RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN’S READING IN MUMIAS EAST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

BY

WAISWA EMMANUEL FLAVIAN
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JULY, 2016
DECLARATION

I confirm that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university or institution for certification. It has been complemented by referenced works duly acknowledged. Where data, text or other information has been borrowed from other works including the internet, the sources are specifically accredited through referencing in accordance with anti-plagiarism.

Signature ………………………………. Date…………………………

Waiswa Emmanuel Flavian (E55/23078/2013)
Department of Early Childhood Studies

SUPERVISORS

We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate and has been submitted with our approval as university supervisors.

Signature ………………….…                     Date …………………………

Dr. Gladwell Wambiri
Department of Early Childhood Studies
Kenyatta University

Signature ………………….…                     Date …………………………

Dr. Maureen Mweru
Department of Early Childhood Studies
Kenyatta University
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late mum Hellen Maloba and the late grandma Sabina Shitandi Akwata-my foster-mum. I could have wished that you be there during my graduation ceremony but God knows why He took you away from our lives. May you rest in peace.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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<tr>
<td>EPPE</td>
<td>Effective Provision of Pre-school Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>KICD</td>
<td>Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>KU-ERC</td>
<td>Kenyatta University Ethics Review Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>NACECE</td>
<td>National Centre for Early Childhood Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>NACOSTI</td>
<td>National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NASMLA</td>
<td>National Assessment System for Monitoring Learner Achievement</td>
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<tr>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parent-Teacher Association</td>
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<td>PTO</td>
<td>Parent-Teacher Organization</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
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ABSTRACT

Low reading achievement among pupils has been reported to be a widespread problem globally, regionally and locally. Involvement of parents in their children’s reading at home has been found to reverse the predicament. Parental involvement in children’s reading is a collaborative effort which needs to be undertaken by both the parents and the child’s teacher since it has significant positive influences that include reading achievement, language comprehension and expressive language skills. Most of the studies done in the area of reading have focussed on the level of literacy performance, attainment of numeracy and literacy skills, level of competency as well as comprehension. Adequate efforts have not been made to establish the relationship that parent-teacher communication has on pre-primary school children’s reading. Communication as a form of parental involvement in Kenya has not adequately been investigated. Furthermore, the level to which parents get involved in children’s reading needed to be investigated. The purpose of this study was to establish the level of parental involvement through communication, communication strategies between parents and teachers and also to find out the relationship between these strategies and parental involvement. The theoretical framework used was derived from Joyce Epstein’s model of parental involvement. The study involved only children aged eight years and below in pre-primary schools in Mumias East Sub-county, Kenya. It employed use of survey and correlational designs. The target population consisted parents and teachers of pre-primary school children in Mumias East Sub-county, using a sample size of 180 parents of pre-primary school children and 30 teachers from both public and private schools. Questionnaires were used to collect data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to prepare and organize data for analysis to test the significance levels between variables at 0.05. Chi-Square tests were used to establish whether there were any positive significant relationships between variables. Findings revealed that the correlation between the strategies used by teachers to communicate and level of parental involvement was insignificant (p=0.392) indicating that there was no relationship between the strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents and parental involvement. Some of the major strategies that teachers were using to communicate to parents included use of report cards, talking directly to parents, participating in school activities and use of diaries. The study recommends the need for an enhanced school activities in order to strengthen parents’ participation in their children’s reading. Further studies need to be taken to identify other aspects apart from communication that do affect children’s reading.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research hypotheses, and significance of the study. The chapter also outlines the delimitations and limitations of the study, assumptions of the study, theoretical and conceptual framework of the study and finally presents the operational definition of terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Children’s future competencies in reading may be ensured through laying a strong foundation from early childhood throughout their primary school years. Reading is very much important to the life of a child as it helps in acquisition of early language skills, development of positive associations with books and reading as well as laying a stronger foundation for future school success. It must be acknowledged that during the education cycle, there are many people and events which influence the way children develop in all aspects of development. Parental involvement according to Wolfendale (1983), is a general term that describes all the model and types of liaison between parents, schools and other community institutions that work with children.

A number of studies have been conducted to ascertain the impact that parents have on their children’s reading development. A study by Maina (2010) reveals that parents as partners in their children’s education do play the role of being
their first teachers as they involve themselves in literacy activities with the children. According to Teale and Sulzby (1987) as cited by Maina (2010), parental involvement in early literacy development of children has been found to play a vital role in the development of children’s reading. Involvement of parents in children’s reading at home could therefore have a significant positive influences in children’s reading achievement.

There are a number of effects that parental involvement has on the general achievement of children. A study conducted by Feinstein & Symons (1999) for instance found that parental involvement not only manifests itself through adolescent’s higher academic achievement but also greater cognitive competence as well as problem-solving skills. The adolescent will have a feeling of school enjoyment, better school attendance and fewer behavioural problems at school (Feinstein & Symons, 1999). Parental involvement therefore stands out as an important aspect that needs to be upheld.

Importance of parental involvement in children’s reading is known to be widespread in the life of a child. Rowe (1991), concurs with these sentiments and affirms that parental involvement in their children’s reading has positive impact more so in children’s reading, comprehension as well as expressive language skills. In addition, pupils’ interest in reading, attitudes towards reading and attentiveness in the classroom are enhanced by parental involvement. Their role in acting as reading resources as well as meaning-makers of their children's reading environment cannot be under scored (Ortiz, 2000; Volk & Acosta, 2001). Parents thus play an important role in their children's reading.
Benefits of parental involvement are many. According to Desforges & Abouchaar (2003), parental involvement gives rise to children who are more resilient to stress, have greater life satisfaction, are able to solve problems, have greater self-direction as well as self-control, superior social adjustment and mental health. In addition, they have more supportive relationships, greater social competence, more positive peer relations, tolerance, more successful marriages and fewer delinquent behaviours and many more.

Several studies have been done in Kenya to investigate both the relationship between parents and or caregivers and reading as well as the literacy status of children. Wambiri (2007), studied the strategies that caregivers including parents use when interacting with children around the print materials. She reported that caregivers, who included parents largely lacked knowledge on how to support children’s emergent reading development. She further asserts that parents have a role to help their children to get engaged in all literacy activities among them reading story books aloud that are important to early literacy development, which are very much related to literacy instructions in reading and writing in preschools.

There are various ways that parents can get involved in their children’s reading. Such include providing reading books for children’s use, telling or reading them stories, helping them with their reading homework and communicating with the teachers on their children’s reading progress (Epstein, 1995). The above revelations made it necessary for this study to be conducted in order to
investigate the possible causes that parent-teacher communication and parental involvement had on children’s reading.

Parent-teacher communication plays an important role in enhancing parental involvement in their children’s reading which in turn affects children’s reading development. There is an increasing need for parents to get actively involved in their children’s reading both at home and at school. Parental involvement entails the actions that parents engage in with their children which may include providing reading resources, modelling reading behaviours, providing conducive environment for reading, telling stories to children, helping children to read among others. One of the ways that parents can achieve this is by ensuring regular communication between them and the teachers of their children.

Children’s performance in reading has been found to be below the expected standards all over the world. In Europe for instance, about 10% of pupils annually do not reach average reading levels (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998; Rosebrock, 2006; Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2006). A study done by McKenna, M.C., Kear D.J., & Ellsworth, R.A. (1995) further reports that some American children struggle to read and this results to lack of school success. A study by Black (2005) shows that three percent of grade three children, 16.6% of grade five children and 5.5% of grade seven children in the State of Queensland were performing below average in reading. There was a clear indication that low reading achievement among pupils was widespread hence needed to be investigated.
In similar studies conducted on children’s reading in Africa, the National Assessment System for Monitoring Learner Achievement (NASMLA, 2010) reveal a similar trend with over 92% primary school pupils not being able to read. The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education (2007) report also indicate low reading achievement among children across many parts in Africa including Kenya. In another study done in Kenya by Muindi (2011) similarly reveals that Kenyan pupils trail behind those in Tanzania, Seychelles, Mauritius and Swaziland in the same grade in relation to reading skills. Such deviations in children’s reading needed to be investigated to find out if parental involvement had any effect on poor reading achievements.

According to more recent studies by Uwezo Kenya in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 on the status of learning in Kenya reveal that two out of every three class two children cannot read a two grade paragraph. The 2011 report has a wider scale and discusses data from 123 of the 158 districts studied. A comparison of the key findings reveals that status quo in reading performance has almost remained the same. Some of the findings from the report are that Kenyan children continue to exhibit very low levels of reading achievement. The 2011 evidence confirms that only 28% (or three out of ten) children in standard three can read a standard two level story. Four out of 100 children in Standard eight cannot read a standard two level story (Uwezo 2010, 2011). Such findings about the status of children’s reading is such worrying that calls for further investigation in finding out if parent-teacher communication has an influence
on this poor reading levels among children in Kenya and more so in Mumias East Sub-County.

In Kakamega, Uwezo (2012) reports that over 50 out of 100 children in classes 4-5 and 21 out of 100 children in classes 6-8 cannot comprehend a class 2 level story even when they can read it. Western province according to the task force lags behind in reading as average percentage of class three children who can read a paragraph both in Kiswahili and English was the lowest at 44.3% and 37.6% respectively. It further states that less than half of class three children in Western, Nyanza and Eastern Provinces can read a class two level paragraph. A class three child in Nairobi Province according to Uwezo has twice as much chances of reading a class two level paragraph than a child in the same class in Western province. The current study aimed at investigating the relationship that parent-teacher communication as an aspect of parental involvement has on poor reading patterns indicated in the above study findings. Was there any relationship between parent-teacher communication and parental involvement in the current low reading levels among children in Mumias East sub-county? Such questions needed to be answered and were addressed by this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Studies conducted in the last one decade have reported low reading achievement among primary school children. As seen in some of the reviewed studies in the background, some children in class three for instance are reading at pre-primary
school level suggesting that the challenges in reading could be emanating from as early as pre-primary school.

Parental involvement has been reported to contribute to children’s reading and learning as well. Studies done in Kenya have not been conducted on children’s reading at pre-primary school level yet parental involvement is crucial for this level of schooling. Most of the studies done locally including the Uwezo cluster of researches as mentioned in the background have been focusing on the level of literacy performance, attainment of numeracy and literacy skills, level of competency as well as comprehension. Furthermore, most studies conducted on reading have not made efforts to establish the relationship that parent-teacher communication as an aspect of parental involvement has on pre-primary school children’s reading.

Communication between parents and teachers has been proved through research to impact on parental involvement. Since children’s reading as seen in the background is a collaborative entity between parents and teachers, I went out to investigate how communication could influence parental involvement in pre-primary school children’s reading. Parental involvement in children’s reading formed the major gap for this study.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish the level to which parents were involved in communication with pre-primary school teachers about their children’s reading. The study also sought to establish the existing strategies of
communication between parents and teachers on children’s reading in order to suggest practices that could improve children’s reading achievement.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

(i) Establish the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents of pre-primary school children about their children’s reading.

(ii) Establish the level of parental involvement in their pre-primary school children’s reading.

(iii) Establish the relationship between the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents and parental involvement.

(iv) Find out the level to which parents communicate about their children’s reading to pre-primary school teachers.

1.5 Research Questions and Hypothesis

From the already stated study objectives, the researcher developed three questions and one research hypothesis that are presented below.

1.5.1 Research Questions

To achieve the first, second and fourth objective, the following research questions were formulated that helped in investigating the stated objectives:

(i) What strategies do teachers use to communicate to parents of pre-primary school children about their children’s reading?
(ii) What is the level of parental involvement in their pre-primary school children’s reading?

(iii) What level do parents communicate about their children’s reading to pre-primary school teachers?

1.5.2 Research Hypothesis

To achieve the third objective, the following hypothesis was formulated:

$H_0$: There is no relationship between teachers’ communication strategies and parental involvement

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings from this study may act as a base unto which reference may be made on the importance of parent-teacher communication on parental involvement by persons who may be interested in children’s reading such as pre-primary school teachers, home schoolers among others. Information from the findings of the study may be used by organizations that work with children such as USAID during seminars and workshops to advice teachers and parents on the need for their communication and active involvement in the reading life of children.

The government through the Ministry of Education (MoE) may benefit from the study as the information from the study findings may be used to develop policies to guide activities for enhancement of parent-teacher communication and parental involvement. Policy makers may also make use of the findings to make
policies that would encourage programs that may enable parents and teachers
gain knowledge on the importance of communication about children’s reading,
with an aim of improving children’s performance in school. The programs may
include ensuring that the curriculum for adult education is reorganized to
educate parents on parental involvement in children’s reading. Curriculum
developers specifically the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)
may be one of the bodies that may find the information from the findings of this
study very useful especially in developing curriculum meant to foster and create
awareness on parental involvement in their children’s reading.

Parents, teachers and the management of pre-primary schools may find these
findings very beneficial especially in establishing a collaborative effort between
parents and teachers in children’s reading. In enhancing a positive reading
culture, a strong foundation in reading among pre-primary school children need
to established. Findings from this study may be very helpful especially in
making parents be part of these reading programmes.
1.7 Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

The following sub-sections presents the study’s delimitations and limitations.

1.7.1 Delimitations of the Study

This study focused on the relationship between parent-teacher communication and parental involvement in pre-primary school children’s reading. The selected parents and teachers were from public and private pre-schools. Although parental involvement entails several aspects, the study was only delimited to communication.

1.7.2 Limitations of the Study

The confinement of this study to pre-primary schools drawn from Mumias East Sub-County in Kenya was a limitation since the study findings may only be generalized to other regions with similar characteristics. The fact that the questionnaires were written in English language was another limitation to parents who were not well versed with English language but efforts were made to translate them into a vernacular version to cater for them since the study needed to be as representative as possible.
1.8 Assumptions of the Study

In this study, it was assumed that parents were getting involved in activities that impact on their children’s reading. Another assumption was that reading was taught in pre-primary schools and that there was parent-teacher communication taking place in such schools. It was also assumed that teachers of such pre-primary school children were aware of the importance of involving parents in their children’s reading.

1.9 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

1.9.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for the study was Joyce Epstein’s model of parental involvement developed in 1995. Epstein’s model of parental involvement is a framework that defines six different types of involvement which are: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community. Epstein underscored the importance of more abstract constructs and the multidimensional ways in which parents can become involved in children’s early education.

Epstein’s (1995) six dimensions of parent involvement are based on the perspective of the schools. As such, two of the dimensions that is parenting and learning at home reflect home-based involvement and include the ways in which parents raise and meet the basic needs of their children, as well as the behaviours in which parents engage to facilitate a positive learning environment for their children. In ‘parenting’, there are a couple of issues that are handled which
entails helping all families establish home environments to support children as students, parental education and other courses or training for parents (such as family literacy), family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition and other services, home visits at transition points to pre-school, elementary, middle and high school. The second aspect is ‘learning at home’ that entail aspects such as providing information and ideas to families about how to help children at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions and planning, information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade, ensuring that there is passage of information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home, including family participation in setting children’s goals each year and in planning for school or work.

Two separate dimensions involve school-based involvement. One of these categories describes the communication patterns between a child’s family and the school on specific education issues, school programs and students’ progress. Rather than simply emphasizing parents’ communication patterns with schools, Epstein (1995) also listed the school’s contact with parents as another opportunity for parents to become involved. ‘Communicating’ as one of the dimensions entail designing effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress, conferences with every parent at least once a year, using language translators to assist families as needed, regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters and other communications. Parents need to ensure that the
channels of communication between them and their children’s teachers is complete. They can do this by signing the respondents’ records such as diaries, offering suggestions on effective communication strategies among others that may enhance positively the development of children’s reading.

The other form of school-based involvement entails parents’ active participation in learning activities at the school, such as volunteering and responding to teachers’ efforts to recruit help and support within the classroom. This is ‘volunteering’ which has to do with recruiting and organizing parent help and support, developing school and classroom volunteer programs to help teachers, administrators, children and other parents at school, establishing a parents’ room or family centre for volunteer work, meetings and resources for families, organizing annual surveys to identify all available talents, time and locations of volunteers. Parents ought to make themselves available and accessible whenever their assistance is needed mainly in promoting children’s reading.

The last two dimensions pertain to parents’ influence on school politics decisions that affect the student body at large and parents’ collaboration with the broader community. Within this category, parents might be described as being leaders and representatives in making school decisions. This framework assists educators in developing school and family partnership. Under ‘decision making’, several aspects are presented which including parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives, active PTA/PTO or other parent organizations, establishing advisory councils, or committees for parent leadership and participation, establishing independent advocacy groups
to lobby and work for school reforms and improvements and encouraging networks to link all families with parent representatives. The last dimension is ‘collaborating with community’ that involves identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning and development, providing information for children and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support and other programs or services and availing information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents.

The current study adopted Epstein’s model of parental involvement because it clearly brings out the different and best ways parents get involved in their children reading. Since Epstein’s model was used for parents and children from a totally different geographical and cultural background from the ones in the present study, the researcher modified some factors to be in a streamlined form to meet the current study objectives and also to suit the participants of the study who mainly included parents and teachers. The model was much applicable to this study because it clearly elaborates the aspect of involvement that are directly linked to development of children’s reading bearing in mind the collaboration between parents and teachers that was the main focus of the study.
1.9.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1.1 below presents the relationship between parent-teacher communication and parental involvement.

**Independent Variables**

- Level of parental communication to teachers

**Dependent Variable**

- Parental involvement in children’s reading
  - Providing reading resources for their use
  - Modelling reading behaviour
  - Provision of time to read
  - Holding conversation with children on reading
  - Telling stories/reading books to children
  - Helping them with their reading homework

**KEY**

- Study Variables
- Non Study Variables

**Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Diagram**

The figure above shows how parental involvement in their children’s reading through activities such as providing reading resources for children’s use,
modelling reading behaviour, provision of time to read, holding conversation with the children, telling stories or reading books to them, helping them with their reading homework and communicating with the teacher to find out their children’s reading progress could positively influence the children’s reading achievement.

1.10: Operational Definition of Terms

**Communication:** Verbal or written interaction between teachers and parents of pre-primary school children including strategies such as use of diaries, parents’ meetings, conferences among others.

**Parental involvement:** These are the things that parents and/or caregivers do or say about reading for example reading together with children, teaching children how to hold books while reading among others.

**Parenting:** Activities or behaviours that actively promote a learning environment at home for children, such as providing learning experiences, providing necessary materials for reading, taking the child to school, providing basic needs such as food, shelter among others.

**Parent-teacher communication:** This is the flow of information between teachers and parents. It is the interaction between teachers and parents which may be written or verbal such as phone calls, notes, letters or memos, emails among others.
Pre-primary: The period before standard one which may include home experiences together with baby class, nursery and pre-unit class.

Pre-reading activities: These are the events which strive towards making the child develop a positive attitude towards reading. They are aimed at encouraging the child to love reading materials as well as the reading activity itself for example purchasing print materials such as cards, providing coloured pictures among others.

Reading: The ability for one to attach meaning to or understand any printed material such as letters, word or sentences.

Strategies: These are ways used by both parents and teachers to get linked to each other or rather to communicate about children’s reading in pre-primary schools. Some of the examples of communication strategies include parent-teacher conferences, diaries, PTA meetings, progress reports, phone messages, home visits and seminars or workshops among others.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the review of literature and studies that have been carried out on parental involvement and children’s reading in relation to communication between parents and teachers. In particular, the chapter focuses on communication between parents and teachers, communication strategies, parental involvement in children’s reading and importance of parental involvement in children’s reading. At the end of the chapter, there is a summary which has key knowledge issues, main research gaps of the study and what this current study aims towards addressing. All these have been organized in relation to the study objectives presented earlier in chapter one.

2.1 Communication Strategies used by Teachers

For effective communication to take place between parents and teachers, various strategies need to be considered or rather be employed. A research study by Ediger (2001) shows that parents can contribute relevant information during parents- teacher conferences that could potentially play a huge role in the kinds of activities that make up the bulk of their lesson plans. When this is done according to this research findings, it could derive literacy activities that their children may enjoy doing on a regular basis at home.

Following the theoretical framework of Epstein (1995), schools can help parents develop better parenting skills by: providing suggestions and ideas for home conditions that support children’s reading, providing grade level opportunities
for parents to learn about children’s reading development through workshops, videotapes and computerized phone messages, providing parent education on reading and other courses or training for parents such as family literacy, directing families to support programs for children’s reading, conducting home visits to support parents on children’s reading among other strategies.

According to the Graham-Clay (1995), various strategies can be used by teachers as well as parents in enhancing effective communication. Such include holding parent-teacher conferences. When face to face communication is held, the people involved get humble time to learn also on non-verbal cues that may help in passage of their messages. When such conferences are organized, teachers ought to be flexible as not all parents may be available to the scheduled time of events due to their different engagements. Reading performance of children may be discussed during such conferences.

Talking informally with parents is another strategy that teachers can use to communicate to parents. This can be achieved especially as they drop off their children in the morning or as they pick them up in the evening. This may just require some few minutes for the two parties to share about the reading progress of the children involved. Informal talks may also be a good way to cement parent-teacher ties which mostly works for the benefit fs the child as a learner.

Use of technology in communication can be another strategy used by teachers to communicate to parents. Technology as a means of communication between parents and teachers is seen as the quickest way to send and receive information.
In schools that are advanced technologically, class websites may be one of the most important sites to post children’s history of reading performance. Teachers ought to maintain a regular communication pattern with parents using this strategy.

Progress reports is another strategy that teachers can use to communicate to parents. Report cards, which are the common forms of progress reports, may be used by the teacher to indicate the steps made by the child in reading performance. Parents in this case are usually asked to give their comments on how they feel about their children’s performance. In the Kenyan system of education, this mainly takes place during the end of a school term.

Another strategy that teachers can use to communicate to parents is the use of school diaries. Children’s daily occurrences are usually recorded in these diaries. Reading performance can be recorded here by the teacher for the parent to follow the child’s progress. Feedback in the use of school diaries is very important as it enhances proper taking up of corrective measures in redressing reading challenges.

Use of parent-teacher organizations (PTO) has also been frequently as a strategy by teachers to communicate to parents. Parents and teachers can form organizations that can be used as a means through which these two parties can embrace their unity. Through such organizations and associations, the distance between parents and teachers can be reduced greatly. In such forums, children’s performance may be shared and appropriate actions taken either to maintain
good performance or to improve the performance of those who may not be up to the set standards of excellence.

In another by Hill & Taylor (2004), parent–teacher relationship practices and research are dominated by the concept of parental school involvement, typically defined as parent participation in school activities. Such include strategies like volunteering or observing in the classroom, attending parent–teacher conferences, planning or serving on advisory committees and participating in school social events (Hill & Taylor, 2004). In addition to facilitating parental familiarity with and support of school goals and functions, some parental involvement activities have the potential to increase teacher understanding of parents' goals for and views of their child such as parent–teacher conferences and school personnel's awareness of parent perspectives on school functioning. (Hill & Taylor, 2004).

Although much literature that has been reviewed on the strategies that parents and teachers do use to communicate to each other as far as children’s reading is concerned, one may note that there still lacks a good number of extensive studies specifically on the relationship between the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents and parental involvement. Exact types of teacher communication strategies may not have been exhaustively pointed out by the reviewed literature hence the current study. Literature in this sub section has tried to inform the study objectives 1 and 2 as stated in section 1.4.
2.2 Level of Parental Involvement in Children’s Reading

As many parents know already, they become their child’s first teachers beginning at birth. Children learn and achieve many milestones in life by observing their parents and modelling what they see them do. A research done by Strickland (2004), shows that young children learn the uses of print in their lives as they observe adults read, make lists, and make use of literacy as they go about their everyday lives. She further says that at young ages, when children see their parents reading newspapers, writing out grocery lists or doing anything at all comparative to literacy, they will pick up on that and strive to do the same. Preparation for children in the outside world occurs when their parents constantly influence them throughout their lives (Strickland, 2004).

There are various ways that parents can get involved in their children’s reading as seen through a number of studies conducted on reading. As stated by Crosnoe (in Two-Generation Strategies and Involving Immigrant Parents in Children’s Education, July 2010), parents may attempt to support and manage their children’s educational experiences at home. This may be done by establishing cognitively stimulating environments through providing books and other learning materials, setting up learning activities such as reading and stimulating language development through conversation. When children are in preschool, parents may coordinate with teachers, help children with lessons and participate in school activities. Thus, parental involvement can occur well before formal schooling begins and encompass direct contact with schools and indirect support of the pedagogical mission of schools (Epstein, 2005).
There is need for a good relationship between parental involvement and children’s reading if any positive results has to be realised. A study by Sclafani (1984), states that parental involvement in early intervention reading programmes has been found to equate with better outcomes for the child’s reading. Most effective interventions involve parents in pre-primary school children’s reading development (Sclafani, 1984). What children learn from their parents during the foundation years will have impact on the rest of their lives. It is important that parents take up the active role in their children’s reading development and make the reading venture very exciting during the early years. Parents are the ones who need to instil this reading excitement in their children.

The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project by the Institute of Education (2002), provide evidence on how parents’ involvement in their children’s reading affects the outcomes of both reading and school performance. The project, which was a large scale longitudinal study monitored 2,800 children's progress across the range of preschool provision to entry to reception class. After controlling the impact of parents' occupations and education, aspects of the home learning environment were found to have a significant impact on children's cognitive development both at age 3 years plus and again at school entry. It was also found out that the frequency with which the child plays with letters/numbers at home was linked with attainment in all measures. Parents’ drawing children’s attention to sounds and letters was linked to literacy skills, early number skills and non-verbal attainment.
Other related studies have examined the influence that parental involvement has on children’s reading life from the home environment. A study conducted by Goin (2004) found out that the influences of the home environment such as family support contribute to young children's language and literacy acquisition, and children may benefit from exposure to a variety of reading and writing activities (Goin & Twardosz, 2004). He further states in another study with Gutierrez (2001) that the differences in home literacy environments influence the development of children's listening, speaking, reading and writing (Goin & Gutierrez, 2001). Another study shows that parents as first teachers of their children in reading have a big role to play. Whatever they do with books will impact either positively or negatively to their children’s reading. The study observes that parents who introduce their babies to books may give them a head start in school, giving them an advantage over their peers throughout primary school (Wade & Moore, 2000a; 2000b).

A number of studies on the level of parental involvement in children’s reading have been conducted in Africa. A study done by Lemmer (2007) in South Africa found out that parental involvement was not adequate. It is reported that some teachers selected for the study were aware that the type of parent involvement activity they were arranging was the first of its kind ever to be ventured upon in their community. It is also reported that the study event was the first time many parents had ever visited the school or attended any activity organised by the school. Lombana (1983), finds out that both parents and educators acknowledge that they have not been successful in communicating with each other proved through not sending nor even accepting those that are sent. He further states that
they acknowledge that communication, mis-communication or lack of communication is involved in every aspect of the home-school relationships and that breakdowns in the communication process exist at every turn (Lombana 1983:42). There was need to establish in comparison to these findings, the level that parents in Mumias East Sub-County were getting themselves involved in their children’s reading. Such findings could be key in establishing ways that could necessitate such engagements.

In another retrospective longitudinal study, Miedel & Reynolds (1999) found that the number of activities in which parents participated during preschool or kindergarten was significantly associated with higher reading achievement, lower rates of grade retention and fewer years in special education in eighth grade as measured through school records. It is also known through research that teachers demonstrate responsiveness to a parent by communicating openness to new information, suggestions and other forms of feedback about the classroom, and maintain a welcoming, supportive stance toward parents (Powell, 2001).

Although much literature has been reviewed in this section highlighting the level of parental involvement in their children’s school life and more specifically on their reading development informing objective v, there are very few studies if not at all, that have been done in Africa as a region on the area of parent-teacher communication and its influence on children’s reading. Many studies have been done in the area of parental involvement but much focus has been on the larger impact on children’s educational achievements and not on
their reading in Kenya to be specific. This study therefore sought to fill this gap in knowledge as far as establishing the level of parental involvement in pre-primary school children’s reading was concerned.

In enhancing positive development of reading among children, parents have an important role to play. Something that needs to be put in mind is that these parents may not fully participate in their children’s reading if efforts to enable them know the significance of such efforts is not emphasized. Research shows that parents’ reports of teaching might still have a direct link to fluent reading because the influence of these reports is closely linked to development of emergent literacy skills among children and it is those early skills that will facilitate the acquisition of reading (Barker, Torgesen & Wagner, 1992). Further research suggests that the quality of adult-child interactions during book reading may influence the acquisition of literacy skills (Reese & Cox, 1999).

In addition to these, parental involvement in children’s reading been proven through research to be of a great importance. Children’s exposure to books in situations such as parent-child reading seem to have a role in the development of fluent reading (Cunningham & Stanovich 1993, 1998). It is also shown through research study that parents who specifically read to their children begin to acquire decoding skills, because early progress in development of receptive language is predictive over the long term for the acquisition of reading vocabulary and comprehension (Purcell-Gates, 1996; Reese & Cox, 1999). It is further shown that the relationship between parents’ reports of teaching and children’s early literacy skills is consistent with more general perspective that
home experiences predict the acquisition of academic skills (Scarborough, 1991; Sonnenschein; 1996; Stipek 1992). Parents have a very major role to play in stimulating reading development among their children by ensuring that homes are organised to facilitate reading development.

Importance of parental involvement in their children’s reading goes beyond just the home setting but also to schools that children are attending. Hawes and Plourde (2005) found out that strong parent-teacher relationships is a remedy in accommodating struggling or underachieving readers (Hawes & Plourde, 2005, p. 55). Under no circumstances should a teacher’s poorest readers in the class not receive parental support from home and their teacher’s, they propose. In addition, a research by Bailey, Silvern, Brabham & Ross (2004) demonstrates that children’s complete reading homework with their parents actively involved, increases the inference making skills thus holding onto the point that parental involvement in children’s reading is an important engagement. As fronted by Powell (2001), participation in school activities provides parents with information about children’s learning and development. It also adds an insight into their children’s reading that leads to improvements in how parents promote the development of their children’s school-related abilities and performances.

Research further states that parents can make a significant contribution to their children’s reading achievement through informal and formal literacy experiences. Parents can promote their young children’s vocabulary when they read books to them (Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000; Jordan, Snow & Porche, 2000; Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998; Sénéchal, 1997; Whitehurst et al., 1988). In
addition, children’s vocabulary skills will facilitate their reading comprehension (Jorm, Share, Maclean & Matthews, 1984; Roth, Speece & Cooper, 2002; Snow, Tabor, Nicholson & Kurland, 1995). Parents can also train their children to learn the alphabets, reading and printed words (Ebey, Marchand-Martella, Martella & Nelson, 1999; Kraft, Findlay, Major, Gilberts & Hofmeister, 2001; Lopez & Cole, 1999). Parents need to consider their position in children’s reading abilities to be very critical if a positive impact has to be made in their children’s reading life.

2.3 Level of Communication between Parents and Teachers

It may be seen just as a day to day affair between parents and teachers in their interaction but communication as an entity is very important in the life of a child who is schooling. Parents as well as teachers do pass a lot of information between each other and this greatly affects a child’s academic life as seen in the following reviewed studies. A study by Doherty-Derkowski (1995) revealed that good communication between parents and teachers or the school staff is an important part of the daily life of early childhood centres, and it is a prerequisite for high-quality care and education of young children. He further reveals that it positively influences children's cognitive and social development thus increasing their reading success. Another study by Smith & Hubbard (1988) reveals also that effective communication between parents and teachers contributes to good relations between children and between teachers and children. More so, research findings from other researchers such as Gelfer (1991) have also shown clearly that parental involvement in their children's
early education increases parents' understanding of appropriate educational practices and improves children's development. In addition to these, research findings by Bryant, Peisner-Feinberg & MillerJohnson (2000) shows that effective parent-teacher communication improves children's educational outcomes and more specifically on literacy achievements.

There are various problems that both the teachers as well as parents undergo in quest for effective communication. A number of studies reveal this such as Laloumi-Vidali (1997) who observes that parent-teacher communication has been seen as problematic in diverse countries, including Greece, Australia. Some of these problems according to him include among others teacher-parent relationships often being strained and not always meaningful, teachers struggling to know how best to communicate with parents and are often being anxious about it as well as some teachers are often reluctant to talk to parents whenever these parents want to. In addition to these, other studies reveal that some teachers were reluctant to involve parents in their programs. They dutifully expressed the prevailing belief that parents' involvement was a good thing for parents, teachers and children but however, they knew or rather believed that parent involvement was hard. This was because developing shared understandings with parents about their child's best interests was neither easy nor guaranteed (Cairney, 1997).

Parent–teacher collaboration becomes very much critical in early childhood, such as during the transition period from home to preschool or from preschool to kindergarten. Furthermore, beneficial connections between the child’s home
and school have been shown to enhance children’s motivation to learn. Parents communicate clear expectations for achievement, while integrating school curriculum goals within the home (Christenson, 2000). Once there is an effective communication link between these two parties namely parents and teachers, children’s reading may become an affair of concern since there would be a positive influence from either parties as seen from the above literature. This can be achieved only if there is a positive and regular communication between parents and teachers of these children. Through effective communication, one needs to know also that parents may be able to fully understand what they ought to do exactly in their support for their children’s reading especially when they receive such information from the teachers. If this happens successfully, relationships will flourish and allow parents permanent access their children’s reading work to make sure they do everything possible at home to create positive literacy connections for their children.

The strongest relations between parent-teacher involvement and children's outcomes were found by Marcon (1999) in a sample of children enrolled in public school pre-kindergarten, including Head Start classrooms. Higher levels of parent–teacher communication and more active types of parent involvement such as helping with class activities were associated with children's adaptive behaviour and progress in meeting curriculum-based learning objectives as assessed through an early childhood progress report card (Marcon, 1999). As it had been earlier mentioned in the background to the study, there is need to extensively find out the levels of communication between parents and teachers
of pre-primary school children on their reading. As it may be seen in the reviewed literature, there is very little studies that have been done in Kenya specifically on the relationship between parent-teacher communications on pre-primary school reading, hence development of the second objective. This may be seen in the gap of knowledge in the reviewed literature under this section. Communication as an aspect of parental involvement and its influence on pre-primary school children’s reading had not been extensively investigated hence the current study.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review

This chapter discussed literature reviewed for the present study which revealed that parental involvement in a child’s schooling is a more powerful force than other family background indicators such as social class, family size and level of parental education that contributes to no less than 10% of variation in achievement. Good communication between parents and teachers or the school staff is an important part of the daily life of early childhood centres, and it is a prerequisite for high-quality care and education of young children. Various strategies that can be used to enhance parents-teacher communication include holding parent-teacher conferences, talking informally with parents, use of technology in communication, progress reports, use of diaries among others.

Much of the literature that was reviewed in this section on reading had not established the extent of communication between parents and teachers of pre-primary school children. There was need to establish the extent to which parents were involved in children’s reading, an aspect that had not been investigated by
the studies reviewed in the preceding sections. It can also be noted that parental involvement in children’s reading is a collaborative effort which needs to be undertaken by both the parents and the child’s teacher. This study tried to establish the extent of communication between parents and teachers in reference to children’s reading an aspect that had not been adequately investigated in previous research.

In a nutshell, it is evident from the reviewed literature that research has not been conducted on the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents with reference to pre-primary school children’s reading as well as the level of parental involvement in pre-primary school children’s reading. Furthermore, parent-teacher communication and its influence on parental involvement in children’s reading has not been established by the reviewed literature. Lastly, the relationship between strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents and parental involvement in children’s reading has been identified as a gap in knowledge that the current study sought to fill that had not been established by the reviewed literature.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology that was used during the study. The research design, variables, location of the study, target population, sampling technique and sample size, research instruments, pilot study, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and logical and ethical considerations are discussed in this chapter.

3.1 Research Design

This study applied use of survey and correlational designs. According to Wambiri (2007), survey research seeks to obtain information that describes an existing phenomena. Survey design is also used when one wants to describe an existing condition as well as in determining relationships that do exist between variables (Orodho, 2009). This design was effective for this study as it aimed at bring to the limelight the existing status of parental involvement in their children’s reading as well as the current status of communication between parents and teachers.

A correlational study on the other hand aims at establishing relationships among groups of variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). It merely attempts to establish the patterns of association among variables at a particular point in time without any manipulation. Correlational design too enables the researcher to assess the degree of relationship that exists between two or more variables (Orodho, 2003). Since the variables in this study did not require manipulation,
the correlation design was deemed appropriate in establishing the relationship that parent-teacher communication had on the levels of parental involvement in their children’s reading. Quantitative data collected using questionnaires was used to test the hypothesis generated in the study.

### 3.2 Research Variables

The study had two variables. These were independent and dependent variables.

#### Table 3. 1 Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of variables</th>
<th>Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variables</td>
<td>- Level of parent communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variable</td>
<td>Parental involvement in children’s reading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.2.1 Independent Variables

The independent variables for the study included:

i. **The level of Parental Communication**: This referred to the extent to which parents engaged teachers concerning their children’s reading. In order to determine this, four forms of communication were developed which included talking to the teacher, signing children’s diaries, use of mobile phones and writing letters to teachers to inquire about their children’s reading. Parent’s level of communication was assessed by having them indicate the frequency that they used the stated forms of communication with teachers either never, sometimes or always. Total frequencies were calculated on a three-level indicator of 0-13, 14-26 and 27-39 which categorised their responses as either low, moderate or high respectively.
ii. **Strategies used by Teachers to Communicate to Parents:** This referred to ways and methods that teachers used to pass information about children’s reading to their parents. The researcher developed eight strategies that teachers were asked to indicate the frequency that they used the already stated strategies on a three-scale of never, sometimes and always. In order to determine which of the listed strategies was mostly used by teachers, the researcher used the ‘always’ frequency measure and listed the percent for each of the strategy. From this scores, he was able to establish the strategies that were used regularly by teachers to communicate to parents about their children’s reading. In order to determine this, four strategies that were mostly used by teachers to communicate to parents were established. This was obtained from the information that teachers provide on which ways they used to communicate to parents. In order of frequency of use, the following were identified: use of report cards, talking directly to parents about their children’s reading, using school events such as seminars on reading, workshops and academic days and use of school diaries to communicate on reading.

### 3.2.2 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable for this study included parental involvement. In order to determine this, seven forms of involvement were developed which included showing interest in children’s reading, rewarding children’s reading performance, purchasing reading materials for children, helping children to read difficult words, checking children’s reading homework, reading books or telling
stories to children and participating in school seminars, workshops, academic
days or parent’ days to discuss about children’s reading. Parent’s level of
involvement was assessed by having them indicate the frequency that they used
the stated forms of involvement on a three-scale of never, sometimes and
always. Total frequencies were calculated on a three-level indicator of 0-13, 14-
26 and 27-39 which categorised their responses as either low, moderate or high
respectively.

3.3 Location of the Study
This study was conducted in Mumias East Sub-County, Kenya. Kakamega
County is situated in the Western part of Kenya. The location is dominantly
occupied by the Luhya community though there is insignificantly few people
from other ethnic communities who have mainly settled there due to
intermarriages. Mumias East Sub-County was selected for the study basing on
poor performance of the region in children’s reading as reported by Uwezo-
Kenya (2012). The region lags behind in reading as average percentage of class
three children who can read a paragraph both in Kiswahili and English was the
lowest at 44.3% and 37.6% respectively as discussed in background to the study.
This is the lowest as compared to other regions that had a higher level in class
three reading performance. The results for other regions were Rift Valley at
55.3%, Nyanza at 46.0%, North Eastern at 52.8%, Nairobi at 76.7%, Eastern at
50.4%, Coast at 63.3% and Central at 68.3% levels of reading performance
(Uwezo Kenya 2012).This therefore made the researcher to be interested in
getting to the root of this poor performance in reading to investigate if parental
involvement had any effect on such performance hence the choice of the location.

3.4 Target Population

Kakamega County has 12 constituencies. Using a random sampling procedure, Mumias East Sub-County was randomly selected for the study. This formed the target population consisting parents and teachers of pre-primary school children in all the two divisions. The target schools were 30 out of 53 pre-primary schools in the sub-county. This represented 30% of the total population of pre-primary schools in the sub-county which was an appropriate sample to represent the population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). The sub-county had a total of 8 private schools and 45 public pre-primary schools (Mumias District Education Office, 2014). Pre-primary school parents and teachers were chosen because the study was limited only to pre-primary school going children hence they became suitable study subjects.

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

In order to reach the target population that participated in the actual study, various approaches had to be employed to arrive at this decision. The following information describes various steps and methods that the researcher used to reach at his sample size.

3.5.1 Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling was used to select Kakamega County based on the poor reading performance as explained in the background and also in section 3.4. Consequently, Mumias East Sub-County which consisted of two divisions
namely East Wanga and Mumias Central, was randomly selected out of the 12 constituencies in the county. All the two divisions were involved in the study to make it more representative.

The population of the pre-primary schools was categorized into public and private. Stratified sampling method was used to select a proportionate number of 8 and 22 private and public pre-primary schools respectively in order to get a representative sample. On average, each school had around twenty children that was equated to a similar number of parents. For the 30 schools, the number of parents were 600. Purposive sampling was used to select 180 parents representing 30\% of the total number of parents who were 600. In order to get the specific parents, the researcher requested the class teacher for the lists of parents in each class. Using systematic sampling method, (n\textsuperscript{th} number to be 6), the researcher picked every sixth name until the total number of six parents was attained. Six parents from each of the selected 30 pre-primary schools as well as one teacher each from the schools constituted the study sample. Purposive sampling was used because it had fewer time constraints and the costs for carrying out the sampling procedures were greatly reduced. A total number of 180 parents participated in the research study.

3.5.2 Sample Size

Sample size consisted of 180 pre-primary school parents. There were six (6) parents from each of the 30 pre-primary schools in the constituency. As already explained in section 3.5.1, six parents each school totalling to 180 was appropriate as it made the expected 30\% of the total number of parents. This
was after dividing the number of schools selected for the study against the expected total sample size to maintain the expected 30% for the sample size. In addition to this, one teacher from each of these schools was randomly selected.

There were eleven cases where the pre-primary class was having only one teacher. In such cases, the teacher was purposively selected. The following table illustrates the sample size for the study:

**Table 3. 2 Sampling Frame**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Public schools</th>
<th>Private schools</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Wanga</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumias Central</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.6 Research Instruments**

Questionnaires were administered to the selected parents to collect data on their involvement in their children’s reading and also to assess their communication with teachers who were asked to fill the questionnaires. The questionnaires consisted of structured questions which were used to gather information on the level of communication between parents and teachers and establishing the strategies used by both teachers and parents to communicate about children’s reading.

Questionnaire for parents was divided into three parts namely section (a) up to (c) which sought to establish the demographic information, level of
communication between parents as well as finding out the strategies used by parents to communicate to teachers.

Teacher’s questionnaire was divided into two parts that sought to establish demographics and the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents on children’s reading. All the instruments had rating scales of never, sometimes and always with values of 1, 2 and 3 respectively. These values were used to compute the rates of responses after data had been collected.

3.7 Pilot Study

In order to improve the instruments and enhance their reliability and validity, a pilot study was conducted in two pre-primary schools selected from the area. Piloting also helped the researcher to familiarize himself with the research instruments and procedures. That meant that ten parents were involved in the pilot study as each school provided five pre-primary school parents. Two teachers were also involved in the pilot study. The pilot study also helped the researcher to monitor how much time each instrument took for the respondents to answer. This helped in preparing for the actual study as far as time was concerned and also to plan other resources necessary for the success of the research study such as finances among others.

In addition, the pilot study helped to check whether the language used in the questionnaires was simple and clear enough for the respondents as well as inferring any setbacks that may have arose from the pre-study. This was achieved through thoroughly looking at the pilot responses to ascertain
ambiguities. Ambiguous test items were modified accordingly. The researcher also noted down major observations during the pilot study and later used that information to amend the test items where necessary. The two pilot schools were not included in the final research.

3.7.1 Validity of the Study Instruments

Using the pilot as already discussed, clarity of the test items was improved. Items in the questionnaires were made clear, direct to the point and easy to comprehend. In addition, the questionnaires for parents were first translated by the researcher to Luhya language and then translated back to English so as to check for consistency. Later on, the two versions of the questionnaires (the original as well as the translated) were compared to ensure accuracy of the content. Furthermore, the researcher sought professional assistance from statisticians and reading experts to conduct item analysis to ascertain validity of the items. Content validity was made possible by ensuring that the items covered the data required by the objectives.
3.7.2 Reliability of the Study Instruments

This tests the degree to which the tools used during data collection produce consistent results. Using test-retest method, the questionnaire was administered twice to the same parents and teachers within a duration of one month and the responses compared to determine if the two scores correlate. This took place for the two selected pilot schools before the actual study commenced. For the questionnaires to be accepted for reliability, Spearman’s correlation coefficient was to be 0.7 and above. A co-efficient level of 0.763 was accepted as reliable.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection followed two stages which included: administration of the questionnaires and collection of completed questionnaires. The researcher made the first visits to the selected schools. During this initial visit, the researcher asked the relevant authorities to help organize for the meeting of the six randomly selected parents.

The researcher personally delivered the questionnaires to the randomly selected parents and teachers in their respective pre-primary schools. This was done after requesting the selected parents to come to school at any time convenient to them since the researcher was at the location for a whole day. The school management was asked to provide a conducive place for the exercise such as a room or a hall if it were available. The respondents were then asked either to tick or mark against their responses in the questionnaires. Those who had problems with reading and writing in English were issued with the translated version of the
questionnaires. The researcher personally administered these translated versions orally to the respondents. This process took place during the morning hours starting from 8am and advanced till afternoon. Later on in the afternoon, the researcher collected the filled questionnaires starting with the last school visited. During the filling in of the questionnaires, the researcher was present personally to guide the respondents in case they faced any difficulty in the process.

3.9 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

Before going to the field to collect data, the researcher obtained a letter from the Dean Graduate School, Kenyatta University allowing him to carry out the study. In addition to this, the research proposal was viewed and approved by the Kenyatta University Ethics Review Committee (KU-ERC) and a research permit obtained from the National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The County Government of Kakamega and the local administration of Mumias East Constituency were informed of the intended study and their consent was also obtained. All the head teachers and managers of both the selected public and private schools were informed of the study.

3.9.1 Care and Protection of Research Participants

The researcher clearly informed the participants that the study was for academic purposes only hence their participation was completely voluntary. As stated in the consent form attached at the appendix, participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time which could involve no penalty. In the case of withdrawal, another research subject was to be
purposively selected from that school to fill the gap left. The researcher was in such cases also to make his personal follow up to ascertain the cause for withdrawal so as to prevent such from happening to the other subjects. Pencils were provided to the participants to be used to complete the questionnaires.

3.9.2 Protection of Research Participants’ Confidentiality

At the beginning of the data collection process, all the respondents were briefed about the purpose of the study in one sitting inside a classroom that was used by the researcher. The researcher made it clear to them that the study was for education purposes and no one could be allowed to access the information before it was translated into a study report. The respondents were informed as well that their individual details such as names could appear nowhere even in the final report and that the report could have group data hence their identity being sealed. All information obtained from parents was kept confidential. In addition to these, data was coded to hide the identity of the participants and no names were included in the study.

3.9.3 Informed Consent Process

The respondents’ consent was sought at the beginning of the study after the briefing and no one was coerced into participating in the research study. Only those who willingly gave their consent participated in the study. The information in the consent was fully explained to both participating parents and teachers and after they had agreed to it, they were asked to sign the consent form before the study took place. All the participants were given an opportunity to
have any question answered. The researcher ensured that he responded to their questions accordingly.

3.9.4 Community Consideration

The researcher sought permission from the area Education Officer by briefing him about the purpose of the study in the area. All interested members of the community who included parents were allowed to inquire about the study and its significance was well explained to them. The researcher made it clear that the research findings were to be made available to the study schools so that they could be well informed about the status of parental involvement in their children’s reading.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATIONS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, interpretations and then discussion of these findings in relation to the reviewed empirical studies.

4.1 Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study was done according to the study objectives and research hypothesis.

The objectives of the study were to:

(i) Establish the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents of pre-primary school children about their children’s reading.

(ii) Establish the level of parental involvement in their pre-primary school children’s reading.

(iii) Establish the relationship between the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents and parental involvement.

(iv) Find out the level to which parents communicate about their children’s reading to pre-primary school teachers.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to prepare and organize data for analysis to test the significance levels between variables at 0.05. Data analysis consisted of inferential statistics that involved testing statistical hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. Chi-Square tests were utilized to establish whether there was any significant relationship between the strategies used by teachers to communicate and parental involvement as well as
the relationship between the level of teacher communication and parental involvement. The hypothesis to be tested was:

\[ H_0: \text{There is no significant relationship between teachers’ communication strategies and parental involvement} \]

### 4.2 General Information and Demographics of Parents

During the current study, 180 parents were sampled as discussed in chapter three to participate in the study. To ensure that the return rate remains 100%, the researcher increased the number of participants to 210 parents after which the questionnaires were cleaned to retain 180 that was needed for analysis. The demographic information that was required from parents who participated in the study included their gender, their level of education, occupation and type of the school their children attend. The following tables present the demographic information on the parents.

#### 4.2.1 Gender of Parents

Information about the gender of parents was presented using frequencies and percentages. The table below shows the gender composition of parents that participated in the study.

**Table 4.1 Gender of Parents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>60.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the findings on gender as seen in table 4.1, it is evident that majority (60.6%) of parents who participated in the study were female. There was only slightly half (39.4%) the number of male parents as those who were female. This appears to suggest that female parents were most likely to be involved in their children’s reading. This finding is similar to that of Ndani (2008) who also found out in her study that majority of the respondents that participated in a study about community involvement in pre-school activities in Thika District were females. Libent (2015) as well found that majority (57%) of parents involved in a study on determinants of parent’s satisfaction with the quality of preschool education in Ilala District were female.

4.2.2 Level of Education of Parents

Information about the level of education of parents was presented using frequencies and percentages. The table below shows the levels that parents who participated in the study had.

Table 4.2 Level of Education of Parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never attended</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary/College</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings in table 4.2 above, majority (38.3%) of parents who participated in the study had a primary school level of education. This was
followed slightly (30.6%) by secondary school in education levels. The above findings on low levels of education by parents who participated in this study could suggest to mean that their low levels of involvement in their children’s reading were as a result of such low levels of education. These findings are in agreement with Kimathi (2014) who in a study on parental involvement in primary standard three pupils’ reading at home in Igembe south established that the largest category of parents did not either complete primary education or did not attend school at all. As cited by Kimathi (2014), parents who had more formal education were more involved in their children’s reading than those who had less formal education (Dauber & Epstein, 1993; Zill and Nord, 1994; Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1995; Maina, 2010). Duber (1993) also found that there is a significant correlation between parental education and parental reports of involvement in their children’s learning at home (Cited by Koech, 2010). This however differs with the findings by Libent (2015) who found out that most of the parents who participated in her study on determinants of parent’s satisfaction with the quality of preschool education in Ilala District were university degree holders. Koech (2010) as well found out that majority (45.9%) of parents who participated in a study on parent-teacher partnerships for enhanced pre-school children’s education in Uasin Gishu district had at least college or university level of education.
4.2.3 Occupation of Parents

Information about the occupation of parents was presented using frequencies and percentages. Table 4.3 below shows the occupation of parents who participated in the study.

Table 4.3 Occupation of Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not working</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majority (53.9%) of parents who participated in the study were practising farming. This was expected since the region is known for large scale production of sugarcane as well as other subsistence crops like maize, beans, millet and sorghum among others. There was a significantly low (12.2%) of parents who had no formal kind of occupation. Since majority of studied parents were ‘working class’, it could follow to suggest that they had little time to get involved in their children’s reading as seen by the low levels of involvement.

4.2.4 Type of School attended by their Children

Information about the type of school that children attended was presented using frequencies and percentages. There were two categories that were studied that is public and private schools. The table below shows the type of school that children attended.
Table 4.4 Type of School attended by their Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 4.4 above, majority (75.0%) of children were going to public schools as compared to a smaller (25.0%) number that went to private schools. This was expected due to the smaller number of private schools that participated in the study as discussed in section 3.5.1. Due to the insignificant number of private schools involved in the study, it was a bit not possible to effectively determine the comparisons in the levels of parental involvement in their children’s reading. If the number of public and private schools were equal, then it could have been possible to calculate the comparison levels of involvement. However, due to the higher number of parents from public schools in the study, it could suggest to mean that it could have contributed to the lower levels of involvement established. As cited by Koech (2010), parents in private schools are more likely to be involved in their children’s education than those in public schools (Coleman and Hoffer, 1987). Mwoma (2008) also established that fathers with children in private schools got involved in their children’s education more than fathers who had children in public schools.

4.3 General Information and Demographics of Teachers

Thirty teachers were sampled to participate in this study. To ensure that the return rate remains 100%, the researcher increased the sample to 40 to include extra that in case of failure to return the questionnaires, the expected
number could still be maintained. Out of the 40 that was sampled, five teachers did not complete filling in their questionnaires. After data cleaning, the 30 expected for analysis was used. The demographic information that was required from the teachers who participated in the study included their gender, their level of education and the type of the school that they teach. The following tables present the demographic information on the pre-school teachers.

4.3.1 Gender of Teachers

Information about the gender of teachers that participated in the study was presented using frequencies and percentages. The table below shows the distribution of teachers by gender.

Table 4.5 Gender of Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 4.5 above, majority (76.7%) of teachers who participated in the study were female. Male teachers were significantly small (23.3%) in number as compared to their female counterparts.
4.3.2 Level of Education of Teachers

The researcher needed to understand the composition of teachers in relation to their highest level of education. The levels included primary, secondary, tertiary or college and university as the highest of the ranks stated.

Information about the level of education attained by teachers who participated in the study was presented using frequencies and percentages. The table below shows the distribution of teachers’ levels of education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary/College</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 above shows that majority (76.7%) of the teachers who participated in the study had attained tertiary/college levels of education. There was a relatively small (3.3%) of teachers who had just primary level as their highest levels of education. This appears to suggest that a good number of teachers had been trained on appropriate ways that they could involve parents in their children’s reading through effective communication hence higher levels of communication with parents. This finding agrees with Koech (2010), who found that teacher’s level of involvement in children’s education increases with increase in level of education. As cited by Koech (2010), the findings of Whalley (2001) are also consistent with the above findings where it was found that higher levels of teacher education are associated with improved classrooms.
or better academic outcomes. Good performance in children’s reading is one of the expected academic outcomes.

4.3.3 Type of School taught by Teachers

Teachers who participated in this study were asked to state the type of school that they teach in that is, if it is a private or public. This information was presented using frequencies and percentages. The table below shows the type of school that teachers were teaching.

**Table 4.7 Type of School**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 4.7 above, it is observed that majority (60.0%) of teachers were teaching in public schools while a relatively smaller (40.0%) number of teachers were from private schools. There is an observable gap between the number of teachers in public and private schools due to purposive sampling that had been done during the data collection process as discussed in section 3.5.1. As it was for the case of parents in section 4.2.4, the insignificant number of private schools involved in the study made it not possible to effectively determine the comparisons in the levels of parent-teacher communication about children’s reading. If the number of public and private schools were equal, then it could have been possible to calculate the comparison levels of communication. However, studies show that there is significant differences in the way teachers relate with parents and even with children in public and private schools.
4.4 Communication Strategies used by Teachers

The researcher developed eight strategies that teachers were asked to indicate the frequency that they used the already stated strategies on a three-scale of never, sometimes and always. In order to determine which of the listed strategies was mostly used by teachers, the researcher used the ‘always’ frequency measure and listed the percent for each of the strategy. From this scores, he was able to establish the strategies that were used regularly by teachers to communicate to parents about their children’s reading. This was meant to get data that could be used to determine the first objective that read as below.

**Objective 1:** To establish the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents of pre-primary school children about their children’s reading.

The table 4.8 shows the frequencies and proportions for the strategies that teachers used as observed when investigating the above objective. Teachers were asked to state the frequency at which they employed the various strategies in communicating to parents about their children’s reading.
Table 4.8 Strategies used by Teachers to Communicate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparing and issuing regular report cards or progress records for parents specifically on children’s reading</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing letters or notes to parents to inform them about their children’s reading progress or give information about the state of children’s reading while at school</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring that children’s diary is signed by the parents as a confirmation that the parent actually monitored the child’s reading homework</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in parent-teacher organizations or associations to discuss about children’s reading</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sending phone messages to the parents about their children’s reading progress while at school</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting home visits and give guidance to parents on how to enhance home reading for children</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in seminars, workshops, academic days or parent days to talk about children’s reading</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availing oneself to talk to parents about their children’s reading when asked to do so by the parents</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8 shows that majority (86.7%) of teachers used report cards as the main strategy to communicate to parents. This might be due to the frequency of use of report cards by most of schools in the country as the main mode of communication between parents and teachers. Most schools use report cards to communicate generally about children’s performance in schools usually at the end of the school terms. The second highly used strategy of communication by teachers were two namely direct talking to parents about their children’s reading and using seminars, workshops and parent school days (70.0%) to talk to parents about their children’s reading abilities. These strategies could have been
majorly used due to their low cost as a means of communication hence the second preferred choice of communication.

There was a considerable number (66.7%) of teachers who used diaries as a strategy to communicate to parents about their children’s reading closely followed by use of parent-teacher organisations’ meetings. Many schools nowadays use diaries especially in lower primary and pre-primary schools for parents to check their children’s progress at school more so with assignments. Due to this therefore, the two mentioned above could have been the case in their high ranking. There is need to mention that the diaries were only used to find out about children’s reading since at pre-primary, reading is a subject or rather an activity area under language. Other aspects of the diary were not of interest to this study.

**Discussion**

From table 4.8 above, out of the eight strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents about their children’s reading, there were two that were in minimal use. These strategies included the use of letters (43.3%) and use of phone messages (36.7%). The study took place in the interior part of Western Kenya where there are very low levels of access to mobile phones as well as relatively low levels of literacy (56.9%) in comparison to other regions like Nairobi (86.6%) (Njue. J. et al, 2008). This might have been the reason for the low use of letters as well as phone messages as a means of communication between parents and teachers.
Findings for objective one established that the major strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents about their children’s reading were use of report cards, talking directly to parents, use of parent days, seminars and workshops and use of diaries. These findings concur with Graham-Clay’s (1995) findings on teachers’ communication strategies that included parent-teacher conferences, use of progress reports, school diaries and talking informally with the parents. Similarly, Hill & Taylor (2004) found that teachers may use parent-teacher conferences in getting themselves familiar with school functioning and activities among them their role in children’s reading development which is being supported by the current study.

The current study findings however differs with Koech (2010) who found out that there was a high level of parental involvement in communication to teachers due to the fact that teachers were using many varieties of communication modes that included newsletters, phone messages, phone calls, report cards, conference schedules and diaries to communicate. To conclude, parents therefore have a sole responsibility of identifying most appropriate strategies that they can use to communicate to teachers about their children’s reading since the use of various strategies vary from one parent to another.

4.5 Level of Parental Involvement in Children’s Reading

As already discussed in section 3.2.2, level of parental involvement was the dependent variable for this study. Seven forms of involvement were developed which included showing interest in children’s reading, rewarding children’s reading performance, purchasing reading materials for children, helping
children to read difficult words, checking children’s reading homework, reading books or telling stories to children and participating in school seminars, workshops, academic days or parent’ days to discuss about children’s reading. Level of parental involvement was assessed by having them indicate the frequency that they used the stated forms of involvement on a three-scale of never, sometimes and always. Total frequencies were calculated on a three-level indicator of 0-13, 14-26 and 27-39 which categorised their responses as either low, moderate or high respectively. This helped in establishing data to help answer the second objective stated below.

**Objective 2:** To establish the level of parental involvement in their pre-primary school children's reading.

Table 4.9 below states the frequencies of various forms of parental involvement plus their equivalent percent. Note that parents were asked to state how often they used already stated activities. Parents’ level of involvement was grouped into three categories namely low, moderate and high as already discussed.

**Table 4.9 Proportions of Parents by Level of Involvement in Reference to Showing Interest in Children’s Reading Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of involvement</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From table 4.9 above, majority (63.3%) of parents were highly involved in their children’s reading through showing an interest in their children’s reading activities. This could be interpreted to mean such things as but not limited to being there while the child is reading, being concerned with what children are reading, showing approval and or disapproval of whatever is being read by children among others. High levels of involvement on this aspect could be attributed to parents’ realisation and recognition on the importance showing an interest in their children’s reading.

Table 4.10 Proportions of Parents by Level of Involvement in Reference to Rewarding Children’s Reading Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of involvement</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On rewarding children when they perform well in reading exercises, majority (52.2%) of parents studied confirmed that they do reward their children when they perform well in reading activities contrary to a slight number of their counterparts (15.6%) who had a very low level of involvement. Rewarding children as an aspect of reinforcement when they do well in reading has been known to play a major role in enhancing performance of children (Skinner, 1938). Positive reinforcement strengthens a behaviour by providing a
consequence an individual finds rewarding hence the need for such when a positive reading development has to be achieved and encouraged (Skinner, 1938). High level of involvement on rewarding children when they perform well in reading could have been due to knowledge that positive reinforcement plays in children’s reading.

Table 4.11 Proportions of Parents by Level of Involvement in Reference to Purchasing Reading Materials for Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of involvement</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 4.11 above, majority (40.0%) of parents had a low level of involvement in purchasing reading materials for their children. Majority of parents could not be purchasing reading materials for their children due to the relatively high poverty rate of Western region and specifically for Butere/Mumias District according to the economic survey that rated the then district at 51.6% poverty rate with 276,284 people living below the poverty line of Ksh 1,562.00 per month (District Poverty Data KIHBS, 2005/6). This could be one of major causes for the observed low levels of involvement of parents in purchasing children’s reading materials.
Table 4.12 Proportions of Parents by Level of Involvement in Reference to Helping Children to Read Difficult Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of involvement</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On this aspect of involvement, majority (50.6%) of parents had a low level of parental involvement in helping their children to read especially the difficult words. This may be due to inadequate knowledge on reading patterns especially in pre-primary classes that has changed from the traditional old days. As such, most of what children are taught in schools could be unfamiliar to their parents hence very little assistance in reading.

Table 4.13 Proportions of Parents by Level of Involvement in Reference to Checking Children’s Reading Homework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Involvement</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From table 4.13 above, majority (49.4%) of parents had very low levels of involvement in checking their children’s reading homework. Contrary to this, there were only a few (18.9%) parents who had a high level of involvement in checking their children’s reading homework. This could be interpreted to mean that majority did not show interest in knowing what their children were doing on reading and if there was any reading progress that their children were making.

**Table 4.14 Proportions of Parents by Level of Involvement in Reading Books or Telling Stories to Children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Involvement</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above results, majority (37.8%) of parents confirmed that they had a very low level of involvement in reading books or telling stories to their children. This was low rate (37.8%) as compared to the other aspects of involvement. There are several reasons that could have led to this low levels such as lack of adequate time by parents due to their economic engagements, lack of interest in their children’s reading activities as indicated in the above findings, as well as lack of reading materials for children that has also been confirmed in the above findings.
Table 4.15 Proportions of Parents by Level of Involvement in Reference to Participating in School Seminars, Workshops, Academic days or Parents’ days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Involvement</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 4.15 above, it was found that majority (43.3%) of parents in this study had a very low level of involvement in their children’s school activities through participating in school seminars, workshops, academic days and parents’ day among others. This could mean as it has been discussed in some aspects above that parents were hardly involved in school activities. If parents are not aware about what goes on at school, then that may impact negatively on how they help their children to develop academically and more so in their reading development.

**Discussion**

Objective two for this study aimed at establishing the level of parental involvement in their children’s reading which the study findings indicate that the involvement was low as seen from the above findings. In reference to this, there was a low parental involvement in showing interest in children’s reading activities, rewarding children, purchasing reading materials, helping children to
read, checking children’s reading homework, reading books to children and participating in school activities.

These findings are in agreement with Lemmer (2007) who found out that parental involvement in school activities in South Africa was not adequate and thus majority of parents in the study hardly participated in activities organised by schools. Participation in school activities provides parents with information about children's learning and development plus an insight into their children’s reading that leads to improvement on how parents promote the development of their children’s school-related abilities and performances (Powell, 2001). All these could have not been the case for the current study due to the contrary findings that majority of parents had very low levels of involvement in school activities which are very key in promoting children’s reading development.

Use of diaries is a means of communication between teachers and parents and such low levels of involvement in the current study are in agreement with Lombana (1983), who found that both parents and educators acknowledged not having a successful communication with each other proved through not sending messages nor even accepting those that are sent. He further states that they acknowledged that communication, mis-communication or lack of communication was involved in every aspect of the home-school relationships and that breakdowns in the communication process existed at every turn (Lombana 1983:42). These findings are also in agreement with Kathure (2014) who found that majority of the parents were hardly engaged in reading related activities such as reading with children, listening to children read aloud or
supervising homework. Majority of studied parents therefore were not aware of the information that children’s complete reading homework with their parents actively involved, increases the inference making skills (Bailey, Silvern, Brabham & Ross, 2004). These informs the findings about low involvement of parents in their children’s readings.

Contrary to the above findings that show low levels of parental involvement, some studies showed a higher level of parental involvement hence bringing out the inconsistencies. Parents were found to be promoting their young children’s vocabulary when they read books to them unlike the current study that parents confirmed a low level of reading books to their children (Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000; Jordan, Snow & Porche, 2000; Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998; Sénéchal, 1997; Whitehurst et al., 1988). In addition to these, there was a high level of parental involvement in children’s reading in Ottawa, Canada where parents were confirmed to be reading books to their children that in turn enhanced development of fluent reading (Cunningham & Stanovich 1993, 1998) thus showing the deviation from this study.

In addition to the above findings, Swadener, Kabiru & Njenga (2008) study explains that parents were involving themselves in their children’s reading at home. According to this study, there were specific things that parents are doing with their children at the family level such as reading books and making drawings. (Cited by Koech, 2010). The findings for the current study are further inconsistent with the findings that observed that parents acquired and introduced their children to books with the aim of giving them a head start in school, giving
them an advantage over their peers throughout primary school (Wade & Moore, 2000a; 2000b), something that was not similar with the current study.

Furthermore, parents reported on average that they often taught their children how to read and print words. Senechal et al (1996) found similar patterns of behaviour, as did a variety of other researchers who reported a high level of parental involvement in their children’s reading (Baker et al., 1998; Evans et al., 2000; Frijters, Barron & Brunello, 2000; Sonnenschein, Brody & Munsterman, 1996). In another study by Senechal et al. (1998), middle and upper middle-class English-speaking parents reported a high frequency of involvement with their children’s reading at home. On average, parents reported having started reading storybooks when their children were 9 months of age, that storybook reading occurred frequently in the home and that children had between 61 and 80 children's books in the home.

4.6 Relationship between Strategies used by Teachers to Communicate to Parents and Parental Involvement

As discussed above in section 4.4, strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents were use of report cards, talking directly to parents, use of school days such as reading seminars, use of diaries and PTA meetings. Parental involvement in their children’s reading was measured with reference to seven forms of involvement. These were showing interest in children’s reading, rewarding children’s reading performance, purchasing reading materials, helping children to read difficult words, checking children’s reading homework,
reading books or telling stories to children and participating in school seminars, workshops, academic days or parents’ day. During data analysis, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to organise these different forms into two sets of data that made it easier to analyse the relationships. These data was used to answer the third objective and the hypothesis formulated from it as stated below.

**Objective 3:** To establish the relationship between strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents and parental involvement.

**H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents and parents’ level of involvement in children's reading.

The above hypothesis was tested at 95% confidence level thus the significance level was based at 0.05 and the hypothesis determined by P value. Chi-square test was used to test the null hypothesis. Table 4.16 shows the results obtained from the Chi-square tests.

**Table 4.16 Chi-square Tests for Relationship between Strategies used by Teachers to Communicate to Parents and Parental Involvement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Assmp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>1.982</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction</td>
<td>1.539</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>1.878</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>1.512</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.362</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**N of Valid Cases** 180

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table
b. 0 cells have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.89
From the findings as seen in the table 4.16, there was an insignificant weak negative correlation between the strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents and parental involvement, $\chi^2 (4, N=180) = 1.982, P>0.05$. Given that the p value (p=0.392) for the study was greater than 0.05, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between the strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents and parental involvement in children’s reading. This meant therefore, that there was no significant relationship between the strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents and parental involvement. As such, the level at which parents got involved in their children’s reading was not affected by whichever kind of strategy that teachers could use to communicate to them.

**Discussion**

An insignificant weak negative correlation shows that the strategies being used by teachers to communicate to parents and parental involvement did not have a strong relationship. This may mean that despite efforts and or type of strategies that teachers could be employing to communicate to parents about their children’s reading, it was not positively achieving any results as far as ensuring parental participation in their children’s reading. In other words, parents were found not to be involved in their children’s reading even after various strategies were put in place by teachers.

There is an agreement between the current study’s findings and that of Lombana (1983), who found out that both parents and educators acknowledged that they had not been successful in communicating with each other irrespective of what
strategies were put in place such sending nor even accepting phone messages were sent. He further states that they acknowledged that communication, miscommunication or lack of communication was involved in every aspect of the home-school relationships and that breakdowns in the communication process existed at every turn (Lombana 1983:42) which in turn affected negatively communication between parents and teachers. Furthermore, the findings agrees with Koech (2010) who asserts that parental involvement is not affected by any other factor rather than an increase in the level of education where parents with college/university education were reported to be more involved in parent-teacher partnerships, something that has no relationship on the strategies that teachers were using for communication as the case for the current study.

The above findings are however inconsistent with what Hill & Taylor (2004) asserts that facilitating parental familiarity with teachers and support of school goals and functions have the potential to increase teacher’s understanding of parents' goals for and views of their children such as parent–teacher conferences and school personnel's awareness of parent perspectives on school functioning. It is argued that the above has a positive impact on enhancing parental involvement and communication with teachers of their children. In addition to these, the findings for this objective were also not in agreement with Powell (2001) who established that participation in school activities provides parents with information about children's learning and development plus an insight into their children’s reading that leads to improvements in how parents promote the development of their children’s school-related abilities and performances.
4.7 Level of Parental Communication to Teachers

As already discussed in section 3.2.1, level of parental communication to teachers was an independent variable. Four strategies of communication that were tested included talking directly to teachers, signing children’s diaries, use of mobile phones and use of letters to communicate to teachers about their children’s reading. Parent’s level of communication to teachers was assessed by having them indicate either never, sometimes or always the frequencies that they used the stated strategies of communication. Total frequencies were calculated on a three-level indicator of 0-13, 14-26 and 27-39 which categorised their responses as either low, moderate or high respectively. Note that parents were asked to state how often they used already stated strategies to communicate. This helped in establishing data to help answer the fourth objective stated below.

Objective 4: To find out the level to which parents communicate about their children’s reading abilities to pre-primary school teachers.

The tables below states the frequencies for the strategies that parents were employing in communicating to teachers plus their equivalent percentage.

Table 4.17 Proportions of Parents by Level of Communication in Reference to Talking to the Teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Involvement</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On talking to the teacher about their children’s reading, majority (52.2%) of parents recorded a moderate level of involvement with only 40.0% of parents recording a high level of involvement in talking to teacher about their children’s reading. These findings were also similar with those measuring parental level of involvement with reference to initiating discussions with teachers that recorded a moderate level of 48.3% with a minimal of 32.8% recording high levels of involvement. These findings may suggest that majority of parents are neither involved in direct communication nor initiate discussions with the teachers about children’s reading because they may not have attached the importance of doing that to their children’s reading.

Table 4.18 Proportions of Parents by Level of in Reference to Signing Children’s Diaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Involvement</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second strategies that was used to measure the level of communication between parents and teachers was the use of the diaries as means of home to school communication. From the table above, majority (43.3%) of parents recorded a very low level of communication. There were only 59 parents out of 180 parents that participated in the study who said that they were using diaries to communicate to teachers about their children’s reading. Diaries were to be
used only to indicate if children had done their reading homework or not since reading was one of the taught subjects in pre-primary schools.

The low levels of communication by the use of diaries as observed above may suggest that majority of parents were not signing their children’s diaries which could have meant that they were in less communication with teachers. As a means of communication between parents and teachers, this may mean that parents who were involved in the study were not active communicators as far as their children’s reading was concerned.

Table 4.19 Proportions of Parents by Level of Communication in Reference to use of Mobile Phones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Involvement</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, majority (45.6%) of parents recorded a very low level of communication in reference to use of mobile phones as a mode of communication with teachers. There were only 43 parents out of the 180 that participated in the study who reported to be using mobile phones to communicate to teachers about their children’s reading. These could be attributed to the fact that being in local rural environment, many people could have not embraced technological advancements specifically on use of mobile
technology for the purposes of improving children’s educational outcomes rather than for the basic use in meeting their basic needs. This leaves a room for advocacy to be done to educate parents on how they can incorporate use of technology and particularly use of mobile phones to facilitate their children’s reading.

Table 4.20 Proportions of Parents by Level of Communication in Reference to Writing Letters to Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Involvement</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0-13</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>14-26</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27-39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last form of communication studied was use of letters where majority (46.7%) of parents studied recorded a very low level of involvement in use of letters in communicating with teachers. There were only 41 parents out of the 180 that participated in the study who reported to have been writing letters to teachers to inquire about their children’s reading. These findings could suggest that majority of parents did not embrace use of written forms to get involved in their children’s reading which might be attributed to the fact that literacy levels could have been low. In addition, use of letters as a means of communication is becoming outdated, and it is also somehow seen as official hence it may require some level of formality and time to be drafted. Parents may not find this as a
comfortable mode of communication in getting involved in their children’s reading engagements. Furthermore, use of letters is a common mode of communication among the elite members of the society which could have not been the case for the parents who participated in the study.

Discussion

In establishing the level of parental communication, it was found that there was a relatively low level of communication by parents to teachers in reference to talking directly to teachers, signing children’s diaries, use of mobile phones and writing letters to teachers. The study findings for this objective agrees with Mwoma (2008) who established that fathers who had limited schooling as well as low reading and writing abilities had difficulties participating in school related activities requiring high levels of literacy such as signing school diaries, use of letters among others. In addition, it was established that majority of parents who participated in the current study recorded a very low level of communication with teachers in the above stated strategies. This is also in agreement with Ndani (2008) established during her study in Thika District-Kenya, that communication as mode of parental involvement in comparison to other aspects of involvement was relatively low among parents. Despite this however, communication was on average higher than other modes of parental participation. She established that in private schools, the most common mode of parent participation was communication, as most private schools required that parents make comments and sign in their children’s home work books daily. Furthermore, one-on-one conferences between the teacher and parents
suggesting places for field trips, accompanying children in trips and end of term discussions on children’s performance comprised the other activities in private schools. According to Ndani (2008), public schools in addition to attending parents’ meetings was another way in which parents got involved in communicating to teachers where they sometimes involved in deciding on matters related to provision of learning materials, fees to be paid, construction of facilities and their maintenance.

The findings above on the level of parental involvement in communication differs to a great extent with Koech’s (2010) findings that indicated highest level of parental involvement in communication. He asserts that high level of parental involvement through communication could have been due to the fact that teachers were using many varieties of communication modes that included newsletters, phone messages, phone calls, report cards, conference schedules and diaries to communicate. This is also in line with Fantuzzo & McWayne (2002) who assert that traditional strategies of involving parents, such as inviting parents to meetings and school events, did not promote genuine parental involvement in school. Other strategies for strengthening partnership were therefore necessary.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction
This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations for various stakeholders as well as for further research.

5.1 Summary of the Findings
Findings for this study were presented based on the four objectives that the study had. These were to establish the strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents, to establish the level of involvement of parents in their children’s reading, to establish the relationship between the strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents and parental involvement and lastly to establish the level of communication of parents.

Strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents were found to be use of report cards, talking directly to parents, use of school days such as seminars on children’s reading, workshops and parents’ day among others. Other strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents were use of diaries and through PTA meetings.

Parental involvement in their children’s reading was measured in reference to how they got involved in seven aspects of involvement. The results showed that there was a low level of parental involvement in reference to rewarding children when they perform well in reading, purchasing children’s reading materials, helping children to read difficult words, checking children’s reading homework,
reading books or telling stories to children and participating in school activities. However, there was a high level of involvement by parents in reference to showing interest in children’s reading activities. This could be interpreted to mean such things as but not limited to being there while the child is reading, being concerned with what children are reading, showing approval and or disapproval of whatever is being read by children among others.

From the findings as seen in the table 4.16, there was an insignificant weak negative correlation between the strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents and parental involvement (p=0.392). This meant therefore, that there was no significant relationship between the strategies that teachers used to communicate to parents and parental involvement. As such, the level at which parents got involved in their children’s reading was not affected by whichever kind of strategy that teachers could use to communicate to them.

In establishing the level of parental communication, it was found that there was a relatively low level of communication by parents to teachers in reference to signing children’s diaries as a confirmation that their children had done the assigned reading homework, use of mobile phones and writing letters to teachers to inquire about their children’s reading performance at school. However, it was found out that there was a moderate level of communication by parents in reference to talking directly to teachers on matters to do with their children’s reading. Only an average number of parents took the initiative to visit the schools and have a one on one talk with teachers concerning their children’s reading.
5.2 Conclusions

The current study sort to investigate the relationship between parent-teacher communication and parental involvement in pre-primary school children’s reading. From the study findings, the following conclusions can be made:

- The study findings as discussed show that there is a negative correlation between parent-teacher communication and parental involvement. That is to mean that majority of parents were not involved highly in communication with teachers. This could have been due to other social engagements that consume much of their time plus their prioritization that do not put ahead their children’s reading.

- Teachers use five main strategies to communicate to parents. These are use of report cards, talking to parents, school days, diaries and PTA meetings.

- There is low level of parental involvement in their children’s reading. This is in reference to purchasing reading materials for their children, helping children to read especially the difficult words, checking children’s diaries, reading books for children and participating in school activities.

- Level of parental communication to teachers about their children’s reading is low. This is in reference to using such communication strategies as school diaries, mobile phones and writing letter to teachers to inquire about their children’s reading.
• The strategies that teachers used to communicate with parents about their children’s reading did not appear to influence parental involvement in children’s reading.

5.3 Recommendations

This study provides recommendations for two categories of institutions. The first category involves what needs to be done in the area of parental involvement in their children’s reading aimed at improving the participation. The second class of recommendations points out some of the areas that may require further research in relation to the just concluded study.

5.3.1 Recommendations to Education Stakeholders

(i) The Ministry of Education through department of ICT to make available communication gadgets such as mobile phones in schools to enhance parent-teacher communication. This is because parent-teacher communication was found to be very low in reference to use of mobile phones. Such gadgets may be used by teachers to communicate and engage parents more on their children’s reading.

(ii) Parent-teacher communication was found to be negatively related. Schools should therefore make more use of open days, seminars, workshops among other school days to promote parental involvement in children’s reading.
5.3.2 Recommendations for Further Research

The current study aimed at establishing the relationship between parent-teacher communication and parental involvement in pre-primary school children’s reading in Mumias East Sub-County, Kenya. For further research studies in this area of parental involvement and children’s reading, the following are the suggested recommendations;

(i) The current study looked at only communication as a form of parental involvement whereas there are more others such as parenting, community participation, volunteering among others. These other aspects need to be investigated so as to determine their influence on children’s reading.

(ii) The current study was on the relationship that parent-teacher communication has on parental involvement in children’s reading. There is need to narrow down to individual gender of parents and investigate on either fathers’ or mothers’ communication with teachers and how these affects their children’s reading.
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APPENDICES

Appendix I: A Questionnaire for parents

Section (a): Demographic information

1. Gender
   Male [ ]
   Female [ ]

2. What is your highest level of education?
   a. Never attended [ ]
   b. Primary [ ]
   c. Secondary [ ]
   d. Tertiary/College [ ]
   e. University [ ]

3. What is your occupation?
   a. Not working [ ]
   b. Farming [ ]
   c. Business [ ]
   d. Teaching [ ]
   e. Banking [ ]
   f. Any Other (Please specify) ……………………………

4. Which type of a school does your child attend?
   a. Public [ ]
   b. Private [ ]

Section: (b). Parent’s level of involvement in children’s reading
Kindly put a tick alongside each activity to indicate how often you do each of the activities below with your child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Showing interest in your child’s reading activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rewarding your child when he or she performs well in reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Purchasing reading materials for your child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Helping your child to read difficult words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Checking your child’s reading homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Reading books or telling stories to your child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Participating in school activities such as parents’ days to discuss your children’s reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section (c): Level of parental communication to teachers

Kindly put a tick alongside each activity to indicate how often you do each of the activities below with your child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Talking directly to the teacher about your child’s reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ensuring that your child’s diary is signed after the child completes the reading homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Using phone messages and making phone calls to the teacher to discuss your child’s reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Writing letters to the teacher to inquire about your child’s reading progress while at school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix II: A Questionnaire for teachers

Section (a): Demographic information

1. Gender
   Male [ ]
   Female [ ]

2. What is your highest level of education?
   a. Primary [ ]
   b. Secondary [ ]
   c. Tertiary/College [ ]
   d. University [ ]

4. Which type of a school is this?
   a) Public [ ]
   b) Private [ ]

Section (b): Strategies used by teachers to communicate to parents
Kindly put a tick alongside each activity to indicate how often you do each of the activities below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Preparing and issuing regular report cards or progress records for parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Writing letters to parents to inform them about their children’s reading progress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ensuring that children’s diary is signed by the parents as a confirmation that the parent actually monitored the child’s reading homework</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Participating in parent-teacher organizations or associations to discuss about children’s reading</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sending phone messages to the parents about their children’s reading progress while at school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Conducting home visits and give guidance to parents on how to enhance home reading for children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Participating in seminars, workshops, academic days or parent days to talk about children’s reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Availing oneself to talk to parents about their children’s reading when asked to do by parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix III: Informed consent form for parents

My name is Waiswa Emmanuel Flavian. I am a Masters student from Kenyatta University. I am conducting a study on Relationship between parent-teacher communication and parental involvement in pre-primary school children’s reading. The information from this study may be used by the Ministry of Education to improve parents’ involvement in children’s reading in this constituency as well as other regions of Kenya.

Procedures to be followed
You will be expected to answer some questions as stipulated in the questionnaire in order to get your views on your involvement in your child’s reading. You are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire. You may decline from participating in this study. Your decision will not affect in any way your child’s education in this school. Please remember that participation in the study is voluntary. You are free to ask questions related to the study at any time. You may also withdraw your participation in the study at any time without any consequences to the services you receive or your child receives from this school now or in future.

Discomforts and risks
In case you feel that some of the information being sorted in the questionnaire is not worthy being said, you are kindly requested to express your opinion on it and seek further clarification from the researcher. You may also withdraw from participation at any time. The questionnaire may take approximately between ten to fifteen minutes to be filled hence I kindly ask for your patience.

Benefits
If you participate in this study, you will help us learn and be enlightened on the extent to which parents get involved in their children’s reading and also on the importance of doing so. Information sort from this study is very important particularly in informing parent-teacher partnerships that may impart positively on children’s learning outcomes.
Confidentiality
You will answer the questions in one of the classrooms provided alone and nobody will have access to the information. Do not write your name anywhere on the questionnaire for confidentiality reasons. The questionnaire will be kept in a locked cabinet for safe keeping at Kenyatta University. Everything will be kept private.

Contact information
If you have any questions, you may contact Mr. Waiswa Emmanuel Flavian on waiswa.flavian@gmail.com or KUERC on chairman.kuerc@ku.ac.ke

Participant’s statement
The above information regarding my participation in the study is clear to me. I have been given a chance to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. My participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I understand that my records will be kept private and that I can withdraw from participating in this study at any time. I understand that I will still get the same services as well as my child whether I decide to withdraw my participation from the study or not and my decision will not change the services I receive from this school or that I will get from any other school at any other time.

_________________________  ______________________
Signature or Thumbprint  Date

Investigator’s statement
I, the undersigned, have explained to the volunteer in a language s/he understands, the procedures to be followed in the study and the risks and benefits involved.

Name of Researcher ……………………………………………………………..

_________________________  ______________________
Researcher’s signature  Date
Appendix IV: Informed consent form for teachers

My name is Waiswa Emmanuel Flavian. I am a Masters student from Kenyatta University. I am conducting a study on Relationship between parent-teacher communication and parental involvement in pre-primary school children’s reading. The information from this study may be used by the Ministry of Education to improve on parents’ involvement in children’s reading in this sub-county as well as other regions of Kenya.

Procedures to be followed
You will be expected to answer some questions as stipulated in the questionnaire in order to get your views on your involvement in your child’s reading. You may decline from participating in this study. Your decision will not affect in any way your child’s education in this school. Please remember that participation in the study is voluntary. You are free to ask questions related to the study at any time. You may also withdraw your participation in the study at any time without any consequences to the services you receive or your child receives from this school now or in future.

Discomforts and risks
You are kindly being requested to be very honest in participating in this study and any worries or fears are welcome. You are kindly requested to express your opinion on any issue in relation to the study and seek further clarification from the researcher. You may also withdraw from participation at any time. The questionnaire may take approximately between ten to fifteen minutes to be filled hence I kindly ask for your patience.

Benefits
If you participate in this study, you will help us learn and be enlightened on the extent to which parents get involved in their children’s reading in relation to your extent of communication to the parents on children’s reading. The role of parent-teacher communication in children’s reading will be also be understood well.
Confidentiality
You will answer the questions in one of the classrooms provided alone and nobody will have access to the information. Do not write your name anywhere on the questionnaire for confidentiality reasons. The questionnaire will be kept in a locked cabinet for safe keeping at Kenyatta University. Everything will be kept private.

Contact information
If you have any questions, you may contact Mr. Waiswa Emmanuel Flavian on waiswa.flavian@gmail.com or KUERC on chairman.kuerc@ku.ac.ke

Participant’s statement
The above information regarding my participation in the study is clear to me. I have been given a chance to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. My participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I understand that my records will be kept private and that I can withdraw my participation from the study at any time. I understand that I will still get the same services whether I decide to participate or not participate in this study and my decision will not change the services I receive from this school or that I will get from any other school at any other time.

_________________________  ______________________
Signature or Thumbprint         Date

Investigator’s statement
I, the undersigned, have explained to the volunteer in a language s/he understands, the procedures to be followed in the study and the risks and benefits involved.

Name of Researcher ……………………………………………………………

_________________________  ____________________________
Researcher’s signature         Date
Appendix V: NACOSTI Research Authorization

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

Ref: No.

Date:
11th June, 2015

NACOSTI/P/15/7435/5978

Flavian Emmanuel Waiswa
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on “Relationship between parent teacher communication and parental involvement in pre primary school childrens reading abilities in Kakamega County Kenya,” I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Kakamega County for a period ending 31st December, 2016.

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

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

Said Hussein
FOR: DIRECTOR GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Kakamega County.

The County Director of Education
Kakamega County.
Appendix VI: NACOSTI Research Clearance Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MR. FLAVIAN EMMANUEL WAISWA
OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 43844-100
Nairobi, has been permitted to conduct research in Kakamega County
on the topic: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENT TEACHER COMMUNICATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN READING ABILITIES IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY KENYA

for the period ending: 31st December, 2015

Applicant’s Signature

Allowance

Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do so 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, planting 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.

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Republic of Kenya

National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

CONDITIONS: see back page