

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES USED IN TEACHING
READING: AN IMPLICATION ON GRADE THREE PUPILS' READING
SKILLS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

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E83/21391/2012

**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
STUDIES IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION OF
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

FEBRUARY, 2019

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university for certification. The thesis has been complemented by referenced works duly acknowledged. Where texts, data (spoken words), graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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DEDICATON

To my husband Mr. David Njogu and our children EdrianGakuya and Royd Ngire.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am greatly indebted to Dr. Teresa Mwoma and Dr. Yattani Buna for their guidance and invaluable input in the development of this research thesis. Much appreciation also goes to my friends and several individuals who have been actively involved in the discussions which have ended up in the completion of this thesis. I owe much gratitude to the many authors of books, articles and research materials whose work I have referenced and has formed the basis of my research.

My gratitude also goes to the Ministry of Education for granting me permission to carry out research in Nairobi County lower primary schools. Much appreciation goes to the headteachers and teachers who allowed me to conduct the research in their schools in Embakasi Sub-County.

The completion of this work would not have been possible without assistance and cooperation of many people and institution like Kenyatta University to which I am indebted. May God bless each and every one of them abundantly.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA	:	One way Analysis of Variance
CD	:	Compact Disc
DVD	:	Digital Versatile Disc
ECD	:	Early Childhood Development
ECE	:	Early Childhood Education
EPRC	:	Educational Policy Review Commission
ESL	:	English as a Second Language
IEBC	:	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
		Innovation
IPAR	:	Institute of Personality Assessment and Research
KICD	:	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
KNBS	:	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
LABE	:	Literacy and Basic Education
MoEST	:	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NACOSTI	:	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NAPE	:	National Assessment of Progress in Education
NCDC	:	National Curriculum Development Centre
NICHD	:	National Institute of Child Health and Human
		National Reading Panel
NRP	:	National Reading Panel
PTE	:	Primary Teacher Education
PTT	:	Pupils Talking Time
SACMEQ	:	South and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring
		Standard Australian English

SPSS	:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UK	:	United Kingdom
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	:	United States of America
VDCT	:	Vocabulary Dictation

ABSTRACT

Reading skills are vital to lower primary school pupils because it is the foundation for learning. However, studies worldwide indicate low levels of reading skills in schools and little has been done to find out how different instructional strategies used in lower grade schools influence learners' acquisition of reading skills. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to establish the use of instructional strategies and resources on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils in Embakasi, Nairobi County, Kenya. The study objectives were: to establish levels of reading skills among the Grade Three Pupils, to explore selected instructional strategies used in Grade Three teaching of reading in Nairobi County and to examine the teachers' use of instructional resources in teaching and learning reading with the Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County. The research was guided by Holdaway's Theory of Literacy Development and supported by Instructional Theory by Robert Gagne. The study used mixed methodology approach on a target population of 225 headteachers from 225 primary schools, 675 Grade Three teachers and 30,000 Grade Three Pupils, totaling to 30,900. Sample size of this study comprised 10 headteachers, 30 Grade Three teachers and 150 Grade Three Pupils. Research instruments were questionnaires for Grade Three teachers, interview schedule for headteachers, class observation checklist and a reading test for the Grade Three Pupils. Pilot study was done to pre-test the instruments and content validity was determined. Reliability was ensured through test retest and a Cronbach Alpha Coefficient with index of 0.7 obtained. Data was collected from headteachers, Grade Three teachers and Grade Three Pupils and its analysis began by coding the field data. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically following the research objectives while the quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics whereby frequencies and percentages were used. Inferential statistics used ANOVA and data presented using frequencies, tables, percentages and charts. The study established that 50% of the pupils were below average in reading of letter and letter sound recognition, 57.1% in sentence and paragraph reading, 53.6% in story reading and a mere 60.7% in comprehension skills. The study also revealed that majority 78% of the teachers agreed that small reading groups as opposed to large groups are effective in improving class three reading skills. Most of the teachers 60.7% indicated that reading books were scarce. The study recommended that MoE should provide refresher courses to teachers on teaching methodologies that would improve reading skills among the Grade Three pupils and that teachers should form small reading groups which provide every learner with an opportunity to actively participate in reading activities. Other stakeholders like parents and teachers should come together and develop learning resources to help in better acquisition of reading skills.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents background to the study, statement of the research problem, the purpose of the study, objectives of the study and the research questions. It also covers significance of the study, limitations, delimitations and assumptions of the study. It also provides theoretical and conceptual frameworks and a list of operational definition of key terms.

1.2 Background to the Study

Reading is a complex and active process that involves understanding of written text, developing and deducing meaning appropriately to the type of text, situation, and purpose (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2013). The acquisition of reading skills is a complex intellectual process and unlike language which seems automatic, children require skilled instructions in learning to read and to develop strong reading skills (Howie, 2010). One of the effective interventions for boosting reading among the children in lower primary schools could be proper use of instructional strategies and resources (Shanahan, 2010). Instructional strategies are the methods that the teacher uses to deliver various contents (Al-Osseli, 2010). These strategies help the learners to learn independently and become strategic readers (Stahl, 2012). The instructional resources help teachers to make learning enjoyable and help learners desire to learn (Doyle, 2008).

Reading helps learners to broaden their thinking skills, learn to concentrate and expand their vocabulary. According to Gove and Cvelich (2011), children need to

absorb increasing amounts of instructional content in print form as to enable them to master the learning content in the successive levels. Those children who fail to learn to read in the early grades are likely to face challenges of reading in the latter grades (Blog, 2015). Learners need to be versed in reading in their earliest years of formal schooling to build up a better foundation for all formal learning. The learners need to acquire these reading abilities in the foundational phase otherwise they may struggle to catch up in the successive grades (Teale, 2013). Through reading, learners are able to decode words and previous experiences to form the foundation and create meanings for print words (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2013). The skills to read and understand a simple text are the most basic skills that pupils need in lower primary school (Alfassi, 2014).

Children who lag behind in their reading skills receive less practice in reading than others do, miss opportunities to develop reading comprehension strategies, often encounter reading materials that are too advanced for their skills, and may acquire negative attitudes towards reading (Jamison, 2012). Such processes may lead to what he termed as Matthew effect, in which poor reading skills impede learning in other academic areas. This increasingly depends on reading across the school years. The government therefore should provide teachers with the necessary infrastructure to improve reading skills among learners in lower primary (Halladay, 2012).

Acquisition of proper skills in reading depends on the correct utilization of instructional strategies and instructional resources by the teacher because they both facilitate the understanding of difficult concepts (Hanson & Padua, 2014). More so, if well utilized, the resources make it easier for learners to follow, understand and retain

content of the lesson (Mubichakani&Koros, 2014). Also, the availability of instructional resources may influence the level of reading skills among the learners in lower primary (Torgesen, 2012). Mubichakani and Koros (2014) assert that instructional resources are the teaching and learning aids used in the learning process to make the content of what is presented more vivid, interesting and pragmatic to learners.

A study conducted in Nigeria by Namdi (2005) indicated that instructional materials vary from simple to expensive ones. The simple ones are such as the chalkboard, pictures, textbooks, flash cards, counters and worksheets among others. The more complex and perhaps expensive ones are like the television, computers and slides among others. These resources are vital ingredients in learning, because they facilitate the learning process (Snowling&Hulme, 2011). In essence, lack of proper, plenty and variety of instructional resources in a classroom situation could result to serious reading problems (Connor & Morrison, 2009).

The role of teachers, in terms of teaching strategies and use of instructional materials in early literacy acquisition as rooted in the Education Policy Review Commission report (EPRC, 2002), indicate that the teachers ensure that instructional resources are available as part of the instructional process (Lindsay & Knight, 2007). Indeed their responsibility revolves around instructional strategies and materials used in imparting early reading skills. Chall (2003) reports that teachers are said to be partners, clients, consumers and educational assistants in as far as acquisition of reading skills and their roles in imparting of such skills is concerned. Despite this, studies by UNESCO (2011) have demonstrated that in spite of the accessibility of strategies for teaching reading

and regardless of the fact that the teachers in Grade Three should integrate teaching resources in their teaching of reading, pupils' world over have low reading abilities.

A study in Europe by Richards and Rodgers (2014) indicated that 10% of pupils do not reach average reading levels. A similar study in America by UNESCO in 2011 reported that many children struggle to read and this leads to poor academic performance. Additionally, Queensland Studies Authority (2010) showed that worldwide, 3% of Year 3 learners, 16.6% of Year 5 learners and 5.5% of Year 7 learners are achieving below the benchmark in reading. This is a clear indication that low reading achievement among pupils is widespread.

A study conducted in South Africa by Taylor and Taylor (2013) found that the average Grade 3 learners scored 20% in English reading test. Similarly, a report by the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education (SACMEQ, 2007) indicated that reading achievement across Africa is very low. For instance, O'Connor and Geiger (2009) ascertained that most of the schools in developing countries do not use efficient instructional resources and strategies needed for reading.

A study conducted in Tanzania by Medadi (2014) established that inadequate reading resources, poor methods of teaching and inadequate number of teachers are some of the causes of poor reading skills. Another study carried out by Uwezo (2011) in East Africa revealed that about 70% of the standard three pupils were not able to read a standard 2 level narrative both in English or Kiswahili.

In Uganda, reading skills is not emphasized enough in lower primary (Namata, 2010). This is because the personnel in early childhood development (ECD) centres are

expected to provide a stimulating environment to enhance child holistic growth and development at the expense of reading (National Curriculum Development Centre, 2010). This is attributed to inadequate instructional materials and poor teaching strategies (Literacy and Basic Education, 2013).

A study by Namata (2010) emphasized on the importance of early class reading especially by Grade Three given that after the elementary levels, poor readers remain poor readers while good readers remain good readers. He asserted that as early as Grade Three and four, poor readers generally perform below their peers and are unlikely to catch up. At class four, it becomes increasingly difficult to incorporate beginning reading instruction into the classroom setting. Medadi (2014) found out that 74 % of pupils who were poor readers in lower primary remained similarly poor readers at upper primary. Likewise, 87 % of those who were good readers in lower primary remained good readers in upper primary. Therefore, since low level of reading achievement has long lasting impact on the later learning and productive life, there is need to focus on improving acquisition of early reading skills in children.

In Kenya, learners may face serious reading challenges in future due to lack of appropriate instructional methods and resources (IPAR, 2008). Uwezo (2012) indicated that nationally, only about 32% of the standard three pupils could read a standard 2 passage in English and Kiswahili. Further, the study showed that 40% of children in standard eight could not read a standard two level story while slightly more than half couldn't read even a paragraph.

Moreover, Runo (2010) established that, KCPE results for 2008-2009 in Nairobi indicated that most of the candidates performed poorly in English and that the reason

could have been the insufficient reading which might have affected performance in other subjects. Wangui (2011) in her study also asserted that, pupils in Kenya lagged behind their counterparts in Mauritius, Swaziland, Tanzania and Seychelles in reading skills. In addition, research on reading skills that have been conducted in Kenya are in harmony with these cited studies that reading skills acquisition is low (Ogola, 2011; Nyamu, 2015; UWEZO, 2011). This demonstrates the fact that, a child who is a poor reader in pre-school and first grade is 88% more likely to remain poor in fourth grade and all other subsequent levels of learning (Mberia, 2012).

Furthermore, a study conducted in Kenya on the role of instructional materials on reading skills, revealed improved reading skills among early childhood and primary school learners with effective availability and application of the reading instructional materials (Omuna & Kimutai, 2016). This implies that effective use of instructional materials is an important educational component which needs to be factored in reading instructions.

From the foregoing, use of inappropriate and inadequate instructional strategies and resources could lead to children's inability to acquire reading skills. In-depth studies should therefore be conducted in the use of the instructional strategies and resources in early childhood education because there is scarcity of recorded research reports in this field. The present study therefore sought to establish the effect of use of instructional strategies and resources used by teachers on reading skills among grade three pupils in Embakasi, Nairobi County.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Global and regional studies indicate a low reading achievement by children with 10% of them not reaching the average levels required and majority across Africa struggle to read which leads to poor academic performance with Kenya not being spared. For instance in Nairobi County, Kenya, reading levels among pupils was less than 33.9% compared to the national standards. A study conducted in Kenya by Uwezo (2012) revealed that about 70% of the standard three pupils were not able to read a class 2 level narrative both in English and Kiswahili.

This has raised a point of concern to the Education stakeholders since learners achievement in reading affect all the subjects across the curriculum. Moreover, studies related to what measures were being put in place to correct utilization of instructional strategies and resources by both the teachers and the learners in Kenya were scarce. In view of this, indepth study in the use of instructional strategies and resources among grade three learners was necessary because very little was known on teachers' use of instructional strategies and resources geared towards acquisition of reading skills by their learners. Thus, there was dire need to conduct this study to establish the situation on the ground because if the situation remains the same, there would be dismal academic performance.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish the use of instructional strategies and resources in teaching reading and its implication on Grade Three Pupils reading skills in Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i) To establish the levels of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.
- ii) To explore selected instructional strategies used in Grade Three teaching of reading in Nairobi County.
- iii) To examine the teachers use of instructional resources in teaching and learning reading with the Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.

1.6 Research Hypotheses

H₁1: There is a relationship between use of groupwork strategy and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

H₁2: There is a relationship between use of storytelling strategy and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

H₁3: There is a relationship between use of play activities and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

H₁4: There is a relationship between use of instructional resources and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

This research study assumed that Grade Three learners have some skills in reading since they have been learning reading in the previous classes. It was also the assumption of this study that Grade Three teachers use appropriate instructional strategies and resources in teaching reading among the Grade Three learners. On the

other hand, the study assumed that all Grade Three teachers in Nairobi County are professionally trained and have the knowledge and skills in the teaching of reading.

1.8 Limitation and Delimitation of the Study

In this section, the study highlighted the limitations and delimitations of the study.

1.8.1 Limitations of the Study

The study constitutes a limitation in that some teachers were uncomfortable with the lesson observations but the researcher assured them that their identities would not be revealed at all. The headteachers were also reluctant to participate fully in the study because of their busy schedules. This was overcome by administering the interview schedules to head teachers at their own convenient time. On the other hand, some Grade Three teachers were apprehensive about the English reading test administered to their pupils. The researcher assured them of confidentiality in handling the results.

1.8.2 Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to public primary schools in Nairobi County because it is a cosmopolitan area and due to its diverse nature, the learners are exposed to different languages making Kiswahili and English the language of the catchment area. The study focused on Grade Three Pupils in lower primary. Grade Three is also a transitional class and English is used as a medium of instruction in upper classes.

The study also focused on instructional strategies and resources as factors influencing the development of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils. This is because acquisition of reading skills is a complex intellectual process and therefore children require skilled instructions and correct utilization of instructional strategies and

resources by the teachers to develop strong reading skills. The study also focused on the instruction of reading in Grade Three.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study findings may provide information that may be useful to teacher training institutions on the need to adequately equip trainees with skills to enable them effectively use various strategies in classroom instruction of reading among the Grade Three Pupils. The study findings may also provide information to the Primary Teacher Education (PTE) curriculum designers on the various reading instructional strategies and resources to include in the PTE curriculum.

In addition, the results of this study may provide school curriculum implementers with information on the determinants of pupils' reading skills which may be useful in helping them to come up with appropriate strategies to improve reading skills among Grade Three Pupils. The findings and suggestions of this study may also assist school administrators in supervision and evaluation of the reading instructional process in their schools.

Furthermore, the findings of this study may contribute to the already existing literature in pedagogy especially teaching reading among Grade Three Pupils and form a basis for further research by academicians interested in conducting further studies in a similar area.

1.10 Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

This section presents the theoretical underpinnings which guided the study. It also provides the conceptual framework showing the relationship between variables of the study.

1.10.1 Holdaway's Theory of Literacy Development

This study was underpinned by Holdaway's Theory of Literacy Development (1979). This theory was grounded on the fact that acquisition of reading skills is a complex and active process that involves developing a written text and deducing appropriate meaning from the text. Holdaway's theory asserts that, foundation of literacy development is rooted on the correct utilization of teaching strategies (groupwork, storytelling, play activity) in a literacy rich environment

Holdaway advocates four processes of learning which include demonstration, participation, role play/practice and performance. Demonstration involves the learner listening to the teacher while learning to read. The second process is participation, where the learner participates in the reading process. The third process is role play (practice), where the learner practises what he/she has learnt from the teacher (reading process) and actively get involved in the learning process. Finally, performance involves the learner practising the skill (reading) and becoming an independent reader.

Literacy development therefore encompasses two assumptions; acquisition of literacy skills follows a natural development pattern and that utilization of specific teaching strategies enhances literacy development. Tracy and Morrow (2006) assert that first, the children observe adults engaging in literate behavior and finally as the children

progress and internalize the reading skills, they are able to become independent literate individuals. This theory asserts that, the foundation of literacy development is rooted in meaning based instruction (reading instructional strategy).

1.10.2 The Instructional Theory by Robert Gagne

This study was also guided by The Instructional Theory by Robert Gagne (1999). The theory is grounded on three theoretical stances which include constructivism, cognitivism and behaviourism. The instructional theory assists teachers in creating situations that improve the likelihood of learning. This theory, describes how the instructional process and practice should be conducted. It outlines the strategies that a teacher can employ to attain the desired learning objectives(reading skills). The theory could be employed as an educational tool which grade three teachers use to help learners acquire desired skills in reading.

It emphasises on full participation by learners as compared to direct instruction where the teachers dominate the learning process. In this theory learners are usually more motivated when they participate actively in the instructional process by interacting with the learning resources. This theory blends various instructional models, instructional strategies and instructional methods, thus its relevance in this study. Given that the major variables of this study were instructional strategies and resources, the theory helped us to understand how these variables interacted in this study as presented in the following conceptual framework.

1.11 The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows the relationship between independent and dependent variables in the study. The independent variables include instructional

strategies and resources that influenced the acquisition of effective reading skills (dependent variable). The independent variables form the inputs which teaching and learning takes to influence grade three pupils' reading skills which is the output, to give an outcome of appropriate academic performance. Further, there is a number of intervening variables which include government policy, teachers' attitude and teachers' level of academic qualification. The interaction of these variables led to the findings of this study.

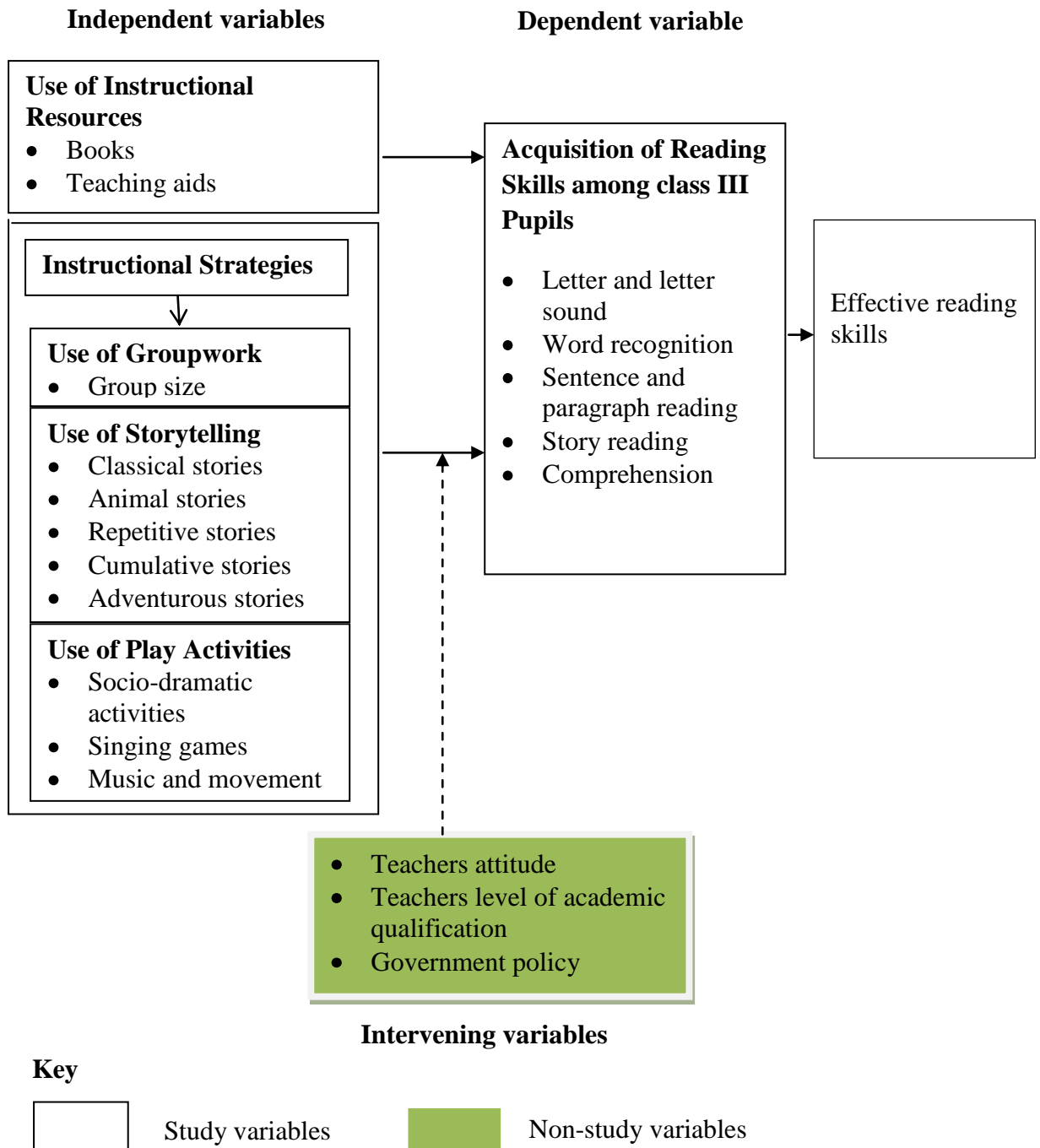


Figure 1.1: The conceptual framework showing instructional strategies and resources influencing acquisition of reading skills in Grade Three

1.12 Operational Definition of Key Terms

- Grade Three Pupils:** These are learners who are completing the lower primary classes and transiting to upper primary.
- Groupwork strategies:** Are approaches of teaching reading skills by putting Grade Three Pupils into convenient groups with specific tasks.
- Implication:** These are effects of instructional strategies and resource used by the teachers on Grade Three Pupils reading skills.
- Instructional resources:** These are significant components of learning process, without which the intended purpose of learning may not be accomplished. They are materials such as textbooks and teaching aids.
- Instructional strategies:** Approaches which a Grade Three teacher applies to enhance acquisition of reading skills among Grade Threepupils. Such strategies include; groupwork, use of storytelling, use of play etc.
- Play activities:** Refer to a game or sport in which a lower primary school child is engaged in. These include; pretended, socio-dramatic, hide and seek and fun activities.

Reading skills:	Refer to learnt behaviour in reading that can be developed and improved overtime among Grade Three pupils. In this case, it involves sound recognition, letternaming, word recognition, sentences and paragraph reading and comprehension.
Storytelling:	Is a form of teaching strategy which involves use of stories. These include classical tales, animal tales, repetitive tales, cumulative tales and adventurous tales.
Strategy:	Is a plan of action designed to achieve long-term goals. In this case it involves the use of reading instructions and resources on the Grade Three Pupils reading skills.
Use:	Utilization of instructional strategies and resources for teaching reading.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature related to the study. It covers: Grade Three Pupils reading skills, influence of teachers' groupwork strategies on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils, influence of use of storytelling on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils, influence of use of play activities on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils, influence of use of instructional resources on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils and summary of the literature review.

2.2 Levels of Reading

Reading skill is the ability to translate print materials to meaning. Reading levels include the phonic and phonemic awareness (letter and letter sound), whole word reading (vocabulary), sentence and paragraph reading, and story reading in comprehension (Roe & Smith, 2012). These are the skills used to improve decoding and comprehension skills to benefit the learners (Alexander, 2006). Reading skills help the learners to learn independently and become strategic readers (Stahl, 2012).

The phrase reading skill and reading ability will be used interchangeably because skills are learned behaviours that can be developed overtime by combining our abilities and knowledge needed in order for the skills to be developed (McNamara & Kendeou, 2011). Similarly, abilities can be improved and refined to some extent. Children's skills to read lay a firm foundation for their academic success and final transition to other education levels (Salehi, 2014).

Grade Three learners with strong skills to read at an early age experience quite a lot of exposure to print media and eventual advancements in a variety of knowledge domains (Chaplain, 2012). They also miss opportunities to develop reading comprehension strategies and often encounter reading material that is too advanced and consequently, may acquire negative attitude about reading itself (Amer, 2012). This may lead to what Ouellette (2006) termed as Matthew effect, in which poor reading skills impede learning in other academic areas. There are five levels in the process of reading; phonics and phonemic awareness, whole word reading (vocabulary), sentence and paragraph reading (fluency) and comprehension (Block & Pressley, 2012). These five levels create the reading skills.

National Reading Panel and Center for Education (2010) defines phonics as a way of acquiring letter-sound correspondences and their use in reading and spelling. Phonic level enables the learners to be able to relate letter and letter sounds (Treiman & Kessler, 2013). According to National Reading Panel and Center for Education (2010), phonics instruction involves teaching letter sound relationships. Learners are taught the technique so that they can identify words that they do not recognize in print. Phonics strategy involves relating letter sounds to reading. It is the relationship between the letters and spellings that represent those sounds in written language (graphemes) and the sounds of spoken language (phonemes) (Wicox, 2013). In learning phonics, learners acquire the speech sounds which are a combination of printed letters and letter combination (Marima, 2013). A series of sounds is blended by the order in which particular letters occur in printed words.

Phonemic awareness is the understanding that letters make sounds and those sounds are systematically joined to make words (Ulusoy&Dedeoglu, 2011). Phonemic awareness is very important in understanding phonics. According to Hempenstall (2009) once phonemic awareness is established and some sound-letter correspondences are learned, the brain begins to recognize new patterns on its own. After demonstrating phonemic awareness, learners begin to develop their phonological awareness, or their ability to rhyme, identify onset sounds, and recognize syllables (Reeb, 2011).

A study by Ding Jia Yu (2015) in Hong Kong on the use of phonics in developing proficiency and enjoyment in English reading in Hong Kong Institute of Education involving 60 students participants and 5 teachers and using qualitative and quantitative research methodologies found out that the differences in language background and school systems should be taken into consideration when phonics approach for reading is used. The study also revealed that using phonics is highly effective in developing reading skills among learners. The study focused on acquisition of reading skills by use of phonics among learners in Hong Kong. The current study sought to establish the level of reading skills among Grade Three in Nairobi County.

A study by National Reading Panel (NRP, 2011) on a meta-analysis reported that first graders who were taught phonics systematically were better able to decode and spell, and they showed significant improvement in their ability to comprehend text. The study reported that 70%, of children learnt to read regardless of how they were taught, but they read more quickly if they were taught phonics, and without phonics, the

remaining 30% might have had real problems with reading. A study done in India by Duke and Block (2012) found that beginning readers who were systematically taught phonics performed better than those who were not. Phonics instruction should not consist of mindless drills, should not be done to the exclusion of reading stories, and should not extend beyond the first half of first grade (Duke & Block, 2012). This study therefore investigated the importance of phonic in India while the current study sought to establish the phonic acquisition among Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.

Another study by Krissy and Feng (2013) on whole language strategy vs phonics strategy in Savannah Georgia, analyzed phonics strategy where fifty-five comparative first grade students were randomly assigned to either a literature embedded group (whole language strategy) or phonics strategy. Both groups used the same schedule and sequence for introducing phoneme patterns. The only variables considered were the degree of phonics which got embedded into the instruction of both groups. The study revealed that phonics group had 20% greater gains in reading and spelling than the whole language group. They concluded that teaching phonics explicitly was more effective than teaching through a dis-embedded phonics approach. While the study focused on the students' phonics strategy gains on reading and spelling, the current study focused on the use of phonics on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

Critics of phonics strategy argue that English spellings are too irregular for phonics strategy to really help children learn to read words (Tompkins, 2011). He finds phonics strategy to be a potential and powerful method of interfering with the process

of learning how to read. However, in a study by Sherine (2012) on alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness in children with speech sound disorder in Athens, knowledge was assessed by comparing accuracy in naming of all 26 letter names and letter sounds, and was further evaluated to determine differences as a function of letter name category. Two levels of phonological awareness on an elision task (larger vs. smaller units) were compared. Finally, correlations between alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness levels were calculated. Overall, participants knew more letter names than letter sounds, and their letter sound knowledge varied according to letter name categories. Outcomes from this study suggest that some children with isolated speech sound disorder would have acquired knowledge about letter names and sound in their kindergarten year, but may encounter difficulty in developing deeper levels of phonological awareness.

Further, a study in United Kingdom by Shayne and Richard (2010) on comparing the effects of more or less letter sound instruction, eighty first grade students were divided into six groups, with three teachers focusing on segmenting and blending vocabulary words (phonics instruction) and three teachers studying words in the context of the story (whole language). Results showed the groups received phonics instruction, spelled and read exception words with greater acceleration and accuracy, than whole language group. This is evidence that, phonics instruction improved students' reading and spelling of words with irregular spelling patterns.

From the foregoing, phonics learning is important because when the children are taught phonics, they will be able to recognize sound in words and spell them correctly. According to NRP (2011), phonics strategy is the most effective way in

teaching reading and therefore, it is necessary to work on phonics needed at the learners reading level. This study therefore sought to establish the influence of use of phonics strategy on reading skills acquisition among Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.

When children are able to read both letters and letter sounds, they are able to connect the letters and letter sounds to a word. Learning a whole word involves teaching children how to read words as a whole piece of language (Toste&Fuch, 2013). Proponents of the whole language philosophy believe that language is a complete system of making meaning with words, functioning in relation to each other in context rather than breaking down language into letters and combination of letters (Bomengen, 2010). Balanced literacy is about balancing explicit language instruction with independent learning and language exploration. It aims at striking a balance between both whole word and phonics when learning to read. The strongest elements of each are incorporated into a literacy programme that aims to guide students toward proficient and lifelong reading (Kimberly 2013).

Children from phonics classroom seem to develop greater ability to use words more effectively than children in more traditional classrooms where skills are practised in isolation (Strickland, 2011). Whole-word reading is also known as whole language. This is a comprehensive and holistic approach of reading where learners focus on the meaning of words in the context of the story being read (Smeda& Sharda, 2014). Balanced literacy is a combination of phonics strategy and whole word approach in reading (Vadasy& Sanders, 2010).

Reutzel and Cooter (2012) state that balanced literacy programmes teach learners skills in reading based on their individual needs and within the context of reading materials of interest to the learner. Many teachers feel that a balanced literacy approach enables them to do a better job of empowering learners to acquire proper reading skills (Heroze, 2012).

In planning to teach reading skills, teachers must take into account the needs and diversity of their learners. Some learners have minimal experiences with print and will need consistent opportunities to work with connected text and meaning-based activities as well as intensive instruction in word identification strategies (Bean & Morewood, 2011). Other learners enter school with many experiences with complex print and with well-developed reading skills. These students will require less time with phonological processing activities (Jolliffe, 2012).

Reading is a very important skill in both learning and communication (Teng, 2009). Reading lessons are considered an important step in the current trend of educational development of both mental and linguistic abilities (Helfrich & Bosh, 2011). Reading methods include silent reading, reading using sub-vocalization (forming the sounds of the words while reading silently), and reading orally to oneself. Silent reading means reading without labial movements or the vibration of vocal cords (Serravallo, 2010). This method implies that graphic forms are visually perceived and then transformed into meanings and ideas without passing through the vocal stage. Silent reading is usually seen as a natural reading behaviour and for decades has been associated with the idea of reading for comprehension (Hardie, 2012).

A study conducted in the US by Allington (2011) to establish the impact of vocabulary knowledge on academic performance of learners indicated that, children who do experience early difficulties in learning to read are likely to experience reading problems throughout the school years into adulthood. The study further reported that the possibility that children would remain poor readers at the end of the fourth grade without transiting to any other level if they were poor readers at the end of the first grade was 88%. This study had similar sentiments in its endeavour.

In UK, similar findings were reported in a longitudinal study carried out by Duke and block (2012) where he asserted that children who enter school with limited reading-related skills are at high risk of qualifying for special education services. In other words, their poor reading skills cannot allow them to transit to other higher levels. These studies affirm the fact that reading skills enhance learners' skills to acquire literacy skills. Armbruster (2010) outlined different components of emergent literacy skills and identified three factors that appear to be associated with Grade Three school learners' later word-decoding skills; oral language, phonological processing abilities, and print knowledge. Phoneme awareness is a process of translating visual codes into meaningful language (Blog, 2015). In the earliest stages, reading in an alphabetic system involves decoding letters into corresponding sounds and linking those sounds to single words (Dalton & Grisham, 2011).

In a longitudinal study conducted in Nigeria among 111 respondents to establish the relationship between early literacy and academic achievement among learners, Share (2010) demonstrated positive correlations between oral language skills and phonemic awareness. The study further asserted that learners with well-developed phoneme and

phonological awareness register impressive transition rates (Pressley, 2010). This research study affirms the fact that the skills of learners to recognize sounds and symbols and establish the connection between them enable the learners to acquire pre-requisite skills for transitions to other levels of learning. In a similar study conducted in Tanzania to determine the effects of phonological sensitivity on language development, Johnston, Anderson and Holligan (2006) asserted that phonological sensitivity refers to skills to manipulate the sound structure of oral language.

A study by Marni (2011) also supports that phonological sensitivity plays a critical role in the normal acquisition of reading skills. Children who are better at detecting and manipulating syllables, rhymes, or phonemes are quicker learning to read. Whereas the connection between oral language and reading is clear for reading comprehension, some studies indicate that vocabulary skills also have a significant impact on decoding skills very early in the process of learning to read (Wagner, Torgesen, Rashotte, Hecht & Barker, 2010).

Another study by Reld and Hagaman(2013) on children with special needs indicate that there is a core phonological deficit in nearly all poor readers regardless of whether their reading abilities are consistent or inconsistent with their general cognitive abilities (Phillips &Torgesen, 2006). Acquisition of skills to read and understand vocabulary is another component of reading skills which enhances transition of children from Grade one to Grade Three (Shapiro, 2011). To read words, it is imperative that the learners know their meanings. According to Johnston (2006), as Grade Three learners develop and become more advanced readers, they not only

learn to connect their oral vocabularies to their reading prowess, but they also strengthen each of these areas by adding new words to their repertoires.

Similar arguments were posed by Landi (2010) in a study conducted in Malawi among 123 respondents to establish the significance of understanding meanings of words in language learning in which they indicated that reading is considered to be a key element of vocabulary development in school-age children. Before children are able to read on their own, children can learn from others reading to them. Landi (2010) asserted that learning vocabulary includes using context, as well as explicit explanations of words and events in the story. This may be done using illustrations in the book to guide explanation and provide a visual reference or comparisons, usually to prior knowledge and past experiences (Tomlinson & Hyson, 2010). Interactions between the adult and the child often include the child's repetition of the new word back to the adult.

When children begin to learn to read, their print vocabulary and oral vocabulary tend to be the same, as children use their vocabulary knowledge to match verbal forms of words with written forms (Torgesen&Rashotte, 2012). These two forms of vocabulary are usually equal up until grade 3 (Landi, 2010). Because written language is much more diverse than spoken language, print vocabulary begins to expand beyond oral vocabulary. The study further indicated that, by age 10, children's vocabulary development through reading moves away from learning concrete words to learning abstract words which are necessary for transition into class one.

In Kenya, teaching reading skills is taught at primary school level (pre-unit to class 8) as a basic skill, in addition to listening, speaking and writing (Dubeck, Jukes

&Okello, 2012). After 9 years of age, which in Kenya places them in grade 4, the learners are expected to learn all the subjects in the school curriculum without any difficulties in reading. Information about the stages of reading development indicates that learners starting at this level should read to learn, where they use reading as a functional tool for acquiring new knowledge (Mugo, Mwoma&Limboro, 2011). Evidence from the Uwezo assessment (2010 & 2011) estimates that only around 50% of children in grade 4 are able to read at grade 2 level, identifying significant delays in acquisition of reading competency among children in Kenyan primary schools.

Indeed, studies have established that a significant number of learners complete the primary school cycle without having achieved the basic levels of reading and comprehension skills (Uwezo, 2011). However, Lerner (2006) noted that reading difficulties among school-going children should be considered a serious handicap in life in that children who do not learn to read may not succeed in life. It is, therefore, necessary for the Grade Three teachers to use the right instructional strategies and resources to improve the reading skills. This study sought to establish the level of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

2.3 Instructional Strategies and Reading Skills

Instructional strategies are approaches or plans of action used by teachers to enhance acquisition of reading skills. Reading strategies are the key essentials in enabling children to acquire reading skills. They help teachers to make learning enjoyable and help learners desire to learn (Jamison, 2012). Instructional strategies focus on not only the method and environment of the teaching process but also on the educational content. Learners' development of reading skills is paramount while choosing a

particular teaching learning strategy so that they can accomplish their goals (Mashau, 2014). Abagi (2012) asserts that, the main aim of the classroom teacher is to support the teaching of reading to children with a variety of teaching strategies.

Research has shown that, proper instructional strategies in reading can improve young children's language proficiency such as vocabulary development and comprehension skills as well as aspects of reading literacy such as phonemic awareness and print knowledge (Hassan & Makamen, 2013). Proper instructional strategy has positive effect on learners' reading skills acquisition which in turn is associated with better reading (Cregan, 2008). Evidence has accumulated to suggest that the principles of good teaching are essentially the same for all children, including those with special educational needs (Rouet & Britt, 2011). While teachers may need to make 'normal' adaptations to teaching methods in class teaching for the majority of children, a greater degree of adaptation may be required for those with more significant learning needs (Vural, 2013)

Learners with special needs may require high levels of practice, more examples of a concept, and greater error-free learning to master key skills in reading (Bell & Limber, 2010). Others may benefit from intensive multi-sensory learning opportunities. This work can be supported by the use of a three-tiered approach to assessment where pupils at risk of failing can be provided with targeted teaching to help them catch up. This should include specification of learning targets as part of an individual educational plan as indicated by National Association of State Directors of Special Education, (2007).

A study in Kenya by Ochien'g (2016) on analysis of the influence of English on performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education further revealed that when teachers are not native speakers of the child's first language and lack sufficient training on how to carry out mother-tongue based teaching, they revert to the old system of teacher centered instruction where pupils are merely required to repeat content after the teacher and are given little room to ask a questions or express themselves (Vecca& Mraz, 2011). Kenyan lessons show that classroom interactions in second language dominant schools are dominated by safe talk, where teachers make little demand on learners, encourage oral answers, repetition of phrases and copying of notes from chalkboards or textbooks, undermining efforts to bring up a new generation of teachers (Ndung'u, 2010).

Runo (2010) asserted that scholars have tried valiantly, inventing many teaching methods in reading, in the hope that all children could be taught to read better. In Kenya, the primary school English syllabus spells out the objectives of teaching English in primary school but remains silent about the competences in each language skill that should be developed in the learners including reading (Hang & Hwang, 2012). Methodology on how to teach the content is not suggested in the syllabus which becomes a problem for the language teacher whose level of English language might also be low (Akbari, 2014). This study therefore sought to find out the influence of instructional strategies on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

2.3.1 Groupwork and Children's Acquisition of Reading Skills

Groupwork is a teaching and learning strategy that can be utilized for all types of pupils and can take various forms in the classroom. Groupwork is a type of cooperative learning where group activities are organized so that learning is dependent on socially structured exchange of information between learners where each learner is held accountable for his/her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others (Slavin, 2013). Using groupwork as a pedagogical tool can be useful in numerous ways (Chiriac&Frykedal, 2011). Through groupwork, pupils can develop social skills, build a sense of community, support and depend on each other for their learning experiences. During group work, the learners or the pupils are the main participants in the learning process while the teacher plays the role of the monitor allowing pupils to take ownership of their learning (Heather, 2011). Therefore, the teacher provides students with an opportunity to take ownership of their own learning during a reading lesson.

Groupwork can be an effective method to motivate pupils, encourage active learning, and develop key critical thinking, communication, and decision-making skills. However, according to Herazo Rivera (2012) without careful planning and facilitation, groupwork can frustrate pupils and instructors and feel like a waste of time. In keeping with these assertions, Rodríguez Sánchez (2014) conducted a study in New Delhi in India, among 23 elementary school learners which revealed that group reading instruction includes rich tasks which promote deep understanding and allows teachers to teach reading skills before and during the reading process and allows instructors to adjust teaching to meet the needs of all learners.

A study done in United States of America by Hafez (2015) on cooperative learning reviewed that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. The spirit within the team has to be one of positive interdependence, that is, a feeling that success for any one is tied directly to the success of others (Mashau, 2014). To put it more concretely, a cooperative learning approach defines the class as comprising heterogeneous groups; the class is organized in groups of four or six pupils in order to fulfill a reading task cooperatively (Goldman & Scardamania, 2014). Reading task is based on interaction and reciprocal interdependence among the members of group and requires mutual help. In this educational approach, pupils and teachers are in a state of dynamic cooperation and together build up an intimate learning and social atmosphere in the classroom (Zammit, 2011).

The forgoing provide opportunities for ESL learners to develop proficiency in Standard Australian English (SAE) in an active and meaningful way through working with different groups of peers such as pairings, buddies, small groups and conferencing (Al-saeed, 2013). ESL learners can see different socio-cultural language and behaviours modeled in a variety of meaningful contexts (Zacharis & Manara, 2011). In brief, it is seen that groupwork is a feature of collaborative learning, which provides social interaction and peer learning opportunity for learners to acquire reading skills (Yamat & Rich, 2014). Since reading development is based on reading in context, the learners should get the input from their context. In most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Amendum, Li and Creamer (2009) report that teachers are

encouraged to create small reading groups with assisted-literacy experience in which the teacher supports and guides the pupils with text on their instructional level.

A study done in Sweden by (Chiriac&Frykedal, 2011) on Effect of Cooperative Learning Strategy on Students' Acquisition and Practice of Scientific Skills in Biology shows that cooperative learning improves students' thinking skills as it allows them to communicate actively with each other. Therefore, cooperative learning has been proposed by many educators to be implemented in classrooms to produce lifelong learners and critical thinkers (Lunenburg, 2011). While the study investigated the effect of cooperative learning on students acquisition of scientific skills among students in Sweden, the current study sought to explore the use of groupwork strategy and the acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.

In groups, every pupil is engaged and every pupil has a voice and can sometimes learn more from one other than they can from the teacher (Padilla de la Cerda, 2013). Meng (2010) noted that the classroom is clearly a place where people have to work together, essentially requiring a compromise between their own individuality and the dynamics of the whole group. It is ideally a co-operative environment. The teacher generally demonstrates such strategies for pupils until the pupils are able to carry them out independently.

A study in India byRodríguez Sánchez (2014) involving 23 elementary school learners revealed that, group reading instruction includes rich tasks which promote deep understanding and allows teachers to teach reading skills before and during the reading process and allows instructors to adjust teaching to meet the needs of all

learners. Every pupil is engaged and every pupil has a voice and can sometimes learn more from one other than they can from the teacher (Padilla de la Cerda, 2013). The teacher generally demonstrates such strategies for pupils until the pupils are able to carry them out independently. It is in this consideration that the current study sought to explore the use of groupwork activities and its implication on reading skills among Grade three pupils in Nairobi County.

According to Chiric and Frykedal (2011), every group member is involved in working on a given task to produce an outcome that they all agree upon. This allows all types of learners, including English language learners, the opportunity to be in an environment where they can work together to improve their reading skills, discuss their ideas as well as share and listen to their peers' thinking process. Nair and Alwee (2012) state that, opportunities are provided through groupwork for learners to talk freely with their peers, which ultimately allow all learners to practise and improve their reading skills.

According to Tuan and Nhu (2010), groupwork must include these key elements: positive interdependence, accountability, social and cognitive development, and interaction. Groupwork is an effective way to encourage pupils to want to learn more, like school better, like each other better, have higher self-esteem, and learn more effective social skills (Nemeth, 2010). Some of the benefits of cooperative reading include: academic gains across different subjects, increase in participation in classrooms, and more social interactions with peers (Schwartz & Pollishuke, 2013).

A study by Helfrich and Bosh (2011) in China on importance of group discussion on learning of grade 1 and 2 English revealed that, small group peer interactions are

paramount for learning reading skills. Tuan and Nhu (2010) assert that interaction is key to second language acquisition and exists as the central feature; it facilitates language learning and engages students in participation in language learning activities.

Another study done in China by Meng (2010) revealed that, groupwork and pair work have become increasingly popular in teaching of reading since they make reading simpler and enjoyable as children learn from one another. The researcher posits that groupwork is a cooperative activity where several pupils, perhaps with a topic, work together to solve a problem. According to Kobayashi (2014) pupils in groups tend to participate more equally and they are also more able to experiment and use the language than they are in a whole-class arrangement. Pair work has many of the same advantages. The moment pupils get into pairs and start working on a problem or talking about something, many more of them would be doing the activity more than if the teacher was working with the whole class, where only one pupil talks at a time.

Meng (2010) noted that the classroom is clearly a place where people have to work together, essentially requiring a compromise between their own individuality and the dynamics of the whole group. It is in this consideration that the current study sought to explore the use groupwork activities and its implication on reading skills among Grade three pupils in Nairobi County. Groupwork and pair work give the pupils chances for greater independence (Taylor, 2013). Pupils work together without the teacher controlling every move, they make some of their own learning decisions, and they decide what language to use to complete a certain task. They can work without the pressure of the whole class listening to what they are doing on reading.

Interactions in small groups provide a basis for acquisition of better reading skills (Gheith& Mustafa, 2015).

According to Amendumet al., (2009) the teacher helps pupils develop an understanding of the text while prompting them to apply strategies they need to become independent readers. It also allows the teacher to assist and support the pupils as they respond to the text in varying ways. These findings affirm the fact that small-group reading is important because it enables teachers to observe pupils' reading behaviour and provide support while they practise reading strategies. During small-group reading, pupils' reading abilities are matched to appropriate reading materials. This allows teachers to demonstrate specific reading behaviours and strategies within context. Harb (2011) posits that small-reading groups provide opportunities for pupils to apply these strategies in order to develop competence through practice.

In most schools in South Africa, prior to a small-group reading lesson, teachers select books they believe pupils could read successfully, with 90% accuracy or better (Klapwijk, 2012). Book selection plays a major role in assisting pupils to learn at optimal rates in groups. In Kenya and in Nairobi County in particular, for instance, designing of group tasks and selections based on pupils' interests, prior knowledge, and competencies spur their development by building upon strengths (Okoth, 2009). In selecting appropriate books, teachers should consider text layout, book language, supportive and challenging features of the book, and a pupil's oral language and current strategies for problem solving at difficult points during a reading task.

In a study conducted in Nairobi County, Mwaniki (2010) reports that to help pupils integrate cues, the teacher prompts them to use meaning, structure and visual cues

in the orientation. The researcher notes that the teacher provides pupils with a brief overview of the text and prompts them to discuss the pictures as they converse about the author's intended message. The teacher incorporates structure into the book orientation by exposing pupils to recurring language patterns. The teacher is also careful to use precise vocabulary as the group engages in a conversation about the upcoming text. Ongati and Omollo (2010) as did other empirical researchers have not articulated the extent to which different group sizes and task choice are critical in introducing concepts and cues to pupils by having them locate a known high-frequency word at the emergent level. A few studies have failed to indicate how pupils gain more control over the visual aspects of print, how the teacher directs their attention to predicting letters in initial, final and medial positions, thus, the current study sought to explore the use of groupwork on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

2.3.2 Storytelling and Children's Acquisition of Reading Skills

Storytelling is a technique of imparting knowledge and skills by adopting use of spoken words and actions to influence communication. As resources, stories enable primary school children to learn about the world around them and are critical to primary school children's socialization (Sakthivel, Phil & Kavidha, 2010). Stories about animals are very common among children and this is attributed to the fact that, children like animals especially those that act as human beings. Primary school children associate themselves with animals in the stories and then imitate their behaviours and actions (Pardede, 2010).

Using storytelling as an instructional strategy for teaching of reading skills is the earliest and most enduring form of education practised by different people worldwide (Amer, 2012). Use of stories is viewed as a way of entertaining, teaching of reading skills and learning language skills, preservation of folktale and instilling morality among people (Koham&Pourkalhor, 2013). Among different traditions, use of stories was a method of educating children. According to Riwes (2010), stories are used in a manner that enhances human beings' skills to pass themes which make primary school children understand real and imagined worlds.

Dawkins and O'Neill (2011) believe that teachers should benefit from these stories and make use of them since teaching becomes meaningful to the students when it is based on their own interests and experiences. From the socio-cultural perspective, we see that language development is dependent on the children's previous reading experiences and their ability to be in contact with and process the literature, and to internalize literary purposes, substances and structures (Dawkins & O'Neill, 2011). Ahrens (2011) and Fast (2014) state the importance of storytelling for children. To increase the child's vocabulary, it is to start reading to the child at an early age. By reading and telling stories to children, their vocabulary increases, which they may benefit from telling a story to someone else.

In Ghana, among English speakers, storytelling is considered a suitable way to enhance class three learners' acquisition of vocabulary (Neil & Steve, 2011). Storytelling can also develop learners' motivation and interests. This was consistent with the assertions of Yuksel (2014) who established that stories, applicable to teach

English to class three pupils in different grades, develop class three pupils' motivation and enhance their skills to take part in different activities especially in reading.

Storytelling has emerged over the last few decades as a powerful method of teaching reading skills (Lee, 2012). A study by Lee (2012) in Malaysia on how storytelling helps to enhance the learning attitude and motivation of students revealed that, storytelling enhances students' language proficiency and communication skills inside as well as outside the classroom. Mehrnaz (2013) noted that storytelling promotes reading skills, encourages critical thinking, good academic achievement and fosters learners' motivation. Considering these benefits, teachers should be eager to adopt this approach in teaching reading.

A study done in Ethiopia by Friday (2014) on benefits of storytelling to learners revealed that, storytelling inspires students to learn English skills. In his studies, he concluded that: (a) stories are distinctively part of everyday experience, in any language. Hence, storytelling is a common endeavour to connect between world cultures, regardless of literacy rates (b) in storytelling, students convey their messages effortlessly, thereby assisting the development of their communication skills (c) when their friends appreciate the stories that they present, students' self-esteem and confidence level are boosted (d) learners have the liberty to take charge of their learning and make language errors, hence allowing them to discover the language on their own (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2014).

A study done in Nigeria by Yusuf (2016) on investigating the impact of teacher on use of folktales on the performance of pupils in reading comprehension in primary schools gave weight into storytelling. The sample of the study consisted of forty (40)

primary four pupils from two randomly selected primary school, tagged, school “A” and school “B” in Kaduna North Local Government area. School “A” was assigned as the experimental group while school “B” was assigned as the control group. Both groups were taught reading skills for eight weeks. A pre-test and post-test experimental design for equivalent groups was used. Pupils were tested using reading comprehension test called retelling test. Results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group. This indicates that the use of folktales by teachers in reading skills may have a significant positive effect on pupils’ reading skills.

Yusuf (2015) investigated the analysis of Nigeria secondary schools students’ reading habits: implication for teacher education curriculum for English as a second language. Seventy-five students participated in the study. The experimental group had a story read aloud to them by the teacher, whereas the control group read the story silently. Two dependent measures were used: a multiple-choice test and a story frame test. Results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group on both measures. This indicated that reading aloud by the teacher may have a significant positive effect on learners reading comprehension.

Other great sources of listening are poems, rhymes, songs and chants owing to their repetitiveness, plot and imaginativeness which enhance primary school children’s motivation and language competency (Khatib, 2011). In a longitudinal study conducted in Iran, Hassan and Mahkameh (2013) asserted that stories make every real situation in life tangible and primary school children understand that stories can be practical in the real world. Teachers who are good at telling stories create a motivating environment for Grade Three learners to undergo challenges which are

unavoidable in their lives. Such stories teach such primary school children ways to mitigate such challenges. In the same vein, there exist numerous reasons for telling stories to Grade Three learners. In other words, storytelling brings together Grade Three learners' skills to listen, speak, comprehend, read and write meaningfully. Based on linguistics concepts, stories present grammatical aspects, vocabulary and speech in a way which is consistent with comprehension (Zacharias & Manara, 2011). In view of this, this study sought to explore the use of storytelling strategy among Grade Three pupils in Nairobi County.

A study carried out in Algeria by Gonzalez (2010) to find out how storytelling and story reading enhance promotion of Grade Three Pupils' reading comprehension, indicated that, telling and reading stories have both improved the skills of Grade Three learners aged three to five years to read comprehension. He concluded that the group of Grade Three learners who just heard the stories showed higher order skills in reading comprehension compared to their counterparts who only read though stories had the same content. The use of stories in classroom instruction has numerous advantages. Gottschall (2012) asserted that use of stories involves verbal activity intended not only for listening, but also for actual participation in order to enhance class participation. Gottschall (2012) posits that, serious face-to-face interaction involving the primary teacher and the learners is unique when using stories owing to the fact that such behaviour is characteristic of any form of communication and in the end increases skills to communicate in the classroom. This study investigated how reading and storytelling enhanced Grade Three pupils comprehension reading in Nigeria while the current study sought to explore the use of storytelling and the implication on grade three pupils in Nairobi County.

A study conducted in Kenya by Marima (2014) posited that, teachers read story books to Grade Three Pupils in class. The researcher argued that this was considered an important learning activity recommended in educational settings since it was useful for teaching of reading skills and learning of Grade Three learners. Besides its value in entertainment, storytelling has innumerable value in education as a foundation for teaching of reading skills and new language in the classroom (Tella, 2010). Such positive aspects of storytelling are pegged on its practical value in the classroom though it is not clear whether teachers adopt storytelling in their classes. This study therefore sought to explore the use of storytelling in the acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three pupils in Nairobi County.

2.3.3 Play Activities and Children's Acquisition of Reading Skills

Worldwide, play activities have been found to immensely contribute to holistic growth and development of lower primary school learners. According to Musa (2012), play is essential to development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional wellbeing of children in lower primary schools. A study conducted in the US by Azizifar (2015) among 111 respondents on playing social chess: children's play and social intelligence, revealed that play is the most developmentally appropriate way for children to learn and facilitate acquisition of reading skills.

Another research by Jones (2013) on the importance of play on health asserted that play activities are essential to healthy development of children. Research shows that 75% of brain development occurs after birth. The activities engaged in by children both stimulate and influence the pattern of the connections made between the nerve

cells. This process influences the development of fine and gross motor skills, reading, oral, socialization, personal awareness, emotional wellbeing, creativity, problem solving and learning skills. The most important role that play can have is to help children to be active, make choices and practise actions to mastery and reading skills (Goldstein, 2011). Play that links sensory-motor, cognitive, and social-emotional experiences provide an ideal setting for development of reading skills.

A study in America by Chaplain (2012) posited that, play activities promote young children's reading skills in areas such as dictation, comprehension, letter naming, read-aloud, vocabulary and sound recognition. Another study by Morrow (2013) on language skill development through play, revealed that literacy materials within play settings in preschool, kindergarten and multiage programmes, has typically shown an increase in children's use of reading materials and engagement in literacy acts. Using such a literacy intervention, Morrow (2013) found out that kindergarten children's skills to read print-embedded in the environment was increased. Bergen and Coscia (2001) in a longitudinal study conducted in the Netherlands on play and acquisition of reading skills, found out that children who had high levels of play with reading materials in lower primary were likely to be spontaneous readers of place signs and have greater verbalizations in a town-building activity at age 5. While the study on importance of play were conducted in America and Netherlands respectively, the current study sought to establish the use of play activities in the acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three pupils in Nairobi County, Kenya.

A similar study conducted in United Kingdom on play and development of reading skills, Weisberg (2015) asserts that, play is essential to development because it

contributes to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional wellbeing of children. In most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the scenario is the same. For example, in Ghana, Roskos and Neuman (2010) have pointed out that, although emerging language can be enhanced through play, further research comparing the efficacy of play-related literacy approaches to other methods of increasing reading skills was still needed.

Using a strategy similar to the literacy-embedding studies, Krafft (2013) in a study carried out in Morocco, enriched preschoolers' play settings with artifacts emphasizing number symbols and found out that the children in the language-enriched setting engaged in more talk and activity related to reading concepts. However, the effects did not extend to more mature conceptual forms. This affirms the fact that shared activities through play with peers provide children with unique opportunities to learn, practise, and develop their communicative, interactive and social skills. The study by Kraft (2013) investigated the use of play things with artifacts to emphasize number symbols in morocco. The current study explores the use of play activities on reading skills among Grade three pupils in Nairobi County.

In a study done by Peter and Charles (2011) on effect of dramatization on learner achievement in learning English language in public secondary schools in Meru County Kenya, quasi-experimental design was adopted. From the findings, the study revealed that teaching strategies such as role-play, simulation, language games and mime have a significant influence on learner achievement and acquisition of reading skills. It was established that dramatization is relevant to teaching English language skills. This study recommends that the government should plan to address the issue of

including dramatization in teaching the integrated syllabus by requesting KICD to incorporate dramatic genres, in language curriculum. Therefore, the current study sought to explore the use of play activities on reading skills among Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.

In Kenya and Nairobi County in particular, the aspects of play in enhancing lower primary school learners' development of reading skills are not fully exploited. A study conducted by Wafula (2010) about play and role of teachers revealed that, play makes up about two-thirds of the pretend play of lower primary school learners and in essence, involves children's emotions, thoughts and their external world. He further asserts that it is through social play that children use their imagination and creativity and take on different roles as they create and take part in situations. However, in Nairobi County, role play in lower primary school learners' acquisition of reading skills has not been effectively brought into perspective. The study by Wafula (2010) does not explain how shared activities with peers provide children with unique opportunities to learn and practise and develop their communicative, interactive, and social skills. He fails to show how enhanced creativity and problem-solving skills among lower primary school learners determine the quality of reading skills development as done by this study.

2.4 Instructional Resources and Children's Acquisition of Reading Skills

For productive learning to take place, adequate learning resources should be provided in the schools for proper curriculum implementation (Gall, 2013). Okwara (2009) also elaborates that instructional materials are used by the teacher to facilitate effective learning process. Instructional resources are vital in the development of reading skills.

The development of English reading skills depends on many factors among them being availability and use of appropriate instructional resources. Okwara (2009) observes that availability of essential instructional resources is an ideal condition for effective teaching of reading skills. He argues that when instructional resources in a school are inadequate, it generates enormous reading problems. Thus, it is the prerogative of the teachers of English language to make instructional resources an integral part of their instructional process (Lindsay & Knight, 2007).

Another study in Britain conducted by Watson (2012) on factors affecting the teaching of English reading skills in a second language of grade 3 pupils established that, insufficient reading resources, poor teaching methods, insufficient teachers and learners interactions and overcrowded classrooms were significant factors that made the teaching of reading skills unsuccessful. Watson's study gives some insight to the current research especially in looking at the availability and use of instructional resources in the teaching and learning of reading skills by standard three learners in Nairobi County.

A research conducted in South Africa by Shayne and Richard (2010) examined teachers' perspective on the methods used for reading instruction in Grade 1 of rural schools. The findings indicated that the learners' mastery of reading skills was influenced by limited resources and space within the programmes which affected teaching of reading as well as inadequate training and in-service workshops. It was suggested that teachers and local administrators in schools need to keep abreast with new development in the field of language and literacy development by use of adequate resources.

Another study still in South Africa was undertaken by Makhubele (2015) who aimed at exploring the challenges faced by grade 4 teachers in the implementation of effective reading practices. His findings revealed overcrowded classes, lack of parental involvement and lack of support from the responsible department as factors hindering the mastery. While the reviewed study examined the perspective on the methods used for reading instruction in Grade 1 in rural schools, the current study sought to find out the influence of use of instructional resources on acquisition of reading skills among grade 3 pupils in Nairobi County.

A study conducted by Rochayani (2010) on impacts of instructional materials and resources on students' academic performance in Mathematics in Nigeria revealed that there existed significant differences between performance of students taught with instructional materials and resources and those taught without. The study observed that those students who were taught with the aids of instructional materials achieved statistically significantly higher score compared to those who were taught without instructional resources. While the reviewed study looked at impacts of instructional materials and resources in Mathematics, the current study focused on the influence of the use of instructional resources on reading skills among Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.

Nwafor (2012) carried out a study on the availability and utilization of Social Studies instructional materials in secondary schools on Onueke Education zone of Ebony State in Nigeria. According to this study, instructional materials were available but underutilized. The result revealed that those taught with adequate instructional materials performed significantly better than those taught without instructional

materials. Based on the findings, it was recommended that adequate instructional materials should be used in the teaching of Social Studies since it enhances students' performance.

In Nigeria, Louisa (2010) investigated the differences in the achievement of pupils taught using audio instructional package on basic school pupils' performance in English pronunciations and those taught using the expository method. The findings indicated that, the pupils taught using the audio instructional package performed significantly better than those taught using expository method. The current study, therefore, sought to find out the effects of the use of instructional resources and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

A study conducted by Nalusiba (2010) in Uganda, investigated the strategies for the development of a reading culture in Ugandan primary schools and revealed that inadequate reading resources affected the reading culture in the pupils. Similarly, Wangui (2012) found out that instructional materials are inadequate in most schools both in terms of quantity and variety. Omuse, Onchera and Kimutai (2016) carried out a research titled availability and use of instructional resources for teaching and learning of English reading skills and found out that the instructional resources are not adequately provided in the schools. It is on these grounds that the present study intended to establish the availability and use of instructional resources for teaching reading skills among Grade Three Pupils in Embakasi, Nairobi County, Kenya.

Another study conducted by Ogola (2011) in Kenya found that, teaching using various instructional materials improved the performance of learners in various learning activities including ability to write dictated words. The study concluded that

mandatory use of instructional materials should be established while teaching to enhance reading as part of English language teaching. This was supported by a study done in Kiambu by Karanja (2015) on effects of reading difficulties on academic performance among students. The researcher ascertains that main factors affecting Public Primary Schools pupils' acquisition of reading skills include the failure of majority of teachers in the schools to use the recommended strategies of teaching reading skills and high shortage of reading materials.

A research carried out in Kenya by Karanja (2015) at Baraka Primary School in Nairobi observed that to a large extent, teachers used whole-class, and teacher centred methods, with minimal teacher-student and student-student interactions. Teacher-pupil interactions were limited mainly to the teacher asking questions and the student providing answers. In addition, teachers did not use teaching aids to enhance their lessons. The classroom walls were bare; visuals such as charts, maps and drawings were conspicuously absent. Consequently, students mainly learn through rote memorization and their creativity and critical thought were stifled (Karanja, 2015). While most of the reviewed studies focused on the general instructional resources, the present study looked at the influence of use of instructional resources on Grade Three Pupils' reading skill in Embakasi, Nairobi County.

Another study carried out in Kenya by Ambuko(2013) on the availability of reading resources in language learning revealed that, a variety of reading materials is very significant and motivating to learners. Some of the English reading resources include but are not limited to library books, chalkboard, pictures, story books flash cards, counter, printed materials, charts, recordings, videos, pictures, online resources and all

technology-based resources (Namata, 2010; Andima, 2013). Reading instructions rely on the availability, utilization and quality of appropriate instructional materials used in the classroom by the teachers (Gauther & Lawson, 2004). Moreover, instructional materials facilitate and make learning process easier and enjoyable for learners (Mubichakani & Koross, 2014).

Further, Onchera (2013) and Chepkurui (2014) established that most of the learning institutions provide inadequate instructional materials required for reading. Mwanamukubi (2013) also asserts that teachers need to utilize relevant instructional resources for reading. A study conducted by Mberia (2012) on a survey of teaching reading in English in lower primary classes of Gatundu Division, Rural Thika Sub-County found that, reading materials were inadequate, yet these instructional resources assist in improving the quality of teaching while promoting efficiency in learning reading. Use of proper learning tools and materials reinforces the teaching learning process (Okobia, 2011). The current study focused on the availability of instructional resources and its influence on reading skills among Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.

Nyamu (2015) assessed factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy outcome in public primary schools in Nyeri County. The findings indicated that underachievement in reading skills is influenced by inadequate teaching and learning resources, mother tongue, lack of school library and lack of parental support. Gathumbi (2013) indicated that in Kenya, there is a lot that both teachers and learners need to do to get the Desired Competence Level (DCL) of operation in English reading and writing skills because majority of the learners failed to attain the Desired

Competence Level. While the reviewed study assessed factors influencing achievement of basic reading literacy outcome in public primary schools, this study sought to find out the influence of use of instructional resources on acquisition of reading skills among grade 3 pupils in Nairobi County.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review

This section has presented a review of literature on instructional strategies and resources used in teaching reading skills among pupils in school from global to local context. Literature has been reviewed on levels of reading skills, use of groupwork on acquisition of reading skills, use of storytelling on acquisition of reading skills, use of play activities on acquisition of reading skills and use of instructional resources on acquisition of reading skills. The review shows that there are very few studies targeting reading at lower primary levels and it appeared that no specific study has been done locally and specifically on Grade Three pupils in Nairobi City County which is a very crucial grade.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents the design and methodology which the study used to achieve the research objectives. It explains the research design; location of the study; target population; sampling techniques and sample size; data collection instruments; methods of testing the validity and reliability of instruments and data collection techniques. It also presents data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive study design and specifically mixed methods whereby quantitative and qualitative data were collected and interpreted. Quantitative data were derived from teachers' questionnaires on Grade Three children reading skills and using the reading test. Qualitative data were derived from headteachers interviews and the observation checklist (Creswell, 2009).

The design was appropriate for this study as it helped the researcher to establish the instructional strategies and resources used to enhance pupils reading skills and brought rich data analysis based on teachers and headteachers' responses which further helped the researcher to understand the research problem. The researcher compared the two data sets by bringing the separate results together in the interpretation.

3.2.1 Study Variables

There were two levels of variables for this study. They included the independent and dependent variables.

3.2.2 Independent Variables

The independent variables were *instructional strategies and resources* which included, groupwork strategy, storytelling strategy, play activities, and instructional resources. They were measured as follows:

- i. Use of groupwork strategy. This was measured by considering size of the groups and tasks performed such as the number of pupils per group.
- ii. Use of storytelling strategy was measured by considering types of stories often used by teachers such as cumulative, animal, adventurous and classical tales.
- iii. Use of play activities was measured through socio-dramatic activities, singing games, music and movement.
- iv. Use of instructional resources was measured through books and teaching aids.

3.2.3 Dependent Variables

The dependent variable of the study was the acquisition of reading skills. This was measured through letter and sound recognition, word recognition, paragraph and sentence level, story level and comprehension level.

3.3 Research Methodology

This study adopted mixed methodology approach, that is, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in the study process. This involved collection of numerical as well as non-numerical data. In this study, qualitative research was used

to generate rich, detailed data that were utilized to get in-depth understanding of underlying causes, views, and inspirations of respondents. It also provided insights into the problem in order to uncover trends in thought and opinions, and goes deeper into the problem (Kothari, 2005). Likewise, quantitative research was employed to generate numerical data which were transformed into usable statistics. It was used to quantify attitudes, views, actions and other stated variables. It also allowed the utilization of measurable information, put together facts and unearth patterns in research. It also allowed generalizations of results from a sample to an entire population of interest.

3.4 Location of the Study

The research study was carried out in Embakasi sub-county of Nairobi County, Kenya. First, Nairobi county had been selected purposely because of its high population density of 690 persons per km² (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2009) and a large number of primary schools spread across its 10 sub-counties including Embakasi which was randomly chosen. In addition, the high population rate in Embakasi alongside other Nairobi sub-counties has created great challenges in the education sector in the locale with instances of low accessibility, high drop-out rates and poor performance of learners in national examinations as well as low transition rates to higher institutions. Further, Embakasi alongside her sister sub-counties of Nairobi have contributed to numerous cases of failure to achieve reading skills among learners in the upper primary classes let alone those in lower sections (Ministry of Education, 2014).

Moreover, in Nairobi sub-counties in which Embakasi belongs, there was a great challenge and threat in the learning progress of pupils in public primary schools. Studies by Uwezo in the years 2011, 2012 and 2013 indicated poor performance in all of the three areas that were tested that is, reading a class two English story, reading a class two Kiswahili story and solving class two math problems. Despite these statistics, little has been done to interrogate how different instructional strategies adopted by teachers influence acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils and thus the focus on Embakasi sub-county in Nairobi County as the location of the study. Thus the researcher was propelled by these circumstances to conduct a study in this sub-county, serving as a sample out of the other 10 sub-counties of Nairobi County in the Republic of Kenya.

3.5 Target Population

The target population comprised all public primary schools or two hundred and seventy-five (275) and thirty thousand (30,000) grade three pupils (Nairobi County Education Office, 2015). The study further targeted 3 teachers on average from each school making a total of 675 grade three teachers of English. Further a total of 225 head teachers were selected. The study targeted Grade three because it is a critical stage that marks the transition to upper primary school because it is in the next grade where pupils start using English as a medium of instruction and the pupils are expected to be proficient enough in English in order to learn all the other subjects. The target population is as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Target population of the study

Categories	Target Population
Headteachers	225
Grade Three Teachers	675
Grade Three Pupils	30,000
Total	30,900

3.6 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

In this section, the study highlighted the sampling techniques which were adopted and the procedures of determination of the sample size.

3.6.1 Sampling Techniques

Multi-stage sampling was used to obtain participating schools, teachers and pupils. Multistage sampling divides large populations into stages to make the sampling process more practical. First Nairobi County was purposively selected (see 3.4 for justification) before selection of Embakasi sub-county. To determine the number of sub-counties, the research was guided by Kothari (2005) who acknowledges that 10% and above may form a viable representative study sample. Therefore, since there were 10 sub-counties in Nairobi County at the time of data collection, random sampling was used to select a sample of 1 (10%) of the sub-counties by writing down their names on pieces of papers and putting them in a basket. One of them which happened to be Embakasi sub-county was picked out from the basket while blind folded to eliminate bias. Thus Embakasi sub-county was used to represent the rest of the regions in Nairobi County since all of them were similar and without distinguishing factors among them. Embakasi sub-county is subdivided into Embakasi East, West, South,

North and Central district. Each district formed a strata from which 2 schools were purposively selected based on the highest and the lowest performance in the preceding end of the term English exams making a total of 10 schools out of 20 schools in Embakasi Sub-county.

Further, purposive sampling technique was used to select a total of 10 headteachers from the sampled schools. Purposive sampling technique was also used to select 15 Grade Three Pupils from each of the 10 sampled schools by selecting 5 high performing pupils, 5 average and 5 below average based on the preceding end of the term test giving a total of 150 pupils. In addition, the researcher used purposive sampling to select 3 grade three teachers on average from each of the 10 sampled schools totaling to 30 teachers.

3.6.2 Sample Size

The sample size comprised 10 headteachers from the selected schools, 30 teachers and 150 Grade Three Pupils totaling to 190 respondents as indicated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Sample frame

Categories	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Method
Headteachers	225	10	Purposive sampling
Grade III Teachers	675	30	Purposive sampling
Grade III Pupils	3245	150	Purposive sampling
Total	30,900	190	

3.7 Research Instruments

The research tools that were used to gather information included; questionnaires, interviews, observation schedule and reading test for Grade Three Pupils. The instruments for this study were developed along the set objectives with each objective forming a sub- topic with relevant questions.

3.7.1 Questionnaire for Lower Primary School Teachers

The researcher applied a self-designed questionnaire to collect data from Grade Three teachers. The questionnaire was divided into six sections. The first section (A) captured information on respondents' demographic profiles. Section (B) collected information on the first objective, which was the level of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils. Section (C) sought information on the second objective (part a) on the use of groupwork strategy. Section (D) sought information on the second objective (part b) on storytelling strategy while Section E gathered information on objective two (part c) on play activities. Section F gathered information on use of instructional resources.

3.7.2 Interview Guide for Headteachers

The researcher used structured interviews with open-ended test items to collect qualitative data from headteachers based on a set of questions on the research objectives. Prior permission was sought for interviews and explanations were offered to rephrase any questions the respondents could not feel comfortable with. Interviews were important for this study since they allowed the researcher to ask probing questions pertaining to the availability of resources and instructional strategies used for the acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils. The questions in the

interview covered all the study objectives so as to help the process of determining the research hypotheses conclusions.

3.7.3 Observation Schedule

An observation schedule was prepared by the researcher. The classroom observation schedule enabled the researcher to observe the instructional strategies used for teaching reading skills. The resources used in teaching reading were observed too. It had two sections. Section (A) contained instructional strategies used by the teachers in teaching reading among Grade Three Pupils. Section (B) assessed the resources used in teaching reading in Grade Three. All the observations were geared to the research objectives and assisted in hypotheses conclusions.

3.7.4 Pupils' Reading Test

The researcher adopted a reading test by Uwezo Kenya National Learning Assessment, 2014 which was used to assess Grade Three Pupils reading skills. Pupils were given the sub-tasks focused on five levels of reading, namely; letter and letter sound recognition, word recognition, paragraph and sentence level, story level and comprehension level. This reading test was important for establishing the reading skills of Grade Three children. The test was administered to Grade Three Pupils in all the sampled schools for study by the researcher with the assistance of the class teachers. The researcher assessed the performance of the pupils and recorded the grades. The test was also geared to establishing the answers of the study objectives in terms of the hypotheses.

3.8 Pilot Study

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2007), piloting involves testing of research instruments for validity and reliability. Piloting of research instruments was conducted and instruments were pretested in 2 public primary schools in Nairobi County which were not included in the actual study process. The purpose of carrying out a pilot study was initially to examine the methodology using the planned data gathering techniques involving a restricted sample in order to provide information about the functionality and viability of the research design. It also enabled the investigator to identify difficulties and problems which could be anticipated during the actual data gathering process and plan for them. Therefore, piloting was done to ascertain the practicability of the research instruments, and the generated items to test the data they were expected to produce and the measure to which they were designed to measure before the actual data collection. The instruments and generated items were tested for reliability and validity. The respondents who participated in the pilot study were not included during the actual data collection.

3.8.1 Validity of the Instruments

The research objectives, questions together with reviewed literature were used as a guide in the construction of questionnaires. The validity of the study was measured against content of the instruments. In this regard, instruments' validity was measured through ensuring that the study items conformed to the study objectives. This was achieved by going through the questionnaires and interview schedules one at a time and comparing the items with the research objectives. Items that failed to measure the variables they were intended to measure were modified and unnecessary items were

discarded for improvement of the instruments. Consultation with experts and professionals in the department was also done.

3.8.2 Reliability of the Instruments

To improve the reliability of the instruments, the researcher critically assessed the consistency of the responses on the piloted instruments to make a judgement on their reliability. The reliability of the instruments was further established using test retest technique where the researcher administered test items to a group of respondents twice. Two forms of instruments; especially observation checklist and questionnaires, differing only in the specific nature of the items, were administered on the same pilot subjects and their results compared. From the results of the piloting, Cronbach's Alpha method was used to obtain reliability indices of $r = 0.735, 0.722, 0.72$ and 0.729 which yielded an average reliability index, $r = 0.727$, which indicated high internal reliability since the closer an instrument's reliability coefficient is closer to 1.000, the more reliable it is taken to be. The researcher had confidence to continue with the research process having made sure that the instruments were good enough for the study.

3.9 Data Collection Techniques and Procedures

Data collection was done by use of questionnaires for Grade 3 Teachers and interview schedules for headteachers. There was also an observation check list and reading test to determine the instructional strategies and resources in use.

The researcher conducted face to face interviews where she spent at least one hour with each respondent and took notes during the interviews. Secondly, the researcher met with Grade Three teachers as she was distributing the questionnaires from

selected schools and discussed with them the data she required from Grade Three Pupils.

It was agreed with the teachers that they would fill the questionnaires within a week after which the researcher collected them from the sampled schools. In the third stage, the researcher made prior arrangements with the teachers on particular days when she would conduct observations on reading lessons in the classrooms. After obtaining the information, the researcher visited the sampled schools and also administered the Uwezo reading test to the selected children. The children read the test items individually starting from recognition of sounds, then words, followed by one simple paragraph, then story and finally they were required to answer two simple questions to test their comprehension.

3.10 Data Analysis Procedures

Data collected during the study involved both qualitative and quantitative data and analysis began by coding the data and identifying and grouping information into logical categories.

3.10.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

Data from interviews with headteachers was analyzed qualitatively by availing it in word format from field notes. Themes were derived based on the pre-determined themes from the objectives and then emerging themes that were analyzed qualitatively. The researcher used observations checklist paying attention to each research objective to bring in-depth information on the instructional strategies and resources used in teaching reading and their implication on the reading skills among the Grade Three Pupils in Embakasi, Nairobi County. These qualitative data collected

were analyzed through thematic content analysis. This approach looked across all the data to identify the main ideas and gave a summary of all the views collected. Thematic analysis was suitable for this study because it could be applied across a wide range of qualitative research approaches making it flexible to use. Qualitative data were presented in narrative forms.

3.10.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

For quantitative data, frequency counts and percentages of the responses were used to generate descriptive information about the respondents and to illustrate the general trend of findings on the various variables that were under investigation. They were then presented in frequency tables and graphs. Inferential statistical analysis involved testing statistical hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance using one-way ANOVA to test the following statistical hypotheses:

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between use of groupwork strategies and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between use of storytelling strategy and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

H₀3: There is no significant relationship between use of play activities and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

H₀4: There is no significant relationship between use of instructional resources and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

3.11 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in research involved outlining the content of research and what was required of participants and informed consent was obtained and confidentiality

ensured. The researcher obtained an introductory letter from The School of Postgraduate Studies of Kenyatta University and Authorization Letter and research permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher also sought for an authorization letter from The County Commissioner and County Director of Education, Nairobi. These letters introduced the researcher to different sampled primary schools to carry out the study in Nairobi County. In this study, privacy and confidentiality of the respondents were a major ethical concern. All responses were confidential and anonymous.

The researcher observed three universal ethical principles, including respect for participants, beneficence and justice. In this regard, all participants gave their consent after the researcher explained the purpose of the study and guaranteed them confidentiality of information, explained the risks and benefits and clarified that participation was voluntary. All the information was kept confidential including personal interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, chronologically arranged to reflect the research objectives that have been guiding this study. In the first section, response rate is described followed by respondents' demographic information. Thereafter, formation of subtopics represents the chronology of the research objectives as shown in the preceding list:

- i) To establish the levels of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.
- ii) To explore selected instructional strategies used in Grade three teaching of reading in Nairobi County
- iii) To examine the teachers use of instructional resources in teaching and learning reading with the Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County.

4.2 General and Demographic Information

In this section, the return rates as well as the demographic data are discussed. The gender of the participants is highlighted. Finally, the education level of the headteachers and Grade Three teachers is also determined. This information is necessary since it potentially affects the way data is interpreted and discussed in the preceding sections.

4.2.1 Return Rate

In this study, 30 questionnaires were administered to Grade Three teachers as described in chapter three of this study. Consequently 28 questionnaires were filled

and returned while only two sampled teachers failed to return their response within the designated period. The researcher similarly conducted interviews among the selected 10 headteachers. A sample reading test was also administered to 141 Grade Three Pupils out of the expected 150 by the researcher. The response rates yielded were as summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Return rate

Respondents	Sampled Respondents	Those Who Participated	Achieved Return Rate (%)
Headteachers	10	10	100.0
Grade Three Teachers	30	28	93.3
Grade Three Pupils	150	141	94.1
Total	190	179	94.2

From Table 4.1, headteachers, Grade Three teachers and Grade Three Pupils registered a collective response rate of 179 (94.2%). The researcher found this response rate as adequate and suitable to carry on with the data analysis as attested by Creswell (2013), who asserts that, a response rate of 75% and above is adequate for generalization of the outcomes to the target population.

4.2.2 Demographic Information

The research instruments solicited demographic information of the respondents. The first part of the information was on gender of the headteachers, teachers and pupils. The information on gender helped the researcher to know the proportion of males and females, boys and girls, who were involved in the study for the purpose of

establishing gender equality, parity and balance exhibited in preprimary centers in Nairobi County.

4.2.3 Respondents' Gender

Information about the distribution of the respondents by gender of headteachers, Grade Three teachers and Grade Three Pupils was collected and the results presented in Figure 4.1.

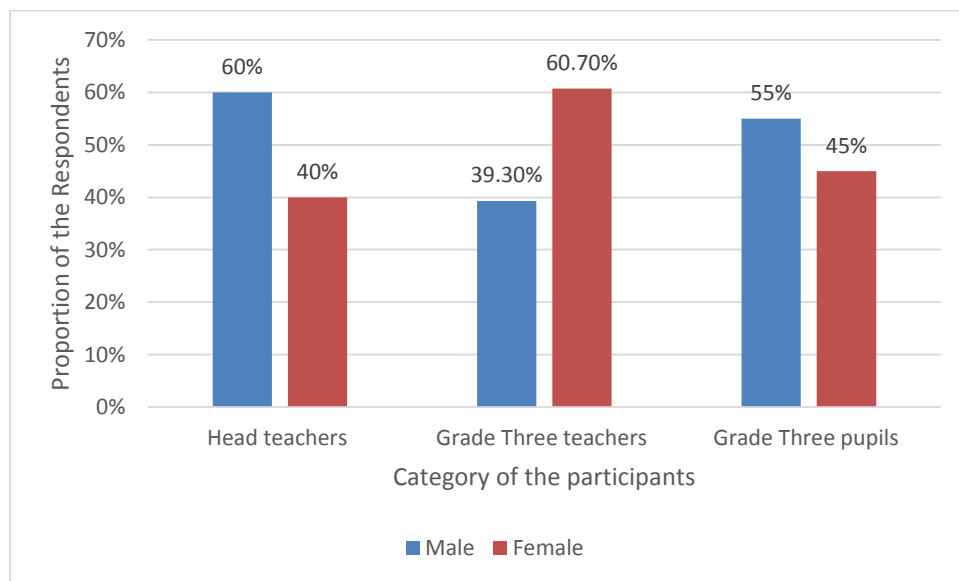


Figure 4.1: Distribution of the Headteachers, Teachers and Pupils by gender

Figure 4.1 indicates that majority of the headteachers 6 (60%) were males with their female counterparts constituting 4(40%). On the other hand, majority of the Grade three teachers 17(60.7%) were female while male teachers constituted 11 (39.3%). Slightly more than half, 78(55%) of the Grade Three Pupils were boys with their female counterparts constituting 63(45%). The findings reveal that there was gender disparity among all categories of the participants, an implication that, while most of the preprimary centres in Nairobi County were headed by males, majority of the teachers were female. Since the source of the information came from both male and

female, it is worth noting that the data gathered was not skewed to one gender. The fact that the proportion of boys was quite higher than that of girls, depicts existence of underlying factors in Nairobi County, that puts girls to a higher disadvantage in accessing education than boys. However, this could not affect the interpretation of the results since there was fair gender balance in all the three categories of the respondents as attested by Kothari (2005) who stated that at least seventy per cent gender parity in a study is acceptable.

4.2.4 Headteachers and Grade Three Teachers’ Level of Education

The research also explored information on level of education of headteachers and Grade Three teachers since this variable could influence their skills to supply credible information about the research objectives. The results were as indicated as shown in Figure 4.2.

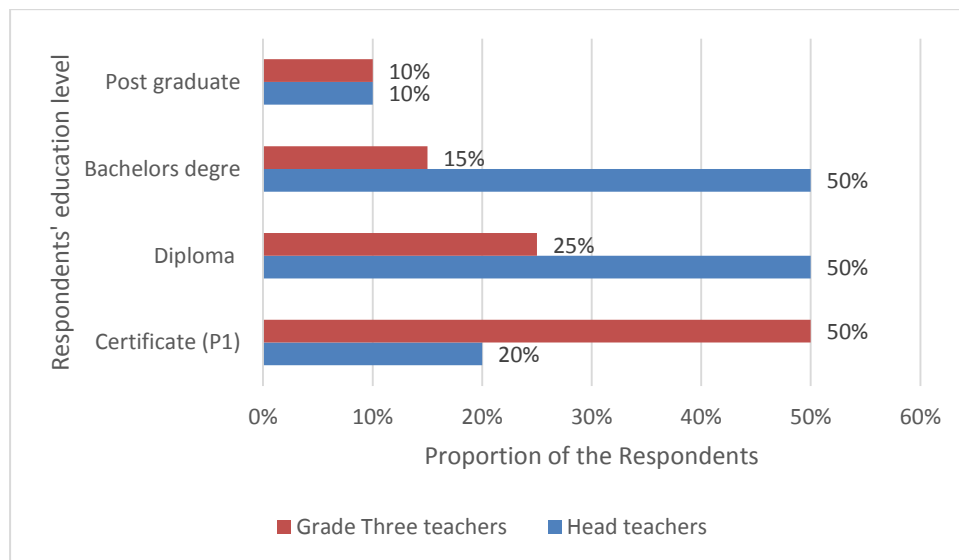


Figure 4.2: Headteachers and Grade Three teachers’ level of education

Figure 4.2 indicates that half, 5 (50%) of the headteachers had Diplomas, 2 (20%) had certificates as 2 (20%) of them had Bachelor’s degrees. Only 1 (10%) of the

headteachers had postgraduate qualifications. On the other hand, half, 14 (50%) of the Grade Three teachers had certificate qualifications, a quarter, 7 (25%) had Diplomas, and 4 (15%) had Bachelor's Degrees whereas 3 (10%) had postgraduate qualifications. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that most of the headteachers in Embakasi Sub-County had attained higher level of education than the teachers. This was useful since their interview proved to be more reliable based on their high levels of educational qualifications.

These data were in line with the assertions by Bean and Morewood (2011) that headteachers and teachers professional qualifications are critical in understanding the relevance of literacy-rich environment which stimulates pupils to participate in language and literacy activities in their day-to-day lives.

4.3 Thematic Presentation of Findings

In this section, findings have been presented chronologically based on the research objectives. Triangulation techniques have been employed to corroborate findings from different sources, so as to provide coherent and meaningful discussions. Basically, there are descriptive findings obtained from grade three teachers, observation findings from the grade three pupils and interview findings from the head teachers. It is also important to note that inferential statistics have been drawn from questionnaires and observation guide based on applicability.

4.3.1 Levels of Reading Skills Acquisition among Grade Three Pupils

The first objective of the study sought to establish the reading levels of Grade Three Pupils in public primary schools as manifested by their reading skills such as recognition of letter sounds, word recognition, paragraph reading, story reading, and

comprehension skills. The first step was that the researcher administered the Uwezo test, marked the reading levels for each pupil and recorded the marks. The marks were awarded in every level of reading skills out of 100 per cent. Any mark above 70 per cent was rated good; 50-69 per cent was rated fair and below 50 per cent was rated below average. The results as presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Ratings of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils

Reading Skills	Good %	Fair %	Below Average %
Word recognition (Vocabulary)	53.5	7.0	39.5
Letter and sound recognition	39.3	10.7	50.0
Story reading	32.2	10.7	57.1
Paragraph and sentence reading	32.1	14.3	53.6
Comprehension skills	28.6	10.7	60.7

From the results in Table 4.2, slightly more than half, 76 (53.5%) of the Grade Three Pupils were competent in word recognition. About 10 (7.0%) of the Grade Three Pupils recorded fairly good results in word recognition whereas 56 (39.5%) were below average in word recognition.

This implies that, the level of reading skills among Grade Three children was not good. From interviews with headteachers, similar sentiments were echoed. One headteacher said:

Most Grade Three Pupils in my school cannot read the words, such asgoat, umbrella, queen, mat, milk, home, teacher, parent, field, leg, sin and cup among others.

During the reading process, the researcher also observed that children could not read words such as goat, umbrella, queen, mat, milk, home, teacher, parent, field, leg, sin

and cup. The views of the headteachers were also in line with Bean and Morewood (2011), who advocated for careful monitoring and evaluation of reading skills.

Table 4.2 further indicates that 55(39.3%) of the learners recorded good performance in letter and sound recognition, 15(10.7%) performed fairly while a half, 71(50%) of them recorded below average in letter and sound recognition. This was thus an indication that the performance in letter and sound recognition was not encouraging. Further, the fact that majority of the learners recorded below average performance, is an indication that they were not well equipped to handle grade three tasks adequately. The findings of the current study echo those of UNESCO (2011) and also those by Uwezo (2011) which earlier found out that 70% of grade three children in East Africa could not read grade two work. The implication is that, there remained a lot to be done as far as letter/sound recognition was concerned. In fact, the challenges of inappropriate instructional methods and resources pointed out by IPAR (2008) are still faced by Grade Three pupils in Nairobi County up to date. These findings are in line with the assertions of Bell and Limber(2010) that early teaching of decoding skills lays a firm foundation for acquisition of reading skills. In other words, successful acquisition of decoding skills during the lower primary levels is a good indicator of later literacy achievement. This performance could be as a result of poor teaching methods on letter and sound recognition.

Judging from the researcher's results from Table 4.2, 45 (32.2%) of the Grade Three Pupils read story well, 15 (10.7%) indicated fair reading and 81 (57.1%) indicated that their pupils' story reading skills were below average. These findings revealed that majority of the pupils were below average in story reading. This could be an

indication that Grade Three teachers may not be exposing the learners to adequate reading materials.

The researcher established from Table 4.2 that 46 (32.1%) of the Grade Three Pupils were good in sentence and paragraph reading, 20 (14.3%) were fairly good and more than half 76 (53.6%) were rated below average in sentence and paragraph reading. This indicated poor performance in reading skills among Grade Three children in Nairobi County. During the observations, the researcher noted that 80 (56.7%) of the pupils in Grade Three manifested a lot of difficulties in pronouncing words fluently within the sentences hence reading a paragraph became very difficult. Only 62 (43.9%) could struggle to read fluently for example,

Martin had seven white chicks. An eagle ate five of the chicks. Martin was very angry. He wanted to trap the eagle. He did not know how to trap it. His friend Tom suggested they could use a rat.

It was further observed by the researcher that 85 (60.3%) Grade Three learners read words faster without spending so much time figuring out words, were unable to recognize letters when reading words, had a high degree of difficulty with phonics patterns and activities and stumbled a lot and lost their paces when reading aloud. These findings indicate that 99 (70.2%) of the Grade Three Pupils had a problem in sound recognition, word recognition and hence could not read sentence and paragraph easily. It could also be an indication of poor reading practices by the pupils. These findings corroborate the assertions of Grende (2013) that, fluency is usually measured through oral readings, although good readers also demonstrate this skill when reading loudly.

Fluency develops from reading practice. Frequent oral reading is the best way for children to improve their fluency. These findings affirm that, skills such as letter-sound, letter combinations and the making of sense and association of words need to be acquired first before the reader can read more complicated skills. The findings show the fact that early acquisition of reading skills lays a firm foundation for future success in reading. This implies that successful acquisition of reading skills during the lower primary levels is a good indicator of later literacy achievement.

The researcher's test in table 4.2 indicates that only 40 (28.6%) of the Grade Three Pupils had good comprehension skills in reading whereas 15 (10.7%) indicated fair and majority 86 (60.7%) indicated that pupils were below average in comprehension skills. This could have affected the acquisition of comprehension skills since in most cases, children who are poor readers may not be good at comprehending skills. From these outcomes, the reading skills among the Grade Three Pupils in the study area were wanting.

These findings are consistent with the assertions of Hanson and Padua (2014) that word recognition plays a crucial role in reading process and that, in reading, comprehension is necessary to understand the text. These findings also lend credence to the viewpoints held by The NICHD (2000) and NRP (2000) that sound and word recognition lead to better comprehension skills. Further, Glende (2013) confirms that pupils with poor letter, word, and sound recognition skills are likely to experience reading problem.

These findings affirm the fact that letter, letter sound recognition, word recognition (vocabulary), and comprehension skills are imperative to children's acquisition of reading skills. In other words, Grade Three learners with poor reading skills need early intervention to enable them to become good readers. These findings were consistent with the findings of a study conducted by Kim, Petscher and Foorman (2015) which examined variance in reading comprehension scores that existed between learners, classes, schools and districts for children in grades 3. Kim, Petscher and Foorman (2015) affirm that, many factors such as the cognitive factors, fluency and semantic, spelling and a motivational factor, reading and self-concept knowledge matter in influencing comprehension.

4.4 Use of Selected Strategies and Acquisition of Reading Skills Among Grade Three Pupils

In objective two, the study sought to explore the use of selected instructional strategies and their relationship with reading skills acquisition among Grade three pupils in Nairobi County.

4.4.1 Groupwork and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

The study sought to establish the influence of groupwork on children's acquisition of reading skills. To address this objective, the researcher issued questionnaires to Grade Three teachers. This was measuring teachers' perception on the size of groups and how it influenced acquisition of reading skills as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Teachers' views on the influence of groupwork strategies

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA	A	U	D	SD
	%	%	%	%	%
Setting small reading groups as a way of improving Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills	65.0	13.5	3.5	9.5	8.5
Large reading groups have rarely assisted teachers in improving their Grade Three Pupils' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills	80.5	3.5	2.5	5.5	8.0
Teachers who design group tasks based on learners' different levels of difficulty have improved their Grade Three Pupils' phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills	75.5	7.5	6.5	6.0	4.5

Key: SA-Strongly Agree A-Agree U-Undecided D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree

Table 4.3 reveals that majority 18 (65.0%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three teachers should use small reading groups as a way of improving Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills as did 4(13.5%) who agreed. However, only a paltry of 1 (3.5%) was undecided, 3 (9.5%) disagreed whereas 3 (8.5%) strongly disagreed. The total of those who agreed and those who strongly agreed was 21 (78.5%), an implication that groupwork comprising of small groups was strongly used by teachers. The findings seem to adhere to Amendum, Li and Creamer (2009) recommendations that teachers should adopt the model of forming small groups in order to ensure maximum participation of all learners in the discussion.

During interviews with the researcher, the headteachers, however, noted that Grade Three teachers rarely constitute small reading groups for learners as a way of enhancing learners' acquisition of reading skills. This was ascertained by several headteachers and as one headteacher put it,

The kind of reading groups which Grade Three teachers form are not convenient to enable learners be active and learn anything meaningful from such groups. Sometimes, the class has 40 pupils and they only end up with two or three groups which cannot effectively enable learners to make use of such groups to improve on their reading skills. In such groups, some learners end up playing no significant role.

During the observations, the researcher also witnessed that groups formed for reading were often not convenient to enable learners to learn from each other. The groups were too big (often comprising more than 10 learners) and without gender balance. They tended to be noisy, an indication that they did not know tasks they were supposed to handle, contrary to Klapwijk's (2012) assertion that there is need to select the book and the content to be discussed in order to make group work effective. These findings also corroborate the assertions by Amendum, Li and Creamer (2009) that teachers are encouraged to create small and focused reading groups with assisted-literacy experience in which the teacher supports and guides the pupils with text on their instructional level. According to Amendum *et al.*, (2009), the teacher helps pupils develop an understanding of the text while prompting them to apply strategies they need in order to become independent readers.

These findings are consistent with findings of a study conducted in Ghana in which Tyner (2003) asserts that each small reading group consists of approximately two to six members. This small-group setting allows the teacher to introduce a new text each day and to ensure that the challenges are manageable (Tyner, 2003). It also allows the

teacher to assist and support the pupils as they respond to the text in varying ways. These findings affirm the fact that small-group reading is important because it enables teachers to observe pupils' reading behaviour and provide support while they practice reading strategies.

In other words, during small-group reading, pupils' reading abilities are matched to appropriate reading materials. This allows teachers to demonstrate specific reading behaviours and strategies within context.

Further, Table 4.3 indicates that majority, 23 (80.5%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that large reading groups have rarely assisted teachers in improving their Grade Three Pupils' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills. Only 1 (3.5%) of the sampled teachers agreed. At the same time, 2.5% of the sampled teachers were undecided, 5.5% of teachers disagreed whereas 2 (8.0%) of the teachers strongly disagreed. This implied that actually groupwork strategies were not fruitful as far as acquisition of reading skills were concerned in the study county. The findings indicate that there are no meaningful groups organized by the teachers to enhance acquisition of reading skills.

During the interview with the investigator, headteachers admitted that actually Grade Three teachers always formed large groups for reading among Grade Three Pupils.

One of the headteachers noted,

In fact, Grade Three teachers form large discussion groups for learners and has not really helped them learn from each other. Instead, other learners become passive audience in such groups.

These findings are in line with the findings of a study conducted in France in which (Meng, 2010) asserts that cooperative learning is defined as group learning activities

organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. This points out to the fact that groups should be formed such that the team has to be one of positive interdependence, that is, a feeling that success for any one is tied directly to the success of others.

Majority, 21 (75.5%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three teachers who design group tasks based on learners' different levels of difficulty have improved their Grade Three Pupils' phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills. A paltry 7.5% of the sampled teachers agreed. At the same time, 6.5% of the sampled teachers were undecided, 6.0% disagreed whereas 4.5% of the teachers strongly disagreed. The headteacher and researcher noted that Grade Three teachers usually design tasks for learners to practise reading and other accompanying skills.

These findings corroborate the assertions of Okoth (2009) that designing of group tasks and selections based on pupils' interests, prior knowledge, and competencies spur their development by building upon strengths. Okoth (2009) asserts that, in selecting appropriate books, teachers should consider text layout, book language, supportive and challenging features of the book, and a pupil's oral language and current strategies for problem solving at difficult points.

Thus, these findings affirm the fact that, to help pupils integrate cues, the teacher prompts them to use meaning, structure and visual cues in the orientation. The teacher provides pupils with a brief overview of the text and prompts them to discuss the

pictures as they converse about the author's intended message, incorporates structure into the book orientation by exposing pupils to recurring language patterns.

To verify the possibility of variance between use of groupwork strategies and Grade Three Pupils' acquisition of reading skills, data were collected on sizes of reading groups which teachers usually form and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills from the sampled pupils' test. The results are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Size of the group and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills

Number of Pupils Per Reading Group	Reading Skills				
	L/S (25)	W (25)	S/P(25)	S (25)	C(25)
26 and above	4	10	5	9	5
21-25	9	13	6	14	7
16-20	11	16	11	17	10
11-15	15	18	13	19	13
6-10	20	20	16	20	15
2 - 5	23	22	19	21	18

Key: L/S- Letter and sound recognition; W-Word recognition; S/P –Sentence and paragraph reading; S – Story reading and C – Comprehension

The results in Table 4.4 indicate the size of reading groups which teachers formed in their class and marks awarded in every level of reading out of 25 marks to determine the performance of learners in reading skills. In schools where teachers formed large groups of up to 25 pupils and above Grade Three Pupils performed poorly in the five levels ranging from 4 to 10 out of 25. In the class where the groups contained five pupils, the pupils performed well in all the five reading levels ranging from 18 to 23 out of 25.

These findings indicated that, the smaller the number of Grade Three Pupils in the reading groups, the better was their performance. These findings further corroborate the assertions of Amendum (2009) that teachers are encouraged to create small reading groups to help improve literacy skills. This implies that, in small groups, the teacher helps pupils develop an understanding of the text while prompting them to apply strategies they need, to become independent readers. These results were subjected to ANOVA to test the null hypothesis that stated that, “*There is no significant relationship between the number of Grade Three Pupils per reading group and Grade Three Pupils ’ performance in reading skills.*” The results are indicated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: ANOVA analysis between number of Grade Three Pupils per reading group and Grade Three Pupils ’ performance in reading skills

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Number of pupils per reading group	193.367	5	38.673		
Letter and sound recognition, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension	640.333	4	160.083	5.632	.003
Residual	568.467	20	28.423		
Total	1402.167	29	48.351		
Grand Mean = 12.83					

From the ANOVA statistics in Table 4.5, the processed data, which are the population parameters, had a significance level of 5% which shows that the data are ideal for making a conclusion on the population’s parameter as the value of significance (p-value of 0.003) is less than 5%, that is, $p\text{-value} = 0.003 < 0.05$. Thus, the Alternative Hypothesis, **H₁₁**, is accepted. However, there was need to establish whether there are

clusters of group sizes which would not lead to significantly different results in acquisition of reading. As such, the researcher performed a post-hoc test using Duncan's test to establish these clusters at 95% confidence interval.

Table 4.6: Duncan's test

Group size	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05			
		1	2	3	
25 and above	141	1.8333			
21-25	141	2.3333			
16-20	141	3.1333			
11-15	141		3.3333		
6-10	141		2.3333	5.1667	
2-5	141			5.2000	
Sig.		.288	.053	.942	

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 141.

From the results, 3 clusters were obtained, with cluster one being the most popular. The findings show that there was no significant difference in reading achievement in situations where group sizes comprising of 11-15, 16-20 and 21-25 members were used ($p=0.288>0.05$). Similarly, it was observed that group sizes of 6-10 and 11-15 did not post significantly different results in acquisition of reading skills ($p=0.053>0.05$). A group size of 2-5 and 6-10 was also found not to have significantly different results in acquisition of reading skills ($p=0.942>0.05$). Basically, findings have shown that though the number of group sizes influenced acquisition of reading

skills, some group sizes would not lead to significantly different results. This specifically applies to the ones that are close to each other like 6-10 and 11-15.

Indeed, this indicates that there was a significant relationship between the number of Grade Three Pupils per reading group and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills. It also indicates that the results are statistically significant and that the size of reading group which Grade Three teachers formed determined the skills of Grade Three learners to acquire reading skills. These results were consistent with the findings of a study conducted in Ghana by Tyner (2003) which generated a p-value of $0.045 < 0.05$. These findings affirm the fact that effective small reading group consists of approximately from two to six members per group.

This small-group setting allows the teacher to introduce a new text each day and to ensure that the challenges are manageable. It also allows the teacher to assist and support the pupils as they respond to the text in varying ways. Thus, small-group reading is important because it enables teachers to observe pupils' reading behaviour and provide support while they practise reading strategies.

4.4.2 Storytelling Activities on Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

The study sought to explore the use of storytelling strategy and its implication on reading skills among Grade Three pupils. Data were collected from Grade Three teachers and summarized and results are shown in Figure 4.3.

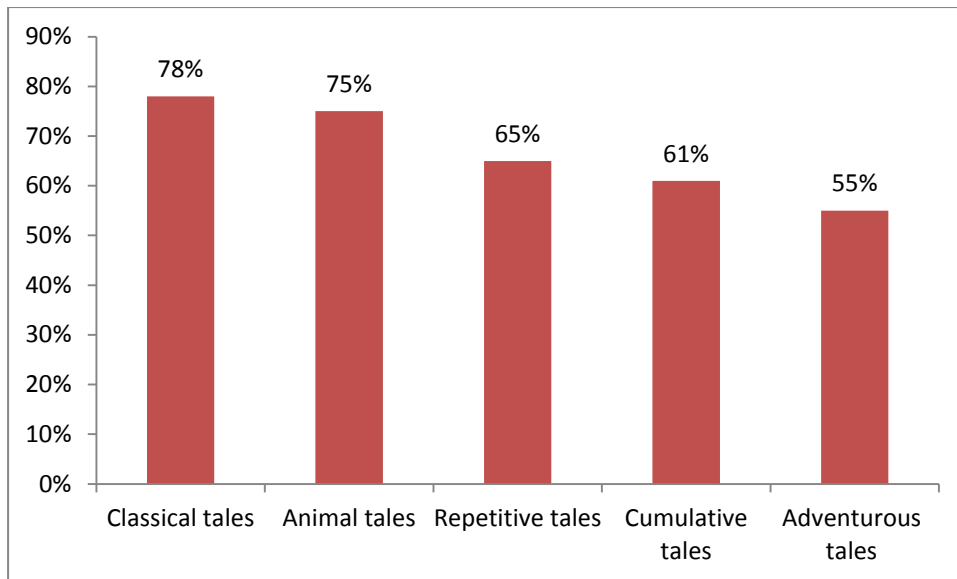


Figure 4.3: Types of stories used by Grade Three teachers. Source: The researcher, 2018

The result in Figure 4.3 above indicates that majority 22 (78%) of teachers use classical tales, 21 (75%) animal tales, 18 (65%) repetitive tales, 17 (61%) cumulative tales and 15 (55%) use adventurous tales. This indicates that classical tales and animal tales are used by most teachers in classroom to teach reading skills. The implication here is that teachers did not use a variety of stories while teaching to enable acquisition of reading skills. They mostly used classical tales (78%) and animal tales or fables (75%).

The use of stories could have been higher to enable acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils in Nairobi County. This is in line with Hassan and Mahkameh, (2013) findings which indicated that folk tales or classical tales help in instilling morality among children while stories about animals are attributed to the fact that children like animals especially those that act as heroes and heroines. Table

4.7 presents teachers' views in the influence of storytelling strategies to acquire reading skills.

Table 4.7: Grade Three teachers' views on the influence of use of storytelling strategies on acquisition of reading skills

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Grade Three teachers' use of classical tales enhances Grade Three learners acquisition of phoneme awareness, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension skills	75.0	11.5	4.5	7.5	1.5
Grade Three teachers use of animal tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension skills	88.5	2.5	1.5	4.5	3.0
Grade Three teachers use of repetitive tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension skills	83.5	5.5	2.5	4.5	4.0
Grade Three teachers use of cumulative tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension skills	65.5	11.5	4.0	13.0	6.0
Grade Three teachers use of adventurous tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension skills	57.5	17.0	5.5	15.0	5.0

Key: SA-Strongly Agree A-Agree U-Undecided D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree

Table 4.7 reveals that majority, 21 (75%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three teachers' use of classical tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension skills as did 3 (11.5%) who agreed. However, only a

paltry 4.5% were undecided, 7.5% disagreed whereas 1.5% strongly disagreed. From the findings, it can be noted that use of classical tales in teaching reading lead to acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils . Although the teachers were in favour of using classical tales, the big question was if they really used them in class during their lessons.

During interviews conducted among the primary school headteachers by the researcher, the headteachers, however, noted that Grade Three teachers rarely use classical tales to enhance learners' acquisition of reading skills. This was contrary to what the teachers had alleged. This was ascertained by one headteacher, who said,

Most Grade Three teachers in my school only major mostly on what is documented in text books. They rarely allow their learners to participate in storytelling sessions as a way of improving their reading skills.

The researcher also observed that Grade Three teachers used stories as a teaching technique only on a few countable occasions and that could be the reason why there was low levels of reading. One explanation for this is that these headteachers may not have observed their teachers frequently and so gave unconfirmed information to the researcher. Another reason could have been that these stories were told quietly by the teachers without the headteachers noting what was happening in the classrooms.

These findings are in line with the findings of a study on reading and comprehension through use of short stories conducted in Australia in which Koham and Pourkalhor, (2013) established that Grade Three learners from diverse cultural backgrounds are aware of classical tales, their plot, characters and ending of such forms of stories. These findings affirm that, when children are encouraged to choose a folk tale and in keeping with oral traditions, make it their own in reality they become creative and

build their adaptive skills by writing and telling their own stories. This creativity inevitably carries over into their other work in class. As they tell their stories, children will also learn that they have a unique sensibility and method of presentation as no other two people ever tell a story in the same way. Through children's own and other stories, they develop understanding of other people and cultures and learn to appreciate diversity.

From Table 4.6, majority, 25 (88.5%) of the sampled teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three teachers' use of animal tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills. Some 2.5% of the sampled teachers agreed. At the same time, 1.5% of the sampled teachers were undecided, 4.5% of teachers disagreed whereas 3.0% of the teachers strongly disagreed. The study findings indicate that, use of animal tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of reading skills.

During the interviews, headteachers discounted the view that Grade Three teachers use stories such as animal tales to teach reading skills. One interviewee observed that:

Grade Three teachers do not use these stories. Learners are only allowed to generate their own stories which are just mentioned as a peripheral event, but not as a technique which can help pupils improve their reading skills.

The researcher also made similar observations where Grade Three teachers strictly followed the school syllabus without embracing any form of creativity such as using storytelling as an improvised way of teaching reading skills. Failure to improvise methods of teaching could imply that acquisition of reading skills was definitely hampered. These findings lend credence to the assertions of Pardede (2010) that

narratives deal with human or human-like intention, action, the vicissitudes and consequences that mark their course.

Stories can bring abstract principles to life by giving them concrete form. Hence, these findings attest to the fact that lower primary school Grade Three learners listening to stories react to them almost automatically and take part in the action of the narrative. Furthermore, majority 23 (83.5%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three teachers' use of repetitive tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills. A paltry 5.5% of the sampled teachers agreed. At the same time, 2.5% of the sampled teachers were undecided, 4.5% disagreed whereas 4.0% of the teachers strongly disagreed. On the same breath, majority (65.5%) of the sampled teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three teachers' use of cumulative tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills. Eleven point five per cent (11.5%) of the sampled teachers agreed. At the same time, 4.0% of the teachers were undecided, 13.0% of teachers disagreed whereas 6.0% of the sampled teachers strongly disagreed. The results indicate that use of repetitive and cumulative tales enhance acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

During interviews, headteachers and researcher, however, established contrary views and reported that Grade Three teachers rarely use any form of stories to help pupils acquire reading skills. These findings corroborate the findings of a study conducted in most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa such as Ghana, Egypt and Kenya in particular in which Neil and Steve (2011) indicated that stories about repetition and accumulative stories are really useful for learning language due to their short plot and

rhythms which are repetitive in nature and enhance Grade Three learners' skills to recall words within a short time span.

Slightly more than half, 16 (57.5%) of the sampled teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three teachers use of adventurous tales enhances Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills. Some 17.0% of the sampled teachers agreed. At the same time, 5.5% of the sampled teachers were undecided, 15.0% of the teachers disagreed whereas 5.0% of the sampled teachers strongly disagreed. These findings are consistent with the assertions of Ibrahim and Fadi (2012) that the most famous adventurous stories enhance the motivation and language competency among preschool Grade Three learners. Thus, these findings point to the fact that Grade Three learners who just heard the stories manifested greater reading of comprehension compared to their counterparts who just read the stories, even though the storytelling and the reading of stories had similar concepts. Most importantly, a narrative account requires a story that poses questions without answers or unresolved conflicts; characters may encounter and then seek a solution to the crisis or crises.

The investigator interviewed headteachers on this issue. This was confirmed in the words of one headteacher, who said:

Use of animal tales, repetitive, cumulative and adventurous tales has not enhanced Grade Three learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills.

These views affirm the fact that lower primary school Grade Three learners listening to stories react to them almost automatically and take part in the action of the narrative. That is, stories about repetition and accumulation stories are really useful

for learning language due to their short plot and rhythms which are repetitive in nature and enhance lower primary school Grade Three learners' skills to recall words within a short time span (Neil & Steve, 2011).

Thus, these views also point to the fact that, Grade Three learners who just heard the stories, manifested greater reading of comprehension compared to their counterparts who just read the stories, even though the storytelling and the reading of stories had similar concepts. Most importantly, a narrative account requires a story that poses questions without answers or unresolved conflicts; characters may encounter and then seek a solution to the crisis or crises.

To verify the possibility of variance between use of storytelling strategies and Grade Three Pupils' acquisition of reading skills, data were collected by the researcher on how often teachers use stories as a teaching strategy per term out of 45 reading lessons. The marks were awarded out of 25 per every reading skill. The results are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Frequency of use of storytelling and Grade Three Pupils’ performance in reading skills

Frequency of Using Storytelling During Reading (per term)	Reading Skills				
	L/S (25)	W (25)	S/P(25)	S (25)	C(25)
5	4	4	3	3	2
15	8	7	6	5	5
20	13	11	10	9	8
30	15	13	12	11	10
38	18	17	16	15	11
45	21	20	19	19	17

Key: L/S- Letter and sound recognition; W-word recognition; S/P –sentence and paragraph reading; S – story reading and C - comprehension

The results in Table 4.8 indicate that teachers who frequently use stories in teaching reading skills have their Grade Three learners register good grades in letter and sound recognition, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension skills. The teachers with the highest frequency of 45 have highest results as: letter and sound recognition 21, word recognition 20, sentence and paragraph reading 19, story reading 19, and comprehension 17, all these out of 25 scores. These results were subjected to ANOVA to test the null hypothesis that stated “*there is no significant relationship between using storytelling and acquisition of reading skills*”. The results are indicated in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: ANOVA analysis between use of storytelling and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Frequency of using storytelling in teaching reading skills	1209.367	5	241.873		
Letter and sound recognition, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension	1433.667	4	358.417	15.024	.001
Residual	477.133	20	23.857		
Total	3120.167	29	107.592		

Grand Mean = 15.17

From the ANOVA statistics in Table 4.9, the processed data, which are the population parameters, had a significance level of 5% which shows that the data are ideal for making a conclusion on the population's parameter as the value of significance (p-value of 0.001) is less than 5%, that is, $p\text{-value} = 0.001 < 0.05$. Thus, the Alternative Hypothesis, **H₁₂**, is accepted. No doubt there is a significant relationship between storytelling and Grade Three acquisition of reading skills. It also indicates that the results were statistically significant and that frequency with which Grade Three teachers use stories to teach reading skills enhances Grade Three Pupils' skills to master fluent reading, dictation, comprehension and letter naming skills. These results were consistent with the findings of a study conducted in the United States by Fiona (2006) which generated a p-value of $0.023 < 0.05$. However, there was need to establish whether any difference in the frequency of storytelling practice would lead to significantly different results in acquisition of reading skills. Post-hoc test was

therefore performed, where Duncan test was used to form the clusters at 95% confidence interval.

Table 4.10:Acquisition of reading

Duncan test

Frequency of storytelling	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	3
5	141	1.4333		
15	141	1.5667		
20	141	1.7000		
30	141		1.7333	
38	141		2.7000	
45	141		3.1333	
Sig.		.354	.156	

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 141.000.

From the findings, only two clusters were formed, one with frequencies between 5 and 20 and the other one between 30 and 45. The results show that storytelling frequencies of 5,15 and 20 did not have significantly different outcomes in reading acquisition among the learners ($p=0.354>0.05$). Similarly, a group sizes of 30 to 45 did not lead to significantly different results in acquisition of reading skills ($p=0.156>0.05$).

These findings affirm that storytelling is critical and really helpful for learning literacy since these sorts of stories have short plot and repetitive rhythms which

enable Grade Three Pupils to remember the plot and then reproduce words and structures in a short span of time. Hence, these results further attest to the fact that retelling or remembering the plot of a story can foster Grade Three learners cognitive and social skills; cognitive activities such as identifying language characters, comparing their behaviours and reactions during story and defining concepts, lead to develop concrete thinking, and cognitive activities such as; reasoning, finding solution, and creative ending leading to develop abstract thinking.

4.4.3 Play Activities and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

In objective 2, the study further sought to explore the use of play activities on reading skills acquisition among grade Three pupils. Grade Three teachers' perception was documented as indicated in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Forms of play activities

Forms of play activities	Number of Grade Three teachers reporting use of play	
	No. of teachers	%
Pretended play	16	60
Socio-dramatic	9	30
Hide and seek activities	3	10

Table 4.11 reveals that majority, 16 (60%) of the Grade Three teachers indicated that the learners participate in pretended play activities; 9 (30%) engage in socio-dramatic play activities whereas 3 (10%) do engage in hide and seek activities. Other play activities were not as much used as this one. This calls for a variety of activities being

employed to enable acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three children in Nairobi County. There is no reason why all these activities cannot score 100%.

These findings reflect the assertions of (Farrel&Okotoni, 2009) that children can experiment with their environment (exploratory play) while older children can manipulate and control their environment (mastery play). Solitary play is followed by parallel play- playing 'next to' but not 'with' other children - at around two or three years of age. During interviews with the investigator, the headteachers also noted that play is common among pupils as one of them remarked:

Pupils in my school participate in pretended, hide and seek and socio-dramatic play activities. However, this has not effectively enhanced their reading skills.

This sets the stage for social play, at around age three or four. Bailey (2011) also asserts that social play is diverse and complex, and includes everything from simple activities, like working together to build a sand castle, to 'rough-and-tumble' play (chasing, play fighting), and complex 'socio-dramatic play', in which children enact roles in fantasy scenarios that they themselves create. These findings affirm the fact that children engage in play activities which include; pretended, socio-dramatic, hide and seek activities, singing games and storytelling activities. Table 4.12 presents the results.

Table 4.12: Grade Three teachers' views on the influence of play activities and acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils

Summary of Test Items	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Grade Three Pupils should engage in pretend play activities to enhance their reading skills	71	12.3	1.3	10.1	5.3
Grade Three Pupils should engage in socio-dramatic play activities to enhance their reading skills	66.9	13.2	2.4	12.7	4.8
Grade Three Pupils should engage in hide and seek play activities in order to improve their reading skills	67.4	19.7	3.5	5.3	4.1
Grade Three Pupils should engage in music and movement as a way of improving their reading skills	69.6	13.8	1.6	10.6	4.4

Key: SA-Strongly Agree A-Agree U-Undecided D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree

Table 4.12 reveals that majority, 20 (71%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three Pupils should engage in pretend play activities to enhance their reading skills. At the same time, 3 (12.3%) agreed. However, only a paltry 1 (1.3%) of the sampled teachers were undecided, 3(10.1%) disagreed whereas 1 (5.3%) strongly disagreed. These findings corroborate the assertions by Wafula (2010) that children have better narrative recall, immediately after the pretend play and at a later time when prompted by pictures and doll figures.

These findings affirm that, in observing, discovering and carrying out deductive reasoning, pretend play is critical for cognitive skills and helping children build the skills to solve problems and draw their own conclusions. This is indicative of the fact

that, in pretending to be someone or something else in a theatrical way, pretend play can help develop a child's gross and fine motor skills. This means the role of play among children should not be underestimated at any case.

The study further revealed that a fair majority, 19 (66.9%) of the Grade Three teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three Pupils engaged in socio-dramatic play activities to enhance their reading skills as did 13.2% of the teachers. At the same time, 3 (2.4%) of the sampled teachers were undecided, 12.7% disagreed whereas 4.8% strongly disagreed. These findings lend credence to the assertions of Meng (2010) that young children learn by imagining and doing. He noted that those young children learn through the dramatic play activities. These findings also lend credence to the assertions of Peters and Charles (2011) that as well as being a great way to encourage interaction and communication, dramatic play helps develop literacy skills. This means that children engage in imaginary play activities with friends and learn some words and phrases. That is, in promoting linguistic understanding, hide and seek play activities are great preparatory aids for Grade Three children.

A fair majority of 19 (67.4%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that Grade Three Pupils engage in hide and seek play activities in order to improve their reading skills whereas 19.7% agreed. However, 3.5% of the teachers were undecided, 5.3% disagreed whereas 4.1% strongly disagreed. These findings are further in line with the assertions by Wafula (2010) that hide and seek play can help develop a child's gross and fine motor skills.

From putting their character's costume away when the game has finished, role play builds hand-eye coordination as well as developing visual discrimination. This is indicative of the fact that learners in early childhood education centres constantly involved in pretend play with peers, manifest fairly developed reading skills.

The study also revealed that a fair majority, 19 (69.6%) of the sampled teachers strongly agreed that Grade Three Pupils engage in music and movement as a way of improving their reading skills while 13.8% of the teachers agreed. On the other hand, 1.6% of the sampled teachers were undecided, 10.6% disagreed whereas 4.4 % strongly disagreed. These findings corroborate the findings of a study carried out in Meru County in which Peters and Charles (2011) indicated that children who used music and movement activities showed improvements in the skills to work with other children on a task, developed good communication and improved their skills to take the perspectives of other children when those wants and preferences differed from their own.

To verify the possibility of variance between use of play strategies and Grade Three Pupils' acquisition of reading skills, data were collected on how often teachers use play as a strategy for improving reading skills and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills from the sample pupils test. The results are shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Frequency of use of play and Grade Three Pupils’ performance in reading skills

Frequency of Using Play per month	Reading Skills				
	L/S (25)	W (25)	S/P(25)	S (25)	C
1-2	4	5	4	4	3
3-4	9	7	6	5	4
5-6	11	10	10	9	8
7-8	15	13	12	11	10
9-10	20	15	15	15	14
11 and above	23	18	17	16	15

Key: L/S- Letter and sound recognition; W-word recognition; S/P –sentence and paragraph reading; S – story reading and C - comprehension

The results in Table 4.13 indicate that in schools where learners rarely engage in play activities such as pretended, socio-dramatic, hide and seek and music and movement register fairly low grades letter and sound recognition, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension. These results were further subjected to ANOVA to test null hypothesis that stated, “*There is no significant relationship between use of play activities and the acquisition of reading skills.*” The results are indicated in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: ANOVA test analysis of difference between frequency of use of play and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Frequency of using play activities in teaching reading skills	1485.067	5	297.013		
Letter and sound recognition, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension	3044.867	4	761.217	18.256	.001
Residual	833.933	20	41.697		
Total	5363.867	29	184.961		

Grand Mean = 17.07

From the ANOVA statistics on Table 4.14, the processed data, which are the population parameters, had a significance level of 0.001 which shows that the data are ideal for making a conclusion on the population's parameter as the value of significance (p-value of 0.001) is less than 5%, that is, $p\text{-value} = 0.036 < 0.05$. Thus, the Alternative Hypothesis, **H₁₃**, is accepted. It also indicates that there was a significant difference between Grade Three learners' involvement in play activities and their performance in reading skills. It seemed that play activities propelled the acquisition of reading skills among primary school children significantly. These findings further support the findings of a study conducted by Wafula (2010) which generated $p\text{-value} = 0.023 < 0.05$. However, a post-hoc test was performed using Duncan test in order to establish the existence of frequency clusters that had similar effect on preprimary pupils' performance in reading skills. The test was carried out at 95% confidence interval with the aid of SPSS program.

Table 4.15: Performance in reading skills

Duncan test

Frequency of Using Play per month	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05				
		1	2	3	4	
1-2	141	.3733				
3-4	141		.4367			
5-6	141		.4500			
7-8	141			.5667		
9-10	141			.6267		
11 and above	141				.6333	
Sig.		1.000	.630	.809	1.000	

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 141.000.

The findings reveal existence of three clusters as far as frequency of using play per month and performance in reading is concerned. Using play 3 to 4 times and 5 to 6 times did not lead to significant differences in reading performance among grade three pupils ($p=0.63>0.05$). Similarly, a play frequency of 7 to 8 and 9 to 10 did not lead to significantly different results in reading performance among grade three learners. Basically, it appears that the higher the frequency of using play per month, the better the performance. However, it has been revealed that, frequencies of between 7 to 10 would not lead to significant differences in performance in various reading skills.

These results further point to the fact that the play activities are important in promoting reading skills among Grade Three Pupils. Through play, learners build

hand-eye coordination as well as developing visual discrimination. In other words, learners constantly involved in pretend play with peers manifest fairly developed reading skills.

4.5 Instructional Resources and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

Objective three sought to assess the adequacy and use of reading instructional resources and how teachers' use of instructional resources as a strategy influenced Grade Three Pupils' acquisition of reading skills. Data were collected from Grade Three teachers and results are shown in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Adequacy of instructional resources in use in grade three

Items	None	Few	Adequate	Plenty
	%	%	%	%
Presence of reading books	7.1	60.7	17.9	14.3
Pupil book ratio	3.6	57.1	32.1	7.2
Classroom library	28.6	53.6	10.7	7.2
Resource centre	57.1	32.1	7.2	3.6
Presence and use of technology	32.1	57.1	7.2	3.6
Age appropriate books	28.6	57.1	7.1	7.1
Charts on the walls	32.1	60.7	3.6	0.0
Writing opportunities	35.7	42.9	14.3	7.1
Recognizing diversity in the classroom	39.3	46.4	7.2	3.6

Table 4.16 indicates that a small proportion 2 (7.1%) of the Grade Three teachers admitted that reading books are present in public primary schools, 17 (60.7%) indicated that reading books are few, 5 (17.9%) of the teachers indicated that reading books are present and adequate whereas 4 (14.3%) of the Grade Three teachers noted that reading books are present and in plenty. Similar views were expressed by the headteachers.

The respondents also stated that their schools had reading books. However, through observations, the researcher noted that books were inadequate. A small proportion (3.6%) of the Grade Three teachers admitted that pupil book ratio is not adequate, slightly more than half (57.1%) of the Grade Three teachers indicated that pupil book ratio is fairly, slightly less than a third (32.1%) indicated that pupil book ratio is adequate whereas 7.2% indicated plenty. Scarcity of reading books was a phenomenon as the headteachers who were interviewed indicated. The results imply that instructional resources being scarce, the acquisition of reading skills in the study county could not be possible.

The headteachers interviewed lamented that there was dire need for instructional materials. This was ascertained in words of one of them,

Reading books in my school are not enough for all Grade Three learners. Sometimes, we have three pupils sharing a book and Sometimes, even four.

The study also revealed that 28.6% of the Grade Three teachers admitted that their schools had no classroom libraries, slightly more than half (53.6%) indicated that there were few books in classroom libraries, 10.7% indicated that their schools have adequate classroom libraries whereas 7.2% indicated that they have plenty classroom libraries. The study also revealed that slightly more than half (57.1%) of the Grade Three teachers admitted that their schools had no resource centres, 32.1% indicated that only few schools had resource centres, 7.2% indicated that their schools have adequate resource centres whereas only 3.6% indicated that they had plenty resource centers.

During interviews, headteachers also noted that their schools did not have resource centres. One such headteacher lamented,

Reading resourseres are rare occurrence in most schools. If any school attempts to have, then it may not even have pre-requisite reading materials.

The researcher also made similar observations. From the observations, it was realized that there was scarcity of teaching resources for instance schools had children uncomfortably sharing meagre resources like textbooks. These findings are consistent with the findings of a study carried out in South Africa in which Tiemensma (2009) found that many difficulties learners experience include; lack of and limited access to libraries in schools and community and lack of appropriate reading materials, multilingualism, illiterate parents, and socio-economic conditions and lack of support from government at various levels. Previous studies have also indicated that a book-rich environment positively influences the acquisition of literacy reading skills.

A study by Koskinen(2010) on the impact of using book-rich classroom environments and home reading on the reading motivation, comprehension, and fluency revealed that a book-rich classroom enriches reading of comprehension. Reading of books increased the pupils' reading. Therefore, the low reading skills acquisition in the study area could be due to low pupils- textbook ratio experienced in schools that were sampled.

These findings are indicative of the fact that resource centres with reading materials of sufficient quantity, quality and variety serve a considerable role in successful early grade literacy acquisition. This implies that, such materials guide pupils through learning of essential reading and writing skills and also provide them with a crucial

link between skills acquisition and meaningful use of literacy throughout their life. The study also established that 32.1% of the Grade Three teachers noted the presence and use of technology in teaching reading skills, slightly more than half (57.1%) of the Grade Three teachers noted few presence and use of technology, 7.2% indicated that technology is rarely used in teaching reading and only a paltry 3.6% indicated that technology is present in plenty and is used in teaching reading skills. Regarding the use of modern technology, the headteachers found sense in this as one of them indicated,

Use of technology is in-thing in most public primary schools, though its use in teaching reading skills has not been fully embraced.

The researcher also observed that despite the scanty presence of technology in most of public primary schools, its use in teaching Grade Three Pupils reading skills is yet to be realized. These findings lend credence to the assertions of ADEA (2012) that the literacy material comprises books, adequate age and language appropriate materials and scalable technologies that improve reading. Teaching resources seemed to be very important as far as acquisition of reading skills was concerned.

At the same time, 28.6% of the Grade Three teachers noted inadequate use of age appropriate reading books, slightly more than half (57.1%) indicated that age appropriate reading books are few, 7.2% indicated adequate whereas 7.1% indicated that age appropriate reading books were in plenty. Headteachers also responded in favour of the view that, in most cases, their pupils lack age appropriate reading books. This was a drawback to the acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three children in the study county.

These findings are thus in line with the assertions of IPAR (2012) that reading materials of sufficient quantity, quality and variety serve a considerable role in successful early grade literacy acquisition. Pupils need to access age appropriate and interesting books in addition to instructions in literacy skills that teachers provide in order to develop reading skills (Gambrell, Malloy & Mazzoni, 2007). Without proper materials, it is impossible to improve reading skills acquisition at any case.

Such materials guide pupils through learning of essential reading and writing skills and also provide them with a crucial link between skills acquisition and meaningful use of literacy throughout the pupils' life. In the same vein, 32.1% of the sampled Grade Three teachers indicated that there are no charts on walls for reading, majority (60.7%) of the teachers indicated that charts are available on the walls though few, 3.6% indicated that charts on the walls are adequate where no Grade Three teachers indicated that the charts are in plenty. This pronounced inadequacy of teaching and learning resources in the schools investigated.

During interviews with the investigator, headteachers also echoed similar sentiments. They responded in favour of the view that most public primary schools have very few charts on walls. One such headteacher from one of the public primary schools sampled remarked,

My lower primary classes, especially class III, lack suitable and relevant teaching aids for improving reading skills. My school lacks wall charts, maps, audio-visuals and pictures which can harness reading skills for learners in class III.

On the same breath, the researcher also observed that most of the public primary schools Grade Three, had no charts, pictures, maps and reading materials on class

walls as one of the strategies that enhance acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils. The blank walls had a tale to tell. All was not well indeed.

These findings thus are in line with the views expressed by Neuman and Roskos (2010) who asserted that enriched environments tend to arouse more challenging activity, with a greater repertoire of behaviour such as questions, responses, and complexity of language interactions. These findings suggest that a quality literacy environment that provides many opportunities and materials to promote language and literacy development is linked to good acquisition of reading. In other words, a literacy-rich environment setting, stimulates pupils to participate in language and literacy activities in their day to day lives. This propels the level of reading skills among the children.

The study also found that 35.7% of the Grade Three teachers indicated that Grade Three Pupils are never offered writing opportunities and instruction, 42.9% indicated that few writing opportunities and instruction are offered to Grade Three learners, 14.3% indicated the opportunities are adequate, whereas only 3.6% of the participants indicated plenty. Headteachers also indicated that there were no writing opportunities and instruction.

The study also established that 39.3% of the Grade Three teachers noted they did not have recognition of diversity in their classrooms, 46.4% admitted that they recognize diversity in their classrooms on few occasions, 7.2% indicated adequately whereas 3.6% indicated that they recognize diversity in their classrooms in plenty. However, headteachers offered a discounting view stating that all pupils are catered for devoid of their diverse backgrounds. Table 4.17 presents the views.

Table 4.17: Teachers’ views on the influence of use of instructional resources on Grade Three Pupils’ acquisition of reading skills

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Instructional resources include books, reading appropriate materials, school libraries are necessary for literacy development	75.0	11.5	4.5	7.5	1.5
Inadequate reading resources in the classroom affects acquisition of reading skills by Grade Three Pupils	75.0	10.5	2.5	9.0	3.5
Instructional reading resources of low quality impair pupils’ negatively influences Grade Three Pupils ’ skills to acquire reading skills	88.5	2.5	1.5	4.5	3.0
Quality instructional resources promotes Grade Three Pupils ’ reading skills	65.5	11.5	4.0	13.0	6.0
Classrooms equipped with age appropriate reading instructional resources help Grade Three Pupils acquire reading skills	70.0	15.5	4.5	7.0	3.5

Table 4.17 reveals that majority (75.0%) of the Grade Three teachers strongly agreed with the view that instructional resources include books, reading appropriate materials, school libraries are necessary for literacy development as did 11.5% of the Grade Three teachers who agreed. Only an insignificant 4.5% of the headteachers as well as 1.1% of Grade Three teachers were undecided, 7.5% of Grade Three teachers disagreed whereas 1.5% of Grade Three teachers strongly disagreed. During the interviews, the headteachers also responded in favour of the view that literacy-rich environment is critical in enhancing the reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

One such headteacher remarked:

Any school which has adequate and appropriate reading books, libraries and well-stocked resource centers have their Grade Three learners' manifest good reading skills.

These findings corroborate the assertions of Neuman and Roskos (2009) that a literacy-rich environment setting stimulates pupils to participate in language and literacy activities in their day-to-day lives. They ascertained that literacy-rich environment gives learners an understanding of the usefulness and purpose of reading. These findings attest that a literacy-rich environment at school is important in promoting literacy and preventing reading difficulties.

The study also revealed that majority (75.0%) of Grade Three teachers strongly agreed that inadequacy of reading resources in the classroom affects acquisition of reading skills by Grade Three Pupils. On the same breath, 10.5% of the Grade Three teachers agreed. However, 2.8% of the teachers were undecided, 9.0% of Grade Three teachers disagreed whereas 3.5% of the Grade Three teachers strongly disagreed. Headteachers also echoed similar views. One interviewee noted,

The skills of Grade Three teachers to effectively manipulate the reading materials at their disposal always have their learners acquire good reading skills.

These findings lend credence to a report by ADEA (2012) which noted that literacy-rich environments both at home and at school arouse pupils participation in language and literacy activities. Hence, these findings affirm that reading materials of sufficient quantity, quality and variety play a significant role in successful early grade literacy acquisition. Such materials guide pupils through learning of essential reading and writing skills and also provide them with a crucial link between skills acquisition and meaningful use of literacy. Majority (88.5%) of Grade Three teachers strongly agreed that instructional reading resources of low quality impair and negatively

influence Grade Three Pupils' skills to acquire reading skills. A paltry 2.5% of the Grade Three teachers agreed. At the same time, 1.5% of the Grade Three teachers were undecided, 4.5% of Grade Three teachers disagreed whereas 3.0% of the Grade Three teachers strongly disagreed.

Similarly, majority (65.5%) of Grade Three teachers strongly agreed with the view that quality instructional resources promote Grade Three Pupils' reading skills. Eleven point five per cent (11.5%) of Grade Three teachers agreed. At the same time, 4.0% of the Grade Three teachers were undecided, 13.0% of Grade Three teachers disagreed whereas 6.0% of the Grade Three teachers strongly disagreed. Interviewing of headteachers revealed similar outcomes. The headteachers responded in favour of the view that literacy environments of low quality may impair pupils' literacy learning skills and can contribute to negative attitudes that interfere with successful literacy development. The headteachers further noted,

Quality literacy environment that provides many opportunities and materials promote language and literacy development.

These findings support the assertions of Kimberly (2013) that a literacy-rich environment at school importantly promotes literacy and prevents reading difficulties. This means that literacy-rich environment setting stimulates pupils to participate in language and literacy activities in their day to day lives. In other words, literacy-rich environment gives learners an understanding of the importance and purpose of oral and written text. Majority (70.0%) of the Grade Three teachers strongly agreed with the view that classrooms equipped with age appropriate reading instructional resources help Grade Three Pupils acquire reading skills as 15.5% of the Grade Three teachers agreed. At the same time, 4.5% of the Grade Three teachers were undecided,

7.0% of Grade Three teachers disagreed whereas 3.5% of the Grade Three teachers strongly disagreed.

4.5.1 Inferential Findings on the Influence of Instructional Resources on Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

To verify the possibility of variance between use of instructional resources and Grade Three Pupils' acquisition of reading skills, data were collected on pupil book ratio and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills from the sample pupils' test. The results are shown in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Pupil/book ratio and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills

Frequency of Using pupil/book ratio	Reading Skills				
	L/S (25)	W (25)	S/P(25)	S (25)	C 25
6	4	4	3	3	2
5	9	8	7	7	6
4	11	11	10	9	9
3	15	14	14	13	12
2	20	18	17	16	14
1	23	21	20	19	18

Key: L/S- Letter and sound recognition; W-word recognition; S/P –sentence and paragraph reading; S – story reading and C – comprehension

Table 4.18 indicates that public primary schools with smaller pupil/book ratio (PBR) have their Grade Three children manifest excellent reading skills. That is, such learners manifest letter and sound recognition, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading comprehension. These findings further corroborate the findings of Neuman and Roskos (2009) and Kimberly (2013) that a literacy-rich environment setting stimulates pupils to participate in language and literacy activities

in their day-to-day lives. They added that, literacy-rich environment gives learners an understanding of the usefulness and purpose of oral and written text. These data further affirm the fact that a literacy-rich environment at school is important in promoting literacy and preventing reading difficulties. The null hypothesis *There is no significant difference between means of pupil/book ratio and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills* was tested. These results were subjected to ANOVA to analyze such variance and results are shown in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: ANOVA analysis of the difference between the means of the pupil/book ratio and Grade Three Pupils' performance in reading skills

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Letter and sound recognition, word recognition, sentence and paragraph reading, story reading and comprehension	1863.556	5	372.711	31.013	.002
Residual	300.444	25	12.018		
Total	2723.889	35	77.825		
Grand Mean = 10.06					

From the ANOVA Statistics in Table 4.19, the processed data, which is the population parameters, had a significance level of 0.002 which shows that the data are ideal for making a conclusion on the population's parameter as the value of significance (p-value of 0.002) is less than 5%, that is, $p\text{-value} = 0.002 < 0.05$. Thus, the Alternative Hypothesis, **H₁₄**, is accepted. It also indicates that the results were statistically significant and that there is significant difference between pupil/book ratio and Grade Three Pupils' acquisition of reading skills. These results were consistent with the findings of Neuman and Roskos (2009) which generated a p-value of $0.013 < 0.05$.

These results indicate that in schools where books are adequate, Grade Three Pupils manifest excellent reading skills. That is, such learners manifest fluent reading of letters, perform well in dictation, comprehension, letter naming and register few cases of mixing of letters and sounds.

Thus, instructional resources stimulate pupils to participate in language and literacy activities in their day-to-day lives. In other words, literacy-rich environment gives learners an understanding of the usefulness and purpose of oral and written text. These data further affirm that a literacy-rich environment at school is important in promoting literacy and preventing reading difficulties.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary of the main research findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research as discussed under the research objectives.

5.2 Summary of Research Findings

This section provides a summary of the research findings based on the objectives of the study. The aim of the study was to establish the levels of reading skills, explore the use of selected instructional strategies on acquisition of reading skills and also examine the use of instructional resources on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.

5.2.1 Levels of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

In the first objective, the study established that most of Grade Three Pupils in public primary schools manifested relatively low skills in word recognition. Most of the pupils were below average in reading words and had difficulty figuring out the sounds and letters. Majority were unable to differentiate between letters and sounds making it difficult to read words, sentences and paragraphs and hence comprehension. This was an indication that reading levels among Grade Three pupils was low.

5.2.2 Use of Selected Strategies and Acquisition of Reading Skills Among Grade Three Pupils

The study revealed that, majority of the teachers agreed that small reading groups as opposed to large groups were effective in improving Grade Three reading skills. It was also reported by the headteachers that most teachers use large groups in teaching reading. From the inferential studies, size of the group had a significant relationship with reading skills achievement among Grade Three pupils.

The headteachers supported the use storytelling strategy as a way of acquiring reading skills on few occasions. Teachers who frequently use stories in the class registered better grades in all reading levels. The use of stories has a significant relationship with acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three pupils.

Majority of the Grade Three teachers indicated that the learners participate in pretended play activities compared to socio-dramatic play activities and hide and seek activities. Interview from headteachers indicated that children participated in play activities too but play was not effectively used while inferential statistics indicated that there was a significant relationship between use of play and acquisition of reading skills.

5.2.3 Use of Instructional Resources and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

From the study findings in objective three, it was evident that instructional materials in public primary schools were inadequate and inappropriate. This indicates that the difficulties Grade Three learners experience are associated with lack of appropriate

reading materials, multilingualism, illiterate parents, and socio-economic conditions and lack of support from government at various levels.

Resource centres with reading materials of sufficient quantity, quality and variety serve a considerable role in successful early grade literacy acquisition. Use of technology is still a pipeline dream and its use in teaching reading skills has not been fully embraced. This attests to the fact that, literacy materials comprise books, adequate age and language appropriate materials and scalable technologies that improve reading. Such materials guide pupils through learning of essential reading and writing skills and also provide them with a crucial link between skills acquisition and meaningful use of literacy.

Another challenge in most public primary schools is lack of suitable and relevant teaching aids for improving reading skills. Schools lack relevant wall charts, maps, audio-visuals and pictures which can harness reading skills for learners in class III. In a nutshell, these findings affirm that a quality literacy environment that provides many opportunities and materials to promote language and literacy development is linked to later reading.

5.3 Conclusions

The study concluded that reading levels among class three pupils was low. It was also concluded that Grade Three teachers rarely set small and convenient reading groups. Smaller groups make pupils engage more in learning and the teacher is also able to support them in reading activities and this enhance the acquisition of proper reading skills. Grade Three teachers did not use the selected instructional strategies effectively leading to low acquisition of reading skills. Instructional resources in most of the

public primary schools were inadequate and inappropriately used by the teachers leading to low reading skills.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommended that:

- MoE should provide refresher courses on teaching methodologies that would improve reading skills among the pupils.
- Curriculum support officers should ensure learner-centred teaching methods are practised in lower primary classes.
- Other stakeholders like parents, teachers should come together and develop learning resource materials to help in the acquisition of reading skills.
- Quality assurance curriculum support officers and headteachers should strengthen quality assessment, supervision and evaluation of children reading skills acquisition.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Further Research

The study recommends that:

- i. Further studies should be conducted to establish the influence of teachers' characteristics on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three Pupils.
- ii. A further study should be conducted to evaluate the influence of learners' characteristics on acquisition of reading skills.
- iii. Other studies should replicate other areas not covered in this study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH

I am a student taking a course in Doctor of Philosophy in Early Childhood Studies of Kenyatta University. I am required to submit as part of my research work assessment, a thesis on *Instructional Strategies and Resources Used in Teaching Reading Skills: An Implication on Grade Three Pupils Reading Skills in Nairobi County, Kenya*. To achieve this, you have been selected to participate in the study. I request you to participate in the study by providing the information contained in instruments. This information will be used purely for academic purpose and your name will not be mentioned in the report. Findings of the study, shall upon request, be availed to you.

Your assistance and cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

WINFRED NGURE

APPENDIX II

PARTICIPANTS' CONSENT FORM

Dear Respondent,

My name is Winfred Ngunjiri of registration number E83/21391/2012, Ph.D. student at Kenyatta University, and undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education, in the department of Early Childhood Studies. I am carrying out a study on *Instructional Strategies and Resources Used in Teaching Reading Skills: An Implication on Grade Three Pupils Reading Skills in Nairobi County, Kenya*. Your participation in this study is voluntary. The information you will provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality and anonymity. Your responses cannot be tracked back to you because they will be combined with the responses of others to establish common trends. The questionnaire will collect information on your school. Your responses will be confidential. Please fill in all the sections of the questionnaire as honest as you can. Your positive responses will be highly appreciated. Kindly sign below if you agree to participate.

Sign.....**Date**.....

Thank you

Winfred Ngunjiri,

Reg. No. E83/21391/2012

Sign.....**Date**.....

Section B: Levels of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

1. How would you rate the readings levels among your learners?

Reading Skills	Good	Fair	Below Average
	3	2	1
Sounds (phoneme awareness)			
Vocabulary			
Comprehension			
Letter naming			
Fluent letter and sound recognition			

Section C: Groupwork Strategies and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

2. Please, rate the extent to which you agree with the influence of groupwork strategies on acquisition of reading skills among your learners

Key: SA-Strongly Agree A-Agree U-Undecided D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree

Test Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
	5	4	3	2	1
I usually set small reading groups as a way of improving my learners' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills					
Large reading groups helps in improving my pupils' acquisition of phoneme awareness, vocabulary and comprehension skills					
I always design group tasks for my learners					

3. How does the size of group influence acquisition of reading skills among your learners?

Section D: Use of Storytelling Strategies and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

4. Tick the type of the stories which you tell learners in your class
- Classical tales []
 Animal tales []
 Repetitive tales []
 Cumulative tales []
 Adventurous tales []
5. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on the influence of storytelling on acquisition of reading skills among your pupils

Key: **SA**-Strongly Agree **A**-Agree **U**-Undecided **D**-Disagree **SD**--Strongly Disagree

Test Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
	5	4	3	2	1
Use of classical tales enhances learners' acquisition of reading skills					
use of animal tales enhances learners' acquisition of reading skills					
Use of repetitive tales enhances learners' acquisition of reading skills					
Use of cumulative tales enhances learners' acquisition of reading skills					
Use of adventurous tales enhances learners' acquisition of reading skills					

6. How many times do you use storytelling strategy in teaching reading in your class per term

Section E: Use of Play Activities and Acquisition of Reading Skills Among Grade Three Pupils

1. Please mark forms of play activities which your learners often engage in
- Pretend play []
 Hide and seek []
 Socio-dramatic []

Music and movement []

Others (Specify).....

2. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on the influence play activities on acquisition of reading skills among your pupils

Key: **SA**-Strongly Agree **A**-Agree **U**-Undecided **D**-Disagree **SD**-Strongly Disagree

Test Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
	5	4	3	2	1
Learners in my class engage in pretend play activities to enhance their reading skills					
I engage learners in learners in hide and seek play activities in order to improve their reading skills					
Engaging in socio-dramatic play activities has enhanced reading skills of learners in my class					
My learners engage in music and movement as a way of improving their reading skills					

Section F: Instructional Resources and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

1. Rate the levels of availability of reading instructional materials

Availability of Reading Materials	Non 4	Few 3	Adequate 2	Plenty 1
Pupil book ratio				
Classroom library				
Resource center				
Presence and Use of Technology				
Age appropriate books				
Charts on the walls				

2. Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on the influence of instructional resources on acquisition of reading skills among your learners.

Key: **SA**-Strongly Agree **A**-Agree **U**-Undecided **D**-Disagree **SD**-Strongly Disagree

Test Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
	5	4	3	2	1
Instructional resources include books, reading appropriate materials, school libraries are necessary for literacy development					
Availability and organization of reading resources in the classroom affects acquisition of reading skills by Grade Three Pupils					
Instructional reading resources of low quality impair pupils' negatively influences Grade Three Pupils' skills to acquire reading skills					
Quality instructional resources promotes Grade Three Pupils' reading skills					
Classrooms equipped with age appropriate reading instructional resources help Grade Three Pupils acquire reading skills					

Thank you, Winfred Ngunjiri

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS

Dear respondent,

The researcher is a student undertaking a degree course in Doctor of Philosophy in Early Childhood Studies in Kenyatta University carrying out a research on *Instructional Strategies Used in Teaching Reading: An Implication on Grade Three Pupils' Reading Skills in Nairobi County, Kenya*. The information you provide will be treated with confidentiality and entirely used for purposes of this study.

Section A: General Information

- 1. Gender.....
- 2. Highest level of educational qualification.....

Section B: Levels of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

- 3. Please describe the reading levels of grade three learners in your school.

.....
.....

Section C: Groupwork Strategies and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

- 4. Explain the influence of groupwork strategy on acquisition of reading skills among your learners?

.....
.....

Section D: Use of Storytelling Strategies and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

5. Describesome of the kinds of stories which your Grade Three teachers tell their learners

.....
.....

6. Explain the influence of use of storytelling on acquisition of reading skills among your pupils

.....
.....

Section E: Use of Play Activities and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

7. Identify play activities thatGrade Three learners in your school engage in to enhance the acquisition of reading skills.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section F: Instructional Resources and Acquisition of Reading Skills among Grade Three Pupils

8. Please comment on the availability of reading instructional resources in your school.

.....
.....

9. Identify the influence of use of instructional resources on acquisition of reading skills among Grade Three learners in your school?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you,

Winfred Ngure

APPENDIX V
OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Instructional Strategies	VO	O	S	R	N
The teacher is enthusiastic about teaching reading.					
The teacher allocates time for reading.					
Learners are enthusiastic about reading.					
Learners show difference in response when reading for pleasure and for tests.					
Class discussions involve questioning.					
The teacher interacts with learners during the lesson					
Learners engage in play activities					
The teacher challenges pupils during the lesson.					
Class discussions involve collaborative reasoning.					
The teacher provides motivation for pupils during the lesson.					
Instruction is done in small groups.					
The teacher uses integrative strategies.					
The teacher uses strategies independently.					
Instruction is done individually based on learners' needs.					
Instruction is done putting in mind pupils' different strengths.					
The reading materials are in form of course books					
Pupils have adequate reading materials.					
Pupils are provided with a variety of reading materials.					
Are there adequate instructional resources?					
Teacher uses the resources often					

Thanks, Winfred Ngunjiri

APPENDIX VI
PUPILS READING TEST

School: _____ Class: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

Pupils Gender: _____ Starting Time: _____

Ending Time: _____

This test will be individually conducted and will be strictly time-bound.

A) Letter/Letter sound recognition

i	o	A	c	y
h	b	S	u	w

B) Word level

Goat	Umbrella	Queen	Mat	Milk	Home
Teacher	Parent	Field	Leg	Sin	Cup

C) Paragraph/sentence Level

Paragraph 1

Mary has a very big garden. Her friend gave it to her. She has grown flowers on it. The flowers look good

Paragraph 2

John is not feeling well. He will miss school today. His father gave him medicine. He will get well soon.

D) Story Level

Martin had seven white chicks. An eagle ate five of the chicks. Martin was very angry. He wanted to trap the eagle. He did not know how to trap it. His friend Tom suggested they could use a rat.

The boys went to look for a rat. They saw one entering a hole. They dug deep into the hole. A big snake came out of the hole. The boys ran away screaming loudly. They did not trap the eagle.

1. Why was Martin angry?
2. Why were the boys digging into the hole?

Assessing Reading

Tick if the child is able to recognize letters, read words or sentences and answer the questions from the story

Child	Frequency	Total
Letter recognition		
Sound recognition		
Read words and sentences		
Read a short paragraph		
Read a story and answer questions about it.		

Adapted from Uwezo Kenya National Learning Assessment 2014 Test

APPENDIX VII

LETTER OF APPROVAL



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 810901 Ext. 57530

Internal Memo

FROM: Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 31st August, 2017

TO: Winfred Ngure
C/o Department of Early Childhood Studies
Kenyatta University

REF: E83/21891/12

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

We acknowledge the receipt of your revised Ph.D. Research Proposal entitled "**Instructional Strategies and Resources used in Teaching Reading: An Implication on Lower Primary School Pupils Reading Abilities in Nairobi City County, Kenya**" as per recommendations raised by the Graduate School Board of 21st June, 2017.

You may now proceed with your Data collection, subject to clearance with the Director General, National Commission for Science & Technology.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the progress Report Forms. The Supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

By copy of this letter, the Registrar (Academic) is hereby requested to grant you substantive registration for your Ph.D. studies.

Thank you.


JOHN M. ODONGO
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

c.c. Registrar (Academic) Att. Mr. Likam
Chairman, Department of Early Childhood Studies
Supervisor

1. Dr. Teresa Mwoma
C/o Department of Early Childhood Studies
Kenyatta University
2. Dr. Yattani Buna
C/o Department of Early Childhood Studies
Kenyatta University

JMO/cao

APPENDIX VIII

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER NACOSTI



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: 020 400 7000.
0713 788787.0735404245
Fax: +254-20-318245.318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/17/75804/19713**

Date: **30th October, 2017**

Winfred Wairimu Ngure
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on ***“Instructional strategies and resources used in teaching, reading: An implication on lower primary school pupils reading abilities in Nairobi City County, Kenya”*** I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **30th October, 2018.**

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

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a **copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.


GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
NAIROBI COUNTY
P. O. Box 30124-00100, NBI
TEL: 341666

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.

APPENDIX IX

RESEARCH PERMIT FROM NACOSTI

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. WINFRED WAIRIMU NGURE
of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 43844-100
NAIROBI, has been permitted to conduct
research in *Nairobi County*

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/75804/19713
Date Of Issue : 30th October,2017
Fee Received :Ksh 2000

on the topic: **INSTRUCTIONAL
STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES USED IN
TEACHING READING: AN IMPLICATION
ON LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS
READING ABILITIES IN NAIROBI CITY
COUNTY, KENYA**

for the period ending:
30th October,2018

.....
**Applicant's
Signature**



.....
Director General
**National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation**

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.
2. Both the Licence and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.
5. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further permissions from relevant Government agencies.
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7. The Licensee shall submit two (2) hard copies and upload a soft copy of their final report.
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REPUBLIC OF KENYA

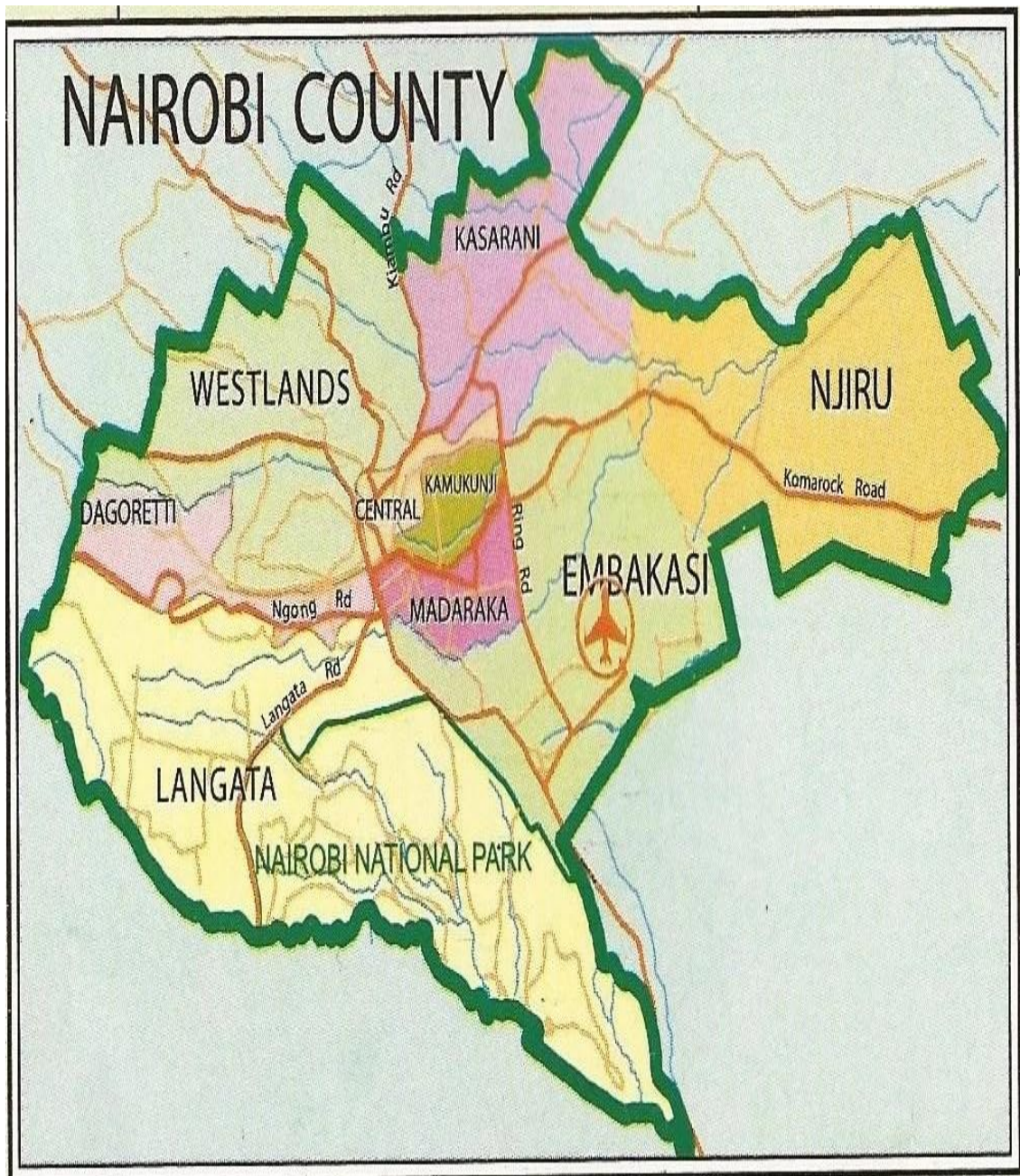


**National Commission for Science,
Technology and Innovation**
**RESEARCH CLEARANCE
PERMIT**

Serial No.A **16283**

CONDITIONS: see back page

APPENDIX X
STUDY AREA MAP



Source: IEBC (2017)