

Effects of Teaching and Learning Resources on Pre School Learners Transition to Class One: A Case Study of Rachuonyo South Sub County

Were Philip Onyango
Vocational Training Centre for the Deaf and Blind Sikri

Abstract

It is the wish of every parent that transition from preschool to primary to be as smooth as possible so that the child can attain the maximum growth and developmental milestones. However, there are several challenges that learners as well as parents and educators do face with regards to smooth transition, Sanders et al (2008). This smooth transition process is determined by several notably availability of teaching and learning resources. It on this premise that the study explored the relationship between teaching and learning resources on pre school learners in transition to class in Rachuonyo South Sub County using case study research design. The study was anchored on the Piaget's theory of cognitive development that appreciates the critical role played by education resource provisions in the development of a Child's schemas. Questionnaires were used to collect data from the targeted 118 preschools with a sample size 259 participants using Yamane (1967) sample selection Formula. Data collected was presented in pie charts and analysed by use of descriptive statistics. The research found out that teaching and learning materials when appropriately acquired, used and stored increases the transition rate of the pre school learners. The research therefore concluded that teaching and learning materials should be used in teaching the pre school children. The research recommended that teaching and learning materials be provided by the parties responsible for the same to enhance holistic development of the child. Teachers should take the leading role in the acquisition, appropriate use and storage of the teaching and learning materials to help improve the academic part of the child.

Keywords: Teaching and Learning Resources, Pre School and Transition

1.1 Background of the study

Teaching and learning materials are crucial to any successful teaching and learning process worldwide. This is because these resources aid the teacher to effectively transfer the content to the preschool learner, Karaka (2007) and Fabian (2007). In Kenya pre school centers are the recipient of the innocent innate children as they transit from home to school. As they move to school, they need to adapt to the new environment which they must meet a conducive atmosphere right from home to school. Among the fears which tend to enhance children to like schooling are teaching and learning materials where children learn new experiences from, Rolleston (2009). These materials tend to assist children to open up in many areas which lead to holistic learning. He noted that when children are exposed to various teaching and learning resources, they tend to be active and involved in the learning process. Therefore it is worth noting that preschool teachers can testify that teaching become easier with such materials, Mwangi and Wanyama (2012).

Early childhood education is aimed at caring and nursing all dimension of life of young children to enhance holistic development. The early years of zero to six years are important in laying the foundation for adulthood. Therefore its great important that all the stakeholders concerned should treat this without any hitch. Hirst, Jewis, Sojo and Cavagh (2011) contend that early childhood education is of great value to all children and should be available to all. They argue that preschool provides a sound basis for learning and helps to develop skills, knowledge, personal competence and confidence and a sense of social responsibility. Therefore every child should have access to early childhood education of good quality. He noted that there is a wide range of positive development and experiences in several countries, including increasing participating, and professional development of teachers to enhance increased enrolment and transition rate. However the rates are quite slow. According to Duba and Orodho (2014), most families living arid and semi arid areas in the rural areas in Kenya face several challenges with regards to access to schooling and pre school education especially for the girl child is worst hit.

According to the United Nations Convention (1989), every child has a fundamental right to learn and develop to his or her full potential through access to quality education regardless of their age, gender, origin or social background. Kenya is a signatory to the UN convention and has passed several laws to ensure that all children are entitled to their constitution rights as contained in the Kenyan 2010 Constitution. This was done in the light of the fact that Pre School is the most critical period for cognitive and social development in all children. It is important to note in the absence of these educational resources in any set up the dream to achieve the vision 2030 and to fulfil the UN conventions on the Right of Children becomes elusive. Education is also key to economic growth in Kenya as explained by Otiato (2009) and Wanyama and Changach (2013) hence demands a

lot of attention. It was in this view that the researcher will establish the rationale behind the usage of teaching and learning materials and how they impact on the enrolment in Pre School Rachuonyo South sub-county.

1.2: Problem Statement.

In Kenya several scholars have endeavoured to investigate the link between teaching and learning resources and academic performance with the bulk of data generated from studies conducted in secondary schools. The researcher intended to bridge this gap by conducting an empirical study in this area. Secondly, it is cardinal to note that with the introduction of Free Primary Education and subsidised secondary education programme the government of Kenya the gross enrolment ratio increased from 91.2% in 1999 to 109% in 2010, Orodho et al (2013). The government has also made remarkable accomplishment with regards to provision of teaching and learning materials, Republic of Kenya (2012). However, these materials have not been adequate since the government only provides for essential materials and due to financial constraints the government has not covered Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) privately registered in this scheme. It is important to note that pre school programs are under the county government and most of these centers again have not been receiving grants regularly to aid them buy these teaching and learning materials. It is also critical to highlight the fact that most of these centres in Rachuonyo South Sub County are community owned. It is on this firm argument that the researcher intended to investigate the effects of teaching and learning materials with the view to present the much needed empirical data that was meant to create knowledge to bridge the gap identified by earlier scholars on this topic and mainstream policy formulation at county and national level with regards to provision of teaching and learning resources.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives.

- To find out the availability of teaching and learning resources in Rachuonyo South Sub County.
- To explore the various types of teaching and learning materials currently being used in South Sub County.
- To investigate the effects of teaching and learning materials on transition to class one in South Sub County.
- To determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning materials in ECDE centers in South Sub County.

1.4 Research questions

The research question was guided by the following questions:

- What are the teaching and learning resources available in Rachuonyo South Sub County?
- What are the various types of teaching and learning materials currently being used in South Sub County?
- What are the effects of teaching and learning materials on transition to class one in South Sub County?
- How effective are the teaching and learning materials in ECDE centers in South Sub County?

1.5 Literature Review

Research done by Mwangi and Wanyama (2012) revealed that teaching and learning materials not only enhance a child's acquisition of music and movement skills but also ensure that the transition from pre primary to primary school is smooth. This therefore means that all the education stakeholders should ensure that the teaching and learning materials are available in pre school centres. Muilkiungu et al (2003), suggests that teachers should use a variety of teaching learning resources easily found within the locality. It is the responsibility of the stakeholders to ensure that the required materials are provided to enhance learning of children in ECDE centers. He notes that the teacher is the main source of teaching learning materials in that he/she initiates their provision in the centers like, involving the children in the material collection. According to Muithungu et al (2003), materials can be made available by parents and the community as a whole for the ECDE centers within the locality. This can be successfully done by organizing for material making day in school. The community members and parents can collect and others can donate to the school.

Transition in this research was defined contextually as the process of moving from pre school set up to class one by learners. This process however has been seen to face several challenges as noted by Carle and Daiber (2008), Noor (2003) and Ombongi (2008). These challenges can be minimised by use of best practices as discussed by Bohan- Baker and Little (2004). These best practices include but not limited to the school management encouraging parents to visit schools prior to admission, teachers visiting learners at home, the school offering opportunities where parents of other children meet and share, encouraging early enrolment and running a support group for parents. However it is important to note that because of financial constraints and diversity in

Kenya some of these best practices cannot be embraced in most schools. Despite the provision of best practices, it is critical to highlight one fact that teaching and learning resources play a key role in the transition process, Hirst et al (2011). This true because Pre School and early childhood where class one falls is dominated by play. It therefore demands that a school with adequate play materials enhances social and psychological adjustments during the transition process.

According to Montessori (1998) use of concrete teaching learning resources assists in the development of five children's senses. This reduces the monotony of the teacher using only one material to enhance learning. According to K.I.E (2008), these are several varieties of teaching learning resources that can be used e.g. audio-visual aids (television, videos) audio aids such as radio, visual aids such as, flash cards, tactile aids like dolls and toys. All these dusters of teaching learning resources can assist the child to learn and acquire new knowledge. Aids such as charts, pictures can enable a child to learn and remember concepts learnt. The classroom should be well organized and be spacious for the free movement of children and teachers to access materials and enable the teacher to pass round assessing children's activities and motivate them. According to K.I.E (2008) these equipment need to be installed and fixed in stationed place where children can access them. Examples of these include climbing bars where children can use this equipment to play by climbing up and down the bars or ladders. It is fun for children to move upwards and downwards in turns. As a children get fun by playing in turns, their tension and other emotions such as fear are got rid of and they refresh for the next activity.

According to Karaka (2009) concrete materials enhances understanding of basic concepts no matter how the teacher plans, it is the child who must learn. The role of the teacher is to facilitate learning through the use of teaching/learning resources. According to him all that the teacher prepares may not be of any importance if they do not enable the child to learn. If the materials are displayed well, they pre-occupy the pupils when the teacher is not in class and this will enhance children's learning in the absence of the teacher. This can be done by displaying on walls, hangings, mobiles, soft boards using pins, placed on shelves and learning centers like shop-corners, curiosity tables among others. According to Brunner (1960) children develop their intellect in stages especially in language development. Children are architects of their own understanding. A child is not a passive recipient of adult's instructions but also an active partner in the construction and development of knowledge. From this perspective, children should be allowed to learn through discovery and make their own conclusions they should be allowed to solve their own problems while in groups' manipulation materials this will boost their self esteem.

According to ECDE policy framework (2006), it is noted that these should be improved efficiency in resource allocation to enhance quality education provided to young children. To achieve this, efforts should be placed to enrich ECDE centers as they are the focal point where this should start. This will depend on how much the teachers are involved in using the resources which enhances quality education required by the government. A teacher with the above vision at heart can readily use all the available resources at their disposal to improve the quality of education in ECDE centers. The plan outlines the need for ECDE centers as an area where basic knowledge is obtained by the young children. Fisher (2009), states that children like to do one activity for a short time and then change to another. Their concentration span is low, hence need for them to be presented with opportunity to refresh and relax hence develop their muscles. Omwoyo (2003) said that teaching/learning resources enable the teacher to explain concepts easily to learners. A class with these resources, few words is used to present a given concept to the learners. But a class where these resources are missing, the teacher strain in explaining the concept yet in vain.

Ministry of education (2001) notes that learning in ECDE centers enable children to mature holistically. It stresses that the learning environment should be organized to meet the needs of the children. Children needs include enjoyment and satisfaction during play. This can be realized only by use of teaching/learning resources. Various materials include toys' dolls, charts and pictures. When the children's needs are fully satisfied, they feel comfortable to move to the next activity. Hendricks (1989) notes that teaching materials help to sustain interest of children and make learning to be real. He notes that children need practical things rather than descriptions of things and aspects beyond their experience. Play is the most natural way which children learns and unfolds their potentials through manipulation of resources. According to Ministry of Education (2010) it encourages understanding rather than rote learning. When teachers do not use the resources, it is possible that rote learning will be these; they only master concepts without in depth understanding. With the use resources, children relate what they learn with the real life aspects. Teaching/ learning resources enable children to open up their mind explore their creativity as well as their wide range of thinking. To guide children to open up their mind, the teacher ought to ask them leading questions on related resources.

2.0: Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study used case study to investigate the relationship between the variables. Case study was used because the researcher intended to intensively investigate the topic and determine the relationship between the variables,

Orodho (2009).

2.2 Location of the Study

The study was located in Rachuonyo South sub-county with 118 Pre Schools with approximate population of 4000 learners and 590 teachers.

2.3 Target Population

The study targeted all the teachers in all the 590 pre schools in Rachuonyo south sub-county. This study did not include education officers, parents, learners and other stakeholders in the ECDE programmes.

2.4 Sampling technique and Sampling Size.

Yamane (1967) formula was used to calculate the size of the sample from the target population. The target population as noted above was 590 teachers. This formula has confidence level of 95%, Margin Error \pm and $P=0.5$.

The Yamane (1967) formula of calculating the sample size:-

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n is the Sample Size, N is the total Population and e is the precision level

Therefore

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{590}{1 + 590(0.05)^2} \\ &= \frac{590}{2.275} \\ &= 259 \text{ Participants} \end{aligned}$$

2.5 Research Instruments.

The researcher adopted questionnaires to collect data. It was because all the respondents were literate and could respond to the questions at their convenience within the time frame of the research, Orodho (2008)

2.6 Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

Content and construct Validity of the Questionnaire was attained by thorough literature review and consultations with experienced researchers in the field of early childhood education. This process was repeated until there was total agreement between the two experienced researchers consulted. The researcher then subjected the tool further to reliability test. The researcher used test retest method to achieve reliability index of cronbach alpha of 0.699.

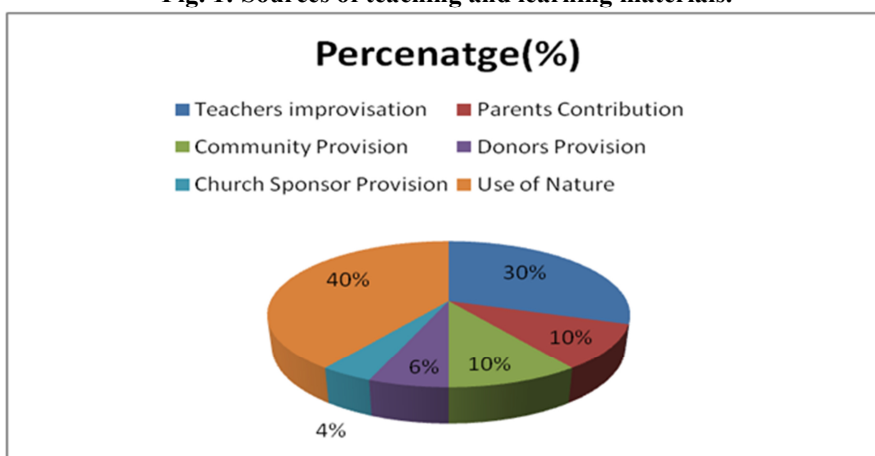
3.1 Findings and Discussions

Data was analysed based on the objectives and the findings were as follows:-

Objective1: To find out the sources of teaching and learning resources in Rachuonyo South Sub County.

To achieve this objective the researcher requested respondents to indicate the sources of teaching and learning materials currently being used at their respective centres and the findings were as follows:-

Fig. 1: Sources of teaching and learning materials.

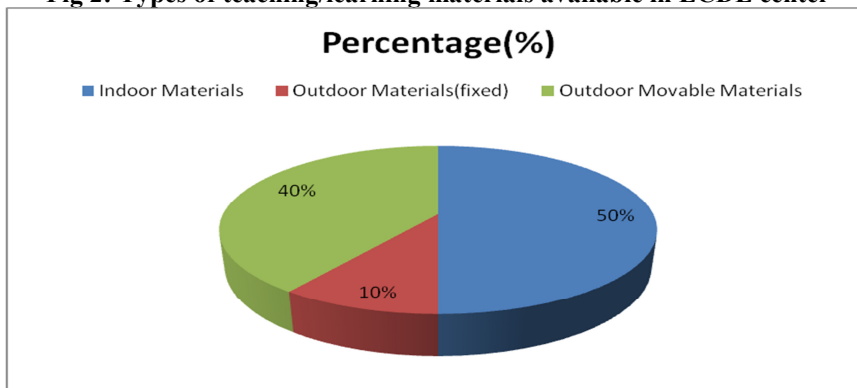


From fig 1, it is evident from the figure that majority of the respondents which represent 40% of the response

admit that nature provides the main source of teaching and learning materials in ECDE centers in Rachuonyo South Sub County.

Objective 2: To explore the various types of teaching and learning materials currently being used South Sub County. The findings were as follows:-

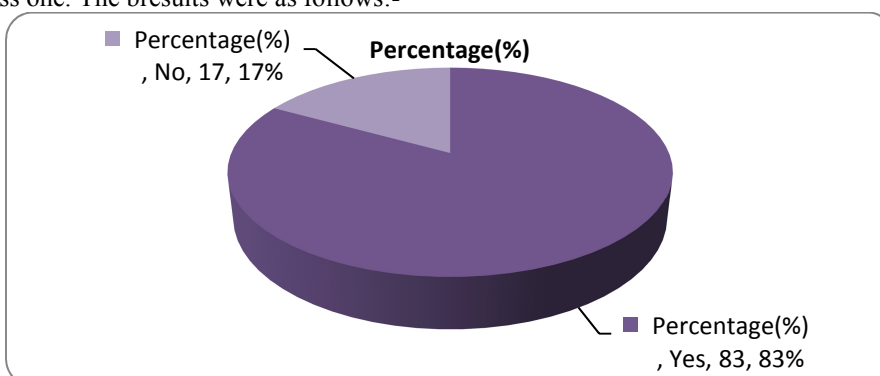
Fig 2: Types of teaching/learning materials available in ECDE center



From the above figure 2, it is indicative that most of the materials available in pre schools are indoor play materials which represent 50% as compared to 10% of outdoor fixed materials. Therefore teachers and caregivers should effectively use the available materials to enhance the pre school learner's holistic development including fine motor cognitive and psychomotor development. It is important to note that the outdoor materials combined are equivalent to the indoor material. This is good for effective content delivery since there is a balance.

Objective 3: To investigate the effects of teaching and learning materials on transition to class one South Sub County.

The respondents were asked whether they think that effective use teaching/learning materials promote learner transition to class one. The results were as follows:-



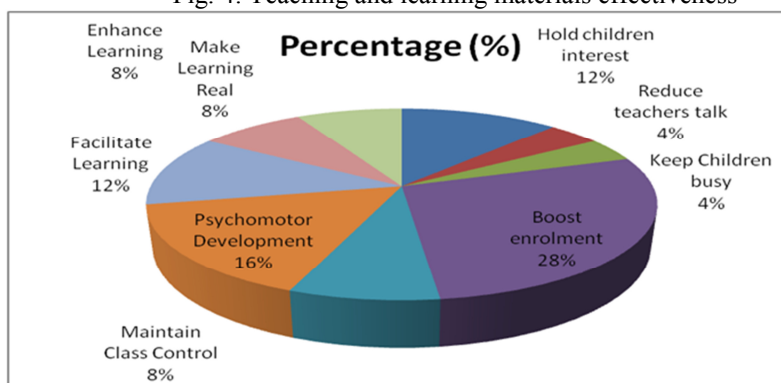
From figure 3 it is evident that effective use of teaching and learning resources promotes pre school learners transition to class one as this accounts for 83% of the respondents. Therefore the ECDE teacher should ensure that children are taught using teaching and learning materials to facilitate their learning and smooth transition to class.

Objective 4: To determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning materials in ECDE centers South Sub County.

The respondents were asked to indicate whether in their opinion teaching and materials are effective during the teaching and learning process.

The findings were as follows:-

Fig. 4: Teaching and learning materials effectiveness



From fig 4, 28% of the respondents agree that teaching and learning assist to boost enrolment in ECDE centers. This compared with the responses given that teaching and learning help to reduce teacher's talk and keep children busy which represented only 4% each respectively.

Thus ECDE teachers ought to use teaching and learning materials in their centers during teaching young children so as to attract more children to enroll in ECDE centers from the locality because children enjoy playing and learning with play materials. The parents also should ensure that children are oriented from home to use play materials.

3.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings and reviewed literature the study concluded that teaching learning materials help the children develop holistically hence smooth transition to primary schools. This is because Children get attracted to them, hold the interest and facilitate cognitive development. During the absence of the teacher in class children can be kept busy thereby developing their psychomotor skills.

3.3 Recommendations

The following are the recommendation drawn from the research findings:

- The management of the pre school centre in Rachuonyo South Sub County should mobilize the parents and the community on the importance of teaching learning materials to children.
- The County Government of Homabay to put more resources in ECDE centers as it has been done in primary schools to improve learning environment in ECDE centers especially in procurement of teaching learning materials.
- The management of the pre school centre in Rachuonyo South Sub County should put more emphasis not only in indoor activities but also in outdoor activities with coherent use of teaching learning and play materials in both cases.
- Ministry of Education and County Government of Homabay officers should continually supervise activities in ECDE centers to ensure that children learn with teaching learning materials and advice the teachers accordingly.
- Ministry of Education and County Government of Homabay officers should organize in service course and seminars for ECDE teachers on the usage of teaching learning resources in ECDE centers.

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