

**EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES ON
LITERACY TEACHING SKILLS OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN IN KASIKEU ZONE,
MAKUENI COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Instructional strategies adopted by preschool teachers are critical in enhancing teaching of literacy skills. However, acquisition of such skills has been dismal. Thus, this study was carried out in an attempt to identify the encouragement and support provided by school environment and most importantly the role of teachers in enhancing early literacy instruction aimed at improving language development of preschool children. Thus, the main objective of this study was to evaluate the level of effectiveness of instructional strategies on teaching of literacy amongst preschool children in Kasikeu Zone, Makueni County, Kenya. The review was based on the concept of early childhood literacy, use of play, storytelling, songs and drama in relation to teaching of literacy amongst preschool children. The study applied both qualitative and quantitative approaches of methodology. The qualitative data was collected using observation checklists whereas quantitative data was collected using questionnaires. The study applied explanatory sequential design in which qualitative data helped explain or build upon initial quantitative results. The procedure started with the collection and analysis of quantitative data. This was followed by the subsequent collection and analysis of qualitative data. The second, qualitative phase of the study was designed so that it followed from the results of the first quantitative phase. The study was conducted amongst 8 sampled preschools. Target population for this study comprised 135 preschool teachers and 1065 preschool children all totaling to 1200. The researcher applied The Central Limit Theorem to sample 200 respondents. The study applied simple random sampling to select the respondents since it eliminated the feelings of bias and favoritism amongst the respondents. Analysis of data began by identifying common themes from the respondents' description of their experiences. Frequency counts of the responses were obtained to generate descriptive information about the respondents and to illustrate the general trend of findings on the various variables that were under investigation. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically along the study objectives whereas quantitative data was analyzed using ANOVA in Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS Version 21). Findings of the study were presented using tables. The study established that strategies adopted in teaching literacy skills serve to enhance preschool children's acquisition of reading, writing and listening skills. The study thus recommends that educators, teachers and other stakeholders should encourage parents to provide conducive environment to enable preschool children acquire reading, writing and listening skills. Preschool teachers should stress teaching and learning of phonemes to preschool children since it enhances their acquisition of basic reading skills. The Ministry of Education should provide language materials which are geared towards enhancing reading skills of preschool children. The schools should develop rules and regulations which lay emphasis on literacy development. Ministry of Education and other policymakers should formulate regulations to enforce adherence to language policy in preschools which lays emphasis on literacy development. Curriculum developers should develop a language material with uniform scope and sequence to enable teachers to effectively enhance reading skills.