

**INFLUENCE OF UTILIZATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES
ON ATTAINMENT OF BASIC READING SKILLS AMONG GRADE THREE
PUPILS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN SAMETA SUB-COUNTY, KISII
COUNTY, KENYA**

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Accepted, October 29th, 2023

Abstract

Research from various parts of the world has indicated that a significant number of students in public primary schools struggle with reading skills. Yet, in Sameta sub-county, there has been a noticeable gap, with no systematic studies pinpointing the factors leading to this challenge, especially among grade three pupils. This research gap motivated the present investigation, which sought to understand the determinants of reading skills achievement for grade three students in public primary schools of Sameta Sub-County, Kisii County, Kenya. Among the primary objectives of the study were to: Analyze the influence of grade three students' parental economic status on their reading skills achievement. Examine the impact of the utilization of teaching and learning resources on students' basic reading proficiency. Investigate how the teachers' educational qualifications shape the reading skills outcomes among grade three learners. The target group for this research consisted of 45 grade three teachers, 45 public primary schools in Sameta sub-County, 2,025 parents of grade three students, and a Quality Assurance Officer from Kisii County. Employing a descriptive survey design, the study used purposive sampling for selecting schools, representative grade three teachers, and the Quality Assurance Officer. Meanwhile, random sampling was applied for the selection of parents. The research instruments included interview guides and questionnaires. The instrument's validity was ascertained through a pilot study and expert review, while its reliability was verified using the test-retest method. Data, both primary and secondary, was gathered, analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The study's results highlighted the positive impact of provision of teaching and learning resources on their literacy outcomes. The findings also underscored the need for the provision of teaching and learning resources.

Keywords: *Teaching and Learning Resources, Basic Reading Skills, Grade Three Pupils*

INTRODUCTION

Children in today's society face a variety of challenges when it comes to acquiring the reading and writing skills necessary for basic literacy. In the context of the international situation, Canada, as a developed country, places a greater emphasis, beginning in preschool, on activities including reading; nonetheless, there are still pressing problems that need to be solved. Despite the fact that 260 million children lack literacy abilities in speaking and

writing, which is reported even at the standard eight level (Khoury-Metanis & Khateb, 2022). According to a study by the National Research Council, largely headquartered in the United States (2017), it will have been provided that early childhood is an essential era for the upgrading of the abilities and that it emphasizes the cultivation of development skills.

Research conducted in German by Kırkıç and Demir (2020).emphasized the degree of success of basic reading skills among pre-school kids as well as the socioeconomic position of parents as a factor in basic reading skill achievement. Lichri discovered that the majority of students in lower primary had extremely low levels of activities as a result of the lack of funding obtained from their parents. This had a detrimental influence on students' fundamental reading literacy skills. Reading approaches, as indicated by Lokshyna et al. (2021) contribute to an increase in the stilled labor force participation and social inclusion, leading to the creation of a society that is identifiable.

According to the findings of Ficher (2018), the regions of the world with the lowest rates of reading skills in 2017 were sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia. In sub-Saharan Africa, there will be 24% of illiterate adults, and in Asia, there will be 53%. According to the findings of the institution, this pattern may be reversed if more attention is paid to the formative period that occurs throughout elementary school. According to the findings of a survey that was carried out by Wachira (2016), the vast majority of students are not aware of the primary reading abilities that are required of them throughout their formative years when seen in relation to the national curriculum. In addition, the problem is more prevalent among children who come from families that are economically and socially disadvantaged when compared to children who come from privileged homes.

According to a research by Uwezo Kenya (2018), 4% of grade eight students were unable to read a tale book written for grade three. In the similar vein, research conducted by Uwezo (2018) indicated that three students out of ten in grade three are capable of reading a storybook intended for grade three, whereas just one student out of ten in grades four and five was able to do so without difficulty.

The accomplishment of reading skills among students in Kisii County is a problem that has to be addressed. In comparison to the national average of 39.04% of class three students who are unable to read through hadith and 42.39% of class three students who are unable to flip through a tale book, only 48.91% of class three students in Kisii County are unable to read through hadith and a story book. This is in contrast to the national average of 39.04% of class three students who are unable to read through hadith. This is an indicator that children in Sameta sub-County continue to have poor reading skills accomplishment, and the present research studied the variables that are contributing to pupils' low reading skills performance.

Uwezo Kenya advised that schools and counties should put greater weight to building a wonderful foundation for the acquisition and learning of long-term reading and mathematics ability skills among students in the first few years of primary school. This recommendation was made in light of the fact that literacy and mathematical ability skills are essential for students' future success. The purpose of this research was to determine the factors that influence the level of reading proficiency attained by third-grade students attending public primary schools in the Sameta sub-county. This level of reading proficiency is a precondition for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Vision 2030.

Statement of the problem

Strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation form the trinity of successful academic programs, especially in the realm of reading skills, which are foundational to all other academic pursuits. This is especially crucial at the lower primary levels where the foundation of literacy is established. When done correctly and with dedication, the benefits of these strategic interventions resonate throughout a student's academic journey, leading to higher satisfaction and achievement. A growing concern, as highlighted by Uwezo (2018), is the

literacy attainment gap that has become glaringly evident in primary pupils. This gap is not just a transient educational issue but a persistent challenge that demands immediate redress. Uwezo's data-driven research found that a staggering 48.91% of grade three pupils in Kisii County are unable to read a simple storybook independently, relying instead on someone else to read it to them (Momanyi, 2019). Such a statistic is not just alarming but also indicative of deeper systemic issues that plague the education sector.

Numerous researchers have tried to understand the reasons behind this literacy challenge. Their studies have zeroed in on factors such as poor language development in early years, the educational qualifications of teachers, and the limited number of academic staff in schools. Pribesh, Gavigan, & Dickinson (2015) emphasize the role of language as not just a medium of instruction but as a cognitive tool that shapes thought. Their research suggests that students who don't get robust language development experiences in their formative years find it challenging to cope with the reading demands of higher grades.

Furthermore, Whitford, Zhang and Katsiyannis (2018) elucidate the significant influence of teachers on students' reading abilities. Their findings indicate that the teacher's level of education, pedagogical skills, and personal commitment to literacy development are critical determinants of students' reading outcomes. A well-trained and passionate teacher can ignite the spark of literacy even in the most challenging environments.

Another aspect brought to light is the inadequate number of academic staff. Schools, especially in densely populated areas, often face high student-to-teacher ratios. Such circumstances not only dilute the quality of instruction but also limit personalized attention, making it harder for struggling readers to catch up. Kisii County, despite being a vibrant hub with potential, faces these challenges head-on. The situation becomes even more dire in Sameta sub-county. Here, despite the overarching efforts by Kisii County to uplift educational standards, reading skills lag behind when compared to other better-performing counties. This disparity establishes the pressing need for the current study which delves deep to unearth the specific determinants affecting reading skills achievement among grade three pupils in public primary schools in Sameta Sub-County.

This research is of utmost importance for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, by identifying the unique challenges faced by students in Sameta Sub-County, targeted interventions can be developed. These interventions can then be piloted in this region and, if successful, replicated in other similar regions facing literacy challenges. Secondly, by focusing on grade three pupils, the study highlights a crucial juncture in a student's academic journey. The transition from grade three to higher classes signifies a shift from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn.' Therefore, ensuring that students achieve reading proficiency by this stage can pave the way for subsequent academic success.

In conclusion, reading is a foundational skill, the bedrock upon which all other academic achievements are built. The challenges faced by grade three pupils in Kisii County, especially in Sameta sub-county, are a clarion call for all stakeholders – from policymakers to educators to parents – to come together and craft a strategic roadmap. This roadmap, grounded in research and evidence, will not just uplift reading standards but also shape the future of the next generation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

According to agency theory, one of the potential causes of conflict is the practice of managing people in which they prioritize their own personal profit above the value of the firm's shareholders. This may have an impact on the management of the capital structure of the organization. It's possible that this conduct will have an impact on the value of the company's stockholders as well. This notion may be traced back to the principal-agent relationship, which describes a situation in which one party undertakes activities with the

intention of safeguarding the interests of another party. Within the context of this connection, one of the parties makes an attempt to look out for the interests of the other. Jensen and Meckling (1976) were the ones who first described the relationship that exists between management action and the interests of a variety of stakeholders. This link arises because management activity affects those interests. Their findings were presented in an article that was published in the journal *Management Science*. In addition to that, it included the management of the organization's capital structure in addition to the expenditures that were spent by the agency.

Both the positivist agency theory and the principal-agent theory are considered to be two of the most significant sub-divisions that were generated by the theorists who were responsible for establishing the theory. According to Schaltegger and Burritt (2017), both parties have a lot in common due to the fact that the principle wants to make the most money possible off of their investment, and the agent wants to be paid appropriately. In other words, both parties want to achieve the same thing: maximum return on their investment. To put it another way, all sides are looking out for what they consider to be in their own personal best interests. Interactions between principals and agents may be seen taking place in a variety of settings at any one time. These include the links that arise between management and the direct subordinates that they have, as well as the connections that exist between management and the shareholders that the company has. According to Schaltegger and Wagner (2019), the possibility for moral hazard is the most major reason for worry in interactions between principals and agents. They state that this is because of the potential for unethical behavior to occur. This phrase describes a scenario in which one party could prioritize their own individual interests above the interests of the other party. The predicament that is referred to as the "agency problem" is one in which the agent places more importance on their own personal goals than they do on the interests of the principal. This occurs rather often and is the fundamental cause of what is commonly referred to as the "agency problem." The situation involves two different parties, and one of those parties has access to more information than the other party has. One of the many reasons why there is a conflict of interests in this situation is because of this. This suggests that one side has knowledge that the other side does not have access to.

Empirical Review

Gunning (2018) emphasizes the pivotal role of educational resources, teaching materials, and engaging visual aids in enhancing learning experiences. These resources not only facilitate comprehension of ideas but also ignite students' interest and active participation in the learning process. In Canada, Miller (2016) assert that teaching and learning resources are indispensable components of academic support, forming the foundation for effective educational programs. They stress that these materials provide valuable opportunities for students to apply their knowledge while aiding teachers in achieving their instructional goals. In situations where institutions face resource limitations, teachers are encouraged to showcase creativity by improvising and utilizing locally available materials.

A study conducted by Nsa, Ikot, and Udo (2018) in Nigeria focused on understanding the impact of academic content utilization on the performance of early childhood pupils in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area. The study utilized an experimental design involving management staff and assessed 200 pupils for analysis. While the examined evaluation used a quasi-experimental approach, the current study adopts a descriptive survey method.

Lumuli (2019) emphasizes the importance of a well-structured classroom environment tailored to students' preferences. Interactive displays in preschool settings, combined with carefully curated online resources, encourage students to explore teachers' suggestions actively. In 2017, the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, in collaboration with UNICEF, introduced a learner-centered approach to teaching and learning. According to the

Kenyan Ministry of Education Report (2016), students' learning experiences are influenced by the availability, distribution, and utilization of concept mastering methods. Thus, the present study aims to explore the impact of knowledge utilization and the availability of teaching materials on elementary reading abilities among primary pupils in the specific context of Sameta sub-county.

METHODOLOGY

The present study used descriptive research design because it describes the behavior of all the independent and dependent variables with the view of establishing relationship among them, whether they influence the each other, and characterize the current situation (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; Guest, 2013). The research was carried out at Sameta sub-County, which is located in Kisii County. The study targeted 45 grade three teachers, 45 public primary schools in Sameta sub-County, 2,025 parents of grade three pupils and one Quality Assurance Officer from Kisii County. The study included a number of different sampling approaches, including cluster, saturation, purposive, and random sampling. A questionnaire designed for the grade three teachers and interview schedule was employed to glean more detailed insights from the Quality Assurance Officer.

The gathered data will be systematized and coded using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v 21) software for streamlined analysis. By using both of these statistical techniques, the study was able to provide a comprehensive understanding of the data and draw meaningful conclusions regarding the influence of family socioeconomic factors on students' academic achievements. In the realm of descriptive analysis, information derived from the questionnaires and classroom observation schedules was classified, arranged, and summarized using frequency distribution tables. The inferential analysis involved chi-square test, and the correlation analysis technique.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Questionnaire return rate

The survey had a high level of participation among the respondents. This is evident from the fact that all of them, which amounts to 90 participants or 100% of the total, took the time and effort to complete and send back the questionnaires.

Provision of teaching and learning resources by school Management

Descriptive Statistics on the Provision of teaching and learning resources by school of Management

Table 1 offers a detailed breakdown of the feedback received concerning the extent to which management participates in the provisioning of these essential teaching and learning materials.

Table 1 : Management involvement in provision of teaching and learning materials

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	30	100
Total	30	100

The responses outlined in Table 1 indicate unanimous agreement among the respondents that the Management members actively participated in providing teaching and learning materials within the schools. This collaboration strengthened the institutions' capacity, showcasing the significant involvement of Management members in the day-to-day operations and the provision of educational materials. This acknowledgment suggests that the schools recognized the importance of engaging Management members in the process, indicating the proper delegation of responsibilities to them.

Contrasting this, a study conducted by Gakure (2013) in Gatanga Sub County highlighted issues such as lack of support from Boards of Management, strained relations between school managers and the Boards due to mismanagement of funds, leading to a scarcity of teaching materials and subsequently poor academic performance in public primary schools. However,

the situation in Kahuro presented a different scenario where Management members demonstrated robust support for school administrators, fostering a more positive environment.

Furthermore, Management members confirmed their active involvement in the procurement of teaching and learning materials by authorizing expenditures for these resources. The sub-county Director of Education affirmed that Management members were legally mandated to oversee all school expenditures, emphasizing their vital role in the procurement process.

In addition, teachers were actively engaged in ensuring the provision of teaching and learning materials. They maintained constant communication with the administration to ensure timely delivery of materials, actively sought donations from well-wishers, encouraged parents to contribute materials, and monitored the acquisition process to ensure transparency and adherence to accounting principles. These proactive measures demonstrated the clear roles and responsibilities of teachers in the provision of teaching and learning materials within the schools.

Table 2, presents the responses on various attributes related to the provision of teaching and learning materials, assessed using a Likert scale ranging from one to five.

Table 22 : Responses on Teaching and Learning Materials Provision

	Consideration of teachers as up to task of provision of teaching and learning materials in right manner		Total
	Yes	No	
	Members of the boards of management are always keen on the curriculum requirements of the school	Agree 13 Strongly Agree 7	10 0
Total	20	10	30
Regular interaction between Management members and teachers enables provision of teaching and learning materials	undecided 0 Agree 6 Strongly Agree 14	2 8 0	2 14 14
Total	20	10	30
A program of events that is adhered to enables provision of required teaching and learning materials	undecided 0 Agree 13 Strongly Agree 7	2 8 0	2 21 7
Total	20	10	30
Management is tasked with mandate of ensuring regular supply of pedagogy materials	Undecided 6 Agree 7 Strongly Agree 7	0 10 0	6 17 7
Total	20	10	30
School places major emphasis on the previous training and background of BOM members	Agree 20 Strongly Agree 3	0 7	20 10
Total	23	7	30

The responses from the majority of the participants (77%) indicated that the Boards of Management (BOM) were highly attentive to the curriculum requirements of the school. This

demonstrated that these schools had proactive and informed BOM members who were diligent about the teaching and learning materials needs. This insight shed light on the capabilities of the BOM members in sourcing teaching and learning materials, signifying the commitment of the schools to provide adequate resources for their students.

Furthermore, all respondents acknowledged the significance of the previous training and background of BOM members. This awareness indicated the schools' meticulous approach in selecting individuals for their Boards, focusing on their qualifications and expertise, particularly in the field of education. The emphasis on qualifications reflected the importance attached to the proficiency of the members and their ability to influence decisions related to the procurement of teaching and learning materials.

The responses also highlighted the effectiveness of regular interactions between BOM members and teachers in ensuring the provision of teaching and learning materials. This collaboration illustrated a cohesive relationship between the teaching staff and the Management members, promoting mutual understanding and facilitating optimal procurement practices. However, a small percentage of head teachers seemed uncertain about the existence of such mutual relations, suggesting potential challenges in delegation of authority and decision-making processes within these schools.

Additionally, the respondents confirmed the presence of well-defined programs and structures in their schools, enabling the consistent provision of teaching and learning materials. This systematic approach ensured regular follow-ups on material availability, requisitions by subject teachers, and proper documentation of procurement activities. The responses indicated a strong commitment to adhering to best practices and maintaining transparency in the procurement processes.

Moreover, a significant percentage of respondents (84%) believed that Management members were responsible for ensuring the regular supply of pedagogy materials. This demonstrated the schools' compliance with the Education Act and their commitment to involving the Management in the acquisition of teaching and learning materials. However, there were instances where principals felt that the Management's engagement in the procurement of pedagogy materials was insufficient, suggesting a lack of synergy and limited involvement between school administration and Management members in certain schools. The sub-county director of education and the Management members shared a similar, albeit slightly different perspective, indicating their involvement in facilitating the procurement process to some extent.

In summary, these responses highlighted the varied dynamics and levels of collaboration between school administrators, teachers, and Management members in the procurement of teaching and learning materials. While some schools demonstrated effective teamwork and adherence to best practices, others faced challenges in achieving cohesive decision-making processes, potentially impacting the quality and availability of educational resources.

Inferential Statistics Analysis on Provision of teaching and learning resources by school Management

Test Statistics

Table 33 : Inferential Statistics Analysis on Provision of teaching and learning resources by school Management

	Agree	Disagree
Chi-Square	.857 ^a	.714 ^b
df	4	5
Asymp. Sig.	.931	.982

Table 4: Correlations

	Agree	Disagree

Agree	Pearson Correlation	1	-.981**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	7	7
Disagree	Pearson Correlation	-.981**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	7	7

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The chi-square test was performed based on the premise that is greater than; the value of is between.931 and.982 has a value of 0.05 in standard English. Both of the resulting values were more than 0.05, which indicates that the observed frequencies for agreeing and disagreeing are not going to be substantially different from what the researcher would have anticipated getting by chance. As a result, the researcher came to the conclusion that there was no significant difference in the percentage of head teachers and Management members who agreed and disagreed with the supply of teaching and learning resources by school Boards of Management. The Pearson Product Moment correlation at two different ends of the scale is a perfect zero, and the threshold of significance is 0.01. This indicates that.000 is lower than.01, demonstrating that there is a degree of significance. This indicates that there was a considerable difference in the variables compared to what may have been predicted based on random chance alone.

Thematic Analysis on Provision of teaching and learning resources by school Management

The Sub County Director of Education interviewed agreed that Provision of teaching and learning resources by school Management was low. However, he noted that the head teachers were the ones to blame since they are the people on the ground and are supposed to report to the Management of the availability of teaching and learning resources.

The data captured on availability of Provision of teaching and learning resources by school Management was looked at from the qualitative and quantitative angles. In both cases, it was established that there was a deficiency in the provision of teaching and learning resources. It is imperative that head teachers should report to the Management on the availability of the physical resources.

Conclusions

Management team members played an essential role in providing educational resources to the schools. They were actively engaged in the process of obtaining teaching and learning materials. Their participation extended to approving expenses directed towards acquiring these essential tools for education. Educational resources to the school are paramount for the holistic development of an educational institution.

Recommendations

It is important that the members of management have access to resources that will make it easier for them to make arrangements for kitty that will be used for motivational reasons. To achieve the desired result of encouraging students to enhance their academic performance, it is imperative that the alumnae organizations of the schools, the broader communities, and any and all well-wishers be enlisted to make financial contributions to the pot. It's possible that this may be a sign that the schools will see an improvement in their overall academic performance.

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