FACTORS INFLUENCING PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHILD-CENTRED AND TEACHER-CENTRED TEACHING METHODS IN NAIROBI, KENYA

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Factors influencing pre-school teachers'
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university or for any other award.

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

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my dear parents, Joseph and Magdalene for their great efforts to educate us.
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I wish to acknowledge a number of people whose valued assistance cannot go unmentioned.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisors, Dr. Barbara Koech and Dr. Frank Ingule, for their intellectual stimulation, guidance and encouragement.

I wish to thank my colleagues at Kenyatta University for their moral support. My gratitude's also goes to Sarah, Kerubo and Rose for their assistance in typing. I am grateful to Mr. Bojana for editing and proofreading my work.

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Very special thanks go to my husband and a friend, Moses Mwariri for his unwavering support intellectually, financially and morally, Anastasia for her assistance in the house and Ken for his encouragement.

To you all thank you so much.
ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating factors that influence pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods in Nairobi.

From the literature review, it is clear that proper methods should be used to train children to become inquisitive, independent, emotionally mature and people who can make sound judgments. The recommended teaching method at pre-school level is child-centred teaching method.

This study employed an ex post facto descriptive design using survey and observation research methods. It was conducted in Langata and Makadara educational zones of Nairobi Province, Kenya. The two divisions were cluster-sampled and included all teachers within the randomly selected schools. The population was 447 pre-school teachers, and a sample of 162 was used in this study. The main instrument used was a questionnaire that was divided into 3 parts. The data were analysed using T-test and Spearman Rho Correlation Matrix.

The results revealed that there are two methods used by pre-schools teachers: teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods. Teachers' choice of the teaching methods is influenced by her academic level where the higher the level of the teachers' education, the more favourable they are towards child-centred teaching methods. The results also showed that as teachers' ages advance, teachers' attitudes also change from teacher-centred to child-centred. Training
helps to shape pre-school teachers' attitudes from teacher-centred to child-centred teaching method. The results revealed that trained teachers are more favourable to child-centred teaching methods than untrained teachers who prefer teacher-centred teaching methods. Results showed teachers with more years of experience prefer child-centred teaching methods than teachers with less years of teaching experience.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Pre-school education is tested by how well a child can be integrated in the society in later years of his life. The society expects education to be holistic and to foster intellectual independence and self-reliant persons. Education should also help the individuals to cultivate favourable attitudes towards learning, and other persons within the society. Children are also expected to exhibit those behaviours that are socially accepted. Since creative persons are highly placed in the society, education therefore should help children to develop their creative abilities to the limits (Voster, 2002).

The literature reviewed shows that pre-school teachers have a significant role to play in helping children to become responsible persons (Galinsky, 1986; Munyeki, 1987; Mina, 1990; UNICEF, 1992; Prakash, 1993 and Ryan, 1998). They all agree that the exposure the child has determines the level of achievements in school and in the future. Their performance and standard of attainment measures the quality of early childhood education received in pre-school. (Witt, 2002). Children’s level of emotional stability, intellectual flexibility, ability to make sound judgments and genuine independence are important qualities that can only be fostered at pre-school level (UNICEF, 1992). Witt (2002) says that the opportunities a child has at pre-school level will encourage or discourage the development of his or her talents.
Although research reveals this, the quality of education offered in pre-school institutions has not met the standards set. Honowirtzertal (1995) found that pre-school education and teachers particularly in Africa have not been supported well by their governments.

She also found that the level of motivation given to teachers; such as level of income and lack of opportunities to study lowers the quality of education. However, Makoti (2004) found out that although salary plays a major role in motivating teachers other aspects such as terms and conditions of service have more influence on motivation of pre-school teachers. In addition to this, Waithaka (2003) found that good management and a good learning atmosphere were of great concern to teachers than salaries.

Adams (1995) found that a small percentage of national budget goes to pre-school education, thus, limiting efforts by the Ministry of Education to improve pre-schools and teachers working in them.

In Kenya, pre-school education has received considerable attention. The government moved Early Childhood Education from the Ministry of Culture and Social Services to the Ministry of Education in 1984 when the National Centre of Early Childhood Education (NACECE) was established with the responsibilities of developing curriculum for early childhood education, and materials to be used. NACECE was also charged with the responsibilities of training the trainers and to
supervise activities countrywide. For efficiency in their work, District Centre for Early Childhood Education (DICECE) was established in 1985 to help implement policies at the grassroots level and ensure that quality education and training were imparted to the pre-school teachers and schools. (KIE, 1998).

Guidelines prepared by the Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E) favoured child-centred teaching methods. Pre-school teacher training bodies (DICECE), Kenya Headmistress Association and Montessori trainers all recommend discovery methods for high quality education, because children are in the pre-operational thinking stage and learn best through active involvement.

These recommendations for child-centred teaching methods have not been fully implemented because some teachers appear to have unfavourable attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods as a result of being untrained as Kabiru (1995) found out. Adams (1995), found that lack of resources, that is, teaching and learning aids, contribute greatly to this problem. She also found that supervision of schools has not been conducted as it is supposed to be thus teachers have also relaxed in their preparation for teaching and in the way they deliver the content. Kivuva (1997), who researched on the quality of pre-school teachers in relation to their qualifications academically and professionally, revealed that teachers with low academic and professional levels were more biased to teacher-centred teaching methods. Teachers' attitudes are also determinants of how the teacher is to teach in the classroom. However, researches that have specifically focused on teachers'
attitudes towards teaching methods (Mbeche, 1979; Mullei, 1985; Omwenga, 1992; Ndani, 1994 and Mohammed, 1994) targeted teachers from on other levels of education and not in pre-schools. None featured on pre-school attitudes towards teaching methods.

A research on pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods is important in order find out what attitudes pre-school teachers have towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods. This will give an insight on what motivates pre-school teachers' practices in the class. As a result, teachers can be given necessary assistance that will make them efficient in class, thus enabling children to become persons that the society expects to be.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

A gap exists between what the government recommends for pre-school education and what actually goes on in the classroom. Although child-centred teaching methods are recommended they are not used. This contributes to a situation where society's expectations that education should mould an all-round child are not met. It is important therefore to find out factors that influence pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods.

Previous research studies conducted focused on pre-school teachers' professional qualities, availability of resources and management issues. Researches focusing
on attitudes were conducted at higher levels of education. No known research in Kenya has focused specifically on understanding pre-school teachers attitudes, towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods yet such research could suggest the way forward in ensuring that children are exposed to quality experiences. If pre-school teachers' attitudes towards various teaching methods were known, negative attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods that have been identified as the most appropriate for young children could be changed. Therefore, to foster positive teaching and learning experiences for young children, it is necessary to investigate what attitudes pre-school teachers have towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods.

1.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study investigated pre-school teachers' attitudes towards teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods as well as selected factors that influenced their attitudes. The following specific aspects of attitudes were explored:

a) The ease or difficulty in preparation of teaching materials in teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods.

b) The ease or difficulty in implementing teaching materials using teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods.

c) The pleasure derived from teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods.

d) The developmental appropriateness of teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods.
e) The popularity or unpopularity of teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods with other pre-school teachers.

f) Pre-school teachers' confidence in using various content areas in teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods.

g) Pre-school teachers' competence in the subject content in teacher-centred and child-centred methods.

The study also focused on identifying the relationships among these attitudes and pre-school teachers' age, professional and academic qualifications and years of experience.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this study:

a) What are pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred teaching methodology?

b) What are pre-school teachers' attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methodology?

c) To what extent are the pre-school teachers' professional qualifications related to their attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods?

d) To what extent are pre-school teachers' academic qualifications related to their attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods?
e) To what extent is the pre-school teachers' age related to their attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods?

f) To what extent are the years of teaching experience related to attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study are useful in various ways. They will bring to light attitudes pre-school teachers have on teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods. Once these attitudes are exposed, challenges that are facing pre-school teachers will be revealed, strengths that need reinforcement will be highlighted and weaknesses that need to be addressed will be reviewed to solidify pre-school teaching force.

The findings of the study can also be used to guide educators and policy makers to make informed decisions and perhaps recommend changes in the early childhood curriculum. Specifically, pre-school teacher trainers will be able to implement recommendations and through their teaching methods influence their trainees to use child-centred teaching methods in the classroom, hence improving the services they render to the pre-school going children.

The findings will be useful in seminars, workshops and in refresher courses organised by trainers in enlightening pre-school teachers on the importance of using appropriate teaching methods when teaching pre-school children and of
Pre-school teachers' attitudes- Refers to the disposition of the teacher to respond positively or negatively with cognitive, affective and behavioural responses to teaching methods including their perceptions the easiness and difficulty in implementation of the subject, and the developmental appropriateness of the method, the pleasure derived from using the method, perceptions of the popularity of the method, her feeling of confidence and competence in teaching.

Teacher-centred teaching methods- Teaching methods where pre-school teacher is the source of knowledge/information and the children are not involved as they should be involved. They are also known as expository or formal methods. Examples include reading of books for children without involving them or writing on the blackboard as the chief communication means between pre-school teacher and children.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, categories of literature related to the study are reviewed in various sections. The first section reviewed is the nature of attitudes and also the theoretical rationale. The theoretical rationale section discusses the relationship between attitudes and behaviours as well as theories that focus on attitudes and behaviours. The second section focuses on research related to pre-school teachers' attitudes and behaviour. Teaching methods used in schools and pre-school teachers' attitudes are discussed in the third section. The conceptual framework is diagrammatically summarized and research hypotheses are listed at the end.

2.1 THEORETICAL RATIONALE

2.1.1 Definition and Properties of Attitudes

Attitudes have been defined in different ways by various researchers and psychologists. Shulte (1997) and Mbennah (2002) have defined attitudes as relatively enduring organizations of feelings, beliefs and behaviour tendencies towards other persons, groups, ideas or objects. Zanna and Rempel (1988) view attitudes as a categorization of stimulus alongside evaluative dimension based on cognitive, affective and behavioural. Zimbardo and Leippe (1991) regard attitudes as evaluative disposition towards some objects. It is an evaluation of something or someone along a continuum of likes to dislike or favourable to unfavourable (Witt, 2002). Ryan (1998) looks at attitudes as a tendency to
respond in a specific manner to particular stimuli, which includes people, objects and situations. Whittaker (1970) and Seefelt (1980) view attitudes as regularities of an individual's feelings, thoughts and predisposition. Davin (2002) says that they are hypothetical constructs that can be inferred by a person's verbal expressions or overt behaviour.

Gross (1996) defined attitudes as predispositions to respond to stimuli with certain classes of responses. The three classes of response are:

i) Affective- what a person feels about the object; how favourably or unfavourably it is evaluated.

ii) Cognitive- what a person believes the object is like.

iii) Conative (behavioural) how a person actually responds or intends to respond to the object based on affective and cognitive.

Thus, attitudes can be defined as a deposition to respond cognitively, affectively and behaviourally responses to the object of the attitude Ajzen (1988); Taylor (1991) and Beckler and Wiggins (1994). For the purpose of this study, this definition was adopted because it considers the three responses that one can respond to a certain object. Whatever response it can influence teachers' attitudes, either positively or negatively.

According to Whittaker (1970) and Wang-Wen-Lin (1998), attitudes are different from other predispositions such as sets or habits and from other motivating states
such as emotions or psychological needs. They describe five characteristics of attitudes. These are:

i) Attitudes are not inborn; they are learnt. They are different from psychological needs such as hunger, which is a psychological state while preference for cakes over biscuits is an attitude.

ii) Attitudes are long lasting. They rarely fluctuate from moment to moment and dominate over one’s moods.

iii) Attitudes imply a subject-object relationship because ‘...they are formed in relation to a specific, identifiable stimulus and one’s relatedness to specific groups, issues and individuals is revealed in his attitudes.” (Whittaker, 1970).

iv) The referent of an attitude may encompass a small or large number of items. This means that attitudes can be directed to only one specific object or to a particular race or group of people.

v) Attitudes have a motivational- affective characteristic. Many predispositions, such as the habit of opening the door with the right hand, do not have motivational attributes. However, attitudes towards God, one’s family, school and friends have definite motivational characteristics.

Since attitudes are learnt and motivate behaviour, it is important for the preschool teacher to develop, cultivate and uphold positive attitudes towards
appropriate teaching methods so as to be successful and effective in her teaching career.

2.2 ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR

This section discusses the relationship between attitudes and behaviour in relation to teaching. This discussion is important because it will not only consider what researchers have said about attitudes and behaviour but also show how these two aspects can affect an individual thus contributing to effective or ineffective teaching.

Philosophers, educators and psychologists have long speculated about the connection between thought and action, character and conduct. The prevailing assumption that underlies most teaching has been that our feelings and beliefs determine our behaviours. Myers (1983), Shuttle (1997) and Peters (2001) agree that the actions of an individual are largely governed by his attitudes, and that an individual will behave in a manner that will satisfy his attitudes towards the object.

According to Wang-Wen (1998), attitudes are implicit responses whose drive strength occur within an individual as a reaction to stimulus pattern and affects subsequent overt responses. This means that attitudes determine the behaviour of an individual. To Allport (1988), attitudes determine for each individual what he will see and hear, what he will think and what he will do. Attitudes interact with
other personal characteristics such as motives, values and personality traits that in turn interact with environmental factors to determine behaviour. An individual, therefore, is able to maintain a meaningful view of the world.

Recent studies regard attitudes as important aspects of life. Franyo (1998) and Allport (1988), assert that attitudes impel behaviour and guide its manner and form. Omwenga (1992), expounds that attitudes explain a person's consistency in behaviour. He considers attitudes to be a cause of a person's behaviour. Franyo (1998) and Omwenga (1992), assert that when attitudes become consistently associated with attitude objects, they produce a pattern of behaviour. They determine what one will say or do in particular situations, what one will enjoy or dislike and his approach to the other people, his reaction to events in his own life and in the world around him (Arasa, 1995).

Research also suggests that attitudes directly impact on one's behaviour. According to Arasa (1995), they determine one's behaviour be it in actions or in words. She believes they provide one's cues to personality and to one's needs which are important in understanding the formation of relationships. An individual's attitudes determine his behaviour tendencies to excel or to fail in the performance of daily tasks and will influence one's social interactions and degree of social adjustment (Tassot, 1998). However, not all psychologists agree to this view of attitude causing behaviour. Ciadini, Petty and Cacioppo (1981) urge that behaviour cannot be explained as resulting from mental events since they cannot
be observed. Vorster (2000) and Creemers (1994) hold that an individual does not always behave in accordance to his attitudes. Creemers says that a person may hold strong attitude, and yet, under certain circumstances behave in ways quite contradictory to those attitudes.

In response, Gross (1996) says that attitudes are only one determinant of behaviour and that they represent predispositions to behaviour. How we actually act in a particular situation will depend however, on the immediate consequences of our behaviours, how we think others will evaluate our actions and our habitual ways of behaving in those kinds of situations. Thus, we sometimes experience a conflict of attitudes, and behaviour may represent a compromise between them.

Jonas, Eagly and Stroebe, (1995), say that the lack of consistency between attitudes and behaviour can be understood in terms of reliability and validity of the measures used. For example, a single instance of behaviour is an unreliable indicator of attitudes because the performance of the behaviour depends on many factors in addition to the attitude. Similarly, a single behavioural observation may also be rather invalid because it embodies specific features that are not included within the attitudes being investigated. Ajzen and Fishbein (1987), say that each single measure of behaviour involves:

a) Specific action

b) Directed at a target

c) In a context
d) At a time or occasion

These authors continue to say that what matters when one is considering attitudes is the correspondence between measures of attitudes and behaviour or whether the measure of attitudes matches the type, context and time of the behaviour later measured. Ajzen (1988) asserts that since behaviour is a function of habits, attitudes, norms and expectancies about reinforcement, there is still a consistency between attitude and behaviour.

Shulte (1997) says that representative samples of all the behaviours that are relevant to the attitudes are important. She further says that attitude needs to be defined more specifically and that the behaviour observed must also be specific. She says that the more specific the behaviour observed is, the more valid will be the attitude and the correlation between attitudes and behaviour. Thus, she echoes Ajzen’s (1988) Principle of Compatibility.

Having reviewed studies done in the 1980s and 1990s, Hogg and Vaughan (1995) emerged with a view that attitudes and overt behaviour are not related in a simple one-to-one fashion. To predict one’s behaviour, they conclude, it must be possible to account for the interaction between attitudes.

In conclusion, it can be noted that attitudes show an individual’s self-description for his commitment in a particular position, his affinities of and aversion to some
aspects of his environment, his evaluative judgement, his social influence, his emotional and motivational inclinations. Attitudes, therefore, bring out patterns of behaviours (Mullei, 1985; Ndani, 1994). They determine what one does, and assert what one likes or dislikes, his relation to other people and his reactions to events in his own life and in the world around him (Ndani, 1994).

2.2.1 Theories of Attitudes and Behaviour

Several theories have been raised to explain how attitudes are formed. The theories that suggest how attitudes are formed are as follows:

i) Cognitive Theory: Cognitivists believe that for good performance, there should be consistence between one’s thoughts and actions. Cognitive theories view attitudes as necessary because they permit the individual to achieve certain goals. These theories predict that individuals will avoid information inconsistent with their attitudes and behaviour and will block any negatively valued goal and positively foster valued ones. They allow him to organize knowledge, maintain his self-esteem and to express his views. Theorists behind this school of thought are Rosenberg (1956) and Leone Festinger (1957, cited in Peters, 2001). According to this, preschool teacher attitudes towards work may be determined by several factors within her. Therefore, if engaging in certain behaviour makes confident and comfortable, she will adopt it. If the behaviour makes her uncomfortable she will not engage in it. Thus, respective attitude will eventually be formed.
ii) Social Cognitive Theory: Albert Bandura (1986 cited in Kaplan, Sallis and Patterson 1993) developed this theory. It was an updated version of social-learning theory. The theory states that human behaviour is influenced by environment and personal variables, which include not only cognitions but also emotions and psychological processes. Bandura urges that two cognitive processes are influential over behaviour. These are outcome expectancy, which is one’s beliefs that behaviour will produce a specified effect and the other one is self-efficacy, which is one’s belief in his/her ability or competence to perform the behaviour. The beliefs vary according to the situation. Bandura (1986, cited in Kaplan, Sallis and Patterson, 1993) argues that self-efficacy plays a central role in human behaviour and is the type of cognition that is closely linked to behaviour.

Social cognitive theory is important in regard to pre-school teachers’ behaviour. If the teacher believes that using a particular teaching method will bring about the required result, in this case effective learning, leading to good performance, then she will have high outcome efficacy since she believes the behaviour will produce the required outcome. If the teacher feels competent with a particular method, she may be very confident and have high self-efficacy. Hence, she will behave accordingly. That is, she will adopt the method she is confident and competent in (Peters 2001).
iii) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB): Ajzen (1988) formulated this theory as the reformulation of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Fishbein and Ajzen (1974), which claimed that the immediate cause of behaviour is a person's intention to engage in that behaviour. Theory of Planned Behaviour assumes that human behaviour is rational and that the target behaviour is under the actor's conscious control. Mbennah (2002) supports this premise by adding that the Theory of Planned Behaviour suggests that the intention itself is a function of both the actor's attitude towards engaging in the behaviour and his perception of the extent to which significant others think that they should engage in it. The theory does not say anything about the non-voluntary behaviours by adding a new predictor of intention. Perceived behavioural control is a function of our belief about how likely it is that we possess the resources and opportunities needed to execute the behaviour.

When applied to pre-school teachers' attitude towards certain teaching methods, the theory explains that teachers' use of certain methods is a matter of choice. Her classroom behaviour is influenced by her intentions (goals) and personal norms, which lead to development of favourable or unfavourable attitudes towards certain behaviour and the consequent performance or rejection of the behaviour.

The theorists say that personal or subjective norms are affected by pressures from the significant others. Thus, if the teacher feels that parents, school inspectors do
not encourage certain method, their opinion will have a major impact on their perceptions and feelings about the teaching method.

Ajzen (1988) indicates that intentions to perform behaviour will become stronger when people feel that they have personal control over the behaviour. Thus, a teacher who feels that she can handle child-centred teaching method effectively will use it to teach and vice versa is also true.

From these theories, it can be concluded that whatever a pre-school teacher does is influenced by the way she perceives her environment. She will adjust herself to the environment according to how consistent it is with her attitude. Her attitudes toward certain methods will also be subject to the kind of reward she will receive. Her classroom behaviour will also be influenced by the motives she has about teaching profession. That is, if her teaching is as a result of her deep desire for children, she will develop positive attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods and children. If teachers' motivation is to get money or to please someone, then, she may develop negative attitude towards child-centred teaching methods that are time consuming and the preschool teaching profession.

2.3 PRE-SCHOOL TEACHING METHODS AND ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS

This section focuses on pre-school teachers' teaching methods and their impact. It reviews findings of different researches and recommendations they provide.
The section also focuses on teachers’ attitudes on teaching methods and
text recommends why teachers should nurture positive attitudes towards the
recommended teaching methods.

2.3.1 Pre-school Teaching Methods: Child-centred Methods and Teacher-
centred Methods

Pre-school years are very important in the life of an individual child because it is
the time that a child is introduced to the learning process (Peters, 2001). To
stimulate learning and to foster healthy growth and development, children should
be provided with appropriate materials, guidance, stimulation and care. Good
teaching methods must also be used in order to help the child benefit from the
learning experience. Such methods are the child-centred teaching methods (Witt,
2002).

Child-centred teaching method is a teaching strategy where children learn through
manipulation of the environment (Vorster, 2000). The method is also known as
discovery method. This method can be applied to a wide range of learning where
children get new insight about themselves and their environment and erroneous
concepts can be corrected. The main advantage of the method is that children can
do what actually seems impossible for their age through experiments, hence, the
method acts as a stimulus to confidence and knowledge (Farrant, 1988). Davin
(2002) highlights the advantages of the method by saying that the method places
the child at the central point of learning, where he learns by doing and by using
his own senses. The child controls the speed at which he learns new ideas. It encourages all-round development in the child, thus helping to fulfil one of the basic aims of education. The pre-school teacher acts as a facilitator and an advisor where she guides children and provides the materials needed to promote learning. This is because children are learning how to learn, and the teacher’s job is to help children to create favourable attitudes, skills and knowledge of themselves and the surrounding (Davin, 2002).

Empirical studies done on the relevance and appropriateness of the child-centred teaching methods have clearly demonstrated that child-centred methods are the best methods. Evidence for this is given in a study that was conducted in Germany by Danes (1997), which compared those children who were exposed to child-centred teaching methods where they were allowed to learn through play, and those who were exposed to academics. By the fourth grade (standard four) those who were allowed to learn through experience excelled significantly over those who had academics only. Their advantage was physical, emotional, social and intellectual development (Danes, 1997).

Play helps them stretch their intellect, learn to share and language skills are developed. They also acquire more ideas and skills. Dramatic play, imitation or pretended activities help children to learn more about their surroundings, how people and things work and how to express themselves by imitating people or happening and to mix with others (Tina, 1990).
Munyeki (1987), suggests that teaching within child-centred methods should be built on children’s experience and provision of materials and activities should be based on their familiarity. The familiar experiences should occur first, and unfamiliar ones later. Being in the discovery stage, children learn through their senses. They touch, feel, listen, smell, taste, imagine and dream about things. Through these experiences, they discover new knowledge and increase their ideas as they grow. Therefore, teachers should provide opportunities to enable children to investigate and find out things on their own.

David Elkind (1989), a child study professor, advocates interactive teaching as another child-centred teaching methods in pre-school institutions. It is a teaching method where the teacher serves as a matchmaker between the child and the materials. The teacher introduces the child into the materials, and gets a ‘conversation’ going on between them, and then discreetly moves out of the scene. This method aims at getting children started in the right way and then being left alone to take over and be responsible for their own learning. Materials used, should be easy to use to give children guidance, and complex enough to pose a challenge to their intelligence. Teachers in this method are seen as means, the mechanism by which children can develop strategies, initiatives and responses and construct their own rules, which enable their all-round development.

Although the method is very effective, Elkind (1989) admits that it is demanding for the teacher because getting materials that are neither too structured nor too
open is not easy. The teacher is also constantly looking for words and phrases that will get children started on the activity and give them direction without unduly constraint to their manipulations of the materials. More so, the teacher has to be aware of individual differences and what types of materials and verbalizations are most appropriate for particular children. Though demanding, the ideals are important pointers as they guide the teacher in her efforts to provide the best possible education for the increasing number of children.

From Elkind’s study, it can be inferred that teaching is a matter of facilitating development of more adequate schemes rather than giving knowledge. Therefore, a pre-school teacher should understand children who are in intuitive stage and their way of thinking, hence, preparing teaching material and adopting child-centred teaching methods which take care of children that are in pre-operational or intuitive stage. Witt (2002), supports Elkind and says that teachers should expose children to an environment where they learn through manipulation of objects and play, as these do not give them mental stress. Only in child-centred teaching methods can children learn through manipulation of the environment or discovery.

Smilansky and Kulgman (1990), conducted a research which showed that those children who are left to discover for themselves in social situations show significant gains mainly in cognitive, emotional and in social areas, including language development, innovation and imagination. They concluded that children
taught using child-centred teaching methods tend to have a longer attention span and greater concentration ability. These children are less aggressive and get along well with their peers. They show more empathy fit in social situations.

More recent research also documents that child-centred based on developmental principles as the best and most appropriate approach to teaching young children. Ryan's (1998) study supports what Piaget and Froebel advocate that education must be based on the natural stages in development. The purpose of teaching at nursery school is to create a framework of controlled and flexible free-activity, in which children are helped and extended by the pre-school teacher at each stage of their development, particularly during their first few years. This encourages them to develop intellectually, socially, and emotionally hence improving their educational performance in the primary school. Their views correspond to Dr. Maria Montessori's views, which stress that children learn best when there is interaction between maturational process of the child, the experiences the child has and the environment he/she is in.

Ryan (1998), asserts that through this method a pre-school teacher can instil in the children desire to learn and encourage them to become independent children. Through child-centred teaching methods, pre-school teacher permits children not only to express themselves but also arouses their curiosity, gives them understanding and affection, supports them when needed, helps them grow up. She discovered in her research that when children are able to make activity
choices and are left truly free, they are able to draw on a wealth of knowledge, and they become competent.

Cass (1990) conducted a research with 400 pre-school teachers in London on their role in schools to provide the child with a ‘live’ day where he can be living, learning and growing all the time. From the pre-school teachers’ response, they all agreed that children benefit greatly from the active methods found in the child-centred teaching methods. Teachers reported that children have the opportunity to develop at their own rate, gain confidence, independence and are prepared for all-round development. From the study conducted by Jonas et al (1995), children not only develop creative ideas but they like living life instead of watching it.

Kivuva (1997) found that although pre-school teachers are supposed to expose children to new experiences using child-centred methods, the methods are rarely used in Kenya. Besides inadequate teaching and learning materials, the pressure from parents to teach children how to read and write is too intense and pre-school teachers are therefore forced to sacrifice the child’s wellbeing to perceived academic excellence. Kivuva (1997) interviewed some head pre-school teachers and they said that the main task of pre-school institutions today was to prepare children for the tough interview that they were to face before admission for class one. Although formal teaching and academic excellence are not supposed to be stressed, Kivuva (1997) reported that teachers have to emphasize formal teaching because they have no choice. If they do not teach the children properly and the
children do not make it in the interview, they are in trouble with the parents. This means no children in the school the following year. So they have to teach formally.

In contrast, teacher-centred teaching method is one in which the pre-school teacher acts as the director of learning (Zanden, 1989). She is the source of all information. In this method, pre-school teachers are essential links between the child and the subject matter as she selects what is to be learnt, the method to use and the pace at which the children learn. The children are regarded as more or less uniform groups of children rather than as individuals with different gifts and needs (Farrant, 1988). Farrant observes that children taught through this method remain passive and are dependent on the pre-school teacher.

From the above discussion it can be concluded that child-centred teaching methods are the best methods to use in pre-schools. This is because they help children to be introduced to school and learning without creating stress and interfering with their developmental processes. Most research suggests that pre-school teachers should therefore use child-centred teaching methods if they expect children entrusted to them to excel in all spheres of life.

2.3.2 Pre-school Teachers' Attitudes and Teaching Methods

Pre-school teachers' attitudes towards teaching are concerned with the way they value, appreciate and act in various situations, which involves established
methods and techniques of teaching. Pre-school teachers’ attitude, in turn, will affect the behaviour and subsequent performance of the children (Tough, 1985; Wasanga, 1987). Studies on the importance of teachers’ attitudes towards teaching assert that teachers’ attitudes affect not only her manner of teaching but also the way she handles children (Mohammed, 1994; Omwenga, 1992; Ryan, 1998).

Attitudes are examined in connection to teaching because the behaviour patterns of pre-school teachers, which are in turn affected by attitudes, are important to teaching effectiveness. Fiske et al (1991) view attitude as essential determinants to success in the profession. The researchers support Gay (1981) who developed the Minnesota Teachers’ Attitude Inventory with an aim of establishing whether attitudes towards teaching profession affect learning. The experiment conducted revealed that attitude towards teaching significantly affects teaching performance and the motivational level of children.

Empirical studies show that teaching methods are often influenced by pre-school teachers’ attitudes because the pre-school teacher adopts whatever method she thinks corresponds to her beliefs about teaching and the perceived role of the pre-school teacher in the classroom (Farrant, 1988). Teaching methods are also influenced by her attitudes towards her competence in the subject matter (Witt, 2002). He suggested that if she were incompetent in regard to the subject matter, she would use teacher-centred method, which allows her full control of the class.
On the other hand, if she is competent she allows children to learn on their own and only gives help when necessary. She controls children more by good planning than by recourse to rewards and punishment. Professional preparation and cultivation of positive attitudes are of paramount importance to a schoolteacher according to (Whitebook, 1989; and Gorgan, 1993).

Franyo (1998), observed that special preparation for pre-school teacher is of paramount importance given the heavy responsibility of influencing the children in their formative years. The Kenya Institute of Education Guidelines for the Pre-school Education in Kenya (1990) clearly states that the pre-school teacher should provide children with as many opportunities to experiment as possible, in addition to stimulating them to express themselves clearly and listening. For such atmosphere to prevail, the teachers themselves must cultivate favourable attitudes towards children and child-centred teaching methods.

Munyeki (1987) expounds that a pre-school teacher with favourable attitudes towards pre-school children and child-centred methods avoids methods that will make her the ‘jug’ and the children “mug” where she can fill children with knowledge rather than leaving them to discover for themselves. However, this situation does not occur always as teachers’ performance is determined by their expectations. As Zeichner et al (1992) in their research on teacher’s attitudes towards teaching as a profession, the income and advancement opportunities determined teacher’s attitudes and behaviour to teaching. Most of the teachers that
were interviewed did not intend to remain in the profession because there was no "opportunity to increase one's standards of living in accordance with his ability" (Zeichner, 1992). Thus, this study suggests those pre-school teachers' attitudes will be influenced by their aspirations and working environment.

Shulte R.N. (1997) revealed that satisfaction in the job; professional enhancing activities such as workshops and refresher courses, classroom interaction and planning are the most rewarding aspects of the profession and foster positive attitudes of the pre-school teacher. Educational researchers, (Good and Brophy, cited in Ryan, et al 1998) found that pre-school teachers' expectations can be self-fulfilling prophecy. According to them, "...our expectations do affect the way we behave in situations, and affect the way we behave in situations, and this affect how other people respond..." Their beliefs about children and learning are important determinants of the kind of the pre-school teacher she is. If she believes that children are capable, curious children, she will give what suits them best. Copple (1991), asserts that what pre-school teachers say to children has an important bearing on how a child views himself, and may determine if he gains satisfaction from his learning.

Hendrick (1992), Gorgan (1993) and Munyeki (1987) all agree that a trained pre-school teacher is more important than the curriculum. They argue that untrained pre-school teacher will teach poorly while trained teachers will overcome the deficiencies of any curriculum. Their research findings have revealed untrained
pre-school teachers tend to escape from children’s problems instead of dealing with them. They do not know how to deal with different age groups since they do not know what tasks to give which group of children (Kivuva, 1997). This can lead to the development of negative attitudes towards work and children (Witt, 2002).

Wang-Wen-Ling (1998) researched on pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards gifted pre-schoolers and their knowledge of the early intervention for the gifted. She said that pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards young children enhance their success in education. This is because the teacher, in her teaching, inculcates beliefs and ideas that will encourage or discourage the child. She is the role model to the children.

Locally, a few studies on pre-school teachers’ attitudes have been conducted. Mullei (1985) and Omwenga (1992) agree that teachers’ attitudes are expressed in their tone as they manage children. Kenya Institute of Education Jadini Seminar Report (1988) concludes that pre-school teachers hold values that influence the way in which they will view children and affect their expectations of what children should do in school.

The above studies suggest that pre-school teachers’ attitudes are important determinants of the direction children will take in the school. Teachers should adopt positive attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods where children
learn through play, because conscious learning in the pre-school years interferes with the dreamlike state of consciousness needed in play. (Witt, 2002).

From the studies reviewed, there is ample evidence that the pre-school teacher is one of the most important factors determining what nursery school experience will be like for children. Not only pre-school teachers’ skills but also her attitudes and feeling will influence what she does, how she relates with different children and what method she will use to teach. It is therefore important for her to foster those attitudes that will favour her and the children for the benefit of all.

Though studies have been done on teachers’ attitudes, there were no studies that were identified that focused on pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards teaching methods and what factors underlie their classroom behaviour. This study therefore seeks to bridge the gap by investigating factors that are related to pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods.

2.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS’ ATTITUDES

Although it is advised that teachers develop positive attitudes towards child-centred methods while teaching, teachers may develop negative attitudes as a result of some constrain. Kabiru (1995), asserts that teachers can develop negative attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods if there is inadequate teaching and learning materials. Thus, pre-school teachers may end up using teacher-centred method although it is not appropriate.
Furthermore, the societal demands determine the method the teacher will use by placing some demands on her. Some parents expect that the pre-school teacher will have her children know how to read and write before joining primary schools (Omwenga, 1992; Kivuva, 1997). Pre-school teachers then use the methods that will yield what the society wants even if not appropriate at the expense of the child (Kivuva, 1997).

The factors that affect pre-school teachers’ preference for child-centred and teacher-centred methods are numerous. These factors are age, pre-school teacher qualifications - academic and professional, and experience. They can influence pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching strategies.

2.4.1 Pre-School Teachers’ Academic Qualifications and Attitudes

From research finding, practitioners’ level of formal education is an important factor in the quality of their work with children. It is even suggested by some studies that education is linked to effectiveness of the teachers in teaching and understanding of children and other educational issues (Whitebook, 1989, Witt, 2002). Academic qualification is an important aspect as it is the foundation of the professional training (Gwen, 1993; Kivuva, 1997 and Peter, 2001) contend that pre-school teacher’s role requires that she undergoes intensive academic preparation including the observation and participation in early childhood program. This is essential so as to provide pre-school teachers with the basis for
human understanding and will prepare them for the delicate responsibility of handling young children. They will also be able to discover the appropriate methods that can be used with pre-school children without creating unnecessary strain. In Kenya, some years ago, pre-school teachers were just recruited without considering their education level. Today, however, the trend has changed because we have pre-school teachers at the universities pursuing graduate degree programmes in early childhood education. Thus, through formal learning, the pre-school teacher becomes aware of stages of development and ways of helping children at different developmental stages so as to help them benefit from a learning experience.

2.4.2. Professional Training

The pre-school teacher has a responsibility of helping children to grow physically, emotionally mentally and socially since “nursery school education is the foundation of the development of the person, community and the nation. “ (The East African Standard, Tuesday September 2, 1976). Her responsibility is to create an environment, which stimulates natural curiosity to learn (Smilansky, et al. 1990). She encourages a child to be a learner on his own. To accomplish these goals, a pre-school teacher must be professionally trained to understand how children develop and learn.

A professionally trained pre-school teacher also provides experiences for the children in logical manageable steps (Oyagi, 2003). Alternative learning
experiences are provided in accordance with children’s individual interests, and the pre-school teacher supplies the necessary guidance. Recognizing that a child needs to experience success and to exercise his curiosity, the pre-school teacher works with him individually. By understanding the individual child, she can readily assess a child’s learning ability and his mode of behaviour. It is only then that she can plan learning activities that are appropriate for him (Oyagi, 2003).

Pre-school teachers need to undergo training so that they can get equipped with the skills required to cope with the demands of the young children (Munyeki, 1987). She argues that training of the pre-school teacher will ensure the provision, expansion and improvement of quality and relevant education. The kind of the training she has, and the duration of training, teaching methods and quality of the subject matter determine how the pre-school teacher handles the children and the upcoming challenges (Oyagi, 2003). Through training, the pre-school teacher develops professional attitudes, skills and the knowledge to adapt to the learning environment and ability to fulfill her task positively and effectively (Kivuva, 1997). One must also attend seminars to update oneself and to get new ideas in the profession. Davin’s (2001) repeated studies show that the factor most often associated with quality child-care is a stable trained pre-school teacher (Tough, 1985; Bredekam, 1987; Munyeki, 1987; Kivuva, 1997; Davin, 2001; Witt, 2002). Trained pre-school teachers, they all agreed, are equipped with necessary skills and can trace the child’s mental development and offer what is suitable for the child through appropriate teaching-learning materials.
Teacher training course is very relevant as qualified teachers reported when they were interviewed by Kivuva (1997). For those who started teaching as untrained pre-school teachers said there is hardly any comparison between their pre and post-training teaching skills. They asserted that prior to their training, they could not prepare their lessons adequately; they did not know how to deal with children's problems and could get easily irritated. After training, they were able to handle children better. It is also important for the pre-school teacher to know how children learn. This will enable her teach them more effectively as the more easily they learn, the more competent they become (Vorster, 2000). Only through professional training can she achieve this.

The conclusion derived from the above discussion is that training of teachers does not only help them to learn how to teach, but they also learn how to cultivate those qualities that will help them to create favourable environment for children. Professional training therefore, helps the teachers to foster positive attitudes towards children by showing why children behave the way they do. More so, positive attitudes towards child-centred methods are encouraged for the benefit of children and teachers themselves.

2.4.3 Pre-school Teachers' Teaching Experience

Copple (1991) asserts that pre-school teachers' quality can be viewed in three aspects: work experience, level of education and type of specialised training in
early childhood education. Pre-school teachers with long teaching experience are more confident in their dealing with children (Cass, 1990).

Experienced pre-school teachers, Copple (1991) continues, are capable of being more effective in their teaching than inexperienced ones. They are able to apply the massive wealth gained through teaching for their benefits and for the children. Honowitzertal (1995), asserts that one’s experience can lead to the foundation of certain attitudes. With experience, one becomes used to these challenges and is able to devise ways of solving the difficulties faced. Refresher courses and workshops enable the pre-school teacher to solve difficulties that arise in school. Thus, positive attitude is fostered. However, Snider and Fu (1990) suggest that experience alone is a poor predictor for pre-school teacher’s behaviour because untrained pre-school teacher may be gifted in handling children and therefore perform better than the trained and experienced pre-school teachers do.

2.4.4 Pre-school Teachers’ Age

Pre-school teacher’s age plays an important role in children’s life. There is evident that an old pre-school teacher is more effective in handling children. Young pre-school teachers may find themselves in a dilemma especially where they have not dealt with children before (Muliei, 1985). Evans and Smith (2000) found that as teachers grow old, they tend to adopt discovery methods, which they reported as useful for children’s intellectual growth. Old pre-school teachers may
adopt child-centred methods, given their experience, which has helped in the development of competence and confidence.

However, Evans et al (2000) is quick to note that this is not always the case. Older pre-school teachers have less patience with children unlike young pre-school teachers. Prakasha (1993) asserts that a pre-school teacher might mishandle children if there are areas that are affecting her career such as frustrations derived from the administration, dissatisfaction in the job and other related problems. These can affect her attitude towards children; thus, affecting the method the pre-school teacher will use to teach them, irrespective of age.

2.5 Other Factors

While professional qualifications are important, pre-school teacher’s character is also important (Kivuva, 1997). This supports Miller (1985) who says that a pre-school teacher who feels that she is qualified in her role will have more success in guiding young children than she would if she was not qualified.

Additional factors include the expected reward. All human beings seek to minimize penalties (Vander Zanden 1987, 4th ed.). They develop attitudes that aid them in accomplishing their goals. For example, people tend to favour the party that will advance their economic lot, if unemployed, the individuals will associate with the party that will decrease unemployment and improve social welfare benefits. One associates with a mate who provides him with variety of rewards —
sense of worth, recognition, security, and avoiding those who produce the opposite effects.

Second, ego defense mechanism serves to protect us from acknowledging basic truths and harsh realities of life (Zanden, 1989; Vorster, 2000). An individual will therefore tend to favour those attitudes that will make him forget some painful experiences and hence he remains peaceful.

About the working environment, Ndani (1994) suggests that for a preschool teacher to succeed, her working environment should be conducive. This way, she is able to concentrate on her work and children, with fear or unnecessary anxiety. Otherwise, she will spend much time trying to meet her needs thus neglecting her job.

Thus teachers' attitude can be influenced by many factors imposed by her environment or from within herself. To ensure that she sails through the challenges of her work and gives her best to the children, it is important to support her and encourage her not only to have professional training but also to attend workshops and in-service courses which will enable her to give quality services.

2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

We are cultural beings and our society dictates what is acceptable. Professional ethics strengthen what the society upholds as honourable; hence in the shaping of
pre-school teachers’ attitudes, it is not different. Our society determines the age when one can take over certain responsibilities (Vorster, 2000). These responsibilities require preparations (professional) so that they can be carried out effectively (Gorgan, 1993). The professional preparations are based on the values held by the society and the academic level believed to be appropriate for a particular profession. Funzi (1995), says that there are many factors that influence teachers’ attitudes. These factors include: professional qualification, age, academic qualifications and their experience. These attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods are reflected in the teacher’s behaviour (practices) in the classroom. Whatever attitudes teachers hold they will definitely affect the child either positively or negatively. This is illustrated in the diagram below.
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A diagram showing factors that influence teachers' attitudes towards teaching methods and how they affect the child's classroom experiences.

Classroom experience a child goes through

Actual teaching methods used in teaching

Child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods

Professional Qualification  Academic Qualifications  Age  Years of experience

Professional ethics
2.7 THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were derived from the literature review and were tested in the study.

1. There is no significant difference in pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods.

2. There is no significant correlation in pre-school teachers' attitude towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their level of training.

3. There is no significant correlation in pre-school teacher's attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their academic qualifications.

4. There is no significant correlation in pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their years of experience.

5. There is no significant correlation in pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their age.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research design and methodology that was employed in the study. It highlights on the study setting, the variables, the population and sample selection, the data collection method and instruments used.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research study was a descriptive design employing ex post facto approach. This is a process of collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subjects in the study (Gay, 1981). The research sought to obtain information that describes such things like possible behaviour, attitudes, values and characteristics. Since the approach reports the way things are, it was appropriate for this research, which was investigating on pre-school teachers' attitudes.

Kovacs (1985) defines ex post facto as a systematic empirical inquiry in which the researcher does not have the direct control of the independent variables because the manifestation has already occurred. He looks back far beyond the present and does not manipulate the variables. For this reason, the researcher tried to seek explanation behind the pre-school teachers' attitudes.
3.2 VARIABLES

There were three types of variables used in the study.

a) The Subject Variable was pre-school teachers' age.

b) The Independent Variables are the:
   i) Pre-school teachers' years of experience.
   ii) Pre-school teachers' academic qualifications in reference to level of education (KCPE/CPE graduates, KCSE and its equivalent, Diploma graduates, Degree graduates).
   iii) Pre-school teachers' professional qualifications in reference to number of months of training (short or long courses).

c) The Dependent Variables are the:
   i) Pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred teaching methodologies in relation to specific aspects:
      ♦ Planning
      ♦ Implementation
      ♦ Appropriate to children’s age
      ♦ Effectiveness of the method
      ♦ Teachers’ competence and confidence
   ii) Pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methodologies in relation to specific aspects:
      ♦ Planning
      ♦ Implementation
• Appropriate to children's age
• Effectiveness of the method
• Teachers' competence and confidence

3.3 LOCATION AND POPULATION

Nairobi was purposively selected because of its proximity. The population of the study included all pre-school teachers in selected schools in Lang'ata and Makadara educational divisions of Nairobi. The divisions are close to one another. This helped in reducing transport and other expenses. Most of these pre-school teachers are trained given the availability of colleges and resources.

The two divisions are divided into educational zones to ease administration. Lang'ata has four zones. These are Karen, Langata, Nairobi West, and Kibera. Only three zones were randomly selected and used in the study. Makadara zones are Makadara, Buruburu and Viwanda. There are 149 registered pre-schools in the two divisions; 61 schools in Makadara and 88 in Lang'ata. Thirty-six (36) pre-schools in Lang'ata and eighteen (18) in Makadara were used in the study. This was 30% of the schools in each division. Therefore, a total of fifty-four (54) schools were in the study. Of the 36 schools in Lang'ata, twelve (12) were in Karen zone, twelve (12) in Lang'ata zone and twelve (12) in Kibera zone. Makadara had three zones. Six (6) schools were in Makadara zone, six (6) were in Buruburu and six (6) in Viwanda zone. Given that there were at least (3) pre-
school teachers in each school, this gave a sample of 162 pre-school teachers, from a population of 447 teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone 1</th>
<th>Zone 2</th>
<th>Zone 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Langa’ta</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madaraka</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the proposed sample is 162 pre-school teachers from Langa’ta and Makadara.

### 3.4 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Multi-tier sampling was used to arrive the final sample. In the first tier, the researcher selected Nairobi purposively. In the second tier, cluster sampling was to obtain two divisions used in this study. According to Mugenda (1999), cluster sampling involves selection of an intact group. The third tier was random selection of pre-schools from each of the four zones. The final tier was the selection of all pre-school teachers in the selected schools. All pre-school teachers in the selected schools were used in the study, because at that time there were no records existing to show the number of pre-school teachers present in the field.

### 3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The study utilised a questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire had three sections. Part One collected the biographic information of the respondents: the name of the school, pre-school teacher’s name, sex and qualifications. The name of the school was important for the identification of those schools whose pre-school teachers were among the study subjects. The researcher also wanted to
know whether the pre-school teachers are male or female. Pre-school teachers' qualifications were used to help determine whether the pre-school teachers are trained or untrained.

Part Two of the questionnaire comprised a rating scale to measure attitudes of the pre-school teachers towards teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods. A Likert scale was employed. The scales used were - Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), or Strongly Disagree (SD). The most positive got five points and the most negative one point, except in reverse questions. Likert scale rating was considered appropriate in measuring attitudes because it gives a range of rating points describing different feelings. It is easy to score and interpret.

Part Three consisted of semantic differential matrix-ranked questions where the respondent selected the most appropriate choice. They were scores by order of importance. The scoring ranged from 5-1. The most positive response scored five (5) marks and the lowest scored one (1) mark. The upper three scores (4-5) were considered favouring child-centred teaching methods while the last two (2-1) were considered to be in favour of teacher-centred teaching methods. To identify pre-school teachers' attitude towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods, Parts III and IV were scored.
3.6 PILOT STUDY

The researcher carried out a pilot study with a randomly selected sample of thirty nursery schools in Lang'ata that were not used in the study. The purpose of this pilot study was to determine the validity and reliability of the research instruments. The researcher analysed the data using T-test and Spearman’s Rank correlation method to test the hypotheses. The pilot study showed that teachers were able to use the instruments. The methods used to analyse the data proved that they were reliable.

3.7 STATISTICAL HYPOTHESIS

H01 There is no significant differences among pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods.

H02 There is no significant relationship among pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their level of training.

H03 There is no significant relationship among pre-school teachers’ attitude towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their academic qualifications.

H04 There is no significant relationship among pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their years of experience.
H\textsubscript{05} There is no significant relationship among pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their age.

All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

T-test was used to testing the significant differences of pre-school teacher’s attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods. Spearman’s Rank Correlation method was used to analyse the degree of the relationship between pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods, and whether age, level of academic qualifications, the duration of training, years of experience influence their preference for child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods. Spearman Rho was adopted because the variables are ordinal. The correlation coefficient ranged from \(-1\) to 1. This method was adopted because it would show how ranked variables relate and their magnitude. It also showed the direction and strength of the relationship between variables.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results that were obtained in the study. The chapter contains two sections. The first section contains the descriptive statistics, which looked at the item analysis of the pre-school teachers' questionnaire and the second section looks at the analytical testing of the hypotheses. In section one, the number of teachers who responded to child-centred teaching methods was 160 and those who responded to teacher-centred teaching methods were 159 teachers. The numbers do not tally with the total number of the respondents. This is because some teachers did not answer questions for child-centred teaching methods.

4.1 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The researcher described the demographic characteristic: age, academic level of the teachers, and professional qualifications of the teachers. This was followed by the analysis of teachers' attitudes towards different lessons and the content analysis of pre-school teachers' responses to the questions about their attitudes towards teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods in general and specific aspects.
4.1.1 Demographic Information

Pre-school teachers that were questioned were all aged from 21 years and above. Their ages were categorized into four groups, as can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Age of the Pre-school Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 35</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information available</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the results shown on Table 2 above, the majority of the teachers in pre-school were relatively young; they were under 30 years of age. Teachers within the age bracket of 21-25 years constituted 21.2% of the teachers. Almost one-half of the teachers were in the 26-30 years group 49.0%. Teachers above 31 years were fewer (25.2%) and those above 35 years were very few (4.3%). Those described on the table as no information available were the teachers who did not give their age. They accounted for 0.3% of the teachers sampled.

Table 3 Academic Qualifications of Pre-school Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPE/KCPE</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O-LEVEL/KCSE</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>84.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-LEVEL</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in Table 3 above, shows that the majority (84.6%) of the teachers were high school graduates while only 8% were primary school graduates. Some teachers (6.8%) were A-level graduates. Those from other institutions of higher learning (University) were negligible (0.6%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Untrained</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-service Certificates</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate Holders</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma Holders</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>162</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In pre-school teacher training, there are different approaches that teachers can take to enroll themselves in the training course. The untrained teachers can enroll for the in-service courses where they attend training sessions for certificate or diploma during holidays. Teachers may also enroll themselves for the pre-service courses. Both public and private institutions have provided opportunities and interested students can pursue up to university level.

From Table 4 above, it is clear that almost 44.1% of the teachers were certificate holders. Teachers attending in-service course were 33.8%. Untrained teachers were 13.8% of the teachers while 6.9% and 1.4% were diploma holders and degree holders respectively. This means that the majority of the pre-school teachers were certificate holders.
Table 5 Duration of Pre-school Teachers' Training Period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training period</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Untrained</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-18 months</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduation courses</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In training pre-school teachers the duration is considered in terms of months especially for the in service courses. For this reason, the above duration of training was divided in months rather than being considered in terms of years.

It can be observed from Table 5 above that 13.2% of the teachers had only three months of training. 40% of the teachers reported to have gone for training for a period of 6-12 months. Only 10.3% had 13-18 months of training. Those who attended post-graduation courses such as seminars and short courses after getting their certificates were only 19.6%. Untrained teachers were 16.9%.

Table 6 Length of Pre-school Teachers' Teaching Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in Years</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7+</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 above shows that the majority of the teachers are relatively new in the profession. The number of teachers decreases as their years of experience increase.
More than 50% have less than two years of teaching experience, while the percentage of teachers with experience of 3-4 years drops to 19.8%. Teachers with 5-6 years experience are only 15.4%, and those with seven years and above are only 13%.

4.1.2 Pre-school Teachers’ Attitudes Towards Child-centred Methods and Teacher-centred Teaching- Methods

It was assumed earlier that attitudes towards teacher-centred and child-centred teaching methods were opposite ends of a continuous attitude variable, but the research documented that they are two distinct attitudes. Both Semantic Differential and the Likert scales were used to determine teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods. Likert scale rating was considered appropriate in measuring attitudes because it gives a range of rating points describing different feelings. It is easy to score and interpret. To separate attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods, teachers’ mean scores towards child-centred teaching methodologies were calculated separately and those towards teacher-centred teaching methodologies were also calculated separately. Teachers with a mean score of less than 2.50 were regarded as negative towards that teaching method while teachers with a mean score between 2.51-5.00 were regarded as positive towards teaching method. The two scales were significantly correlated. Specifically, attitudes toward child-centred teaching methods were negatively correlated at Spearman’s Rho = -0.243 (p=0.002) and for attitudes toward teacher-centred methods, the
correlation was a moderate positive correlation with Rho = 0.160 (p=0.045). The Semantic Differential was selected for the analysis because it is a well-known scale and is the best scale known to reliably depict attitudes.

Graph 1 Attitudes Towards Child-centred Teaching Methods

Graph 1 represents the teachers' attitudes towards child-centred teaching method. It can be noted from the table that the distribution of attitude scores is positively skewed with a mean of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 0.89. These data show that majority of teachers had a very positive attitude toward child-centred teaching methods while a few teachers held moderately favourable attitude. However, few teachers held a strongly negative attitude toward child-centred teaching methods.
The teachers who held positive attitudes for child-centred teaching methods have given varying reasons for their attitudes. They reported they prefer this method because they find child-centred teaching methods very appropriate for the age of the children and the method is very interesting and effective, however, they agreed that it is a demanding and time consuming method to prepare for. They also reported that it is also very expensive and requires enough resources to teach and to be used by the children. Despite this, they said the method is very rewarding. In general, they reported that they feel confident in child-centred methods and very competent about the skills they use in their teaching.

Teachers who said that they favour child-centred teaching methods had higher levels of education than those with negative attitudes did. They were diploma and first-degree holders. They were also older and more experienced teachers. Trained teachers were also child-centred particularly. Those that had attended other courses also held positive attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods.
Graph 2 Attitudes Towards Teacher-centred Teaching Methods

Graph 2 shows the distribution of the teachers' attitude scores towards teacher-centred teaching methods. As can be noted from the figure, the distribution of scores is slightly negatively skewed. It has a mean of 2.52 and a standard deviation of 1.18. This shows that a few teachers are extremely favourable to teacher-centred teaching methods, but that the majority held either a moderately favourable attitude while many held negative attitudes toward teacher-centred teaching methods. The teachers' attitude toward this method is more widely dispersed than that toward child-centred methods according to the standard deviation. This means that the teachers differed more in their attitudes toward teacher-centred teaching methods than they did toward child-centred methods.
Pre-school teachers who said they had positive attitudes toward teacher-centred teaching methods said that they prefer these teaching methods because they find them very easy to prepare for and quite interesting. They prefer it because it takes short time to prepare it. They reported that the method boosts their confidence, and they have the control of the classroom so they feel competent in this method. When asked about their feelings of the effectiveness of the method with the children, they responded that they find the method very effective and appropriate to the age of children. The teachers said that the method is the best choice when they do not know how to develop and use some of the resources required in the child-centred teaching methods.

Teachers who reported that they strongly favoured teacher-centred teaching methods were those who had lower academic levels. Specifically, they were standard eight graduates while others were high school dropouts. They were also young teachers with little or no training at all or who had limited experience in teaching in pre-school.

**Table 7 Teachers’ Reported Teaching Methods in Activity Areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Methods</th>
<th>Music Cases (%)</th>
<th>Number Cases (%)</th>
<th>Reading Cases (%)</th>
<th>Writing Cases (%)</th>
<th>Science Cases (%)</th>
<th>Social studies Cases (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child-Centred</td>
<td>125 (77.2)</td>
<td>138 (85.2)</td>
<td>129 (79.6)</td>
<td>129 (79.6)</td>
<td>135 (83.9)</td>
<td>134 (83.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-Centred</td>
<td>37 (22.8)</td>
<td>24 (14.8)</td>
<td>33 (20.4)</td>
<td>33 (20.4)</td>
<td>27 (16.1)</td>
<td>28 (16.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162 (100)</td>
<td>162 (100)</td>
<td>162 (100)</td>
<td>162 (100)</td>
<td>162 (100)</td>
<td>162 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.3 Pre-School Teachers' Reported Use of Child-centred and Teacher-centred Teaching Methods when Teaching

Teachers were asked to indicate how often they use the child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods during various activity areas. On the Table 9 above, their responses are highlighted. As can be seen from the table above, the majority of the teachers reported using the child-centred methods to teach music, numbers, writing, science and social studies.
4.2 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The following section presents the results of the five hypotheses that were tested. The following were the results of each hypothesis. Hypothesis one was tested using t-test. Hypotheses 2-5 were tested using Spearman’s Rank Order of Correlation Coefficient. They were also tested using two steps. The first step tested teachers’ attitudes using child-centred teaching methods while the second step tested teachers’ attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methods.

All hypotheses were tested at significance level of alpha =0.05.

4.2.2 Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between pre-school teachers attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods. According to this hypothesis, it was expected that there would be no significant difference between pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards pre-school child-centred and teachers’-centred teaching methods.

Table 8 Mean Score and t-value of the Pre-school Teachers’ Attitudes Towards Child-centred and Teacher-centred Teaching Methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Methods</th>
<th>No of cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child-centred and Teacher-centred</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>0.6211</td>
<td>0.7660</td>
<td>10.288</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

The T-test showed that the hypothesis was rejected at $p< 0.01$ level of significance. This means pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards teacher-centred
and child-centred teaching methods are significantly different. Teachers may favour one method than the other.

4.2.3 Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two stated that there is no significant relationship between pre-school teachers attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods and child-centred teaching methods and their level of training.

After testing this hypothesis it was expected that there would be no significant relationship between pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods and teachers-centred teaching methods and their academic qualifications at 0.05 level of significance. It was tested as two separate correlations as depicted on Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9 Correlation of Academic Qualifications and Child-Centred Teaching Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No of cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std deviation</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards child-centred</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.9375</td>
<td>0.8294</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
<td>0.306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

This hypothesis was rejected because when Spearman’s Rho correlation was used, it showed that pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred teaching method are significantly related at $p<0.01$ level of significance and are positively correlated, at 0.306 level of significance. This means that as pre-school teachers
acquire more education, the more they are more likely to favour child-centred teaching methodologies.

Table 10 Correlation of Academic Qualifications and Teacher-Centred Teaching Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No of cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std deviation</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Teacher-centred</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>2.4937</td>
<td>1.2452</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
<td>-0.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic qualifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

When the hypothesis two was tested again using Spearman Rho correlation to find out whether pre-schools teachers' attitude toward teacher-centred teaching methods are related to their academic qualification, it was revealed to be negatively correlated at -0.237. This means that the lower the educational level of the teachers, the more their attitudes are likely to be teacher-centred teaching methods.

4.2.4 Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three proposed that there is no significant relationship towards pre-school teachers' attitudes towards teachers'-centred and child-centred teaching methods and their attitudes towards professional qualifications, at 0.05 level of significant. It was tested in two steps.
This hypothesis was rejected because the results showed that as teachers acquire more education, their attitudes tend to favour child-centred teaching methods. When Spearman’s Rho correlation was used to test pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods and their professional qualifications, the results revealed that there is significant relationship among pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards child-centred and their professional qualifications. The correlation coefficient was positive at 0.418. This shows that as teachers became more professionally qualified, they held more favourable attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods.

When Spearman’s Rho correlation was performed, the results showed that pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methods and their professional qualifications did not significantly correlate.

* significant at $\alpha = 0.05$
professional qualifications are significantly related at p<0.05 level of significance, but are negatively correlated at -0.306. This means that as teachers became more professionally qualified, they held more negative attitudes towards teacher-centred methodologies. See Table 13 above.

4.2.5 Hypothesis Four

It was stated in hypothesis four that there is no significant relationship among pre-school teacher attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their age. It was tested in two steps.

Table 13 Correlation for Pre-schools Teachers' Age and Child-centred Teaching Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. deviation</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Child-Centred</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.9375</td>
<td>0.8294</td>
<td>0.015*</td>
<td>0.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

The hypothesis was however rejected because the results showed that as teachers age advance, they tend to favour child-centred teaching methods. When pre-school teachers' age and their attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods were correlated using Spearman's Rho, the results show that there is a significant but weak relationship. The correlation co-efficient was positive at 0.194. This shows that, older pre-school teachers, tend to become more favourable to child-centred teaching methods than younger pre-school teachers.
Table 14 Correlation for Pre-School Teachers’ Age and Teacher-Centred Teaching Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No of cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. deviation</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Teacher-Centred</td>
<td>Teachers' Age</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>2.4937</td>
<td>1.2452</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

The same hypothesis was tested using Spearman’s Rho correlation method to determine whether there is positive relationship among pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methods and their age. The results indicated that age is significantly related to teacher-centred teaching methods but negatively correlated at $-0.324$. This means that as teachers became older, they held more negative attitudes towards teacher-centred methodologies.

4.2.6 Hypothesis Five

It was stated in hypothesis five that there is no significant relationship among pre-school teacher attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods and their age. It was tested in two separate steps.

Table 15 Correlation for Teachers’ Teaching Experience and Child-centred Teaching Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No of cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. deviation</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Child-Centred</td>
<td>Teachers years of Experience</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.9375</td>
<td>0.8294</td>
<td>0.016*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

This hypothesis was rejected because the results revealed that as teachers’ years of experience increase, they tend to favour child-centred teaching methods. When
the hypothesis was tested using Spearman Rho correlation to test whether there is positive significant relationship among pre-school teachers’ attitude towards child-centred teaching methods and experience, the direction of the relationship it showed that there is a positively significant but weak relationship of 0.191. This means teachers who had more years of experience held positive attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods.

**Table 16 Correlation for Teachers’ Teaching Experience and Teacher-centred Teaching Methods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No of cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. deviation</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Teacher-Centred</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>2.4937</td>
<td>1.2452</td>
<td>0.008*</td>
<td>-0.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' years of Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

When the same hypothesis was tested using Spearman Rho correlation to find out whether there is significant relationship among pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methods and experience, it showed that there is negative relationship though not very strong of correlation coefficient -0.208. This suggests that teachers’ attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methods and their experience were inversely related. Teachers who had more years of experience had less positive attitudes towards teacher-centred methods.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND FINDINGS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section is on the discussions of the results of the study. The second section presents the implications of the study to the teachers and the last section provides recommendations derived from the findings of the study.

5.1 THE RESULTS

a. The results of this study showed teachers' attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods are two distinct attitudes. This means that a pre-school teacher favours a particular teaching method but does not use the two at the same time.

b. Teachers' attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods were significant and positively correlated to teachers' age. The result showed that as teachers advance in age, they tend to favour child-centred teaching methods.

c. Teachers' attitudes for teacher-centred teaching methods were significant and negatively correlated to age. This means that young teachers tend to favour teacher-centred teaching methods.

d. There was a significant positive relationship between teachers' attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods, and academic level. This means
that as teachers acquire more education, their attitudes change to favour child-centred teaching methods.

e. There was a significant negative relationship between teachers' attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methods and their academic level. The results showed that teachers who favoured teacher-centred teaching methods had lower academic levels than teachers who favoured child-centred teaching methods.

f. There was a significant positive relationship among pre-school teachers' attitude towards child-centred teaching methods and their professional qualifications. The results showed that teachers who were professionally qualified were favourable to child-centred teaching methods.

g. There was a significant negative relationship among pre-school teachers' attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methods and their professional qualifications. This means that teachers who are untrained were more favourable to teacher-centred teaching methods.

h. There was a significant but weak positive relationship among pre-school teachers' attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods and their years of experience. This means that, as teachers' years of experience advance, they tend to favour child-centred teaching methods.

i. There was a significant but weak negative relationship among attitudes towards teacher-centred teaching methods and their years of experience. The results showed that teachers with less years of experience tended to favour child-centred teaching methods.
5.1.1 Discussion

The study showed that a teacher could either be favourable to child-centred or teacher-centred teaching methods but generally favour one method more than the other. The choice of the methods adopted by the teacher is determined by such factors as teachers age, the educational level, the level of training and years of experience, as the following paragraphs indicate.

In this study, educational level was related to the methods the teacher would use to teach. Those with high education were more favourable to child-centred teaching methods than teacher-centred teaching methods. This supports what Kivuva (1997) found out. One explanation for this is that they are aware of the developmental pattern of human beings and what is best at a particular stage of development (Funzi 1995). This is consistent with Copple (1991), Mohammed (1994), Kivuva (1997) and Franyo’s (1998) findings. This study documented that those teachers who have low education level that is, primary school graduates and high school dropouts are more favourable to teacher-centred teaching methods while those with high educational level, that is, A-level and university graduates were more positive to child-centred teaching methods. These results are consistent with the studies done by Hoffman in Germany and were published in Der Spiegel (1990) and what Whitebook (1989) found out.

Trained teachers also reported to use child-centred teaching methods. This means that professional qualifications of the teacher may influence her attitudes
towards child-centred teaching methods. Similar findings are by Whitebook (1989), Kivuva (1997), and Smith (2000) who found in their studies that the professional qualifications of teachers determine their attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods. As in other studies, teachers with low qualifications prefer to use teacher-centred teaching methods that do not pose great challenges to the teacher (Hendricks 1993, Franyo 1998 and Schulte, 1997).

Copple (1991) found that a teacher improves her qualifications through training. He also found out that as teachers further their training, they tend to become more efficient in their teaching and their attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods become stronger. This study documented that trained teachers were more favourable to child-centred teaching methods. Teachers who had attended improvement courses in addition to their training were more positive towards child-centred teaching methods and less positive towards teacher-centred teaching methods. This study shows that younger teachers were more teacher-centred than older teachers. This trend however changed as teachers’ age advanced. This is supporting the findings of Mullei (1985, Smilansky (1990) and Smith (2000), which documented that teachers’ age does influence teachers’ teaching methods where older teachers respond more to the needs of the children more favourably than young teachers thus they tend to adopt discovery methods, which are useful to young children’s intellectual growth.
The results of the study show that experienced teachers were more favourable to child-centred than inexperienced teachers. The results also indicated that as their years of experience increased, their attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods become more favourable while those towards teacher-centred become less favourable. Mullei (1985), found that teachers who were new in the profession used teacher-centred teaching methods while the experienced teachers used child-centred teaching methods while teaching. Her findings have been supported by this study. Other studies that have been supported by this study are studies conducted by Honowitzertal (1995), Copple (1991) who said that experience nurtures teachers’ confidence and her competence in teaching, hence becoming an effective teacher.

5.2 IMPLICATION OF THE FINDINGS

5.2.1 Implications for the Teachers

Teachers influence children’s learning through the teaching methods they use in the classroom. They also pass on their attitudes and views they hold about children and learning to children. This implies that if teachers hold favourable attitudes towards child-centred teaching methods, they reflect them when they teach. Children taught through these methods will become independent, curious and creative and develop positive attitudes towards learning, thus develop their potentiality. Positive attitudes towards and use of teacher-centred teaching methods implies that children will have limited experiences. Research by Smilanksy et al (1990) shows that this practice has costs involved. These include
limiting opportunities for the children, undermining their potential and ignoring talent and entertaining dependency. Since the study results suggest that teachers have different attitudes towards the teaching methods, they should be aware of the implications of these attitudes and the use of the teaching methods.

5.2.2 Implications for Teacher-Trainees

Some teachers were more favourable to teacher-centred teaching methods than to child-centred teaching methods. This suggests that teacher trainers may not be using or demonstrating to the student teachers the child-centred methods and also the importance of using the recommended teaching methods. There is the need for the trainers to demonstrate to the student teachers the value of using proper teaching methods by teaching the student teachers using child-centred teaching methods. There is also the need to encourage the untrained teachers to attend in-service courses where they can learn about methods recommended for pre-school children. Refresher courses would also help emphasize to the trained teachers about the importance of using child-centred teaching methods always. It is through these opportunities that teachers will cultivate those attitudes that favour child-centred teaching methods.

5.2.3 Implications for Pre-school Head teachers

Quite a number of teachers were not trained while others had low educational level. Head teachers have an obligation to encourage their untrained staff to enroll for the in-service training to improve their services. Also, as representatives
of the government in their schools, they should ensure that teachers use the recommended teaching methods to teach. They should also provide enough teaching and learning materials to ensure effective teaching takes place.

5.2.4 Implication for the Policy Makers

Some policies made in regard to pre-school education may not be in practice, for example, the use of child-centred teaching methods. The policy makers should put in place some measures to monitor how the teachers are implementing what has been recommended. Sending pre-school inspectors to schools regularly would ensure that the policies recommended are being implemented. They should also organize teachers’ open days where they can discuss with teachers’ issues affecting them in their work. This will help teachers to use only the methods that are recommended. When their needs are attended to, they will love their work and foster attitudes that favour children and child-centred teaching methods.

5.2.5 Implications For Further Research

Studies on pre-school teachers and the teaching methods used in pre-school institutions in Kenya have not been exhaustively researched on. This was a pioneer study in the investigation of teacher-centred and child-centred teaching method attitudes as being separately held attitudes. Research confirming these findings need to be replicated with other researchers. Also, there is room for more researches and researchers may concentrate in this area. Such areas include factors within and without school that could influence teachers’ effectiveness in
teaching both directly or indirectly. Longitudinal research can be conducted on teacher trainees in colleges and in their teaching after colleges to find out whether there is any change in their attitudes. Observational studies may also be conducted in the classrooms so as to find out whether teachers actually use child-centred teaching strategies or not. By carrying out such researches, the quality of education offered in the Kenyan pre-schools will be improved.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Recommendations for Teachers

1. It is recommended that pre-school teachers use child-centred teaching methods while teaching in the pre-school at all times. This is because they have great influence in the life of children that they teach. Also, they easily transmit their attitudes to the children and this will influence children’s view of school and learning.

2. It is recommended that pre-school teachers improve their qualifications and their academic level by enrolling to in-service courses. This will help them increase their knowledge on child development, material making and teaching skills thus becoming effective teachers.
5.3.2 Recommendation for Teacher-Trainers

It is recommended that pre-school trainers use child-centred teaching methods when training as this will emphasize to the students the value of using these methods and as a result use them when they are teaching. The study also recommends that trainers be organizing refresher courses for the teachers already in the field. This will help update teachers' knowledge on the new recommendations and policies made in regard to teaching methods in pre-schools. By doing this, teachers will be more convinced why they must foster favourable attitudes towards child-centred teaching method.

It is also recommended that teacher trainers teach the student teachers how to develop and use teaching and learning materials. Trainers are recommended to encourage teachers to improve the locally available materials where it is not possible to buy the materials.

5.3.3 Recommendations for Pre-School Headteachers

It is recommended that headteachers encourage their untrained teachers to attend in-service and self-improvement courses. Also, it is recommended that headteachers provide adequate learning and teaching materials to the teachers if they are to achieve the stipulated goals.

Headteachers are also recommended to visit teachers in their classrooms to see how they are fairing. In such visits, the headteacher can help the teacher to be
more efficient by guiding them to improve in areas that they are weak in. It is also recommended that head teachers be organizing seminars and inviting resource persons regularly in order to help teachers share their experiences, meet specialists, and be informed about the recent developments in Early Childhood Education.

5.3.4 Recommendations to Policy Makers

It is recommended that the policy makers put some measures in place to ensure that teachers actually implement what has been recommended. This can be done through regular inspection of teachers. It is also recommended that the policy makers hold teachers' open days where teachers can discuss issues affecting their work. The inspectors can also use these forums to give teachers feedback on the areas that they find that teachers are failing. This will help teachers to cultivate attitudes that are favourable to the teaching method that they use in schools.

5.3.5 Recommendation for Further Researchers

i) Spearman’s Rho correlation method that was used in this study had not been used before in teaching methods at pre-school level in Kenya. Other researchers could adopt Spearman’s Rho correlation when carrying out observational studies.

ii) This study centred on teachers already in the field and their attitudes towards child-centred and teacher-centred teaching methods. Other researchers could employ longitudinal research to those trainees who are taking full-time courses in college to find out whether their attitudes will change with time.
iii) This research showed that inexperienced teachers are more favourable to teacher-centred teaching methods than the experienced teachers. Other studies should be conducted to replicate the findings and how find out whether experience influences attitudes towards teaching methods.
REFERENCES


   London: Wardlock Educational.


Wasanga, M.C. (1987). A study of attitudes of primary school pre-school teachers:


QUESTIONNAIRE

Kindly fill in the questionnaire below. The information is strictly for educational purposes. It will be treated with confidentiality.

PART ONE

1.1 Name of the school

1.2 Sex of the respondent M( ) F( )

1.3 Age of the respondent

(a) 21 - 25 ( )
(b) 26 - 30 ( )
(c) 31 - 35 ( )
(d) Over 35 ( )

1.3 Academic qualification

(a) CPE/KCPE ( )
(b) O-Level/KCSE ( )
(c) A-Level ( )
(d) Any other ( )

1.4 Your professional qualifications

(a) Untrained ( )
(b) In-service short courses ( )
(c) Certificate ( )
(d) Diploma in ECE ( )
(e) Bachelor of Education ( )
(f) Any other ( )

1.5 If trained, please state where.

1.6 What was the duration of your training?

(a) 3 months ( )
(b) 6 - 12 months ( )
(c) 13 - 18 months ( )
(d) 18+ months ( )
(e) Other (specify length) ( )

1.8 Your experience in teaching

(a) 0 - 1 years ( )
PART TWO

A: Please indicate whether you Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), or strongly Disagree (SD) with the following statements by putting a tick in the corresponding column. Please put only one tick against each statement.

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PART THREE

A: Tick the column that agrees with your opinion.

a) Pre-school teachers' attitude towards teaching.

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g) Pre-school teachers’ attitudes towards implementation using pre-school teacher-centred teaching methods.

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h) Pre-school teachers' attitudes towards children participation using child-centred teaching methods.

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i) Pre-school teachers' attitudes towards children participation using pre-school teacher-centred teaching methods.

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PART FOUR

A) (i) How often do you use child-centred teaching methods to teach music?
Always
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

(ii) How often do you use pre-school teacher-centred teaching methods to teach music?
Always
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

B) (i) How often do you use child-centred teaching methods to teach numbers?
Always
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

(ii) How often do you use pre-school teacher-centred teaching methods to teach numbers?
Always
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

C) (i) How often do you use child-centred teaching methods to teach reading?
Always
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never
(ii) How often do you use pre-school teacher-centred teaching methods to teach reading?
- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

D) (i) How often do you use child-centred teaching methods to teach writing?
- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

(ii) How often do you use pre-school teacher-centred teaching methods to teach writing?
- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

e) (i) How often do you use child-centred teaching methods to teach science?
- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

(ii) How often do you use pre-school teacher-centred teaching methods to teach science?
- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never
f) (i) How often do you use child-centred teaching methods to teach geography?

Always
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

(ii) How often do you use pre-school teacher-centred teaching methods to teach geography?

Always
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

g) How often do you allow children to learn on their own?

Always
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

How often do you allow children to play on their own?

Always
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

(1) Were you taught anything concerning development and use of teaching materials?

Yes (  ) No (  )

(2) If yes, has this information helped you?
How?

(3) If no, do you find it hard to develop and use material to enhance the learning of the pre-school children?
Explain your answer.

i) How do you assess the availability of teaching and learning materials in your school?
Adequate  ( )
Inadequate  ( )
Not present at all  ( )