

**CHALLENGES IN USE OF MOTHER TONGUE AS A MEDIUM OF
INSTRUCTION IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN TAITA TAVETA
COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This project is my work, and it has not been submitted before for any certification in other university or institution. Referenced sources have been used to supplement this study proposal, and they have all been properly acknowledged. Where text, data (including spoken words), graphics, photos, or tables are taken from other sources, such as the internet, they are properly acknowledged and references mentioned using the current APA system and anti-plagiarism standards.

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ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

ECD	Early Childhood Education
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
GoK	Government of Kenya
KICD	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
LOI	Language of Instruction
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MT	Mother Tongue
MTL	Mother Tongue Language
SGDs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

ABSTRACT

Mother tongue use as a medium of instruction promotes learners' self-esteem together with academic achievement. Despite the advantages gained by using mother tongue in early year's education, studies have revealed that mother tongue is the least chosen medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County. Therefore, this study purposed to establish school and teacher related challenges that hinder use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in the County. The study was guided by the following objectives: to determine the extent to which teachers in pre-primary schools use mother tongue as a medium of instruction, to identify teacher related challenges in the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, to establish school related challenges in the use of mother tongue language as a medium of instruction and to determine strategies that can be used to enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County. The study was anchored on the Social Constructivist theory of language development by Lev Vygotsky. A descriptive research design was employed. The target population for this study was 384 people encompassing of 120 head teachers and 264 pre-primary school teachers in Voi sub-county. To sample the respondents, stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used. The sample size was 38 respondent, these included 12 head teachers and 26 pre-primary schoolteachers. Data was collected using a questionnaire for teachers and interview schedule for the head teachers. A Pilot study was done in 2 pre-primary schools in Voi Sub-County. Content validity of the questionnaires and interview schedule was ascertained through expert judgment. The questionnaire's reliability was determined through test-retest method using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient algorithm. For qualitative data, thematic analysis was done, while analysis of quantitative data was done using descriptive statistics that is percentages and frequencies. The study established that majority of teachers rarely used mother tongue in instruction, they preferred using English and Kiswahili. In addition, the study found that use of mother tongue in instruction was hindered by teacher related factors. Further the study established that use of mother tongue in the schools was influenced by school related factors. Finally, the study established a number of strategies that can enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools which include; encouraging parents to use mother tongue when speaking to their children, training teachers on how to use mother tongue in instruction, mobilizing funds for acquiring or developing materials for teaching using mother tongue and sensitization of parents on importance of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The study concluded that majority of the pre-primary schools did not embrace use of mother tongue in instruction. The study recommended that the government, the Ministry of Education and its sub sectors like the Teachers' service commission and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should come together to address the challenges identified to be in the path of implementing the language policy.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the study background, problem statement, objectives and research questions. In addition, the chapter presents the study significance, limitations delimitations and study assumptions. Finally, it discusses the theoretical and conceptual frameworks and gives the operational definition of key terms.

1.2 Background of the Study

Globally, researchers have emphasized the importance that is brought about by use of mother tongue as a communication mode in learning in early year's education. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) indicated that language teaching must begin with using one's mother tongue at such a key time in one's education (UNESCO, 2015). In addition, the report by UNESCO highlights that children's confidence, comprehension and academic performance is enhanced when instructed by mother tongue.

In similar vein, Benson (2017) argues that the mother language of a child is a predictor of their learning outcomes, the linguistic and cognitive foundations for learning second or additional languages is laid by mother tongue. Correspondingly, Cummins (2017) posted that mother tongue makes students feel that they belong and become individually confident. In addition, Cummins (2017) highlighted that use of mother tongue in instruction encourages learners to take part in the activities of the school, resulting in an effective home to school transition. It can be argued, therefore, that when learners get official first-language instruction before progressing to second-language

instruction, they rapidly learn the second language, while children who are denied a chance to learn in their mother tongue language face difficulties to understand and grasp concepts taught in school using the second language.

There is lack of homogeneity as to the definition of mother tongue among scholars, however, it has been operationalized to incorporate elements comprising origin; identification; competence; and function. In consonance with these elements, Desai (2012) elucidated mother tongue as one's first language with which he or she identifies as a speaker or by others. It also refers to the language provided by a child's direct caregivers in the home, without the involvement of educational institutions, because it is the child's entire home environment (Desai, 2012). Similarly, Mohanty (2016) defines mother tongue as the language in which children convey their ideas and relate to social setting. Therefore, in this study mother tongue is defined as the local language used in teaching and learning in pre-primary grades.

In London, parents and teachers view mother tongue language training as excellent in terms of enhanced learners' results, enhanced parent involvement in homework operation, cultural and heritage preservation and enhanced learning methods (Sakati, 2016). However, Sakati remarked that the absence of funds to purchase adequate learning materials and dedicated teacher education as major hurdles when teaching using mother tongue. According to Villalba (2013) majority of parents in Philippines have positive perceptions on use of mother tongue in instruction, they express pride in their own language heritage, and most of them think that using mother tongue as first language in classrooms have beneficial outcomes for the growth of their child's literacy. In addition, Villalba (2013) reported that teachers in the Philippines had noted favorable outcomes in the grades and growth of their students' literacy, but they encountered

problems in the shift from primarily English LOI to mother tongue. This is evident that use of mother tongue in instruction can enhance learners' academic performance.

In Turkey, education is offered using other languages such as German, French, and English in state schools; mother tongue education is considered one of the Country's core human rights (Sahin, 2018). However, some Turkish schools are opposed to providing education in the mother tongue because they believe it will bring split within the country (Sahin, 2018). In a similar vein, the Nigerian National Education Policy (FRN, 2004) prescribes mother tongue use as a teaching medium in grades 1-3, however, as posited by Iyamu and Ogiebhaen (2016), the use of foreign language (L2) in developing curriculum, syllabus, and lesson materials could generate teaching issues that will culminate to poor academic results. So far, the Nigerian government has made no concrete attempt to address the difficulties of enforcing the Mother Language Medium Policy.

In Kenya, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), (2014) encourages mother tongue use in rural elementary schools. Language policy in Kenya recommends using mother tongue as the language of instruction in early school years to preserve Kenyan culture and facilitate a smooth transition from home to school. However, despite domestic policy, many preschools in Kenya's rural regions do not utilize mother tongue as a teaching tool (Nyarigoti, 2014). National Policy Framework for Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE), (2006) stated that pre-primary education should be based on the child's culture to guarantee that the community culture is transferred to children (Republic of Kenya, 2006). According to Ogott, Indoshi and Okwara (2010), English is the main medium of instruction in many pre-primary schools in rural Kenya. Similarly, Oluoch (2017) observed that, despite the

advantages of using mother tongue as a teaching language in schools situated in remote locations, it is rarely utilized in Kenyan pre-primary schools. Therefore, it was important to establish challenges hindering use of mother tongue in pre-primary schools in Kenya.

In addition, a research by Khejeri (2017) reported that most teachers in preschools in Kenya use English and Kiswahili in instruction and mother tongue is Kenya's least popular language of instruction. This is an indication that the language policy, which suggests that children in their early years of education should be taught using a local language that is familiar as they join school, is not implemented in majority of the pre-primary schools in Kenya. This implies that children's confidence, comprehension and academic performance may be affected, as they are likely to lack linguistic and cognitive foundations for additional languages (Benson, 2017). Similarly, Wuganga (2017) revealed that pre-primary school teachers in Taita Taveta County usually teach their lessons using English language. Given the documented significance of using mother tongue as a teaching tool, there was a need to establish challenges hindering pre-primary school teachers in Taita Taveta County from embracing use of mother tongue in instruction.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The benefits of using mother tongue within pre-primary cannot be over-emphasized both in the developed and developing countries. To this end, empirical studies have documented evidence that children's confidence, understanding ability, and academic achievement improve when their mother tongue is employed as a teaching medium. According to research, students who started their schooling in their local language had

a better beginning and were more likely to perform better compared to those who used foreign language in their beginning.

In Kenya's context, despite the recommendation of the National Policy on Education that in pre-primary schools, mother tongue be used when teaching children, discrepancy exists between language policies and practice in classrooms. Studies have reported that in many schools, the usage of the mother tongue has been deemed the least favored instructional language in schools, particularly in Taita Taveta County. Non-usage of mother language in pre-primary grades may have an impact on learners' confidence, comprehension, and academic performance. While many studies have empirically registered the benefits of using both mother tongue as language of instruction across contexts, the evidence of studies investigating challenges inhibiting use of mother tongue as a medium of teaching in Kenya has remained limited. As a result, there is a dearth of knowledge on the factors that prevent the use of mother tongue in instruction, as required by the language policy. The lack of such information will impede the policy's effective implementation because action can only be done based on research findings. As a result, there was a need to fill this gap in order to inform policies and actions. In this regard, the study was designed to establish the challenges hindering use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County, Kenya.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers use mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. The study also examined teacher related and school related challenges that hinder use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction with an intention of suggesting strategies, which can be used to enhance use

of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County.

1.5 Study Objectives

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To determine the extent to which teachers in pre-primary schools use mother tongue as a medium of instruction in Taita Taveta County.
- ii. To identify teacher related challenges in the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County.
- iii. To establish school related challenges in the use of mother tongue language as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County
- iv. To determine strategies that can be used to enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County.

1.6 Research Questions

The study delved to answer the following questions:

- i. What is the extent to which teachers use mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County?
- ii. What are the teacher-related challenges in using mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County?
- iii. What are the schools related challenges in using mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County?
- iv. What strategies can be used by the schools in enhancing the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The government of Kenya in collaboration with international organizations and nongovernmental organizations, may use the recommendations to fund the development and production of culturally relevant instructional resources, as well as pre-primary school teachers' in-service training on the use of mother tongue as a language of instruction. This may improve the implementation of Kenya's language policy in pre-primary schools.

The findings of the study may be valuable to the Ministry of Education, which will be informed of the obstacles to the use of mother tongue in early childhood education. Furthermore, it may incorporate the study's recommendations to improve the effectiveness of language policy implementation in Kenya's pre-primary grades.

The study findings could be useful to the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Education (KICED), which could use them to develop mother language textbooks and guides for teachers. KICED may also embrace recommendations from this study and device in-service teacher training in equipping them with pertinent and suitable knowledge required to use mother tongue as a teaching tool.

Head teachers may also embrace findings and recommendations from this study, which may inform them to hold seminars to educate teachers regarding the benefits of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Such seminars may also equip teachers with skills on how they can improvise instructional materials with local resources.

In addition, the study's findings may provide vital information to teachers, as they may understand the need to simplify abstract and conceptual meaning of terms to the understanding of students through using mother tongue as a medium in teaching.

Finally, the findings of this research may provide a platform for researchers to carry out future empirical inquiry on issues relating to utilization of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools.

1.8 Limitations and Delimitations of the study

The study limitations and de-limitations are discussed below;

1.8.1 Limitations of the Study

Some respondents were not willing to provide honest information because of fear of being victimized by the school management. This was solved through convincing the respondents that the data would be kept confidential and that the information was to be used for academic purpose. In addition, some teachers were busy due to tight schedules and to overcome this, the researcher gave them a period of two days to fill in the questionnaires.

Further, some of the head teachers that were the unit of analysis of this study were not willing to have the research conducted in their schools, perhaps, as a result of palpable apprehension. This apprehension was allayed and mitigated by providing the head teachers with the research approval letter from Kenyatta University, research permit from National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and the research approval letters from Graduate School, Kenyatta University .

1.8.2 Delimitations of the Study

The study was undertaken in Taita Taveta County. The County was the study locale because studies have demonstrated that majority of the schools in the County rarely use mother tongue as a language of instruction (Wagunga, 2017). There are many factors, which may influence the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-

primary schools but this study focused on school and teacher related challenges that hinder use of mother tongue in pre-primary schools. This is because school heads and teachers are key players in the implementation of Kenya's mother tongue policy.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The researcher assumed that;

- i. All head teachers and instructors were aware of the language policy in early childhood education.
- ii. The non-use of mother tongue in teaching and learning in the pre-primary grades impairs pupils' academic performance.

1.10 Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

1.10.1 Theoretical Framework

Social constructivist's theory of language development by Lev Vygotsky's (Lowenthal & Muth, 2008) was used in guiding this study. The theory of Vygotsky indicated that development of language hinge on communication with individuals and on the instruments provided by culture to assist pupils' world's view. He proposed three methods of transferring an instrument of culture from one person to another. The first method which he highlighted is imitative learning, where by an individual attempts to copy or imitate the other. Another method is through guided teaching that includes remembering teacher, parent or caregiver instructions and using the guidelines to self-regulate. The last method through which cultural instruments taken to others is by collaborating education involving set of colleagues striving to comprehend and working as a group to learn a particular skill. This study explored the school and teachers' role in effective utilization of mother tongue in teaching and learning in pre-primary schools.

The theory of Vygotsky combines social surroundings with cognition. He claims that by interacting with a more knowledgeable individual, children gain the methods of thinking and conducting that make up a culture. He believed that social interaction would result in continuing modifications in a child's thinking and conduct that would differ across cultures. The four fundamental principles in Vygotsky's structure are: young children build their knowledge, social context influence language development, learning leads to growth and mental development of children are influenced by language.

His social cultural development theory is made up of several components to assist put it into practice. The components comprises of a privately made speech in which children talk amongst each other in directing their individual character. It is common in children at pre-school level with inadequate acquisition of social skills. When a task becomes too difficult for them, they use private speech and they do not know how to proceed. This enables them fulfill an assignment. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is the second component in social cultural theory.

Vygotsky highlights that the Zone of Proximal Development determines the real level of growth, while prospective growth is decided by the level of growth from grown up guidance or cooperation with plenty of knowledge through problem solving. In the long run, the dominant culture, children become more socialized and induce cognitive development. This means that use of mother tongue can enhance interaction between teachers and learners inducing cognitive development. It also enables in social communication and the process of thinking. This study interrogated learners engagement activities that teachers select during lesson delivery in relevance to the use of mother tongue.

This theory informed this study as it puts emphasis on the role of social environment in learning. It means that children's cognitive function is derived from each individual's social interaction in a cultural environment, and that learning occurs when pupils work on new activities that are within their ability or in their zone of proximal development.

When one is socially engaged in discussion and actively participating in experiments and experiences, knowledge and understanding are produced. Dialogue can only happen when teachers use familiar language, which in this case is mother tongue, which learners can hear, speak and understand so that they can form meaning. Learners in this situation require not just physical experience but also engagement with teachers' experience.

The underlying tenets which informed this study is 'language and culture'. According to Vygotsky, these are critical components of human intellectual growth as well as how individuals see the world. This indicates that language is used to communicate learning concepts, which are then interpreted and comprehended through experience and interactions in a cultural setting. Therefore, it was critical for the study to delve and establish the challenges that hinder use of use of mother tongue in early years education.

1.10.2 Conceptual Framework

The way in which independent and dependent variables relate is depicted in the following conceptual framework.

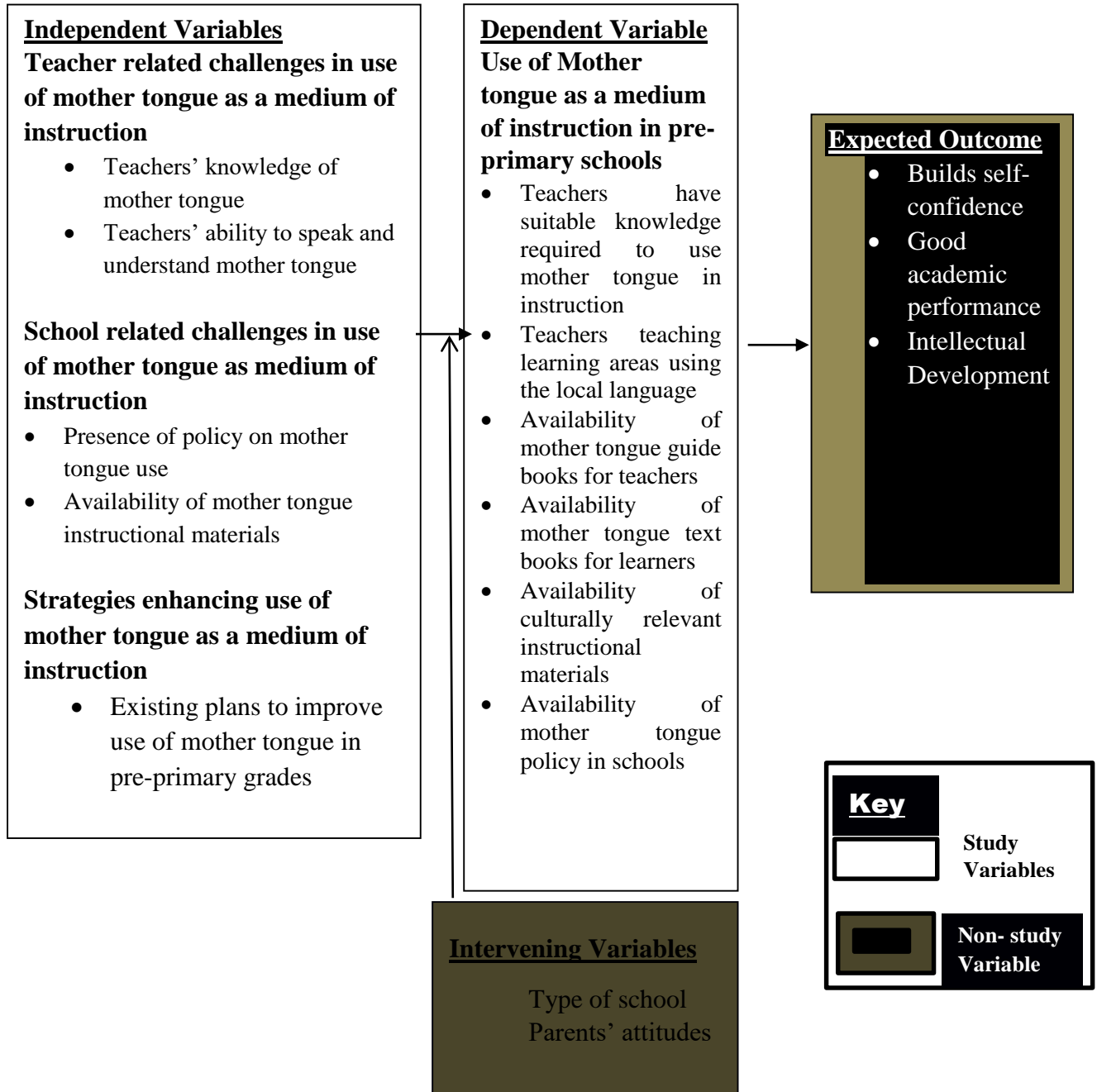


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework Illustrating the Relationship between the Dependent and Independent Variables

The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. According to the diagram, the independent variables which include teacher related challenges, school related challenges and strategies to teach has an influence on the dependent variable, which is use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. If the teachers have the knowledge of mother tongue and they have the ability to speak and understand mother tongue, this will enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary grades. Further, the framework shows that if schools have a policy guiding use of mother tongue in pre-primary grades and mother tongue instructional materials are available, the teachers are more likely to use mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary grades. In addition, the framework shows that if schools have existing plans to improve use of mother tongue in pre-primary schools, it will enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary grades.

Further, the conceptual framework illustrates the expected outcomes when mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction in pre-primary grades. These include; increased self confidence among learners, boosts intellectual development and good academic performance. Finally, the framework shows that there are other variables which may affect use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, these are intervening variables which include, type of school and parents' attitude.

1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

Challenges:	Barriers or obstacles to effective usage of mother tongue as a medium of instruction.
Medium of instruction:	The language of teaching utilized in pre-primary schools in Voi Sub-County.
Mother tongue:	Local language used in Voi Sub-County
Pre-primary schools :	Pre-primary 1 and pre-primary 11 grades
School related challenges:	School related issues, which hinder use of mother language in teaching in pre-primary grades. They include, presence of policy on mother tongue use, availability of mother tongue instructional materials
Strategies:	Plans put in place to facilitate teaching using mother tongue in pre-primary schools.
Teacher related challenges:	Issues with teachers, which prevent utilization of mother language as an instruction medium among pre-primary grades. These include, teachers' knowledge of mother tongue and teachers' ability to speak and understand mother tongue.
Use of mother tongue:	Utilization of local language during teaching and learning in pre-primary grades in Voi Sub-County

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the available literature on the subject of the research problem. The themes in this section are derived from the study's objectives, which include: teachers' use of mother tongue as a medium of teaching-learning in pre-primary schools, teacher-related challenges and use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, school-related challenges in use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, and strategies schools put in place to enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The chapter concludes with a summary of the literature review, with an emphasis on the identified gaps.

2.2 Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction in Pre-Primary Schools

Mother Tongue refers to the language that students use outside of the classroom and/or at home (IBO Second Language and Mother-Tongue Development, 2004). It also includes the language spoken at home by a child's primary caretakers, without the involvement of educational institutions, because a child's language learning is influenced by his or her entire home environment, not just the mother. It can also be referred to as the language in which the children convey their ideas and relate to the social setting (Mohanty, 2016). Mother Tongue (MT) is operationalized in this study as a catchment language, which often serves as first language employed as a means of communication in the child's environment and at home.

A cursory investigation of literation showed that a number of studies have been investigated to establish whether across situations, mother tongue is utilized as a vehicle of guidance in learning. In the investigation of Sahin (2018), the native language

schooling with regards to instruction was examined in Turkey. The discoveries showed that most of the members considered first language schooling to be a major basic freedom. Furthermore, while some participants believed that the government was not yet ready to provide education in their mother languages to non-official subgroups or local communities, others opposed mother tongue education, fearing that it would promote division within the Country.

Further, Sahin (2018) reported that in Turkey, education can be offered in foreign languages such as German, French, and English in public schools. Mother tongue education, on the other hand, cannot be delivered in the languages of minorities or local groups that are not formally recognized as minorities. The findings provided impetus for comprehending the importance of Mother Tongue as a basic human right, however, there is still need to investigate Mother Tongue in a context where mother tongue use as an instruction medium is mandated, particularly in lower and pre-primary grades. The goal of this research was to investigate the challenges of adopting Mother Tongue as a medium of instruction in Kenyan pre-primary schools.

In Ghana a study conducted by Karikari, Kumi and Adu (2022) examined the impact of mother tongue as the language of instruction and pupils' achievement in mathematics in rural upper primary classes in Sefwi Akontombra District of Ghana. The correlational study conducted indicated that there is a positive relationship between mother tongues usage as a medium of instruction and mathematics achievement at [$\beta = 0.92$; $p = 0.00$]. Also, Mother tongue utilization impacts positively on effective communication at [$\beta = 0.88$; $p = 0.00$]. A quasi-experiment was also conducted in three classes in an attempt to confirm the claims by the teachers who were respondents for the correlational study. The controlled group (A) was taught in only English as required by the Ghana

Education Service language of instruction policy whereas the experimental group (B) was instructed in mother tongue (Twi). The mean scores were as follows: Primary 4, A=3.33, and B=8.2, Primary 5, A=2.00 and B=8.00 and Primary 6, A=2.36 and B=7.18. Both studies revealed beyond doubt that the impact of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction in rural upper primary classes is substantially positive on mathematics achievement. The study shows that use of mother tongue in instruction improves learners' performance, therefore, it was important to establish whether local languages are used as medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Kenya.

In Nigeria, a study carried out by Oyekola (2020) sought to determine the effectiveness of mother tongue instruction on the achievement of primary five pupils in literacy and numerical skills in Osun state. Quasi experimental design was adopted and sampled 223 pupils from two Local Government Areas in Osun state which were randomly selected. The instruments used were Pupils literacy test, pupils' numeracy test, questionnaire and instructional guides. Data were subjected to analysis of covariance at .05 level of significance. The findings showed that there was a significant difference in the achievement of pupils taught with mother tongue and conventional strategies in literacy and numeracy skills ($F(2,232) = 27.94; p < .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .20$). Pupils exposed to mother tongue strategy had highest post mean literacy and numerical skills (70.47). The study shows that use of mother tongue improves pupils' achievement in literacy and numerical skills. Therefore, it was important to establish if teachers in Kenyan schools utilize their local languages in teaching and learning.

Another study carried out in Nigeria by Ekeh (2020) explored issues involved in the use of mother-tongue as a medium of instruction to boost the education of an African child. In addition, the study examined the arguments for and against mother-tongue as

a medium of instruction, especially at the early stages of education. The study established that the use of mother-tongue as a medium of instruction is desirable and is a boost to the education of the African child. Based on the findings, the study recommended that Government should sponsor in-service training for pre-primary and primary school teachers on use of mother-tongue as a language of instruction; ensure that language policy is implemented in order to preserve the African culture; provide funds for the development and acquisition of culturally-relevant materials to promote culturally relevant teaching. Also, the Ministry of Education should ensure that schools comply with language of instruction policy (which states, in respect of Nigeria, that mother-tongue should be the medium of instruction in pre- primary and lower primary schools); organize workshops for writing and publication of culturally-relevant materials in all local languages; ensure that culturally-relevant learning materials are produced to promote culturally-relevant teaching-learning; and ensure that education policies are fully implemented.

In Kenya, Begi (2014) conducted a study to establish whether mother tongue was used as a language of instruction in pre-primary and lower primary schools in three districts in Kenya as per the language policy. The population of the study was 36 pre-primary and 36 lower primary school teachers randomly selected from three districts drawn from three counties (Kisii, Kericho and Bondo). The study employed a survey design. Purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select the sample. Data was collected from teachers using a questionnaire and was analyzed using qualitative methods. The findings showed that 44.4% of the pre-primary schools in the three districts were using mother tongue as a medium of instruction compared to 41.7% lower primary schools. Fifty five percent of the pre-primary schools were not using

mother tongue as a language of instruction compared to 58.3% of lower primary schools. The results clearly showed that majority of the schools were not using mother tongue as a language of instruction. The findings of the reviewed study were informative; nevertheless, the study did not address the school related and teacher related factors that hinder the use of mother tongue in schools. As a result, the current study intended to fill the gap by establishing the challenges affecting use of mother tongue in school.

According to Nyambura (2016), mother tongue use as an instruction medium positively affects learners' achievement in academics in Kiharu, Murang'a County, Kenya. Mother tongue was said to have an important role to play in ensuring effective training, additionally in higher level of education in which learning in English and Kiswahili is emphasized. Therefore, it is very essential when teaching preschoolers, to employ mother tongue as a medium of education. However, many studies dissented from the conclusion of Nyambura's study that Mother Tongue is less preferred to English in schools as a medium of instruction. This present study therefore aimed at examining challenges facing teachers in pre-primary schools in Kenya when using mother tongue as an instruction medium.

Mberia (2016) conducted a study on Mother Tongues as Media of Instruction in Kenya and the study observed that in Kenya, using mother tongue as an instruction medium has been a contentious topic. Besides indigenous languages or mother tongue, the Country also has English, which was inherited from the colonial past. Consequently, a policy allowing for mother tongue use in the lower levels of formal learning as a medium of teaching has attracted reactions ranging from skepticism, at best, to hostility, at the very worst, not only from parents but also from other members of society who

consider them as being of little value. The study appeared exploratory; however, there was still a need for empirical inquiry to unravel how mother tongue is being used as an instruction medium is being challenged and how its usage can be improved in Kenya's context. This present study, therefore, sought to empirically investigate the challenges that might be faced in pre-primary schools in Kenya when using mother tongue as an instruction medium.

In the study of Nyarigotu and Ambiyo (2014), the importance of attitude in mother tongue implementation in instruction was investigated in Kenya. The study collected data using methods such as interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. The findings from the study revealed hindrances to usage of the mother tongue as the instructional medium, which includes; various languages, dialects and society's skepticism of mother tongue use in education and shortage of finances. The reviewed study was an indicator to the challenges hindering usage of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, but the study's unit of analysis isn't specified, and the classification of the difficulties to using mother tongue as an instruction medium is not established. This present study therefore investigated the difficulties in utilizing mother tongue as a medium of education: school related challenges, and teachers related challenges, and strategies for surmounting the challenges in pre-primary schools in Kenya.

In a similar vein, in Kenya, Gacheche (2010) looked into the difficulties of adopting mother tongue-based language-in-education policies. The study concluded, based on a survey of the literature, establishment of effective system of education that is based on mother tongue required more resources, political will, and clear policy objectives. The study looked into the challenges of Kenyan mother tongue-based education systems, but it was limited in terms of addressing the challenges and issues that prevent teaching

medium as mother tongue which lacked empirical evidence. Employing data in selected pre-primary schools within the Country, the current study evaluated empirically limitations in utilizing mother tongue as an instruction medium.

Khejeri (2014)'s study explored the attitudes of teachers' on use of mother tongue as an instruction medium in Lower Primary Schools in Hamisi District, Kenya. Data were collected from 12 lower primary schools with instruments such as observation checklists and questionnaires. It was revealed that in lower primary schools, mother tongue was valued less than English as teaching language. However, while the study was able to provide insight into teachers' attitudes on how mother tongue is used compared to English when teaching, problems that cause teachers to favor English over Mother Tongue must be empirically investigated. As a result, the present study looked at school and teacher related challenges that hinder use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

Manyonyi, Mbori and Okwako (2016) investigated teachers' attitudes on using mother tongue as teaching medium in pre-primary schools from Bungoma South Sub-County. Lower primary schools teachers did not prefer a mother tongue medium of teaching, according to the findings. Because of insufficient materials of instructions, teachers' L1 and mother tongue of learners' differences, absence of training specifically for teaching in mother tongue at pre-primary level, mother tongue was not being used by teachers as an instruction medium. While the findings were appreciated, there was need for empirical inquiry to document both teachers; and schools' related challenges and strategies for improving use of mother tongue in pre-primary grades.

Begi (2014) did research on how mother tongue is used as an instruction medium in ECD centers in Kenya as way of preserving Kenyan culture. The findings revealed that teachers were willing to employ mother tongue as an instruction language, but the parents were opposing the idea. According to the findings, Kiswahili together with English were opted to be the instruction languages as compared to the Mother Tongue in most of the studied areas. The study made frantic effort in establishing how Mother Tongue was being utilized as instruction language using, however, there was still the need to determine whether there are school and teacher related challenges hindering use of mother tongue when teaching, which were not clearly reported in the reviewed study.

2.3 Teacher Related Challenges and Use of Mother Tongue as a medium of Instruction in Preprimary schools

Studies have shown that teacher related factors can influence mother tongue use in teaching. Umar (2018) examined the influence of teacher factors on use of mother tongue when teaching mathematics. Results from the research showed that in teaching counting and number recognition, most participants always used mother tongue. The research also disclosed that teachers do not mostly use mother tongue when teaching mathematics. Accordingly, it was suggested that school managers should permit teachers to be trained on how they can use mother tongue when teaching. The reviewed study showed a gap that requires strategies to be implemented to improve use of mother tongue in understanding abstract and conceptual terms, and this characterized the focus of this present study.

The study by Ephias, Newman and Lilian (2015) looked at how parents and teachers viewed use of language in ECD in the Norton District., in Zimbabwe. The results of this research indicated that 86% of parents preferred to use English as an educational

medium in early childhood growth. The study recommended participatory evaluation and creation of national language policies that involve parents, educators and children among other stakeholders. However, the National Language Policy in Kenya preferred learning in lower and pre-primary schools to be facilitated using mother tongue, and therefore there was still need to investigate the challenges hampering mother tongue as an instruction medium, and this became the main focus of this present study.

In Ghana, a study was carried out by Tackie-Ofosu (2015) who looked into how mother tongue is used in pre-schools in Ghana with the focus of parents and teachers view. According to the findings, parents together with the teachers recognize how mother tongue is important in promoting cultural identification, basic idea comprehension, and effective communication. A large portion of teachers and the parents advocated use of mother tongue and English. It was observed that teachers perceived mother tongue as a tool to effectuate learning in lower schools, and therefore empirical study was needed in Kenya's context to unravel what can be done to enhance learning using mother tongue.

Another study was carried out in Ghana by Vandyck, Kumador and Toku (2015), they investigated the perceptions of parents and teachers on the use of the mother tongue and their preferred medium of communication and instruction for preschool children at home and in school. The sample was made up of a cross-section of parents and teachers (N=120, Female=80% for teachers and 55% for parents) of children (between ages 2 and 5) in a suburb of the Greater Accra Region, Ghana. A structured questionnaire was administered to the respondents to elicit information on their perceptions on the use of mother tongue in communicating with the children. The results indicated that both parents and teachers appreciated the importance of the mother tongue, with reasons

including the promoting of cultural identity, the easy understanding of concepts and for effective communication. An appreciable number of teachers and parents also supported the use of mother tongue as the language of instruction in school alongside English language.

Teachers' perspectives on usage of African languages in the curriculum in Kenyan schools were investigated by Njoroge and Gathigia (2011). According to the study, majority of teachers, parents, and students viewed African languages as inferior to second language such as English. This defeatist attitude towards the use of native languages for schooling may be linked to the African language's inferior position during the colonial period. Therefore, they see English as a language that helps to bridge people's communication gaps. This, however, only threatens the survival of many mother tongues. The study's findings were based on perception of teachers, parents, and students, however, there was need to examine the school and teachers related challenges to using mother tongue, and strategies of improving facilitation of learning via mother tongue in pre-primary and lower schools in Kenya, and therefore, this became the focus of this current study.

Another study carried out in Kenya by Ong'uti, Aloka and Raburu (2016) investigated factors affecting teaching and learning in mother tongue in lower public primary schools in Kenya. The Chomsky's theory of language acquisition was adopted. The study employed the sequential triangulation research design within the mixed methods approach. Questionnaires for teachers were used to collect quantitative data while qualitative data was collected using interview schedules, focus group discussions (FGDs) and observations. The target population comprised of 6000 pupils, 170 teachers, 17 head teachers, and 10 parents out of whom 90 pupils, 9 head teachers, 9

class three teachers, 10 parents and 1 Education Officer were sampled. Saturated sampling technique was used to select the head teachers, the primary schools, and class 3 teachers of lower primary, while simple random sampling was used to select the learners. The study reported that both teachers and learners had negative attitudes towards teaching and learning in mother tongue. The study recommended that relevant education players develop a curriculum which would result in the use of local languages as tools for economic empowerment and help change the attitudes of teachers, learners and parents towards teaching and learning in mother tongue. The findings of this study were informative; nevertheless, the study did not discuss on the problems impeding effective implementation of the language policy in schools. As a result, the current study attempted to bridge this gap.

Attitude by teachers on mother tongue use as a teaching medium in lower primary schools in Hamisi District, Kenya, were studied in a similar study by Khejeri (2014). It was determined that Mother Tongue is not as well-liked as English, English was extremely appreciated by parents and teachers. The study recommended that the government should promote the publication of educational materials for Mother Tongue learning and that educational linguistic policy makers review their stance on Mother Tongue in order to promote it both as instruction language and as a topic. The study' observation provided robust recommendations, however, there was a need to find out challenges impending use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in lower and pre-primary schools.

2.4 School Related Challenges and Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

Use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction might be influenced by school circumstances, according to available literature. Awopetu (2016) assessed how mother tongue in public schools influenced learning capability of children in Early Childhood Classrooms in Nigeria. The study looked into the impact of a mother language on pre-school children's learning abilities. There were about 200 ethnic groupings and 400 mother tongues in the Country. The findings showed effectiveness in the classroom when using mother tongue in teaching, and therefore, the need for empirical investigation of usage of mother tongue as a communication channel by factoring school-related challenges into consideration in Kenya's context.

The impact of mother language as a medium of education was investigated by Beka (2016). The study discovered that most pupils had a favorable attitude towards using mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The study also established that teaching in the mother tongue boosts self-confidence, psychological endurance, self-expressive abilities, clear communication and instruction in the classroom and improves academic achievement and general quality education. The reviewed study focused on the benefits of using mother tongue in learning, however it did not research on factors hindering utilization of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, which was the focus of the current study.

In South Africa, a study by Singh (2014) researched on the use of mother tongue in diverse language province to private schools in Limpopo Province. The information indicated that in circumstances where all children talk one or two of the domestic languages, mother tongue schooling is feasible. Further, the study reported that there

were challenges in instruction medium in cases where two languages were considered as local languages. Therefore, there was need to find out whether this was the same situation applied in Kenya.

In the study of Seida (2017), the influence of learning using mother tongue was investigated in Ethiopia. The study relied on evidence from a natural experiment. The research findings disclosed that government primary schools in Ethiopia embraced teaching in mother tongue, which contributed to better performance among learners. The findings were consistent with the argument that when children are taught in mother tongue, they understood faster than those taught in English during their transition period. The reviewed study showed the importance of using mother tongue in teaching and learning. The present study went further to establish school factors hindering use of mother tongue in pre-primary schools.

Another study in Ethiopia, by Bachore (2014) investigated utilization of Mother Tongue Based Classroom Instruction in Sidama Zone School Community. The observation was that a large portion of the parents and almost half of learners sampled had an opposing perception on employment of mother tongue as a medium of teaching. On the other hand teachers had positive attitudes towards use of mother tongue based classroom instruction to teach learners. As a result, the community's view and attitude were linked to the learners' success or failure in mother tongue-based education. It was therefore crucial to establish the same factors hampered use of mother tongue in Kenyan schools.

In Zimbabwe, Ndamba (2013) researched on the impact of mother tongue usage in learning. At the elementary school level, the observation was that the most preferred

language in teaching by teachers was English. The study therefore proposed that a method of change is required and a thorough move by every stakeholder in appreciating the responsibility that mother tongue is very crucial in the beginning years in education. However, there was still need for empirical inquiry to identify factors that occasioned the preference of English to Mother tongues as against the Educational Policy of using Mother Tongue to facilitate learning within Kenya's lower and pre-primary schools. This present study therefore, focused on investigating the challenges in the use on mother tongue and likely strategies needed to improve use of mother tongue as a medium of communication.

In Ghana, Agbevivi (2022) conducted a study, which explored the perceptions of parents and teachers on the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction in early childhood education. Using pragmatist paradigm, the mixed method approach and concurrent embedded design were employed. Questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide were used to seek data from 492 respondents in multilingual Ho in the Ho municipality of Volta Region of Ghana. Data was analysed using means and standard deviation, and themes. Findings revealed that notwithstanding their acknowledgement of mother tongue in ECE, both teachers and parents disapproved use of mother tongue as medium of instruction. The findings from the reviewed study are informative, however, they may not be applicable in the Kenyan context. Therefore, the current study focused on exploring the problems in the use of mother tongue and the possible methods needed to improve the use of mother tongue as a medium of communication.

In Namibia, Soili (2021) explored Namibian teachers' beliefs in use of mother tongue in instruction. The study was carried out in two government primary schools by means

of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings showed that majority of the teachers felt that implementation of the policy on use of mother tongue in instruction was problematic and its implementation challenging. The findings of the examined study are instructive, although they may not be applicable in the Kenyan setting. As a result, the current study focused on investigating the challenges associated with the use of mother tongue as a medium of communication, as well as potential solutions to improve its use.

In Kenya, a study by Nyarigoti and Ambiyi (2014) explored influence of teacher attitude in use of mother tongue in teaching in public primary schools in Kenya. The study tracked down that the assortment of dialects and lingos, conflicting methodologies used to manage the circumstance, incredulous mentalities of society toward primary language use in instruction, shortage of monetary assets, educational issues, and surprisingly the conflict between ethnic loyalties from one perspective and the situation of the poor on the other are a portion of the difficulties confronting the utilization of mother tongue in Kenyan schools. The study, however, did not specify the necessary strategies that can be employed to address the challenges to using mother tongue in studied areas. The current study focused on specifying strategies that can be used to mitigate the challenges inhibiting mother tongue use as a teaching language in Kenya's pre-primary schools.

Another study was carried out in Kenya by Njogu (2015) who investigated the influence of mother tongue on pre-school children's performance in the English language in Gachoka Division Embu County. The study used a descriptive survey design which used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect the data. The participants included head teachers, pre-school teachers and pre-school parents from eight pre-

schools. Data was collected using questionnaires for the head teachers and pre-school teachers while interviews were used for pre-school parents. Data was analyzed using percentages and frequencies and presented in tables and charts. The study revealed that mother tongue contributes positively towards the learning of the English language in pre-schools. It further revealed that parents had a negative attitude towards the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The study made a concerted effort to determine benefits of using Mother Tongue in instruction; however, it was still necessary to determine whether there are school and teacher-related challenges that prevent the use of mother tongue when teaching, which were not clearly reported in the reviewed study.

2.4 Strategies to Enhance the Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

The teacher and learner difficulties and approaches of English as the second language was examined by Dhillon and Wanjiru (2013). The study reported that teachers' strategies to tackle these difficulties included; diverse educational approaches, establishing a warm classroom climate for teaching and to provide a non-threatening atmosphere for language acquisition. The study also indicated that the most prevalent individual strengthening strategies like taking vocabulary notebook and group-based interactions with their colleagues are examples of learner approaches. The research indicated research based strategies that could help develop effective language. The study appeared to be exploratory, and therefore there was need to conduct empirical investigation so as to identify strategies needed to improve learning through use of mother tongue as an instructional language.

A study conducted by Lartec, Belisario, and Cammagay (2014) focused on teacher techniques and strategies in adopting a multilingual classroom which is based on

mother tongue instruction. The findings revealed that educators employed strategies such as target language translation into mother tongue, multilingual learning, lingua franca, improvisation of mother tongue-written learning materials, learning remediation, and utilization of mother tongue-written literary work as a motivator. The current study departed from previous study by empirically investigating the teachers and school related challenges inhibiting utilization of mother tongue when teaching, thereafter providing strategies for mitigating the identified challenges drawing data from selected pre-primary schools in Kenya.

In Namibia, Mmamoyahabo and Niipare (2022) conducted a study in five primary schools in Namibia during teaching and learning in the mother tongue classroom. The aim of this study was to investigate how 30 pre-service teachers used the learners' home language during their curriculum delivery. The study followed a qualitative approach where data were gathered from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews of pre-service teachers. The findings showed that pre-service teachers lacked sufficient competencies in the teaching of mother tongue literacy. Additionally, the classroom arrangement and teaching approaches that were used by the pre-service teachers were ineffective for learning. Furthermore, the learning materials and pedagogical practices were likely to inhibit successful learning. The implication of this is that the quality of education and learning was compromised. The study recommended that pre-service teachers should be equipped with skills to teach the mother tongue programme while using relevant and appropriate teaching strategies and learning resources to enhance mother tongue learning of the Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama dialects. The study was useful; however, it did not emphasize the tactics that might be used to improve the use of mother tongue in instruction. As a result, the current study addressed the gap by

proposing strategies for overcoming the identified issues using data from selected pre-primary schools in Kenya.

In Ghana, Tawiah (2019) researched evidence to show that mother tongue-based bilingual medium of instruction in schools that serve students with diverse linguistic background enhance learners' academic achievements. The study reported that use of mother tongue enhances social and psychological development of learners. In addition the study reported strategies that support effective implementation of mother tongue in the early childhood education (ECE) classrooms which include alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, and print awareness that contribute significantly to later reading achievement as well as foster their socio-emotional development that are prerequisite for academic success. Creating rich language and literacy environment, effective use of dramatic plays, reading and writing workshops, organizing open days supporting home literacy are also some of the strategies which can be employed to enhance use of mother tongue in instruction. The findings were useful, although they may not apply in the Kenyan situation. As a result, it was critical to develop techniques for increasing the usage of mother tongue in Kenyan schools.

In Uganda, a study by Nakiwala (2022) sought to find out the teachers' perceptions on the use of Mother Tongue in the implementation of the Thematic Curriculum in selected primary schools in Kanoni Town Council, Gomba District. The findings showed that teachers had varying attitudes and perceptions regarding mother tongue use as a medium of instruction. The majority of the teachers had positive attitudes. They supported the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction because it facilitated acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills at an early stage. The study also reported that teachers adopted a combination of Mother Tongue Teaching and language

strategies such as Reading, writing, Listening and speaking activities and work with co-teachers, elders in the community for assistance as resource persons and translation activities. It was also established that teachers used Mother Tongue resources when using mother tongue as a medium of instruction in lower primary classes. Such resources included materials from the local environment, garden tools, mats, pots, puppets and models, banana fibers. The study's conclusions are enlightening, but they may not be applicable in Kenya. As a result, the current study focused on identifying the difficulties connected with using mother tongue as a medium of communication, as well as potential ways to improve its use.

In Kenya a study by Afandi (2018) examined the teaching strategies used in teaching oral skills in English language and their effects on pupils' performance among lower primary school pupils. The study employed stratified simple random sampling technique in selecting the sample size for the schools, classes and teachers of English giving final sample sizes of 10 schools, 100 teachers and 10 classes. The study found out that teachers employed interactive techniques through the use of English as a medium of instruction in their classes while teaching oral skills. The study established that textbooks and newspaper/magazine cuttings were used as the preferred teaching and learning material

in teaching oral skills in English. Among the challenges facing the teaching of oral skills in English, the study revealed that the teaching and learning of oral skills in English was greatly hampered by mother tongue influence, lack of constant practice in the use of oral skills and inadequate textbooks of oral skills in English. This study was informative, however it focused on English Language. Therefore, there was need to

conduct this study to establish challengers hindering use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review

The study focused on utilization of mother tongue as an instruction medium in schools globally, in Africa and specifically in Kenya. This was done with an aim of establishing the factors hampering effective use of mother tongue in teaching and learning. According to the existing literature, most nations have a policy document governing mother tongue use in pre-primary schools, however, only a few countries have adopted mother tongue when teaching.

Most of the existing studies focused on the benefits of using mother tongue in learning, however it did not research on factors hindering utilization of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, which was the focus of the current study. In addition, the existing empirical studies did not specify the necessary strategies that can be employed to address the challenges to using mother tongue in studied areas. The current study focused on specifying strategies that can be used to mitigate the challenges inhibiting mother tongue use as a teaching language in Kenya's pre-primary schools.

Further, findings from the reviewed studies documented evidence of significant and insignificant impact of mother tongue language, and therefore the inconsistencies in findings across contexts still created a gap that demanded for further empirical inquiry. In addition, there are a few studies investigating ways to improve mother tongue as a medium of instruction in Kenyan schools. In addition, there is lack of empirical investigation on the challenges in using mother tongue which may likely serve as

precursor to strategies for improving use of mother tongue (MT) as a teaching language.

The present research sought to address this gap.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the study design, variables, target population, techniques in sampling and sample size. It also describes instruments used in collecting data, pilot study and procedures followed when collecting data. Finally, it presents analysis of data and, logistical and ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed descriptive research design. This is because Creswell (2013) noted that the design helps to describe characteristics or behavior of the sample population. Orodho (2014) affirms that descriptive research design helps to observe the phenomenon in a completely natural and unchanged environment. It also allows for the integration of qualitative and quantitative data collection approaches. As a result, the descriptive research design was effective in this study since it allowed the researcher to collect data that enabled her to identify the challenges hindering use of mother tongue when teaching in pre-primary schools.

3.2 Research Methodology

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. According to Orodho (2016), a combination of qualitative and quantitative data can improve an evaluation by balancing the limitations of one type of data with the strengths of another. This will ensure that understanding is enhanced by combining various modes of knowledge. Therefore, the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies provided substantial benefits, allowing the researcher to compare and contrast data and get far deeper insights.

3.2 Study Variables

They have been described as follows:

3.2.1 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable was use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. The use of mother tongue was measured by using a questionnaire with statements on 5-point Likert's scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, = neutral, 4=agree, and 5= strongly agree. The statements measured the extent to which teachers used mother tongue in instruction. Teachers were asked to read the statements and indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with them.

3.2.2 Independent Variables

The independent variables were challenges in use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools, which included:

i. Challenges related to teachers in using mother tongue as a medium of instruction

The study sought to establish teacher-related factors, which hindered use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The information on this variable was collected using a questionnaire as well as an interview schedule.

ii. Challenges related to schools in using mother tongue as a medium of instruction

Information on school related challenges were collected using a questionnaire. Pre-primary school teachers were asked to indicate whether there was management support on use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. They were also asked to indicate if mother tongue instructional materials and policy on use of mother tongue were

available in their schools. In addition, the head teachers were interviewed to shed more light on school and teacher related challenges hindering use of mother tongue in teaching and learning in pre-primary grades.

iii. Strategies for improving use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction

Information on existing plans to improve mother tongue use in pre-primary grades were captured using a questionnaire as well as an interview schedule. The teachers and head teachers were asked open-ended questions which gave room for them to explain the existing plans in their schools which enhanced use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

3.3 Location of the Study

Taita-Taveta County was purposefully sampled for this study. The choice was informed by findings from Wuganga (2012) study that revealed that pre-primary school teachers in Taita Taveta County usually teach their lessons using English language and mother tongue is not much considered as language for instruction in the County. This findings prompted the present study to be undertaken in the County, to identify challenges hindering mother tongue use in instruction in pre-primary grades. Since it was not practical for the researcher to study all schools in Taita-Taveta County, the researcher selected Voi Sub-County, which was randomly selected from Taita-Taveta County. Voi is 150 kilometers Northwest of Mombasa and 300 kilometers Southeast of Nairobi. It has eight wards namely; Kaloleni, Mbololo/Ngolia, Kaloleni, Kirutai. Voi sub-county has an approximate population of 111,831 with an average of approximately 16.27 square kilometers.

3.4 Target Population

The study targeted 120 head teachers and 264 pre-primary school teachers in all the 120 primary schools in Voi Sub-County. The study targeted headteachers and teachers because school heads and teachers are key players in the implementation of Kenya's mother tongue policy. These led to a total target population of 384 people. This is illustrated in table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Target Population

Category	Population
Head Teachers	120
Pre-primary school Teachers	264
Total	384

Source: Voi Sub-County Education Office Report of 2019

Table 3.1 shows that the study had a target population of 384 comprising of 120 head teachers and 264 pre-primary school teachers.

3.5 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

3.5.1 Sampling Techniques

Multi-stage sampling technique was employed. Using multi-stage sampling technique has been justified in literature as effective means of sampling representatives from the population devoid of biasness (Orodho, 2014; Creswell, 2013). Therefore, all pre-primary schools and teachers were given equal chances of participating in the study.

In the first stage, purposive sampling was employed to sample Taita Taveta sub-county. According to Creswell (2015), purposive sampling, also known as judgment or selective sampling, is a research approach in which researchers intentionally select participants based on their own judgment and criteria. The County was chosen as the

study location because research has shown that the majority of schools in the County rarely employ mother tongue as a language of teaching (Wagunga, 2017). As a result, it was critical to identify barriers to the use of mother language in the county, as well as solutions for improving its use.

In the second stage, simple random sampling was used in selecting Voi Sub-county. Tichapondwa (2014) elucidates that simple random sampling is a random method for surveying smaller subgroups of a large population without generating survey bias. Simple random sampling is a random method for surveying smaller subgroups of a large population without generating survey bias. Therefore, the researcher utilized the technique to sample one subcounty because it gave each subcounty an equal probability of being sampled. The researcher had to choose one sub-county because she could not collect data from the entire county due to the scale of the resources necessary and the time constraints.

The third stage, involved sampling of schools whereby stratified sampling was used to categorize the schools in the sub-county into two strata, private and public pre-primary schools. According to orodho (2016), stratified sampling guarantees that each stratum is appropriately represented in the sample while also reducing sampling error and variability within each group. This improves the accuracy and precision of your predictions while also allowing you to compare the variations between strata.

Thereafter, simple random sampling was used to sample pre-primary schools from the strata. This was achieved by assigning the various schools numbers that were written on pieces of papers. The papers were mixed in a container and the researcher randomly

picked 26 pre-primary schools. Choice of random sampling is premised on the fact that it yields research data that can be generalized to a larger population (Creswell, 2014).

Further, simple random sampling was also used to sample 26 pre-primary school teachers from the sampled schools. This was achieved by allowing teachers to randomly pick papers labeled yes or no from a container; those who chose yes participated in the study. Finally, purposive sampling was employed to sample 12 head teachers from the sampled schools. Patton (2015) argues that purposive sampling is usually used in the identification and selection of samples with minimal use of resources. Head teachers were sampled to participate in this study since they are the ones who are in charge of service and delivery of learning content in pre-primary teachers.

3.5.2 Sample Size

A ten percent of the target population was sampled. Mugenda and Mugenda (2007), note that a descriptive study requires 10-30% of the target population. Consequently, the study had 39 respondents, which is 10% of 384. The 39 respondents comprised of three (3) headteachers in public pre-primary schools, nine (9) head teachers in private pre-primary schools, eight (8) pre-primary school teachers in public pre-primary schools and 19 pre-primary schoolteachers in private pre-primary school as shown in table 3.2:

Table 3.2: Sampling Frame

Category	Target Population	Sample size(10% of the target population)
Public pre-primary school	28	3
Private pre-primary school	92	9
Head teachers in public pre-primary schools	28	3
Head teachers in private pre-primary schools	92	9
Teachers in Public pre-primary school	84	8
Teachers in private pre-primary schools	180	19

3.6 Research Instruments

Following instruments were used to collect data:

3.6.1 Questionnaire for Teachers

A questionnaire (Appendix I) was used in collecting data from the pre-primary schoolteachers. A questionnaire was preferred because it enabled the researcher to collect information concerning all the variables in question from the 26 pre-primary school teachers in a short amount of time.

The questionnaire was categorized in six section; the first section (Appendix I Section A) contains items which were used to collect the pre-primary school teachers' demographic information. The second section (Appendix I Section B) had items, which

collected information on how teachers make use of mother language as instruction medium in pre-primary institutions while the third section (Appendix I Section C) has items that were used to collect data on extent of usage of mother tongue as a teaching medium. The fourth section (Appendix I Section D) of the questionnaire has statements which were used to measure challenges faced by teachers while the fifth section (Appendix I Section E) has items which were used to collect information on school related challenges. Finally, the last section (Appendix I Section F) of the questionnaire has an open ended question which collected information from the teachers on strategies that can be employed to enhance use of mother tongue.

3.6.2 Interview schedule for Head teachers

The study used a semi structured interview schedule (Appendix II) to obtain data from head teachers. The interview questions covered all the study variables. The data that was collected from the head teachers was used to compliment the self-reporting data obtained from pre-primary schoolteachers through the questionnaires. According to Orodho (2016) interviews provide in-depth and accurate information, which inform study findings.

3.7 Pilot Study

Pre-testing of data collection instruments was done in two schools, one private and one public pre-primary school. These schools were not involved in the final study. This was achieved by categorizing the schools into two strata, private and public pre-primary schools. After which, one school was randomly selected from each stratum. The two head teachers and all the pre-primary school teachers in the sampled schools participated in the pre-testing exercise. According to Orodho (2014), pretesting is a crucial step in research since it helps the researcher check the gaps and weakness of the

research instrument before the main study. This exercise enabled the researcher establish how valid and reliable the instruments were. The researcher also checked for relevance, clarity and adequacy of the items in the instruments. Any shortcomings that were noticed were addressed before the actual data collection exercise.

3.8 Instruments Validity

Determination of validity was done using content validity. According to Creswell (2011) validity enables the researcher to make sure the research tools are measuring what they are intended to. Therefore, this exercise entailed checking if instruments items measured various constructs of this study, and also ensured that the items were structured in a way that respondents would understand. This was achieved by going through individual statements to ensure clarity, relevant and consulting two subject experts who gave judgment on the relevance, clarity and adequacy of the research instrument. The researcher ensured that the items in the research instruments covered all the variables and objectives of the study.

3.9 Reliability of Instruments

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was achieved by using test-retest method. The instrument was administered to same respondents within a one-week interval. This was done during the pilot study. Cronbach's alpha for the two tests was computed and compared. The researcher obtained a coefficient of 0.824, which was greater than the threshold of 0.7. This ascertained that the instrument was reliable. Further, the reliability of the interview schedule was achieved by comparing the two sets of results, which was found to be similar.

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

A pre-visit was done to the sampled schools to obtain permission from the head teachers and scheduling the process. On the scheduled dates, the researcher embarked on data collection process, data was collected in two stages:

Stage I: The researcher commenced by interviewing the head teachers. The items in the interview schedule guided the interviews. The information given by the head teachers was recorded on paper; also a tape recorder was used to record the information, which was transcribed later to avoid any biasness.

Stage II: The researcher administered the questionnaires to the teachers. Administration of questionnaires was done to teachers of sampled schools during break time. The teachers were requested to fill in the questionnaire at their own free time. They were informed that the forms were to be collected after two days.

3.11 Data Analysis

After data collection, the researcher checked for comprehensiveness and uniformity of the respondents' responses. After checking the instruments, quantitative data from the questionnaires was fed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. Descriptive statistics, which involved frequencies and percentages, were used to analyze the data. The results were presented in tables and figures. Data in qualitative form was analyzed thematically. The qualitative data was used to provide in depth understanding of the responses from the questionnaire. The qualitative data was presented in a narrative form where the voices of the interviewees were captured in the analysis.

3.12 Logical and Ethical Consideration.

The study observed the following logical and ethical considerations:

3.12.1 Logical Considerations

A research authorization letter (Appendix III) was obtained from the Graduate School, Kenyatta University and thereafter application for a NACOSTI permit (Appendix V) was done using the letter. These documents were used in acquiring authorization for data collection from the County Director of Education in Taita Taveta County. Furthermore, the researcher made preliminary visits to the sampled schools to acquire permission from headteachers to collect data and schedule dates for the exercise.

After obtaining approval from the relevant authorities, the researcher identified two research assistants who helped in the data collection exercise. The research assistants were trained for three days on how to collect data using the instruments. Training of research assistants was to facilitate collection of credible data from respondents.

3.12.2 Ethical Consideration

The researcher explained to participants all aspects and purpose of the study and gave honest answers to the clarification that they sought about the study. Further, the researcher issued the respondents with a consent form, the form provided complete information about the study, the participants read through the forms and signed to show that they volunteered to participate in the study.

The names of the respondents were protected. Respondents were informed not to provide their personal details, which would identify them. The researcher also ensured confidentiality; the information, which was collected from the respondents, was only

utilized in this study. The researcher accorded all respondents the option to pull out of the process any time for any reason they felt they could not continue participating.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the results, which were obtained after data analysis. In addition, the chapter presents the interpretation and discussion of the results. The first section of the chapter presents the response rate, followed by demographic information of the respondents. Finally, findings have been presented according to the objectives of the study. The study objectives were:

- i. To determine the extent to which teachers in pre-primary schools use mother tongue as a medium of instruction in Taita Taveta County.
- ii. To identify teacher related challenges in the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County.
- iii. To establish school related challenges in the use of mother tongue language as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County
- iv. To determine strategies that can be used to enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Taita Taveta County.

4.2 Response Rate

The study had a sample size of 39 participants, these comprised of 12 head teachers and 27 pre-primary schoolteachers. The response rate is presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Category	Sample Size	Respondents Who participated	Achieved Response Rate (%)
Head teachers	12	12	100%
Pre-primary school teachers	27	27	100%
Total	39	39	100%

Table 4.1 shows that all the sampled respondents participated in the study, thus the study achieved a response rate of 100%. The results indicate that the study had adequate respondents based on the recommendation by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), that a response rate of more than 70% is sufficient for a study. Therefore, the data that was collected from these respondents was adequate for analysis.

4.3 Demographic Information of the Respondents

The demographic information of the teachers was evaluated in terms of type of school, gender, age, gender, teaching experience and level of training. The results are presented in the subsequent sub-sections:

4.3.1 Type of School

The study sought to find out the representation of the respondents in terms of private and public preprimary schools. The results are presented in table 4.3:

Table 4.2 Type of School

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Public	15	55.6
Private	12	44.4
Total	27	100

Table 4.3 shows that 55.6 % of the schools, which participated in the study were public while the remaining 44.4% of the schools were private. The results indicate that all the schools in Voi Sub-county were represented in the study, however majority that participated were public pre-primary schools. This was the case because the numbers of public pre-primary schools in the Sub-county are many compared to the number of private pre-primary schools.

4.3.2 Gender

The study sought to establish the representation of teachers in terms of gender. The results are presented in table Figure 4.1:

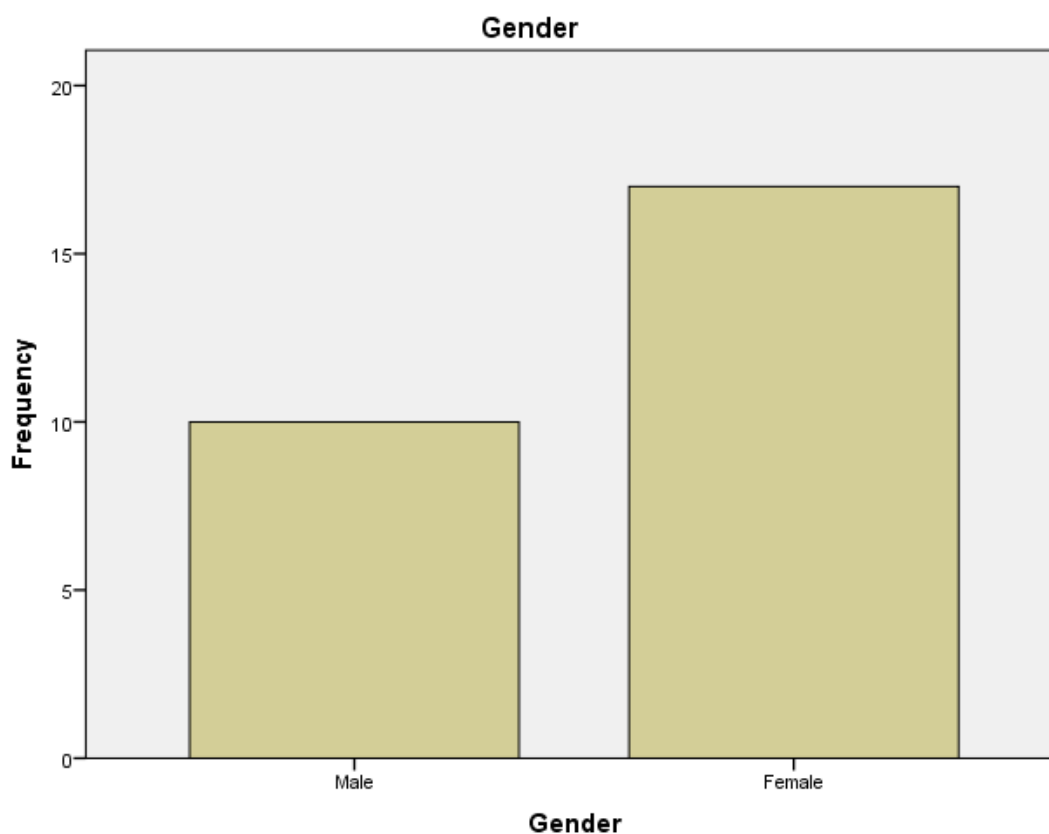


Figure 4.1: Teachers' Gender

As shown in Figure 4.1, 37.0% of the respondents were male teachers, while the remaining 73.0% were female teachers. The results show that majority of the

respondents were female, which indicate that there are many female teachers working in pre-primary school in Voi sub-county compared to male teachers. These could be as a result of the high numbers of females who enroll for Early Childhood Development (ECDE) courses compare to males.

4.2.3 Teachers' Age

Further, the study sought to establish the respondents' age range. The results are presented in Figure 4.2:

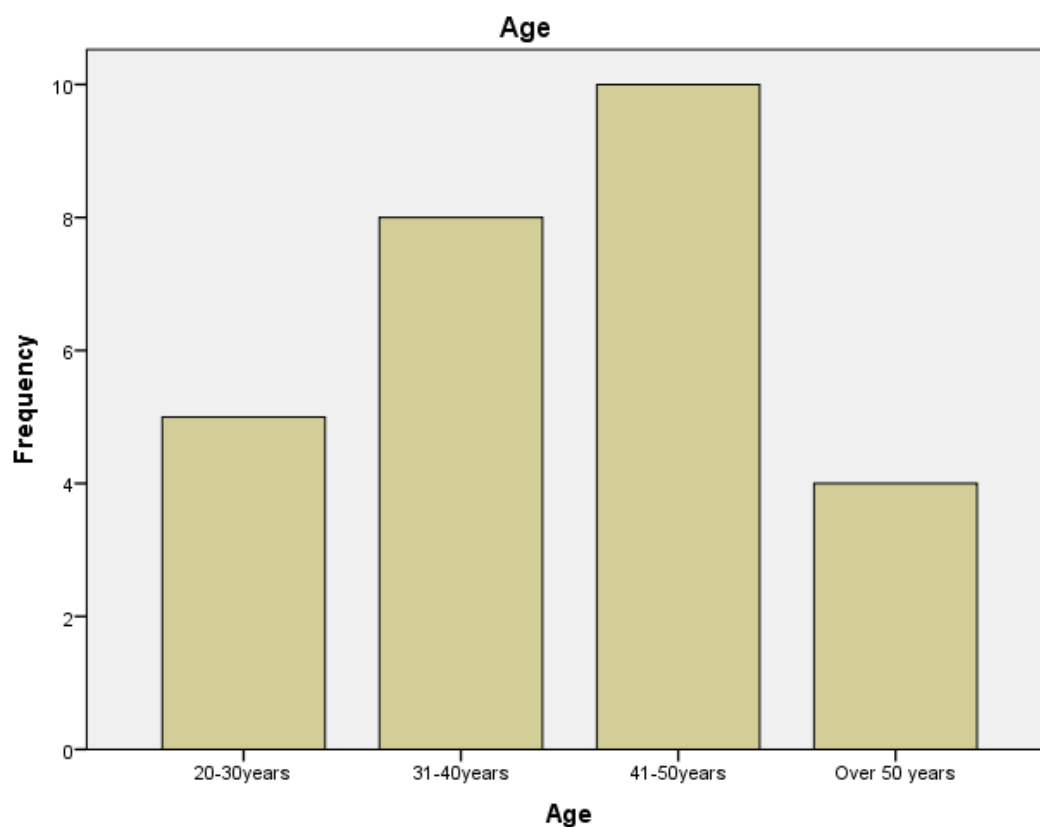


Figure 4.2: Teachers' Age

Figure 4.2 shows that majority (37.0%) of the teachers were between the bracket of 41-50 years. This category was closely followed by those who were in the age bracket of

31-40 years accounting for 29.6%. Further 18.5% of the teachers were between 20-30 years, while the least (14.8%) were those above 50 years. The results indicate that majority of the teachers were below 50 years, with the majority ranging between 41-50 years. This is an indication that teaching and learning in pre-primary schools in Voi sub-county was entrusted to mature teachers. Therefore, they are in a better position of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

4.3.4 Teaching Experience

The study sought to establish the teaching experience of the teachers who participated in the study. The results are presented in Figure 4.3:

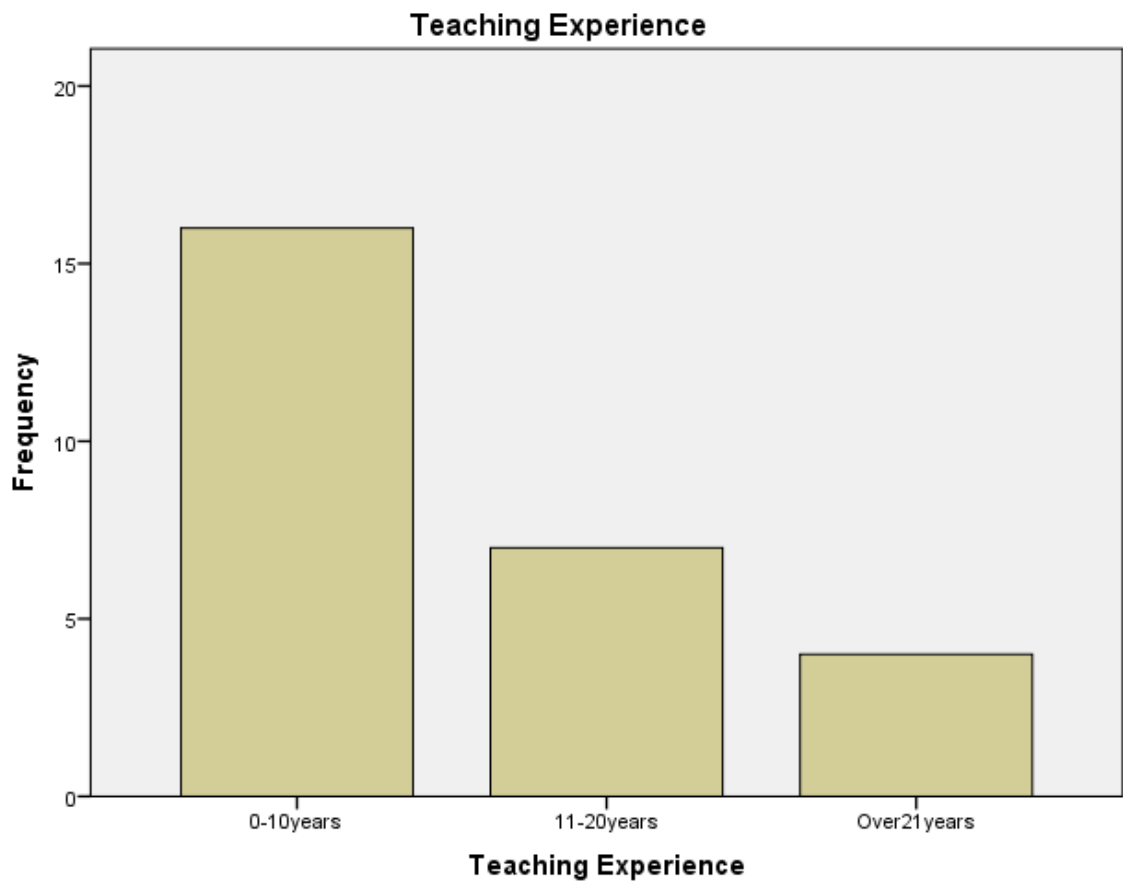


Figure 4.3: Teachers' Teaching Experience

As shown in Figure 4.3, the experience of the majority (59.3%) of the teachers was ten years and below. Followed by those who had a teaching experience ranging between 11 to 20 years, accounting for 25.9%, while a few (14.8%) had taught for over 21 years. This implies that the experience of majority of the teachers in pre-primary schools in Voi Sub-county was below ten years.

4.3.5 Level of Training

Further, the study sought to find out the respondents' level of training. The results are as presented in Figure 4.4:

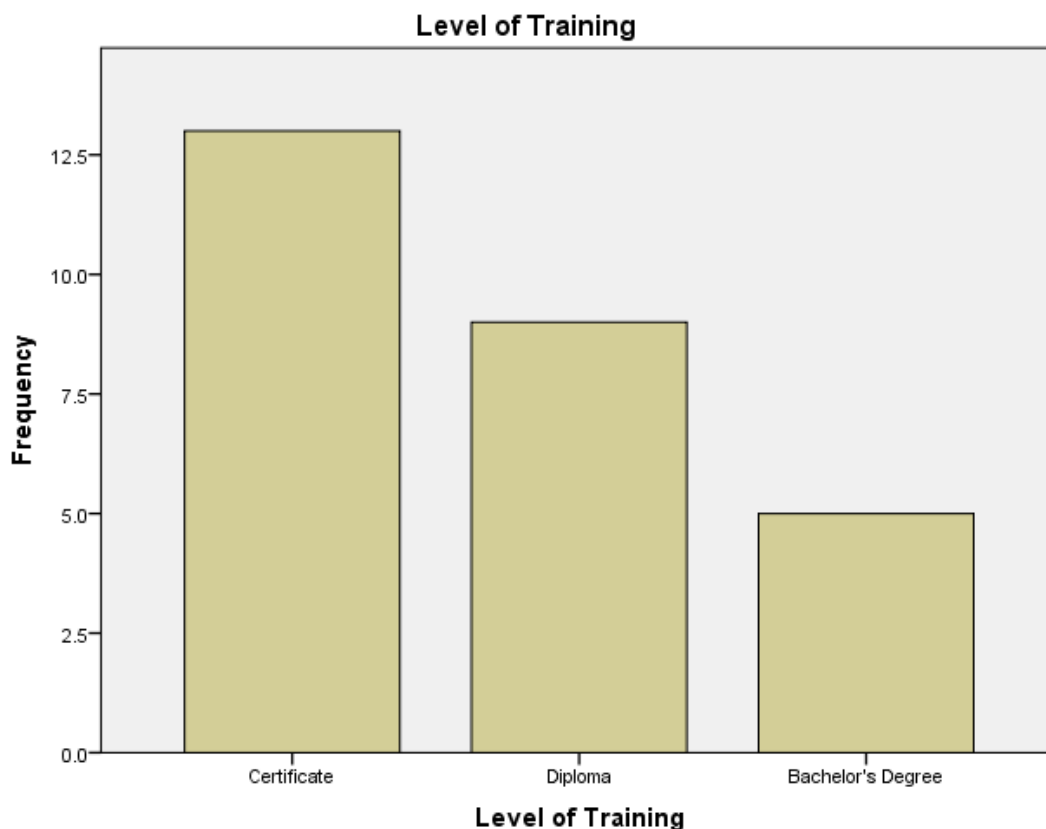


Figure 4.4: Teachers' Level of Training

As shown in Figure 4.4, majority of the teachers (48.1%) had certificates, followed by those who had diplomas, accounting for 33.3%, and the least (18.5%) had bachelor's

degree. The results show that majority of the pre-primary schoolteachers in the Sub-county were certificate and diploma holders. The results show that all the teachers were trained and qualified to teach in pre-primary schools. However, majority of them did not advance their studies after obtaining their first training, this could be due to lack of motivation as a result of poor remuneration by the County government.

4.4 Extent Teachers Use Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

The first objective of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers in pre-primary schools use mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Voi sub-county. The information on this objective was collected using questionnaires, which were administered to teachers. In addition, the researcher interviewed the head teachers to establish the extent to which they encouraged use of mother tongue in their schools. The results are presented in the subsequent sections.

4.4.1 Number of Schools which Encourage use of Mother tongue as a medium of Instruction

To achieve the first objective, the researcher sought to find out the number of schools which encourage teachers to use mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The teachers were asked to indicate in the questionnaire, whether their respective schools supported use of mother tongue in teaching and learning. The results are presented in Table 4.3:

Table 4.3: Number of School which Encourage use of Mother tongue as a medium of Instruction

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Public	15	55.6
Private	12	44.4
Total	27	100

As it can be seen in Table 4.3, 29.6% of the teachers indicated that their schools encouraged teachers to use mother tongue as a medium of instruction while 70.4% of the teachers indicated that they were not encouraged to use mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The results show that majority of the pre-primary schools in Voi sub-county were not supporting use mother tongue as a medium of instruction. This means that learners in majority of the pre-primary schools were taught using English or Kiswahili, which are the languages, which are most preferred by the teachers.

4.4.2 Number of Schools having a Policy Guiding Use of Mother Tongue

The researcher also sought to find out whether the pre-primary schools in Voi sub-county had policies guiding use of mother tongue in instruction. The results are presented in Table 4.4

Table 4.4: Number of Schools having a Policy Guiding Use of Mother Tongue in Instruction

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	8	29.6
No	19	70.4
Total	27	100.0

Table 4.4 shows that the majority of the schools did not have a policy guiding the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, as indicated by majority (70.4%) of the respondents. This is an indication that majority of the schools did not embrace use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

4.4.3 Teachers' Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

Further, the researcher delved to establish the extent to which the teachers used mother tongue in instruction. The teachers were given a questionnaire with statements describing usage of mother tongue in teaching and learning. The statements were rated on a five-point likert scale, 1-strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Undecided, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the statements. The results are presented in Table 4.5:

Table 4.5: Mean Scores in Teachers' Use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. I use mother tongue to teach all activity areas	27	1	5	3.22	.801
2. I use mother tongue to teach some lessons	27	2	5	3.37	.884
3. I use mother tongue to explain difficult concepts	27	1	4	2.37	.688
4. I use of mother tongue when teaching values	27	1	4	2.70	1.171
Total	27	1	5	2.91	1.176

According to Table 4.5, the range of mean scores for teachers using mother tongue as a medium of teaching was 2.70 to 3.77. The overall mean score was 2.91, this indicate that use of mother tongue was low. This suggests that the majority of teachers rarely used mother tongue as a medium of instruction, demonstrating their preference for English and Kiswahili over mother tongue as the language of instruction.

4.4.4: Teachers' Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction by Type of School

The researcher sought to establish whether there was any significant difference in use of mother tongue in instruction based on the type of school. The results are presented in table 4.6:

Table 4.6: Overall Mean Scores in Teachers' Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction by Type of School

Type of School	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std
Public	15	1	5	2.95	.47
Private	12	1	5	2.86	.45

Table 4.6 shows that the mean score in use of mother tongue in instruction for teachers in public schools was 2.95, while that of teachers in private schools was 2.86. The results indicate that the mean score in use of mother tongue in instruction for teachers in public schools was slightly higher than private pre-primary schools. This implies that teachers in public pre-primary schools used mother tongue as a medium of instruction more than the teachers in private pre-primary schools. Generally, the results imply that the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction was low in the schools.

4.4.5 Teachers' Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction by Gender

Further, the study sought to find out whether there was any significant difference in use of mother tongue in instruction based on teachers' gender. The results are presented in table 4.7:

Table 4.7: Overall Mean Scores in Teachers' Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction by Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std
Male	10	2.68	.11
Female	17	3.06	.11

Table 4.7 shows that mean score in use of mother tongue in instruction for male teachers was 2.68 with a standard deviation of .11, while that of female teachers was 3.06 with a standard deviation of .11. The results show that the mean score in use of mother tongue in instruction for female teachers was higher. This implies that female teachers used mother tongue as a medium of instruction more than male teachers.

Generally, the results presented on tables 4.7., 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11 show that the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction was low in pre-primary schools in Voi Sub-county. Majority of the schools preferred use of English and Kiswahili to mother tongue. The head teachers echoed the same during interviews as reported:

“Our pre-primary school teachers do not teach using mother tongue because the teachers and pupils come from different ethnic communities.” Head teacher 1 private pre-primary school

“Yes, the teachers use mother tongue sometimes, especially when they are explaining complex concepts to the learners. But most of the time we allow use of Kiswahili or English.” Head teacher 2 from public pre-primary school

“No. In pre-primary grades, teaching is done using English or Kiswahili.”

Head teacher 3 from private pre-primary school

“We do not use mother tongue, Instruction is done using Kiswahili and English.” Head teacher 4 from private pre-primary school

“Mother tongue is not allowed in this school. Strictly we use English or Kiswahili. So teachers are expected to address learners using either English or Kiswahili.” Head teacher 5 from private pre-primary school

“No. We do not expect anyone to use mother tongue in the institution. All the teachers use English or Kiswahili only” Head teacher 6 from private pre-primary school

“Not always but sometimes the teachers use mother tongue to explain difficult concepts that learners may not understand well when taught using English or Kiswahili.” Head teacher 7 from public pre-primary school

“Yes. A day is set for mother tongue talking once in a week. Teachers use mother tongue in classrooms when there is a need to, for example in explaining difficult concepts that can be better explained in mother tongue only.” Head teacher 8 from public pre-primary school

The responses from the head teachers indicate that majority of the pre-primary schools do not prefer use of mother tongue in instruction because the teachers and learners come from different ethnic communities. The findings concur with the findings reported by Nyambura (2016), who carried out her study in Kiharu, Murang'a County, Kenya. The study established that Mother Tongue was less preferred to English in schools as a medium of instruction. Similarly, the findings are in agreement with the findings reported by Mberia (2016), who conducted a study on Mother Tongues as Media of

Instruction in Kenya. The study reported that the policy allowing for mother tongue use in the lower levels of formal learning as a medium of teaching had attracted reactions ranging from skepticism at best, to hostility at the very worst, not only from parents but also from teachers and other members of society who consider mother tongue as being of little value.

In addition, the findings are in line with the findings reported by Nyarigotu and Ambiyio (2014), who researched on the importance of attitude in mother tongue implementation in instruction in Kenya. The findings from the study revealed that use of mother tongue was a challenge in schools due to existent of various languages, dialects and society's skepticism of mother tongue use in education and shortage of finances. In a similar vein, the findings concur with the findings reported by Gacheche (2010) who examined the difficulties of adopting mother tongue-based language-in-education policies. The study reported that effective implementation of the policy on use of mother tongue in education was a challenge due to lack of resources and lack of political will.

Further, the findings concur with the findings reported by Khejeri (2014)'s study, which explored the attitudes of teachers on use of mother tongue as an instruction medium in Lower Primary Schools in Hamisi District, Kenya. The study established that in lower primary schools, mother tongue was valued less than English as teaching language. Also, the findings agree with the findings reported by Begi (2014) who investigated how mother tongue is used as an instruction medium in ECD centers in Kenya as way of preserving Kenyan culture. The findings revealed that Kiswahili together with English was opted to be the instruction languages as compared to the Mother Tongue in most of the studied areas. On the same breath, Manyonyi, Mbori, and Okwako (2016) investigated teachers' attitudes on using mother tongue as teaching medium in

pre-primary schools from Bungoma South Sub-County. The study established that lower primary school teachers did not prefer mother tongue medium of teaching, these findings are in agreement with the findings from the current study. This implies that teachers in pre-primary schools in Voi Sub-county do not prefer using mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

4.5 Teacher Related Challenges in Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

The second objective of the study was to determine teacher related challenges in use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Data on this objective was collected using questionnaires, the respondents were asked to indicate the factors making them not to use mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The results are presented in Table 4.8

Table 4.8: Teacher Related Challenges hindering use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

	Challenges reported by teachers	Frequency	%
1.	Teachers and learners come from different communities	18	66.7
2.	Teachers not trained how to teach using mother tongue	17	63.0
3.	Teachers not familiar with some mother tongue words	17	63.0
4.	Teachers not competent in use of mother tongue	16	59.3
5.	Teachers have negative attitude towards mother tongue	16	59.3
6.	Teachers not familiar with mother tongue	15	55.6
7.	Makes learners not active in class	7	25.9

The results in Table 4.8 show that the main teacher related challenges experienced in schools while using mother tongue as a medium of instruction include: teachers and

learners were from different communities as indicated by majority (66.7%) of the respondents, teachers were not trained how to teach using mother tongue and were not familiar with mother tongue as indicated by 63.0% of the respondents; and teachers had negative attitude towards mother tongue and were not competent in use of mother tongue as indicated by 59.3% of the respondents. The other challenges that were reported include: Children were multicultural and learners were coming from different communities as indicated by 55.6% of the respondents; Children were not familiar with mother tongue as indicated by 51.9% of the respondents; mother tongue was rarely used at home by family members as indicated by 40.7% of the respondents; and use of mother tongue made learners less active in class as indicated by 25.9% of the respondents. The results imply that use of mother tongue as medium of instruction in the pre-primary schools was hampered by a number of challenges.

Similarly, the head teachers reported same sentiments are reported;

“Teachers are not engaged in any form of training and preparation on use of mother tongue in instruction. The fact that some of the teachers come from other communities, they are not familiar with the local language. Therefore, it is challenging to expect all the teachers to use mother tongue when teaching.” Head teacher 1 from Private pre-primary school

“Teachers experience challenges in using the local language when teaching because not all the pupils come from the same community. That being the case, some learners are not conversant with the language; therefore the teachers oppose the use of mother tongue.” Head teacher 2 from public pre-primary school

“Some of the teachers associate mother tongue with low social-economic class, therefore, they have negative attitude towards use of the language, and they prefer using English or Kiswahili.” Head teacher 3 from private pre-primary school

“Not all teachers come from the same communities like the students. That is why some of them are not competent in using mother tongue.” Head teacher 4 from private pre-primary school

“Teachers are reluctant in using mother tongue in teaching and learning because this is a cosmopolitan locality with different tribes meaning that some teachers and learners are not conversant with the local language.” Head teacher 5 from public pre-primary school

“In this school, majority of the teachers do not recognize mother tongue, hence it is almost forgotten. Remember, we teach mixed tribes of learners so if teachers use mother tongue, some learners will not understand” Head teacher 6 from private pre-primary schools

“Teachers are not willing to teach using mother tongue because most learners do not use the language even when they are at home .If learners are not fully exposed to their mother tongue by their parents, it is challenging for teachers to use the same.” Head teacher 7 from private pre-primary school

These findings concur with the findings reported by Umar (2018) who investigated the influence of teacher factors on use of mother tongue when teaching mathematics. The research reported that teachers do not mostly use mother tongue when teaching mathematics because the teachers have not been trained on how they can use mother

tongue when teaching. Similarly, the findings are in agreement with the findings reported by Ephias, Newman and Lilian (2015) who looked at how parents and teachers viewed use of language in Early Childhood Development in the Norton District, in Zimbabwe. The results indicated that majority (86%) of teachers and parents had negative attitudes and preferred to use English as an educational medium in early childhood growth.

In addition, the findings from the current study are in line with the findings reported by Njoroge and Gathigia (2011) who established that majority of teachers had negative attitudes on use of mother tongue. They viewed African languages as inferior to second language such as English. This defeatist attitude towards the use of native languages for schooling was linked to the African language's inferior position during the colonial period. Therefore, they see English as a language that helps to bridge people's communication gaps. This, however, only threatens the survival of many mother tongues. Similarly, the findings concur with the findings reported by Khejeri (2014) who researched on the attitude by teachers on mother tongue use as a teaching medium in lower primary schools in Hamisi District. The study established that mother tongue was not as well-liked as English, English was extremely appreciated by parents and teachers. Based on the findings from the current study and the findings from the reviewed studies, it is evident that use of mother tongue in pre-primary schools is challenged by a number of factors, which hinder its implementation.

4.4 School Related Challenges in Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

The third objective of the study was to establish the school related challenges in use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Information on this objective was collected

using a questionnaire, the teachers were asked to indicate the school related challenges that hamper use of mother tongue in instruction. Table 4.9 presents the challenges, which were identified by the teachers; the table also shows the number of teachers who identified each challenge.

Table 4.9: School Related Challenges in Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

Challenges reported by teachers	Frequency	%
1. The use of the mother tongue is not encouraged by parents	22	81.4
2. Lack of books in mother tongue	21	77.8
3. The use of MT as a medium of education is opposed by primary school teachers.	20	74.1
4. MT is not a language of instruction in primary schools.	19	70.4
5. lack of MT educational materials	17	63.0
6. Lack of support from school administration	16	59.3
7. Lack of adequate funds developing materials in mother tongue	14	51.9
8. Lack of school policy on use of MT in instruction	13	48.1
9. Schools employs teachers from other tribes	11	40.7
10. Lack of mother tongue lessons to develop children's competency in mother tongue.	7	25.9

Table 4.9 shows that the main school related challenges experienced in schools while using mother tongue as a medium of instruction include: Parents do not support the use of mother tongue as indicated by majority (81.4%) of the respondents; lack of books in mother tongue as indicated by 77.8% of the respondents ; primary school teachers

oppose use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction as indicated by 74.1% of the respondents; mother tongue not used as a medium of instruction in primary schools as indicated by 70.4% of the respondents; lack of instructional materials in mother tongue as indicated by 63.0% of the respondents; lack of support from school administrations as indicated by 59.3% of the respondents; and lack of adequate funds developing materials in mother tongue as indicated by 51.9% of the respondents. The other challenges include: lack of school policy on use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction; schools employ teachers from other tribes; and lack of mother tongue lessons to develop children's competency in mother tongue.

The results show that use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools in Voi Sub-county is hampered by a number of school related challenges. On the same vein, the head teachers shared a number of school related challenges affecting use of mother tongue in instruction as reported:

“The schools don't have instructional materials in mother tongue, there are no books written in the local language, therefore it will be difficult to teach using the language without materials” Head teacher 1 from public pre-primary school

“The school policy doesn't allow teachers to use mother tongue. Some schools do not allow mother tongue to be used in the school because not all the teachers and students come from the same community and some of the parents despises the use of mother tongue.” Head teacher 2 from private pre-primary school

“Pre-primary schools lack funds to purchase the required learning materials printed in local language” Head teacher 3 from public pre-primary school

“The school has not recognized use of mother tongue in instruction. As such, there is no time allocated for mother tongue lessons” Head teacher 4 from private pre-primary school

“The schools have enrolled learners from various localities and employed teachers who do not come from the catchment area. It is therefore challenging to implement the use of mother tongue in teaching and learning.” Head teacher 5 from public pre-primary school

“There are no books for reference/teaching and learning materials. In addition use of mother tongue has not been embraced by the community as a medium of instruction, all these hinder use of mother tongue in pre-primary schools” Head teacher 6 from public pre-primary school

“Mother tongue is not embraced in the pre-primary section because some of the learners are not yet fully exposed to their mother tongue. Again, the school does not have teaching aids like written books in mother tongue.” Head teacher 7 from private pre-primary school

“Not all teachers come from the same community as learners. So the school only advocates teaching and learning to be done using national languages i.e English and Kiswahili.” Head teacher 8 from public pre-primary school

Based on the responses given by the head teachers during interviews, it is evident that majority of the pre-primary schools did not embrace mother tongue as a medium of instruction because they were faced by a lot of school related challenges. These findings are in agreement with the findings by Awopetu (2016), who assessed how mother tongue in public schools influenced learning capability of children in Early Childhood

classrooms in Nigeria. The study established that use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction might be influenced by school circumstances.

Similarly, the findings agree with the findings reported by Singh (2014) who researched on the use of mother tongue in diverse language province in private schools in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study found out that use of mother tongue in schools was challenged by existence of more than one local language in the school. The study reported that there were challenges in instruction medium in cases where two languages were considered as local languages.

Further, the findings concur with the findings reported in Ethiopia by Bachore (2014) who investigated utilization of Mother Tongue Based Classroom Instruction in Sidama Zone School Community. The study established that a large portion of the parents and almost half of learners had an opposing perception on employment of mother tongue as a medium of teaching. As a result, the community's view and attitude were linked to the learners' failure in mother tongue-based education.

In addition, the findings are in line with the findings reported in by Nyarigoti and Ambiyu (2014) who explored influence of teacher attitude in use of mother tongue in teaching in public primary schools in Kenya. The study reported that the assortment of dialects and lingos, conflicting methodologies used to manage the circumstance, incredulous mentalities of society toward primary language use in instruction, shortage of monetary assets, educational issues, and the conflict between ethnic loyalties from one perspective and the situation of the poor on the other are a portion of the difficulties confronting the utilization of mother tongue in Kenyan schools. Based on the findings

from the current study and the reviewed studies, it is evident that use of mother tongue in instruction in pre-primary schools is hampered by many school related challenges.

4.6 Strategies to enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools

The fourth objective was to identify strategies that enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. Data on this objective was collected using questionnaires, the teachers were asked to indicate the strategies that can be put in place in their respective schools to enhance use of mother tongue in instruction. Table 4.10 presents the strategies reported by teachers and the number of teachers who reported each strategy.

Table 4.10: Strategies to Improve the Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

	Strategies	Frequency	%
1.	Encouraging parents to use mother tongue when speaking to their children.	20	74.0
2.	Encouraging children to speak in mother tongue while at home and school	18	66.7
3.	Training teachers on how to use mother tongue in instruction	17	63.0
4.	Mobilize funds for acquiring or developing materials for teaching using mother tongue	14	51.9
5.	Sensitization of parents on importance of using MT in instruction	13	48.1
6.	Recruiting teachers who are good in speaking mother tongue	12	44.4
7.	Providing time for mother tongue lesson in the school time table.	10	37.0
8.	Support music festivals to enhance use of MT	8	29.6

As shown in Table 4.10, the teachers suggested strategies that can enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. The strategies include: Encouraging parents to use mother tongue when speaking to their children as indicated by 74.0% of the respondents; Encouraging children to speak in mother tongue while at home and school as indicated by 66.7% of the respondents; Training teachers on how to use mother tongue in instruction as indicated by 63.0% of the respondents; Mobilizing funds for acquiring or developing materials for teaching using mother

tongue as indicated by 51.9% of the respondents; and Sensitization of parents on importance of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction as indicated by 48.1% of the respondents. The other strategies include; recruiting teachers who are good in speaking mother tongue; providing time for mother tongue lessons in the school time table; and Support music festivals to enhance use of mother tongue.

Similarly the majority of the head teachers indicated that they were trying to put some mechanisms in place to implement the policy on use of mother tongue in pre-primary schools as reported:

“It is not easy but we are trying to encourage parents to speak to their children in mother tongue when at home. If they learn their local language at home, it will be easy for teachers to use the language in instruction.” Head teacher 1 from public pre-primary school

“The school has not implemented any strategy to enhance use of mother tongue because it is not applicable.” Head teacher 2 from public pre-primary school

“We are thinking of starting sensitization meetings/program to educate parents on the importance of using mother tongue in teaching and learning, especially for young children.” Head teacher 3 from public pre-primary school

“We encourage all learners including the one in preschool to participate in music activities, through such activities they will learn their traditional songs in their own mother tongue and learn other mother tongue vocabularies.” Head teacher 3 from private pre-primary school

“Teachers encourage parents to teach their children in mother tongue at home. In school, they are taught folk songs, storytelling and skits in mother tongue during music activities.” Head teacher 4 from private pre-primary school

“We introduced a mother tongue day/lesson once in a week, and that has come a long way in helping the pupils appreciate and learn their mother tongue.”

Head teacher 5 from public pre-primary school

The results imply that there are a number of strategies that can be put in place to enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The findings are in agreement with the findings reported by Lartec, Belisario and Cammagay (2014) who researched on teacher techniques and strategies in adopting a multilingual classroom based on mother tongue instruction. The findings revealed that educators employed strategies such as target language translation into mother tongue, multilingual learning, lingua franca, improvisation of mother tongue-written learning materials, learning remediation, and utilization of mother tongue-written literary work as a motivator. Similarly, the findings concur with the findings reported by Dhillon and Wanjiru (2013) who established that teachers’ strategies to tackle challenges hindering use of first language in classroom included use of diverse educational approaches, establishing a warm classroom climate for teaching and providing a non-threatening atmosphere for language acquisition. The study also indicated that the most prevalent individual strengthening strategies like taking vocabulary notebook and group-based interactions with their colleagues are examples of learner approaches used in schools to enhance language acquisition.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of research findings, conclusions and the recommendations emanating from the study findings based on the study objectives

5.2 Summary of Findings

The first objective of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers in pre-primary schools used mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The study established that 29.6% of the pre-primary schools encouraged teachers to use mother tongue as a medium of instruction while 70.4% of the schools did not encourage use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. In addition, the study found out that majority of the pre-primary schools did not have a policy guiding the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, which is an indication that majority of the schools were not supporting use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Further, the study established that the overall mean score in teachers' use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction was 2.91. This indicates teachers' use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction was low. This implies that they preferred English and Kiswahili as medium of instruction to mother tongue.

The second objective of the study was to identify teacher related challenges in use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. The results showed that use of mother tongue in instruction was hindered by several teacher-related factors, which include: teachers and learners were from different communities, teachers were not trained how to teach using mother tongue and were not familiar with mother tongue,

teachers had negative attitude towards mother tongue and were not competent in use of mother tongue. The other challenges that were reported include: Children were multicultural and learners were coming from different communities, children were not familiar with mother tongue, mother tongue was rarely used at home by family members and use of mother tongue made learners less active in class.

The third objective was to establish school related challenges in use of mother tongue language as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. The results revealed that there were many school related challenges experienced in schools while using mother tongue as a medium of instruction, which include: Parents do not support the use of mother tongue in schools, lack of books in mother tongue, primary school teachers oppose use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, lack of policy on mother tongue as a medium of instruction in primary schools, lack of instructional materials in mother tongue, lack of support from school administrations and lack of adequate funds developing materials in mother tongue.

The fourth objective of the study was to determine strategies that can enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. The study established a number of strategies that can enhance use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. The strategies include: Encouraging parents to use mother tongue when speaking to their children, encouraging children to speak in mother tongue while at home and school, training teachers on how to use mother tongue in instruction, mobilizing funds for acquiring or developing materials for teaching using mother tongue and sensitization of parents on importance of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The other strategies include; recruiting teachers who are good in

speaking mother tongue; providing time for mother tongue lessons in the school time table; and supporting music festivals to enhance use of mother tongue.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings the study made the following conclusions:

The study concluded that majority of the pre-primary schools did not embrace use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The teachers rarely used mother tongue, as they preferred to use English and Kiswahili as the instruction languages.

In addition, the study concluded that use of mother tongue as medium of instruction in the pre-primary schools was hampered by a number of teacher related challenges which included: teachers and learners were from different communities, teachers were not trained how to teach using mother tongue and were not familiar with mother tongue, teachers had negative attitude towards mother tongue and were not competent in use of mother tongue.

Further, the study concluded that use of mother tongue language as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools was influenced by school related challenges, which include: Parents do not support the use of mother tongue in schools, lack of books in mother tongue, primary school teachers oppose use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, lack of policy on mother tongue as a medium of instruction in primary schools, lack of instructional materials in mother tongue, lack of support from school administrations and lack of adequate funds developing materials in mother tongue.

Finally, the study concluded that use of mother tongue in pre-primary schools can be enhanced by the following strategies: Encouraging parents to use mother tongue when speaking to their children, encouraging children to speak in mother tongue while at

home and school and training teachers on how to use mother tongue in instruction. The other strategies include: mobilizing funds for acquiring or developing materials for teaching using mother tongue, sensitization of parents on importance of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction, recruiting teachers who are good in speaking mother tongue, providing time for mother tongue lessons in the school time table and supporting music festivals to enhance use of mother tongue.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the study recommends that:

- i. The Government in collaboration with the International Organizations and Nongovernmental Organizations should sponsor development and production of culturally relevant instructional resources and in-service training of pre-primary school teachers on use of mother tongue as a language of instruction. This will enhance implementation of the language policy in pre-primary schools in Kenya.
- ii. The Ministry of Education and its sub sectors like the Teachers' service commission and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should come together to address the challenges identified to be in the path of implementing the language policy. Further, the Ministry of Education should put mechanisms in place to ensure full implementation of the language policy which states that mother tongue or language of the catchment area should be the medium of instruction in pre-primary and lower primary schools.
- iii. Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should ensure that the curriculum is culturally-relevant in order to impart culturally-relevant education; and facilitate the production of culturally-relevant materials that support the use of mother tongue as

a medium of instruction. Other Publishers should also produce instructional materials which are culturally relevant and affordable.

- iv. Teacher Training Institutions should equip teacher trainees with skills on how to develop culturally relevant instructional materials and help them understand the benefits of mother tongue. Further, the County government should organize workshops for training pre-primary school teachers on how to teach using local languages and how to improvise instructional resources that are culturally-relevant in local languages, and equip them with the current strategies on local language instruction.
- v. Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in collaboration with the head teachers should organize regular refresher training, capacity-building and sensitization meetings for teachers and parents on the importance of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Further, teachers should design more interactive strategies such as debates, drama, music activities, art and craft activities and other instructional activities that allow learners to participate in the learning using their local language.

5.4.1 Recommendations for further studies

- i. The present study focused on challenges influencing use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary schools. A similar study should be carried in lower primary grades.
- ii. It is also important that a study is conducted in Teacher Training colleges to find out how teacher trainees are prepared to teach using local languages.
- iii. This research work was carried out in one sub-county in Taita Taveta County. Related studies should be done in other counties in Kenya and compare findings.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS'

INSTRUCTIONS

The questionnaire intends to collect facts related to mother tongue use in pre-primary grades. You are requested to honestly complete the questionnaire by ticking the right choice in all questions. Do not write your name or any detail that you feel will lead to your identification. Information in this questionnaire will be secretly maintained and only meant for achieving the study purpose.

SECTION A: PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Specify your school category

Public () Private ()

2. Gender?

Male () Female ()

3. Age?

20-30years () 31-40years () 41-50years () Over 50years ()

4. State the length of your teaching experience in pre-primary school?

0-10years () 11-20years () over 21years ()

5. i) Are you trained?

Yes () No ()

ii) If yes, what level of training do you have?

a. Certificate ()

b. Diploma ()

c. Bachelor's Degree ()

d. Masters ()

e. Doctor of Philosophy ()

SECTION B: MOTHER TONGUE USE AS AN INSTRUCTION MEDIUM

6. Does your respective school support use of mother tongue in teaching and learning?

Yes () No ()

7. Does your school have a policy on use of mother tongue in instruction?

Yes () No ()

8. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the statements by ticking (√) against your choice.

	Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	I use mother tongue to teach all subjects in pre-primary grades					
2	I use mother tongue to teach some lessons					
3	I only use mother tongue when explaining complex difficult concepts					
4	I never use mother tongue when teaching					

SECTION D: TEACHER RELATED CHALLENGES IN USE OF MOTHER TONGUE IN INSTRUCTION

9. What are the teacher related challenges you experience while using the mother tongue as a tool for teaching?

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

(v)

SECTION E: SCHOOL RELATED CHALLENGES ON USE OF MOTHER TONGUE IN INSTRUCTION

10. What are the school related challenges you experience while using mother tongue as a medium of instruction?

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

(v)

SECTION F: STRATEGIES OF ENHANCING USE OF MOTHER TONGUE

11. Methods has your school implemented to increase the utilization of mother tongue as an instruction medium in the pre-primary grades?

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

1. Are your pre-primary school teachers using mother tongue when teaching?
2. Is there a policy that guides mother tongue language use in pre-primary school?
3. Are the teachers using more effective and active teaching methods on children to help them understand mother tongue?
4. Is there a standardized curriculum that enables learners develop a strong foundation in the mother tongue and a quality bridge to transit to the second language?
5. In your opinion, what teacher related factors that may be hindering effective use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary school?
6. Please explain if you have enough teaching and learning resources to promote the reading in mother tongue?
7. Are your teachers involved in developing teaching and learning resources for mother tongue?
8. Are teachers engaged in any training and preparation of using mother tongue in instruction?
9. What school related challenges which affect use of mother tongue in your pre-primary school?
10. What strategies has your school put in place to enhance use of mother tongue in instruction?

APPENDIX III: RESEARCH APPROVAL FROM GRADUATE SCHOOL



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

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

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 810901 Ext. 4150

Internal Memo

FROM: Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 30th June, 2022

TO: Harriet Ondeko Makokha
C/o Early Childhood & Special
Needs Education Dept.

REF: E55/OL/CTY/32106/2016

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

We acknowledge receipt of your revised Project Proposal as per our recommendations raised by the Graduate School Board at its meeting of 31st March, 2022, Entitled, "**Challenges Influencing use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction in Pre- Primary Schools in Taita Taveta County, Kenya**".

You may now proceed with your Data Collection, Subject to Clearance with Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation.

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

Thank you.

HARRIET ISABOKE
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

C.c. Chairman, Department of Early Childhood and Special Needs Education

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Nyakwara Begi
C/o Early Childhood & Special Needs Education
Kenyatta University

**APPENDIX IV: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FROM GRADUATE
SCHOOL**



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

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

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P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Our Ref: E55/OL/CTY/32106/2016

DATE: 5th May, 2022

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,


**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR ESTHER HARIET ONDEKO MAKOKHA -
REG. NO. E55/OL/CTY/32106/2016**

I write to introduce Ms. Esther Harriet Ondeko Makokha who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. She is registered for M.Ed degree programme in the **Department of Early Childhood and Special Needs Education**.

Ms. Makokha intends to conduct research for a M.Ed Project Proposal entitled, **“Challenges Influencing use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction in Pre-Primary Schools in Taita Taveta County, Kenya”**.






Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

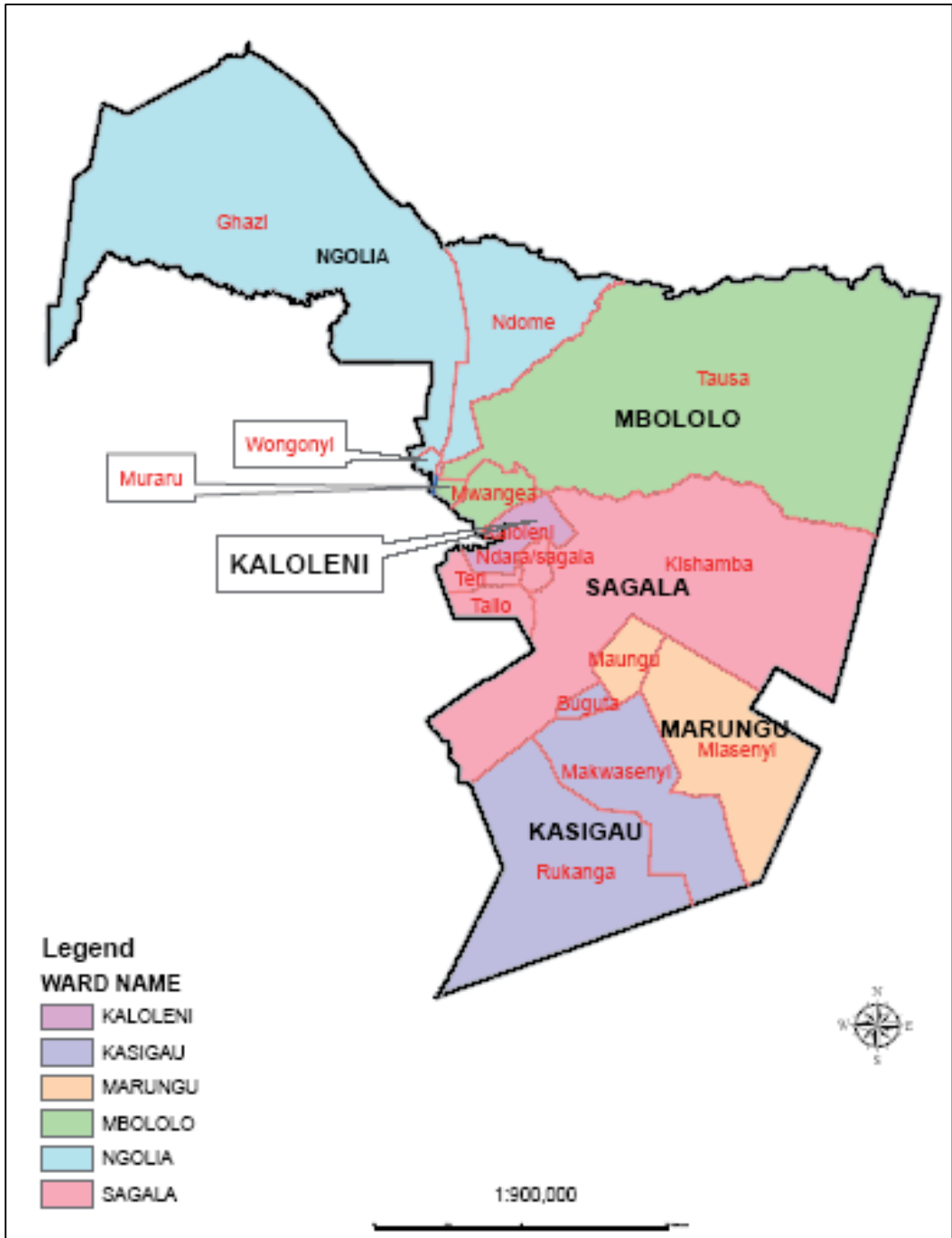

PROF. ELISIBIBA KIMANI
DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

EK/nn

APPENDIX V: RESEARCH PERMIT FROM NACOSTI

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
RefNo: 427238	Date of Issue: 08/November/2022
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
<p>This is to Certify that Miss.. ESTHER Harriet ONDEKO of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Taita-Taveta on the topic: CHALLENGES INFLUENCING USE OF MOTHER TONGUE AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN TAITA TAVETA COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 08/November/2023.</p>	
License No: NACOSTI/P/22/21706	
427238	
Applicant Identification Number	Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code
	
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APPENDIX VI: MAP OF VOI SUB-COUNTY



Source: Taita Taveta County Government (2014)