

**Challenges Faced By Pre-school Teachers in Teaching Learners with  
Reading Difficulties in Mukuru Kwa Reuben Slum in Nairobi, Kenya**

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**A Research Project Submitted to the institute of Open and Distance  
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For the Award of Degree of Bachelor of Education  
In Early Childhood and Primary Education  
Of Kampala International University**


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## DECLARATION

I, Kamau Esther Wanjiku BED/7015/51/DF do hereby declare that this study research on **Challenges Faced By Pre-School Teachers In Teaching Learners With Reading Difficulties in Mukuru Kwa Reuben Slum In Nairobi Kenya** is my own original work and to the best of my knowledge it has never been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for any award.

I further declare that all materials cited in this paper which are not my own have been dully acknowledged.

Date:.....9.9.18.....

Signed:..........

**Kamau Esther Wanjiku**

**BED/7015/51/DF**


## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to my beloved parents Mr. and Mrs. Kamau and my sisters Leanne, Mary, Ruth and Grace. May almighty bless God bless you greatly.

### APPROVAL

This is to satisfy that this research study has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree in Early Childhood and primary Education with my approval as University Supervisor.

Sign.....

Date.....

Miss Onego Roseline

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study was carried out in Primary Schools in Mukuru Kwa Reuben Slum in Nairobi Kenya to find out the challenges encountered by pre-school teachers in teaching learners with reading difficulties. The problems found to be responsible were lack of knowledge in handling the this children especially those with special learning problems; they were



## **ABSTRACT**

The study was carried out in Primary Schools in Mukuru Kwa Reuben Slum in Nairobi Kenya to find out the challenges encountered by pre-school teachers in teaching learners with reading difficulties. The problems found to be responsible were lack of knowledge in handling the this children especially those with special learning problems; they were looked at as slow learners, lack of effective teaching, poor teaching methods, and lack of specialized personnel, poor intervention measures, and high student- teacher ratio.

The researcher used survey research design. And the data was collected using questionnaire to obtain information the review from the written materials and the discussions with the respondents. The qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyze data. The most dominant informants were teachers, learners, head teachers, and the community members, and the educational officers.

The researcher established among others that the challenges of teaching the pre-school learners with reading difficulties were lack of resources. There was a close relationship between teaching material and leaning recourses and the children's ability to learn the reading and writing. Despite the majority of the pointed out that they face problems in teaching some of the slow learners, the researcher analyzed that they were not slow learners but the number was always to large for the teachers to offer standard services. The government should therefore see the need to help this special group they are to make a better Kenya.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Background Information

The need for engendering a reading culture is a pre-requisite to development in any society. One of the first and most basic aim of education is to teach learners to read. But for too long, these young illiterates have been deprived of the material to foster and develop this basic skill, reading culture.

The more stimulation young children get with the book at an early stage, primary and even in their later school years. In other words, a good foundation and exposure to a wide variety of literature at an early age will shape the way the young will eventually approach school life and also have a bearing to their reading habits as adults.

The late S.L.A. Kotei while speaking on children's literature in Ghana, pointed out that whether children read for profit or for pleasure reading is an end in itself and guided reading leads to an awareness of himself and his potentiality."

It is said that "children must learn to read so that they can later read to learn." Indeed, since reading is the basic tool for all academic subjects, failure in school frequently can be trace to immediate reading skills. Learning to read is a complex process. Pre-school learners who fail to acquire knowledge of a few common words from their reading scheme or early reading books within their first year in school should be considered to be at risk from learning difficulty in the area of reading.

It is therefore advisable to identify reading difficulties at a child formative years so as to assist him/her at an early age before the problem becomes unmanageable. A learner who realizes that he/she has a reading difficulty avoids reading tasks. On the other hand, they may struggle so hard to recognize words that they have less energy to pay attention to the meaning of what they are reading.

Reading is a continuously developing skill, one that constantly improves with practice. It is not mastered once and for all. From the very beginning and at all stages of reading learners must have sufficient opportunities to practice and engage in the process of reading.

Teachers teaching children with reading difficulties face a lot of problems because they cannot assume all is well while children are not gaining the concept being taught. This problem affects a teacher who has a big class because the teacher will not be able to cater for individual needs.

Some schools especially private ones do not care how children are taught but worry about mean scores, which forces teachers to do examinations for the poor pupils so as to maintain their job. Thus learning is more of examination oriented and not what children will gain. This makes teachers lose their ethics. Hence makes them not to be contented with their work.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Most learners with reading difficulties in primary schools are likely to have acquired those difficulties during their pre-school years. Without lower level reading skills, learners find it hard to acquire higher level reading skills. It is in line with these views and observation that calls for research.

Government implemented free primary education. Thus provide books or reading materials, teaching aids resources. There are government colleges or institutions which train teachers on regular basis and in-service. Every year there is a book fair or exhibition at Sarit Centre, Westlands, Nairobi, Kenya. Curriculum and syllabus are adjusted where need arises in order to rhyme with the emerging issues. Much has been done to improve teaching and learning but challenges faced by pre-school teachers in teaching learners with reading difficulties has not been looked into. That's why the researcher want to find out and base her study on.

This work therefore intends to create awareness on the challenges faced by pre-school teachers in teaching learners with reading difficulties.

Much has been done but still teachers face challenges, for example there is a burden of teacher child ratio. Teachers handle a large class which is hard to manage. Some teachers lack knowledge and patience in dealing with learners who have reading difficulties on the other hand management expect or set high goals which are hard to achieve i.e. measure teacher's performance by means score. Teacher morale is demoralized by low pay i.e. lack of motivation. This makes teachers to teach for the sake of it. Some learners have severe problems and when teachers advise the parent to take the learner to a special unit they refuse. This makes teacher's work difficult because they do not have the specified facilities for their learners.

## **1.2 General Objective**

The general objective of this study was to examine the challenges faced by pre-school teachers teaching learners with reading difficulties.

## **1.3 Specific Objectives**

- (i) To examine the factors that cause reading difficulties
- (ii) To find out the existing educational resources used to teach learners with reading difficulties
- (iii) To suggest possible solution and recommendations which may help promote effective teaching

## **1.4 Research Questions**

- (i) What are factors that cause reading difficulties?
- (ii) Which teaching approaches does the teacher use?
- (iii) What educational materials does the teacher use?
- (iv) What are the specific reading problems encountered by the learners?

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

It is anticipated that this study will provide useful information on the roles played by parents and teachers on learners with reading difficulties.

The study will also provide information to the layman or the general reader interested in knowing challenges faced by learners with reading difficulties. Thus form a base for future research in same area of study.

It is hoped that the research will sensitize parents and teachers on learners with reading difficulties. New teaching approaches will be incorporated together with the existing ones to enhance effective learning. The teacher will provide more education resources for learners with reading difficulties.

The research will form a basis for further research in same area of study.

## **1.6 Limitations**

Reference books were hard to come by. The researcher went to different libraries in search of these materials since most of these libraries do not allow one to go away with their books if not a member. The researcher used a lot of intelligence in getting the information she needed in the voluminous and wordy books and the time was too.

Some respondents were not co-operative they were not ready to give information the researcher wanted. Some termed this exercise as irrelevant and waste of time.

The researcher spent a lot of money while she was developing the whole research the expenses was incurred in getting literature review, developing the questionnaires and typing the research report.

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## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This section covers a review of literature on topics relating to challenges faced by pre-school teachers in teaching learners with reading difficulties. The literature discussed was collected from journals, seminar papers, conference proceedings and books. The topics selected for review are topics such as general information on pre-school, definition of reading among others.

#### **2.1 General Information on Pre-school**

Early childhood programmes are known by different names. Such as kindergarten, nursery schools, day care centers, pre-schools, Montessori, Koranic schools etc. But whatever their names, their main purpose are to ensure that they provide an environment which stimulates the child's development in addition to provision of appropriate care.

Most of us understand the term pre-school as any setting where children get formal education in preparation for primary school Kimanthi (2005) defines pre-school as follows:

Pre refers to before. School refers to any organized environment for learning. Pre-school education therefore means formal education set up that is offered to children between 0-6 years.

The Kenya Institute of Education guidelines for early childhood education in Kenya gives out some of the objectives of pre-school education which include: enabling the child to enjoy living and learning through play.

Enriching the child's experience to enable him/her to cope with primary school life. Providing education geared towards development of child's mental capabilities and

physical growth. Developing the child's self-awareness, self-esteem and self-confidence fostering the spiritual and moral growth of the child. Developing the child's artistic skills. Pre-school education is therefore aimed at developing the child's holistic growth.

## **2.2 Definition of Reading**

Reading can be defined as the way something is interpreted or understood. It involves decoding of print, the association of meaning with the printed code and the reaction of the reader as he associates the author's meaning with his/her previous experience Lerner (1997) says that reading comprehension refers to understanding the meaning of what is read. When a learner merely says the words in a passage without understanding the meaning of the passage, the learner is not truly reading. Learners must recognize words to comprehend what they read.

Therefore word recognition and comprehension are needed if the learner is to function as a reader in the traditional reading curriculum word recognition receives more emphasis in the beginning stages of reading instruction and comprehension receives more emphasis in the later stages. However, from the initial stages or learning to read, children should associate words with meanings. A child should for instance know what the bag means but not just be able to read it.

Reading can also be defined as the process of understanding and interpreting written symbols into meaning and ideas. There are three main strategies that learners use to read a text. Meaning this is where risks are taken on the basis of what word could be referring to (prediction), grammar here learners use their knowledge or word order to make sense of the reading, lastly phonics in this learners check out the look of the word by sound letter relationships.

Anticipating and predicting checking predictions by looking at letters and sounds. Making visual comparisons with known words looking at words, reading them silently art, making sense of the text remembering, understanding meaning beyond sentence, bringing own knowledge to text creating new meaning.

A pupil can have difficulty at any of these levels and become very demoralized. Many develop tactics to cover up their lack of success in reading. In course of teaching someone discovers that some of the poor readers are excessively timid and are over dependent on cues from other pupils. Others are very hostile and show disruptive behaviour. This kind of behaviour often masks a lot of misery and lack of confidence.

Reading aloud is a common activity in the teaching of English. This is the one main activity where you can find out the poor readers in a class, but, you have to be sensitive, to the fact that this may make the poor readers very embarrassed, especially if the other learners ridicule them.

### **2.3 Importance of Reading**

There are three general reasons why reading is important. It is because of these three reasons that reading is given so much emphasis. Reading is a tool for learning. Once children are able to read they can do much more learning on their own. On the other hand a child with a reading problem will be handicapped in all other subjects and will continue to do poorly until the problem is rectified. Reading is an indispensable skill in terms of entertainment. Through reading a person can experience ideas, adventures, feelings and situations that are expressed in the form of print and are not available in everyday life. Reading is an important means by which people obtain information about their environment and make use of it. Children need to learn to read for comprehension, with fluency and for pleasure.

Reading for comprehension refers to reading to understand fully what is read. Some children may read the words learnt by rote, but not understand what they mean. The following are the comprehension skills which pupils need to acquire, how to read for exact meaning, how to read for implied, meaning lastly to understand how sentences and ideas relate to each other. Reading for exact meaning in this skill pupils are expected to read and understand the exact meaning of the sentences which make up a story or a passage. Asking pupils very detailed questions about a passage they have read usually



encourages them to read a passage very carefully and understand it. Reading for implied meaning. Here you have to help your pupils to be able to draw conclusion or opinion and from facts given in a passage. For example, if there is an unfamiliar word in the passage they can learn to guess its meaning from the context. For instance if pupils do not know the meaning of the word “cutlery” and they are given the following sentence they can work out its meaning, “my mother went to town to buy a set of cutlery because she discovered we had no spoons, knives and forks in our house.” By mastering this skill pupils can be able to work out meaning of words without using a dictionary. This is helpful especially in an examination situation, can also understand the passage better. Another aspect of reading for implied meaning is understanding the relationship between sentences and ideas in written pieces of work there will be a relationship between sentences and ideas. It is impossible in writing to find two or more sentences following one another without being related. Reading with fluency when pupils read fluently they are able to read accurately and smoothly. They read with ease when pupils read fluently they are able to achieve the following: the vocabulary expands, their reading speed increase, they are able to deal with long texts, they improve their learning, they gain information and widen their general knowledge they can pass time with reading for pleasure lastly they can read more and with better understanding. Reading process involves three aspects meaning phonics and fluency. Also shows the relationship between reading and writing ‘meaning’ covers both the understanding and enjoyment of what is read. ‘Phonics’ refers to the use of the knowledge of English sounds which helps pupils to guess new words. Whilst ‘fluency’ is the effortless and automatic word recognition that we have talked about. The success in one area has a multiplier effect on the child’s effectiveness in both reading and writing. Reading helps people to interact successfully with their environment.

All in all reading is a very important skills without which progress in learning or full participation in life would be impossible. It helps us in solving problems spending leisure time, widening of experience and participating in modern society. Being able to read is a great achievement for any child. For the child to understand and appreciate all

the other subjects, they must not only be able to read, they must be fluent readers. Reading for pleasure becomes a meaningful hobby and a good past me.

## **2.4 Children with Reading Difficulties**

These children have difficulties in reading letters and short words recognizing letters, sounds, syllables and words, interpreting pictures with details among others. Pre-school teachers can pick out these children at an early age. (Oganda 2002) cites some early signs of reading difficulties. They include: failure to recognize familiar words, confusion between similar looking words, difficulties with breaking down a word into smallest sound unit and putting the syllabus back into the correct order, refusing to read, crying or attempting to distract and frowning or fidgeting. The condition known as Dyslexia is an unusual type of severe reading disorder. Lyon (1995) cites dyslexia as one type of severe learning disability that affects some children, adolescents and adults with this baffling disorder find it extremely difficult to recognize letters and words and to interpret information that is presented in print form. Many learners with dyslexia are intelligent in other ways. For example, they may have strong Mathematics skills. However, the reading problem makes it difficult for a learner to tackle word sums that require him or her read and understand abstract concepts. Such problems present double trouble to the learner since the learner must read and understand the problem, Grace (2002).

## **2.5 Factors That Cause Reading Difficulties**

Because the reading process is highly complex investigations into the causes of reading disabilities very rarely indicate that reading failure can be attributed to a single factor.

Prenatal, peri-natal and post –natal factors are highly cited as causes of learning difficulties in general prenatal it refers to a period from conception to the period of birth. Peri-natal period refers to the time when a mother is in labour up to the actual birth of the baby. Post-natal period it is after birth.

Genetical factors include fragile X syndrome, phenylketonuria congenital factors include: legal drugs like alcohol and cigarettes prescribed drugs like herbs and immunization,

illegal drugs like cocaine and heroine, maternal infections and maternal trauma and maternal conditions and poverty leading to maternal anoxia and incompatibility.

Acquired factors include, foetal anoxia, low weight and prematurity, use of medical procedures like forceps, vacuum, suction, anesthesia, birth complications, brain infection, head trauma and poor teaching methods. Grace (2002).

Mwaura and Wangeci (2002) states that:

Children with reading difficulties have problems in psychological functions like understanding directions or receiving and recalling information. These problems are caused by interference with the senses that are used to transfer information.

The child needs a good vocabulary and a competent use of language before he can learn to read. If a child does not do a lot of practice he/she will not have a good language. This referred to as sensory stimulation. Stephen and Samuel 2002 site inadequate and inappropriate teaching too low or high expectations from the child and lack of motivating activities as some of the factors that cause reading difficulties.

The latter factor is one that accelerates reading difficulties in most regular schools where teachers have no patience with slow learners. Fellow children have been known to make fun of these readers where the teacher does not restrain them. Janet (1997) cites a case of a learner who had reading difficulties. The boy would stammer and sputter in an effort to start reading. The teacher would look up and say crossly "oh for goodness sake; sit down and shut up." The boy would do anything than go to school; powder his face with talcum to make him look pale; scream; have hysterics and just be sick. The researcher thinks the boy's problem accelerated and even forgot what he knew.

They are several reasons why some pupils have problem with reading these includes: eye sight and hearing problems. Here you can check that pupil's hearing is normal and that poor eye sight is not contributing to the problem. Parents can help in this area ask them if you suspect a child has a hearing or sight problem. Lack of reading experience such



pupils can be helped by reading with other pupils and listening to them where tapes are available the pupils can listen and read with the books accompanying the tapes.

Some pupils are confused about the strategy to use when reading. For instance the teacher may have emphasized use of phonic work so that the pupils may not be able to read strategies to enable them to read with confidence.

## **2.6 Common Errors Made by Learners with Reading Difficulties**

Among other errors, these are the most common as cited by Grace (2002) learners with reading difficulties miss out a line while reading, they fail to recognize familiar words even words they have met many times before, experience difficulties with breaking words into smallest syllables like ba-na-na = banana omit letters and words, reading the same line twice or losing place while reading. They also read without expression and may not put punctuation.

Observable behaviour of children with reading difficulties includes crying when faced with a reading task, they become hesitant when reading because of lack of confidence avoid reading activities and rubbing their eyes while reading.

## **2.7 Approaches of Teaching Reading to Pre-school Learners**

Reading in pre-school should be introduced in a simple systematic manner from the lowest level of difficulty to facilitate understanding. Reading should be done from time to time in very friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

Nolan (2005) notes that children with a good knowledge of the sound and structure of the language and the meaning of words usually make more progress in reading. They develop an ability to recognize individual letters (phonemic awareness) and that spoken and written words are made up of individual sounds.

From an early age, reading to children and sharing of books and stories are very important. Awareness of sounds such as in rhymes helps children in reading. Constance

(2002) on Early Childhood Education gives the following activities that can assist children to develop reading readiness skills. These includes sorting, matching pictures, colours, shapes and sizes, recalling objects put out of sight. Recognizing colours and shapes, interpreting pictures with details and arranging pictures logically. These skills are necessary before a child learns to read since they train the child to look at and interpret in either pictures, objects or symbols.

Irungu (1998) gives guidelines on introduction to reading using the following steps.

Teach phonetic sounds from a – z, clarify that letters “C”, “K” and “q” have the same sound, teach the sound of the constants accompanied by the vowels like ba, ca. Add a sound to the syllables to make a word and teach learners to read like ba + g = bag, ca + t = cat, the learner should master these words well and make sense, of how they are made before moving to vowel “e”. Activities like filling in the gaps, dictation, reading out loudly, drawing pictures of words and matching words with pictures should be incorporated lastly to enhance understanding and enjoyment while learning.

- (i) Phonic - work phonic is derived from Greek means sound. This method caters for both the average the learner and learners with learning difficulties. This is the approach recommended by Hatcher, Hulme and Ellis (1994). They argue that phonic awareness appears to be important not only for development of phonic decoding skill but also a direct aid to rapid word recognition.

Phonic method has an advantage that when children meet a new word, they can spell out the sound of letters of which it is composed and then guess the word. Kay (1971) it is useful with learners with reading difficulties who often lack word attack skills.

The phonic approach to reading is where the child is taught to associate sounds with letter symbols in order to read the word. The phonic method is introduced only when the children have already built up some knowledge of a few words through the look and say method. The children need to have mastered letters of the alphabet and vowels, as without this they will have no phonetic strategy.

The children are likely to have learnt the sounds of the letters in their first language before they begin to read in English. There are similarities between most mother tongue and English alphabets. It is on the basis of these similarities that you can make use of the familiar sounds to teach the unknown ones. In doing this there is need to use some known phonic rules.

The initial stages of mother tongue reading normally includes a substantial amount of phonic work. Here the sound/spelling relationships in the languages concerned are generally regular. Both the general and the specific skills which the skills acquire in the mastery of consonant and vowel sound are transferable to English.

#### (ii) **The Sight Word**

This is a method whereby children first learn to recognize a word by its overall appearance rather than by its individual letters of which it is made up. In order to read and understand the word, children must be able to distinguish it from other words and associate its written form and its meaning. The look-and-say approach is intended to help the pupils to build a “sight vocabulary”. The pupils need to have a number of words they can recognize instantly by their overall shape, length and other visual features, such as double letters, middle letters and ending letters. For every word there is a three way association built up as follows spoken word, visual referent and written word.

Sight words are words that we recognize instantly, without hesitation or further analysis. Fluent reading requires that most of the words be sight words. For a few other words we rely on other word recognition strategies.

This involves exposing a learner to whole words or sometimes to whole phrases, for example ‘cat’, ‘book’. The idea behind such exposure is that visual exposure should help the learner to recognize, memorize and read the words and eventually built a sight vocabulary, Grace (2002). Children with reading difficulties may need sight words

presented and practiced more systematically. Teachers may help those learners by the use of flash cards, playing games to provide repetition.

### (iii) **Key Word Method**

This method is for pre-school learners. Grace (2002) says that this is a method in which the letter to be learnt is written together with a word whose initial sound is similar to be sound of the letter for example *a* for *ant*. The aim of the method is to unlock the name and sound of the visual representation of the letter.

### (iv) **Language Experience Model**

In this method, the learner is exposed to whole sentences. The learner is encouraged to use the context to guess the individual words and the meaning. This method in itself may not benefit learners with reading difficulties since it does not give them a clue. The methods advocated for teaching disabled learners are the same for any student, Westwood (1997).

It is not easy for us to communicate to others using single words. Our thinking can only be expressed in complete sentences. To teach reading using the whole sentence approach, you will still need to build on already known words. You may need sentence building cards for this purpose.

Building two sentences using cards in guiding the pupils to make the sentences you may require pictures to serve as clues to enable them to make meaning and read the words. The children can then read the sentences aloud. You can remove the last word in each case and ask the pupils to come and match the pictures and the word. The pupils can read a number of words then they are ready to start reading sentences and paragraphs. This is progression towards reaching independently. However, not all children will get to start to read at the same time. The slower readers will need more help to master the fundamentals.

In all strategies of teaching reading, the role of listening is a very important one. All strategies rely on the listening skill to capture the pronunciation and information of the words being taught. It is also very important for the teacher to listen to the pupils as they

read through texts and guide them accordingly. This helps the learners to gain confidence in their predication skills, phonics and recognition of words.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents and discusses the methodology that was used in carrying out this study. It describes the way data was collected, from where, and what techniques were used to collect them. It presents the research design that was adopted for the study. It describes the area and the population and sampling strategies. It explains data collection methods and instruments that were applied in data collection, analysis and presentation. The chapter also explains ethical considerations that were followed in gathering data.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopted basically descriptive research design which also used qualitative and quantitative research methods. The qualitative methods were used because they show real experiences necessary in providing a more profound understanding and analysis of all related aspects. Since qualitative methods are information driven, they provide a more holistic picture of challenges faced by pre-school teachers in teaching learners with reading difficulties, through observing, interviewing and analyzing of documents. Qualitative research involves emphasizing meanings, experiences, descriptions, and so on [Kumar, 1999]. Its approaches have traditionally been favoured when the main research objective is to improve on the understanding of a phenomenon, especially when this phenomenon is complex and deeply embedded in its context [Josee et al, 2001]. This is intended to get on the concept challenges faced by pre-school teachers in teaching learners with reading difficulties in Mukuru Kwa Reuben Slum upon which findings, interpretations, summaries, conclusions and recommendations were made in the subsequent chapters.

#### **3.6 Data collection Instruments**

The study sample was selected using purposive sampling technique for the respondents. This was mainly to ensure that the body of knowledge and information sampled is adequate. The final sample gave information on the objectives of the study and other relevant data.

### **3.8 Quantitative Techniques**

The key area of interest was gender perspective in rural land access. The kind of data needed relate to quantitative information hence the close ending and open ended questionnaires. These questionnaires were administered to selected respondents to get the required information. All the questions are designed in line with the study objectives.

#### **3.6.1 Documentary Sources**

Data was also collected using secondary sources. These included; public books, reports, journals, magazines, newspapers and internet sources. This was carefully scrutinized and analyzed so as to help the researcher to get the background tom the problem as well as the literature related to the research topic. This also helped in the building up of an impression of the group that was studied and thereby developed appropriate methods of investigation. It also provided a database.

### **3.8 Procedures**

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from Institute of Open Distance Learning Kampala International University. She then visited the sample area and on this date permission was sought from the head teachers. The questionnaires were personally administered with the help of research assistants to sampled 10 schools. The subjects were briefed about the importance of the study and were assured that confidentiality will be observed in the information they will give after which they were given useful hints about how to fill the questionnaires. An appeal was then made for objectivity. The researcher also gave the respondents enough time to fill the questionnaire after which they were collected. This way a hundred percent rate of return was expected.

### **3.9 Data Quality Control**

For any research, it is necessary to control its quality to minimize errors. As regards this research study, the questionnaires were first being tested before distributed to the final respondents. A pre-test was done among 10 colleagues, who after through screening and making appropriate recommendations, some modifications in the nature of the questions

was made accordingly. Finally, the listed questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents.

### **3.9.1 Data Processing and Analysis**

Data processing and analysis was embarked on in the field especially for the qualitative data and after the field for the quantitative data. This involved summarizing the information collected from the respondents in a manner that yielded answers to the questions according to the contents of the questionnaire, observation and documentary sources.

Calculations was done on the quantitative information and percentages made after which it was presented in tables and figures using tally frequencies.

A descriptive analysis of data was done using the following approaches;

- Content analysis of the information obtained from literature review,
- Manual analysis of qualitative data from key informants which was thematically analyzed among major variables /concepts/and broad categories developed to differentiate and describe ideas expressed from generalizations, making summaries, direct verbatim quotation and where appropriate make comparisons.
- Qualitative data from questionnaire was coded and analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences [SPSS], where frequency tables and figures was generated to illustrate the findings using pie charts and graphs.

### **3.9.2 Ethical Considerations**

In the process of conducting the study, an ethical consideration was beheld:

The respondents were not in any way coerced into filling questionnaires, but as a result of establishing a technically working relationship between them and the researcher. They were actually motivated to participate in the study.

The respondents were made aware on how and why they were sampled and that filling in the questionnaires is for the purpose of achieving the research aim.

Respondents were assured of confidentiality. There was no need of names in relation to information provided. They were also assured that the information was to be used only for the purpose of the research and not anything else.

Honesty and trustworthiness in sampling was ensured by use of the local council representatives.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings and results from the analysis of the data collected on challenges faced by pre-school Teachers in Teaching Learners with Reading Difficulties in Mukuru Slum in Nairobi district Kenya using the various methods outlined in the previous chapter. The research questions were answered to examine the challenges faced by pre-school teachers teaching learners with reading difficulties.

**Table 1:** Sex and Pre-School Teachers

Sex Category	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Male	-	0	0
Female	//// //	20	100

**Source:** Field Work Data

Female exclusively teach pre-school in Mukuru Kwa Reuben slum it shows 100% of female teachers. All the pre-school teachers that were found in the scope of study were female teachers. This may closely be related to the fact that women are more caring and concerned. They also know how to handle this children with a parental hand than men who may not be patient enough to handle such. There is evidence that there are men who are qualified to this but they are not patient enough therefore up with other jobs.

**Table 2:** Age of Pre-school Teachers

Age Category	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
20 - 25	//// //	12	60
26 - 30	////	5	25
31 - 35	///	3	15
36 – 40	-	-	0
Above 40	-	-	0

**Source:** Field Work Data

The findings revealed that the old people are no longer teaching in pre-school since only 15% were recorded to be between 31-35. That is not actually old. The young ladies have taken over pre-schools. This may be related to the value that this young generation have attached on it that is related to child caring and home making which is also a tradition that it is the role of women to take care of the child in the community. This people also have fewer responsibilities and therefore can offer standard time in form of love and care to the children unlike in the case of old mothers who have their own home children and a lot of responsibilities to take care of.

**Table 3:** Academic Qualifications of Respondents Teachers

Academic Qualification	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Cert. in ECD	//// //	10	50
Diploma in ECD	////	5	25
NOT trained	///	2	10
Other Courses	///	3	15

**Source:** Field Work Data

Apart from two teacher who claimed to be undergoing training. The rest are certificates holders (50%) and diplomas (25%). This may also be related to the reason as to why there were no male teachers and old teachers who may be in the field but feel like they

are over qualified for the job or under employed if they took this job. 15% of the respondents had done other courses which they specified as computer, piano and French. None of the respondents had done any course related to special needs education implying that in case of any special problem there was no sufficient personnel to handle situation which has an implication on the quality education services that are being offered in this slum.

**Table 4:** Number of Pupils

No. of Pupils	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
5 – 10	////	3	15
11 - 15	////	5	25
16 - 20	////	5	25
21 - 25	////	5	25
Above 25	///	2	10

**Source:** Field Work Data

Most pre-schools as observed have a number of pupils ranging from 11 – 25. This is a large number of one teacher is involved. Above 25 is pathetic. This is because learners at this age have a lot of difficulties in reading as this is just their first school days and they are yet to learn the core of alphabetical letters that can help them learn to write and read and therefore need maximum attention. This implies that these learners that can not get maximum attention will still remain with that difficulty without having been properly attended to.

**Table 5:** Learners with Reading Difficulties

Response	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	////	20	100
No		0	0

All teachers admitted of the existence of learners with reading difficulties. 100% of the respondents agreed that learners have reading difficulties. This is closely related to the factors related to what has been explained in Table 4; above that there are few teachers in

relation to the numbers of the children they have to attend to. This also mean that teachers will only concentrate n first learners who can at least read and write than those who can not do anything as they percei9ve them as slow learners.

**Table 6:** Factors That Cause Reading Difficulties

Factors	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Inheritance	//// // //	13	45
Other disabilities	///	2	10
Inadequate Learning resources	////	5	25
Indiscipline	////	4	20
Absenteeism	//// //	8	40
Lack IEP	//// // //	14	50
Others as indicated	//// // //	14	50

**Source:** Field Work Data

The teachers ticked what they felt are the factors that cause reading difficulties and other added their own opinion. As observed, inheritance, psychological problems that are problems caused by interference with the senses that transfer information and lack of individual attention were cited as the common factors that lead to reading difficulties.

Absenteeism from learners whose parents believe that life is still young also have reading problems since reading is done everyday. Others are genuine absentees due to hospitalization and difficult circumstances.



**Table 7: Common Mistakes Made by Learners**

Common Mistakes	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Mispronunciation		17	85
Very hesitant reading		19	95
Guess from the first sound		18	90
Additions		15	75
Substitution		8	40
Blending syllables wrongly		20	20
Omission of sounds		17	85

**Source:** Field Work Data

The result indicates that signs which indicate reading difficulties vary and that these learners display most of the reading difficulties signs.

There is minimal problem in substitution of letters and words. If the learners get individual attention with a lot of patience, most of these problems can be minimized.

This will be possible if the teacher, parents and the school administration take the above recommendations seriously. The researcher has not been able to tackle all the issues related to reading effectively. It is open for further researches to be able to come up with complete means of alleviating reading problems which have contributed to the diverse academic achievements of various persons in this nation who are potential readers.

**Table 8:** Types of Teaching and Learning Materials Used in Schools

Problems	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Charts	6	9	3	2	20
Ground(scribbling)	7	5	4	4	20
Drawn pictures	12	3	3	2	20
Ledger corners	5	6	4	5	20
Shop(prepared shops in the class)	10	1	3	3	20

Source: **Primary Data (2008)**

Majority of response indicated that children used charts and ground scribbling. While a minority of the teachers said children also used made shops and ledger corners. One teacher respondent cited the lack of teaching aids as forcing them to make pupils scribble in the ground. This closely affected their level of learning as in those children who were first learners were always with the material while the slow learners could not get the resources to use and were always left behind.

**Table 9:** The Relationship between Instructional Materials child's reading capacity

Response	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: **Primary Data (2008)**

Most teachers' response represented by 45% strongly agreed that using teaching learning materials helped the children in early childhood centres to learn first the reading and even understand what they were reading. 15% strongly disagreed, 20% disagreed and 20%

agreed presence of teaching learning aids in the early childhood centres was helping children do well in reading.

**Table 10:** Strategies That Can Be Adopted To Solve the Problems

Measures	Strongly agree	agree	disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Integrating Learning aids in the curriculum	6	6	3	5	20
Government funding	8	4	6	2	20
Establishing More learning aids	2	6	4	8	20
Modifying curriculum	7	4	5	4	20
Modifying the infrastructure	10	3	6	1	20

Source: **Primary Data (2008)**

Teacher's respondents were unanimous on the need to put into place a better system for accepting learning aids as an alternative to normal teaching methods in early childhood centers. Majority of response said that the government should intervene to mitigate the challenges faced by the early childhood centers.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Summary**

The study shows that there are certain factors affecting reading at Mukuru Kwa Reuben slum. Some of the factors are such as subject time allocation on the time table the time allocated to one particular lesson is not enough. For the teacher to handle the large class and then pay individual attention to learners experiencing learning problems.

The size of the class is another factor. The study showed that most teachers handle 20-30 pre-scholars alone. This number is not manageable putting in the special needs learners' consideration. Each learner has a diverse need from the other and each learner has his own perceiving. Therefore each learner should be handled individually for good results. There should therefore be teacher aids in classes where learners exceed 15.

Most teachers in Mukuru are professionally trained but none has been trained in special needs education. Reading difficulties should be identified early enough so that intervention measures can be put in place before the problem gets out of hand. The researcher believes that these teachers with their training can identify learners with reading difficulties and intervene.

#### **5.1 Recommendations**

After carrying out own the study, the researcher felt that something need to be done if the learning problems are to be lessened or eliminated among learners.

The number of learners should reduce to 15 if there is no aid teacher. This will enable teachers to attend to the learner with special needs.

Pre-school teachers should get some training on special needs. This will be very useful in identifying special needs at a tender age. If primary school teachers receive learners who have been identified and assessed, teaching them will be made easier. To make this

possible, the government should create awareness among pre-school teachers and sponsor them or cut down the cost of training to an affordable rate.

The methods of instruction should be reviewed and made learner centered friendly. This will help the teacher in being able to know his or her learners easily and hence establish any difficulties or success that they might be experiencing.

Education should stop being viewed as examination oriented since that what happening in most pre-schools so that the teachers are able to reach all learners without hurrying up in work coverage preparing the learners for exams.

After a teacher has established a reading difficulty, she must search for strategies that offer many reading opportunities. She/he should make reading enjoyable and convey to learner the belief that they will learn to read. The teacher should search for reading materials that interest the learner and develop a positive attitude about books and reading.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Teachers should first understand the nature and complexity of the reading process so that they can appreciate why learners with reading difficulties have difficulties acquiring reading skills and become fluent readers.

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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Teachers

### Instructions

Kindly provide answers to these questions as honestly and precisely as possible.

Response to these questions will be treated confidential.

**Instruction: Tick the applicable answers in the box or fill in the blank space were necessary**

### Respondents' Profile

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age: below 25 ☐ 25-30 ☐ 30-35 ☐ 35-40 ☐ 40-45 ☐ 45-50 ☐ 50 and above

3. Marital Status: Married ☐ Single ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed ☐

4. For how long (years) have you been working in this community?

(a) Below one year ☐ (b) 2-5 years ☐

(c) 6 and above years ☐

5. Academic qualifications

(a) Certificate in E.C.D ☐ (b) diploma in E.C.D ☐

(c) Not trained ☐ (d) others .....

6. What is the type of your school? \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Public ☐

(b) Private ☐

7. What is the current enrolment of your school? \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Below 100 ☐

(b) 100-200 ☐

(c) 201-300 ☐

(d) 301-400 ☐

(e) 401 and above ☐

7 what is the teacher pupil ration in this school. ....

8. Do your learners have any reading difficulty?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Give reasons for your answer above

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

9. Do you have enough resources that can help your learners to improve on their reading ability?

(a)Yes (b) No

Give reasons for your answer above

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



10. Do parents cooperate when told to buy these materials to support the schools

Very much [ ]

Somewhat [ ]

Neutral [ ]

Never [ ]

11. What is the ratio of books to pupils .....

12. Do you receive quality standard officers who inspect your instructional materials?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

13 How do you rate your school ECD unit in terms of instructional materials that facilitate the children's reading ability?

Enough [ ]

Neutral [ ]

Not enough [ ]

14. How often do you use these materials during your teaching in class?

Very often [ ]

Often [ ]

Rarely [ ]

Not at all [ ]

15. Does the school administration support in provision of these materials when you request?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

If no, why? .....

.....

.

16. In your opinion, do you think that these materials enhance learning?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

If no, why? .....  
.....  
.

17. Have you ever seen any external inspector checking these materials since you joined the school?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

If yes, from which body? .....  
.....  
.

18. Do you think that the school is paying the necessary attention to these materials?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

If no, what could be the reason? .....  
.....

19. In your own opinion, highlight four ways in which materials in schools can be better utilized to help promote academic performance.

- a. ....  
.....
- b. ....  
.....
- c. ....  
.....

20. what are the factors responsible for problems facing childrens reading ability

- a. ....  
.....
- b. ....  
.....

21. What three recommendations can you make towards the provision and use of these materials in school?

- a. ....  
.....
- b. ....  
.....
- c. ....  
.....

## **Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion**

1. Do you have children with reading difficulties in your class?
2. Does the school have enough teachers?
3. How is teacher child ratio?
4. Does the school have adequate teaching aids?
5. Do you call for parents meeting regularly.
6. Are parents aware of this problem?
7. Is your school integrated or main stream?
8. Do you have teachers who are trained in special education?
9. How do you deal with children with reading difficulties?
10. Do you get any assistance from the school management while dealing with these children?

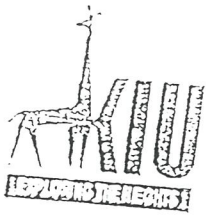
### APPENDIX 3 : Financial Budget

Traveling expenses	6,000
Subsistence expenses	4,500
Stationery	3,000
Miscellaneous	2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>Kshs.16,000</b>

#### APPENDIX4: PLAN FOR DATA PRESENTATION

DATE	ACTIVITY
APRIL 2008	Proposal title
MAY 2008	Sourcing Literature Review
JUNE 2008	Compiling 1st, 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> drafts
AUGUST 2008	Proposal research presentation of proposal title





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## Office of the Director

24<sup>th</sup> April 2008

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR MS/MRS/MR KAMAU ESTHER WANJIKU  
REG. # BED17015151DF

The above named is our student in the Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL),  
pursuing a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

He/she wishes to carry out a research in your Organization on:

CHALLENGES FACED BY PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS  
IN TEACHING LEARNERS WITH READING  
DIFFICULTIES

The research is a requirement for the Award of a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

Any assistance accorded to him/her regarding research will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,

