

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PRIMARY STANDARD THREE
PUPILS' READING AT HOME IN IGEMBE SOUTH
CONSTITUENCY, MERU COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

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

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband Kimathi and my children: Karwitha, Gitonga and Kajuju. Above all, to God who gave me the strength and courage to complete this study.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|------|---|
| CBO | Community Based Organization |
| DEO | District Education Officer |
| ECD | Early Childhood Development |
| EFA | Education for All |
| FPE | Free Primary Education |
| KCPE | Kenya Certificate of Primary Education |
| KCSE | Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education |
| KNEC | Kenya National Examination Council |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goals |
| MOE | Ministry of Education |
| NCES | National Centre for Educational Statistics |
| NCST | National Council for Science and Technology |
| NGO | Non Governmental Organization |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PTA | Parent Teacher Association |
| RNG | Random Number Generator |
| RTI | Research Triangle Institute |
| SESR | Scottish Executive Social Research |
| USA | United States of America |

ABSTRACT

Parents and schools play a fundamental role in assisting children to develop literacy skills. Studies internationally have proved that parental involvement in their children's reading has a positive effect on children's reading ability. In Kenya, limited studies have been conducted on parental involvement in children's reading; especially at the lower primary school level. This is despite research reports that many pupils are unable to read at their class levels and some, even by the time they complete primary school. This study examined the levels of parental involvement in standard three pupils' reading at home and the influence of parental role construction and teachers' invitations on this involvement. The study used a descriptive research design and was guided by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model of parental involvement, complemented by Grolnick's theory of parental involvement. Independent variables included parents' role construction and teachers' invitation for parental involvement. The dependent variable was parental involvement in children's reading at home which was examined under the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement. Structured interviews were used to collect data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to summarise and analyse the data. The Chi-square test was used to test the null hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. Analysis of responses from 137 parents randomly selected from both public and private primary schools in Igembe South Constituency revealed very low parental involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement. The study also found that most of the parents had low levels of role construction regarding their involvement in their children's reading at home. Teachers' invitation for parental involvement was found to be very low. The study found significant relationships between parents' role construction and their involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. The study found significant relationships between teacher invitation and parental involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. It was concluded that parental involvement in children's reading at home in Igembe South Constituency was very low. This could probably be attributed to the low levels of parental role construction and low levels of teacher invitation for parental involvement. The major implications of the study are; low parental role construction and low teacher invitation are likely to lead to low levels of parental involvement in children's reading at home, parental role construction is a positive contributor to involvement, efforts by teachers to invite parents to be involved in children's reading is likely to raise involvement and inability to read and time constraints are the main hindrances to parental involvement in children's reading at home. The study recommended development of policies that would provide guidelines and standards for programmes which would be instituted to ensure high levels of parental involvement in children's reading.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research hypotheses, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study and assumptions of the study. The chapter also presents a theoretical framework, the conceptual framework and the operational definitions of various terms as employed in the study.

1.2 Background to the Study

The close link between home and school is recognized worldwide as an essential factor in facilitating improvement of literacy skills among children. There is ample evidence that parental involvement in children's reading during their early years has a positive impact on children's reading ability (Gest, Freeman, Domitrovich and Welsh, 2004; Rowe, 1991; Sheldon and Epstein, 2005; Wambiri, 2007). Studies have also shown that lack of parental involvement impacts negatively on children's literacy achievement and academic performance (McNeal, 1991; Sui-chu and Willms, 1996).

Parental involvement refers to a wide range of activities that children and their parents may be involved in to improve children's reading ability. Some of these activities include: reading in their children's presence, reading to

children, listening to children read, asking questions from the passage that has been read and explaining the meaning of difficult words. It also involves checking children's homework, reminding children to read, reinforcing children's effort to read and acquiring reading materials for children.

The level of parental involvement in reading-related activities has been proved to influence children's reading achievement. Research has established that when parents are highly involved in children's reading at home, children's reading achievement improves significantly and when they are not involved, children experience reading difficulties (Adams, 1990; Epstein and Sheldon, 2000; Fantuzzo, McWayne, Perry et al., 2004; Flouri and Buchanan, 2004; Grolnick, 1994; Topping and Wolfendale, 1985; Wade and Moore, 2000). Unfortunately, research on pupils' reading achievement indicates that a significant number of children in several parts of the world are not able to read at their class levels (Maduekwe and Adeosun, 2010; Manjula, Saraswathi, Parkash and Ashalatha, 2009; Rosebrock, 2006; Snow, Burns & Griffins, 1999; Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2006). For example, a nation wide test for reading skills conducted in USA by NCES (1999) reported a proficient reading level of 31%, which is less than the most basic reading level of 38%.

Similarly, studies in the developing world have recorded poor reading achievement among primary school pupils. A study on early grade reading acquisition in Timor-Leste (World Bank, 2009) found that by the end of grade one, 70% of the pupils could not read a single word in "Portuguese" or

“Tetum”. Similar studies conducted in Uganda and Tanzania recorded poor literacy levels. Specifically, in Tanzania the study found that, 92.3% of the standard three pupils could not read a class two text in English. In Uganda, the study found that 98% of the pupils in class three could not read a class two story in English and that 28% could not read a class two text by the time they completed primary schooling (RTI, 2010).

Consistently, local studies show that majority of children are not able to read at expected class levels and worse still, some complete primary school unable to read at the expected level (Uwezo, 2010; RTI, 2010; KNEC, 2010). Further, there has been an outcry over poor examination performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) languages, particularly English and Kiswahili as attested by the audit of the 2012 examination (Gichobi, 2013). The audit report indicated that in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE); some of the standard eight candidates could not write simple English and Kiswahili words. The local studies discussed however, mainly focused on school factors such as teacher to pupil ratio, teachers’ qualification, availability of learning resources and the condition of physical facilities; and did not investigate parental involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions.

Locally, available studies on parental involvement in early childhood have focused more on emergent and informal literacy (Maina, 2010; Wambiri, 2007), while studies on parental involvement in children’s conventional

reading at the lower primary school level have not received due attention. A focus on parental involvement in children's reading at the lower primary school level and factors that influence their involvement was therefore critical since development of conventional reading skills at the lower primary school level plays a significant role in laying a firm foundation for later schooling.

The activities that were examined in this study were drawn from Grolnick's (1994) theory of parental involvement. This theory proposes three parental involvement dimensions from which activities that parents can engage in to enhance children's reading ability may be drawn. These dimensions include: (1) modelling dimension which refers to children observing literacy behaviour of parents or guardians at home then striving to emulate this reading on their own, (2) cognitive dimension which refers to parents reading with their children to promote reading skills development, (3) behavioural dimension which refers to parents motivating their children to learn and exposing them to varying literacy-rich environments, thereby providing opportunities for the children to read different types of materials. Parental involvement levels in activities drawn from these dimensions have not been adequately investigated locally, especially at the lower primary school classes, and hence the need for the study.

Parental involvement in children's reading may be influenced by several factors. Studies in various parts of the world have identified various factors that influence parental involvement in children's reading including; parental role

construction, teacher invitation for parental involvement, parents' education level, parents' self efficacy, parents socio-economic status, time constraint, child's age, type of the school the child attends, teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement, teachers' perception of parents' efficacy and the teachers' years of experience (Adams & Christenson, 2000; Bandura, 1986; Dauber & Epstein, 1991; Fan & Chen, 2001; Garcia, Akiba, Palacios et al., 2002; Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler et al., 2005; Levin, 2002; Park, 2004; Russell & Granville, 2005). This study, however, focused mainly on parental role construction and teacher invitation because according to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) the two have a great influence on parental involvement in children's learning.

Local studies that investigated factors that influence children's reading at the infancy and pre-school levels have found that parents level of education, occupation, socio-economic status, role definition and time factor influence parents and caregivers involvement in children's reading (Maina, 2010; Wambiri, 2007). However, the influence of these factors on modelling, cognitive and behavioural parent involvement dimensions at the lower primary school level has not yet been investigated locally. In addition, the influence of teacher invitation for parent involvement has not been adequately explored locally. This study, therefore, investigated the influence of parents' role construction which refers to parents' perception of their role in their children's reading and teachers' invitation which refers to teachers' prompts to parents to be involved in their children's reading; at the primary school level.

Continued lack of adequate knowledge and comprehensive information about the extent of parental involvement in lower primary school pupils' reading and factors influencing the situation in Kenya may make it difficult to develop relevant policies, strategies and programmes to guide parents on how to effectively support their children's reading at home. Consequently, parents may continue failing to adequately and appropriately support children's reading and in-turn negatively impacting on children's reading development at this critical level of development. As a result, many pupils may continue to perform poorly in reading, and subsequently in all academic subjects. Therefore, there was need for a study specifically focusing on the level of parental involvement and factors that influence this involvement in lower primary school pupils reading. In order to obtain comprehensive information, this study focused on parents.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

While research indicates that the more intensely parents are involved in children's reading the greater the children's academic achievement (Fantuzzo, et al., 2004), there is evidence that parental involvement is low internationally (Anderson, Hiebert and Scott, 1985; Brandt, 2011; Finney, 1993; Ho, 1998; Lemmer, 2007; Manjula et al., 2009; MetLife, 2005; Msila, 2012; Welsh, Buchanan and Flouri, 2012). Locally, studies on the extent of parental involvement in children's reading particularly at the crucial lower primary school level have not received much attention.

Local research on parental involvement has mainly focused on parental involvement at the pre-school level and before formal instruction (Koech, 2010; Maina, 2010; Mwoma, 2009; Ndani, 2008; Swadner, Kabiru and Njenga, 2000; Wambiri, 2007). The kind of parental involvement required at the lower primary school level varies from that expected in pre-school. This is because at the pre-school level children are prepared for reading readiness while at the lower primary school level they are introduced to conventional reading. Hence, the need for a study on parental involvement targeting parents of children in the lower primary school classes.

Local studies on literacy achievement at the lower primary school level mainly focused on school factors such as teacher to pupil ratio, teachers' qualification, and the physical condition of the learning environment and only examined parental involvement in the cognitive dimension (KNEC, 2010; RTI, 2010; Uwezo, 2010). While these factors may contribute to the literacy levels, in some regions and particularly among disadvantaged community schools, there seems to be other pertinent and more widespread factors, one of which has been thought to be parental involvement in children's reading. This study, therefore, focused on the level of parental involvement in children's reading at home in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions as well as factors that influenced parents' involvement.

Bandura (1986); Hoover-Dempsey et al., (2005); Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995); Epstein (1995) found that parents' role construction regarding

being involved in their children's reading influences parents' decision to be involved. Though the contribution of parents' role construction regarding their involvement in children's reading during the infancy and pre-school years has been documented locally (Maina 2010; Wambiri, 2007), contribution of parental role construction at the lower primary school level has not attracted much attention in Kenya.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995); Epstein (1995); Bassler and Brissie (1992) found that invitations by children's teachers influence parents involvement in their children's reading development. Locally, a study carried out in Thika district, found that invitation for participation in pre-school activities by teachers and school management raises community participation (Ndani, 2008). However, the influence of teachers' invitation for parental involvement in children's reading at the lower primary school level has not been adequately explored in Kenya.

In addition, research on modelling, cognitive and behavioural parental involvement dimensions has received minimal attention in Kenya. This study specifically investigated the level of parental involvement in children's reading at the lower primary school level, and the influence of parents' role construction and teachers' invitation on parental involvement in their children's reading at home. Understanding of the extent of parental involvement in children's reading at the lower primary school level and the factors that

influence this involvement would have remained incomplete if this study was not carried out.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent of parental involvement in children's reading at home and the factors that influence this involvement, in order to guide the development of policies and strategies that will enhance parental involvement in children's reading; thereby improving children's reading ability.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to:

1. Find out the levels of parents' involvement in children's reading at home with respect to modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement
2. Establish the levels of parents' role construction regarding involvement in children's reading at home
3. Establish the levels of teacher invitation for parents' involvement in children's reading at home
4. Determine the relationship between parents' role construction and their level of involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement

5. Determine the relationship between teachers' invitation and parents' level of involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement
6. Find out hindrances to parents' involvement in children's reading at home

1.6 Research Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following research hypotheses:

- H₁: There is a relationship between parents' role construction and their level of involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement
- H₂: There is a relationship between teachers' invitation and parents' level of involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that children in class three were given homework regularly. The study also assumed that parents to different extents assisted children in learning at home.

1.8 Limitation

Studies conducted in the area of study had reported high adult illiteracy levels. This meant that some of the respondents in this study could have had

challenges responding to the study instruments. To mitigate this, interviews were used to collect data instead of questionnaires. In addition, interviews were conducted in English, Kiswahili or Kimeru depending on the parent's language preference.

1.9 Delimitation

There are several factors that may influence parental involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural parent involvement dimensions. This study however, focused on parents' role construction and teachers' invitation because these two factors were likely to have a considerable influence on parental involvement. In addition, although the study targeted parents of children in the lower primary school, it was limited to parents with children in standard three because children in this class can read simple story books and are, usually, given homework. In addition, although other people living in a child's home including the siblings, cousins or other relatives may be involved in the child's reading related activities, this study only focused on parental involvement. Further, the study was carried out in Igembe South constituency. The findings, therefore, may only be generalised to other population with similar characteristics.

1.10 Significance of the study

This study has provided useful information that may be used to promote parental involvement in children's reading at home with respect to modelling, cognitive and behavioural parent involvement dimensions. Specifically, the

information obtained from this study could be used by the Ministry of Education to formulate policies for the establishment of programmes to guide parents on techniques to support their children's reading at home. Such parental involvement programmes may be initiated at the school level, county level or nationally with the aim of improving children's reading ability.

Curriculum developers may also use the findings to develop appropriate education programmes that relevant Government Ministries could use to educate parents on how to support children's reading at home. In addition, the findings may also guide the development of teacher education programmes that could be used to educate teachers on appropriate ways of collaborating with parents in order to effectively support their children's reading at home.

Primary school head teachers and classroom teachers could use these findings to guide parents to engage in reading related activities with their children at home and to encourage children to read not only for school work but also for leisure.

Further, County Directors of Education could use the findings to mobilize schools and communities to initiate reading programmes aimed at improving children's reading ability.

1.11 The Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995) model of parental involvement. The study adopted this model because it provides a framework for understanding the motivation behind parents' decision to be involved in their children's learning. The model also gives insight on factors that influence parents' involvement in their children's learning. These factors include parents' role construction and teachers' invitation to involvement, which this study intended to investigate.

This theory was complimented by Grolnick's (1994) theory of parental involvement which provided guidelines on parental involvement dimensions that were investigated in this study. These dimensions include modelling, cognitive and behavioural involvement. In each of these dimensions, the suggested activities which parents and their children could engage in to improve children's reading ability were used to formulate the study items. These theories are as discussed in the following section:

1.11.1 Parental involvement model- Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997)

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995) model of parental involvement discusses factors that influence parents' decision to be involved in their children's education. The model explains that when parents believe they can positively affect their children's education, they choose the activities to be involved in. Accordingly, parents' role construction influences their decision to

be involved in their children's reading. The model also suggests that teachers' invitation to parents to be involved in their children's learning also influences parental involvement. This model was selected for this study because it provides insight on factors influencing parental involvement in children's learning. The factors included parental role construction and teachers' invitation for parental involvement, which were the main focus of this study.

1.11.2 Theory of Parental involvement- Grolnick (1994)

Grolnick's theory explains that parental involvement in children's education increases children's motivation, sense of competence and the belief that they have control over their success in school thereby; improving their achievement. This theory focuses on parental-child interactions that affect pupils' learning in three parental involvement dimensions: modelling, cognitive and behavioural. Modelling dimension refers to reading related activities by the parents such as reading books, magazines and newspapers as children watch them. Accordingly, when children see their parents reading they strive to emulate this reading on their own. Cognitive dimension refers to activities that promote the child's skill development and knowledge. It includes parent-child reading activities such as reading to the child, listening to a child read, assisting the child with homework or discussing what has been read. Behavioural dimension refers to parents' public actions representing their interest in their children's education. These include exposing their children to literacy-rich environments such the library or museum or taking the child to bookshops to choose reading materials.

This theory was selected for this study because it proposes parental involvement dimensions and activities that parents and their children can engage in; to improve children's reading ability. This study intended to investigate parental involvement in each of the three parental involvement dimensions (modelling, cognitive and behavioural) discussed by this theory. The study also examined parental involvement in some of the activities suggested in Grolnick's theory.

1.12 The Conceptual Framework

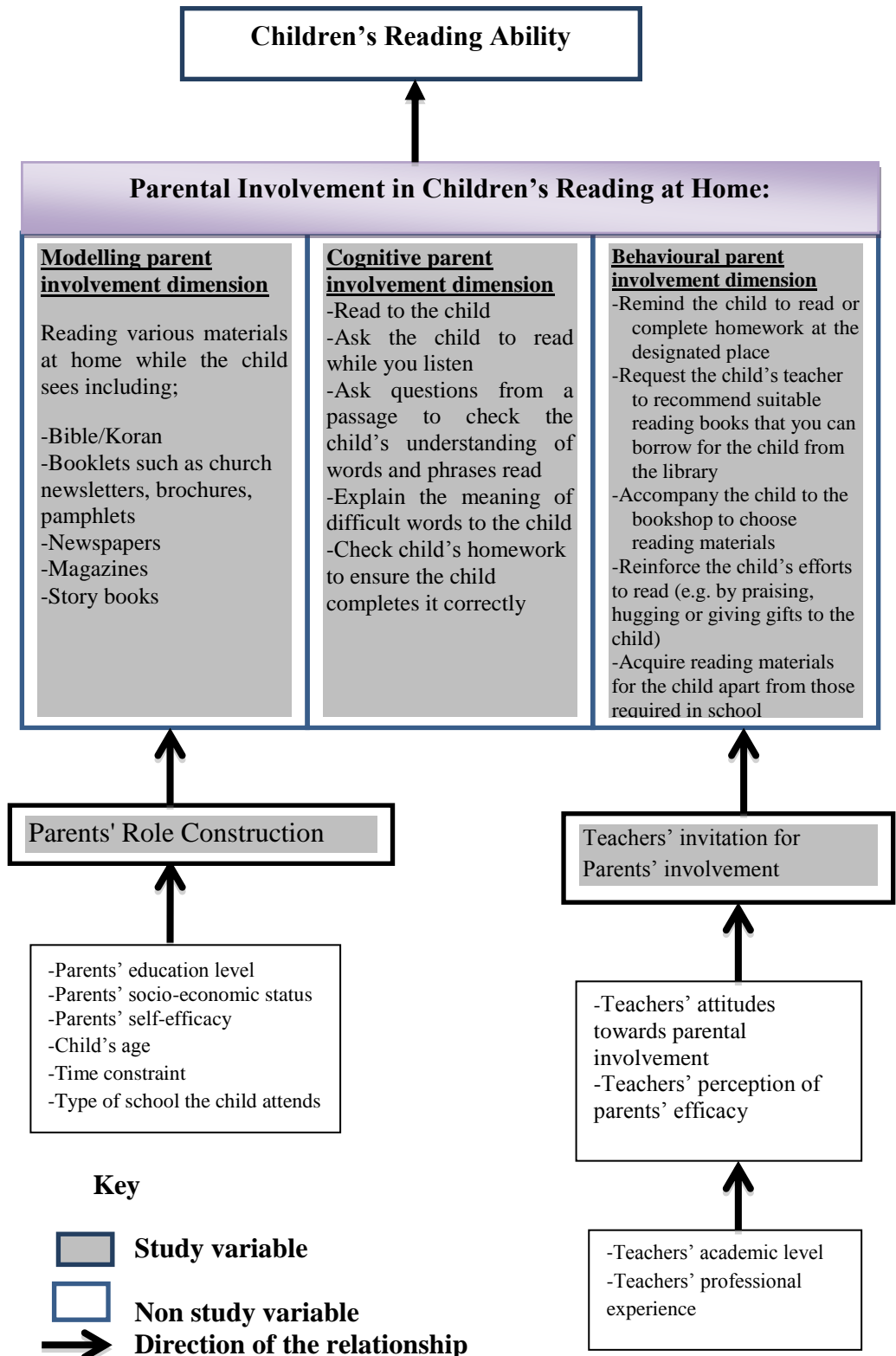
Parents and teachers play a key role in children's reading achievement. To accomplish this role, parents and teachers need to recognise the importance of parental involvement in children's reading at home. According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995, 1997), parental involvement in children's reading at home may be affected by a number of variables including parents' level of education, parents' role construction, parents' self efficacy, parents' socio-economic status, child's age, time factor, the type of school the child attends and teacher's invitation to involvement. However, the current study focused on the influence of parents' role construction and teacher's invitation. These two factors were said to be likely to have a great influence on the level of parental involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Reed, Jones, Walker, et al., 2000). This study investigated parental involvement in three parental involvement dimensions; modelling, cognitive and behavioural. This is because these three dimensions comprised reading related activities that

parents could engage in to improve children's reading achievement significantly (Grolnick, 1994).

Figure 1.1 illustrates the variables of interest; parents' role construction, teachers' invitation and parental involvement. Parents' role constructions and teachers' invitation are the independent variables while parental involvement in children's reading is the dependent variable. The figure also presents a number of extraneous variables including; parents' level of education, parents' self efficacy, parents' socio-economic status, child's age, time factor, type of school the child attends, teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement and teachers' perception of parents' efficacy.

The figure shows that parents' level of role construction and levels of teacher invitation were expected to influence the levels of parental involvement which in turn would affect children's reading ability. The relationship between these variables is presented in figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Factors that influence parents' involvement in children's reading at home



1.13 Operational Definition of Terms

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Parental involvement: | Refers to parents' participation in a wide range of reading-related activities that parents and their children engage in at home geared towards helping children learn to read. In this study, it is categorised under the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. |
| Modelling dimension: | Refers to parents acting as positive role models through constantly reading or requesting someone to read for them various materials in their children's presence. Children then strive to emulate this behaviour on their own. |
| Cognitive dimension: | Refers to parents engaging in reading-related activities with their children at home in order to promote reading skills. This includes reading to the child, listening to the child read aloud, discussing what has been read with the child or supervising the child as he/she does homework. |
| Behavioural dimension: | Refers to parents public reading related actions that motivate the child to read various materials. These actions include reminding the child to read, taking the child to the library, museum or book stores, reinforcing the child's effort to read or acquiring several reading materials for the child (by buying or borrowing). |
| Lower primary school: | Refers to standard one, two and three in the Kenyan education system. |

Parents' role construction: Refers to parents' perception about their role in assisting their children learn to read. This is based on parents' beliefs that their involvement will improve their children's reading ability.

Teacher's Invitation: Refers to teachers' actions that may prompt parents to be involved in children's reading including asking parents to; read various materials with the child at home, listen to the child read aloud, help with homework, sign the diary once homework is completed, discuss what has been read with the child, acquire various reading materials or by positively guiding parents to get involved in children's reading whenever they request.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises review of the literature related to parental involvement in children's reading. In particular, the chapter focuses on parental involvement and children's reading achievement; level of parental involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions; extent of parental involvement in children's reading; factors influencing parental involvement in children's reading; hindrances to parental involvement in children's reading and a summary of the chapter.

2.2 Parental Involvement and Children's Reading Achievement

Learning to read is the main activity undertaken by children in their first years of schooling. Development of literacy skills in young children is a primary role of both parents and teachers. Research conducted by Moats (1999) showed that the ability to read has an impact on the development of skills in all areas across the curriculum. The study also documented that the ability to read not only influences a person's education but also his or her functioning in the society. However, studies by various researchers indicate that some children experience difficulties in the development of reading skills (Snow et al., 1999; Willig, 1990). They stipulate that children who have early reading difficulties often experience problems in later learning and other areas of the curriculum.

The reading process begins at home where children observe their parents or guardians reading. Parents' involvement in their children's reading at home has a tremendous effect on children's reading achievement. Research conducted by Fantuzzo, et al., (2004); Grolnick (1994) shows that the practices associated with parental responsibilities for learning such as providing a place for education activities, asking children about school and reading to them are related to children's motivation to learn, hence contributing to their reading achievement at school. In addition, Grolnick (1994) found that parental involvement affects pupils' achievement because their encouragement, motivation and reinforcement ensure that children practice reading, thereby, improving their reading skills. Accordingly, the mediatory involvement of parents in their children's reading has a positive impact on their reading achievements since they spend many hours at home with their parents. These studies, however, did not explore factors that influence parental involvement in their children's reading.

Parental involvement in children's reading contributes to children's school success. Studies conducted in various parts of the world indicate that parental involvement in children's literacy development influences children's academic performance (Epstein, 1992, 1995; Fan & Chen, 2001; Feinstein & Symons, 1999; Flouri & Buchanan, 2004; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Melhuish, Sylva, Sammons et al., 2001; Wade & Moore, 2000). These studies also indicate that parental involvement is a more powerful force than other family background variables such as social class, family income or education level in improving

children's academic performance. These studies, however, focused on parental involvement in the school and not at home. They also did not identify parental involvement dimensions and the extent to which parents get involved in each of these dimensions.

Greater parent involvement in children's reading at home is linked to children's school readiness hence positively affects school performance, including higher academic achievement. A study conducted in USA by Topping and Wolfendale (1985) found that children who read regularly with their parents at home performed better than those who did not. They attributed this to the following:

- i. Parents have the opportunity to encourage children to practice reading at home as compared to the school where children are engaged in other activities including studying other subjects. This implies that children who read at home regularly get more practice at reading than those who do not. Positive practice promotes fluency and minimises forgetting, hence better performance.
- ii. Unlike in school where there is limited opportunity for the child to receive feedback about the correctness of attempts to read immediately, the one-to-one situation with a parent at home allows for immediate feedback preventing the compounding of errors.

This study however only investigated cognitive dimension of parental involvement and did not explore parental involvement in modelling and behavioural parent involvement dimensions.

Benefits of parental involvement extend beyond the realm of literacy and educational achievement. Several studies conducted in different parts of the world indicate that parental involvement in children's literacy development not only influences children's academic performance but also improves their attitudes towards reading (Desforges & Abouchar, 2003; Epstein, 1992, 1995; Fan & Chen, 2001; Feinstein & Symons, 1999; Flouri & Buchanan, 2004; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Melhuish, et al., 2001; Wade & Moore, 2000). In addition, studies by Gest, et al., (2004) and Rowe, (1991) found that parental involvement in children's reading activities at home has a significant positive influence not only on academic achievement but also on language comprehension, expressive skills, pupils' interest in reading and attitudes towards reading.

Similarly, a study involving 200 parents in Nigeria conducted by Maduekwe and Adeosun (2010) found that when parents were involved in their children's reading at home, children had higher grades, higher test scores, higher graduation rates, better school attendance, lower suspension rates, higher self-esteem, increased motivation and fewer instances of violent behaviour. In addition, studies conducted by Epstein and Sheldon (2000) found that when parents get involved in their children's education, children perform better academically and their behaviour and school attendance improves. However, although these studies show the benefits of parent involvement in children's reading, they did not identify specific reading dimensions that parents were

involved in. They also did not investigate factors that might have influenced parents involvement in their children's reading.

In Kenya, there is some evidence of a positive relationship between parental involvement and children's academic performance. A study in Gucha district involving 160 fathers for example, found that children whose fathers were involved in their education performed better at pre-school than their peers whose fathers were not involved (Mwoma, 2009). This study however, examined the overall children's academic performance and not reading in particular. The study also targeted fathers' involvement and not both parents. In addition, the study examined learning at the pre-school level and not the lower primary school level where children are introduced to conventional reading. Consequently, a study focusing on parental involvement in children's reading at the lower primary school level was necessary.

Lack of parental involvement in children's reading at home negatively affects children's reading ability in school. Studies on pupils reading achievement indicate that low reading ability seems to affect many children. Such studies indicate that many children worldwide are not able to read at their class levels. For example, studies from the west indicate that about 10% of pupils annually do not reach the average reading levels (Rosebrock, 2006; Snow et al., 1999; Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2006). A nationwide test for reading skills

conducted in the USA by NCES (1999) reported a proficient reading level of 31%. This proficient reading level is less than the most basic level (38%).

A study on early grade reading acquisition carried out in Timor-Leste among pupils in grade one, two, and three under the World Bank's support, found that at the end of grade one 70% of pupils could not read a single word of the simple text in either "Portuguese" or "Tetum", 40% of the pupils were not able to read a single word at the end of grade two, and 20% could not read a single word at the end of grade three (World Bank, 2009). This study, however, did not examine the extent of parental involvement in children's reading at home and factors that influence parents' involvement.

Research conducted in sampled developing countries also show dismal achievement on children's reading ability compared to the established reading fluency levels. A cross-sectional national assessment data for the year 2010, in Uganda indicated that only 40% of the pupils in grade three scored over 50% in English literacy while only 30% of the grade six pupils scored above 50% (Mulindwa and Marshall, 2013). In addition, studies conducted in Uganda and Tanzania by the Research Triangle International recorded poor literacy levels. Specifically, in Tanzania the study found that 92.3% of the standard three pupils could not read a class two text in English while 57.8% could not read a similar text in Kiswahili. In Uganda, the study found that 98% of the children in class three could not read a class two story in English while 28% could not

read a class two text by the time they completed primary schooling (RTI, 2010). These studies, however, mostly examined the contribution of school factors and did not focus on the contribution of parental involvement in their children's reading at home and factors that may influence the situation. A study focusing on parental involvement and factors influencing this involvement was therefore necessary in order to improve children's reading ability.

Studies conducted by Research Triangle International in 2010 recorded low reading scores among standard three pupils in Kenya. The study found that pupils scored an average of 30.4 words per minute in English oral reading fluency tests. The study also reported that 14% of the study sample scored a "zero words per minute", meaning they could not read even one word. The study further reported that while significant, a number of these "non-readers" is much less than the number of pupils scoring zero words per minute in the other African countries where the study was carried out (Mali, Senegal and Uganda). The study further found that the average of 30.4 words per minute in oral language test was higher than scores in other languages; Kiswahili 21.2, Gikuyu 20.0 and Dholuo 19.6 words per minute (RTI, 2010). This study, however, did not focus on the influence of parental involvement.

In addition, in Kenya there has been concern about performance in languages and particularly English and Kiswahili. Over the years, the Ministry of Education has been concerned about the poor performance in languages. This was recently attested by the audit of the 2012 Kenya Certificate of Primary

Education (KCPE) where it was reported that some of the standard eight candidates could not write simple English and Kiswahili words; in the English composition and Kiswahili Insha (Gichobi, 2013). The report further indicated that in mathematics, the candidates performed worst in areas that involved reading and interpretation of mathematical problems. There is therefore, need to explore parents involvement in children's reading and factors that influence the situation.

Local studies on literacy achievement have reported incidences of low reading ability among primary school pupils. The Uwezo study for example, found that a high percentage of standard two pupils could not read at their class level and that some pupils leave primary schools unable to read. Specifically, the study found that 85% of the standard two pupils could not read class 2 text in English while 81% could not read a similar text in Kiswahili. Among pupils in class five, 27% could not read a class two text in English; while 23% could not read a similar text in Kiswahili. The study also found that 4% of the pupils could not read a standard two text in English or Kiswahili by the time they completed primary schooling (Uwezo, 2010).

Similarly, a national study commissioned by the Kenya National Examinations Council among standard two pupils reported low scores in reading. The study found that more than half of the pupils (52.7%) did not attain the desirable competence level in literacy tests (KNEC, 2010). The study also found regional disparities in literacy scores with Nairobi province scoring the highest (412.13)

and the Eastern province the lowest scores (276). This implies that the reading achievement is quite low. These studies, however, focused more on school factors such as teacher to pupil ratio, teachers' qualification, condition of physical facilities and attendance of refresher courses by the teaching staff as influencing pupils' literacy achievement but not on the level of parental involvement.

2.3 Level of Parental involvement in Modelling, Cognitive and Behavioural Dimensions of Parental Involvement

This section discusses parental involvement modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement.

2.3.1: Parental Involvement in the Modelling Dimension

When parents read frequently in their children's presence, they act as positive role models since young children want to be like their significant others "their parents". Research conducted by Holdaway, (1979) indicates that by reading daily, parents act as positive role models that children strive to emulate. Accordingly, this emulation results in children attempting to read on their own and when parents reinforce these attempts, children's reading skills improve significantly. Holdaway further contends that, the interest and enthusiasm that parents express as they read motivates children to try to read available reading materials themselves. As a result, children practice reading on their own thereby improving their reading skills significantly. In addition, modelling is particularly influential when the children perceive the models as being

competent and possessing reading skills and abilities. This often makes the parent a significant and powerful model for the child (Bandura, 1986). These studies, however, did not examine factors that influence parents modelling reading at home. In addition, the studies did not specify the type of materials parents read in their children's presence.

2.3.2: Parental Involvement in the Cognitive Dimension

Children who are introduced to reading activities at home during their early years learn to read early. Studies conducted in the west to explore the relationship between children's home reading environment and their literacy acquisition indicate that children whose parents read books, newspapers, and magazines with them, tell stories and listen to them read story books in the early classes have an advantage over their peers without such experiences. The researchers attest that the experience with print and non-print reading materials at home has a facilitative effect on children's reading (Cornille, Mullis, Ritchson et al., 2004; Senechal and LeFevre, 2003; Scarborough, Dobrich and Hager, 1991; Wade and Moore, 2000). These studies, however, only investigated the cognitive dimension of parental involvement and did not examine other parental involvement dimensions.

Regular parent-child practice to read improves the child's reading ability. A five year longitudinal study on parental involvement in the development of children's reading skills conducted by Austin (2007) reported that story book reading by parents at home positively influences children's reading fluency.

The study also found that when parents taught letter sounds and word reading to their children at home, there was a significant improvement in children's reading skills. He argued that families where children are at risk of failing to read should take up these practices in order for their children to succeed in school. The study, however, only investigated parent involvement in the cognitive dimension of parental involvement in children's reading and did not focus on activities in the modelling and behavioural dimensions.

Parents' involvement in children's reading-related activities at home is a very effective form of parent involvement. Studies have proved that when parents read to their children and listen attentively as children read aloud regularly, they help children to comprehend the relationship between the pronounced word and the written word thereby promoting children's reading development (Denton, Reaney & West, 2001; Epstein 1995; Lyon, 1999; Beck & Juel, 1999; Snow et al., 1999). In addition, research conducted by Hewison and Tizzard (1980) found that children who read aloud regularly to their parents performed better in reading tests even when their parents could not read or write when compared to children who did not receive this kind of help from their parents.

A study conducted in Portugal and Luxembourg by Villas-Boas (1998) found that parents' assistance with homework positively affects children's academic achievement. However, these studies investigated parent involvement only in the cognitive reading dimension. For effective intervention, there is need to

conduct studies on parent involvement in all the three parental involvement reading dimensions; namely: modelling, cognitive and behavioural.

Children who read frequently with their parents acquire better literacy skills than those who do not. A study conducted by the National Council for Educational Statistics in the USA found that 26% of the children who were read to; on average three to four times a week, recognized all the letters of the alphabet as compared to 14% of the children who were read to less frequently. The study also reported that 54% of the children who were read to more frequently were more likely to write their own names as compared to (40%) of those who were read to less frequently (NCES, 1999). In addition, the study reported that where parental involvement was high, the classroom average reading score was 28 points above the national average while where involvement was low; the mean average was 46 points below the national average. These two studies have documented the positive impact of parents' reading to their children at home on children's academic performance. However, this study investigated only one activity in the cognitive dimension of parental involvement. A study focusing on all the three parental involvement dimensions; modelling, cognitive, and behavioural was necessary to find out the extent to which parents are engaged in their children's reading at home. There was also need for investigations on factors influencing parental involvement in children's reading.

Parent-child reading activities at home play a key role in children's reading achievement. Research conducted in USA by McNeal (1991) and Sui-chu and Willms (1996) determined that the most important factor in student achievement was home discussions, parents' contact with school and homework supervision. The research also found that children with learning and behavioural problems had fewer home discussions and were less supervised than the cohorts that did not exhibit learning and behavioural problems. They recommended that parents should be guided to provide a literacy-rich home environment, encourage children to interact with reading materials, visit the library or museum with their children and take their children to buy story books. This study, however, did not focus on factors that influence parental involvement in children's reading.

2.3.3 Parental Involvement in the Behavioural Dimension

Exposing children to environments with varied reading materials and allowing them to interact with available materials promotes their literacy development. In a study to compare gains in reading and mathematics by children from low and middle income households in Baltimore Schools, Entwisle, Alexander and Olson (2000) demonstrated that low income children made comparable grade equivalent gains in reading and mathematics during the academic school year as those from middle income children; though children from middle income households achieved higher in reading tests. They stated that the differences in children's achievement was due to pre-existing differences upon entrance to kindergarten and the experiential learning opportunities and home resources

(e.g. books, computers, visits to museums, libraries, plays or movies) available for children from middle income households particularly during summer months. Although this study gives insights on gains made by exposing children to a literacy-rich reading environment, it did not investigate the factors influencing parental involvement in children's reading at home.

A literacy-rich home environment positively influences children's reading achievement. Epstein (2005); Maduekwe and Adeosun (2010); Neufield (1977) and Hughes (1993) found that a home environment that has plenty of reading materials strongly correlates with children's reading achievement in school. They stipulated that an effective learning home environment includes high parent aspiration and expectation, rich learning environment, academic support, guidance and stimulation that lead to higher achievement in reading tests. These studies, however, did not investigate factors that influence parents' involvement in their children's reading at home.

Similarly, a study conducted by Ramsburg (1998) found that children who are brought up in an environment with very few or no reading materials often develop a negative attitude towards reading and that they are more likely to experience difficulties in learning to read than their counterparts. In addition, Henderson and Berla (1994) reported that a home environment that provides reading opportunities and encourages reading is more important in promoting reading achievement than family income or education level. These studies,

however, did not explore factors that influence parents' provision of literacy-rich home environments.

2.4 Extent of Parental Involvement in Children's Reading

Higher levels of parental involvement positively influence children's reading achievement. Various studies conducted all over the world have shown that there has been low parental involvement in children's reading. Studies conducted in the United States of America (USA) for example, indicated that parents were not adequately involved in their children's reading. Brandt (2011) noted that most teachers reported low parental involvement in schools in the United States of America. These teachers reported that majority of parents fail to attend parent-teacher meetings, school functions and do not assist their children with assignments and projects. The study reported that in most families both parents work; and at times full time hence lack time to be involved. Similarly, MetLife (2005) found that teachers in USA ranked strengthening parents' roles in their children's learning first, among the issues that should receive the highest priority in the public education policy. These studies, however, did not indicate factors that contribute to the low levels of parental involvement other than lack of time.

A study by Finney (1993) reported that 40% of the parents across the United States were not devoting enough time to their children's education. Similarly, Anderson et al., (1985) found that only 64% of three to five year old children had parents who read to them or told stories to them on a regular basis. He

however, reported that the percentages of the parents who were involved in their children's reading differed across different races as follows; Whites (69%), Blacks (56%), Asians (66%), Hispanic (53%) and American Indians (50%). Smith (2008) also found minimal parental involvement in children's education in the USA. Smith attributed the low involvement to lack of education and lack of time.

Studies conducted in the United Kingdom reported low levels of parental involvement in their children's education. In a study involving fathers in 26 families in Britain, Welsh et al., (2012) found that parental involvement in their children's reading and support in homework assignments were rated least among other aspects of parental involvement. The study noted that out of the eight aspects of involvement that were measured, the lowest scores were in reading and in the supervision of homework. The study reported that some of the fathers in the study indicated that they did not have the necessary ability to help their children with school work.

In the developing world, parental involvement in children's reading was found to be equally low. A study conducted by Manjula et al., (2009) in India, revealed that 80% of pupils who had reading difficulties studied on their own at home without any parents' support. A study on the level of parents' involvement conducted in 40 primary schools in Hong Kong (Ho, 1998), found that 30% of the parents ranked their involvement as low, 40% as medium while only 30% ranked their involvement as high.

A study conducted by Lemmer (2007) in South Africa, observed that parental involvement has been limited to financing schools and volunteering. She noted that although parental involvement is linked to school success, parental participation is not significant in many schools in South Africa. She reported that many developing countries including South Africa, tend to give parents increased roles in governing schools; while relatively few parents are actively involved in their children's reading. Similarly, a study involving 21 parents who were serving in the school governing bodies, 5 school principals and 1 headman conducted in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa reported very low levels of parental and community involvement (Msila, 2012). Msila reported that parents were of the opinion that teachers had the necessary skills to lead schools without parents' support. On the other hand, the school principals concurred that parental involvement would improve learners' performance and school success in general. However, these studies, did not explore factors contributing to parents' failure to be involved in their children's learning.

Studies in Kenya have shown that parents are not adequately involved in children's reading development. Wambiri (2007) for example, found that majority of the caregivers in Thika district were not adequately stimulating children's emergent reading development. The study observed that children had limited access to books and other reading materials. Similarly, a study by Swadner, Kabiru and Njenga (2000) established that majority of the parents

with children in pre-schools did not focus on reading related activities such as reading books with their children at home, but rather got involved in activities such as making play materials, participating in pre-school committees and putting up classrooms. These studies, however, investigated parent involvement during the infancy and pre-school levels and not at the lower primary level. Due to the crucial role reading plays in a children's reading achievement as well as their academic performance, a study focusing on parental involvement in children's reading at the lower primary school level where children are introduced to conventional reading was necessary.

Parents agree that their involvement in children's education is crucial for improving children's reading achievement and academic performance, but majority of them report they are not involved. In a study conducted in Kenya Obondo (1994) found that 90% of the parents in the study indicated that they valued reading with their children, though they were not involved in reading activities at home. These parents reported that they delegated this responsibility to other caregivers. Similarly, Maina (2010) in a study conducted among fathers of pre-school children in Thika district found that majority of the fathers were not involved in their children's' reading related activities although they agreed they had a responsibility in children's reading development. These fathers delegated this responsibility to their relatives. These studies, however did not seek to find out reasons for such large numbers of parents who reported that they were not adequately involved in children's reading related activities yet they indicated that they valued parental involvement. Empirical evidence

on reasons for parental involvement or non-involvement was, therefore, necessary.

2.5 Factors Influencing Parental Involvement in Children's Reading at Home

Research suggests that several factors influence parental involvement in children's reading. These factors include; parents' role construction, teacher invitation, education level, self-efficacy, socio-economic status, time constraint, child's age, type of school the child attends, teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement and teachers' perception of parents' efficacy. However, local studies on parental role construction and teachers invitation for parental involvement particularly at the lower primary school level have not attracted much attention. This study, therefore, focused on parental role construction and teacher's invitation.

2.5.1. Parents Role Construction

Parents who have a positive role construction regarding their involvement in their children's reading development are more likely to be involved than those who have a negative role construction. According to Bandura (1986), parents' role construction regarding their involvement in children's reading serve as a motivator and regulator of their involvement. Parents' beliefs about their role in assisting their children to improve their learning therefore establishes the range of activities that they construe as important, necessary and permissible to engage in (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). Accordingly, parents decide to

be involved in their children's reading when they understand that being involved is part of their role as parents. They attest that once parents decide to be involved, they choose specific activities to be involved based on their beliefs about what they are supposed to do so that they can improve their children's reading. These studies however, did not explore factors that influence parents' involvement in their children's reading. A study to examine parents' role construction and its impact on their levels of involvement was, therefore, necessary.

Parents' beliefs about appropriate support roles in children's education influence their role construction. A study conducted in England by Williams, Williams and Ullman (2002) found that 2% of parents who took part in the study felt that the responsibility for children's education belonged to the school while 58% believed that they had at least equal responsibility. The study concluded that the way parents perceive the responsibility for their children's education is a critical factor in shaping their views about being involved. This study however, examined children's education in general but did not focus on a particular education aspect such as reading development or the reasons for expressed views. There was, therefore, a need to explore parents' construed roles in children's reading.

Parents' perception of their role in children's reading determines their decision to be or not to be involved. A study conducted in Scotland by the Scottish Executive Social Research found that most parents believed that teaching

children to read was the responsibility of teachers. The study also found that some of the parents argued that homework supervision at home interfered with the quality time that parents' should spend with their children. Other parents believed that their children were capable of fulfilling the demands of the school and did not require parents' monitoring (SESR, 2005).

Parents' role construction serves as a motivator for involvement in children's reading. Studies by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) found that when parents perceive their involvement in children's learning as their responsibility, they engage in activities that they construe as important, necessary, and permissible. Similarly, Bandura (1986) asserts that from the construed roles, parents set goals that are related to desired outcomes. Parents' beliefs about their roles in children's reading enable them to plan and engage in activities that in their opinion assist their children's literacy development. Parents' perception of their roles in children's reading and reasons for these perceptions needed to be explored.

Studies conducted in Thika district in Kenya found that parents' perception influences their involvement in children's reading-related activities. A study on factors influencing caregiver's behaviour with print and children's emergent reading behaviour found that caregivers' perceptions about their role in stimulating children's reading related development is a major factor that influenced their decision to stimulate children's emergent reading development (Wambiri, 2007). Similarly, a study in the same district on fathers'

involvement in pre-school children's reading development found that fathers' role construction influenced their involvement in children's literacy development (Maina, 2010). These studies, however, targeted parents of children who had not entered primary schools. Studies on parental involvement in children's reading development during the lower primary school are necessary because children are usually introduced to conventional learning at this level.

2.5.2 Teachers' Invitation

Teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement are of great importance to the level and quality of parental involvement. Studies by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) found that specific invitations to involvement by children's teachers' through reading assignments and homework supervision influence parents' decision to be involved in children's reading at home. Similarly, a study conducted by Epstein (1995) found that when teachers encourage children to practice reading at home with their parents, children make considerable achievement in reading ability compared to those who only practice reading at school.

In addition, Bassler and Brissie (1992) found that invitation and demands for involvement presented by the teachers influence the extent to which parents are involved in their children's reading at home. Further, Hoover-Dempsey, et al., (2005) found that parents are more likely to be involved in their children's education when they feel that the school supports their involvement. However,

these studies only investigated parental invitation to be involved in the cognitive dimension and did not investigate teachers' invitation for parental involvement in the modelling and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement. Consequently, a study focusing on modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement was necessary.

Invitations to involvement from teachers have been found to motivate parental involvement in children's reading at home. Studies by Balli, Demo and Wedman (1998); Epstein and Van Voorhis (2001) found that developers of intervention programmes reported notable success in increasing the incidence and effectiveness of parental involvement through teachers' invitations to participate in specific activities. In addition, Davis and Ginsburg (1995); Rodick and Henggeler (1980) found that school intervention programmes that included a parent involvement component were more effective than the ones without. The study also concluded that inclusion of parental involvement components in school intervention programmes improves parental participation. Further, Adams and Christenson, (2000); Kohl, Lengua and McMahon (2002); Patrikakou and Weissberg (2000) found that teachers' invitation for parental involvement is influential because when parents realize that teachers value their contribution, they are encouraged to be involved. These studies, however, did not specify activities that were incorporated in these programmes. A study focusing on parental involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions was therefore necessary.

2.6 Hindrances to Parental Involvement in Children's Reading at Home

2.6.1 Parents' education level

Parents' educational level influences their involvement in children's reading related activities. Researchers in USA found that parents who had more formal education were more involved in their children's learning than parents who had less formal education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Zill & Nord, 1994). Dauber and Epstein (1993) found that there is a significant relationship between parents level of education and parents reports of involvement in children's learning at home. They found that parents who had higher levels of education were more likely to be involved in children's learning. These studies, however, investigated parents' involvement in children's learning in general and not specifically in children's reading.

Smith (2005) found that Hispanic parents living in the United States of America failed to be involved in their children's education due to their limited educational background when compared to parents from other races. Similarly, a study conducted in Kenya on fathers involvement in their pre-school children's learning established that fathers' educational levels influenced their involvement in their children's learning (Mwoma, 2009). This study, however, focused on children's education in general and did not focus on parental involvement in their children's reading at home.

2.6.2 Parents' self-efficacy

Parents' perceptions about their ability to help their children learn to read affects their involvement in children's reading at home. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) reported that parents who felt they had inadequate skills or education were less likely to become involved in their children's learning at home. They argued this was because parents felt that their efforts might not positively affect their children's schooling. Parents' perception about their ability to help their children succeed in school influences their views about activities they should engage in to help children improve their reading skills.

Studies by Eccles and Harold (1993); Levin (2002); Park (2004) found that parental involvement in their children's education is higher when parents are confident that they can positively influence their children's performance in school. These studies further indicate that parental involvement was found to be less when parents thought that their efforts might not positively affect their children's schooling. Similarly, studies by Salinas (2005) indicate that some parents reported that they were not involved in their children's education because they did not know how to be involved. Another study in Kenya, Obondo (1994) found that 95% of the study respondents reported that they experienced problems in helping their children learn to read.

2.6.3 Parents' socio-economic status

Parents' socio-economic status influences their level of involvement in children's reading at home. Epstein (1995) asserted that families want their

children to succeed in school therefore, regardless of their socio-economic status; they are equally involved in their children's education. However, studies by other researchers contradict this view as they argue that parents belonging to high socio-economic backgrounds are more involved because they have resources to provide learning materials such as books, magazines and that they make regular visits to a library or a bookstore as compared to parents from low socio-economic backgrounds (Guthrie, 1978; Taube, 1988; Elley, 1994; Lehmann, 1996; Lietz, 1996; OECD, 2002). Similarly, studies by Brody and Flor, (1998); Fan & Chen, (2001); Lareau, (1989); Stevenson and Baker, (1987) found that parents' social-economic status and parental involvement levels are positively related.

2.6.4 Time constraints

Some parents highlight lack of time as a reason for not being involved in their children's reading at home. Research conducted in USA, Epstein (1995) found that in families where caregivers work full-time, their involvement in children's education faces significant barriers regardless of their socio-economic status. A similar study on forms and patterns of parental involvement conducted in Scotland found that work and family involvement were the most mentioned reasons for lack of time for parental involvement in their children's reading (Russell & Granville, 2005).

Demands on parents' time, particularly in relation to family and work responsibilities were reported to influence parents' involvement in their

children's learning (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Lareau, 1989). According to Garcia, et al., (2002); Weiss, Mayer, Kreider et al., (2003), parents whose employment is relatively demanding and inflexible tend to be less involved in their children's education than parents whose jobs are more flexible. Parents with multiple child-care or extended family responsibilities were also found to be less involved particularly, in school-based activities (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Brandt (2011) reviewed that most teachers in the United States of America reported low levels of parental involvement in schools. Majority of the parents failed to attend parent-teacher meetings, school functions and did not assist their children with assignments and projects. Lack of time as a result of both parents working schedules was reported to be a major factor influencing parental involvement. Smith (2008) reported minimal parental involvement in children's education in the USA. He attributed the low level of involvement to lack of time.

2.6.5 Child's age

Child's age influences parental involvement in children's reading. A longitudinal study on maternal involvement in children's homework conducted in Israel found that parents' help with homework decreases as children move to higher classes (Levin, 2002). The study reported that there is more parental involvement during the early years. Similarly, a study by Stevenson and Baker (1987) found that parental involvement tends to decrease as children move

from pre-school and lower primary school to higher levels. Similarly, Eccles and Midgley (1990); Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, et al., (1997) found that parental involvement consistently decreased as the child moves from early to middle childhood and into adolescence. They attributed this to developmental reasons such as children's maturity and increased need for independence. In a cross-sectional study of first to third-grade students, Izzo, Weissberg, Kaspro, et al., (1999) noted that parental participation at school decreased as the child joined higher grades.

2.6.6 Type of school the child attends

Parents with children in private schools tend to be involved more in children's learning than those with children in public schools. In an attempt to compare the level of community participation in pre-schools in Thika district, Ndani (2008) found that parental involvement tends to be higher in private pre-schools as compared to public pre-schools. She noted that parents in private schools participated more in communication with the pre-school teachers including; making comments as they sign the child's diary, accompanying children on field trips and attending teachers' meetings. In public pre-schools, parents were found to be involved in the provision of learning materials and construction of buildings. Similar findings were reported by Mwoma (2009) in a study on fathers' involvement in pre-school children's education in Gucha district Kenya. Mwoma found that fathers' involvement is influenced by the type of pre-school the child attends.

2.6.7 Teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement

Dauber and Epstein (1991) found that teachers who have positive attitudes towards parental involvement regularly invite parents to be involved in children's learning. They further report that such parents increase their interactions with their children at home and feel more positive about their ability to help their children with school work.

2.6.8 Teachers' perception of parents' efficacy

Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Jones et al., (2002) found that when teachers believe that parents are capable of contributing to their children's educational success, they are more likely to invite them to be involved in their children's learning. These teachers were also found to be more likely to encourage parents to be involved. In addition, the study found that teachers who invite parents to be involved report high levels of support from parents.

2.7 Summary of the Literature Review

Reviewed studies have shown that in spite of the empirical evidence that parental involvement improves children's reading ability, parental involvement is low internationally. However, in Kenya minimal research has been conducted on the extent of parental involvement in children's reading at the lower primary school level. Research in modelling, cognitive and behavioural parent involvement dimensions at the lower primary school level has also not attracted much attention locally.

The review has also shown that although the influence of parental role construction regarding their involvement in their children's reading at the pre-school level has been investigated locally, such studies have not received due attention at the lower primary school level, yet children's conventional reading which is crucial for later learning is introduced at this level. In addition, while teacher invitation for parental and community members participation has been explored at the pre-school level, at the lower primary school level such studies have not received due attention. Consequently, this study was necessary to fill the knowledge and literature gaps regarding levels of parental involvement in children's reading at the lower primary school level and factors influencing this involvement.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents research design, variables, study location, population, research instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures that were used in this study. It also presents ethical and logistical considerations.

3.2 Research Design and Locale

This study employed a descriptive research design to gather information on parental involvement in children's reading at home and factors that influence their involvement. Descriptive research design was found to be suitable for this study because the researcher intended to collect information on parents' behaviour, attitudes and opinions regarding their involvement in children's reading at home as it existed. According to Gay (1991), descriptive research is a process of collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer questions concerning the current status of subjects in the study. Similarly, Best (1970) points out that, descriptive research could be used to describe current conditions or relationships that exist, practices that prevail, as well as beliefs or attitudes that are held by a particular group of subjects.

Descriptive research was appropriate for this study because the researcher intended to describe the influence of parents' role construction and teachers' invitation on parental involvement without controlling extraneous variables.

Mitchell and Jolly (1992) indicated that the descriptive research method could be used to describe relationships that exist between study variables without accounting for effects of extraneous variables.

3.2.1 Variables

The study focused on two independent variables; parents' role construction and teachers' invitation for involvement and one dependent variable; parents' involvement in children's reading at home.

Independent variables

The two independent variables were:

- i. **Role construction:** These were parents' perceived roles in their children's reading at home. Beliefs regarding whether parents' level of involvement in their children's reading at home was assessed by having them indicate whether they agree or disagree, on a 5-point Likert Scale. Parents were requested to choose from five responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree and Strongly Disagree (Appendix 1, section C). Frequencies of parent's responses on the 15 items in the interview schedule regarding perceptions about their role in children's reading were computed. Parents' role construction was then categorized as either high or low based on the scores.

- ii. **Teachers' Invitation:** Refers to teachers' prompts to parents to be involved in reading related activities with their children at home. It was assessed by having parents indicate how often their children's teachers requested them to engage in reading related activities on a 5-point Likert Scale. Parents were requested to choose from five responses: Very Often, Often, Sometimes, Rarely and Never (Appendix 1, section D). Frequencies of parent's responses on the 15 items in the interview schedule regarding teachers' invitation for their involvement in children's reading were computed. Teachers' invitation to parental involvement was then categorized as either high or low based on the scores.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable; parental involvement in children's reading at home was examined under the modelling, cognitive, and behavioural parent involvement dimensions:

- i. **Modelling dimension of parent involvement:** Refers to parents reading in the presence of their children, thereby providing models of reading for children to emulate. The frequency of parents' reports of reading the Bible/Koran; booklets such as church newsletters, brochures or pamphlets; newspapers; magazines and story books in their children's presence at home was measured (Appendix 1, section B). Frequency of parents' reports of how often they read in their children's presence was calculated. Parents' level of involvement in the modelling

dimension was categorised as either high or low based on the scores.

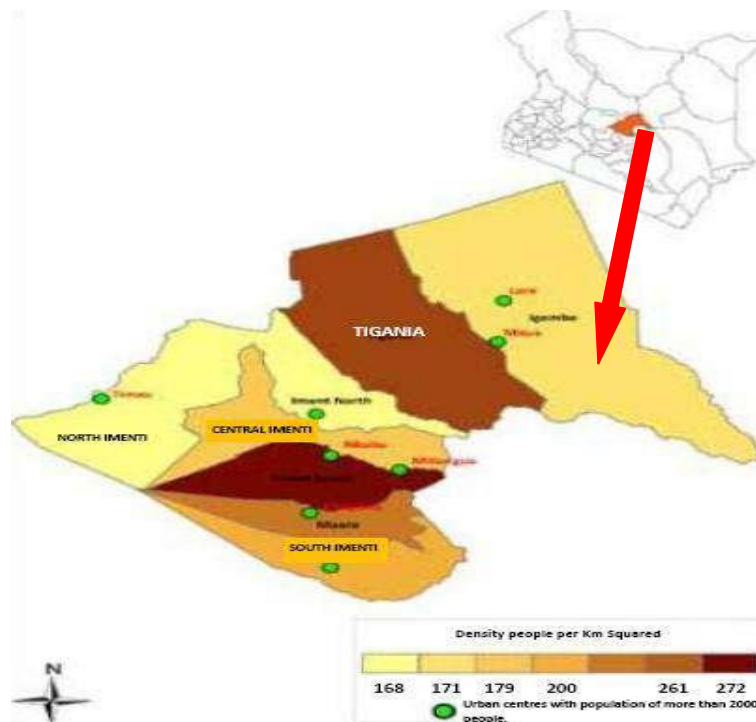
- ii. **Cognitive dimension of parent involvement:** Refers to parent-child reading activities that promote the child's reading skills and knowledge. The frequency of parents' reports of reading to the child; asking the child to read aloud while he/she listens; explaining the meaning of difficult words; asking questions from a passage to check the child's understanding of words and phrases; supervising the child's homework to ensure it is completed correctly was measured (Appendix 1, section B). Frequency of parents' reports regarding their involvement in reading activities with their children was calculated. Parents' level of involvement in the cognitive dimension was categorised as either high or low based on the scores.
- iii. **Behavioural dimension of parent involvement:** Refers to parents encouraging their children to read and exposing them to literacy-rich environments, thereby providing opportunities for children to interact with different forms of reading materials. Parents' reports of reminding the child to read or complete homework; accompanying the child to the bookshop to choose reading materials; reinforcing the child's effort to read; acquiring reading materials apart from those required by the school by either buying or borrowing; requesting the child's teacher to recommend suitable reading materials that that the parent could borrow from the library were measured (Appendix 1, section B). Frequency of

parents' reports regarding their actions to encourage their children to read and exposing them to literacy rich environment was calculated. Parents' level of involvement in the behavioural dimension was categorised as either high or low based on the scores.

3.2.2 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in Igembe South constituency in Meru County. Igembe South Constituency is one of the four constituencies curved out from the former Meru North district. The constituency borders Igembe Central Constituency in the North, Igembe East Constituency in the East, Tigania East Constituency in the West and Tharaka North Constituency in the South.

Figure 3. 1 : Map of Meru County showing Igembe South Constituency



Source: Google Maps

Igembe South constituency was purposefully selected for this study because Eastern province, where it is located, recorded the lowest literacy scores in a national literacy and numeracy study (KNEC, 2010). In addition, Meru North district from which the constituency was curved recorded a very high illiteracy level which may be attributed to irresponsible consumption of “Khat” (Miraa) and liquor (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Further, the Eastern Province where this constituency is located has a very high adult illiteracy rate; second to North Eastern province which has the highest (Kibathi, 2006; Kilele, 2007). The high adult illiteracy level could have affected parents involvement in children’s reading at home.

3.3 Population

The target population in this study comprised of parents or guardians of children in standard three in both public and private primary schools in Igembe South constituency. The constituency has a total of one hundred and nine primary schools of which ninety three were public and sixteen private. Preliminary information from the District Education Officer, Igembe South constituency had confirmed that all the primary schools in the constituency had a standard three class.

Standard three was selected for this study because children at this level are expected to read and are usually given homework. This was important because some of the items that were measured in the study involved children’s reading and assistance with homework. In addition, a longitudinal analysis of

elementary pupils' reading and school performance in America reviewed that third-grade reading level was a significant predictor of a student's eighth-grade reading level; ninth-grade course performance; rate of high school graduation; and college attendance (Tomko, 2014). Tomko concluded that there is a correlation between student graduation/dropout rates and ability to read by the end of grade three. This class was also selected for the study because very few studies in Kenya, have examined parental involvement in children's reading at the lower primary school level, yet development of conventional reading at this level is crucial for reading and academic performance during later schooling.

3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size determination

The sampling technique and sample size are described in the following subsections.

3.4.1 Sampling Techniques

Parents of standard three pupils who formed the study sample were selected from both public and private primary schools in Igembe South constituency. Study schools were selected at random from all the primary schools in the constituency based on the assertion of Ary, Jacob and Raveniah (1972), that 10% to 20% of any population is an adequate representation in a sample when the target is less than 10,000. In addition, Gay (1991) also suggests that for descriptive studies, 10% of the accessible population is satisfactory. Therefore, out of the 109 primary schools in the constituency, 10% were selected. Eleven primary schools were therefore selected for this study.

The eleven study schools were selected at random using stratified random sampling. Two lists, one of public schools and the other of private schools were used to select the study schools using the Random Number Generator (RNG) tool. This sampling method was used to ensure that parents from both public and private schools were represented in the study sample in proportion to their number in the population.

The standard three classes in each selected school became the study class. Parents or guardians of the selected pupils were the respondents in this study. Only one parent/guardian per child was to be interviewed and parents were requested to decide whether it was the father or mother to participate in the study.

3.4.2 Sample Size

The Sample size for this study was calculated using the total number of standard three pupils in the eleven sampled standard three classes. There were one thousand, three hundred and seventy four standard three pupils in the eleven study schools. Ten percent (10%) of standard three pupils in each school were randomly selected for this study. Parents of the selected pupils formed the study sample. The sample size for this study was therefore, one hundred and thirty seven parents as shown in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Study sample and schools from which it was drawn

| Name of the school | Type of school | Number of pupils in the study school | Study Sample (10%) |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---|---------------------------|
| School A | Public | 114 | 11 |
| School B | Public | 103 | 10 |
| School C | Public | 158 | 16 |
| School D | Public | 145 | 15 |
| School E | Public | 174 | 17 |
| School F | Public | 132 | 13 |
| School G | Public | 102 | 10 |
| School H | Public | 157 | 16 |
| School I | Public | 163 | 16 |
| School J | Private | 90 | 9 |
| School K | Private | 36 | 4 |
| Total | | 1374 | 137 |

3.5 Research Instruments

Data for the study was collected using an interview schedule. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), interviews allow researchers to clarify and elaborate the purpose of the research to the respondents to enable them give useful information. Further, during interviews researchers can question and probe the responses to obtain more information. Interview method was used in this study due to the reported high illiteracy rates in the region (Kibathi, 2006; Kilele, 2007; Republic of Kenya, 2007), which could have made it difficult for parents to answer questionnaires. This study utilized structured interviews

because in addition to the reported high illiteracy levels, the study items comprised both close-ended and open-ended items. According to David and Sutton (2004), open-ended questions can be included within a structured interview and prompting can be used during interviews for clarification purposes.

3.5.1 Interview Schedule

A structured interview schedule basically comprising of a set of close-ended questions and a few open-ended questions was used to gather relevant information from the study respondents. A structured interview schedule was therefore utilized to collect relevant information from the parents regarding the extent of their involvement in children's reading at home and factors that influence their involvement with reference to the modelling, cognitive and behavioural parent involvement dimensions. Specifically, the interview schedule was used to gather information on: (1) The extent of parental involvement in children's reading at home with respect to modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions (Appendix 1, section B) (2) Parental role construction (Appendix 1, section C) and (3) Teachers' invitation for parental involvement in children's reading at home (Appendix 1, section D).

3.5.2 Scoring the interview schedule

Various sections of the interview schedule were scored as described in the following sub-sections.

Parents’ level of involvement

To measure parents’ level of involvement in children’s reading at home, a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from “never” to “very often” was used. Parents’ responses to the items in the questionnaire were assigned scores as follows: never (0), rarely (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and very often (4).

Each of the three parental involvement dimensions (modelling, cognitive and behavioural) had five items. Frequencies of parents’ responses in the study items were calculated to establish parents’ scores. To obtain parents’ level of involvement in each of the three parental involvement dimensions, scores were grouped into two categories. Parents who scored 0 to 10 were placed in the low level of involvement category while those who scored 11 to 20 were placed in high level of involvement category as shown in table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Categories of parental involvement levels

| Level of involvement | Score |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Low | 0 – 10 |
| High | 11 – 20 |

Parents’ level of role construction

To measure the level of parents’ role construction, a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” was used. Parents’ responses to the 15 items in the interview schedule were calculated. The responses were assigned the following scores: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree

(2), Not Sure (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5). Frequencies and percentages were calculated to determine the levels of parents' role construction regarding their involvement in children's reading at home and for hypotheses testing.

To obtain the level of parents' role construction, scores were grouped into two categories. Parents who scored 15 to 45 were categorized as having a low level of role construction and those who scored 46 to 75 were categorized as having a high level of role construction as shown in table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Categories of parental role construction

| Level of role construction | Score |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Low | 15 – 45 |
| High | 46 – 75 |

Teachers' invitation

To measure teachers' invitation for parental involvement, a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from "never" to "very often" was used. Parents' responses to the 15 items in the interview schedule were calculated. The responses were assigned the following scores: never (0), rarely (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and very often (4). Frequencies and percentages were calculated to determine the levels of teachers' invitation for parental involvement in their children's reading at home and for hypotheses testing.

To obtain the levels of teachers' invitation, scores were grouped into two categories. Parents who scored 0 to 30 were placed in the low level of invitation category while those who scored 31 to 60 were placed in the high level of invitation category as shown in table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Categories of teachers' invitation levels

| Level of Invitation | Score |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Low | 0 – 30 |
| High | 31 – 60 |

Hindrances to parental involvement in children's reading at home

Frequency and percentages were used to present qualitative data obtained from probing parents on hindrances to their involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. Hindrances that emerged from parents' responses were used to compute frequencies and percentages.

3.6 Training of Research Assistants

The two research assistants were trained for one week on how to use the study instruments. Specifically, the training focused on the data collection procedures. The chief researcher read through all the items and provided detailed explanations of each item. In addition, interviewing techniques, collection and recording of data as well as ethical issues were discussed.

3.7 Pilot Study

The interview instruments were piloted in two primary schools. One public school and one private school were selected at random for the pilot study. Twenty parents (ten from each of the pilot schools) were selected at random for the interview. These two schools were not used for the final study to avoid influencing the findings of the study. The data obtained was used to establish validity and reliability of the study instruments as discussed below:

3.7.1 Validity of the data generating instruments

To establish content validity of the instruments, the researcher sought the expertise of the supervisors and other professional researchers who were familiar with the study area. They were requested to conduct item-analysis to check if the items in the test instrument would generate the required information. Specifically, they established the relevance, clarity, simplicity and ambiguity of each item in the test instrument. Items that were rated as relevant, clear, simple and non-ambiguous were included in the final test. Items that were found to be inadequate in terms of generating the required information were modified or dropped and replaced with other items that provided the required information based on the suggestions of the professional researchers. According to Yaghmale (2003), content validity may be obtained through judgement by a team of professionals who judge the content domains of test instruments.

3.7.2 Reliability of the data generating instruments

The entire interview schedule was administered to all the twenty parents in the pilot study. After administration of the interview, scores were assigned to every respondent on the two halves of the test. One part was made up of the even-numbered questions while the other was made up of the odd-numbered ones. To estimate the internal consistency of the test instruments, the split-half method was used whereby the instrument was divided into two parts. The Correlation coefficient between the two sets of scores was then computed. The scores were correlated using Spearman-Brown proficiency formula at 0.5 indexes. A reliability coefficient of 0.837 was obtained. In addition, the internal consistency of the items was established using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient at .07 using the two halves of the scores obtained during the pilot study. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of .975 and .949 was obtained. The results indicated that there was a strong positive correlation between the two sets of scores, therefore it was concluded that the survey instrument was significantly reliable. Table 3.5 shows the reliability statistics for the test items used in this study.

Table 3.5: Reliability Statistics

| Reliability Statistics | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Spearman-Brown Coefficient | | Equal Length | .840 |
| | | Unequal Length | .840 |
| | | Guttman Coefficient | Split-Half .837 |
| Cronbach's Alpha | Part 1 | Value | .975 |
| | Part 2 | Value | .949 |

Further, inter-ratter reliability was calculated. The instruments were administered to two parents twice (at the beginning and at the end of the March 2013). The inter-ratter reliability was calculated. The correlation coefficient was computed at .80. An inter-ratter reliability of .87 was obtained. The test instrument was therefore considered reliable.

3.8 Data Collection

The study was conducted at the end of the first school term; March 2013. Head teachers of the selected schools were requested to invite one parent or guardian per family of the sampled pupils for the interview at the agreed date. The sampled parents in each of the eleven selected primary schools were interviewed individually through a face-to-face interview. The interviews were conducted at the sampled schools by the researcher and two research assistants. In each school, interviews were conducted within two days. Prior to data collection, two research assistants were recruited and trained to assist in data collection. They were identified on the basis of familiarity with the study sites;

knowledge of the local dialect and culture; possessing or pursuing a master's degree and willingness to work with the researcher.

Before the interview commenced, the purpose of the study was explained to each respondent and his/her permission to participate in the study was sought. Interviews were administered orally using a structured interview schedule (Appendix I). Interviews were conducted in English, Kiswahili or Kimeru, depending on the parent's preference. Whenever necessary, respondents were requested to provide information to clarify their responses or explain vague answers.

Only twelve parents failed to turn up for the interview on the agreed date. The head teachers of the respective schools were requested to contact these parents and request them to come for the interview within twenty four hours. All the parents met the researcher and the whole interview was completed within one month. Parents' responses were recorded at the appropriate part of the interview schedule. At the end of each day, the researcher and research assistants met to discuss the progress and to address challenges encountered during the interviews. The discussions included arrangements to meet the few parents who had not turned up for the interview.

3.9 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

Before data collection commenced, necessary authorization to conduct the study was obtained from the University and the National Council for Science

and Technology (NCST). The DEO, Igembe South constituency was informed about the impending research in the constituency. The purpose, focus and study respondents and their selection procedures was discussed with the DEO. He was then requested to authorize the study in the constituency and inform head teachers of the selected school about the study. The head teachers of the sampled schools were briefed on the study targets and the procedure to select the study sample. They were asked to urge parents to participate in the study.

The key ethical issues that were considered included obtaining informed consent from parents for their participation in the study. Respondents were assured that their participation was voluntary and the information they gave would be treated confidentially. They were also assured that the information obtained would be used for the purpose of the study and that their names were not required.

3.10 Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected in this study. The data obtained through the interview schedule was edited, coded, tabulated then analyzed. Qualitative data was summarized according to similarities and common themes and was used to complement the quantitative information. The frequency of responses was computed and frequency tables were used to present the data obtained.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize data obtained from responses while inferential statistics were used to analyse the data obtained. Pearson's independent Chi-square test was used to establish whether or not there was a significant relationship between the variables under study. This statistic was found suitable because the data obtained was in the nominal and categorical scale. Using Chi-Square the study hypotheses; H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03} , H_{04} , H_{05} and H_{06} stated below were tested at the significance level of .05:

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between parents' role construction and their level of involvement in the modelling dimension of parental involvement in children's reading at home at .05 level of significance. Chi-square test was used to determine levels of significance.

H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in the cognitive dimension of parental involvement in children's reading at home at .05 level of significance. Chi-square test was used to determine levels of significance.

H_{03} : There is no significant relationship between parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in the behavioural dimension of parental involvement in children's reading at home at .05 level of significance. Chi-square test was used to determine levels of significance.

H_{04} : There is no significant relationship between teachers' invitation to parental involvement and parents' level of involvement in the modelling dimension of parental involvement in children's reading at

home at .05 level of significance. Chi-square test was used to determine levels of significance.

Ho₅: There is no significant relationship between teachers' invitation to parental involvement and parents' level of involvement in the cognitive dimension of parental involvement in children's reading at home at .05 level of significance. Chi-square test was used to determine levels of significance.

Ho₆: There is no significant relationship between teachers' invitation to parental involvement and parents' level of involvement in the behavioural dimension of parental involvement in children's reading at home at .05 level of significance. Chi-square test was used to determine levels of significance.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis, findings, and discussions of the study. The purpose of the study was to determine the level of parental involvement in standard three pupils' reading at home and the factors that influence this involvement. Data for this study was collected from parents of standard three pupils selected from both public and private schools in Igembe South Constituency, Meru County. All the 137 parents who were sampled to participate in the study accepted the invitation and agreed to be interviewed.

Findings and Discussions

Findings of this study are presented in three sections. First, demographic information about the respondents is presented. Descriptive analysis related to variables in each objective is then presented. Lastly, the inferential analyses of the findings are presented by hypotheses.

The findings are presented according to the following research objectives:

1. To find out the levels of parents' involvement in children's reading at home with respect to modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement

2. To establish the level of parents' role construction regarding involvement in children's reading at home
3. To establish the level of teacher invitation for parents' involvement in children's reading at home
4. To determine the relationship between parents' role construction and their level of involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement
5. To determine the relationship between teachers' invitation and parents' levels of involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement
6. To find out hindrances to parents' involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement

4.2 Demographic information

Information regarding the respondents' gender and education level was presented using frequency and percentages. The proportions of parents' by their gender are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Proportion of parents by gender

| Gender | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| Male | 52 | 38.0 |
| Female | 85 | 62.0 |
| Total | 137 | 100 |

As illustrated in the Table, majority of the respondents in the study were females who formed 62%. Only 38% of the respondents were males. Both male and female parents were represented in the study sample.

Analysis of the distribution of parents by their level of education revealed that most parents either did not complete primary school or never attended any formal schooling. Table 4.2 presents the distribution of parents by their level of education.

Table 4.2: Proportion of parents by level of education

| Level of education | Frequency | Percent |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Never been to school | 17 | 12.4 |
| Did not complete primary school | 55 | 40.2 |
| Completed primary school | 44 | 32.1 |
| Secondary | 16 | 11.7 |
| College (any post school college: including village polytechnic) | 4 | 2.9 |
| University | 1 | 0.7 |
| Total | 137 | 100 |

The above figures clearly show that the largest category of parents (40.2%) did not complete primary education and a significant number (12.4%) did not attend school at all. Only 15.3% were of secondary school level and above. From these results it is evident that more than half (52.6%) of the respondents either never attended school at all or did not complete primary school. This

suggests that a large proportion of parents in this constituency could have difficulties in reading for their children at home.

The data collected revealed a gender imbalance among the respondents. There were more female parents than male parents. This finding is similar to that of Ndani (2008) who found that majority of the respondents in a study on community involvement in pre-school activities in Thika district were females. This appears to suggest that female parents were more likely to be involved in their children's learning activities at school.

The findings also revealed that the level of education among the respondents was relatively low. Studies conducted in various parts of the world have revealed that parents who had more formal education were more involved in their children's reading than those who had less formal education (Dauber & Epstein, 1993; Zill & Nord, 1994; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Maina, 2010). This suggests that parents' level of education may influence their involvement in children's reading related activities.

4.3 Levels of parental involvement in children's reading at home with respect to modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement

To compute the levels of parental involvement in children's reading, parents were required to indicate how often they were involved in children's reading related activities in each dimension, on a 5-point Likert Scale. Parents'

responses to the items ranged from “never” to “very often”. Responses were awarded the following scores; never 0, rarely 1, sometimes 2, often 3 and very often 4. The least possible score was zero (respondents who answered “never” in all the five items) and the highest score was 20 (those who answered “very often” in all the five items).

The frequency and percentages of scores were calculated. The level of parents’ involvement in each dimension was classified as either high or low based on the scores. Parents who scored between 0 and 10 were placed in the low involvement category while those who scored between 11 and 20 were placed in the high involvement category. Frequencies and percentages for all items were calculated to determine levels of parental involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement as discussed below.

4.3.1: Level of parental involvement in the modelling dimension

Parents’ scores and their level of involvement in the modelling dimension were as shown in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Parents’ scores and level of involvement in modelling dimension

| Score range | Frequency | Percent | Level |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 0-5 | 96 | 70.1 | Low |
| 6-10 | 11 | 8.0 | |
| Sub Total | 107 | 78.1 | |
| 11-15 | 27 | 19.7 | High |
| 16-20 | 3 | 2.2 | |
| Sub Total | 30 | 21.9 | |
| Grand total | 137 | 100 | |

The results in Table 4.3 show that majority of the parents (78.1) recorded low involvement and only 21.9 were highly involved in modelling reading to their children. These results suggest that majority of the children did not have the opportunity to emulate their parents as models in reading since parents rarely read in their children’s presence at home. Many parents reported that they read the Kimeru Bible though they could not read materials written in English. This was an interesting finding based on low levels of education among the parents.

4.3.2: Level of parental involvement in the cognitive dimension

To establish parents’ level of involvement in the cognitive dimension, parents’ scores were computed as shown in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Parents’ scores and level of involvement in cognitive dimension

| Score range | Frequency | Percent | Level |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|-------|
| 0-5 | 63 | 46.0 | Low |
| 6-10 | 41 | 29.9 | |
| Sub Total | 104 | 75.9 | |
| 11-15 | 26 | 19.0 | High |
| 16-20 | 7 | 5.1 | |
| Sub Total | 33 | 24.1 | |
| Grand Total | 137 | 100 | |

From these results, it is apparent that majority of the parents (75.9%) were on the low level of involvement and only 24.1% were highly involved. This point to the fact that most of the children were not supported to practice reading at home. This is because parents hardly engaged in reading related activities such as reading with children, listening to children read aloud or supervising

homework. Some of the fathers who participated in the study however, reported that they help their children with mathematics homework.

4.3.3: Level of parental involvement in the behavioural dimension

Parents' level of involvement in the behavioural dimension was established by computation of their scores as shown in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Parents' scores and level of involvement in behavioural dimension

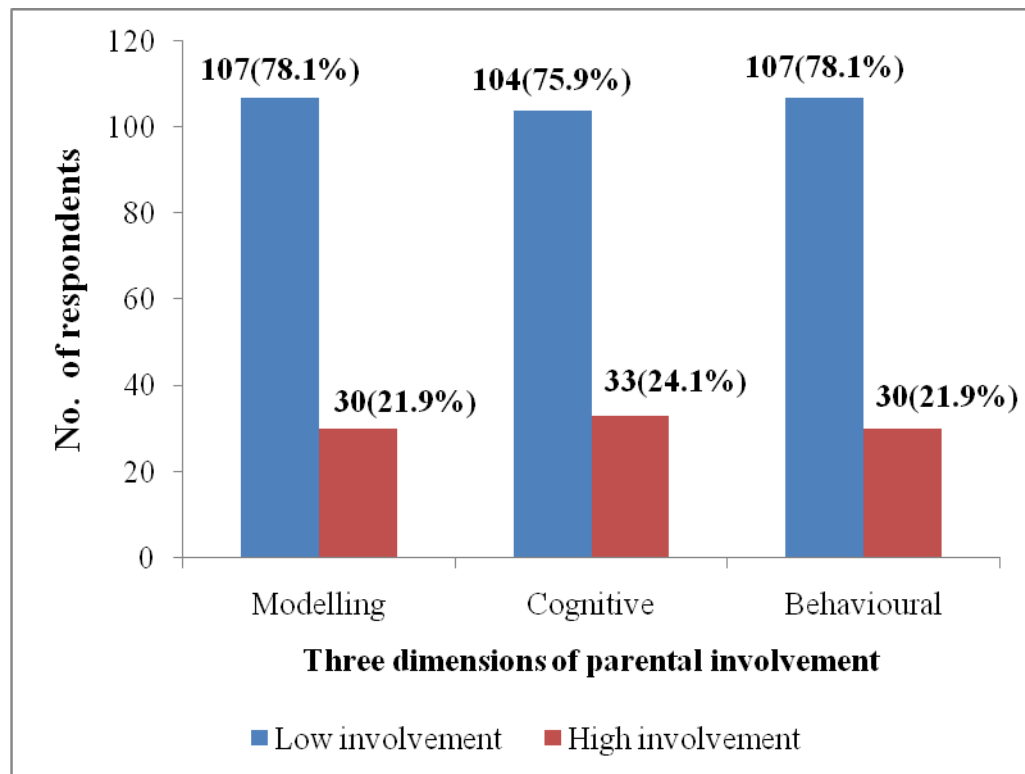
| Score range | Frequency | Percent | Level |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 0-5 | 66 | 48.2 | Low |
| 6-10 | 41 | 29.9 | |
| Sub Total | 107 | 78.1 | |
| 11-15 | 28 | 20.4 | High |
| 16-20 | 2 | 1.5 | |
| Sub Total | 30 | 21.9 | |
| Grand Total | 137 | 100 | |

From Table 4.5, it is evident that majority of the parents (78.1%) recorded low involvement and only 21.9% were highly involved. This suggests that majority of the children in this constituency were hardly encouraged to read by being exposed to varied literacy materials, since parents rarely used strategies that motivate their children to practice reading.

4.3.4: Level of parental involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions

Parents' involvement in all the three dimensions was found to be low as illustrated in figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 : Proportion of parents' involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions by level of involvement



From these results, it is evident that majority of the respondents recorded low levels of involvement in all the three dimensions. However, cognitive dimension recorded a slightly higher level of involvement than modelling and behavioural dimensions but the level of involvement was still low. These results show clearly that parents were not adequately supporting their children's reading development in all the three dimensions.

In relation to objective one, that sought to find out levels of parental involvement in children's reading at home in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions in Igembe South Constituency, the study established that parental involvement was low in all the three dimensions. The findings of this study are in agreement with those of studies conducted in the United States of America. Anderson, et al., (1985); Finney, (1993) found that parents were not adequately involved in their children's reading. Brandt (2011) and MetLife (2005) reported that most teachers in USA reported low parents involvement in their children's learning. Similarly, studies in the United Kingdom are consistent with findings of this study. Welsh et al., (2012) and Wilson (2004) found low levels of parental involvement in their children's education.

Findings of this study are also in agreement with those of studies conducted in other parts of the world. Manjula et al., (2009) found that in India, very few parents supported their children's reading. The study revealed that majority of pupils who had reading difficulties did not receive any support from their parents. Ho, (1998) also found that many parents in Hong Kong were not adequately supporting their children's reading. The findings are also consistent with those of Lemmer (2007) who found low levels of parent involvement in children's reading in South Africa. The study reported that most of the parents were involved in other school activities such as financing schools and volunteering. Msila (2012) also reported that parents in South Africa were not adequately involved in their children's education and were of the opinion that teachers had the necessary skills to lead schools without parents' support.

The findings also concur with those of Wambiri (2007) who found that majority of caregivers in Thika, were not adequately stimulating children's emergent reading development. The findings are also in agreement with those of Maina (2010). In a study conducted in Thika district, Maina found that majority of the fathers of pre-school children were not involved in their children's early literacy development. The findings are in line with those of Swadner, et al., (2000). In a study conducted in pre-schools in sampled communities in Kenya, Swadner et al., established that majority of parents with children in pre-schools did not focus on reading related activities with their pre-school children. This suggests that parents may not be aware of the importance of being involved in children's reading related activities.

Findings of the current study also concur with findings of other studies that found low levels of parental involvement in children's education related activities. For example, Ndani (2008) found low community participation in pre-school activities in Thika district. In a study conducted in Gucha district, Mwoma (2009) found low levels of fathers' involvement in their pre-school children's education. This suggests that parents may lack awareness on the importance of being involved in activities related to children's education in general.

4.4 The level of parents' role construction regarding involvement in children's reading at home

Parents' role construction was measured using a 5-point Likert scale. Parents' responses to the items in the interview schedule ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Responses were awarded the following scores; strongly disagree 1, disagree 2, not sure 3, agree 4 and strongly agree 5. The least possible score was 15 and the highest score was 75. To establish the level of parental role construction, parents' scores were then grouped into two categories. Parents who scored 15 to 45 were categorized in the low level of role construction and those who scored 46 to 75 were categorized in the high level of role construction. To establish the level of parents' role construction, the scores were computed as shown in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Parents' role construction scores and their level of involvement

| Score range | Frequency | Percent | Level |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 15-30 | 93 | 67.9 | Low |
| 31-45 | 18 | 13.1 | |
| Sub-Total | 111 | 81 | |
| 46-60 | 16 | 11.7 | High |
| 61-75 | 10 | 7.3 | |
| Sub-Total | 26 | 19 | |
| Grand Total | 137 | 100 | |

As the results in Table 4.6 indicate, the level of role construction for majority of the parents (81%) was low. Only 19% of the parents reported they believed

they had a role to play in their children's reading at home. The results suggest that most of the parents did not believe they had a role to play in children's reading related activities at home.

The study determined that the level of parents' role construction was relatively low in that majority did not perceive themselves as having a role to play in their children's reading development. The findings are contradictory to those of a study conducted in England by Williams et al., (2002). In the study, majority of the parents were found to believe that although the school is responsible for their children's education, they had equal responsibilities. These findings are also inconsistent with those of Maina (2010) who found that majority of fathers of pre-school children in Thika district indicated that they had a role to play in their children's literacy development. This suggests that in some cases parents believe that they have a role to play in their children's learning, though they may actually not be involved.

The findings are however in agreement with those of a study conducted in Scotland (SESR, 2005). In this study, most of the parents believed that it was not their responsibility to teach their children to read but the teachers'. The findings also concur with those of Wambiri (2007) who found that majority of caregivers had negative role definition. Most of these parents also believed that reading stimulation is the role of the teacher and that parents had little to do with it. This suggests that most parents probably do not understand that being involved in their children's reading is part of their role as parents. These

parents may also lack adequate knowledge on the role parental involvement plays in children's reading development. In addition, some parents may be of the opinion that assisting children learn to read is the responsibility of the teacher and not the parents'.

4.5 The level of teacher invitation for parents' to be involved in children's reading at home

The study investigated the level of teacher invitation for parents' involvement in children's reading at home. Parents' responses regarding teachers' invitation were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. Parents' responses to the items in the interview schedule ranged from "never" to "very often". Responses were awarded the following scores; never 0, rarely 1, sometimes 2, often 3 and very often 4. The least possible score was 0 and the highest score was 60. To establish the level of teacher invitation, parents' scores were then grouped into two categories. Parents who scored 0 to 30 were categorized as being rarely invited and those who scored 31 to 60 were categorized as being highly invited. To establish the level of teachers' invitation, parents' scores on teacher invitation were computed as shown in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Teacher invitation scores and parents' level of involvement

| Score range | Frequency | Percent | Level |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 0-15 | 93 | 67.9 | Low |
| 16-30 | 20 | 14.6 | |
| Sub Total | 113 | 82.5 | |
| 31-45 | 18 | 13.1 | High |
| 46-60 | 6 | 4.4 | |
| Sub Total | 24 | 17.5 | |
| Grand Total | 137 | 100 | |

The results in table 4.7 indicate that majority of the parents (82.5%) recorded low levels of teacher invitation and only 17.5% reported that teachers invited them to be involved in their children's reading at home. These results mean that parents may be failing to support their children's reading development because teachers do not prompt them to be involved in their children's reading at home.

The study found that the level of teacher invitation for parental involvement in children's reading at home was significantly low. Majority of the parents reported that they were invited for Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings but not to be involved in children's reading related activities. The findings are in agreement with those of Ndani (2008) who found low community invitation by teachers and school management for participation in pre-school activities in Thika district. This suggests that teachers are not prompting parents to be involved in reading related activities with their children at home.

The low level of invitation may be due to teachers' perception that parental involvement does not add any value to children's reading achievement. Additionally, teachers may fail to invite parents to be involved in children's reading because they may not be aware of the importance of parental involvement in children's reading development. Further, teachers may fail to invite parents to be involved in children's reading at home due to lack of knowledge on strategies that they could use to invite them.

4.6 The relationship between parents' role construction and their level of involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement

Three hypotheses were formulated to test these relationships. The results are discussed below:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between the level of parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in the modelling dimension.

To establish the relationship between the level of parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement, cross tabulation was computed. Table 4.8 presents the results of the cross tabulation between parents' level of involvement scores in the modelling dimension and the level of parents' role construction scores.

Table 4.8: Parents' involvement in modelling dimension and Parents' role construction Cross tabulation

| Count | | Parents' level of involvement in modelling | | Total |
|--|------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Low | High | |
| Level of parents' role construction | Low | 103 92.8% | 8 7.2% | 111 100% |
| | High | 4 15.4% | 22 84.6% | 26 100% |
| Total | | 107 78.1% | 30 21.9% | 137 100% |

As shown in table 4.8, majority of the parents (92.8%) with low level of role construction displayed a low level of involvement in the modelling dimension while most (84.6%) of those with high level of role construction were highly involved. These results show that where parents' role construction level is high, their level of involvement is high and where parents' role construction level is low; their level of involvement is low. This suggests that parents who have a high level of role construction are more likely to be involved in the modelling dimension than those with a low level of role construction.

To test the relationship between parents' role construction level and their level of involvement in the modelling dimension, Chi-square test was performed. The null hypothesis was tested at .05 significance level, as presented in table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Chi-Square Tests for Parent role construction and Parent involvement in modelling dimension

| | Value | Df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 73.805 | 1 | .000 |
| Continuity Correction | 69.348 | 1 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 64.202 | 1 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 73.266 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 137 | | |

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table
b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.69.

The relationship between the level of parents’ role construction and parents’ level of involvement in modelling dimension was significant, $\chi^2 (1, N =137) =73.81, p < .05$. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. The level of parental role construction is therefore related to the level of parents’ involvement in the modelling dimension. This means that increase in the level of parents’ role construction leads to increase in parents modelling reading for their children to emulate.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between the level of parents’ role construction and parents’ level of involvement in the cognitive dimension.

The relationship between the level of parents’ role construction and parents’ level of involvement in the cognitive dimension was established through computation of cross tabulation. Table 4.10 presents the results of the cross tabulation between the level of parents’ role construction scores and level of involvement scores in the cognitive dimension.

Table 4.10: Parent involvement in cognitive dimension and Parent role construction

| Count | | Parents' level of involvement in cognitive dimension | | Total |
|-------------------------------------|------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Low | High | |
| Level of parents' role construction | Low | 95 85.6% | 16 14.4% | 111 100% |
| | High | 9 34.6% | 17 65.4% | 26 100% |
| Total | | 104 75.9% | 33 24.1% | 137 100% |

The results show that majority of the parents (85.6%) with a low level of role construction exhibited a low level of involvement in the cognitive dimension while most of the parents (65.4%) with high level of role construction were highly involved. These results indicate that where parents' level of role construction is high their level of involvement is high, and where parents' level of role construction is low; their level of involvement is low. These results suggest that parents with a high level of role construction are more likely to be involved in the cognitive dimension than those with a low level of role construction.

To determine the relationship between parents' role construction level and their level of involvement in the cognitive dimension, Chi-square test was employed on the null hypothesis at .05 significance level, as presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Chi-Square Tests for Parent role construction and Parent involvement in cognitive dimension

| | Value | Df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 29.930 | 1 | .000 |
| Continuity Correction | 27.207 | 1 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 26.174 | 1 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 29.711 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 137 | | |

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table
b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.26.

The relationship between the level of parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in cognitive dimension was significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 137) = 29.93, p < .05$. The null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. It was therefore concluded that the level of parents' role construction is significantly related to the level of parents' involvement in the cognitive dimension. This means that increase in parents' role construction positively influences their engagement in reading related activities with their children at home.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between the level of parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in the behavioural dimension.

To find out the relationship between the level of parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in the behavioural dimension, cross tabulation

was worked out. Chi-square test was then performed to test this hypothesis. The results of the cross tabulation between parents' level of involvement scores in the behavioural dimension and the level of parents' role construction scores is presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 : Parents' involvement in behavioural dimension and Parents' role construction Cross tabulation

| Count | | Parents' level of involvement in behavioural dimension | | Total |
|--|------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Low | High | |
| Level of parents' role construction | Low | 100 90.1% | 11 9.9% | 111 100% |
| | High | 7 26.9% | 19 73.1% | 26 100% |
| Total | | 107 78.1% | 30 21.9% | 137 100% |

Table 4.12 shows that majority of the parents (90.1%) with low level of role construction displayed a low level of involvement in the behavioural dimension while majority (73.1%) of those with high level of role construction were highly involved. These results show that where the level of parents' role construction is high, parents' level of involvement is high and where parents' level of role construction is low; parents' level of involvement is low. These results suggest that parents with high role construction level are more likely to expose their children to literacy rich environments than those with low levels of role construction.

To establish the relationship between parents' role construction levels and their levels of involvement, Chi-square test was employed to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 significance level. The results are as presented in Table 4.13

Table 4.13: Chi-Square Tests for Parent role construction and Parent involvement in behavioural dimension

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 49.146 | 1 | .000 |
| Continuity Correction | 45.522 | 1 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 42.000 | 1 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 48.788 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 137 | | |

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table
b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.69.

The relationship between the level of parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in behavioural dimension was significant, $\chi^2 (1, N = 137) = 49.15, p < .05$. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. These results mean that increase in parents' role construction increases the likelihood for parents' to provide varied reading materials for their children.

According to these findings, there is a significant relationship between the level of parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in children's reading at home in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement. The Chi-test for all the three hypotheses $H_{01} (\chi^2=73.81)$,

Ho₂ ($\chi^2=29.93$) and Ho₃ ($\chi^2=49.15$) were significant at .05. This means that increase in parents' role construction appears to positively influence parental involvement in children's reading at home. These findings suggest that when the level parents' role construction increases, their involvement in children's reading at home also increases and vice versa.

These findings are contrary to those of Koech (2010). In his study conducted in Uasin Gishu district, Koech found that the way parents defined their roles did not influence their involvement in their children's education. This is perhaps because most of the activities he investigated relate to parent involvement at the school including volunteering, collaboration, decision making and communication, while the current study investigated parent involvement in children's reading at home. This suggests that parents' role construction may not influence their involvement in school activities other than children's reading.

The findings of the current study are however in agreement with those of Bandura (1986) who found that parents' role construction regulates their involvement in children's reading. Wambiri (2007) also found that in Thika district, caregivers' involvement in children's emergent reading development increased as their role definition increased. These findings also concur with those of Maina (2010) who found that fathers' role construction influences their involvement in children's early literacy development. This suggests that parents' role construction influences their involvement in their children's

reading development. In addition, if parents believe that their involvement will positively affect their children's reading development, they will be readily involved.

The findings are in harmony with those of Mwoma (2009). In her study in Gucha district, Mwoma established that fathers' beliefs about their role in their pre-school children's education influenced their involvement. Further, the findings concur with those of Ndani (2008) who found that the level of community members' participation in pre-school activities in Thika district increased as their role construction increased. This suggests that the way parents construe their role in their children's education determines the extent to which they are involved.

Parental role construction therefore influences to a large extent, their level of involvement in children's reading development. These findings signify the need to create awareness on the crucial role that parental involvement plays in children's reading development. This may in turn increase levels of parents' involvement in children's reading development and consequently improve children's reading ability.

4.7 The relationship between teachers' invitation and parents' level of involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement

Hypotheses Ho₄, Ho₅ and Ho₆ were formulated to test these relationships. The results are presented below:

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between the level of teacher invitation and parents' level of involvement in the modelling dimension at .05 significance level

To establish the relationship between the level of teacher invitation and the level of parents' involvement in the modelling dimension, cross tabulation was computed and chi-square test was used to test this hypothesis. Table 4.14 presents the results of the cross tabulation between the scores of the level of teacher invitation and parents' level of involvement in the modelling dimension.

Table 4.14: Parent involvement in modelling dimension and Teacher invitation Cross tabulation

| Count | | Parents' level of involvement in modelling | | Total |
|-----------------------------|------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Low | High | |
| Level of teacher invitation | Low | 97 85.8% | 16 14.2% | 113 100% |
| | High | 10 41.7% | 14 58.3% | 24 100% |
| Total | | 107 78.1% | 30 21.9% | 137 100% |

The results in table 4.14 show that majority (85.8%) of parents who were rarely invited were rarely involved in the modelling dimension while most (58.3%) of those who were highly invited were highly involved. These results show that where teachers' level of invitation is high, the level of parents' involvement is high and where teachers' level of invitation is low; the level of parents' involvement is low. These results appear to suggest that there is a relationship between the level of teacher invitation and parents' level of involvement in the modelling dimension.

To check this relationship, Chi-square test was performed to test the null hypothesis at .05 significance level as presented in table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Chi-Square Tests for Teacher invitation and Parent involvement in modelling dimension

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 22.586 | 1 | .000* |
| Continuity Correction | 20.077 | 1 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 19.243 | 1 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 22.421 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 137 | | |

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.26.

The Chi-square test table shows that the relationship between the level of teacher invitation and parents level of involvement in the modelling dimension was significant, $\chi^2 (1, N = 137) = 22.59, p < .05$. The null hypothesis was

rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. It was therefore concluded that the level of parents' involvement in the cognitive dimension is significantly related to the level of teachers' invitation for parental involvement. This means that increase in teacher invitation leads to increase in parents' involvement in the modelling dimension.

H₀₅: There is no significant relationship between the level of teacher invitation and parents' level of involvement in the cognitive dimension

Cross tabulation was computed to establish the relationship between the level of teacher invitation and the level of parents' involvement in the cognitive dimension and chi-square test was used to test this hypothesis. Table 4.16 presents the results of the cross tabulation between the level of teacher invitation scores and parents' level of involvement scores in the cognitive dimension:

Table 4.16: Parent involvement in cognitive dimension and Teacher invitation and Cross tabulation

| Count | | Parents' level of involvement in Cognitive | | Total |
|---------------------------------|------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Low | High | |
| Level teacher invitation | Low | 95 84.1% | 18 15.9% | 113 100% |
| | High | 9 37.5% | 15 62.5% | 24 100% |
| Total | | 104 75.9% | 33 24.1% | 137 100% |

rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. It was therefore concluded that the level of parents' involvement in the cognitive dimension is significantly related to the level of teachers' invitation for parental involvement. This means that increase in teacher invitation raises parental involvement in the cognitive dimension.

Ho₆: There is no significant relationship between the level of teachers' invitation and parents' level of involvement in the behavioural dimension at .05 significance level.

The relationship between the level of teachers' invitation and the level of parents' involvement in the behavioural dimension was established through computation of cross tabulation. Chi-square test was then used to test hypothesis Ho₆. Table 4.18 presents the results of the cross tabulation between the level of teacher invitation scores and parents' level of involvement scores in the behavioural dimension.

Table 4.18: Parent involvement in behavioural dimension and Teacher invitation to involvement Cross tabulation

| Count | | Parents' level of involvement in behavioural | | Total |
|------------------------------------|------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Low | High | |
| Level of teacher invitation | Low | 96 85% | 17 15% | 113 100% |
| | High | 11 45.8% | 13 54.2% | 24 100% |
| Total | | 107 78.1% | 30 21.9% | 137 100% |

As table 4.18 shows, majority (85%) of parents who were rarely invited were rarely involved in the behavioural dimension and most (54.2%) of those who were highly invited were highly involved. These results appear to suggest that where the level of teacher invitation is high, parents' level of involvement is high and where the level of teacher invitation is low; parents' level of involvement is low. These results suggest that raising teacher involvement is likely to raise parental involvement in behavioural dimension.

To check this relationship, Chi-square test was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 significance level. The results are as presented in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Chi-Square Tests for teacher invitation to involvement and Parent involvement in behavioural dimension

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 17.716 | 1 | .000 |
| Continuity Correction | 15.502 | 1 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 15.208 | 1 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 17.586 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 137 | | |

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.26.

As shown in Table 4.19 the relationship was found to be significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 137) = 17.72, p < .05$. The null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative

hypothesis accepted. The findings suggest that there was a significant relationship between the level of teacher invitation and parents' level of involvement in the behavioural dimension. It was therefore concluded that the level of teacher invitation for parental involvement is significantly related to the level of parental involvement in the behavioural dimension. This means that increasing teacher invitation may raise the level of parental involvement in children's reading at home.

From these findings, it is clear that there is a significant relationship between the level of teacher invitation and the level of parental involvement in children's reading at home in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement. The results obtained from testing all the three hypotheses, H_{o4} ($\chi^2=22.59$), H_{o5} ($\chi^2=23.48$) and H_{o6} ($\chi^2=17.72$) were significant at .05. This suggests that increase in teachers' invitation for parents' involvement appears to positively influence parental involvement in children's reading at home.

The findings of this study are in agreement with those of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) who found that invitation by children's teachers through reading assignments and supervision of homework influences parents involvement in children's learning. Bassler and Brissie (1992) also found that invitation and demands for involvement presented by the teachers influence the extent to which parents get involved in their children's reading. Further, studies by Adams and Christenson (2000); Kohl et al., (2002) and Patrikakou and

Weissberg (2000) are in harmony with the findings of the current study. They found that teacher invitation influences parental involvement because parents feel their contribution is valued. The findings are also in agreement with those of Ndani (2008). In a study conducted in Thika district, Ndani found that invitation for participation in pre-school activities by teachers and school management raises community participation. This suggests that raising teachers' invitation for parental involvement increases parents' involvement in children's reading development. The increase in involvement is probably because when teachers invite parents to be involved in children's reading, the parents believe that their contribution is valued and that the school acknowledges their contribution. In addition, the parents feel motivated and encouraged, and they consequently get involved more.

4.8 Hindrances to parents' involvement in children's reading at home

Various hindrances appeared to influence parents' involvement in children's reading at home. Hindrances that were reported in the three dimensions (modelling, cognitive and behavioural) are presented in this section.

4.8.1: Hindrances to parental involvement in the modelling dimension

A summary of various hindrances that influenced parents' involvement in the modelling dimension are presented in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20: Proportion of hindrances to parents' involvement in the modelling dimension

| Hindrance | Frequency | Percent |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Inability to read | 72 | 52.6 |
| Lack of resources to buy reading materials | 71 | 51.8 |
| Lack of awareness that reading in the child's presence helps him/her learn to read | 63 | 46.0 |
| Lack of interest in reading | 59 | 43.1 |
| Lack of time; too busy in other activities | 47 | 34.3 |

From table 4.20, it is evident that various factors hamper parents' involvement in the modelling dimension. The study found that inability to read appeared to affect most (52.6%) of the respondents. These parents reported that they could not read or write; hence were not able to model reading for their children to emulate. Lack of adequate resources also appeared to influence the modelling of reading at home. Slightly over half (51.8%) of the parents reported that they could not afford to purchase reading materials. In addition, lack of awareness on the importance of reading in children's presence appears to hinder a significant number of parents from modelling reading at home. These parents reported they were not aware that if their children saw them reading, they would emulate this behaviour and practice reading on their own. Other factors that were reported to affect modelling reading at home include lack of interest in reading and lack of time due to engagement in businesses and household chores. This means that inability to read and lack of adequate resources were the main hindrances to parents' involvement in the modelling dimension.

4.8.2: Hindrances to parental involvement in the cognitive dimension

Parents in the study gave various hindrances to their involvement in the cognitive dimension of parental involvement. A summary of these hindrances is presented in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21: Proportion of hindrances to parents' involvement in cognitive dimension

| Hindrance | Frequency | Percent |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Lack of time; too busy in other activities | 98 | 71.5 |
| Inability to read | 72 | 52.6 |
| Lack of awareness that reading with children helps them learn to read | 41 | 29.9 |
| Lack of invitation by the child; the child does not ask parents to read for him/her | 22 | 16.1 |
| Perception that it is the duty of teachers' to teach children to read and not the parents' | 16 | 11.7 |

Among the hindrances identified as influencing parental involvement in the cognitive dimension, lack of time was the most prominent. Those who gave this response said they were too busy with businesses and other activities that took most of their time; hence they had no time to engage in reading related activities with their children at home. Inability to read was a major factor that appeared to affect parents' involvement in the cognitive dimension. Parents reported that inability to read hindered them from reading with their children at home. Lack of awareness on the importance of reading with children or even listening to them read aloud seemed to affect parents' involvement in the cognitive dimension.

Another hindrance that affected parents' involvement in the cognitive dimension was lack of invitation for involvement by the children. Some parents reported that their children did not ask them to read for them so they assumed that their children knew how to read on their own. Perception that it was the duty of teachers' to teach children to read and not the parents' appeared to affect parents' involvement in this dimension. Parents who were of this opinion said teachers are paid to teach children to read and that the responsibility of parents was to make sure children completed their homework. Lack of time and inability to read were the major factors that appeared to affect parental involvement in the cognitive dimension. The findings suggest that among the hindrances to parental involvement in the cognitive dimension, lack of time was the most prominent.

4.8.3: Hindrances to parental involvement in the behavioural dimension

Parents in the study gave various hindrances to their involvement in the behavioural dimension. These hindrances are presented in table 4.22.

Table 4.22: Proportion of hindrances to parental involvement in the behavioural dimension

| Hindrance | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Assumption that there are adequate reading materials available at school | 112 | 81.8 |
| Lack of libraries and bookshops in the surrounding environment | 92 | 67.2 |
| Lack of awareness that exposing children to places where they can interact with different reading materials helps them learn to read | 88 | 64.2 |
| Inability to read | 72 | 52.6% |
| Lack of adequate resources | 10 | 7.3 |

Majority (81.8%) of the parents reported that they did not engage in the behavioural dimension because they believed that reading materials provided in school were adequate for their children's reading. These parents argued that with the inception of free primary education in Kenya in 2003, all the reading materials that children needed were provided by the Government. Lack of libraries and bookshops in the surrounding environment also appeared to hinder parental involvement in the behavioural dimension. Another key hindrance to parental involvement was the lack of awareness on the importance of exposing children to places where they could interact with different reading materials. The parents indicated that they were not aware that exposing children to literacy-rich environments promotes reading development. Inability to read appeared to hinder a significant number of parents (52.6%) from being involved in the behavioural dimension. These parents indicated that they were not involved because they could not read or write. Lack of adequate reading materials emerged as the least important of the hindrances.

The findings of this study revealed that inability to read, lack of awareness on the importance of being involved in children's reading, lack of time and perception that it is the duty of the teacher to teach children to read were the main hindrances to parental involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement. Other hindrances included parents' assumption that there were adequate reading materials available at school and lack of adequate materials. These factors compare favourably to those of Wambiri (2007) who found that lack of awareness on the importance

of interacting with print around the child, belief that the teacher should help the child learn to read, lack of time and lack of money were some of the constraints caregivers in Thika district cited as influencing their involvement with children around print materials. The findings are also in line with those of Ndani (2008) who found that lack of awareness, time constraint and poverty were the main hindrances to community members' participation in pre-school activities in Thika district.

The high percentage of parents who reported that they were not involved in children's reading due to inability to read was reflective of the finding that a large number of respondents in this study either dropped out of school before completing primary education or did not attend school at all. These numbers are comparable to findings of other studies that reported very high adult illiteracy (Republic of Kenya, 2007; Kilele, 2007; Kibathi, 2006). Several studies have found that parents with low levels of education are less likely to be involved in children's education. For example, Smith (2005) found that most of the Hispanic parents living in the United States of America were not involved in their children's education due to their limited educational background. Studies by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995); Dauber and Epstein (1993) found that parents who felt they had inadequate education were less likely to become involved in their children's education.

Similarly, Koech (2010) established that parents with less or no education in Uasin Gishu district were less involved in parent-teacher partnerships because

they felt incompetent in their contribution. This suggests that parents of low education levels may fail to be involved in their children's reading because they may feel incompetent to assist their children learn to read. In addition, less educated parents may find children's homework challenging, and as a result avoid being involved at all.

Lack of time was also found to be a hindrance to parent involvement in children's reading at home. This concurred with findings of studies by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995); Lareau, 1989; Russell and Granville (2005). These studies established that lack of time due to work and family involvement affected parents involvement in children's reading. Similarly, Epstein (1995) found that parents who worked full time were less likely to be involved in their children's education regardless of their socio-economic status. Further, Garcia et al., (2002) and Weiss et al., (2003) found that parents whose employment is more demanding and inflexible tend to be less involved in children's education than those whose jobs are more flexible. This suggests that time constraint may be a key hindrance to parental involvement in children's reading. In Igembe South, the reported time constraint could have been due to parents' busy schedule in the "Khat" (Miraa) business. Khat harvesting starts very early in the morning and selling goes on until late in the evening. Involvement in businesses and household chores which takes up much of parents' time may also hinder parents involvement in children's reading.

Lack of awareness on the importance of being involved in children's reading related activities was found to be a significant hindrance to parental involvement in children's reading at home. The finding is similar to that of Salinas (2005) who found that parents who were not involved in their children's reading lacked awareness on how to be involved. This suggests that parents may fail to be involved in children's reading because they may not be aware of the importance of being involved.

The study found that various factors appeared to influence parental involvement in the three dimensions at different extents. For example, the most critical hindrance in the modelling dimension was inability to read. In the cognitive dimension it was lack of time while in the behavioural dimension it was parents' assumption that there were adequate reading materials in school. The study also found that those factors that were reported to hinder parents' involvement in more than one dimension were rated differently in each of the three dimensions. For example, inability to read was rated as the major factor that hindered involvement of most of the parents in the modelling dimension. It was rated as the second hindrance in cognitive dimension and the fourth hindrance in behavioural dimension. Lack of time was rated as the factor that hindered involvement of most parents in the cognitive dimension while it was rated as the least factor hindering the involvement of parents in the modelling dimension.

Some factors were found to hinder parental involvement in one dimension and not the others. For example, lack of interest in reading was reported to affect parental involvement in the modelling dimension but not in cognitive and behavioural dimensions. Lack of invitation for involvement by children and the perception that it was the duty of teachers' to teach children to read and not the parents' were only mentioned in the cognitive dimension. The perception that there were adequate reading materials available at school and lack of reading facilities such as libraries in the surrounding environment were reported to hinder parents' involvement in the behavioural dimension and not in modelling and cognitive dimensions. These findings however, could not be compared with similar studies because parental involvement specifically in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions seem to have attracted minimal interest among researchers. This suggests that parents' involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions is hindered by various factors at different extents.

4.9 Summary

In this chapter the findings of the study have been presented and discussed. The study revealed that the level of parental involvement in children's reading was low in all the three parental involvement dimensions investigated (modelling, cognitive and behavioural). In addition, the levels of parents' role construction and teachers' invitation for parental involvement in children's reading at home were found to be relatively low.

There was a significant relationship between the level of parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement in children's reading at home. Similarly, there was a significant relationship between the level of teacher invitation for parents' involvement and parents' level of involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement in children's reading at home. The major hindrances to parental involvement in children's reading at home were found to include; inability to read, lack of time, perception that it is the duty of the teacher to teach children to read, the assumption that there are adequate reading materials available at school and lack of adequate resources.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, implications of the findings and the conclusion drawn from this study. Recommendations on steps that may be taken by various stakeholders to improve parents' involvement in children's reading at home are also discussed.

5.2 Summary of the Study Findings

This study has provided information on the extent to which parents are involved in their children's reading at home and factors influencing their level of involvement. The study findings are presented as follows:

5.2.1 Level of parental involvement

This section presents the level of parents' involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions, the level of parental role construction and the level of teacher invitation for parents' involvement.

The level of parental involvement was found to be low in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. It was found that parents hardly read in their children's presence even texts that are not related to school including newspapers, the Bible/Koran or story books.

The level of parental role construction was also found to be low. This finding indicates that majority of parents did not perceive themselves as having a role to play in their children's reading development.

The level of teacher invitation for parents' involvement was found to be significantly low. Majority of the parents reported that their children's teachers did not invite them to be involved in their children's reading at home.

5.2.2 Relationship between parents' role construction and parents' involvement in children's reading at home

This study established that there were significant relationships between the level of parents' role construction and parents' level of involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. In other words, parents who believed they had a role to play in their children's reading read more often in their children's presence and exposed their children to literacy-rich environments more often than those who believed they had no role to play in their children's reading development.

5.2.3 Relationship between teachers' invitation and parents' involvement in children's reading at home

The level of teacher invitation was found to significantly influence the level of parents' involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. This means that the level of parent involvement was higher when teachers requested them to read in their children's presence, read with their children, get

involved in their homework and expose children to literacy-rich environments than when they were not requested to do so.

5.2.4 Hindrances to parental involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement

The study found that illiteracy, lack of awareness on the importance of being involved in children's reading, lack of time, poverty and the perception that there are adequate reading materials at school were the main hindrances to parental involvement in all dimensions focused on. The study also found that these hindrances affected different proportions of parents differently in each of the three dimensions. Thus, while inability to read was the major hindrance to parental involvement in the modelling dimension, in the cognitive dimension it was lack of time due to parents' busy schedule and in the behavioural dimension it was due to parents' assumption that there are adequate reading materials in schools since the inception of free primary education in Kenya in 2003.

5.3 Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study as well as the related literature provide very useful information on the need to promote parental involvement in children's reading at home. Some of the important implications are:

1. Low parental role construction and low teacher invitation are likely to lead to low levels of parental involvement in children's reading at home.

Consequently, if parental involvement levels are not raised, children will continue to read below the expected levels. This is likely to lead to underachievement and high semi-illiteracy levels in the population. Ultimately, this will negate the Country's achievement of the Education for All (EFA) goal No.4 (to increase adult literacy).

2. Parents' role construction was identified as a positive contributor to involvement. The significant relationship between parents' role construction and their involvement in children's reading at home implies that parental role construction influences their level of involvement in children's reading.
3. Efforts by teachers to invite parents to be involved in their children's reading at home are likely to raise involvement levels. The significant relationship between teacher invitation and parental involvement in children's reading at home signifies that teacher invitation influences the level of parental involvement.
4. Inability to read, time constraints, perception that there are adequate reading materials at school and lack of awareness on the importance of being involved influenced parental involvement in children's reading to a considerable extent.

5.4 Conclusion

Findings from this study have clearly shown that parental involvement in children's reading at home in Igembe South Constituency was low. Levels of parental role construction and teacher invitation for parental involvement in children's reading at home were found to be relatively low. The study also revealed that the way parents' perceived their role in their children's reading affected their level of involvement. Teacher invitation was found to contribute positively to the level of parental involvement in children's reading. Various factors were found to hinder parental involvement in their children's reading at home. The major factors included inability to read, time constraints, perception that there are adequate reading materials at school, lack of awareness on the importance of being involved and poverty.

The study made the following emergent findings; parents who did not complete primary school reported dropping out of school between standard three and standard six. Interestingly, majority of these parents reported that they could read the Kimeru Bible although they could not read other materials. The study also found that some of the fathers who participated in the study reported that they helped their children with mathematics homework whenever they were at home but not reading related activities. The reason given for not assisting children with reading activities was that these parents could not read.

5.5 Recommendations

Enhancing parents' involvement in children's reading is necessary in order to improve children's reading ability. The following are recommendations for various categories of stakeholders.

5.5.1 Recommendations for policy makers

There is need for the Ministry of Education to provide guidelines and standards on each of the following key areas:

1. **Parental involvement:** To improve the levels of parental involvement in children's reading at home, the Ministry of Education needs to formulate policies on parental involvement. These policies would strengthen sensitization and training of parents in order to enable them to support their children's reading development.
2. **Adult literacy classes:** Since a significant number of parents gave the main reason for not being involved in children's reading as inability to read, establishment of adult literacy classes in the area of study would increase literacy levels among the parents. This would empower parents to be effectively involved in their children's reading related activities at home.
3. **Teacher Invitation:** To improve teacher invitation for parental involvement, in-service programmes for teachers should be established and standards set to ensure teachers understand the role of parents

involvement in children's reading. Teachers in primary teacher training colleges should be trained on the importance of parental involvement and strategies that can be used to invite parents to be involved in their children's reading.

4. Community leaders: Programmes for sensitizing local leaders should be developed. Local leaders such as the chiefs, play a significant role in children's education. For example, they ensure that parents take their children to school. During local meetings they could encourage parents to engage in reading-related activities with their children.
5. Language policy: In view of the fact that many parents reported they could read the Kimeru Bible even though they could not read materials in other languages, the Kenyan Government's policy of using the language of the catchment area for learning at the lower primary school level should be enforced.

5.5.2 Recommendations for Curriculum Developers

The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development needs to develop the following curriculum programmes:

1. Teacher training programmes: A curriculum for training teachers on strategies to invite parents to be involved in children's reading should be developed. This curriculum should be offered to teachers undergoing training and as an in-service course for serving teachers. The curriculum should integrate issues of teachers' perceptions and attitudes

towards parents' ability to help children learn to read. Strategies teachers could use to invite parents to be involved in children's reading and reading-related activities that parents could be effectively involved in should be embedded in the teacher training curriculum.

2. Parent education programmes: Curriculum for educating parents on the importance of being involved and how to be involved in their children's reading is necessary. This curriculum will help parents to understand their role in children's reading and activities that they can be involved in to help their children learn to read. The curriculum should also address teacher-parent collaboration. In addition, a component of parental involvement may be incorporated in the existing Adult Education Curriculum developed by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development to ensure parents are aware of the importance of being involved in their children's reading at home.
3. School administration programmes: Curriculum for school administrators on teacher invitation for parental involvement in children's reading should be developed. This curriculum should incorporate issues such teacher-parent partnership, teacher invitation for parental involvement, strategies for inviting parents to be involved in children's reading and the role of the school administrator in parental involvement.

4. Community leaders' education programmes. Education programmes for sensitizing parents and community members on the importance of being involved in children's reading related activities should be developed. These programmes may be used to sensitize parents and community members during local meetings (Barazas).

5.5.3 Recommendations for County Directors of Education

Since most of the services have been devolved to the County level, County Directors of Education in liaison with relevant offices need to initiate the following:

1. Awareness creation and sensitization. During educational events in the county, the importance of parental involvement in children's reading related activities could be discussed. Parents could also be encouraged to be involved in reading activities with their children. County Directors of Education could also collaborate with county administration personnel such as chiefs to encourage parents to be involved in their children's reading at home.
2. Reading campaigns. County Directors of Education should organize reading campaigns in school; which should culminate into reading competitions. Parents and their children may be involved in these reading campaigns. Reading competitions may be held at designated times.

3. Reading facilities. County Directors of Education should mobilize head teachers, to work with other teachers and community members to establish class, school or community libraries. Former students, parents, companies, well wishers, NGOs, CBOs and private individuals could be requested to donate books or funds for purchasing reading materials to stock these libraries. Children and their parents could borrow and return reading materials from such facilities.

5.5.4 Recommendations for Other Agencies

1. Non-governmental organizations, private individuals and community based organizations play a crucial role in the education sector. These organizations could avail funds for training parents on parental involvement and for purchasing reading materials for children.
2. These agencies could also fund adult education programmes to reduce the numbers of parents who are not able to read in this constituency in order to empower parents to be effectively involved in their children's reading at home.

5.5.5 Recommendations for future research

1. This study concentrated on parental role construction and teacher invitation as factors that influence parental involvement in children's reading in lower primary school. Studies examining other factors that influence parental involvement in children's reading at this level should be conducted.
2. This study focused on reported involvement of parents. Research focusing on the similarities between reported involvement and actual observed levels of involvement should be conducted.
3. This study was conducted in Igembe South Constituency, Meru County in Kenya. There is need for similar studies among other communities in order to establish the status of parental involvement in children's reading.

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APPENDIX I: PARENTS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

ENGLISH VERSION

Dear parent,

I am conducting a study on parents' involvement in standard three pupils' reading at home. To do this, I require information from parents. You have been identified to participate in this research because you have a child in standard three. Your participation will enhance the quality of this study and the results obtained.

I request your cooperation in providing the information required to complete this study. I will ask you some questions regarding your involvement in your child's reading at home. Kindly answer the following questions truthfully and if you need any clarification during the interview, feel free to ask me. Your name is not required and your responses will be kept strictly confidential and will be used only for the purpose of this study.

Would you prefer to use: Kimeru, English or Kiswahili during this interview?

Section A: Background information

Name of the school -----

Type of school (public/private) -----

1. Parent/Guardian's Gender

i. Male

ii. Female

2. Parents' highest level of education:

i. Never been to school

ii. Did not complete primary school

iii. Primary school

iv. Did not complete secondary school

v. Secondary school

vi. College

vii. University

Section B: Level of parent involvement in modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parent involvement in children’s reading at home

1. Modelling Dimension

How often do you read or ask someone to read each of the following materials in your child’s presence at home; within one week?

| Reading material | Never (0 days) | Rarely (1 day) | Some- times (2 days) | Often (3-4 days) | Very Often (More than 5 days) |
|---|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Bible or Koran | | | | | |
| Booklets such as; church newsletters brochures, pamphlets, | | | | | |
| Newspapers | | | | | |
| Magazines | | | | | |
| Story books | | | | | |
| What hinders you from reading the materials indicated above in your child’s presence at home (Probe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- | | | | |

2. Cognitive Dimension

How often do you engage in the following reading activities within one week?

| Activity | Never (0 days) | Rarely (1 day) | Sometimes (2 days) | Often (3-4 days) | Very Often (More than 5 days) |
|--|--|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Read to your child | | | | | |
| Ask your child to read while you listen | | | | | |
| Ask questions from a passage to check your child's understanding of words and phrases read | | | | | |
| Explain the meaning of difficult words to your child | | | | | |
| Check your child's homework to ensure that he/she completes it correctly | | | | | |
| What hinders you from undertaking the activities indicated above (Probe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ----- ----- • ----- ----- • ----- ----- • ----- ----- | | | | |

3. Behavioural Dimension

How often have you undertaken the following activities since the beginning of this term?

| Activities | Never (0 days) | Rarely (1 day) | Sometimes (2 days) | Often (3days) | Very Often (More than 3 days) |
|---|---|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Reminded your child to read or complete homework at the designated reading place | | | | | |
| Accompanied your child to the book store to choose reading materials | | | | | |
| Requested your child's teacher to recommend suitable reading books that you can borrow for your child from the library | | | | | |
| Reinforced your child's effort to read (e.g. by praising, hugging or giving gifts to the child) | | | | | |
| Acquired reading materials for your child apart from those required by the school (by buying or borrowing from other parents) | | | | | |
| What hinders you from undertaking the activities indicated above (Probe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- | | | | |

Section C: Level of Parents' role construction on involvement in children's reading at home.

Do you, strongly agree, agree, are not sure, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements.

| It is my responsibility to undertake the following activities to help my child learn to read: | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Read the Bible or Koran in my child's presence | | | | | |
| Read booklets such as; church newsletters, brochures or pamphlets in my child's presence | | | | | |
| Read Newspapers in my child's presence | | | | | |
| Read magazines in my child's presence | | | | | |
| Read story books in my child's presence | | | | | |
| Read to my child | | | | | |
| Ask my child to read while I listen | | | | | |
| Ask questions from a passage to check my child's understanding of words and phrases read | | | | | |
| Explain the meaning of difficult words to my child | | | | | |
| Check my child's homework to ensure it is completed correctly | | | | | |
| Remind my child to read or complete homework at the designated reading place at home | | | | | |
| Accompany my child to the book store to choose reading materials | | | | | |
| Request my child's teacher to recommend suitable reading books that I can borrow for my child from the library | | | | | |
| Reinforce my child's effort to read (e.g. by praising, hugging or giving gifts to the child) | | | | | |
| Acquired reading materials for my child apart from those required by the school (by buying or borrowing from other parents) | | | | | |

Section D: Level of teacher invitation for parents to be involved in children's reading at home.

How often has your child's teacher requested you to undertake the following reading related activities since the beginning of this term?

| Activities | Never (0days) | Rarely (1 day) | Sometimes (2 days) | Often (3-4 days) | Very Often (More than 5 days) |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Read the Bible or Koran in your child's presence at home | | | | | |
| Read booklets such as church newsletters, brochures or pamphlets in your child's presence at home | | | | | |
| Read newspapers in your child's presence at home | | | | | |
| Read magazines in your child's presence at home | | | | | |
| Read story books in your child's presence at home | | | | | |
| Read to your child | | | | | |
| Ask your child to read while you listen | | | | | |
| Ask questions from a passage to check your child's understanding of words and phrases read | | | | | |
| Explain the meaning of difficult words to your child | | | | | |
| Check your child's homework to ensure that it is completed correctly | | | | | |
| Remind your child to read or complete homework at the designated reading place at home | | | | | |
| Accompany your child to the book store to choose reading materials | | | | | |
| Recommend suitable reading books that you can borrow for your child from the library | | | | | |
| Reinforce your child's effort to read (e.g. by praising, hugging or giving gifts to the child) | | | | | |
| Acquire reading materials for your child apart from those required by the school (by buying or borrowing from other parents) | | | | | |

APPENDIX II: PARENTS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

KISWAHILI VERSION

Mzazi mpendwa,

Ninafanya uchunguzi kuhusu kuhusika kwa wazazi katika usomaji wa watoto wa dalasa la tatu wanapokuwa nyumbani. Kufanya hivi, ninaitaji maelezo kutoka kwa wazazi. Umechaguliwa kuhusika kwa utafiti huu kwa sababu una mtoto katika dalasa la tatu.

Ninasihi ushirikiano wako kuendeleza utafiti huu. Ninakuomba uyajibu maswali nitayokuuliza kwa uhakika na endapo unaitaji ufafanuzi uliza ili uweze kufahamikiwa vyema hoja zilizomo. Si muhimu kutaja jina lako, ila hoja zako zitachukuliwa kisiri na pia kutumiwa kwa sababu kuu zilizonuiwa kwa mujibu wa uchunguzi huu.

Ningependa upendekeze lugha unayopendelea kutumie kwa uhojaji uu: Kimeru, Kiingereza au Kiswahili.

Sehemu A: Ujumbe Muhimu

Jina la Shule-----

Aina ya Shule (Umma/Kibinafsi) -----

1. Jinsia ya Mzazi/Mlezi

i. Mume

ii. Mke

2. Kiwango cha juu cha elimu ya mzazi

i. Asiyesoma kamwe

ii. Asiyehitimu elimu ya msingi

iii. Kiwango cha elimu ya msingi

iv. Asiyehitimu elimu ya sekondari

v. Kiwango cha sekondari

vi. Chuo anuai

vii. Chuo kikuu

Sehemu B: Namna mzazi anavyojishughulisha katika kusaidia mtoto kukua kiakili na mwenendo kupitia usomaji, makala na vitabu akiwa nyumbani.

1. Kiwango cha maandalizi

Je, ni mara ngapi kwa wiki wewe kama mzazi unavyojipatia fursa ya kusoma au pengine kumwomba mtu mwingine akusomee makala yafuatayo mbele ya mtoto wako mkiwa nyumbani?

| Usomaji makala na vitabu kama | Sijishughuli shi kamwe | Mara chache (Siku moja) | Wakati Mwingine (Siku mbili) | Mara kwa mara (Siku tatu hadi nne) | Mara nyingi (Zaidi ya siku tano) |
|--|--|------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Biblia/Koran | | | | | |
| Vijitabu kama vile vya kidini, brosha na vinginevyo | | | | | |
| Magazeti | | | | | |
| Majarida | | | | | |
| Vitabu vya hadithi | | | | | |
| Ziorodheshe changamoto zinazokukabili katika kumsomea mtoto wako vitabu na makala mkiwa nyumbani (Chunguza zaidi) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- | | | | |

2. Kiwango cha Kiakili

Je, wewe hujihusiaje katika shughuli za usomaji na mtoto wako kwa wiki?

| Usomaji na motto | Sijishughulishi kamwe | Mara chache (Siku moja) | Wakati Mwingine (Siku mbili) | Mara kwa mara (Siku tatu hadi nne) | Mara nyingi (Zaidi ya siku tano) |
|--|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Kumsomea mtoto wako | | | | | |
| Kumwuliza mtoto na kumsikiliza anavyosoma | | | | | |
| Kumwuliza mtoto wako maswali kupima ufahamu wake wa msamiati na vifungu vya maneno kutokana na alichosoma | | | | | |
| Kumfafanulia maana ya maneno mapya | | | | | |
| Kukagua kazi alizopewa na mwalimu kuzifanya akiwa nyumbani ili kuhakikisha anazifanya ipasavyo | | | | | |
| Ni shida zipi unazokumbana nazo katika kutekeleza majukumu yako katika kumsaidia mtoto kusoma akiwa nyumbani (Chunguza zaidi) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- | | | | |

3. Kiwango cha Mwenendo/Tabia ya Kusoma

Je, ni mara ngapi umewahi kujihusisha na shughuli za usomaji zifuatazo tangu muhula huu uanze?

| Shughuli | Sijishughulishi kamwe | Mara chache (Siku Moja) | Wakati Mwingine (Siku mbili) | Mara kwa mara (Siku tatu hadi nne) | Mara nyingi (Zaidi ya siku tano) |
|---|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Kumkumbusha mtoto kusoma au kufanya kazi za kusoma akiwa nyumbani | | | | | |
| Kuandamana na mtoto hadi kwa maktaba kuchagua vitabu vya kusoma akiwa nyumbani | | | | | |
| Kumwomba mwalimu kupendekeza vitabu vya mtoto kusoma kutoka kwa maktaba | | | | | |
| Kuimarisha juhudi za mtoto kutaka kusoma. Kwa mfano, kumsifu, kumpa zawadi na hata kumkumbatia anapofanya hivyo | | | | | |
| Kumnunulia na pia kumwomba mtoto vitabu vya kusoma | | | | | |
| Je, ni shida gani zinazokukabili katika juhudi zako za kumsaidia mtoto wako kusoma ipasavyo (Chunguza zaidi) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- | | | | |

Sehemu C: Kiwango cha mzazi kukubali ni njukumu lake kumsaidia mtoto ajifunze kusoma akiwa nyumbani.

Bainisha ni kwa kiasi gani unavyokubaliana au kutokubaliana na vifungu vifuatavyo kwa majibu; Ninakubali sana, Ninakubali, Sina uhakika, Sikubali, Sikubali kabisa. Je, kiasi gani unakubali au kukana?

| Shughuli | Sikubali kabisha | Sikubali | Sina ukakika | Nakubali | Na kubali sana |
|---|------------------|----------|--------------|----------|----------------|
| Kusoma Biblia/Koran | | | | | |
| Kusoma vijitabu kama vile vya kidini, brosha na vinginevyo | | | | | |
| Kusoma magazeti | | | | | |
| Kusoma majarida | | | | | |
| Kusoma vitabu vya hadithi | | | | | |
| Kumsomea mtoto wako vitabu na makala | | | | | |
| Kumwuliza mtoto kusoma na kumsikiliza anavyosoma | | | | | |
| Kumwuliza mtoto wako maswali kupima ufahamu wake wa msamiati na vifungu vya maneno kutokana na alichosoma | | | | | |
| Kumfafanulia maana ya maneno mapya | | | | | |
| Kukagua kazi alizopewa na mwalimu kuhakikisha anazifanya ipasavyo | | | | | |
| Kumkumbusha mtoto kusoma au kukamilisha kazi za kusoma akiwa nyumbani | | | | | |
| Kuandamana na mtoto hadi kwa maktaba kuchagua vitabu vya kusoma nyumbani | | | | | |
| Kumwomba mwalimu kupendekeza vitabu vya kusoma kutoka kwa maktaba | | | | | |
| Kuimarisha juhudi za mtoto kupenda kusoma. Kwa mfano, kumsifu, kumpa zawadi anapofanya hivyo | | | | | |
| Kumnunulia na kumwombea mtoto vitabu vya kusoma akiwa nyumbani | | | | | |

Sehemu D: Kiwango cha jinsi mwalimu anavyomwalika na kumhusisha mzazi katika usomaji anapokuwa na mtoto wake nyumbani.

Je, ni mara ngapi mwalimu wa mtoto wako amekuuliza ufanye mambo yafuatayo tangu mwanzo wa muhula huu?

| Shughuli | Hanihushishi kamwe | Mara chache (Siku moja) | Wakati mwingine (Siku mbili) | Mara kwa mara (Siku tatu hadi nne) | Mara nyingi (Zaidi ya siku tano) |
|---|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Kusoma Biblia/Korani | | | | | |
| Kusoma vijitabu kama vile vya kidini, brosha na vinginevyo | | | | | |
| Kusoma magazeti | | | | | |
| Kusoma majarida | | | | | |
| Kusoma vitabu vya hadithi | | | | | |
| Kumsomea mtoto wako vitabu na makala | | | | | |
| Kumwuliza mtoto na kumsikiliza anavyosoma | | | | | |
| Kumwuliza mtoto wako maswali kupima ufahamu wake wa msamiati na vifungu vya maneno kutokana na alichosoma | | | | | |
| Kumfafanulia maana ya maneno mapya | | | | | |
| Kukagua kazi alizopewa na mwalimu kuzifanya akiwa nyumbani ili kuhakikisha anazifanya ipasavyo | | | | | |
| Kumkumbusha mtoto kusoma au kukamilisha kazi za kusoma akiwa nyumbani | | | | | |
| Kuandamana na mtoto hadi kwa maktaba kuchagua vitabu vya kusoma akiwa nyumbani | | | | | |
| Kumwomba mwalimu kupendekeza vitabu vya kusoma kutoka kwa maktaba | | | | | |
| Kuimarisha juhudi za mtoto kupenda kusoma kwa mfano, kumsifu au kumpa zawadi anapofanya hivyo | | | | | |
| Kumnunulia na kumwombea mtoto vitabu vya kusoma akiwa nyumbani | | | | | |

APPENDIX III: PARENTS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

KIMERU VERSION

Muga muciar,

Ninkuthithia uncukuni bwa kwonania uria aciari batethagiria ana bao ba kiraci kia bithatu bamenya kuthoma riria bari nja ciao. Kujuria bu, ninkuenda macokio ja biuria bibi ndinabio kuma kiri aciari. Niuthuri uri umwe wa gucokia biuria ucunkunine bubu niuntu uri na mwana kiraci kia bithatu. Machokio jaku jagatethia kwagirithia ucunkuni bubu.

Ngwataniro yaku igatetheria kuriikia ucunkuni bubu. Ukethirwa utiraciukirwa ni untu kinya buriku no umburie nguciurire. Riitwa riaku ritikwendekana na macokio jaku jagatumirwa ucunkunine bubu akii, kwau ningukuria ucokie biuria bibi na uuma buru.

Urienda gucokia biuria bibi na ruthiomi rwa Kimeru, Giswaili kana Gicunku?

Gacuncii ka A: Mantu ja kwambiria

1. Riitwa ria cukuru -----

2. Muthemba jwa cukuru (cukuru ya thirikari kana ya muntu kiumbe)

3. Muthemba jwa muciar

i. Ntumurume

ii. Mwekuru

4. Kithomo kiria muciar akinyitie

i. Ateeta cukuru

ii. Atathiria primari cukuru

iii. Nathiriitie primari cukuru

iv. Atathiria cekondari

v. Nathiriitie cekondari

vi. Kolenji

vii. Digiiri (Univaciti)

Gacuncii ka B: Kithimi gia kwonania uria; muciaru athomaga mbere ya mwana wawe, athomaga na mwana wawe na acuagira mwana wawe mauku na into bingi bia kuthoma.

1. Kuthoma mbere ya mwana

Ni magita jang'ana ndene ya kiumia kimwe, uthomaga mauku na into biu biejani mbere ya mwana waku nja yenu

| Mauku ana into bingi bia kuthoma | Gutirio | Magita jamakai (Ntuku imwe) | Rimwe na rimwe (Ntuku ijiri) | Magita jamaingi (Ntuku ithatu kana inya) | Magita jamaingi mono (Ntuku ithano na nkuruki) |
|--|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Iuku ria Murungu/Korani | | | | | |
| Turataci kana tubaruga twa kanica, cukuru kana twa ntumiiri | | | | | |
| Ngatheti | | | | | |
| Magaceti | | | | | |
| Mauku ja ngono | | | | | |
| Nimbi irigagiria uthoma mauku na into biu bingi biejani mbere ya mwana waku nja yenu? (cunkuna itumi) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- | | | | |

2. Kuthoma na mwana

Ni magita jang'ana ndene ya kiumia kimwe, utethagia mwana waku

kuthoma na kugita mathithio jaja jaejani

| Mathithio jagutethia mwana waku amenya kuthoma | Gutirio | Magita jamakai (Ntuku imwe) | Rimwe na rimwe (Ntuku ijiri) | Magita jamaingi (Ntuku ithatu kana inya) | Magita jamaingi mono (Ntuku ithano na nkuruki) |
|---|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Kuthoma na mwana waku | | | | | |
| Kwira mwana waku akuthomere uthikiiritie | | | | | |
| Kuria mwana waku biuria bwathiria kuthoma nawe | | | | | |
| Gutaurira mwana mariitwa jaria atikumanya | | | | | |
| Kuraitha kethira mwana waku nathititie ngugi ya cukuru | | | | | |
| Nimbi irigagiria ugiita mantu jau jaejani jagutethia mwana waku amenya kuthoma? (cunkuuna itumi) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- | | | | |

3. Matagaria ja gutethia mwana amenya kuthoma

Ni magita jang'ana ndene ya kiumia kimwe ujukagia matagario jaja jaeni
nikenda utetheria mwana waku amenya kuthoma

| Matagaria ja gutetheria mwana waku amenya kuthoma | Gutirio | Magita jamakai (Ntuku imwe) | Rimwe na rimwe (Ntuku ijiri) | Magita jamaingi (Ntuku ithatu kana inya) | Magita jamaingi mono (Ntuku ithano na nkuruki) |
|--|----------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Kurikania mwana athome na athirie ngugi ya cukuru | | | | | |
| Gwikia mwana ndukene kenda ataara mauku na into bingi bia kuthoma | | | | | |
| Kuuria mwarimu wa mwana waku akwire mauku jaria umba gucuira mwana waku | | | | | |
| Gukaatha mwana waku kana kumuua biewa riria ageria kuthoma | | | | | |
| Kugurira kana kurombera mwana waku mauku ja kuthoma riria ari nja | | | | | |
| Nimbi irigagiria ujukia matagaria jau jaejani jagutethia mwana amenya kuthoma? (cunkuuna itumi) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- • ----- | | | |

Gacuncii ka C: Kithimi kia witikio bwa muciaru ati ni ngugi yawe gutetheria mwana wawe amenya kuthoma

Onania kithimi kia witikio bwaku ati gutethieria mwana waku amenya kuthoma ni ngugi yaku. Taara bumwe bwa jaja jaejani



| Nimbitikitie ni ngugi yakwa kujukia matagaria jaja guteria mwana amenya kuthoma | Ningwitikiria mono | Ningwitikiria | Ndina nkanja | Ntigwitikiria | Ntigwitikiria Buru |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Kuthoma Iuku ria Murungu/Korani mbere ya mwana wakwa | | | | | |
| Kuthoma turataci kana tubaruga twa kanica, cukuru kana twa ntumiiri mbere ya mwana wakwa | | | | | |
| Kuthoma ngatheti mbere ya mwana wakwa | | | | | |
| Kuthoma magaceti mbere ya mwana wakwa | | | | | |
| Kuthoma mauku ja ngono mbere ya mwana wakwa | | | | | |
| Kuthomera mwana wakwa | | | | | |
| Kwira mwana wakwa anthomere nthikiritie | | | | | |
| Kuria mwana wakwa biuria twathiria kuthoma | | | | | |
| Gutaurira mwana waka mariitwa jaria atikumanya | | | | | |
| Kuraitha kethira mwana wakwa akuthiria ngugi ya cukuru | | | | | |
| Kurikania mwana waka athome kana athirie ngugi ya cukuru | | | | | |
| Gwikia mwana wakwa ndukene kenda ataara mauku na into bingi bia kuthoma | | | | | |
| Kuuria mwarimu wa mwana wakwa ambire mauku jaria mpumba gucuira mwana wakwa | | | | | |
| Gukaatha mwana wakwa kana kuumua biewa riria ageria kuthoma | | | | | |
| Kugurira kana kuombera mwana wakwa mauku ja kuthomera riria airi nja | | | | | |

**Gacuncii ka D: Kithimi kia kwonania magita jaria mwarimu oragia
muciari atethie mwana wawe kuthoma**

Ni magita jang'ana kuma kiambiriria kia tamu iji, mwarimu wa mwana waku akuragia ujukie matagaria jaja jaejani gutetheria mwana waku amenya kuthoma


| Matagaria | Gutirio | Magita jamakai (Ntuku imwe) | Rimwe na rimwe (Ntuku ijiri) | Magita jamaingi (Ntuku ithatu kana inya) | Magita jamaingi mono (Ntuku ithano na nkuruki) |
|---|----------------|--|---|---|---|
| Uthome Iuku ria Murungu/Korani mbere ya mwana waku | | | | | |
| Uthome turataci kana tubaruga twa kanica, cukuru kana twa ntumiiri mbere ya mwana waku | | | | | |
| Uthome ngatheti mbere ya mwana wakwa | | | | | |
| Uthome magaceti mbere ya mwana waku | | | | | |
| Uthome mauku ja ngono mbere ya mwana waku | | | | | |
| Uthome na mwana waku | | | | | |
| Urie mwana waku akuthomere uthikiritie | | | | | |
| Urie mwana waku biuria bwathiria kuthoma | | | | | |
| Utaurire mwana waku mariitwa jaria atikumenya | | | | | |
| Uraithe kethira mwana waku akuthiria ngugi ya cukuru | | | | | |
| Urikanie mwana waku athome kana athirie ngugi ya cukuru | | | | | |
| Wikie mwana waku ndukene kenda ataara mauku na into bingi bia kuthoma | | | | | |
| Mauku jaria umbu gucwira mwana waku | | | | | |
| Ukaathe kana ue mwana waku biewa riria ageria kuthoma | | | | | |
| Ugurire kana urombere mwana waku mauku ja kuthoma riria ari nja | | | | | |

APPENDIX IV
RESEARCH PERMIT

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|--|---|
| <p align="center">PAGE 2</p> <p>THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT: Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution Heleen Kathure Kimathi of (Address) Kenyatta University P.O Box 43844-00100, Nairobi has been permitted to conduct research in Location District Meru County on the topic: Parental involvement in primary standard three pupils' reading at home in Igembu South Constituency, Meru County, Kenya for a period ending: 31st March, 2013</p> | <p align="center">PAGE 3</p> <p>Research Permit No: NCST/RCD/14/012/163! Date of issue 20th December, 2012 Fee received KSH. 2,000</p>  <p align="right">  Applicant's Signature Secretary National Council for Science & Technology </p> |
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CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit.
2. Government Officers will not be interviewed with-out prior appointment.
3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.
5. You are required to submit at least two(2)/ four(4) bound copies of your final report for Kenyans and non-Kenyans respectively.
6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.


REPUBLIC OF KENYA
RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT
GPK605513mt10/2011 (CONDITIONS-see back page)