GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING STRATEGIES USED BY PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS IN MANAGING CHILDREN’S SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS IN NAKURU MUNICIPALITY, KENYA.

BY

VIRGINIA WANGARI MUSOGA

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A MASTER OF EDUCATION DEGREE (EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDIES) IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY.

April, 2017
DECLARATION

I confirm that this research thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university for certification. The thesis has been completed by referenced works duly acknowledged where text data, graphics or tables have been borrowed from other works including the internet; the sources are specifically accredited through referencing in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

Signed………………………… Date…………………………

Virginia Wangari Musoga

SUPERVISORS’ DECLARATION

We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under our supervision as university supervisors.

Signed………………………… Date…………………………

Dr Esther N. Waithaka

Department: Early Childhood Studies.

Kenyatta University

Signed………………………… Date…………………………

Dr Teresa Mwoma

Department: Early Childhood Studies.

Kenyatta University
DEDICATION

To my children; Moses, Priscilla, Miriam and Carol; may this work awaken in you the eagerness to learn.

I dedicate this work to my late parents for their sacrifice to educate me.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I sincerely appreciate the efforts put in this work by my supervisors Dr. Teresa Mwoma and Dr. Esther Waithaka for their dedication and guidance from proposal writing through to the research report. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my husband Herbert for encouraging me all through the journey and my children for their understanding and support. I could not achieve at this stage without their encouragement. Special thanks to the participants the pre-school teachers who spared their time for responding to the questionnaire. Finally I would like to acknowledge my Pastor and his wife for their prayers and encouragement. The Principal Langalanga secondary school, Mr Henry Cheruiyot, colleagues and friends for the encouragement they accorded me throughout my study. Above all glory be to God for His grace that has brought me this far.
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<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Conduct Disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCECE</td>
<td>Municipal Centre for Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODD</td>
<td>Opposition Defiant Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Fund for Population Activity</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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ABSTRACT

Experience in early childhood education has shown that there is need to respond to the many types of complex social issues and economic trends affecting children in developing countries as a result of family adjustments and disruptions. In the Kenyan traditional society, the family set-up was anchored on extended family arrangements and children were mainly counseled by the grandparents, aunts, uncles and other relatives. This ensured a solid background which was healthy for the developing person. However in the contemporary society the traditional family set up has broken down. There is less contact between children and their grandparents, aunts and uncles. Parents have also become too busy and this has resulted to children being taken to school too early some barely three years old. Parents’ absence and reliance on pre-school teachers seems to create an emotional gap. Children like adults have many issues that affect their emotional growth and development. Like children of other stages, pre-school children require guidance and counseling to deal with behavioral and emotional problems in order to realize their optimum development and learning performance. The study was carried out to explore the guidance and counseling strategies pre-school teachers use in managing social-emotional behaviour problems of pre-school children. It also investigated the causes of social-emotional problems among children and the challenges teachers face. The study was carried out in Nakuru Municipality and it was guided by Erik Erikson’s Theory of psychosocial development and Skinner’s Behavioural Theory. Survey research design was used in this study to obtain information about guidance and counseling strategies, social and emotional problems and behavior management in pre-schools classrooms and during children outdoor activities. To ensure maximum variations in the characteristics of ECD centers selected for the study, purposive sampling was done to obtain 8 schools from which 16 pre-school teachers were interviewed. Teachers were interviewed to find out how they deal with children having social-emotional problems. Observation was also done to see some of the indicators of social-emotional problem among children. Data was analyzed qualitatively where the information obtained was organized into themes and categories by first tidying up the data, finding the items, creating stable items, creating patterns and assembling groups of related or linked patterns that come up with an overall description of the problem being studied. The findings showed that there were a considerable number of pre-school children who had social-emotional problems that affect their behaviour and school performance. Such behaviour problems included inability to play, appearing moody and worried and being not attentive. The causes of these problems were mainly domestic conflict and poverty. Guidance and counseling strategies teachers used played a great role in helping pre-school children change behaviour and improve their learning performance. These included involving parents and talking to the children as individual or groups. Teachers faced many challenges when dealing with social emotionally disturbed children. Such challenges included, some parents not heeding to their call or denying there is a problem. The researcher has recommended that there is need for a trained teacher counselor in each pre-school. There is also need for referrals to be made for children with serious behaviour problems. This would go a long way in realizing healthy development in early childhood and hence avoid maladjusted adults in future.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the background to the study, the problem statement, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, scope, and limitations of the study as well as significance of the study. It also discusses the theoretical framework based on Erik Erickson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development and Skinners Behavioral Theory. Finally it highlights the conceptual framework of the study.

1.2 Background to the Study

Recent years have seen a worldwide effort to give first priority to early child- hood care and education as critical in determining the quality of human life in the 21st century (Association for Childhood Education International, 2011). The international focus in the quality of care of children in early years may have been motivated by the need to respond to a diverse of complex social issues and economic trends affecting children worldwide in developing countries. These forces, which are referred to as “complex family stressors” may be as a result of societal changes due to industrialization, more women with young children entering the work force and an increase of families with two working parents. It is also due to an increase in the number of single parents and disappearance of the traditional ways of caring for children and extended family support networks (Driscoll & Nagal) as cited by Mbugua (2004).

In the contemporary society, the extended family set-up has been replaced by nuclear families. Many non-traditional families and lifestyles have grown rapidly in number.
over the past half-decade. Strong support networks and extended family ties are not as available as thought (Turner & Welch, 2011).

Amato (2005) carried out a study on how changes in U.S family structure affected the cognitive, social, and emotional well-being of the nation’s children. He investigated how children in households with two biological parents differ from children in households with only one biological parent. His findings show that, children growing up with both parents are less likely to experience a wide range of cognitive, social and emotional problems during childhood and also later in adulthood. However children growing up with one biological parent had high chances of developing cognitive, social and emotional problems. Troubled children are likely to develop problems with disobedience, anger and rule violations. School achievement is also likely to suffer (Billings & Emery, 2000).

In the Kenyan traditional society, the family setup was mainly extended families. Children were mainly guided and counseled by grandparents, aunties, uncles and other relatives. There were fewer opportunities for formal education especially among the young children and they stayed with the family members for a long time until they matured. The extended family provided services that young people and children needed. Uncles, aunts and other relatives were sources of information that young people needed as they grew up (UNESCO, 2000).

Economic demands and expectations have made parents to be quite busy trying to provide for their families. There is less contact between children and their grandparents, aunties and uncles. The alternative is for the families to result to formal education from early years. The consequences is that young children barely three
years of age are leaving home for school under the care of pre-school teachers who are themselves likely to be less competent to provide alternative parental support to these children.

This has resulted to less contact time for parents or relatives to guide and/or counsel their children. Sirera (2003) argues that, parents in the current society may be unavailable physically and emotionally to respond to the psychological needs of young growing children. This denies the growing children the guidance, which is an important ingredient for their healthy development. Muasya (2016) in her study reports that, the number of women in the formal sector in Sub-Saharan Africa has increased in recent years. The kinship networks are weakening, leading to a decline in the traditional forms of support for child care.

Due to work pressure on parents living in urban areas, most families have resorted to employment of house helps as the main caretakers for children at home further reducing the contact time children have with their parents. Majority of the house helps are basically people searching for survival and are likely to come from poor backgrounds and with less formal education. These house helps move from their families to urban areas in search of opportunities for any form of employment and the consequence for entrusting young children to them can be disastrous. Besides, most of them have not received training on bringing up children and how to take care of their emotional issues.

Children like adults face many issues that affect their social-emotional growth and development. Meggit (2006) says that, there are numerous reasons as to why children experience lack of social and emotional well-being. In the recent years Kenya has
experienced high rates of divorce and separation which hardly occurred in traditional times; loss of loved ones due to illness, accidents or natural calamities like floods and famine. In addition, the recent political and ethnic violence has resulted in the displacement of persons or loss of property. Transfer of parents from their work places results in children changing their usual environment and separation from their friends. Nickson (2014) reports that the instantaneous lack of continuity and stability can cause academic and behavior problems. The child has to get used to a new school environment and get new friends, leaving behind the old social networks formed over years.

Child sexual abuse has also been on the increase. All these issues could cause maladaptive behaviors if not dealt with early enough. It is therefore a concern that most young children especially at the early years rely on the mercy of pre-school teachers and others house helps to cater for their counseling and psychological needs. The Mother Goose Kenya (2014) in their report points out that, the nanny must be a child’s person who will love, have patience with children, understands children psychology and above all nurture the children just like the parent.

Gilliam (2005) points out that, researchers and policy makers have conveyed their concern that pre-schoolers chances for latter success in school may be compromised by their behaviour problems. Given the outcomes of behaviour challenges for children’s school preparedness, the children’s behavioural problems can be minimized by targeting classroom processes (August, Realmuto, Hekner & Bloomquist, 2000).

There is need therefore to draw attention to guidance and counseling and behavior management strategies in young children learning in preschools. There may be gains
in child development outcomes if the school guidance programme focus on early recognition of social- emotional problems of pre-schools children. Social-emotional problems are highly resistant to change and may continue over time especially when interventions are provided at a later stage in primary or secondary schools. Childhood behavior problems is strongly linked to, delinquency and criminality in middle childhood or during the adult years (Huesman, Evon & Dubow, 2002). Lack of intervention in early years may bring about development of persistent social-emotional problems, underachievement, school dropout and ultimately delinquency in childhood.

This is particularly critical as theories in early child development like Erik Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development point to the fact that behavior problems in early childhood can last a life time (Berger, 1988). Considering the many challenges facing the care of children, for example issues resulting from the breakdown of the traditional family setup, minimized contact time of parents with their children and the fact that children are starting school earlier. There is need for a study to explore the role of guidance and counseling on behavior management provided by pre-school teachers to the young children.

From the review of literature, no studies in this area seem to have been done in other African countries. In Kenya the focus in guidance and counseling programs appear to be mainly on adults and youth especially secondary school students. For instance much counseling focuses on drug abuse and other maladaptive behaviors like burning of schools that are rampant in secondary schools in Kenya. These undesirable behaviors could be traced from lack of proper guidance in early childhood. Okeyo
(2000) in his study reports that, guidance and counseling in secondary schools decreases classroom disturbances since there is statistically and significant decrease in disruptive behaviors among students. Gatua, Sindabi and Chepchieng (2015) carried out a study to find out the impact of guidance and counseling on modification of students' behaviour in public urban and rural secondary schools in Rift Valley Province Kenya. This was after schools had experienced devastating consequences of students’ unrests. They found out that there was a significance decline of students’ unbecoming behaviour after the establishment of guidance and counseling services in Kenyan secondary schools. Wanjiru (2011) carried out a study to find out the role of guidance and counseling in addressing psychosocial needs of orphaned pupils in public pre-schools in Nakuru Municipality. However, counseling services for preschool children have not received much attention at pre-school level in Kenya. This study therefore sought to investigate the guidance counseling strategies used by pre-school teachers in behavior management of pre-school children in Nakuru County, Kenya.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Like children in other stages of development, preschool children require guidance and counseling services to deal with their behavioral and emotional problems which interfere in many ways with their development. This is important if children are to realize their optimum development and performance in pre-school.

As highlighted in the background the extended family set-up where children were guided and counseled by grandparents, aunties, uncles and other relatives has broken down. Work pressure on parents especially the ones in urban areas has resulted in less
time for parents to guide and counsel their children. Children are also being taken to pre-school too early some barely three years old. These children are likely to be faced with issues that affect their social-emotional growth and development. The issues may include sexual abuse, domestic violence and death of parents among others. Since children spend most of their active time in school, the responsibility of guiding and counseling has mainly been left to teachers.

Reviewed literature shows that in Kenya, guidance and counseling programs mainly focus on adults and youth especially in secondary schools. Less guidance and counseling services are also offered in primary schools which act as a link between pre-schools and secondary schools. There is less emphasis on guidance and counseling in early childhood, yet the future of an individual mainly depends on the early years. This implies that if the social emotional issues affecting children at this stage are not dealt with, these individuals may have maladjusted behavior even in later years.

Nakuru municipality is an area with many issues that cause social-emotional problems among children. Studies that have been done to investigate the impact of guidance and counseling in behavior management in Nakuru Municipality mainly focus on secondary schools. Consequently, this study sought to investigated how pre-school teachers use guidance and counseling strategies as a mechanism for shaping young children’s behaviour in Nakuru Municipality.
1.4 Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study was to explore the guidance and counseling strategies used by pre-school teachers in behavior management of pre-school children in Nakuru Municipality, Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study
(i) To explore the social-emotional behavioural problems experienced among pre-school children.

(ii) To establish causes of social-emotional problems among pre-school children from pre-school teachers’ perspective.

(iii) To find out the guidance and counseling strategies used by preschool teachers in managing children’s social-emotional behavioural problems.

(iv) To establish challenges preschool teachers encounter while dealing with children having social-emotional behavioural problems.

1.6 Research Questions
(i) What are the social-emotional behavioural problems experienced by pre-school children?

(ii) What is the teachers’ perception on the causes of social-emotional problems among pre-school children?

(iii) What strategies of guidance and counseling are used by preschool teachers to manage pre-school children’s social-emotional problems?
(iv) What challenges do pre-school teachers encounter when dealing with children having social-emotional problems?

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

The study was conducted using the assumptions that all teachers were trained to teach in pre-schools. All pre-school teachers had attained some skills on guidance and counseling and that guidance and counseling is useful in behavior management and learning performance among pre-school children.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Since the research was carried out in public pre-schools, the research findings may not be generalized to private schools since they may not be faced by the same issues. Another limitation was the gender of the participants. All participants in the study were females since there were no males in the schools visited. The researcher overlooked the gender issue and just interviewed those present. After reporting to the primary school head teacher, it took long before the researcher was referred to the head teacher of the pre-school section. This however happened in three schools which resulted to a lot of time wasting and the researcher had no control over that. Some teachers were not willing to be interviewed and so the researcher had to deal with those willing.

1.9 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study was carried out in Nakuru Municipality. Out of the five zones central, southern, northern eastern and western the study was carried out in the central southern and eastern zones. These were areas with diverse social-economic status and
hence diverse social-emotional issues. The schools visited were Freehold, Khalsa, St Josephs’, Kenyatta, Jamhuri, Menengai, Kisulisuli and Naka pre-schools. The target population was preschool teachers. Nakuru Municipality was chosen since there are many factors that cause social-emotional problems to pre-school children and consequently affect their behaviour and school performance.

Although there are diverse perspectives to factors that describe and explain behaviour management and learning performance of pre-school children, this study focuses on guidance and counseling. This was informed by the need to update and add value to this area of study given the crucial role guidance and counseling plays in early child development. This focus allowed a more in-depth exploration of the subject matter.

1.10 Significance of the Study

The study was based on the fact that, the findings would provide results that could help the pre-school teachers improve on how they handle children with social-emotional problems. The pre-school teachers could also realize the need for guidance and counseling and hence enroll for the course. Policy makers could also realize the need for guidance and counseling in preschools and hence work towards strengthening it in order to guarantee healthy development in early childhood. This is because the future of the nation, family and church depends on the children. The findings could also be used by future researchers to establish whether the same happens in other areas.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Erik Erikson’s (1956) Theory of Psychosocial Development and Skinner’s Behavioral Theory (1958). Erik Erikson’s theory in this study had an
indication of how social-emotional problems affect children. Skinner’s theory had an indication of how teachers can use reinforcement strategy in shaping behaviour for children. Erikson believed that personality develops in a series of predetermined stages referred to as the eight stages of human personality development. Each stage is regarded by Erickson as a psychosocial crisis, which come up and expects resolution before the next stage can be negotiated successfully. These stages are built upon one another in an almost architectural sense. Each stage builds upon the successful completion of the previous stage. The challenges of stages that are not completed successfully, may be expected to reappear as problems in the future. Successful resolution and learning of each crisis is important if the child is to manage the next and subsequent stages satisfactorily. Just as the foundation of a house is critical to the first floor, which in turn must be structurally fit to support the second storey and so on.

The early stages of life act as the foundation of latter development. One of the themes of Erikson’s philosophy is that failure is accumulative. In many cases a person who has to deal with difficulty circumstances as a child, may not be able to go through latter stages as compared to someone who had less challenges early on. For example, orphans who were not held or stroked as infants have a very hard time getting along with other people when they become adults.

In the pre-school stage (3-5yrs), the primary issue involves the child interacting with others regularly at school. Play at this stage is key as it presents children with the opportunity to explore their interpersonal skills through initiating activities (McLeod, 2013). If this is suppressed through criticisms or control, children develop a sense of
guilt. Too much guilt can make the child not able to interact with others and may inhibit their creativity. This theory has indicated the need to take care of the early developmental stages of a child in order to have a healthy and well adapted adult. For the pre-school children to develop into well adapted adults, guidance and counseling is therefore significant in helping those who may have a feeling of guilt.

**Theory of Operant Conditioning by BF Skinner**

Skinner (1958) developed a theory of operant conditioning which states that all behaviour is directed by reinforcing and punishing organisms. Behaviour modification is a treatment technique based on the work of B.F Skinner. Behaviour modification uses a planned approach that rewards desirable behaviour and “punishes” undesirable behaviour. This technique is effective and is used to treat many disorders such as attention deficit disorder or oppositional deficit disorder. It can therefore be applicable in increasing desirable behaviours in any individual, regardless of operating level (Halper, 2010). Therefore behaviour that is positively reinforced or rewarded over time will repeat itself and hence lead to desired behaviour becoming a habit.

Grace (2016) in her study reports that today some childhood authorities have a tendency to offer positive reinforcement in order to encourage good behaviour and using negative reinforcement techniques only as a last option. These are healthier ways which provide children with appropriate behaviour guidelines while allowing them their dignity. Basing on the operant conditioning theory, guidance and counseling of pre-school children should focus on rewarding positive behaviour and the child learning the consequences of negative behaviour. This would go a long way in changing maladaptive behaviour of children and hence improve on their school
performance. The two Theories were used to indicate that, children having social-emotional problems due to inability to go through the developmental stages successfully can be helped through behaviour reinforcement.

1.12 Conceptual Frame work

This study was based on the concept that guidance and counseling services have a positive impact on a child’s social-emotional behavioural problems which facilitates the child’s optimum development and school performance. Independent variables were measured by observing behaviour like bullying, aggressiveness, and inability to play and also by the strategies teachers used like individualized or group counseling. Dependent variables were measured by change of behaviour and school performance. Extraneous variables such as relationships with the parents/care givers also have an impact on the child’s social-emotional development and school performance. However this did not focus on these variables.

Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework showing social emotional behavioural problems, guidance and counseling strategies and proper development and performance

- Social and emotional behavioural problems
  - Aggression,

- Proper development and performance
  - Productive behavior

- Relationship with parents and care givers.

Key
- Non-study variables
- Study variables
1.13 Operational definitions of terms

**Behaviour management** - This refers to the way pre-school teachers’ help the children change their socially unacceptable behavior e.g through reinforcement.

**Guidance and Counseling strategies** - ways used in helping the child understand his/her problem, explaining the danger of an action and consequence, taking child through activities to change from bad behaviour e.g talking to individuals or groups.

**Maladaptive behaviours** - Challenging behavior like aggression, bullying, rudeness, or unable to deal with ordinary social situations or relationships.

**Optimum development** - Development in the best way possible, both socially and academically e.g. ability to interact with others and read respectively.

**Performance** - The ability to do well in the child’s learning process e.g. ability to concentrate, read, write or ability to identify colours.

**Pre-school children** - This refers to nursery school children between ages 3-6 years.

**Social-emotional problems** - Issues that affect children socially and emotionally like violence, sexual abuse etc.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction
The study investigated the role of guidance and counseling on behavior management and school performance of pre-school children. This chapter discusses, social-emotional problems of pre-school children, their causes, guidance and counseling services, optimum development and performance of pre-school children and challenges faced by teachers.

2.2 Social-emotional Behavioural Problems among Pre-school Children
There are many factors that affect social emotional development of young children. If such children are not helped at an early age, it may lead to adults who are not well adjusted in life (Meggitt, 2006).

Some of the social-emotional behavioural problems are bullying, aggression, inability to play, inability to sleep, low self-esteem, excess fear and problems in concentration in class. Others include: depression, anxiety, withdrawal symptoms, being scared of going to school, being clingy and whiny and complains of headaches and stomachaches for no good reason.

Children who begin school with numerous symptoms of Opposition Deviant Disorders (ODD) and Conduct Disorders (CD) run a risk of developing additional difficulties that will aggravate the ones they exhibit already. Those who act aggressively towards peers, or regularly disturb class and other group activities, find themselves quickly rejected and cut off from normative influence of other children.
that is essential to the development of many social and emotional skills (Glassberg, Hooper & Matttison, 1999).

Stewart (2011) reports that, bullying among pre-school children is more common than people think. Since the behavior is linked to older children, it is often ignored during the early years when it’s difficult to tell the difference between normal social experimentation and arising bullying behaviour. Bullying can cause extensive fear, anxiety and stress in young children. Bullying is not just restricted to physical aggression; it can be through social rejection such as a group of girls refusing to play with another child repeatedly, or through verbal abuse such as ridicule.

Nordhagen, Nielsen, Stigum and Kohler (2005) carried out a cross-sectional comparative study in Nordic children and their families health and welfare. They interviewed parents of 3000 children who were randomly selected. Their findings were as follows: 7.2% cases of bullying were reported in Sweden while 20% in Finland and Denmark. They also found out that bullying was more among boys while children of single parents and those of low education had high risks.

An indication that children are stressed and overwhelmed is when they display the following behaviours on a regular basis: being overactive, solve problems by hitting, biting, grabbing or pushing. Others include: having tantrums, cry frequently and cannot be soothed easily, cling to adults and do not play with other children (Watson, 2007).

Stewart (2011) further indicates that, a child may be undergoing bullying if he suddenly gets scared to go to school, complains of stomachaches or headaches and is clingy and whiny for no apparent reason. If the child talks of particular children doing
unpleasant things to him, avoids eye contact when asked about school and has trouble concentrating.

Kariuki, Abubakar, Kombe, Kazungu, Odhiambo, Stein and Newton (2015), carried out a epidemiological study in Kilifi county Kenya to investigate Burden and risk factors of behavioural emotional problems among children. They found out that out of 3273 children assessed, 13% had social-emotional behavioral problems. Those with externalizing problems were 10%, while internalizing problems were 22%. This study however sought to explore the social-emotional behavioural problems experienced among pre-school children in Nakuru municipality.

2.2.1 Causes of Social-emotional Problems among Children

Meggitt (2006) in her study reports, some of the causes of behavioral disorders include divorce and separation, sexual abuse, exposure to violence, poor parenting or care-giving and bereavement among others. Nagpa and Divya (2014) mention some of the reasons why some children show social-emotional problems as: unhappy families, tension at home, constant fight among parents and broken homes. Others are death of or separation from a parent, abuse at home or school and parental depression and stress.

Early childhood is a time of great opportunity but also makes children easily exposed to negative experiences like abusive or inappropriate care giving, chaotic or inappropriate environments and insufficient nurturing. These adverse effects could also be due stressed, inexperienced, pre-occupied, isolated or ill-informed, caregivers. Other causes could be parental substance misuse and or alcoholism, family violence or social segregation (Perry, 2004).
Divorce and separation are on the increase these days. When parents’ divorce and separate the main culprit is the child. Parents sometimes have a task over who will have custody of the child. The child is never given a choice as to which parent to go with. This can affect the child emotionally and the self-esteem may be lowered. This can also result to outbursts of anger, acting out in school, mistrust, anxiety and loneliness. They may also become aggressive and destructive, refuse to go to school or run away from home (Amato, 2001).

In the event of marriage ending in divorce, all members connected to that relationship are affected and mostly the children. Because of their immaturity and innocence, children are unable to process stressful events unlike adults. Hence children resort to others ways of expressing their confusion and heartache. These reactions and behavior usually ranges from delicate to eruptive (Ebling, Pruett & Pruett 2009). Hence, the need for guidance and counseling in pre-schools.

Medical and human rights in Kenya are reporting an increase in cases of domestic violence which has been a long-standing problem especially in rural areas (Voice of America, 2010). Where there is violence, the children are prone to abuse. They experience post-traumatic disorder such as aggression, conduct disorders, low self-esteem, lack of attachment to those who are close and depression. This post-traumatic stress triggers or aggravates their disruptive behavior (Ford, Racusin, Davis & Thomas 1999)

Marriages marked by long-standing open conflict and hostility are “intact” structurally but provide unfavorable environments to raise children. In homes where
conflict is high, children experience many problems of the same nature just like children with divorced parents (Amato 2005).

Children from divorced families are on “average” worse off as compared to children who live in complete families. Such children have, more behavior problems, difficult in school, more negative self-concept, more problems with other children and trouble getting along with their parents (Hughes, 2009). Violence has a modeling effect where boys model their fathers while girls model passivity. The boys, may become abusive husbands or aggressive to the opposite gender.

Boys in divorced families tend to be less able to adjust problems more than girls. Children quite often live with their mother after family disruption and in the case of boys, loss of contact with the father could lead to adjustment problems. Boys tend to receive less support from parents and others when exposed to conflict as compared to girls because they are believed to be tougher (Amato, 2005).

Children in divorced families tend to develop less strong emotional bonds with mothers and fathers as compared to their peers in intact homes. Differences in the well-being between children with divorced parents and those with parents who remain together continue well into adulthood. Overall there is strong evidence that a wide range of problems in adulthood is linked with divorce during childhood (Amato 2005).

Poverty, especially when severe and long term has a negative effect on social and emotional relationships of children. Poverty is associated with a number of variables often implicated in development of conduct disorders. Richards (2013) reports that the consequences of poverty like lower academic achievement and delayed development
among others make a child to lag behind. Children are at risk of developing both emotional and behavioural problems that may include disobedience, impulsiveness and difficulty getting along with peers.

Violence causes overstimulation of fear and helplessness, which can be misinterpreted as being reliable or being obedient to the parents. This experience becomes the recipe for trauma in children. Trauma becomes possible when harm and pain is more intentional (Amato, 2001). Subjection to violence in the home or the community has a negative impact on young children’s social and emotional development in the first five years (California Child Care Health Org. 2006).

In many societies children who have regular access to video games, movies and television are exposed more to high levels of violence under the disguise of entertainment. This kind of exposure has a negative effect in childhood (Farver & Frosch, 1996). Children who have regular exposure to violence tend to be more violent than peers without such exposure. Probably because they see others relying on force to solve problems and tend to imitate them believing that violence offers a better solution to difficulties. In addition, children who are exposed to violence directly or as by-standers may suffer from posttraumatic stress that triggers or aggravates their disruptive behavior (Ford et al., 1999).

Different parenting practices are associated with different outcomes. Specifically parents who are harsh and physically aggressive are likely to have children who are also aggressive, whereas those who show little affection (without being particularly harsh in their discipline) are likely to have children who are oppositional (Stormshak, 2000).
Physically abused or neglected children have a higher probability of becoming aggressive than those who are mistreated, even when possible mediating variables such as socio-economic status are considered (Widom & Maxfield, 2001). Nagpa and Divya (2014), reports that, one of the causes of social and emotional problems among children is abuse at home or school.

Experiencing the death of a parent during childhood puts children at risk for diverse problems, though much less compared to those born out-of-wedlock birth or divorce parents. They also display problems in concentration. McDowell and Futris (2001) reports that, children’s reaction to loss and grief is when they display signs of physical and emotional disturbances which may include loss of appetite, stomach upset, inability to sleep, anxiety and depression. Loss or separation from parents is a cause of social and emotional problems among children (Nagpal & Divya 2014).

Amato (2005) carried out a study on children in U.S to investigate the effect of death of parents on children. He found that, children whose parents had died scored lower on several forms of well-being than children living with both parents. However, children whose parents had died scored significantly higher on measures of well-being than those with divorced parents. Increase in symptoms of depression during adulthood was linked to all causes of separation from parents during childhood, including parental death.

Nagpa and Divya (2014) say that, some of the causes of social and emotional problems among children include lack of friends and ridicule by other children. They also start school with a lack of basic knowledge and skills that are essential to early school success (Glassberg, Hooper & Matttison, 1999). Children separated from their
close members when they are too young can easily develop anxiety, weight loss, withdrawal, psychomotor retardation, sleeplessness, and also develop an inability to play and succeed in anything they start. They lack emotional responsiveness and they never seem to enjoy themselves (Richards, 2013).

There are many reasons why children may go through lack of emotional and social well-being. A child who has poor mental and physical health will be challenged in this respect. Bruce and Meggitt (2006), argue that when children experience emotional, physical and sexual abuse or neglect over time, this then has great damaging effect on their emotional lives and their social relationships. When children fail to feel that they belong to a family, a community or an early childhood group, they often lack the feeling that they are contributing.

Disruptive and antisocial behavior problems are also linked to the area in which children live and to the school they attend. Based on Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological model, neighborhoods are thought to be part of a child’s micro-system. As such, neighborhoods become important developmental contents for children’s early socialization and social-emotional functioning.

Severe aggression and delinquency are more frequent in urban than in rural environment and tend to be concentrated in underprivileged neighborhoods where chronic social problems regularly disrupt the lives of children and families. Children who exhibit high levels of physical aggression in pre-schools are most likely at high risk of engaging in violent behaviors as adolescents (Tremblay, 2002). Such environments are particularly likely to give rise to serious and violent offences which are often associated with onset of conduct disorders (Loeber & Farington, 1998).
Children who live in underprivileged neighborhood run an increased risk of developing disruptive and antisocial behaviours and much earlier than those raised in more privileged neighborhoods (Kupersmidt et al., 1995). Children who display high levels of physical aggression in pre-school are most likely at risk of taking part in violent behavior as adolescents. Unlike their peers, children who are traumatized may have low ability to bear the usual expectations and stress of school, home and social life. The traumatized children are easily provoked to anger, not well prepared to learn from social, emotional, and other life experiences (Perry, 2004).

Parental substance abuse and dependence is detrimental to the physical and social-emotional well-being of children. It can cause chaos and unpredictability in home environments, leading to child mistreatment. Parents do not take their children’s physical and emotional needs as a priority as compared to activities related to obtaining, use, or recovering from the use of drugs and alcohol (Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, Children’s Bureau, ICF International, 2009).

Children whose parents abuse drugs are often left alone for extended periods and hence they feel unimportant and rejected. They are more likely to experience low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and difficulty in forming adult relationships (Promises Addiction Treatment centers, 2014). The time spent recovering from hangovers or withdrawal symptoms can leave parents with less energy or time to take care of their children properly.

These children do not often receive appropriate supervision neither have their basic needs met regularly (Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, Children’s Bureau, ICF International, 2009). Nagpal and Divya (2014) report that one of the causes of social
and emotional problems among children is use of drugs, tobacco and or alcohol from a very early age.

According to Green (2015), parents who abuse drugs often fail to provide stable home environments and nurturing relationships which are important factors in the development of a child. Children are at risk of abusing drugs if their parents abuse drugs often. This is because they view use of drugs as a normal practice or because they might think they need to turn to substance abuse to deal with social or emotional problems.

Exposure to more stressful experiences and circumstances is higher in children living with single parents as compared to those living with both parents. The number of transitions that children go through while growing up (including multiple parental divorces, remarriages, co-habitations) is a sure predictor of their emotional and behavioral problems as adolescence and young adults (Wallerstein, 2003).

Like children with divorced parents, those who grow up with a single parent and particularly those born out of wedlock are more likely to experience a variety of behavioural, emotional and cognitive problems than those living with both parents. Growing up in a single parent household may cause emotional effects of abandonment, loneliness, sadness, and difficulty in connecting with others (Marnie, 2014). As compared to children growing up in stable two parent families, children born out of wedlock may like reach adulthood with less education and have more troubled marriages. They may also experience higher rates of divorce at adulthood and report more symptoms of depression (Teachman, 2004).
Mukuria (2006) reports that education services for children having special needs and more so those with emotional and behavioral problems are not adequately addressed. Studies done in Kenya on children have mainly considered those with special needs like physical and mental disabilities. Little appears to have been done on social emotional problems of pre-school children. There was therefore need to study the causes of social emotional problems and their impact on pre-school children. Hence this study sought to establish the causes of social-emotional behavioural problems among pre-school children in Nakuru Municipality.

2.3 Guidance and Counseling Strategies on Behaviour Management and Learning Performance

Guidance and counseling aims to help students achieve success and happiness within their social and educational context. For young children this involves getting adapted to the educational environment and addressing any family and social problems that may interrupt the child’s psychological health (Marconi, 2016).

Guidance and counseling will inform one of the differences in children and how to recognize special needs in their learning style. For example a behavioral problem may be a sign of a learning disability or a learning difference in giftedness (Matteson, 2016). The process of helping a child by guiding him to develop productive behavior must commence early in life. This ensures that, as he grows up he learns unconsciously and consciously desirable behavior appropriate for a perfect and responsible person (Oniye, 2009).

Nagpa and Divya (2014) reports that, children with social emotional problems show violent, self-injurious, aggressive, shy and withdrawn behavioral symptoms. Thus it
becomes important to use methods that will help improve their behavior. Use of rewards is one of the most common way by which their behavior can be improved. Examples of rewards used are like: material rewards, social rewards such as a smile, nod, hug, pat or kiss. Others include verbal reward like appreciating a child’s good work, saying ‘well done’, 'keep it up.

Teachers are the appropriate people to deal with children at this age as they can recognize their problems and refer them for early intervention. In school, the teachers need to measure the children’s behavior, in order to know why they behave the way they do (Lunenburg, 2010). It is important for teachers to know about the parents because this will give them an insight to the problem faced by the children. Intervention is to arrest or reduce causes of emotional imbalances, arrest dysfunction, intervene for biological causes of impairment and in this case parental education and counseling is paramount.

Guidance services provided at pre-school period are of particular importance as this education period is the first stage in the school life of children. It could contribute to the development of either positive or negative attitudes towards school and holds the risk that children can generalize this attitude in their future school life (Akgun, 2008). The successful school counselor is the one who takes up the role of a caring parent, empathetic and concerned. He should also be able to listen to and be trusted by children and with time make a difference in their lives (Marconi, 2016).

The responsive service component of the school counselor’s role provides individual and/or small group counseling for children (Desoto independent School District, 2014). For example if a child’s behavior is interfering with his or her achievement, the
counselor will observe the child in class. He will then consult the other teachers and come up with a plan to address the behavioral issues and then work together to implement the plan.

Additionally, school counselors may address the children’s needs by leading classroom guidance on a number of topics such as personal/social issues. The counselors will also create groups to address common issues among children such as divorce or death. Counseling may address stress and anxiety, anger management, withdrawal, obsessive behaviors and depression (Mack, 2011).

Many a time, the teacher may pay more attention to the child’s problem in learning and fails to understand the child’s emotional problem may increase further due to lack of attention. Thus, a teacher should try to recognize, separate, and deal with both the academic and social problems adequately and effectively. When this happens the problem faced by the child can be focused upon and the child be actually helped (Nagpal & Divya 2014). Encouraging young children’s social-emotional development is a major role of any early childhood programme. This is usually done by providing warm, positive relationships with teachers and other adults including parents. Also encouraging children make friends with peers and developing their abilities and interests (National Center on Quality Teaching and learning, 2014).

Early childhood counselors exclusively practice helping pre-school children going through diverse problems with their families. Some concentrate in assisting with mental or physical disabilities while others help with psychological issues, like reoccurring nightmares or repeated thumb sucking. Encouraging young children’s social-emotional development is crucial for three reasons that are interrelated.
Positive social-emotional development offers a base for life-long learning. Later academic success in school is related to emotional self-regulation and social skills. Prevention of future social and behavioral problems is more effective than later remediation (National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning, 2014).

Social-emotional problems among pre-school children have a great impact on their behavior and performance. If these problems are not solved the future of the child is also affected since he/she grows up being emotionally unstable. The young people are the hope, strength and continuity of any generation (Maingi, 2008). The stability of society values, practices and beliefs depend on the way a generation raises its children (Kemmer, 1992).

When children are helped to recognize and regulate their emotions, their later learning and social-emotional competence improves as well as school success. Teaching parental skill to parents and social-emotional skills to children lowers the chances of problem behaviours occurring while increasing school achievement (Health Development Summit, 2009). Guidance counselors need to be equipped with skills to design comprehensive guidance programs, provide counseling services and use assessment procedures.

Dunlap, Hemmer and Strain (2003) came up with a teaching pyramid for supporting social competence and thus preventing behaviour challenges in young children.
Building positive relationships is the basis of an effective early childhood programme. It should occur between children and teachers as well as with other professionals and families. It helps every child feel accepted and enables children learn to communicate as well as get along with others. It also encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among individuals of all ages. It also provides conducive environment in which children can learn and practice befitting behaviors either as individuals or as a group.

Creating positive relationships with children enables adults acquire an in-depth understanding of child’s background, preferences and interests. Creating relationships
with family members opens up lines of communication, support and encourages parental involvement. Parents also learn from family members about their children, home and family life and assure parents about confidentiality and privacy. As parents build a positive relationship with children, their impact in children’s behavior grows significantly. Children develop confidence, positive self-concept and a sense of safety that assists decrease challenging behavior (Dunlap et al., 2003).

Teaching strategies should focus on prevention and teaching appropriate skills. Rather than trying to get children stop using challenging behaviours, the focus should be on teaching them new skills (Hemmeter, Corso & 2006). Teachers can prevent challenging behavior, when they understand the risk and protective factors in children’s lives. They can also create a receptive learning environment, program and social context Dunlap et al., (2003). More intensive intervention is required for children who show dangerous patterns and a potential for more serious violence.

Promoting young children’s social-emotional development and learning is a major role of all early childhood programs. The programme includes providing warm, positive relationships with teachers and adults, and enabling children make friends with peers and developing their abilities and interests (National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning 2014).

A teacher counselor plays a big responsibility in helping children. The counselor will help a child who is being bullied cope with it by giving him strategies and ideas. This will make the child feel lonely and do away with the fear of going to school. The counselor will talk with the bully and examine the reason for his behaviour. A teacher counselor is an extremely necessary part of any school administration in the
elementary, middle-school and high school levels. Since they administer guidance of both their personal and school life, they are advocates in the students’ whole being (The online Teacher Resource 2012).

However some children will continue to display behaviour problems occasionally despite ones concerted efforts in using consistent applications of interventions and techniques. One cannot satisfy all the child’s needs at all times. Thus one may need to seek for further interventions and advice from professionals. There is increasing evidence that early intervention has mid-to-long term effects on school achievements retention in grade and special education placement (Reynolds, 2000).

Several studies dealing with guidance and counseling in primary and secondary schools have been carried out in Kenya. Njoka (2011) in her study on guidance and counseling in Kenyan public primary schools found that there is need for change in the management of guidance and counseling. Disiye, kodero and Ongati (2011) in their study on influence of peer counseling on social adjustment and academic performance of secondary students found that, the peer-counseled students were better socially adjusted and performed better academically than non-peer counseled students. Gataby (2014) carried out a study on role of guidance and counseling in addressing psychological needs of orphaned pupils in Nakuru municipality. This study however sought to investigate the guidance and counseling strategies used by pre-school teachers in managing behavioural problems among pre-schools in Nakuru municipality.
2.7 Challenges Faced by Teachers in Providing Guidance and Counseling

Pre-school teachers identify disruptive behavior as the main challenge they face in their behaviour management. Trying to get to know the details of every child and work towards bringing out the best out of them (Ryder, 2009). Another challenge is language of instruction. Pre-school is a primetime for language development and since language is a social instrument, benefits in one area are often related to benefits in the others. Others include: teacher-child ratio which is usually high, children bullying others, not willing to share and children who regularly act out (National Institute for Early Education Research, 2014).

Another major challenge for teachers is students who are usually emotionally disturbed since they may face misunderstandings and preconceived notion when they enter a classroom (Mauro, 2014). Many teachers feel ill prepared to handle children who regularly act out due to the fact that “they do not have adequate tools in their toolbox” (National Institute for Early Education Research, 2014).

A particular challenge for teachers is that some children from underprivileged environments usually lack home experiences that encourage initiative. Their verbalizations and physical explorations may have been slowed down rather than encouraged (National Center on Quality Teaching and learning, 2014). As a result, these areas of their development may lag behind significantly and require proper intervention in pre-school.

When some children become withdrawn, sad or aggressive, the teachers take a lot of instructional time to manage these behaviours. These disruptions usually have a ripple effect on all the children (Mbae, 2013). The mode of communication with the parents
is another challenge teacher’s face yet it is very important since children learn more effectively when communication exists between school and home (Ryder, 2009). No local studies seems to have been done on challenges faced by pre-school teachers hence this study sought to establish the challenges pre-school teachers face when dealing with children having behavioural problems in Nakuru Municipality.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction
In this chapter the research design, variables and location of the study are described. In addition the population, sampling techniques including the sample size and data collection strategies are outlined. Finally data analysis procedures are described with special attention given to explanations of strategies for ensuring validation and reliability.

3.1 Research Design
This study adopted a survey research design. This design was found appropriate since it tried to answer questions that are descriptive in nature concerning guidance and counseling strategies and behavior management in pre-schools. Survey method was also found to be suitable because a lot of information concerning independent and dependent variables was collected (Gall, Borg & Gall, 2007). Through descriptive research, one obtains rich and accurate information about the status of a phenomenon and thus becomes able to draw valid general conclusion from the facts discovered (Koul, 1993 & Kothari, 2003).

3.2 Location
The study was conducted in Nakuru municipality as it presented a cosmopolitan environment with diversity in terms of the socio-cultural background of the children to be studied. The findings would therefore provide a fair level of generalization. Being an urban setup, it presents a concentration population and therefore occurrence of issues like divorce, absent parents and violent neighborhoods that cause social and
emotional problems among children. Nakuru Municipality is divided into five zones Eastern, Northern, Western, Central and Southern.

3.3 Variables

3.3.1 Independent Variables

The independent variables of this study were social-emotional behaviours of children measured by indicators like aggression, bullying and stealing. The independent variables also included guidance and counseling strategies measured by the way teachers deal with children having social-emotional behaviour problems like talking to them as individuals or groups.

3.3.2 Dependent Variables

The dependent variables were proper development and school performance like change in behavior and enhanced child’s school achievements. These were measured by indicators like ability to play, happiness and attentiveness in class. The non-study variables were relationship with parents and other care givers.

3.4 Target Population

The target population was 163 pre-school teachers in 58 pre-schools. Nakuru Municipality has been divided into 5 educational zones. Table 3.1 shows the zones, number of schools and pre-school teachers.
Table 3.1: Public ECD Schools in Nakuru County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>No. of schools</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Eastern</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Northern</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Western</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Central</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Southern</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nakuru Municipality Early Childhood Education Office-2012

3.5 Sampling technique and sample size

Purposive sampling was done to select zones, schools and number of teachers to be interviewed. This sampling method was used since the researcher used her own judgment when choosing members to participate in the study. This technique was utilized to choose schools from both middle and low income areas. Some of the characteristics that were considered when sampling teachers were, teaching experience, level of education and training. This helped the researcher have a deeper understanding of whether these factors influence the way teachers deal with children having social and emotional problems.

3.5.1 Sample size
Table 3.2: Sample size for schools and teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Sample schools</th>
<th>Sample teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nakuru Municipality Early Childhood Education Office-2012
A total of 16 teachers from eight schools were sampled which was a representation of two teachers per sampled school. This sample size was deemed adequate to provide answers to the research questions. Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick, (2008) say that, qualitative research data collection methods take a long time, therefore data is usually collected from a smaller sample than would be in the case of quantitative approaches.

### 3.6 Construction of Research Instruments

Interview schedules and observation checklist were used to gather information on the guidance and counseling strategies and behavior management in pre-schools.

#### 3.6.1 Interview Schedule

Structured and unstructured interviews were conducted in-order to get in-depth information. Structured interviewed gave data in form of frequencies and percentages while unstructured gave verbatim information. The interview form used in this study was developed by the researcher. It included 12 open-ended questions regarding social-emotional problems among children, causes of social-emotional behaviour problems, importance of guidance and counseling on development, behaviour and academic performance, indicators of change and challenges teachers face. In-depth interviews provided detailed data which is not possible to get using a questionnaire (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). In this case there was need to get in-depth information about how pre-schools teachers identify children who have guidance and counseling needs and how they deal with such children. Kathuri and Pals (1993) report that an interview provides the option of elaborating or clarifying items after they are presented to the respondent.
3.6.2 Observation Checklist

A checklist was used to observe behavior problems like bullying, disobedience, aggression, isolation and rudeness. It was done both in the classroom and during outdoor activities and the observed behaviour used to reinforce the information given by teachers during the interview. Koul (1993) argues that observations enable the observer to code and record behavior at the time of its occurrence. Observation was used to identify children with maladaptive behavior and how teachers deal with them.

3.7 Pilot Study

Pilot study was done in one pre-school in the eastern zone where two teachers were interviewed and children observed. This was to establish validity and reliability of the research instruments. After the pilot study, the research instruments were adjusted to include questions and contents more relevant to the purpose of the study.

3.7.1 Validity of the Instruments

Methodological triangulation was done by using interviews and observation checklist. To ensure content validity of the results of the study the researcher also checked the data a number of times to see if the constructs, categories, explanations and interpretations made sense. The participants in the study were engaged in confirming whether their views have been represented in the final account. Lincoln and Guba as cited by Woolfolk (2000), describes member or participant checks as “the most important way for establishing credibility” in a study. It involves taking data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so that they can confirm whether the information and narrative account they gave is credible.
Rich and thick descriptions were used to provide as much details as possible. Rich description enables the readers to make appropriate decisions concerning the relevance of the findings to other situations or similar contexts (Woolfolk, 2000). Lecturers in Early childhood department also validated the instruments.

3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability was enhanced by taking more time in the field with the participants. This was reinforced by rechecking to confirm the information given by writing and reading to the participants the answers they gave. The instruments were also consistent in the collection of the data from all the teachers.

3.8 Data Collection Techniques

Before data collection was done, the researcher obtained a research permit from the office of the National Council of Science and Technology.

Data collection was carried out by use of interview and observation schedules. Interviews lead to the collection of first-hand information and also lead to a rechecking and confirming the responses from the interviewees and facilitate clarifications of questions, so that complete information is obtained (Nassiuma & Mwangi, 2004).

The researcher used both structured and unstructured non-directive interview to interview the participants, in-order to get in-depth information. Koul (1993) points out that the non-directive interviews permit much freedom to the interviewees to talk about the problem under investigation. Probing is important in less structured interviews since it acts as an instrument for eliciting and encouraging further information Nachmias and Frankfort (1996).
Individual teachers were interviewed to obtain information concerning the guidance and counseling strategies they use with children in pre-schools, children’s social-emotional problems and the challenges they face when dealing with such children. The researcher made visits to various pre-schools and the head teachers and pre-school teachers informed of the research and their contributions. The researcher did not have research assistants and so she carried out the interviews by herself.

The interviews took place at each of the seven schools in a quiet and comfortable environment. Some teachers were interviewed in the classrooms while the children were out playing. Others were interviewed outside the classrooms while others preferred being interviewed in the head teacher’s office. A single question was asked at a time to do away with any unnecessary burden of interpretation on the interviewees (Woolfolk, 2000). Open-ended questions were also asked to avoid predetermining answers and allow room for the interviewees to respond in their own terms. Probing and follow up questions were asked to get deeper responses to questions in order to increase the richness of the data obtained. It also gave cues to the interviews about the level of response that is desired. The researcher made notes and recorded the conversations for further follow up.

Observation was done after the interview during both classroom and outdoor activities. This was to reinforce the information given by the teachers during the interview. Direct observation was done since the researcher had a more detached perspective that is watching rather than taking part. The following was observed among children as indicators of social and emotional problems, inability of some
children to play with others, sadness, untidiness and presence of ringworms on their bodies.

3.9 Data Analysis

A descriptive analysis was employed to provide deeper insight into the research questions. Descriptive statistics was used to generate frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data was categorized into themes and analyzed thematically alongside descriptive statistics. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) argue that qualitative approach gives the respondents a chance to state their problems the way they understand them. It also helps them take part in seeking solutions to those problems as well as in effecting such solutions. Since most of the data was in form of text, content analysis was involved where data was analyzed by coding and organizing them into themes and concepts. In qualitative research, data analysis and data collection are done simultaneously (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The methods of analyzing described data in this research involved managing the data by hand. The first step involved identifying themes and categories that arise from the data. This led to identifying themes in the interview data and attempting to confirm, verify and qualify them by checking through the data. The process was repeated so as to identify further themes and categories (Burnard et al., 2008). In order to do this, once the interviews had been recorded word by word, the researcher read each transcript and made notes or short phrases at the margin of words that sum up what was being said in the text. This is known as open coding.

The second stage involved the researcher collecting together all the words and phrases from all the interviews onto a clean set of pages. They were then read through and
duplications crossed out. This is done by repeated readings through interviews, field notes and text to identify information relevant to the research questions (Woolfolk, 2000). The third stage involved looking for information of similar categories. These categories were edited and reduced in number by grouping them together. Then each category was allocated its own identity, and data that fitted under a certain category marked. Research questions were also reviewed comparing them against the information collected; identifying any gaps or missing data by ascertaining if data collected had answered each research question. The last stage was representing the account or reporting the findings. The major themes are represented in the findings section supported by quotes of the participants.

3.10 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

Once graduate school had granted permission to proceed with the research, the researcher sought research permit from the office of the National Council of Science and Technology. The researcher then proceeded to the county’s education office to inform them of the intended research work. Visits were made to various schools and the head teachers and pre-school teachers were informed about the intention to carry out the research. The researcher explained to the pre-school teachers the purpose of the study and what was expected of them. The researcher established a rapport by respecting the informant’s opinions, attentive listening and recognizing their responses. The information obtained was treated with confidentiality and the individuals’ privacy was respected and protected. The participants were allowed to participate voluntarily.
4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings, interpretations and discussion of the findings according to the objectives. The study sought to gather information for the following objectives:

i) Explore the social-emotional problems among pre-school children.

ii) Establish causes of the social-emotional problems among pre-school children.

iii) Find out the Guidance and counseling strategies pre-school teachers use on children having social-emotional problems.

iv) Establish the challenges teachers face when dealing with children who have social-emotional problems.

4.2 General and Demographic Information

4.2.1 General Information

The interview took place at each of the seven pre-schools in a quiet and comfortable environment. All the participants were females as there were no male teachers in all the pre-schools visited.

4.2.2 Demographic Data

All teachers interviewed were females as that was the only gender the researcher found in the field. Two teachers had trained up to Diploma level while the others had
trained up to certificate level. Their ages ranged between 25-50 years and their experience was between 5-20 years

**Table 4.1: Age of Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of teachers</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>56.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-50</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 indicates that most of the teachers interviewed were between 26-50 years of age and only one teacher was 25 years of age.

**Table 4.2: Level of Training for Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>level of training</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 shows that most of the teachers had trained up to certificate level while only two had trained up to diploma level. This implies that certificate holders are handling pre-school children in many schools. Shahrum, Farrokhi and Farjian (2012) say that, pre-school teachers in most childhood centers are required to have a diploma in
addition to a certification in early childhood education. More education or training may be required in other settings particularly public schools.

Table 4.3: Teaching Experience for Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching experience in years</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 reveals that most of the teachers had a teaching experience of between 11-15 years and this was an indication that they had a good experience to be able to identify children having social-emotional behaviour problems.

4.3 Social-emotional Behavioural Problems among Pre-school Children

The first objective of the study sought to explore the social-emotional behavioural problems experienced by pre-school children. To gather information for this objective, teachers were first asked to indicate whether they were able to identify children with social-emotional problems.

Findings indicated that all teachers interviewed reported that they were able to identify children with social emotional problems, which prompted the need for guidance and counseling. When asked to mention indicators of social emotional problems among children, they cited the indicators shown in the figure below.
Figure 4.1 shows that the most cited indicator of social-emotional problems as reported by the teachers among pre-school children was inability to play. According to the teachers, if a child was not interacting with others during play time constantly and usually appeared isolated this was an indication that the child had a social-emotional problem. Another indicator was a child appearing moody and worried and consequently isolated. Also if a child was not attentive in class or was being hyperactive or constantly not following instructions from the teacher then they classified that child as having social-emotional problems.

Children who often slept in class during classroom activities especially in the mornings clearly showed there was a problem at home. This as reported by teachers was more common among children from slums especially those whose parents made local brews.

Other indicators mentioned included: aggression towards others, always appearing sickly, rude, untidy, stealing food and pencils. Other children cannot write, eat and
look withdrawn. Those growing in single mother families usually persistently asked why they did not have fathers. One teacher pointed out that:

“Children with social emotional problems usually soil themselves, such children always have a bad odor and frequently visits the toilet especially those that have been sexually abused.” (Teacher School 2).

The ones who were bullies were those who had delayed in joining school and hence were older than the others. Teachers also reported that such children were angry since they were learning together with younger children. Others were street children who had been rehabilitated in Children’s Homes and those from a neighboring country where there was war. In reporting this, one teacher had this to say:

“The bullies we have in our school are those from a neighbouring country where there is war. This is because the children are usually bigger than our children. Some of the boys force others to write for them.” (Teacher School 4).

Use of improper language and unusual prolonged cry were also cited by teachers and it was mainly among children from the slums. In addition, teachers also cited rudeness, and children clinging to the teachers especially at the time of departure for home. Other children appeared drunk especially those from slums, wore torn uniform,
sang songs associated to gangs and broke pencils or repeatedly hit desks with anger. Other children were cited as too fearful and not able to express themselves.

These findings are consistent with findings by California Child Care Health Org.(2006) which reports that, when children display these behaviours on a regular basis, it shows that they are stressed and overwhelmed. They are also overactive; solve problems by biting, hitting, pushing or grabbing. In addition, they have tantrums, do not involve themselves in play with other children, usually cry frequently and cannot be soothed easily. They also cling to adults and become easily frustrated.

4.4 Causes of Social-emotional Problems among Pre-school Children

The second objective of this study sought to establish the causes of social-emotional problems among pre-school children. Findings for this objective are presented in the figure below.

Figure 4.2 Causes of Social Emotional Problems among Pre-school Children
All the teachers interviewed agreed that social emotional problems among pre-school children had underlying causes. Among the causes identified by 100% of the teachers include domestic issues like conflict and separation of parents as a key cause. This seems to affect children from all categories from the rich to the poor. Quarreling and disagreement between parents in the presence of children seems to have a great impact on the social emotional development of children. Most teachers claimed that, conflict leaves children in a state of confusion as they do not understand what is happening and so they appear worried, withdrawn, cry a lot, cling to the teacher, do not participate in play and at times they are aggressive to others.

These agree with the report by Salcido, Weithorn and Behuman (2013), who says that, when children are exposed to domestic violence, it can have negative effect on children. These effects may include behavioral problems such as insomnia, phobias, aggression, depression and low self-esteem. Children exposed to domestic violence may clearly show low levels of empathy, poor problem solving skills and academic performance.

All the teachers (100%) cited poverty as another major cause of problems especially among the less privileged. They said that parents are not able to provide the basic needs for their children like food and clothing. The children therefore usually look unhappy, steal food from others due to hunger, put on torn uniform and are habitually dirty which makes their self-esteem to be low and hence they cannot socialize with others.

This is also in agreement with Richards (2013) who argues that, slowed development and lower academic achievements are some of the effects of poverty and they make a
child to lag behind. Children are at risk of developing both behavior and emotional problems that may include disobedience, impulsiveness, and difficulty getting along with other children.

Neglect was also cited by 46% of the teachers as another major cause of social emotional problems. Parents neglect their duties of taking care and providing for their children mainly due to drunkenness, ignorance or having a don’t care attitude. This makes the children steal food or pencils, always untidy and hungry. This is in agreement with Child welfare Pre-Service Training (2011), who reports that, children who are neglected are easily traumatized, excessively fearful, seem to expect danger, have night terrors, lack self-esteem and lack of confidence.

Death of parents was also cited by 38% of the teachers as a cause of emotional problems which left children confused, since rarely do adults take time to explain to them truthfully what has happened. The children usually appear worried, confused, isolated and cry a lot. This concurs with McDowell and Futris (2001) who say that, children’s reaction to loss and grief show signs of physical and emotional disturbances which may include stomach upset, loss of appetite, inability to sleep, depression and anxiety.

Teachers cited illness of both parents and children especially when it is chronic like in the case of HIV/AIDS as another cause of children’s emotional problems. If the parent is very sick especially bedridden, the child is greatly affected. Though the understanding about the nature of the illness may be limited, the child usually appears worried, isolated, absent minded, and cries a lot. This agrees with findings by Sieh, Meijer, Visser-Melly and Vander (2010), who argue that, children with chronically ill
parents may react to imposed stressors by feeling guilty, isolating themselves and worrying about changes in health of the parents.

In supporting this finding, one teacher reported that:

"If the child is HIV positive he/she is worried of always taking medication without understanding why" (Teacher School 2).

The findings agree with Nagpal and Divya (2014) who say that some of the causes of social and emotional behaviour problems among children are: painful illness and side effects from use of strong medicines.

Drug and alcohol abuse was cited by 30% of teachers as another cause of emotional problems. Drunkenness among parents is an issue that leads to misbehavior which children copy. According to the teachers, children report how their parents especially fathers urinate in their presence beat up everyone in the house or break the door. One teacher reported a child having told her that:

"Baba yangu alikuja kama amelewa akaingia na mlango na akapiga kila mutu mpaka mama yangu” (Teacher School 4). (My father came home drunk, broke the door and beat up everyone including my mother).

Those addicted to drinking also fail to provide the basic needs for their children. The children usually copy their parents like, some become violent to others and also use abusive language that they have picked from their drunken parents. They lack good role models and moral guidance. This agrees with Sheahan (2008) who says that, parents who are addicted to drug abuse are at risk for cutting off a relationship as well
as guardianship with their children. Parental drug addiction is also a form of child abuse. When parents have drug addiction, they are no longer considered responsible caretakers, as they often neglect their children.

Other parents prepare local brews mainly for sale and the people who come to drink it usually behave badly according to teachers. This acts as a source of social emotional problems among children. Some parents even engage in immoral activities as the children watch. For example in one of the schools, the teacher revealed that:

“Some two school boys were trying to rape a girl on their way home since to them that is what they see happening in their homes where parents make local brew” (Teacher School 1).

Teachers also said that, some children were made to sniff glue by their mothers so that they could sleep especially when they arranged to bring their male friends in the house. Such children usually appear drunk in class and cannot concentrate. This is in agreement with Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, Children’s Bureau, ICF International (2009) which highlights that, children who experience drug exposure before or after birth are at risk of having developmental, academic and emotional problems. For example, they are more likely to; exhibit behavior problems and score lower on school achievement tests.

Absence of parents was also cited by teachers as a cause of neglect since they are either too busy or don’t care. This leaves the older children in charge of the younger ones, and at times they are left on their own. In one of the schools a teacher reported that:
“One of the children had spent the weekend at the police station because he had not been picked up from school on a Friday. He did not link up with the older brother and in the process he missed his way home. He was later found and taken to the police station and still the parents had not bothered to look for him”.

(Teacher School 5)

Some children are locked up in the house, they lack freedom and hence they are not able to express themselves in school. The children usually sleep in class, are too hungry to learn, or are too dirty since parents are rarely available to ensure they eat well, sleep the right time or are clean. They also lack parental love and so they usually appear unhappy.

Environment was also cited by 23% of teachers as another major cause of problems especially the slums where a lot of local brew is made. There is a lot of drunkenness, immoral behavior, theft, harassment, and abusive language among others. One teacher said, children from such areas tend to use abusive language and are untidy. Fifteen percent of teachers said they are rude and disobedient, steal even from the teachers and have no respect for adults. Children copy what they see in their environment.

One of the teachers reported one of her children, having told her that:

“Teacher tafadhali kuja kwetu ukunywe chang’aa ili mama yangu aibe pesa kutoka kwa kibeti chako”(Teacher School 4).
(Please teacher come to our home and take the local brew so that mum can steal from your handbag). Having observed his mother steal several times from her drunken customers, the child might have thought it as a good opportunity for the mother to steal from the teacher's handbag if the teacher would go home. Some parents come to school to abuse teachers in the presence of children. In one of the schools a parent threatened to beat up the teacher while she was teaching.

Sexual abuse was also cited by teachers as another cause of social emotional problems especially among children from the slums though the cases were few. The children usually cling to the teacher, they soil themselves, visit the toilet quite often, usually have bad odor and fear to be touched even by the teacher. This is in agreement with Berman (2010) who says that, childhood sexual abuse has long term effects which may include poor body image because the body is the instrument used during the sexual abuse. The child will also experience a feeling of shame, guilt, low self-esteem, depression and isolation.

Single parenthood was also cited as another cause of social-emotional problems. One teacher reported that:

“Children of single mothers usually ask the teachers why they don’t have fathers especially when they hear others talk about their fathers.”(Teacher School 4).

Lacking a father figure according to the teachers seems to affect children more than lacking a mother figure especially among boys. This concurs with Kruk (2014) who argues that, when fathers are absent from home, children are more likely to develop
behavioral problems. Children often use these problems as a shield to protect their deep issues of fear, unhappiness and abandonment. For example, a child living in home where the father is absent is more likely to develop a don’t care attitude with a cocky swagger and mean persona as a cover up that he really wants his father in his life.

Teachers also cited children born out of wedlock and staying with their grandparents as another cause of emotional problems since such children feel rejected by their parents. This is in line with Teachman (2004) who says that, children born out of wedlock and grow up with a single parent, are more likely to experience a variety of emotional, cognitive and behavioral problems just like children with divorced parents. This is compared to children living with married parents who continuously live together.

Parents who are members of gangs were also cited as another cause of emotional problems. One teacher reported that:

"A child used to tuck a stick in his shorts and during outdoor activities; he would point the stick to other children and act as if he is shooting them. When asked why he used to do so, he said “My father puts his gun in his trouser like I have done”.

(Teacher School 4).

Though he might not have seen his father shooting, he may have watched movies involving shooting. Another teacher reported that:
“A child used to sing songs associated with a gang, and when asked where he learned such songs he said his father used to sing the same songs” (Teacher school 4).

Change of teachers was also cited as a cause of distress among children since they take time to adjust and their attentiveness is affected. Children who join school late, and street children is another problem since they usually bully others and command them to write for them or else they are beaten. This is in line with Stewart (2011) who says that, bullying among pre-schoolers is more common than people think. Since the behavior is associated with older kids, it is often ignored during the early years. This is because it’s hard to tell the difference between normal social experimentation and arising bullying behavior. Bullying can cause a lot of stress, fear and anxiety in young kids.

4.5 Strategies teachers used when handling behavior problems

Objective 4 sought to find out the strategies teachers use when dealing with children with social emotional problems. The findings of this objective are presented in the figure below.
An analysis of the strategies teachers use as shown in Figure 4.3 revealed that all teachers invite parents to school as the first step when they notice a behaviour problem in a child to establish the cause of the problem. They talk to the parent and make him/her understand how such issues affect the child. Teachers guide the parents as much as possible on how to take charge of the situation.

These findings concur with findings by (California Child Care Health Org. 2006) who says that, for a child with challenging behaviour it is important for teachers and parents to work together and talk openly. Teachers need to tell parents what is going on in the ECE program. Parents equally need to tell teachers what is going on at home. Teachers also talk to the children as individuals or groups in a way of guiding them while they show such children a lot of love especially where there is no one at home. This is in agreement with Dunlap et al., (2003) who says that, the responsive
service component of the school counselor’s role provides individual and /or small group counseling for children.

For the children who change their negative behaviour, teachers said they praise them and tell others to clap for them and this makes them improve more. This is in line with findings by Nagpal and Divya (2014) who says that, it is important to use methods that will help improve children’s behaviour. One of the ways is by use of verbal reward like appreciating a child’s good work, saying ‘well done’, ’keep it up’ etc. For those who come to school hungry, the teachers ensure the children get porridge from school and also encourage others to share their snacks with them. One teacher reported that:

“I make sure such a child gets porridge and also encourage other children to share their snacks with him/her” (Teacher School 1).

At times the teachers provide them with food and those whose uniforms are torn they buy for them. The teachers also empathize with children by telling the children they at times also go through the same issues as they.

Another teacher reported that:

“I tell such a child who comes to school without breakfast, I also did not take anything in the morning ” (Teacher School 3).

That way the child feel he/she is not the only one who has a problem

Teachers avoid asking children about their parents where possible and instead ask who the child stays with. This way they are sensitive to those children who may have
lost their parents. Teachers also play the role of parents to individual children whose parents are absent or irresponsible and also advise other children to befriend them. In case a child is isolated, they allocate other children to play with him/her. Teachers also take them to the field and play with them. One teacher revealed that:

“If a child does not involve himself/herself in play, I take the child to the field and play with him/her or allocate another child to play with him/her”. (Teacher School 4).

This is in agreement with National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (2014), who says that to develop positive social relationships the teachers need to provide opportunities for children to play and work together.

For those who use abusive language, bully others, or are naughty, the teachers usually ensure they sit near them in class so that they can closely monitor them. One teacher supported this strategy by saying that:

“I usually keep a chair at an isolated place in class where the child sits until he reforms hence others also behave well in fear of isolation” (Teacher School 6).

This is in line with Glassberg, Hooper and Matttison, (1999) who say that, children who act aggressively towards peers, or regularly disturb class and other group activities, find themselves quickly rejected and cut off from normative influence of other children that is essential to the development of many social and emotional skills
For the hyperactive children, teachers give them a lot of work to keep them busy. Another teacher said:

“For a hyperactive child, I ensure he/she stays near me and I give him/her more work than others. That keeps him occupied and reduces the destructive effect of his/her hyperactivity” (Teacher School 5).

This is in line with National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (2014) which reports that, making children more actively engaged is a sure way to prevent challenging behaviour. Some ways of increasing active engagement is by planning open-ended activities and challenging experiences.

The researcher probed the teachers further by asking them whether they offered any specific guidance and counseling strategies when dealing with children having social emotional problems. The tool used to gather the information was as follows:

*Do you use any specific guidance and counseling strategies when dealing with children having social-emotional problems? If so explain.*

Their responses to this probe are presented in the figure below.
Figure 4.4: Use of Guidance and Counseling Services offered by Teachers

Figure 4.4 indicates that only eight percent of teachers said they used guidance and counseling strategies to deal with children with social emotional problems. They said they mainly depended on the free choice lesson in the morning when children do whatever they wished. Most of the children with emotional problems draw and the kind of drawing enable the teachers to have an insight of what is in their minds. One teacher reported:

“If a child uses a dot for example to represent a parent, it shows the parent occupies a very small space in the mind of the child. This may indicate that the parent is unavailable or the child feels unloved. If the drawing is large it shows how the parent is important to the child. If a child draws a person and makes holes on the face of the drawing, then the teacher knows there is a problem.” (Teacher school 2).
A teacher gave an example of the period after post-election violence in 2008. The teacher reported that:

“During the period, children who were affected were mainly drawing fire or people lying, representing the dead bodies they saw. This showed that they were emotionally disturbed by the events they experienced.(Teacher School 2).

Upon probing on whether their training background prepared them to handle children with social emotional challenges revealed that, those teachers who had trained up to certificate level had not received basic guidance and counseling skills. This is further illustrated in the figure below.

**Figure 4.5: Applicability of Training Skills on use of Guidance and Counseling Strategies**

![Pie chart showing applicability of training skills. Yes: 16%, No: 84%]

Figure 4.5 indicates that as much as the teachers received guidance and counseling skills they said the skills they obtained were not applicable in real life experience since everything on the ground was different. One teacher reported:
“We mainly rely on our personal experience to deal with children with social-emotional problems”. (Teacher School 2)

On probing whether teachers recommend issues they are not able to handle for further interventions. Teachers reported that in most cases the issues were referred to the head teacher of the primary school and were therefore not able to follow them from there. One teacher however said:

“I refer the cases to the guidance and counseling teacher of the primary school. Where the parents are extremely difficult, the cases are taken to the children’s department”(Teacher School 5).

All the participants indicated that there were no professionals or school counselors responsible for the guidance and counseling in their schools. None mentioned about referring the cases to professional counselors. According to Schroeder and Gordon (2002), making suitable referrals to professional counselors constitute an important step in diagnosis and treatment process of early childhood disorders and problems.

However, all teachers were in agreement that, if the social emotional problems are not dealt with properly, they have adverse effects not only in childhood but also on the individual’s adulthood. The findings also agree with Oniye (2009), who says that, the process of guiding and helping a child to develop productive behaviour should start early in life so that as he grows up, he spontaneously learns the appropriate behaviour that befits a perfect and responsible individual.

Further probing was done to find out whether the children with social emotional problems presented any change in behaviour or school performance after using the
various strategies. All the respondents said there was a change in both behaviour and school performance. One teacher supported this by saying that:

“The change is usually instant or gradual depending on the cause and the response of the parents. Children whose parents did not change after being talked to by the teachers, rarely changed their behaviour. However children whose parents accepted there was a problem and worked closely with the teachers to help the child, the change was clearly noticed” (Teacher School 1).

Some of the indicators mentioned by teachers as indicators of positive change among children are presented indicated in table below.

Table 4.4: Indicators of behaviour change and school performance among children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in academic performance</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play a lot with peers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appear happy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appear confident</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved hygiene</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved self-esteem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Become more responsible</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in school attendance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4 shows that teachers reported that, those children who usually appeared sad and worried started appearing happy, while those that did not involve themselves in play started playing a lot with peers. Most of the children also showed improvement in school performance. They started concentrating better and doing well in writing, reading and recognizing colours. For those who appeared dirty and untidy had their hygiene improved. One teacher reported such children usually tell her that:

“Teacher, see I am smart, then I praise him/her and the child gets happy for that” (Teacher School 4).

Other indicators mentioned included, children appearing confident and becoming more responsible while allocated tasks to perform. Others had improved self-esteem and also improvement in school attendance since they never wanted to miss school. The results shown above are supported by National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (2014) who reports that social-emotional development is linked to academic success. A child who is socially and emotionally healthy is described as being friendly, having a good peer relationship, confident and able to deal with as well as persevere challenging tasks.

4.6 Challenges the Teachers Face when Dealing with Children having Social-emotional Problems

Objective 4 sought to find out the challenges teachers face when dealing with children having social-emotional problems. The figure below presents findings for the objective.
Figure 4.6 reveals that most of the challenges teachers faced were concerned with parents. Though most parents come to school when requested to, some refused to come however serious the problem of their child was and this made it quite difficult for the child to be helped. Some of those who come refuse to accept that there is a problem. They wonder what business the teacher has in trying to enquire from the child, yet children are the ones who report to the teachers what is happening.

This finding does not agree with Greenspan (2000) who reports that, one of the ways of understanding and helping a child is when the teacher and parent form a team. It is important for the teacher to find out from the parent what may be happening at home that might raise the child’s level of anxiety.
About a quarter of the teachers said some children are reserved or shy to say anything especially those who were sexually abused. Some parents also threaten their children when they report and hence fear the consequences from the parents. They also fear that teachers may tell others what they have said. Some children are too young to understand what is happening in their lives hence they cannot express themselves. Sometimes it is quite difficult in situations where neither parents nor teachers can afford to provide for the child’s needs hence, the child always seems isolated or steals food.

Sometimes parents threaten to beat up the teachers. One teacher had an experience where a mother wanted to beat her up in the presence of the children because of requesting to see the child’s father. The teacher reported that:

“One day a mother stomped into class and asked me, what interest do you have with my husband?” (Teacher School 4).

The teacher however did not know that the parents had separated and the mother was quite bitter. Such an incidence does not only affect the teacher but also the child.

Teachers said that some parents do not report the sexual abuse cases since they are bribed by the perpetrators hence the children end up without even being treated. This in turn makes children withdrawn and produce bad odor may be due to infection. After reporting the difficult cases to the administration, the teachers are not in a position to follow up. This is due to lack of a professional guidance and counseling teacher in the pre-schools. Hence there is need to have a professional guidance and counseling teacher in every public pre-school.
Further probing of the teachers about the interventions laid down on ECE revealed that, all teachers felt less emphasis has been put on guidance and counseling at preschools as compared to primary and secondary schools. Teachers felt that, since early childhood lays the foundation of future life, more emphasis should be put in order to take care of the social emotional problems affecting children at this level. They also felt that, if the children are taken care of, then we would have fewer problems in future. This is in line with Erik Erickson (1956) who argues that, early stages of life forms the foundation of latter development. The challenges of stages not completed successfully may be expected to appear as problems in future.

The researcher also carried out observations to confirm some of the indicators of social emotional problems among pre-school children as mentioned by teachers. Direct observation was used since the researcher was watching instead of taking part. Direct observation tends not to take long as participant observation. Consequently behaviours like bullying, disobedience, rudeness and aggression were not noticed. Teachers confirmed that the children are sensitive to visitors and therefore do not express themselves naturally.

The issues that the researcher observed were, some children who appeared sad and did not involve themselves in play. Upon further probing, the teachers said those were mainly orphans. Children from slums appeared untidy while those from children’s home suffered from ringworms. This could be a sign that they did not receive enough care.

This finding is in line with Give a Child life (2007) whose finding indicates that, there is lack of basic services such as tap water, toilets, or electricity in slums. It is therefore
impossible to keep living spaces clean and because of the dirt, young children frequently suffer from skin conditions.

The study findings indicate that, there are many issues that affect the social-emotional development of the pre-school children, hence children develop social-emotional behavioural problems. Though pre-school teachers use various strategies to help these children change their behaviour, they feel they are not well equipped to handle serious cases. The objectives of the study were however achieved.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction
This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusions as well as the implications of the findings. The section further highlights recommendations and areas that may require further research.

5.2 Summary
The purpose of study was to explore the guidance and counseling strategies pre-school teachers used in managing children’s social-emotional behaviour problems.

The major findings of the study indicated that, pre-school teachers were able to identify children faced by social-emotional problems. These problems included: inability to play, children appearing moody and worried, lack of attentiveness in class and sleeping in class. The causes of these social-emotional problems included: poverty, domestic violence, neglect, illness and death of parents, drug abuse, and environment.

The strategies teachers used in dealing with such children include: involve the parents, talk to the children, empathize with them, provide for their basic needs where possible and praise them. Most of the teachers, however, especially those who had trained up to certificate level did not use specific guidance and counseling strategies when dealing with such children. However, a few teachers who had trained up to diploma level applied guidance and counseling strategies though they felt the training they received in college was not adequate for pre-school children.
For the difficult cases, the teachers referred them to the Head teacher or the guidance and counseling teacher of the primary section. After dealing with such children, there was usually a remarkable change in behaviour and school performance. Children usually involve themselves in play, appear happy, showed improved hygiene, became more responsible, appeared confident and their school attendance improved.

Teachers however were faced with a number of challenges which included, failure of parents to cooperate when called upon or denying there is any problem. Some children did not open up due to fear of the consequences and some parents being hostile to teachers. Some parents were bribed by those who sexually abuse their children and therefore such cases were rarely reported and consequently such children did not get treatment on time.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

Teachers are able to tell when children have social emotional problems whose main causes include domestic conflict among parents, poverty and neglect by parents. Others are illness and death of parents, drug and alcohol abuse, absence of parents, sexual abuse and environment.

Most teachers are able to handle children with social emotional problems. They mainly involve parents in solving social emotional problems of their children by inviting and talking with them. They also talk to the children as individuals or as groups. Those cases beyond them are referred to the head teacher or guidance and counseling teacher of the primary section.
Though most teachers are able to handle children with social emotional problems, they feel they have not received enough training on guidance and counseling and they mainly depend on experience. Hence only a few teachers use guidance and counseling strategies.

The challenges teachers face are mainly from parents who do not co-operate, hence the issues with their children remain unsolved. Most children also fear to open up since they are threatened by parents or the perpetrators. Teachers are also not able to follow up cases they refer to the head teachers.

All teachers felt that less emphasis is given to guidance and counseling among pre-school children as compared to higher levels of development. When most problems are handled well, this results to a great positive change among pre-school children. Change is manifested in improved academic performance, interaction with others, high self-esteem and good health.

5.6 Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

(i) Objective one sought to find out social-emotional behavioural problems experienced by pre-school children. Findings indicated that, all teachers were able to identify pre-school children having social-emotional problems. The indicators were inability to play, appearing moody and worried among others. I, therefore, recommend that guidance and counseling programs should be introduced in pre-schools as has happened in primary and secondary schools. This would ensure that, pre-school children having social-emotional problems
are helped early enough so that they can grow as emotionally stable people. This is because early childhood lays the foundation of future life.

(ii) Objective two sought to establish the causes of social-emotional problems among pre-school children. Findings indicated that some of the causes included, poverty, domestic violence and neglect by parents among others. I, therefore, recommend that, there is need for parents to continuously learn and keep abreast of changes that may affect their children’s social emotional development. This would reduce the causes of social-emotional problems among children. Since poverty is a major cause of social emotional problems among pre-school children, there is need to mobilize low income communities to start income generating activities that could raise their standards of living.

(iii) Objective three sought to find out the guidance and counseling strategies used by teachers in managing children’s social-emotional problems. The findings indicated that, all teachers involve parents, talked to children and praised or motivated them among others. Most of teachers however said the training they received in college is not sufficient. I, therefore, recommend that, the preschool curriculum developers should ensure that all teachers trained at all levels receive adequate guidance and counseling skills. There should be in-service courses for teachers on guidance and counseling. Each public preschool should have a teacher counselor to deal with management of challenging behaviour. Referral Centre’s should be established so that teachers
could refer cases that are difficult to them. This would ensure that, such children get proper help from professional counselors.

(iv) Objective four sought to establish the challenge teachers encounter while offering guidance and counseling strategies to pre-school children. The findings indicated that, the main challenges involved parents. Some parents ignored the teacher’s call, denied there was a problem, or were hostile to the teachers. I therefore recommend that parents should be sensitized about the need to appreciate the teachers, work with them closely and support them fully. This would reduce the challenges that teachers face when dealing with children.

5.7 Recommendations for Further Research

i) Since this study was carried out in one county, there is need for a comparative study to be carried out in other counties for the purpose of generalization at the national level.

ii) A similar study could be carried out in private pre-schools in Nakuru Municipality to establish the guidance and counseling strategies used in behaviour management and school performance of pre-school children.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I : RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

1. Are you able to identify children with social-emotional problems?

2. If so what are some of the indicators of social-emotional problems among children that affect behaviour? Probe on aggression, isolation,

3. What do you think are causes of social-emotional problems among children in your school?

4. What strategies do you use when handling children having social-emotional behaviour problems?

5. Do you use any guidance and counseling strategies when dealing with such children? If so explain

6. After using all the strategies mentioned above, do you notice any change in behaviour and school performance among the children? If so what are the indicators of change?

9. Explain the challenge that you encounter when dealing with children with social-emotional behavioural problems?

10. What do you do with the cases that seem too difficult/or challenging?
11. Do you think the policy makers have put enough emphasis on guidance and counseling among pre-school children? Comment.

12. What are your recommendations concerning Guidance and Counseling in pre-schools?

Thank you for your time.
OBSERVATION GUIDE

The researcher used the observation schedule to gather information that would reinforce the information given by teachers using the questionnaire. The observation was not predetermined but was to be based on behaviours evolving naturally from the children like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling others names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disobedience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not able to involve in play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untidiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX II
RESEARCH PERMIT