survey design. Primary school head teachers, teachers, and pupils comprised the targeted population. Multi stage probability sampling was used to arrive at a sample of 39 schools from which a sample of 39 head teachers, 78 teachers and 156 pupils were drawn. Data was collected using three types of instruments namely; questionnaires, checklist and a reading test.

Collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The summary of the findings is presented below starting with demographic information and then the research questions.

### 5.2.1 Participant's Characteristic

The response rate achieved was 99%. There was fair gender representation among the participants. The sampled participants were in a position to provide relevant information since

majority of the sampled pupils belonged to 11- 12 years age bracket and majority of the teachers and head teachers had over one year experience in their position and in their current schools.

### 5.2.2 Influence of Implementation of implementation of teaching and learning

The first research question sought to find out the extent to which implementation of teaching and learning influenced achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County. Implementation of teaching and learning comprised of school climate, effectiveness of teachers in teaching and learning and adequacy of teaching and learning resources. The findings on each of these variables is discussed below.

Majority of the schools studied had a positive school climate which has a weak positive relationship with achievement of basic reading literacy. The school climate predicts or explains achievement of basic reading literacy by 16.8%. Most of the schools have effective teachers who have effectively implemented the teaching and learning process. Effectiveness of teachers has a very strong positive relationship with achievement of basic reading literacy and predicts or explains achievement by 53%.

Majority of the schools have inadequate teaching and learning resources. Majority of the schools (64%) lack libraries and the few that have libraries they are fairly equipped with insufficient books to support achievement of basic reading literacy. Almost half (47%) of the pupils share text books. Adequacy of teaching and learning resources has a weak positive relation with achievement of basic reading literacy and predicts or explains achievement by 14.4%.

In public primary schools in Nyeri County, teaching and learning has been implemented to a moderate extent. Implementation of teaching and learning has a strong positive relationship with achievement of basic reading literacy and predicts achievement by 33%.

### 5.2.3 Factors in the Home Environment that Influence Achievement of Basic Reading Literacy

The second research question sought to establish which factors in the home environment of the pupils influenced achievement of basic reading literacy. The factors in the home environment that was studied included the social economic status, literacy activities at home and availability of educational resources at home. The findings on each factor is presented below.

All the parents of the pupils in this study are of average and below social economic status, majority being of low social economic status. Majority of the parents' occupations are menial jobs with relatively low income and have attained up to secondary level of education most of them (50%) having reached secondary school level. Majority of the pupils' homes have educational resources such as calendars, newspapers and story books that enhances development of reading literacy. Majority of the pupils are involved in reading literacy activities at home.

Social economic status, parental educational level, reading literacy activities at home and availability of educational resources at home are factors in the home environment that influence achievement of reading literacy. However, they all have a weak positive relationship with achievement of basic reading literacy, their predicting or explaining power to achievement is as follows; parental education 35%, availability of educational resources 7%, social economic status 4.6% and reading literacy activities 0.2%.

### 5.2.4 Influence of Students Characteristic on Achievement of Reading Literacy.

The third research question sought to establish the extent to which students characteristic influence achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County. The students characteristics considered in this study included school attendance, attentiveness and motivation. The findings on each aspect is presented below.

The school attendance rate of the pupils is moderate 39.1% having been absent from school in the past term for 1 to 5 days. Majority of the pupils have moderate attentiveness while majority have low motivation to learn which hinders learning of reading literacy to a great extent. Motivation has a strong positive relationship with achievement of basic reading literacy and explains or predicts achievement by 36%. Attendance and attentiveness have very weak positive relationship with achievement of basic reading literacy and predicts or explains achievement by 2% and 1% respectively.

In public primary schools in Nyeri County, students' characteristics influence achievement of reading literacy to a small extent. Student characteristics has a very weak positive relationship with achievement of basic reading literacy and predicts or explains achievement by 9.5%.

### 5.2.5 Challenges Influencing Achievement of Basic Reading Literacy

The challenges that affect implementation of teaching and learning as suggested by head teachers, teachers and pupils are inadequate teaching and learning resources, lack of a resource center or library, lack of parents' cooperation, lack of continuity of a teacher with his or her class to next level, mother tongue interference, lack of basic teaching aids, inadequate teachers, high enrollment/ large classes, improper follow up of pupils by teachers and parents, negative attitude by parents, inadequate preparation of teachers at ECD, pupils' lack of self-esteem, inadequate time, student absenteeism, students' inattentiveness, negative attitude towards the subject, inadequate preparation in of pupils in ECD, stammering, pupils having difficulty understanding words and their pronunciation, eye Sight problem, unconducive classroom environment, pupils finding the language hard, pupils' lack of assistance, lack of concentration and squeezing when sharing to read a book.

Challenges emanating from the home environment as suggested by the head teachers, teachers and pupils are lack of learning materials at home, poverty or lack of basic needs, lack of enough income, illiterate parents, unconducive learning environment, lack of role model, mother tongue interference, lack of parental guidance and support, ignorant parents, living with aged parents, poor parenting lack of motivation from the society in general, unstable families or marital problems, poor lighting, poor teacher parent relationship, negative attitude from parents, pupils given a lot of domestic work, poor facilities and stimulation at home, pupils' watching TV and movies at home, lack of follow up activities, communicating in mother tongue, lack of time to study, lack of space to study, distraction by the television, being stressed and a lot of noise lack of learning materials at home, poverty or lack of basic needs, lack of enough income, illiterate parents, unconducive learning environment, lack of role model, mother tongue interference, lack of parental guidance and support, ignorant parents, living with aged parents, poor parenting lack of motivation from the society in general, unstable families or marital problems, poor lighting, poor teacher parent relationship, negative attitude from parents, pupils given a lot of domestic work, poor facilities and stimulation at home, pupils' watching TV and movies at home, lack of follow up activities, communicating in mother tongue, lack of time to study, lack of space to study, distraction by the television, being stressed and a lot of noise.

Challenges emanating from students' characteristics includes absenteeism, indiscipline, peer pressure, lack of commitment and interest, learning disability, negative attitude towards the subject, truancy, lack of a reading culture, mother tongue interference, emotional behavior difficulties, laziness, poverty, being a slow learner, ignorance, malnutrition and lack of concentration.

### 5.2.6 Ways of Improving Basic Reading Literacy Levels in Public Primary Schools in Nyeri County

Suggestion on how to improve implementation of teaching and learning in order to raise the reading literacy levels, as suggested by teachers, head teachers and pupils are increasing the number and variety of teaching and learning, resources, early identification of challenges and mounting of intervention, adequately preparing pupils at pre-school, adequate preparation by teachers, sensitizing parents to embrace their school, giving make up and remedial teaching to pupils, increase the number of teachers, teaching the lower classes more seriously, guiding and motivating pupils to create interest in the subject, use of English as a medium of communication, fair timetabling, provision of individualized education program, encouragement of follow up, allocation of more time, parents to help pupils with homework, reading more story books, teachers to work harder and keep time, teachers to give pupils personal attention, and doing more practice.

On how to improve the home environment of pupils, the head teachers, teachers and pupils suggestion are provision of learning materials at home, improve parental social economic status, co-operation between parents and teachers, electrification or provision of proper lighting, use of Chiefs to address importance of childcare and stable marriages, give pupils less household chores, provision of reading space, provide a conducive learning environment, educate parents on the importance of education and their role and how to support their children, parents should guide, support and encourage pupils, communicating in English at home, teamwork between teachers, pupils and parents, giving pupils tuition at home, giving pupils English homework, switching off television, set time for revision in the evening and reduce the amount of domestic work given to pupils.

Ways in which pupils' character can be improved as suggested by teachers, head teachers and pupils themselves are increase motivation, cultivating interest and positive attitude towards learning, guiding and counseling pupils, inculcate a reading culture, speaking in English, being exposed to newspapers and reading materials, provision of balanced diet, doing more practice, cultivate self-drive and self-discipline, attending lessons, remedial teaching, provision of specialized education program, grouping pupils according to their abilities ,creating cohesion among students, become keen and working harder.

**5.3 Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions can be made. In public primary schools in Nyeri County, implementation of teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy influences achievement of basic reading literacy to a moderate extent. The positive school climate found in majority of schools has a positive but small influence on achievement of basic reading literacy. This is also the case for the teaching and learning resources which are inadequate. The teachers are effective in implementation of teaching and learning of literacy. Effectiveness of teachers and the teaching process has the largest positive influence out of all the factors under study.

Factors in home environment of pupils in public primary schools in Nyeri County that influence achievement of basic reading includes family's social economic status, parental educational level, educational resources at home and reading literacy activities at home. The social economic status of the pupils' parents in below average most being of low social economic status. Majority of the parents have secondary school education. Majority of pupils are involved in reading literacy activities at home and in majority of homes there are reading literacy educational

materials. Among the home environment factors, parental education is the greatest predictor (by 35%) of achievement in basic reading literacy.

In public primary schools in Nyeri County, students' characteristic influence achievement of basic reading literacy to a very small extent. The pupils rate of attendance is moderate, majority of them are not motivated to learn and exhibit moderate attentiveness during learning.

The challenges that influence achievement of basic reading literacy in public primary schools in Nyeri County include inadequate teaching and learning resources, mother tongue interference, lack of school library, inadequate time and pupils' difficulty in understanding and pronouncing word, lack of parental guidance and support, lack of basic needs, lack of learning materials at home, lack of role models, ignorant parents, pupils being given too much domestic work, insufficient lighting, and pupils' lack of motivation to learn.

Ways of improving the reading literacy levels in public primary schools in Nyeri County include increasing the amount and variety of teaching and learning resources, establishing and equipping libraries adequately, using English language as medium of communication, educating parents on importance of education, their role in education and how to support the pupils, provision of learning materials at home, guiding and supporting pupils, pupils doing more revision, increasing pupils motivation to learn and inculcating a positive attitude towards learning.

**5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study and the objective of improving reading literacy levels in primary schools, the researcher makes the following recommendations. On implementation of teaching and learning, each school should be provided with a well-equipped library. The number of text books should be increased in order to increase access of the recommended course books. To accomplish this the school administration can initiate resource mobilization activities like

keeping dairy cows, running food canteen among others, instead of solely relying on the government fund. Head teachers should supervise the actual teaching and learning process mainly through class observation and ensure the teachers adequately prepare for the lessons.

On home environment the parents should be educated on their role in supporting their children's education in order to support and guide them appropriately. Those without electricity in their homes should be advised and be helped by the school administrators to form self-help groups to raise money to install electricity.

On student characteristics, their motivation level should be raised by making learning interesting, organizing motivation talks by school alumni who are successful and establishing a reward system to recognize those who excel or improve in studies.

### 5.5. Recommendations for Further Research

Since this study encompassed assessing three sets of variables that were very diverse, it was not possible to assess each variable in depth. I would thus suggest replication of the same study, and further in depth research on the following; influence of home environment on basic reading literacy, influence of effectiveness of teachers on achievement of basic reading literacy, influence of adequacy of teaching and learning resources on achievement of basic reading literacy, influence of pupils' motivation on achievement of basic reading literacy, influence of social economic status on achievement of basic reading literacy and influence of parental education level on achievement of basic reading literacy.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: LETTER TO THE RESPONDENT

Felistah Wahito Nyamu,

Catholic University of Eastern Africa,

Department of Post Graduate Studies in Education

P.O. Box 62157 - 00200, Nairobi, Kenya.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: MASTERS IN EDUCATION

I am a student at Catholic University of Eastern Africa. As a requirement for the award of a Masters Degree, I am expected to conduct research and write a report. I am carrying out a study on, "*Assessment of Factors Influencing Achievement of Basic Reading Literacy in Public Primary Schools in Nyeri County, Kenya*". I would be glad if you allow your school to participate in this study.

The respondents will remain anonymous and the information obtained from them will be kept confidential and no individual school names will be disclosed in the completed work.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Felistah W. Nyamu

## APPENDIX II

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE HEADTEACHER

My name is Felistah Wahito Nyamu a student at Catholic University of Eastern Africa. I'm carrying out a study on "*Assessment of Factors Influencing Achievement of Basic Reading Literacy in Public Primary Schools in Nyeri County"*. The study is purely for academic purposes and the information you will give will solely be used for this study. Your identity and the information will be treated confidentially and the name of your institution will not be used anywhere.

**Instructions**

Kindly respond to each question with the most appropriate answer. Place a tick [√ ] in the brackets in front of the most appropriate response.

**Section A: Demographic Data**

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Which is your highest academic qualification?

   Masters [ ] Degree [ ] Diploma [ ] P1 Certificate [ ]

   A' Level [ ] O' Level [ ] ATS III [ ]
3. For how long have you been a head teacher?

   1 – 10 years [ ] 11 – 20 years [ ] 21 – 30 years [ ] 31 – 40 years [ ]
4. For how long have you been a head teacher in this school?

   1 – 10 years [ ] 11 – 20 years [ ] 21 – 30 years [ ] 31 – 40 years [ ]

**Section B: Effective Implementation of Teaching and Learning**

5. Are there written and clearly communicated rules on physical and verbal abuse in this school? Yes [ ] No [ ]

6. On average how many cases of physical violence and verbal abuse by pupils do you handle per term? Less than 5 cases [ ] 6- 10 cases [ ] over 10 cases [ ]
7. From your experience what proportion of the total number of workers in this school treat each other with respect? All of them [ ] Three quarter [ ] One half [ ]
   One quarter [ ] None of them [ ]
8. How do you assess that the teachers responsible for teaching reading literacy (English) are actually doing it?

   Subject mean Score in Exams [ ]

   Inspection of Learners Exercise books [ ]

   Class observation [ ]

   Checking records of Work [ ]

   Daily lesson attendance sheet [ ]

   Syllabus coverage [ ]

   Schemes of work [ ]

   Lesson plan [ ]
9. How often do the teachers in charge of teaching reading literacy skills (English) attend in-service training or seminars to improve their knowledge, skills or general service delivery?

   Once per term [ ]

   Twice per year [ ]

   Once per year [ ]

   Rarely [ ]

   Never [ ]

10. Which aspects of teaching hinder acquisition of reading literacy skills by learners in your school?

    Mother tongues interference [ ]

    Inappropriate teaching method [ ]

    Inadequate skills in Early Childhood Education [ ]

    Inappropriate use of teaching Aids [ ]

    Misconception about when serious teaching should be done [ ]

11. Which teacher's indiscipline if any hinder teaching and learning of reading literacy?

    Inadequate lesson preparation [ ]

    Skipping lessons [ ]

    Absenteeism [ ]

    Failure to complete syllabus [ ]

12. Are there enough teachers for reading literacy (English) in this school?

    Yes [ ] No [ ]

13. (a) Does this school have a library? Yes [ ] No [ ]

    (b) (If the answer to 13(a) is yes) How equipped is the library in relation to resources that enhance acquisition of basic reading literacy?

    Well-equipped [ ]

    Fairly equipped [ ]

    Poorly equipped [ ]

14. What challenge(s) in this school influence teaching and learning of basic reading literacy?

    Inadequate Teaching and Learning Resources [ ]

    Lack of a Resource Center or Library [ ]

    Lack of parents' cooperation [ ]

Lack of continuity of a teacher with his or her class to next level [ ]

Mother tongue interference [ ]

Lack of basic teaching aids [ ]

Inadequate teachers [ ]

High enrollment/ Large classes [ ]

Improper follow up of pupils by teachers and parents [ ]

Negative attitude by parents [ ]

Inadequate preparation at EC D [ ]

15. How can teaching and learning of basic reading literacy be improved in this school?

Establishing and equipping a library [ ]

Provision of a variety of teaching and learning resources [ ]

Increasing teaching and learning resources [ ]

Early identification of challenges and mounting

of intervention [ ]

Adequately preparing pupils at pre-school [ ]

Adequate preparation by teachers [ ]

Sensitizing parents to embrace their school [ ]

Giving make up and remedial teaching to pupils [ ]

Increase the number of teachers [ ]

Teaching the lower classes more seriously [ ]

**Section C: Influence of Home Environment**

16. On average what is the social economic status of the parents in this school?

Low social economic status [ ]

Average social economic status [ ]

High social economic status [ ]

17. What challenges are pupils facing at home that hinder their acquisition of basic reading literacy skills?

Lack of learning Materials [ ]

Poverty/ lack of basic needs [ ]

Lack of enough income [ ]

Illiterate parents [ ]

Unconducive learning environment [ ]

Lack of role model [ ]

Mother tongue interference [ ]

Lack of parental support [ ]

Ignorant parents [ ]

Living with aged parents [ ]

Poor Parenting [ ]

Lack of motivation from the society in general [ ]

Unstable families/ marital problems [ ]

Poor lighting [ ]

18. What improvement in the pupils' home background can enhance acquisition of basic reading literacy skills?

Provision of learning materials [ ]

Improve parental Social Economic Status [ ]

Educate Parents on their role in education [ ]

Co-operation between parents and teachers [ ]

Electrification [ ]

Use of Chiefs to address importance of childcare

and stable marriages [ ]

Give pupils less household chores [ ]

Provision of reading space [ ]

Parents to support pupils [ ]

Provide a conducive learning environment [ ]

**Section D: Student Characteristic**

19. Based on your experience, how many students arrive in school alert and well rested?

Almost all [ ] Around 75 % [ ] Around 50% [ ]

Around 25% [ ] Almost none [ ]

20. Based on your experience, how many students are motivated to learn?

Almost all [ ] Around 75 % [ ] Around 50% [ ]

Around 25% [ ] Almost none [ ]

21. What students' characteristic if any, poses a challenge in achieving reading literacy?

Absenteeism [ ]

Negative attitude [ ]

Truancy [ ]

Lack of motivation and Commitment [ ]

Laziness [ ]

Malnutrition [ ]

Indiscipline [ ]

22. What improvements in pupils' character can enhance acquisition of basic reading literacy in this school ?

| | |
|---|---|
| Cultivate a positive attitude | [ ] |
| Motivation and cultivating interest | [ ] |
| Strengthen pupils' Character | [ ] |
| Guiding and counseling pupils | [ ] |
| Inculcate a reading culture | [ ] |
| Exposed to newspapers and reading materials | [ ] |
| Provision of balanced diet | [ ] |
| Good discipline | [ ] |
| Doing more practice | [ ] |
| Cultivate self-drive | [ ] |

**End**

**Thank you for your time and cooperation**.

## APPENDIX III

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This questionnaire is about Assessment of the Factors Influencing Achievement of Basic Reading Literacy and Numeracy in Public Primary Schools in Nyeri County. Kindly respond to the items in this questionnaire with honesty in order to facilitate the study. Your identity and the information will be treated confidentially and will be used solely for this study.

**Instructions**

Place a tick [√ ] in the brackets in front of the most appropriate response and write an explanation where it is required.

**Section A: Demographic Data**

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Years of experience in teaching.

   1 – 10 years [ ] 11 – 20 years [ ] 21 – 30 years [ ] 31 – 40 years [ ]
3. For how long have you been teaching in the current school?

   1 – 10 years [ ] 11 – 20 years [ ] 21 – 30 years [ ] 31 – 40 years [ ]
4. What is your highest academic qualification?

   Masters [ ] Degree [ ] Diploma [ ] P1 Certificate [ ]

   A' Level [ ] O' Level [ ] ATS III [ ]

**Section B: Effective Implementation of Teaching and Learning.**

**5.** To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Tick [ √ ] appropriately.

| Statement | Strongly agree 5 | Agree 4 | Undecided 3 | Disagree 2 | Strongly disagree 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| This school is a safe place for staff | | | | | |
| Pupils in this school respect one another's differences for example gender and ethnicity | | | | | |
| The staff in this school have a close professional relationship | | | | | |

6. Is your subject allocated enough time? Yes [ ] No [ ]
7. What is the average number of pupils in your class? _____
8. Are you able to give each pupil individual attention during teaching and learning in class in each and every lesson? Yes [ ] No [ ]
9. Do you have time set apart for remedial teaching for students with difficulties in learning? Yes [ ] No [ ]
10. Have you ever attended any in-service course on teaching your subject area?

    Yes [ ] No [ ]
11. Do you have a school library?

    Yes [ ] No [ ]

12. Are there adequate recommended course books in school, for teaching and learning in your subject area? Yes [ ] No [ ]

13. Which other relevant teaching learning resources are available for your subject in the school? Charts [ ] Posters [ ] Electronic media [ ]

14. What challenges do you face in teaching and learning of your subject area?

Inadequate Teaching and Learning Resources [ ]

Pupils' lack of self-esteem [ ]

Mother tongue interference [ ]

Inadequate time [ ]

Student absenteeism [ ]

Student inattentiveness [ ]

Negative attitude towards the subject [ ]

Inadequate preparation in ECD [ ]

High enrollment/ large classes [ ]

Inadequate teachers [ ]

Mixed ability learners combined in one class [ ]

Pupils' failure to complete homework [ ]

Lack of pupils' cooperation [ ]

Biased environment [ ]

Lack of individualized attention [ ]

**15.** What can be done to improve the teaching and learning of your subject?

Provision of more teaching and learning resources [ ]

Establishment of a resource center or library [ ]

Guiding and motivating pupils to create interest in the subject [ ]

Use of English as a medium of communication [ ]

Increase number of teachers [ ]

Fair timetabling [ ]

Provision of individualized education program [ ]

Encouragement of follow up [ ]

Allocation of more time [ ]

Parents to help pupils with homework [ ]

**Section C: Influence of Home Environment**

16. What challenges do students face at homes that hinder them from acquisition of reading literacy skills?

Poor teacher/ parent relationship [ ]

Poor lighting due to lack of electricity [ ]

Lack of parental guidance and support [ ]

Lack of learning resources at home [ ]

Poverty/lack of basic needs [ ]

Negative attitude from parents [ ]

Pupils given a lot of domestic work [ ]

Poor facilities and stimulation at home [ ]

Lack of learning space [ ]

Pupils' watching TV and movies at home [ ]

Illiterate parents [ ]

Family instability [ ]

Lack of follow up activities [ ]

Communicating in mother tongue [ ]

Lack of role models [ ]

Ignorant parents [ ]

Lack of time to study [ ]

17. What improvements in the learners' home background can help them to improve their literacy skills?

Educate parents on the importance of education and

their role and how to support their children [ ]

Electrification or provision of solar [ ]

Parents should guide and support pupils [ ]

Provision of learning materials at home [ ]

Give guidance and counseling to pupils [ ]

Communicating in English at home [ ]

Teamwork between teachers, pupils and parents [ ]

Tuitioning at home [ ]

Giving pupils English homework [ ]

Switching off television [ ]

Set time for revision in the evening [ ]

**Section D: Student Characteristic**

18. To what extent do the following student behaviors hinder acquisition of reading literacy in your class? Tick [ √ ] appropriately.

| Statement | To no extent | To a very small extent | To a small extent | To a large extent | To a very large extent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Class disturbance | | | | | |
| Lack of attentiveness | | | | | |
| Absenteeism | | | | | |
| Skipping lessons | | | | | |
| Indiscipline cases | | | | | |
| Lack of motivation to learn | | | | | |

19. What students' characteristic if any, poses a challenge in achieving reading literacy and numeracy .

Absenteeism [ ]

Indiscipline [ ]

Peer pressure [ ]

Lack of commitment and interest [ ]

Learning disability [ ]

Negative attitude towards the subject [ ]

Truancy [ ]

Lack of a reading culture [ ]

Mother tongue interference [ ]

Emotional behavior difficulties [ ]

Laziness [ ]

Poverty [ ]

Being a slow learner [ ]

Ignorance [ ]

**20.** What improvements in pupils' character can enhance acquisition of basic reading literacy in this school?

Attending lessons [ ]

Good behavior and discipline [ ]

Motivating learners [ ]

Remedial teaching [ ]

Provision of specialized education program [ ]

Cultivating interest in learning and positive attitude [ ]

Guidance and counseling [ ]

Encouraging a reading culture and speaking in English [ ]

Grouping pupils according to their abilities [ ]

Doing more practice [ ]

Creating cohesion among students [ ]

Cultivating self-discipline [ ]

**End**

**Thank you.**

## APPENDIX IV

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPILS

These questions are for finding out what influence your performance in reading literacy. Please answer honestly. Nobody will know your name. Your answers will not be known by anybody; they will only be used to find out what is being researched.

**Instructions**

Put a tick [√] in the bracket in front of the best answer or write an answer on the space after the question.

**Section A: Demographic Data**

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Age 9 – 10 years [ ] 11- 12 years [ ] 13 – 14 years [ ]

   15 – 16 years [ ] 17 – 18 years [ ]

**Section B: Effective Implementation of Teaching and Learning**

3. Do you feel safe in all areas of the school buildings and compound? Yes [ ] No [ ]
4. Have you been insulted, teased, beaten or abused by anyone more than once in school?

   Yes [ ] No [ ]
5. Do you feel free to talk with your teachers? Yes [ ] No [ ]

   Do you have your own English text book or you share with other pupils

   Yes [ ] No [ ]
6. In school do you have English story books? Yes [ ] No [ ]
7. Which problem do you get when learning how to read?

   Stammering [ ]

   Difficulty understanding words [ ]

Pronunciation [ ]

Eye Sight problem [ ]

Inadequate books [ ]

Inadequate time [ ]

Unconducive classroom environment [ ]

Speaking in Mother tongue [ ]

The language is hard [ ]

Lack of assistance [ ]

Lack of concentration [ ]

Lack of a library [ ]

Squeezing when sharing to read a book [ ]

8. What can the school do to help you learn how to read better in English?

Do more revision [ ]

Allocation of more time [ ]

Be helped to improve on accuracy [ ]

Provide all the requirements in Mathematics [ ]

Good teaching [ ]

Provide more revision books and text books [ ]

Be tested more often [ ]

Teachers to keep time [ ]

Tuition [ ]

Join a discussion group [ ]

Provide more teachers [ ]

**Section D: Influence of Home Environment**

9. Who takes care of you? Parents [ ] Guardian [ ]
10. What work does your father do?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Small scale farmer [ ] | Small business entrepreneur [ ] | Teacher [ ] |
| Technician [ ] | Driver [ ] | Carpenter [ ] |
| Cashier [ ] | Engineer [ ] | Mason [ ] |
| Manual Worker [ ] | Plumber [ ] | Gate Keeper [ ] |
| Tour Guide [ ] | Game Ranger [ ] | Soldier [ ] |
| Preacher [ ] | Designer [ ] | Mechanic [ ] |
| Policeman [ ] | Human Resource Person [ ] | Managing Director [ ] |

11. What work does your mother do?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Teacher [ ] | Small Business Entrepreneur [ ] | Nurse [ ] |
| House Wife [ ] | Community Health Worker [ ] | Secretary [ ] |
| Accountant [ ] | Small Scale Farmer [ ] | Manual Worker [ ] |

12. Which is the highest education level of your father?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Primary school | [ ] | Secondary school | [ ] |
| College | [ ] | University | [ ] |
| None | [ ] | | |

13. Which is the highest education level of your mother?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Primary school | [ ] | Secondary school | [ ] |
| College | [ ] | University | [ ] |
| None | [ ] | | |

14. Does your family own a car? Yes [ ] No [ ]
15. What type of house does your family live in?

Stone house [ ] Wooden house [ ] Mud house [ ]

16. Do you have the following items at home

Story books [ ] Newspapers [ ]

Magazines [ ] Calendar [ ]

17. Does anybody at home help you with English homework?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

18. Do you do the following activities at home

Read English story book(s) [ ]

Read number story book(s) [ ]

Mum or Dad read books for you [ ]

Check time on the clock [ ]

19. What problem at home prevents you from learning how to read well?

Too much domestic work [ ]

Insufficient lighting/lack of electricity [ ]

Lack of learning materials at home [ ]

Lack of time [ ]

Lack of someone to give guidance and support [ ]

Lack of space to study [ ]

Distraction by the television [ ]

Being stressed [ ]

A lot of noise [ ]

Lack of enough finances to buy necessities [ ]

**20.** What can be done at home to help you improve in reading?

Provision of proper lighting [ ]

Provision of space to do study [ ]

Doing revision [ ]

Be given guidance and support when revising [ ]

Provision of books and learning materials [ ]

Provision of mathematical instruments [ ]

Switching off television [ ]

Be given time to study [ ]

Reduce domestic work [ ]

More income to parents to pay fees [ ]

Being encouraged [ ]

**Section E: Student Characteristic**

21. How many times did you miss school last term?

None [ ] 1 – 5 days [ ]

6 – 10 days [ ] 16 – 20 days [ ]

22. Which is your best subject? English [ ] Mathematics [ ]

Science [ ] Social Studies [ ] Kiswahili [ ]

23. Which is your second best subject? English [ ] Mathematics [ ]

Science [ ] Social Studies [ ] Kiswahili [ ]

24. Do you read story books on your own? Yes [ ] No [ ]

25. What problem prevents you from learning how to read?

Lack of text books [ ]

Difficult words [ ]

Pronunciation [ ]

Being too playerful [ ]

Noise in class [ ]

Lack of enough basic things [ ]

Lack of time and adequate space [ ]

Lack of concentration [ ]

26. What can you do to become better in reading?

Doing more practice [ ]

Become keen [ ]

Working harder [ ]

Develop interest in the subject [ ]

Cultivate a positive attitude [ ]

End

Thank you

## APPENDIX V

## CHECKLIST

| Document or Item | Description | Availability | | Status or comment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Yes | No | |
| School environment | Physically attractive school, pleasing architecture, nicely decorated | | | |
| | Building kept in good condition | | | |
| | Cleanliness, order and appeal of facilities | | | |
| | A displayed list of schools rules and regulations | | | |
| Timetable | Available | | | |
| | English is allocated recommended number of lessons( 7 per week) | | | |
| Library | Available | | | |
| | A variety of story books for junior classes available (at least different 4 types) | | | |
| Class six attendance register book | Available | | | |
| | Updated daily ( confirm rate of attendance of participants) | | | |
| Pupils | Whether they are attentive in class | | | |

## APPENDIX VI

## PUPILS READING TEST

This test is for finding out what influence your ability to read. Please read correctly. Nobody will know your name. Your answers will not be known to anybody; they will only be used to find out what is being researched.

**Instructions:** Read at least five words. Choose and read one of the paragraphs provided. Read the story and answer the three questions.

**Section 1: Reading Test**

| Words | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Toy | desk | fish | hut | head |
| sister | face | room | mat | zip |

The Pupil should attempt to read any five words. At least four must be correct.

Paragraph 1

I am feeding a cow. I help my father to feed it. The cow gives us milk. How much milk does the cow give us? The cow gives us a lot of milk.

Paragraph 2

People are crossing the road. They are crossing it at Zebra crossing. The traffic police officer has stopped the cars. Some drivers do not read road signs.

The pupil should select and read any of the two paragraphs

Story

Long time ago, Hare and Elephant were very good friends. Hare was very small and Elephant was very big. He had big ears too. One day, Hare asked his friend Elephant to visit him. “Can I come with my friends?” Elephant asked. “Who are they?” Hare asked. “One is Giraffe. He has a very long neck. The other is Tortoise. He is very slow,” Elephant replied.”Ah! Those are very good friends,” Said Hare. Elephant and his friends reached very late at Hare’s home.

Who was Hare’s friend? _____

Which animal had a long neck? _____

Who made the animals arrive late?_____

The child should attempt the three questions. Two must be correct.

# THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

## Faculty of Education

**Department of Research and Evaluation**

28th July 2014

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

**Ref: Felistah W Nyamu MED/ED 1022036: Master of Education Degree Thesis Research**

I am writing to introduce to you Felistah Nyamu who is a final year Master of Education Degree student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi - Kenya; and to request you to assist her to accomplish her academic research requirements.

Felistah's Master of Education Degree specialization is Research and Evaluation. She has completed all course work requirements for this programme. However, every student in the programme is required to conduct research and write a report/thesis submitted during the final years of studies.

Accordingly, Felistah's proposal for research has been approved. She will conduct research on the following topic:

***"Assessment of factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy and numeracy in Public Primary Schools in Nyeri County, Kenya"***

Thanking you in advance for any assistance you will offer to Felistah.

Sincerely,

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
28 JUL 2014
P. O. Box 62157 - 00200, NAIROBI

**Dr. Sr. Sabina Mutisya**
**Head of Department**
**Research and Evaluation**

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
*MS. FELISTAH WAHITO NYAMU*
of CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA, 5383-100 Nairobi,has been permitted to conduct research in *Nyeri County*

on the topic: *ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS INFLUENCING ACHIEVEMENT OF BASIC READING LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NYERI COUNTY, KENYA.*

for the period ending:
*21st November,2014*

.....
*Applicant's Signature*

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/14/8201/2896
Date Of Issue : 1st October,2014
Fee Recieved :Ksh 1,000

.....
*Secretary*
*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 Officers 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

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Serial No. A 3428

CONDITIONS: see back page

# NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: secretary@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.

Date:

1st October, 2014

**NACOSTI/P/14/8201/2896**

Felistah Wahito Nyamu
Catholic University of
Eastern Africa
P.O. Box 62157-00200
**NAIROBI.**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on ***"Assessment of factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy and numeracy in public primary schools in Nyeri County, Kenya,"*** I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nyeri County** for a period ending **21st November, 2014.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nyeri 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.**
**Ag. SECRETARY/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
The County Director of Education
Nyeri County.

# MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

E-Mail – centralpde@gmail.com
Telephone: Nyeri (061) 2030619
When replying please quote

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NYERI COUNTY
P.O. Box 80
NYERI

CDE/NYI/GEN/23/VOL. I/88

8th October, 2014

All District Education Officers,
**NYERI COUNTY**

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NYERI COUNTY - FELISTAH WAHITO NYAMU**

The above named is a final year Masters of Education student at Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi.

She has been authorized to conduct her research on ***"Assessment of factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy and numeracy in public primary schools in Nyeri County"*** so as to fulfil the requirements of research component in the MED course at the University.

Please accord her any necessary assistance,

**KABORA I. MWANGI,**
**FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION,**
**NYERI COUNTY**

CC
Felistah Wahito Nyamu,
Catholic University of Eastern Africa,
P.O. Box 62157—00200,
**NAIROBI.**

The Ag. Secretary/CEO,
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation,
P.O. Box 30630623-00100,
**NAIROBI.**