PREDICTORS OF PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS' SCAFFOLDING STRATEGIES OF CHILDREN'S SOCIO-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES IN ELDORET TOWN, KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving husband and friend, Dick, whose faith in me is just amazing, and to my wonderful children: Joy and Mike, you have always given me the reason to be me!

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This thesis is a result of support from several sources and I wish to acknowledge them all. First my success in completing the thesis is due to the Almighty God who gave me the courage, strength, knowledge, wisdom and the gift of life in all that I have done. I would want to thank most sincerely my supervisors: Professor Hezborn Kodero and Professor Rose Ruto-Korir for their invaluable advice, professional guidance, patience and encouragement throughout the proposal and thesis writing period. I also wish to thank my friend and colleague, Dr. Florence Wakhu for having been there for me. Last but not least, I cannot forget Mrs. Zippora Rop, the Moi University Librarian, as well as Amos Rono, and Irene Apeti who ensured that I got all information I needed promptly and edited my work.

ABSTRACT

Scaffolding pre-school children's socio-emotional competence (SEC) is important because it helps them recognize, understand and appropriately express their emotions as well as acknowledge the emotional expression of others. Domains of SEC include: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Poor SEC in children predisposes them to poor academic performance and overall poor life outcomes. While it is assumed that SEC skills, like literacy and numeracy skills are taught to children explicitly or implicitly, studies show that globally many children lack SEC. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of pre-school teachers' attributes and school predictors on the strategies they used to scaffold SEC skills in children. The study was based on Urie Bronfenbrenner's Bio- ecological systems theory which describes the influence of the environment on one's development. The study adopted a pragmatic world view and used the mixed research methods design to investigate the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC in children within Eldoret town, Kenya. It focused on one dependent variable: the strategies that pre-school teachers used and six independent variables: teachers' training level, their experience in pre-school teaching, their gender, pre-school category, pre-school class size and children's developmental level. There were 160 registered public and private pre-schools within Eldoret town. Two pre-schools in each category were randomly selected for piloting. A sample size of 301 teachers from 127 pre-schools was selected for the study. The specific schools participating in the study were randomly sampled. Three Pre-school teachers were purposively selected from each stratum. Where there were more than three pre-school teachers, simple random sampling was done. Pre-schools that did not have the three developmental stages were excluded from the study and in schools with more than two streams more than one teacher was included in the study for each developmental level. Data were collected using questionnaires, observation checklist and interview schedules whose validity was established through expert advice and triangulation of data sources. Reliability was established through test-retest that gave an internal consistency of $r = 0.80$. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics utilizing Statistical Package for Social Science with the statistical significance level set at .05. Qualitative data was analysed for SEC strategies using predetermined themes. The study found a significant effect of pre-school teachers' experience on strategies used to scaffold social awareness skills; $p = 0.003$. However, there was no statistically significant effect of pre-school teachers' training levels, the pre-school teachers' gender, pre-school type, pre-school class sizes and pre-school children's' developmental level and the strategies teachers used to scaffold SEC components in children. The study established that pre-school teachers focused more on self-management and relationship management strategies. The study was significant in that it gives information on when and how children are helped to develop SEC. This study recommends that policy makers and educators should support children's holistic development by supporting the establishment of a curriculum that incorporates SEC programs in early childhood education learning system. Further, continuing teachers' education programs that focus on SEC in children be encouraged and efforts made to retain experienced pre-school teachers in pre-school teaching.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ii
DEDICATION iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT iv
ABSTRACT v
TABLE OF CONTENTS vi
LIST OF TABLES xi
LIST OF FIGURES xii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACROYNMS xiii
CHAPTER ONE 1
INTRODUCTION 1
1.1 Overview 1
1.2 Background to the Study 1
1.3 The Statement of the Problem 6
1.4 The Purpose of the Study 8
1.5 Research Objectives 8
1.6 Research Questions 9
1.7 Hypotheses 10
1.8 Assumptions of the Study 10
1.9 Justification of the Study 11
1.10 Delimitation of the Study 12
1.11 Limitation of the Study 12
1.12 Research Variables 13
1.13 Significance of the Study 13
1.14. Theoretical Framework 14
1.15 Conceptual Framework 17
1.16 Operational Definition of Terms 19
1.17 Chapter Summary 20
CHAPTER TWO 21
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE 21
2.1 Overview 21
2.2 Children's Developmental Needs 21
2.3 Components of Socio-emotional Competence 26
2.3.1 Development of the Self–management Component in Children 27

2.3.2 Development of the Self-Awareness Component in Children 34
2.3.3 Development of the Social Awareness Component in Children 39
2.3.4 Development of Relationship Management in Children 41
2.4 Teacher Attributes and Children's SEC 44
2.4.1 Teachers' Training Level and Children's SEC 45
2.4.2 Teachers' Experience and Children's Socio-emotional Competence 49
2.4.3 Teachers' Gender and Children's Socio-emotional Competence 52
2.5 School and Children's Development of Socio-emotional Competence 55
2.5.1 Developmental Levels and Children's Socio-emotional Competence 56
2.5.2 School Type and Children's Socio-emotional Competence 59
2.5.3 Class Size and Children's Socio-emotional Competence 64
2.6 Teachers' Relationship with Children and Children's Socio-emotionalm Competence 66
2.7 Socio-emotional Competence Scaffolding Strategies 68
2.7.1 Child Development Strategies for Scaffolding Socio-emotional Competence 69
2.7.2 Alternative Thinking Strategies for Socio-emotional Competence 71
2.7.3 Asset Building Approach for SEC 72
2.7.4 Relationships as a Strategy for Developing Socio-emotional Competence 73
2.8 Chapter Summary 75
CHAPTER THREE 76
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY 76
3.1 Overview 76
3.2 Geographic Location of the Study 76
3.3 Research Design 77
3.4 Research Methodology 80
3.5 Research Population 82
3.6 Sample Size 82
3.7 Sampling Procedures 83
3.8 Research Instruments 85
3.8.1 Biographical Form 85
3.8.2 SEC Questionnaire 85
3.8.3 Observation Schedule 86
3.8.4 Interview Schedule 87

3.9 Reliability....88
3.10 Validity....88
3.11 Piloting....90
3.12 Scoring of the Instruments....91
3.13 Data Collection Procedures....92
3.13.1 Themes Emerging from Qualitative Data....93
3.13.1.1. SEMA Themes....93
3.13.1.2 SEAW Themes....94
3.13.1.3 SOAW Themes....94
3.13.1.4 REMA Themes....94
3.14 Data Analysis....95
3.14.1 Descriptive Statistics....95
3.14.2 Inferential Statistics....96
3.14.3 Analysis of Qualitative Data....97
3.15 Ethical Considerations....97
3.16 Chapter Summary....98
CHAPTER FOUR....99
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSES, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION....99
4.1 Overview....99
4.2 Demographic Descriptions of Participants....99
4.3 Test of Hypotheses....100
4.3.1 Relationship between Pre-School Teachers' Training Levels and the Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC....100
4.3.2 Relationship between Pre-School Teachers' Experience and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC Components....112
4.3.3 Relationship between Pre-School Teachers' Gender and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC Components....117
4.3.4 Relationship between Pre-School Type and Strategies Used by Pre-School Teachers to Scaffold SEC....124
4.3.5 Relationship between Pre-School Class Size and the Strategies Pre-School Teachers Used to Scaffold SEC....137

4.3.6 Relationship between Pre-School Children's Developmental Level and the Strategies Pre-School Teachers Used to Scaffold Socio-emotional Competence 143
4.3.7 The Strategies Used by Pre-School Teachers to Scaffold Socio-Emotional Competence in Children 151
4.3.7.1. Strategies for Scaffolding Self-management in Pre-school Children....155
4.3.7.2 Strategies for Scaffolding Self- awareness in Pre-school Children.....156
4.3.7.3 Strategies for Scaffolding Social- awareness in Pre-school Children 158
4.3.7.4 Strategies for Scaffolding Relationship Management in Pre-School Children 159
4.3.7.5 Pre-school Teachers' Interview Responses to Strategies of Scaffolding SEC.....163
4.4 Connecting Data Findings to Theory.....171
4.5 Chapter Summary 173
CHAPTER FIVE 175
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 175
5.1 Overview.....175
5.2 Objectives of the study.....175
5.2.1 The Relationship between Pre-Schoolteachers' Training Levels and the Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC 175
5.2.2 The Relationship between the Pre-School Teachers' Teaching Experience and the Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC 176
5.2.3 The Relationship between Pre-School Teachers' Gender and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC 177
5.2.4 The Relationship between Pre-School Type and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC.....178
5.2.5 Influence of pre-school class size on strategies used to scaffold SEC.....179
5.2.6 The Relationship between Pre-School Children's Developmental Levels and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC 179
5.2.7 Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC.....180
5.3 Study Conclusions 180
5.4 Recommendations.....182
5.4.1 Recommendation for Policy.....182
5.4.2 Recommendation for Practice 183

5.4.3 Recommendation for Further Research....183
REFERENCES....184
APPENDICES....211
Appendix I: Informed Consent for Teachers....211
Appendix II: Informed Consent for Parents....212
Appendix III: Biographical Form....213
Appendix IV: Teachers' Socio-Emotional Competence (SEC) Questionnaire....214
Appendix V: Interview Schedule for Selected Teachers....217
Appendix VI: Examples of Extracts from Interview Data....218
Appendix VII: Observation Checklist....219
Appendix VIII: Examples of Extracts from Observation Data....220
Appendix IX: Interview Data (Extracted from full data transcripts available)....221
Appendix X: Observation Data (Extracted from full data transcripts available)....225
Appendix XI: Map of Uasin Gishu County....227
Appendix XII: Map of Uasin Gishu County Showing the Location of Eldoret Town....228
Appendix XIII: NACOSTI Research Authorization....229
Appendix XIV: Approval Letter for Research (Ministry of Education)....230
Appendix XV: NACOSTI Research Permit....231
Appendix XVI: Examples of Developmental Appropriate tasks....232

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Constructs Measured in the Questionnaire 86
Table 4.1: Demographics of Participants 100
Table 4.2: Mean SEC Components Scores by Training Levels 101
Table 4.3 ANOVA Summary for the Relationship between Preschool Teachers' Training Levels and SEC Components 102
Table 4.4: Mean SEC Components Scores by Experience Levels 112
Table 4.5 ANOVA Summary for the Relationship between Preschool Teachers' Experience and SEC Components 113
Table 4.6: Mean SEC Component Scores by Gender 117
Table 4.7: Mean SEC Components by School Type 125
Table 4.8: Mean SEC Components Scores by Class Size 137
Table 4.9 ANOVA Summary for the Relationship between Preschool Class Sizes and SEC Components 138
Table 4.10: Mean SEC Component Scores by Children's Developmental Levels 143
Table 4.11: ANOVA Summary for Relationship between Children's Developmental Levels and SEC Components 144
Table 4.12: Pre-school teachers' strategies for SEC 154
Table 4.13 Pre-school teachers' interview responses on strategies used to scaffold SEC 164

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems.....17
Figure 1.2: Conceptual Framework 18
Figure 4.1: Strategies of scaffolding self-management competence 155
Figure4.2: Strategies of scaffolding self-awareness competence 158
Figure 4.3:Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding social awareness 159
Figure 4.4: Pre-School Teachers' Relationship Management Strategies.....161
Figure 4.5: Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding self-management 166
Figure 4.6:Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding self-awareness competence 167
Figure 4.7: Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding social –awareness competence.....169
Figure 4.8: Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding relationship management competence.....170

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACROYNMS

ADHD:	Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
ANOVA:	Analysis of Variance
ECCE:	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD:	Early Childhood Development
ECDE:	Early Childhood Development and Education
EFA:	Education for All
EI:	Educational International
ILO:	International Labour Organization
KICD:	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
OECD:	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SEC:	Socio-Emotional Competence
STAR:	Student Teacher Achievement Ratio
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TSC:	Teachers Service Commission

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter presents a background of the study that focuses on strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold socio-emotional competence (SEC) in pre-school children. In the chapter, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, study objectives, research questions, hypotheses, study assumptions, justification for the study, scope of the study, research variables and the significance of the study are presented.

1.2 Background to the Study

Evidence shows that many children lack SEC skills necessary for overall life success (Child Maltreatment Report, 2010; Humphrey et al., 2010; Republic of Kenya, 2012a).SEC is a child's ability to cope well with other people. SEC equips pre-school children with the capacity to do the following: manage their fears (Berke, 2013); empathize (Lewis, 2011); develop self-control (Florezi, 2011); interpret emotional states of others (Tell, 2009); effectively respond to their environment (Bronson, 2000; Zimmerman, 1994), as well as enhance their future academic performance (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 2007) amongst other abilities. Helping children develop SEC skills early in life and specifically at pre-school is important because early years mark a critical period of development in human life. Besides, studies have shown that any form of learning and acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes during early years take place easily and with less effort during this period of human development (Brown & Ward, 2013; Chamberlain, 2009; Knudsen, 2004).

Equipping children with Socio-emotional competence (SEC) skills can be compared to a form of investment that has potential for a high rate of returns in human capital

development. With self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management, children acquire core competencies they need to recognize and manage emotions; establish and maintain positive relationships and handle interpersonal situations constructively. These core competencies further provide a foundation for better adjustment and academic performance, positive social behaviour and fewer discipline problems (Greenberg et al., 2003; Pahl & Barret, 2009; Lamb & Anhert, 2006; Maxwell, 2007).Studies affirm the need to equip children with SEC skills early in life to facilitate their successful current development and later successful adult life (Berke, 2013; Brown & Ward, 2013; Chamberlain, 2009; Cherniss, 2000; Dich et al., 2015; Gillum, 2010; Elias, 2006; Knudsen, 2004; Salovey & Mayer, 2004; Tell, 2009).

The gap in SEC among children and adults is a global concern. In Kenya, while alluding to the deficiency of SEC amongst children, Dr. Maria Nzomo, the then chair of Teachers Service Commission (TSC), observed that it is not enough for a teacher to produce only an "A" student, when their social emotional development is ignored (Kariuki, 2015). While referring to an incident where a law graduate student killed 142 students at Garissa University College, Dr. Nzomo noted that some students with cognitive ability alone could easily become misfits in the society. This concern has been supported by Elias (2006) who observed that SEC is the 'missing piece' that represents part of education that links academic knowledge with a specific set of skills that are important for success in schools, workplaces, and life in general. The example of the law student who killed Garissa University students most likely indicates that he lacked the 'missing piece'. Most likely this student did not have SEC and because nature abhors vacuum, he willing-fully accepted to be radicalized. Hardly a day passes without incidents of children or adults injuring, maiming or even killing each other as a result of unresolved conflicts. Such national and world events demonstrate a danger when a

child, in this case a student grows up without SEC and a strong moral compass. When SEC training is emphasized, an individual is likely to have important life skills, such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. These life skills are critical for successful interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships.

Having essential life skills is one of the objectives of the Education for All (EFA) convention, which reinforces the principle of holistic development. The need for holistic development has been affirmed in international conferences and global fora such as: The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) held in Jomtien, Thailand, in March 1990 and World Education Forum held every year since its inception in Canada in 2011. Since the first world forum, nations gather every year to deliberate on matters affecting educational issues of children which include holistic early childhood education. Consequently, many states, including Kenya have developed curriculums drawn from principles ratified in these conferences with the aim of enhancing holistic education during the early years of life. For example, some of the objectives of Kenyan early childhood education system are to: develop the child's self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-confidence; to cultivate self-expression; to enhance moral growth; to help the child develop worthy habits and acquire satisfactory values and behaviour to cope with self and others (Kenya Institute of Education, 2008).

From the ratifications of international conventions, the Kenyan early childhood education curriculum, therefore, aims at helping children develop knowledge, skills, competencies and learn lifelong dispositions. Therefore, the objectives of pre-school education support children to develop core SEC competence which include: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. All these lead to their ability to tolerate others in the society (Kenya Institute of Education, 2008). Pre-school education, therefore, has the potential to enhance a child's holistic

development by enabling the child acquire competences in all the three domains of learning: cognitive, psychomotor and affective (Feldman, 2014; Harris, 2009; Parke & Locke, 1999).

According to Saarni (1999), SEC develops in a child the ability to detect his own as well as others' emotional states. With this knowledge, the child is able to use vocabularies of emotion effectively. For example, the child is able to discriminate between pain and joy, or approval and disapproval. SEC, therefore, focuses on the self and relationship with others, that is, self-awareness (SEAW), social awareness (SOAW), self-management (SEMA), relationship management (REMA) and decision making. However, decision making is excluded in this study because although children have rights to decision making, at pre-school, thought processes that influence their decision-making ability are yet to develop (Feldman, 2014; Shanker, 2014). Further, scholars have observed that the cognitive and psychomotor domains have received much attention in research, whereas SEC has not (Goodson, Layzer, & Layzer, 2005; Kelly, 2003; Salmon & Reese, 2016). This study, therefore, focused on SEC, but specifically, self-awareness, social awareness, self -management and relationship management.

SEAW, SOAW, SEMA and REMA, like other skills, ought to be taught explicitly or inexplicitly. Scholars agree that pre-school teachers can help children develop SEC by directly teaching the skills, through specific instructional classroom management practices (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Cohen, 2000b; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; Sroufe, 2006; Taylor, 2004). However, pre-schools operate under varied cultural contexts which influence learning experiences which include: values, traditions, beliefs, and the emphasis on aspects of the curriculum. Diverse pre-school cultural contexts, therefore, may influence curriculum decisions,

including emphasis given to SEC skills (Dich, Doan, & Evans, 2015; Elias & Arnold, 2006; Feldman, 2014; Gestsdottir et al., 2014; Marsh, Elfenbein, & Ambady, 2003).

Most documented studies focusing on children's socio-emotional development have either been interventional studies or those measuring the effectiveness of programs amongst vulnerable children. For example: Burton, Osborn and Norgate (2010); Gliebe (2011) measured the effectiveness of SEC among children from vulnerable backgrounds; Hautman et al. (2015); Petrides and Ruttledge (2011) were concerned with children's emotional expressions; Tell (2009), Herba, Landlau, Russel, Ecker, and Phillips (2006) examined social understanding and self-management among pre-schoolers while Paulus et al. (2015); Petrides and Ruttledge, (2011) were comparative studies of the social emotional well-being of autistic and non-autistic children. Deducing from these studies, it is apparent that there were gaps in knowledge that subsequent studies would address. First, most of these studies were done in the West, a different cultural context; second, a number of them focused on measuring SEC among children; third, others focused on vulnerable children like the immigrant children, children with autism or children from poor backgrounds, whose socio-emotional needs differ from mainstream children who were the focus of this study (Burton et al., 2010; Hautmann et al., 2015; Humphrey et al., 2010; Paulus et al., 2015; Mayer & Caruso, 2008; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000; Petrides & Ruttledge, 2011; Tell, 2009).

The current study was based in Eldoret town, Kenya and was conducted amongst typical pre-school children. The study further built upon the recommendations of Shechtman and Yaman (2012) who assessed children's gains in socio-emotional learning among teacher trainees and recommended more studies on SEC outcomes in children; Hamre et al. (2012); Etel and Yamgmurlu, (2015) recommended observations to understand effective teacher-child interactions. Further, La Paro, Thomson, Lower,

Kintner-Duffy, Cassidy (2012) recommended that children's programs be assessed in association with children's experiences, while Menting, Koot, and Van Lier's (2015) study recommended a random selection of schools for observation to enhance generalization in emotional and behavioural studies among children.

Randomly selecting schools to assess how pre-school teachers scaffold self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management using pre-school classroom observations and interviews from a non-western culture became an important niche for this study, and a potential contribution in the field of knowledge in early childhood emotional development emphases. According to scholars in early childhood education, teachers remain the most influential adults with a lasting impact on the life of the children (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Honig, 2002; Stronge, Ward, & Grant, 2011). Consequently, because pre-school is a critical point in children's life, this study sought to find out the influence of pre-school teachers' attributes and school predictors on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC.

1.3 The Statement of the Problem

Although most pre-school curriculum requires that SEC aspects such as: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management be explicitly or implicitly taught to all children as earlier mentioned, studies focusing on how pre-school teachers scaffold SEC amongst children are few and do not focus on strategies of scaffolding SEC (Child Maltreatment Report, 2010; Goodson et al., 2005; Kelly, 2003; Manji & Arnold, 2015; National Research Council of Medicine, 2000; Republic of Kenya, 2008). Such studies on SEC among children reveal that the developmental stage of pre-school children, usually between 3-6 years of age allows them to develop SEC competencies with ease. Additionally, there is consensus amongst developmental psychologists that pre-school is the critical stage for the development of

SEC's core competencies (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Baron, 2006; Ekman, 1972; Blair, 2002; Galinsky, 2010; Katz, 1994). In view of the need to scaffold SEC in children, scholars recommend that teachers creatively look for ways of teasing out SEC skills in children at that early stage of the children's schooling (Barret, 2011; Blair, 2002; Galinsky, 2010; Honig, 2010; Stipek& Byler, 1997; Schonert-Reichl, Smith, Zaldman-Zait, & Herzman, 2012).

In many Kenyan pre-schools, the focus of teaching is often on literacy and numeracy skills, due to a number of reasons including high stakes testing (Kariuki, Chepchieng, Mbugua, & Ngumi, 2007; Ngure, 2014; Ruto-Korir, 2010). This is coupled with the belief amongst many parents and teachers that SEC can be best taught at home (Brown & Ward, 2013; Tell, 2009), and yet, in the Kenyan context, most pre-schools are full day schools and children spend more of their active time in school. Consequently, in such limiting contexts and with the realization that SEC skills are very important for future life success, the following questions emerged: What strategies do pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC amongst children? Do teacher attributes and school factors influence these strategies?

The current study was based in Eldoret town, Kenya, for several reasons: First, Eldoret is the 5th largest town (but 4thin terms of population), and had many pre-schools both public and private, and therefore a home to many children with SEC need. The town has a mixed population of nearly all tribal groups well before independence to date. This makes it a town with children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Further, Eldoret is comprised of both rural and urban population and a large proportion of the population live in the rural areas but come to town every morning to work or do business as they also bring their children to school. Eldoret town, therefore highly represents the lifestyle of most Kenyans and children's SEC from this region may significantly represent

children from the whole country. It was therefore necessary to examine the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC. Further, it was important to investigate whether the pre-school teacher attributes and school predictors had a relationship with the strategies used.

1.4 The Purpose of the Study

This study sought to assess how teacher attributes (gender, experience in pre-school teaching, training levels) and school predictors (type of school, class size, developmental levels) influenced the strategies that pre-school teachers used in scaffolding SEC among pre-school children in Eldoret town, Kenya. Specifically, it assessed the four levels of SEC, namely: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, emotional and relationship management skills.

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Investigate the relationship between pre-school teachers' training levels and the strategies that they use to scaffold self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management.
2. Examine the relationship between teachers' teaching experience and the strategies they used to scaffold self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management in children.
3. Find out the relationship between pre-school teachers' gender and the strategies they used to scaffold self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management in children.
4. Explore the relationship between pre-school type and the strategies that teachers used to scaffold self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management in children.

5. Find out the relationship between pre-school class size and the strategies that teachers used to scaffold self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management in children.
6. Examine the relationship between pre-school children's developmental levels and the strategies that teachers used to scaffold self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management in children.
7. To identify the strategies used by pre-school teachers to scaffold SEC in children.

1.6 Research Questions

This study generated the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between pre-school teachers' training levels and the strategies that they use in scaffolding self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management in children?
2. What is the relationship between pre-school teachers' experience and the strategies that they use to scaffold self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management in children?
3. What is the relationship between the preschool teachers' gender and the strategies they use to scaffold self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management in children?
4. What is the relationship between pre-school type and the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management in children?
5. What is the relationship between pre-school class size and the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management in children?

6. Is there a relationship between pre-school children's developmental level and the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management in children?
7. What strategies do pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children?

1.7 Hypotheses

This study was based on the following six null hypotheses:

H_{O1}: There is no significant relationship between pre-school teachers' training levels and the strategies they use to scaffold SEC components in children.

H_{O2}: There is no significant relationship between school teachers' experience and the strategies they use to scaffold SEC components in children.

H_{O3}: There is no significant relationship between the pre-school teachers' gender and the strategies they use to scaffold SEC components in children.

H_{O4}: There is no significant relationship between pre-school type and the strategies pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components in children.

H_{O5}: There is no significant relationship between class size in pre-school and the strategies pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components in children.

H_{O6}: There is no significant relationship between the pre-school children's developmental level and the strategies pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components in children.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions: that the variables identified had a dynamic influence on how teachers scaffold SEC in children. Specifically, the study was based on the assumptions that: teachers used different strategies to scaffold SEC which varied by context; that teachers had the competence to scaffold SEC among the children; that teachers could accurately identify socio-emotional needs of pre-school

children; that the information and responses given by the participants were honest and accurate, and that it was possible to deduce SEC strategies through observations.

1.9 Justification of the Study

Under the Basic Education Act of Kenya (RoK, 2013) and the Constitution of Kenya (RoK, 2012), every child has a right to basic quality education. Quality education ensures that a child is not only equipped with numeracy and literacy skills but holistic education which includes SEC. With SEC, a child is prepared for lifelong learning in which the educational focus moves towards life skills, attitudes and personal awareness that the child needs for overall life success.

Pre-school environments provide opportunities for pre-school teachers to scaffold SEC amongst children using different strategies. According to the Kenyan early childhood education syllabus, the daily pre-school education routine should have nine activity areas: language, mathematics, outdoor, science, social, creativity, music and movement, religious education, and life skills. The first three activity areas are supposed to be covered throughout the week while it is suggested that the rest are done at least two times each during the week and that every activity area last 30 minutes (Kenya Institute of Education, 2008). Given the disparities between pre-schools and pre-school teachers, this study assessed the influence of teacher attributes and pre-school predictors on strategies used to scaffold SEC amongst pre-school children in Eldoret town, Kenya in four areas of competency: self-awareness, self- management, social awareness and relationship management. Given that language and mathematics activities are supposed to be covered every day of the week, according to the syllabus, the observations for this study were mainly done during the morning sessions for all pre-schools including the full day ones.

1.10 Delimitation of the Study

The study was conducted in Eldoret, Kenya and data was collected from private and public pre-schools within the town. Only registered pre-schools where children were taught in three distinct groups: baby, middle and top class groups were included in the study. The respondents were regular pre-school classroom teachers and not teachers on teaching practice.

The study mainly focused on the influence of teacher attributes and school predictors on the strategies that teachers used to scaffold SEC among pre-school children using three methodological dimensions: questionnaires, observation schedule and interviews. This study was limited to only four constructs: self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness and relationship management.

The study did not focus on decision making because although children can make decisions and should be allowed to make decisions, this should be gradual and under the guidance of adults (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Kelly, 2003; Lundberg, Romich, & Tsang, 2009). According to Yee and Flanagan (1985) sole decision making or making decisions with the help of adults is a higher cognitive function for children after the age of nine years. Since the present study was confined to younger children between three and six years, how pre-school teachers scaffold decision making was included in the study.

1.11 Limitation of the Study

The main limitation of the study was with the self-reports from the SEC questionnaires. The scores from the preschool teachers on the strategies that they used to scaffold the SEC components were quite high. However, using observation and interviews, some of the strategies that teachers purported to use, were actually not used. Observation data

also revealed some strategies that preschool teachers used but did not mention in the SEC questionnaire or during the interview. Abstruse observation would be more appropriate for classroom observation.

The data generation tools were adapted from those developed and mainly used in the West. Since contexts are important in any research, the tools were piloted first before use and later modified to suit the research area. This was a difficult and time consuming process. It would be important that researchers develop tools suited for the African context.

1.12 Research Variables

This study had four dependent variables: the strategies that pre-school teachers use for Self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management and six independent variables: pre-school teachers' gender, pre-school teachers' training levels, teachers' experience at pre-school, pre-school type, pre-school class size and pre-school children's' developmental level. Strategies that pre-school teachers use were considered within the teacher-child and child-child sub systems and were identified as either positive or negative in helping pre-school children develop SEC. In this study, four components of SEC were investigated: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management.

1.13 Significance of the Study

The study sought to examine the influence of teacher attributes and school predictors on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC amongst children. The results from this study provided both practical and theoretical significance. From the study, information about when and how pre-school children are helped to develop SEC components; self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship

management is given. The study applied Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory to examine the strategies that pre-school teachers use in scaffolding SEC competence in children. The strategies were examined in relation to teacher attributes and school predictors and applied to the bioecological systems of Brofenrenner: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem.

Feedback from this study will help pre-school teachers evaluate their performance with respect to the strategies that they use in scaffolding SEC components in children. The study compared the strategies that teacher used with regard to their attributes, and the various school predictors.

For the quality assurance personnel, the study gives insight into school predictors and teacher attributes that are helpful in scaffolding SEC amongst the children that may help assist children achieve holistic development. From the study findings, recommendations for future research in developing components of SEC in children are given.

1.14. Theoretical Framework

This study was based on Urie Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory (1917-2005) that focuses on the social contexts in which children live and their contexts of influence (Roffey, 2008; Santrock, 2008; Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). This theory (Figure 1.1) takes into account the fact that the child's environment has a considerable effect on his/her growth and development. The child's environment is comprised of the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and the chronosystem. In this study, the emphasis was on how the systems work together to influence the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in children. It was evident that the national psyche on meritocracy had an influence on pre-school teachers' interaction

with children so that cognitive development was given more emphasis than SEC development.

As a microsystem this study sought to examine the influence of school and the teacher on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components in the children. Child development scholars such as Berke (2008); Feldman (2014); Roffey (2008) observe that the immediate environment of the child, that is the microsystem according to the bioecological theory, has the earliest and most influence on the child. The pre-school teachers' attributes (gender, training levels, and experience) and the schools' predictors (type of school, developmental levels of children, class size) were examined against the strategies that pre-school teachers used.

The mesosystem is usually comprised of the interactions that exist within the microsystems and between the microsystem and the exosystem. One of the objectives of this study was to examine the interactions between the pre-school teachers and the children and among the children for strategies used to scaffold SEC components in children. This was important because studies have shown that children copy relational values and skills that teachers model (Bronson, 2000; Florezi, 2011; Galinsky, 2010; Saarni, 1999). The mesosystem acknowledges the direct and indirect influences that children have on each other, and the influence that pre-school the teacher has on the children (Feldman, 2014).

The current study also examined the exosystem. The exosystem refers to societal influences on the child's SEC. Such influences according to Fedman (2014 p. 23) can be 'immediate and major' and may also influence how the microsystem and macrosystem operate. They include the county governments, the community, other schools, and even the media. The study found that pre-schools were actually business

entities that relied on the laws of supply and demand. As such, pre-schools were in competition to attract children and be sustainable. The strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in a school were restricted to what other pre-schools did, and what parents were comfortable with.

The macrosystem was also found to influence the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in children. The societies in general, the Kenyan government, religious and political systems are all part of the macrosystem (Feldman, 2014). The curriculum used in pre-schools is developed by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD). Consequently, pre-school education currently is devolved and the county governments issue licenses, ensure quality assurance and employ the teachers in the public pre-schools. The study examined the types of schools and the strategies pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in children in this context.

The chronosystem encompasses the dimension of time as it relates to the child's environment. As the child grows, there are physiological changes that the child experiences that will further influence other growth and developmental aspects. This study sought to find out if the developmental levels of children and the teacher's experiences determined the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components.

This theory therefore, was important in that it offered an illustration of the interconnectedness of the environments that children interact with. In reference to the theory, it was possible to understand how the development of SEC skills, an important aspect of development takes place in pre-school children.

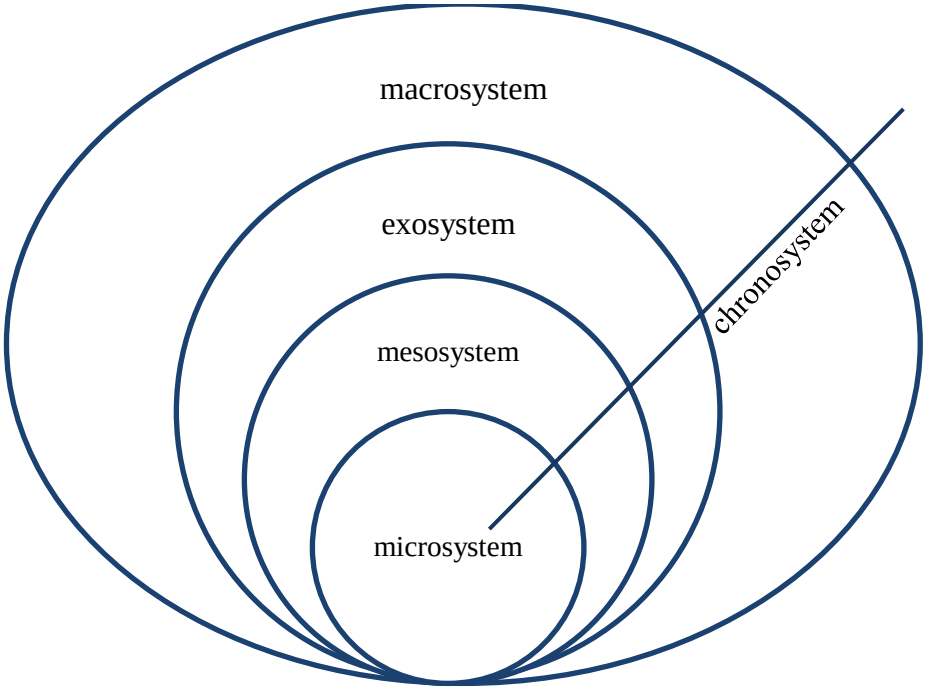

Figure 1.1: Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems

(Source: Santrock, 2008, p. 71)

1.15 Conceptual Framework

The aim of this study was to examine the influence of teacher attributes and school predictors on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components in children. Based on literature, a conceptual framework was developed for this study (Figure 1.2). The conceptual framework assumed that the pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding SEC among children were related to the school predictors and teacher attributes. The conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1.2.

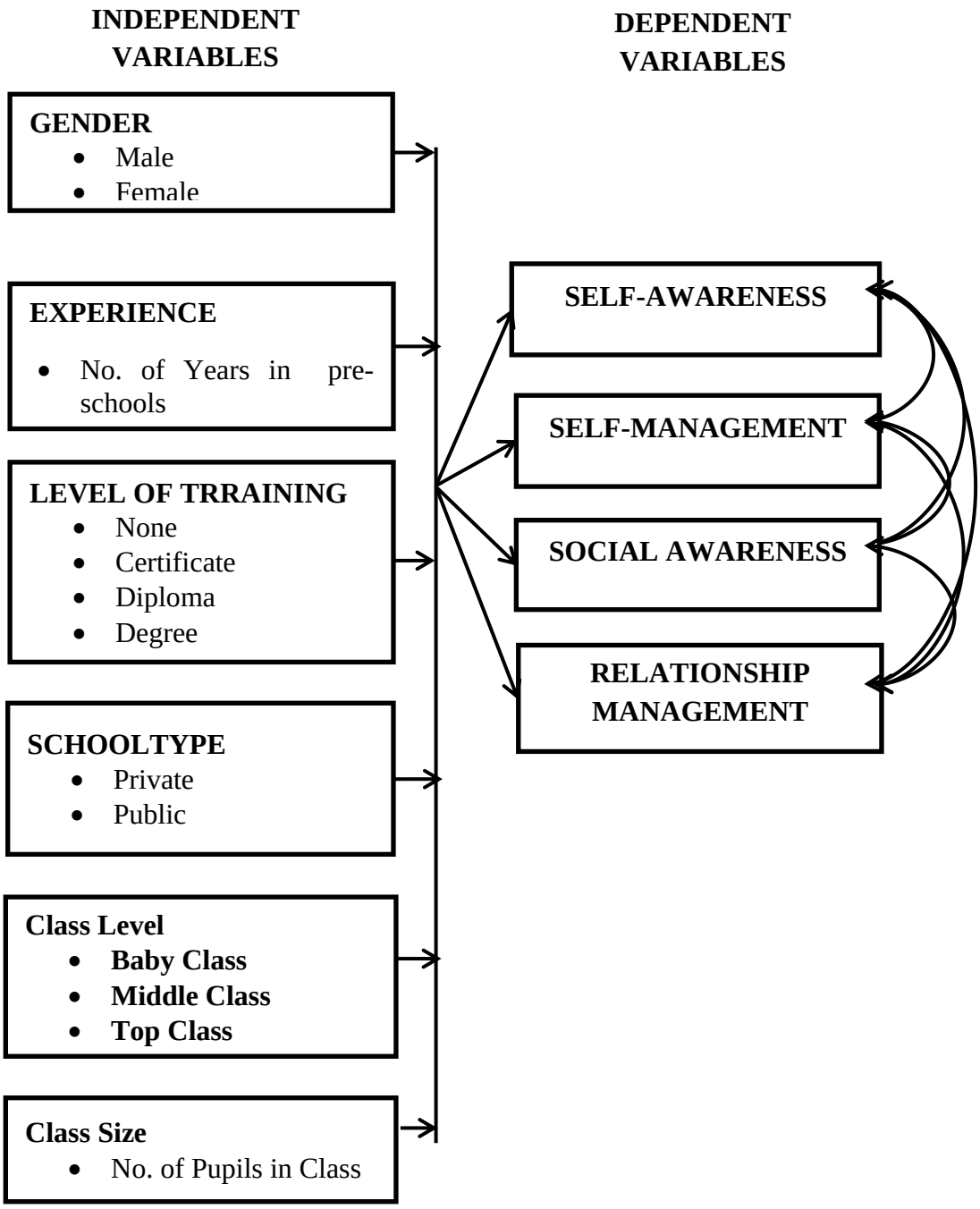

Figure 1.2: Conceptual Framework

(Source: Consolidated from various literature sources)

1.16 Operational Definition of Terms

Class size: Number of children in the classroom which in this study is categorized as low (below 20 children per class) Optimal (20-30 children per class) high (more than 30 children per class).

Developmental level: in this study, developmental level will refer to the transitional level of the child within the Kenyan context: baby class (below 3 years), middle class (4-5 years), and top class (over 5 years).

Mainstream children: in this study, will refer to normal children in school as opposed to children at risk.

Pre-school children: this refers to children in Kenya in their first, second and third year of their pre-school education, usually between 3-5 years.

Pre-school teachers: in this study pre-school teachers are the teachers engaged by schools to give care and education to the children on a daily basis.

Scaffolding strategies: Verbal or behavioural approaches teachers use in their daily interactions to reprimand children, acknowledge or support SEC among the pre-school children; specifically, in this study it means, how teacher scaffold the four levels of SEC: self-management, self- awareness, social awareness and relationship management.

School predictors: in this study school predictors, will be used to refer to: class size, developmental level and school type that influence the strategies that pre-school teachers use.

Socio-emotional competence: in this study socio-emotional competence will refer to verbal and non-verbal cues used by the pre-school teachers to scaffold the four aspects of SEC: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management.

Type of school: in this study, this construct means school categories, whether private or public depending on registration and ownership.

Teacher attributes: in this study the construct focused on: age, experience in pre-school teaching, training levels and gender of the pre-school teachers.

1.17 Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a brief explanation of the study background. The statements of the problem, the purpose of the study, research objectives and research questions have been presented. Within the chapter, the study hypotheses, assumptions of the study and the scope, have been stated and explained. The chapter ends with the operational terms used in the study. The following chapter is a review of literature relevant to the current study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Overview

The purpose of this literature review is three-fold: first to give a summary of developmental needs of children, secondly, to discuss the role of teacher attributes and school predictors in the children's development of SEC, and thirdly to give an overview of the strategies that have been found to be effective in the development of SEC amongst children. The chapter also looks at various researches that have been done with respect to the development of SEC amongst children with the aim of focusing on the gaps.

2.2 Children's Developmental Needs

It has been documented that many children lack SEC skills, one of the developmental needs of children. If acquired during pre-school years, SEC skills portend subsequent positive performance in different areas such as academic and overall psychological well-being in later years (Bornstein, Hahn, & Haynes, 2010; Ekman, 1972). This is because SEC equips children with skills in: self-management; self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. With self –management, a child is in control of self-driven: desires, will, actions, wants, and even likes. Such a child is able to deal with frustrations that arise out of not having what he would otherwise have wished to have. At preschool, self- management is seen in diverse situations. For example, a child may have brought to school a piece of bread as a snack and other children may have brought other snacks like cake or even sausages. A child with self-management competencies will be contented with what she brought from home while one without may steal or beg from others.

According to Feldman (2014), child with self-awareness skills on the other hand is able to understand themselves, and is aware of what makes them unique. They know who they are, what they can do, their limitations and all that make them different from other children. They can compare themselves with others and even go to the extent of comparing their home environments, their family structures, their parents and siblings. At preschool children can appreciate themselves and they can also refute what other children say about them as their self-awareness develops.

Apart from self-management and self-awareness, a preschool child also needs to be competent in social awareness. With social awareness the child is able to appreciate those other preschool children in their environment who may not be like them. This appreciation is not just confined to physical attributes but also to social, emotional and language characteristics that make children different from each other. Preschool children get to know for example that their actions can upset others and so they develop the ability to think about the effects of their actions on others. Beyond the appreciation that they are all different, children with social awareness skills get to learn that it is acceptable to be different from others (Landry, 2005). This is the beginning of appreciating diversity in later life.

Further, relationship management competencies enable children to relate well with others. In preschool, relationship management skills help children learn to: share, use courtesy words, help each other in tasks, learn to respect each other's feelings and private spaces, identify pleasant and unpleasant words to use with each other, and above all develop and practice caring behaviour towards each other. Self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management are therefore some of the SEC skills that children need in preschool.

Due to the importance of SEC, researchers have been interested in what predicts the acquisition of SEC skills in early childhood (Ackerman & Izard, 2004; Berke, 2013; Blair & Diamond, 2008; Etel & Yagmurlu, 2015; Baron, 2006). This is because early childhood marks an important period of human life when 'the fundamentals of children's emotional, intellectual, social and physical development are laid' (Baron, 2006, p. v). According to early childhood scholars, early childhood is that period of human life up until the age of eight years (Berke, 2013; Feldman, 2014; Vargas, 2009).

Most children within the early childhood age bracket are exposed to either formal or informal learning as they are prepared for the next level of schooling. In the context of education, early childhood is that period of time when the young children are prepared for primary school. There are many terms that are used to refer to that education that is given to children at this age: preschool, nursery, kindergarten depending on the approaches of teaching and the reason for having children in school. In Kenya, the environments in these early childhood settings are not similar. Even though the government is the main institution charged with the responsibility of the provision of education services, there are many other non-governmental bodies that contribute to the provision of early childhood education. They include religious institutions and individuals who provide education services in institutions are commonly referred to as private schools.

Whereas some environments that children are brought up in, both at home and at school are conducive for their growth and development, others are not. When children are not exposed to environments that can help them develop skills such as SEC; whether at home or at school, developmental delays may be experienced (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Baron, 2006). Because aspects of development are interrelated, delays in children's SEC may lead to delay in other areas. For example, cognitive achievement is largely

contributed to by SEC as is seen in attention-related skills such as task persistence and self-regulation. When academic tasks prove to be difficult, a child requires more attention and persistence to learn. Under normal circumstances such a child may give up and therefore not learn. Likewise, physical development is also closely related to the development of SEC (Ackerman & Izard, 2004; Berke, 2013; Blair & Diamond, 2008; Kopp, 1982; Zimmerman, 1994). For example, a child who is physically challenged is not likely to play with the others, and if he does, they may taunt him, thus lower his self- esteem which may also end up affecting his academics. Similarly, a child who does not have self-management skills is likely to be unruly, ruthless and not patient. As a result other children may choose to avoid him during play. This in turn may deprive such a child the opportunity to play and develop physical strength. Therefore, a healthy child should not experience any delay in all aspects of development (Baron, 2006; Landry, 2006).

While echoing Baron (2006), Gabriela Mistral, a Nobel Laureate in Literature in 1995, had this to say about children's development (Landry, 2005):

> Many things can wait; children cannot. Today, their bones are being formed, their blood is being made, and their senses are being developed. To them, we cannot say tomorrow, their name is today' (p. ii).

This means that given that children need to develop socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively and linguistically; these developmental needs cannot be postponed or delayed. Socio-emotional development which results in the acquisition of SEC components such as: Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management enhance the child's interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships.

In addition to the SEC skills, children also need to be competent in SEC language. As the main caregivers of children, pre-school teachers can act as SEC language coaches by providing a supportive scaffold (Petrides & Ruttledge, 2011; Saarni, 1999). This will help children learn, understand and practice appropriate SEC language. According to Saarni (1999), competent SEC language increases self-worth in children.

As has already been mentioned, self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management abilities like other abilities develop in an interrelated way and therefore, one strategy can be used to scaffold the development of other competencies. For example, peer monitoring can be effectively used to scaffold self-management, social management and relationship management (Boyatzis, et al., 1995; Cherniss, 2000; Knudsen, 2004; Ready & Lee, 2007). Warning as a strategy can also be used both as a preventive as well as a corrective measure. Therefore, there is no single strategy that works to scaffold a certain competence.

Given that children are unique, preschool teachers have varied knowledge and training and that preschool environments differ, preschool teachers should adopt the best approaches that can work with the types of children that they have. Through trial and error the preschool teachers can devise strategies that they can use to scaffold specific competencies in children. Acquiring components of SEC is therefore important and should not be delayed as it is a predictor of other aspects of development and consequently, future life success of the child. With SEC skills, a child will develop life skills, attitudes and personal awareness helpful in interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. Without these competencies, a child is likely to be a failure in life.

2.3 Components of Socio-emotional Competence

Decades of research disclose that there are five core components of SEC thought to be critical for a child's well-being: Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management and decision making (Durlak et al., 2011; Greenberg et al., 2003; Shanker, 2014). Compelling evidence from research has continued to reveal that the development of SEC components in children is fundamentally linked to their cognitive and academic competencies manifested in their ability to learn and succeed in school (Bierman, 2011; Camilli, Vargas, Ryan, & Barnett, 2010; Joseph & Strain, 2003; Razza, Bergen, & Raymond, 2015).

Although scholars have examined the relationship between SEC and children's' achievement as discussed in Chapter One, few of these studies focused on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children. Most of these studies focus on vulnerable children or children already deficient in SEC skills. This is despite the fact many children have deficiency in essential SEC skills important for overall life success. Consequently, pre-schools should consider ways of promoting the development of these core SEC components to enhance their benefits to children (Durlak et al., 2011; Shanker, 2014). The current study focused on how teacher attributes and school predictors influence the strategies pre-school teachers use to scaffold self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management as core components of SEC. The main intention of the study was to find out if a significant relationship existed between teacher attributes and school factors on the strategies used to scaffold SEC competencies in preschool children. This is because there are a number of documented researches that link children's academic outcome with teacher attributes and school predictors (England, 2010; Islahi & Nasreen, 2013; Wood, 2012). Research on non-cognitive aspects of development on the other hand shows that training children

in core components of SEC can alter their brain centres that regulate negative and positive emotions (Boyatzis, Cowarnsis, & Kolb, 1995).

Brain development is responsive to experiences and children's early experiences shape the formation of their neural pathways. According to scholars in child psychology, as children's brains access the same neural pathways over and again during their growth, the development of SEC components as they respond to environmental stimuli is determined (Cherniss, 2000; Goleman, 1998). Consequently, just like with all forms of learning, the development of SEC components in children requires commitment and sustained effort over time.

2.3.1 Development of the Self–management Component in Children

Self-management skills are critical for success in school, work and life (Galinsky, 2010). Self-management is the ability to be in control of one's feelings, utterances and actions even with an impending threat. With self-management, a child is able to deal with emotions appropriately without harming self, others or property. A child with self-management skills is likely to regulate own behaviour by being aware of the consequence of actions; this involves, being able to recognize the need to control impulsive actions and words and remain composed and not act out in frustration when needs are not met (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Feldman, 2014; Gliebe, 2011; Ministry of Education, Singapore, 2013).

According to Galinsky (2010), children with self-management skills are able to tailor their behaviour to different situations based on unspoken rules and social norms that govern these situations. They learn to devise ways to monitor their behaviour, reflect upon their behaviour and adapt their behaviour when they recognize that they are not as successful and/or not acting as appropriately as they should. With self-management,

children learn that behaviour that is appropriate in one context may not be appropriate in another. Children who manage themselves are therefore, actively and constructively able to adapt their thoughts, feelings, and actions to affect their learning and motivation (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005; Pintrich, 2000). However, self-management requires intentional practice for internalization (Galinsky, 2010). With intentional self-management, children learn more and excel in education (Blair & Diamond, 2008). To help children develop self-management, pre-school teachers ought to be intentional so that children internalise and practice behaviour that is appropriate in different contexts.

Smith-Donald, Raver, Hayes, and Richardson (2007) have observed that self-management competence is comprised of processes linked to adaptive ways of responding to challenges and opportunities of learning. Self-management begins during early childhood as the prefrontal cortex develops and is influenced by maturation of certain areas of the brain, a child's temperament as well as the environment (Thomson, 2007; Kochaska, Murray, & Harlan, 2001; Rothbart & Bates, 2006). An environment that stimulates a child's ability to respond to emotional stimuli, one that gives the child emotional support, attention, verbal and language input helps a child develop self-management competence (Landry & Smith, 2008). Such an environment should be accompanied with continuous practice amongst peers and play experiences (Bodrova & Leong, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978). The child's bioecological processes, therefore, plays significant role in his self-management abilities. According to Lewit and Baker (1995), pre-school teachers have observed that a child's self-management is important not only for overall school adjustment but also for academic skills. To be competent in self-management, children must learn to switch off disrupting behavioural impulses and shift their focus and attention towards a learning task (Blair & Diamond, 2008). Self-

management is therefore fundamental to the acquisition of other skills (Koegel & Koegel, 2006).

Research shows that children who master self-management competence have higher levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy, while those who do not develop it are at a great risk of emotional problems and externalizing disorders, attention problems, and poor academic outcomes (Kim-Spoon, Cichetti, & Rogosch, 2013; McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007; Tremblay, 2000). Self-management studies like with other non-cognitive studies have taken varied dimensions and have been a focus of research for a long time (Beachman, 2009; Bronson, 2000; Elgsti et al., 2006; Gliebe, 2011; Mischel, 1989; Nordgren & Chou, p. 201; Torres, 2011). Most of these researches use compliance to measure children's self-management abilities in relation to requests made to them by their caregivers.

According to Gestsdottir et al. (2014); Honig (2010); children find it easier to comply when they are in agreement with a request made. When they do not agree with a request, they find it difficult to comply. This may be due to the fact that adults more often than not focus on what should not be done rather than encourage children to continue with an activity. For example, it is common to find adults warning children 'don't make noise' rather than 'you must be quiet before we go out to play' (Simpson & Riggs, 2005).

A longitudinal study by Mischel in the 1960's to find the appropriate human development stage for self-management competence, for example, found that it was important for children to develop this competence in early years (Gliebe, 2011). Mischel's study also known as the 'marshmallow test' laid the foundation for modern studies in self-management. Years later, when Mischel revisited the marshmallow test

subjects as adolescents, the teenagers who had waited longer for the marshmallows as pre-schoolers scored higher on SAT and were rated by their parents as able to: plan, handle stress, respond to reason, exhibit self-management and had higher attention span. Studies done on these subjects, while at the age of 40 years, found that these traits were still present in those who as children had self-management competence (Mischel, 1989; Nordgren & Chou, 2011). This has been reported by other scholars (Beachman, 2009; Bronson, 2000; Elgsti et al., 2006).

To date, studies on self-management continue to attract the attention of researchers. Cadima, Verschueren, Leal, and Guedes (2016) study was to find the relationship between child-teachers and the development of self-management in a sample of 206 socially disadvantaged children. Using multilevel analyses Cadima, et al. study found that teacher-child closeness predicted improvements in observed self-management skills among young children. The study concluded that children with low self-management skills benefited most from classrooms where teachers had close relationships with them.

Another study by Wyman, Cross, Brown, Tu, and Eberly (2010) used a model to examine strategies to scaffold self-management amongst 226 kindergarten children identified with behavioural and social problems. In this model, children were taught hierarchical sets of skills to monitor emotions, self-control, maintaining control, and regaining equilibrium. From the teachers' ratings, the study revealed that there were reduced problems in behaviour control and social skills, with girls rated higher than boys.

Like Wyman at al. (2010) study, Tores (2011) study examined the structure of self-management skills in 192 children from 22 prekindergarten and kindergarten

classrooms in three district schools in Pennsylvania, USA. The children had significant developmental delays. The assessed tasks emphasized three different dimensions of self-management: management of behaviour, aroused emotions, attention and intentional conflicts. Teachers gave a report on the children's school adjustment including relationship with teachers and peers and behaviour problems. A sub group of children with behaviour deficits were identified, given a 16-session intervention and a post-test assessment done. The study concluded that self-management plays an important role in social-behavioural learning at school entry.

Razza et al. (2015) found that Yoga could be used to promote children's self-management. This was a longitudinal comparative study that focused on children between three and five years old using a quasi-experimental pre-test and treatment and control design. The study assessed attention, delay of gratification and inhibitory control among the children using a parent report and direct assessment. The study concluded that children who were more at risk of self-regulation benefited most from the intervention.

Avcioglu's (2012) study on the development of self–management in children evaluated the effectiveness of programs meant to help children with intellectual disabilities develop self-management skills. This experimental study was done among nine children between the ages of 10-12 using a multiple probe design across single research methodology subjects. In this study, children were trained in self-management skills that involved: training in the use of expressive language, following directions, matching and counting self-management skills with the use of stories for each skill and picture cards. During observation, the study found that the children were able to develop self-management skills which included: being angry without harming others, solving conflicts without fighting, and use of correct responses in dealing with self-

management issues. The study concluded that self-management training was effective in developing the skill in children.

In Tymes, Outlaw, and Hamilton's (2016) study, children in a rural community were subjected to an after-school life skill program that lasted 30 minutes for 8 weeks. Pre-test and Post-test scores were administered to the children to determine the effectiveness of the self-management programs. Results showed improvement in the prevention of bullying among the children. The study concluded that self-management skills in children could be developed using specific programs.

In another comparative study, Horesh, Apter, and Gross (2010) examined the patterns of self-management in 49 treatment and 42 controlled children diagnosed with anxiety disorders by presenting ambiguous situations with potentially threatening meanings. The study concluded that children with anxiety disorders had deficits in self-management and benefitted more in intentional strategies used.

Other studies on strategies used to scaffold self-management amongst children have revealed that: praise and admiration was an effective strategy in scaffolding the development of self-management skills in children. Modelling pro-social reasoning that emphasized the effect of behaviour other than using punitive methods and physical punishment, helped children effectively acquire self-management skills (Glasser& Easley, 1998; Gomes & Livesey, 2008).

The findings of Gomes and Livesey (2008) and Honig (2002; 2010) are consistent with other studies examining the development self-management in children (Hobson et al., 2006; Duff & Flattery, 2014). Scaffolding of self-management in children can therefore, take place through modelling by significant adults as well as through attachment (Sroufe, 2006).

As highlighted in the cited researches, most studies on the development of self-management in children have focused mainly on strategies used to scaffold self-management with at risk children. Other studies have examined the effectiveness of self-management on strategies used with children. It is obvious from these studies that self-management skills are critical to children's later social-emotional well-being and academic achievement. The studies also affirm that pre-school is a critical stage in the development of non-cognitive skills such as self-management skills. However, self-management skills are not only needed by children considered to be at risk. All children require self-management skills. Like other social skills, self-management skills may be acquired by observing significant others, modelling and imitating the observed behaviours and making acquired behaviours permanent through practice (Cherniss, 2000; Goleman, 1998). Westwood (1993) observed that schools should develop suitable programs for developing self-management after determining children's priorities. Teachers have also been found to be effective coaches in teaching children with non-cognitive skills (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007). Similarly, Manji and Arnold (2015) have observed the need for research that compares the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of service provision which includes self-management skills in public and private pre-schools.

The current study was therefore critical in that it was mainly concerned with the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold self-management skills in typical pre-school children. There are many documented examples of specific skills that have been used to scaffold self-management in children. These include: giving compliments to children (Apple, Billingsley, & Schwartz, 2005), responding to children (Newman, Reinecke, & Meinberg, 2000), sharing (Reinecke, Newberg, & Meinberg, 1999)and conversing with children (Koegel & Frea, 1993). As mentioned by Gross and Thomson

(2007), any emotional regulation strategy is neither always good nor bad; therefore, examining the strategies pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC skills was deemed important.

2.3.2 Development of the Self-Awareness Component in Children

Self-awareness is a process of being in touch with one's feelings and behaviours (Gold & Roth, 1993; Warren & Stifter, 2008). Erich Fromm in 1939 was among the first behavioural scientists to acknowledge that there was a link between one's self awareness and one's feelings about others (Ekman, 1972). Self- awareness, also called self-recognition begins at birth and is evident with infants displaying rooting reflex, though this self-awareness is limited and mainly emerges between the ages of 15 and 18 months (Berke, 2013; Diehl, Youngblade, Hay, & Chui, 2011). At the age of 2 years, as self-awareness further develops children can point themselves out in a picture or even recognize themselves in a mirror (Berke, 2013). By the time children are in pre-school, they are capable of experiencing, identifying and coping with a myriad of emotions with regard to self-awareness as a skill (Diehl et al., 2011; Harris; 2009; Saarni, 1999).

Pre-schoolers' ability to demonstrate self-awareness is an important SEC component that has continued to receive increasing attention from developmental psychologists (Bierman, 2011; Durlak et al., 2011; Warren & Stifter, 2008). Self-awareness enables pre-school children understand themselves; their attributes, abilities, attitudes, and values as they also become more aware of observable characteristics such as their name, physical appearance, what they own, gender, and their everyday typical emotions (Berke, 2013; Fasig, 2000; Harter, 2006; Ministry of Education, Singapore, 2013; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

It is believed that pre-schooler's self-awareness is often much exaggerated with very optimistic views about themselves; their skills and knowledge (Feldman, 2014). According to Verschueren, Doumen, & Buyse (2012), this kind of inaccuracy is attributed to the fact that at this age, pre-schoolers have not yet started to compare themselves and their performances against their peers. Such inaccuracy, therefore, according to Verschueren et al., is helpful because it makes children take chances and try new activities without fear of failure. Subsequently, pre-school teachers are best placed to correct inaccurate self-awareness in children given that they spend more time with them in a day compared to the parents and guardians.

According to Wang (2004), the environment has a significant contribution on a pre-schooler's self-awareness. Whereas some environments promote independence, others promote interdependence, while still others promote individualism (Wang, 2004; 2006). It was in this regard that the current study examined the influence of the type of school on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components. With effective self-awareness skills, pre-school children are able to enjoy healthy relationships with their teachers and peers. This in turn, contributes to positive academic achievement (Harris, 2009; Bornstein et al., 2010).

Literature indicates that the development of effective self-awareness in children requires a pre-school teacher who is aware and responsive to be able to monitor and regulate own internal processes and behaviour during interaction with the children (Harter, 2006; Thomson, 2007). A pre-schooler's self-awareness skill is enhanced if the pre-school teacher interacts with the child in an environment with emotionally regulated and verbally mediated interactions by being attuned to the child's emotions (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Further, the attitudes of teachers and school staff in the pre-school affect the development of the pre-schooler's self-awareness (Feldman, (2014). If the

teachers model sensitive care giving where they are warm and close with the children, children's development of self-awareness component may be enhanced.

Although self-awareness is an important skill, few studies have been done to examine its development in children (Lawlor, Schonert-Reichl, & Gaderman, 2014; Warren & Stifter, 2008). For example, Perez's (2011) exploratory study examined the influence of teacher's understanding of how their own emotions influenced children's ability to develop self-awareness. In Perez's study, 25graduate teacher students from Oakland were assessed using a Students' Emotional Self-awareness Log to enter situations that triggered emotional responses as they interacted with the pre-school children. Perez then used the information from the log to create awareness in children about emotional triggers as the participants modelled the right emotional responses to the children. In this study, Perez's found that teachers' awareness of the effect of their emotions on children and their conscious effort to effectively manage their own emotions had a positive effect on children's self-awareness.

This is consistent with Hobson et al. (2006) comparative study among autistic and non-autistic children. Hobson et al. study aimed at finding out how children's engagement with other people in turn influenced their own development of self-awareness. The study used interview schedules and visual elicitation techniques to examine children's understanding of their self-awareness. From the findings, the study concluded that for children to develop self-awareness, they needed care givers to model this skill.

Similarly, Duff, and Flattery's (2014) study on strategies to develop self -awareness among autistic children found the need for teachers to model positive self-awareness. Coholi (2011) qualitative study, however, examined the use of art-based strategies to teach at-risk children self-awareness, while Bajgar, Ciarrochi, Lane, and Dean (2004)

and Lawlor et al. (2014) examined children's self-awareness development. Hobson et al. (2006); Duff and Flattery (2014) like other studies focused on vulnerable children while Bajgar et al. (2004) and Lawlor et al. (2014) used psychometric scales to examine children's self-awareness. The current study focused on mainstream children and used a SEC questionnaire to examine the strategies that preschool teachers used to scaffold SEC.

Brownell, Zerwas, and Ramani's (2007) study was on the development of body self-awareness in 50 toddlers between the age of 17 and 30 months. The children were given a set of five tasks to assess their awareness of their body sizes in relations to 10 objects; like wearing a small hat or going through a small door. Observations were made on types of errors they made. The study found that children demonstrated their growing self-awareness and were able to use their given names to refer to themselves and could also recognize themselves from photos and mirrors. The study therefore concluded that with developed self-awareness, children were able to use their bodies as a means of personal expression.

Apart from developing self-awareness as a result of biological process, research findings reveal that cultural contexts in which children are brought up also influence their self-awareness abilities. For example, Laksmi, Kustyowati, Yustia, and Luluk (2015) did a case study in Insan Teladan School in Indonesia. The study used the Bordieu Theory to construct children and their parents' self-awareness. It was concluded that a child's self-awareness is constructed by implementing human values such as truth, peace, compassion and non-violence. Once constructed, self-awareness can be realized by ensuring consistent habits are encouraged using a language that is well understood by the child. To Laksmi et al., the child can be helped to develop the

ability to control egocentric tendencies and be able to independently think and act right with practice.

Likewise, among the Greek, parenting practices emphasize autonomy and separation and as such Greek children exhibit self-awareness skills much earlier than other African children (Kelleret al., 2004; Keller, Voelker, & Yovsi, 2005). Similarly, children from the West are taught early in life to be proud of their personal achievement and this raises their self-awareness high (Berke, 2013). In other collectivist cultures, such as China and Japan, being aware of one's success and calling attention to it; is usually discouraged and viewed as an embarrassment (Akimoto & Sanbonmatsu, 1999).

From the aforementioned reviews, it is evident that most research on the development of self-awareness in children have focused on only two aspects: assessing the development of self-awareness in vulnerable children and the evaluation of children's emotional awareness states using different emotional awareness scales (Bajgar et al., 2004; Duff & Flattery, 2014; Hobson et al., 2006; Lawlor et al., 2014). Although Coholi's (2011) study was an attempt to examine the strategies used to scaffold self-awareness in children, the study used one research method approach: the qualitative approach. Secondly, most of the cited studies have focused on children who were mainly at risk of behavioural problems. Thirdly, the studies were all done in the west. The current study was done in Africa, specifically Kenya and was focused on normal preschool going children.

Scholars in developmental psychology have observed that equipping children with self-awareness especially during pre-school is a need for all children (Berke, 2013; Brown & Ward, 2013; Dich et al., 2015; Gillum, 2010; Goleman, 1998; Knudsen, 2004; Tell, 2009). With self-awareness skills, pre-school children are able to understand

themselves and enjoy healthy relationships with their teachers and peers; a prerequisite in the achievement of their academic potentials and later life success (Berke, 2013; Bornstein et al.,2010; Harris, 2009; Fasig, 2000; Harter, 2006; Ministry of Education, Singapore, 2013).

The current study examined the strategies pre-school teachers used to scaffold self-awareness skill in typical pre-school children. This is because research indicates that deficiency in SEC is a challenge with all growing and developing children and even then, such studies are few and mainly prevalent in the western world (Child Maltreatment Report, 2010; National Research Council of Medicine, 2000; Republic of Kenya, 2008). As has been documented that children's self-awareness is closely associated with that of the caregiver; the current study sought to find the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold self-awareness in children.

2.3.3 Development of the Social Awareness Component in Children

A pre-schooler who has social awareness is able to take others' perspectives into account, show empathy, be able to predict others' feelings and reactions and recognize emotional cues to their own actions or speech (Shanker, 2014). This type of ability, as Shanker observes, enables one to adapt to the mood of a group, understand and respect peoples' points of views as it calls for the need to understand and appreciate diversity.

Social awareness like other social skills, do not reside in a person, and as such, no one person can be socially competent in all situations (McFall, 1982). Like other skills, social awareness, is learned (Miles & Stipek, 2006). According to Vygotsky (1978), when pre-school teachers stimulate, are responsive and supportive of children, they help them develop social awareness. Social awareness is important because it provides a crucial foundation for the attainment of a range of skills important to academic

achievement **(**Denham, 2006; Feldman, 2014; Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Downer and Pianta (2006) found that more socially competent pre-schoolers performed better in academics than their less socially competent peers. Similarly, social competence in early childhood has been associated with decreased behaviour problems in middle age and adolescence (Bornstein et al., 2010). It has also been found that social competence is malleable in early childhood and teachers have a powerful influence in shaping contexts and experiences that enhance children's social awareness (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Bierman, 2011). Pre-school teachers are therefore well placed to scaffold the development of this skill in children.

Research on social awareness has mostly focused more on the relationship between social development and academic achievement (Huitt & Dawson, 2011). For example, McWayne and Cheung (2009) found that behaviour problems assessed at the end of the first grade (baby class) did not predict academic or social outcomes in first grade once competencies in areas such as positive interaction with peers, attentional focus and motivation for learning were considered. Similarly, Arnold, Kupersmidt, Voegler-Lee, and Marshal (2012) examined the link between attention problems, aggression, and social skills and how these constructs predicted academic skills in pre-school children. The study found that there was a significant relationship between social awareness and academic attainment. This is consistent with the findings of Nix, Bierman, Domitrovich, and Gill (2013) which reported that gains in social and emotional competence were associated with better pre-academic skills.

Consequently, scholars propose that school curricula must provide learning experiences that address children's development in all dimensions of learning including social awareness as a component of SEC (Cohen, 2006a; Elias & Arnold, 2006; Zins et al., 2004). In line with these findings, one of the objectives of the current study was to

examine the influence of teacher attributes and school predictors on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold social awareness in children.

From study reviews done by Eisenberg, Spinrad, and Morris (2014); Schonert-Reichl, et al. (2012); Lovett and Sheffield (2007), social awareness is associated with positive social adjustment, lower levels of bullying, better pro-social behaviour and increased emotional regulation while lower levels of social awareness is associated with higher level of aggression among adolescents.

A number of experimental evaluations of classroom based interventions in learning social-emotional competence in children indicate that pre-school teachers can successfully scaffold this skill in children (Jones, Brown, & Aber, 2011; Bierman, 2011). According to evidence, a child's social awareness is influenced by context characteristics that include: the emotional climate of the classroom, the teacher's relational style as well as the behaviour management norms (Bierman, 2011).

The current study was therefore important in that it aimed at establishing strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold social awareness amongst children. This made the study different from those previously done that were mainly intervention and evaluation studies.

2.3.4 Development of Relationship Management in Children

Relationship management is the ability of the children to: show appreciation and care for others, work and play cooperatively with each other, establish and maintain friendships with each other, use friendly ways to manage disagreement or unhappiness as well as be able to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings effectively with others through words, actions and gestures (Landry, 2005; Ministry of Education of Singapore, 2013).

Competence in relationship management is achieved when one is able to: develop and maintain healthy friendships; address interpersonal conflicts; be aware of own communication skills, manage and express emotions effectively, build relationships, be able to resist negative social pressures, and be able to seek help when needed (Shanker, 2014). Through relationships with peers, children get information about the world, other people and even about themselves (Berndt, 2002). As observed by Majors (2012), such relationship provides children with the much-needed emotional support to deal with issues such as stress, aggression and negative behaviour from other children. It further provides them with training ground for communication and interaction.

Children often revise their preferred relationships and spend a lot of time with those they appreciate without necessarily focusing on the personal qualities or traits that they have (Feldman, 2014). However, by the time they are between 8 to 10 years, this perspective changes and children will enjoy relationships with peers who have personal qualities and traits that they themselves cherish, like trust or honesty. As observed by Feldman, children preferred by peers for relationships are those who are usually helpful, cooperative, humorous and also love humour, are able to read others' nonverbal behaviour and understand others' emotional experiences, can control their nonverbal behaviour effectively, and have good social problem solving skills.

Pre-schooler's relationship management skills help them understand the concept of gender identity. Often, the pre-school children have very strict ideas about how boys and girls are supposed to act with their expectations of gender appropriate behaviour more stereotyped than that of adults (Serbin, Poulin-Dubois & Eichstedt, 2002; Ruble et al., 2007).

Like with other components of SEC, studies of relationship management skills among children have mainly focused on comparing relationship management skills and academic outcomes. For example, a study on early teacher-child relationships and the trajectory of children's school outcomes found that a positive adult-child relationship in early years was significant and resulted in overall school success regardless of gender, ethnicity, cognitive ability and behaviour (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). This finding is consistent with other studies that have confirmed that teacher-child relationships play a significant role in children's ability to acquire social skills necessary for school and overall life success (Burchinal, Cryer, & Clifford, 2002; Ladd & Burgess, 2001; Pianta&Stuhlman, 2004). Teacher-Child closeness was found to be significantly associated with receptive vocabulary among pre-school children resulting in positive relationships with peers (Burchinal et al., 2002).

Children with high scores on interpersonal competence were also found to be more pro-social and cooperative with higher levels of self-esteem, happiness, and a positive attitude towards school (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Lemerise & Harper, 2014). In contrast, those who scored low on interpersonal relationships were found to: have poor interpersonal skills, low levels of self-esteem and lower levels of happiness (Rigby & Slee, 1999); higher levels of antisocial behaviour and aggression (Lemerise & Harper, 2014); trouble building strong relationships and managing interpersonal problem **(**Denham, 2006; Dunn, Brown, & Maguire, 1995) as well as difficulty in team tasks (Larson, 2000; Cherniss, 2000).

While concurring with the findings from cited scholars that there is a link between children's relationships and overall life success, most of these studies have not examined strategies that help children develop self-management skills. This study sought to go a step further. The study examined the influence of teacher attributes and

school predictors on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold relationship management skills among children.

2.4 Teacher Attributes and Children's SEC

Teacher attributes are teacher characteristics that distinguish one teacher from another. There are several and diverse teacher attributes which may include: age, gender, training levels, education levels, and experience, amongst others. A number of studies have been done to examine the relationship between teacher attributes and children's achievement (Biersteker, Ngaruya, Sebatane, & Gudyanga, 2008; Brackett & Katulak, 2006; Cote & Hideg, 2011; Durlak et al., 2011; Sullivan & Lewis, 2003). This is simply because teachers have been found to have the greatest influence in the lives of children (Honig & Hirillal, 2014; Shanker, 2014). However, none of these studies is conclusive about the relationship between teacher characteristics and children's performance.

The current study examined the relationship between teachers' attributes and school predictors on strategies used to scaffold SEC in children. SEC in children begins with the ability to identify and accurately discriminate between emotions. The ability to identify and interpret accurately emotions that children see from different faces every day is a vital component to all social interactions (Brackett & Katulak, 2006; Cote & Hideg, 2011; Sullivan & Lewis, 2003). Teachers and other school staff can help children accurately identify, interpret and deal with emotions appropriately without the need to engage the services of outside personnel (Durlak et al., 2011). It is believed that a considerable portion of a child's SEC together with the appropriate accompanying emotional vocabulary is enhanced as the child engages with peers and with the teachers (Kityama, Markus, & Matsumoto, 1995). With language development, a child is therefore able to identify and describe emotional expressions. As a matter of fact, language and emotional development are interdependent and

happen during social interactions in an environment with more skilled and competent partners, in this case a pre-school teacher who is intentional (Vygotsky, 1978).

Studies done to examine the effect of teacher attributes on student achievement have given irresolute results (Biersteker et al., 2008; Harris & Sass, 2009; Luschei, 2012; Nurmi, Viljaranta, Tolvanen, & Aunola, 2012; Son, Kwon, & Jeon, 2013). Harris and Sass (2009) for instance, found that the effect of teachers' experience on children's performance is positive only during the first few years of experience. This supports an earlier finding by Jacob and Lefregen (2004) whose study revealed that experiences greatly enhanced productivity in early childhood, but only during the initial career years. Luschei (2012) on the other hand espoused the importance of male pre-schoolteachers on children's overall achievement. To Islahi (2013), however, both men and women have their place in pre-school teaching as each gender is endowed with different insight, intelligence, knowledge, management, competence, dynamism as well as diligence. Son et al. (2013) study findings advocates for teacher professional development as a precursor for children's achievement. The current study is important as it examined the influence of pre-school teacher attributes; training levels, experience and gender on the strategies used to scaffold SEC in children.

2.4.1 Teachers' Training Level and Children's SEC

Pre-school learning centres comprise teachers of different levels of training: the untrained, holders of certificates, diplomas and degrees. Different countries have different training requirements for pre-school teachers. In South Africa teacher training for pre-school requires a 4-year degree as a minimum. In Zimbabwe, it is 3 years while in Lesotho no formal training is required (Biersteker et al., 2008). In Kenya, the government supports 2 years of in-service training for pre-school teachers at certificate

and diploma levels although presently Universities provide a 4 Year period (Republic of Kenya, 2008).

A few years ago, over half of the pre-school teachers in Kenya were untrained with the majority being class eight and Form four leavers (Gakii, 2003; Ngure, 2014). The highest trained pre-school teacher then had a certificate in early childhood education (Republic of Kenya, 2006). According to the Kamunge Commission report, most pre-school teachers in Kenya ended up in pre-school teaching simply because they had no alternative jobs (Republic of Kenya, 2008).Research studies reveal that although pre-school teachers play a crucial role in the prevention of behaviour problems among children, they are often the least prepared in terms of training (Gakii, 2003; Republic of Kenya, 2008; Son et al., 2013). Most of the pre-school teachers actually are trained on the job. In a survey amongst 100 pre-school educators from 13 early childhood programs in Missouri, USA, Waner (2017) found that because of lack of training, most of the teachers (2/3) felt they did not have the educational support that they needed to address challenging behaviours in the classroom. Such high levels of challenging behaviour in the classrooms contributed to stress and burnout amongst the teachers. Studies reveal that teachers with specialized training in early childhood provide more appropriate direction, build upon children's prior knowledge, scaffold activities to develop skills and engage children in activities that are sufficiently challenging (Bueno, Darling-Hammond, & Gonzales, 2010). However, what entails teacher training has continued to be a contested subject and some scholars believe that there are inadequate measures of teacher training (Harris & Sass, 2009). Likewise, scholars differ on whether teachers' training levels have an impact on student's achievement (Alexander & Fuller, 2004; Harris & Sass, 2009; Jacob & Lefgren, 2002; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002).

According to Bronson (2000) it is not just training that is important. Even after training, Bronson believes that teachers need professional development to help them deal with frustrations that they may experience in the course of their work with children. Reflective supervision is therefore needed for teachers dealing with children in their early years of education. In reflective supervision, teacher-child interactions are observed, teachers' frustrations listened to and the supervisor models and implements more effective alternatives in dealing with children's challenges related to SEC (Bronson, 2000).

Guthrie's (1982) review of researches done on teacher training and teacher professional development in developing countries found a positive relationship between teachers' general education, professional performance and student's achievement. However, Guthrie observed that the relationship between these variables were complex because of varied educational contexts and cultural contexts.

Alexander and Fuller's (2004); Laczko-Kerr and Berliner (2002) analyses on the influence of teacher training and children's performance found that children taught by trained certified teachers had higher levels of overall achievement. This overall achievement includes SEC. Earlier Lewis (1994) had found that teachers' skill training had a positive impact on social behaviour of children with disabilities while Bressoux (1996) study on the effect of teacher training and achievement of children found that training improved children's achievement. Bressoux's study entailed 3 categories of teachers untrained novice teacher, trained novice teachers and experienced teachers.

Cooper (2014) mixed method study was on the relationship between teacher training, intervention strategies and children's academic achievement in the classroom with kindergarten children with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). The study

found that trained teachers used better behaviour management strategies that resulted in higher academic achievement for the children. This is consistent with Gnedko (2013) who did a study to explore the relationship between teacher training and strategies of academic achievement among children with ADHD. Gdneko concluded that there was a positive effect of advanced teacher training on student attainment. However, Gnedko observed that the evidence of a positive effect of advanced teacher training was limited to specific subject areas like mathematics.

Similarly, Son et al. (2013) study investigated the contribution of a teacher's professional development on socio-emotional skills among 2159 pre-schoolers. Their study found that the pre-schoolers' social skills and learning behaviour increased with the teacher's professional development.

Dash, Kramer, O'Dwyer, and Russel's (2012) study with 235 teachers and 1899 of 5th graders on the impact of online professional development on teacher quality and pupils' achievement established that high quality and highly effective teachers are important for children's achievement and success. This success was attributed to high levels of behaviour management by such teachers. Teacher training, therefore according to Dash et al. is the single most important factor that explains student achievement.

Collins (2008) study on the effects of early social-emotional and relationship experience on the development of young orphaned children however, found that teacher training alone was not effective. According to Collins, strategies should include structural advances such as the number of children in the class and the teacher's schedule that support socio-emotional relationships.

In another study, Luschei (2012) sought to identify teacher attributes that were closely associated with student's achievement in Mexico. Luschei's study found that although

teacher quality was a strong predictor of student's success, teacher's education level was not necessarily linked to student achievement. Similarly, Harris and Sass (2009) found no relationship between teacher training and teacher effectiveness.

From the aforementioned studies, the following were areas of focus: Western countries (Hanushek, 1995); Vulnerable children (Collins, 2008); Children's academic achievement (Son et al., 2013); Intervention (Bressoux, 1996; Cooper, 2014; Dash et al., 2012; Lewis, 1994); it can be observed that few of them focused on developing SEC components in children. One of the objectives of the current study was to find out the effect of pre-school teacher's training levels on their strategies to scaffold SEC components among typical children. As indicated in Chapter one of this Thesis, this study was done in Eldoret town, Kenya among typical pre-school children. Given that Guthrie (1982) had observed that there was a positive relationship between teachers' general education and professional performance in developing countries, the study was keen to examine the teacher attributes and school predictors as some of the educational and cultural contexts of pre-schools that enhanced the scaffolding of SEC components in children.

2.4.2 Teachers' Experience and Children's Socio-emotional Competence

Teachers experience refers to knowledge and mastery of the teaching profession gained by involvement in instructing children over time. Although teachers' experience is an important aspect of a teacher's quality, research of its effect on children's achievement has been inconclusive (Croninger, Rice, & Rathbun, 2007; Guarino, Hamilton, Lockwood, & Rathbun, 2006; Phillips, 2010). Some researchers suggest that teachers' experience is not a characteristic of highly qualified teachers whereas other studies suggest that it is important and related to children's gains. For example, Goleman (2006) observed that children of more experienced teachers yielded higher outcomes in

achievement. This was affirmed by Jesper and Rivkin (2002) who also observed that teachers with more experience increased the likelihood of 3rd graders' achievement.

Studies on the influence of teacher's experience on children's achievement have taken different dimensions. An analysis of 60 studies by Greenwald, Hedges and Laine (1996) found a positive relationship between teaching experience and children's academic performance. This is consistent with a study by Nurmi, et al. (2012) which found that a teachers' experience had an effect on the children's academic performance. This effect is not confined to academics alone. Fetler (2001) found that teachers experience was positively related to children's resilience levels, and therefore was significant in children's achievement.

Similarly, Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain's (2005) study in Texas confirmed that children of experienced teachers had a higher level of overall achievement including achievement in non-cognitive skills. In this study, one of the objectives was to find out if pre-school teachers' experience influenced the strategies they used to scaffold SEC among the children.

Phillips (2010) study used data from Early Childhood Longitudinal Studies (ECLS-K) to find out if highly qualified teachers meant high overall student achievement among at risk children. Data from Phillip's study had been obtained by measuring student's achievement using pre-test and post-test scores. The study concluded that with experience, teachers of young children were able to handle at risk children by focusing on their needs

In a study to examine general and special educators' predictions of learners' success as a function of learners' characteristics and teachers' experience Podell and Tournaki (2007) study found that teacher's performance may be influenced by their professional

preparation and by the number of years they have worked. In their study, Podell and Tournaki established that experienced teachers made significantly higher predictions than novice teachers regarding learner behaviour and learner achievement. They concluded that the teacher's experience influenced their predictions of learner's success based on learner's behaviour.

Wang, Chai, and Haron (2016) study has recently suggested that teachers' experience affects children's performance. Teachers who are just beginning their career do not have a clear understanding of their own beliefs and values and may exhibit teaching behaviour contrary to what they believe. However, with time and experience these teachers develop better strategies of helping children learn.

Some scholars have however, disputed the effect of experience on children's' achievement; For example, Munoz and Chang (2007) estimated the effect of teachers experience on high school children' achievement in reading and found that teaching experience was not predictive of children' overall achievements. Similarly, Nye, Hedges and Konstanopoulous (2000) randomly assigned children and teachers to classrooms and collected data over four years and reported that the effect of teacher's experience on student achievement were not significant in most grades.

Stronge, Ward, and Grant (2011) cross sectional analysis of the connection between teacher effectiveness and overall learner achievement found that although the common denominator in school improvement and school success is the teacher, the most critical investment one should make is well qualified, caring committed teachers. According to Stronge at al., although subsequent years of experience appeared to have negative impact on test scores, teacher effectiveness increased during first year or two but levelled off after the 3rd year.

From the aforementioned studies, it is clear that the debate about whether teacher attributes like experience influence student achievement is far from being concluded. Most of the documented studies focused on teachers' experience and student's academic achievement, and even then, results have not been conclusive. The current study contributes to this area of research and was focused on the influence of teachers' experience on the strategies teachers used to scaffold SEC in children. As has been observed, the contribution of SEC to a child's academic and over all life success cannot be disputed.

2.4.3 Teachers' Gender and Children's Socio-emotional Competence

Ensuring gender equality is a recurring theme of international conventions on education and social development. Having both male and female teachers has been recognized as one of the factors that provide a good learning climate for holistic child development according to the Dakar framework for Action 2000 document. Among the principles of Dakar Framework was the recognition of the need for a beneficial learning climate for a holistic child.

It has been recognized that a child needs both male and female adults for holistic development. However, most pre-schools all over the world have low numbers of male teachers. In the US males are only 3%; in Turkey 7%; in Sweden, 6%; in Germany, its 4%; in Kenya, less than1% (Gakii, 2003; Ministry of National Education, 2011; Peeters, 2007; Republic of Kenya, 2012; Sandberg & Pramling-Samuelson, 2005; UNESCO, 2006). Although not in tandem with educational and development policies, many reasons have been advanced for these disparities.

According to Farquhar (1997), culture is one of the reasons that have been given for having more female than male pre-school teachers, since in many cultures child care is

the preserve of females. Ngure (2014) and Waithaka (2002) cite lack of adequate remuneration, lack of promotional opportunities and lack of public acceptance as some of the reasons for low number of males in pre-school teaching. Cooney and Bittner (2001) suggest that the low number of males in pre-school could be due to the fact that they felt uncomfortable and isolated in their teaching career. Male pre-school teachers have also been reported as facing enormous challenges including being seen as potential sexual abusers, being labelled as homosexuals and not being perceived as real men, not to mention that they also felt that their women counter parts did not support them (Cooney & Bittner, 2001; Drudy, 2008; Farguhar, 1997; Gushman, 2005). Moreover, due to recurring events in which young children are raped, many parents have an exaggerated suspicion of paedophilia. This has led to some parents not entrusting male teachers with their children, making pre-school establishments to prefer female over male teachers (Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu, & Mtshali, 2015).

Very few studies have been done to assess the effect of pre-school teachers' gender on the strategies that are used to scaffold SEC competence in children. Kalsen (2012) observed that lack of many comparative studies in female dominated occupation like pre-school teaching makes it difficult to interpret men's experiences. Ngure's (2014) study on dynamics of gender in Kenyan pre-schools for example found disparity among male and female teachers of young children. Female teachers were more caring and interacted more with children than their male counterparts. In line with these observations, Ngure recommends that children need care and attention from both male and female caregivers to enhance growth and development. Male pre-school teachers need to be encouraged to give more care to the children without reservation. This is consistent with Yoshikawa and Kabay (2015) research which found that children with

a more significant male presence at school did better at achievement test and had less SEC problems.

In an earlier study, Blee and Tickamyer (1995) found that the attitudes of men and women towards appropriate gender roles have a significant influence on teaching pre-school children. In South Africa, for example, Blee and Tickamyer found that the education sector did not encourage the involvement of males in the education of young children.

Sadker and Sadker (2005) investigated the effect of gender bias on children by comparing strategies employed by men and women teachers in teaching elementary children. They found that male teachers were more direct with children, asked less questions and were subject centred. The women on the other hand were more indirect, asked more questions and were student centred. This is consistent with what Durkin (1987) established that male teachers were more dominant and **a**uthoritarian and conducted their classrooms with greater control and organization than their female counterparts. Female teachers were found to provide warmer instructional environments, asked more questions and created greater opportunities for risk taking in children.

On the contrary, Good and Brophy, (2003), sought to examine the effect of gender on how children were treated in the classroom. The study focused on how male and female teachers treated the children. Brophy's study found that both gender treated girls and boys differently with boys being given a greater opportunity to expand their ideas. The study concluded that there was no significant effect of gender on how children were treated in the classroom although there were more women than men in pre-school

teaching. The current study was interested in examining whether gender influenced the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC in children

As observed by OECD (2005), the fact that pre-school teaching has been feminised and the fact that it has a lower status or pay should be something to worry about. It points out to a greater societal problem with regard to women's status, power and position within a society. According to OECD, such status points out a situation that is not good for women as well as men in those occupations. The current study was therefore important in that it is a contribution to the gender debate as it examined the effect of pre-school teacher's gender on the strategies they used to scaffold SEC in children.

2.5 School and Children's Development of Socio-emotional Competence

Schools have crucial and irreplaceable role in the development of children's SEC. In school, children learn to accomplish tasks, to socialize with people and abide by rules that define and limit behaviour, feelings and attitudes (Santrock, Payne, & Isaacs, 2004; Shanker, 2014; Weisberg & Cascarino, 2013). High rates of educational failure and discipline problems can be attributed to lack of psychological development during early years when children begin school (Taylor, 2004). This is because early years are critical periods of human development (Harter, 2006; Myers, 2005). As (1997) noted, some areas of the brain require stimulation at the right time in order to take on their normal functions. Pre-schools therefore, provide the right developmental contexts for scaffolding where children's SEC. However according to Taylor (2004), there is no single recipe for developing important SEC competencies in children or a standard way of incorporating SEC competencies in school programs.

As a component of the microsystem, schools are contexts of academic and social-emotional development. School environments help children acquire SEC which

comprises: Self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship management and problem solving skills (Ekman, 1972; Nemec & Roffey, 2005; Shaffer & Kipp, 2010).

Studies of school effects indicate that schooling is positively correlated with children's values and aspirations and hence influence children's cognitive and emotional development (Parke & Locke 1999). Cross cultural studies have established that schools influence the way children organize their thoughts, emotions and cognition and can also influence moral values, political views, respect for authorities, good citizenry, motivations to achieve and occupational aspirations of children (Berke, 2013; Shaffer & Kipp, 2010).

According to Bronfenbrenner's theory, there is a kind of interaction between the child and the school as an environmental context: the child can exert influence on his own environment and at the same time the environment can exert influence on the child. To be able to exert influence on the environment, the child needs skills in self-awareness and self–management (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Consequently, to manage the influence exerted by the environment the child not only needs skills in self-awareness and self-management, but also in social awareness and relationship management. School attributes that influence SEC development in children include: development levels of children, class size and school type, among others. These school attributes according to Bronfenbrenner, are likely to have an influence on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC.

2.5.1 Developmental Levels and Children's Socio-emotional Competence

Most pre-schools place children in classrooms according to their chronological age and cognitive ability. Those below three years of age are usually in the baby class; middle

class comprises those between 3 and 4 years and top class those above 5 years. Under special circumstances, young gifted children can be placed in classrooms with older children or older slow learners placed in classrooms with younger children. These different environmental contexts influence children's expression, understanding and development of SEC.

According to Berke (2013); Sullivan and Lewis (2003) most children can express emotions immediately after birth. Early emotional expressions are important in that they provide children's caregivers cues to neurological and cognitive status of the child; for example, appropriate developmental changes in facial signals imply certain cognitive functions. Basic emotions like happiness, interest, surprise, fear, anger, sadness and disgust although being universal in humans and other primates and are important for survival and are also context appropriate (Berke, 2013; Ekman, 1972; Izard, 2009; Sullivan & Lewis, 2003).

By the age of 3 years when the child begins pre-school, a child's self-awareness emotions are linked to self-evaluation. Pre-schoolers show much pride when they succeed in difficult tasks and more shame when they fail simple tasks (Izard, 2009). The quality feedbacks pre-school children get from their teachers according to Izard are therefore important at this stage. If a child receives comments on her worth and performance, the intense of self- awareness emotions are likely to be more intense. Likewise, a child is likely to feel more shame after failure and more pride after success. Pre-school teachers should focus more on employing strategies to bring in moderate, more adaptive levels of shame and pride and greater persistence in difficult tasks (Kelley, Brownell, & Campbell, 2000).

From 3-4 years, children can reliably match facial expressions to verbal labels for emotions such as sadness, anger, surprise, happiness (Herba et al., 2006). The ability to match emotional and facial expression with external causes is developed around the age of 5 years (Pons, Harris, & Rosney, 2007). Such ability helps a child manage their emotions, be aware of their emotions and those of others and therefore enjoy good relationships with others. In most studies of emotional recognition, emotions typically assessed with facial stimuli are biased towards negative emotions with most emotions reliably recognized from faces being those that are negative; angry, sad, disgust, fear and only one positive of happiness (Sauter, Panattoni, & Happe, 2012). According to Tell (2009) when interpreting emotions, it is important to consider the situational context because emotions do not occur in isolation. Therefore, pre-school teachers are in a position to help children understand that negative emotions are not always bad and positive emotions are also not always good.

By 6 years, basic emotions are thought to be fully developed (Berke, 2013). Though the accuracy of recognition and the speed of processing of these emotions improve with age, the ability to recognize fear is more difficult to children than any other and improves at a slower rate (Boyatzis, et al., 1995). The expression of emotions that depict self-awareness such as; guilt, shame, embarrassment, envy, pride can either imply injury or enhancement of one's sense of self. These emotions are believed to appear in the middle of 2nd year and their development requires interaction. For example, to feel proud, ashamed or guilty happens under specific circumstances (Barret, 2011; Garner, Mahatmya, Brown, & Vesley, 2014). The classroom environment, therefore, provides contexts where children's emotions continue develop with appropriate scaffolding strategies.

The ability to understand emotions is linked to positive psychological and behavioural outcomes (Denham & Brown, 2010). Denham (2006) observes that typically developing children's reliance on facial emotions decrease with age while reliance on situational cues increases with age. One of the objectives of this study was to find out how Kenyan pre-school teachers scaffold SEC in children of various developmental levels, baby, middle and top class. The present study focused on how pre-school teachers scaffold emotional expression knowledge in children at different developmental levels in order to enhance self-awareness, social-awareness, self-management and relationship management competencies in them.

2.5.2 School Type and Children's Socio-emotional Competence

Kenyan pre-schools are either private or public depending on ownership and registration. School ownership determines the size of the schools, the teachers who teach in the school, how teaching takes place and the overall school culture. Pre-school children attend schools according to their parents' choices. Accessibility and affordability are some of the factors determine parental choice of pre-school type for their children. Since SEC develops in a cultural context, and its expression is also culture specific, pre-schools provide different environments for children's growth and development. The type of pre-school, therefore, is likely to influence children's development of SEC. Whereas some school cultures encourage individualism and personal achievement, in others, calling attention to personal success is deemed an embarrassment (Barret, 2011; Garner et al., 2014).

Most pre-schools in Kenya are private and independently run. There has been an impetus in the growth of private pre-schools in the recent past with the private sector becoming a well-organized industry having professional associations and lobby groups. Many parents in Kenya also hold the view that private pre-schools perform better than

public schools and respond to competition in ways that public pre-schools do not. Private pre-schools are therefore perceived to be more superior in the provision of educational services.

Raw comparisons of children' outcomes in public and private schools generally show that in private schools, children have higher achievements than public schools, especially academic achievement. Studies suggest that parents in private schools pay more because other than the cognitive dimension, their children are exposed to other aspects of development that may include: religion, extra curricula activities together with activities that may build their self-esteem, a component of SEC (Cobbold, 2015).

Cobbold (2015) found that children in private pre-schools came from higher socio-economic backgrounds and that this background influenced not only their academic performance, but also social achievement. A child from a higher socio-economic status, therefore according to Cobbold, is much more likely to have higher academic achievement and therefore higher self-esteem, a SEC construct.

Numerous studies have been done on the effect of pre-school type on student achievement with inconclusive results. In one such study, Konstantina (2014) found that pre-schools that provided quality experiences were associated positively with children's overall development. Konstantina's was a longitudinal study, in Georgia where 540 private and public pre-schools were randomly selected and mixed methods approach used to study the effect of school type on children's SEC development. The study found that teachers from private pre-schools interacted more with children and displayed sensitivity to them by being warm, giving them individualized attention and were enthusiastic in children's activities. In turn, children's overall development was enhanced. Similar findings were observed by Dunn, Brown and Maguire (1995) and

Lamb and Anhert (2006), although Dunn et al. (1995) further added that such positive overall experience was especially true of children at risk; especially those from low income backgrounds.

On the contrary, Carbonaro (2008) observed that learning opportunities sometimes favour public schools, whereas at other times gains in achievement for private and public pre-school children were similar. According to Carborano few programs from both public and private pre-schools for children can be rated as of having high quality. Most of the pre-schools whether private or public are mediocre and provide little opportunity for children's development (Carborano, 2008).

Butin and Woolums's (2009) study of 12 classrooms in Greece to examine the effect of different school environments on children's overall development, found that colours and lighting within the school environment had an effect on the child's social and psychological development. The current study found that in most public pre-schools, buildings were dilapidated, furniture broken and the environment depressing. Most private pre-schools however, were characterized by colourful walls well-lit and furnished classrooms.

Similarly, Germanos (2002); Maxwell (2007) observed that private pre-schools provided rich environmental stimuli which gave children opportunities for exploration, development of self-motivation and creativity. Private schools therefore enhanced the development of SEC competence in children. According to Maxwell (2007) children's self-management skills require an environment where they exercise their autonomy and self-expression. In such environments, children are able to choose their own activities, their toys, friends, partners as well as their working pace, and whether they want to be involved in activities or not.

Fuligni, Howes, Cinosomo, and Karoly's (2009) naturalistic study investigated patterns of formal education in early childhood training and mentoring of diverse groups of urban childhood educators. In this study, 103 pre-school teachers serving low income 3-4-year-old children in Los Angeles were investigated. The study found low linkages between the type of school, professional development and supervision. The study concluded that public schools had strongest mandates for formal professional development.

Elder and Jepsen (2014) longitudinal study amongst 8000 elementary children assessed the effects of private school on non-cognitive outcomes in children. The study concluded that although selection bias gave the catholic schools, which are private schools, a higher score, catholic schools indeed did a better job in instilling a sense of purpose, self-discipline, robust response to adversity, failure and frustration in children. The same findings were confirmed by Jeynes and Beuttler (2012); Tooley, Dixon, and Olaniya (2005); Nishimura and Yamano (2013).

Coulson (2009) has reiterated that overall performance of private schools in the world for provision of education outshines public ones in most cases. According to Coulson, public school teachers are more satisfied by their jobs and salary compared to private pre-school teachers who are more satisfied by teaching their favourite subjects. The study found that private pre-schools performed better in administration and co-curricular activities because their activities were planned for.

Barnett (2003) and Burchinal et al., (2010) longitudinal studies suggest long term benefits of attending high quality private pre-schools. These benefits include: broadened experiences, strengthened self-awareness, autonomy and self-management (Germanos, 2002; Rentzou, 2014; Weinstein & David, 1987). In high private pre-

schools, having a higher training made a positive difference in teacher's behaviour while in public pre-schools having higher credentials didn't make much difference (Burchinal et al., 2010).

In another study on pre-school types and children's achievement, Howes, James, and Ritchie (2003) found that teachers in private pre-schools had fewer credentials and were highly monitored. The extent to which teachers are supervised and monitored predicts teachers' engagement with children (Bellm, Whitebook, Cohen, & Stevenson, 2004). According to Marshburn (2008) children from pre-schools with more educated teachers do better because such teachers have more knowledge and skills making them more effective. Educated teachers are perceived to be more sensitive and have responsive interactions with children because they are less authoritarian, punitive and detached (Barnett, 2003).

Schools with specific intervention programs have been found to encourage children's overall development. Harris and Sass (2009) longitudinal study to investigate the relationship between extracurricular activities and socio-emotional development among 301 children aged between 7 – 8 years in Finland found that a school based intervention program was useful in developing SEC in children. For Harris and Sass, ensuring that children were supervised by the teachers for self- organization and recreation and encouraging children to engage in hobby clubs and goal oriented activities were important strategies. From the afore-mentioned studies, schools have an important role in helping children develop non-cognitive skills which include SEC skills important for success in their future life. This study examined the effect of pre-school type on the strategies that teachers use to scaffold SEC competence in children. Given that private pre-schools differ in teacher characteristics as well as school factors, the study found interesting results.

2.5.3 Class Size and Children's Socio-emotional Competence

From a psychological point of view, pre-school class size refers to the number of children who are physically present interacting between themselves and with the teacher (Ehrenberg, Brewer, Gamoran, & Willms, 2001). An optimum pre-school class size is therefore, one that allows children to interact with themselves as well as with the teacher in an environment that encourages learning. As observed by Ehrenberg et al., the number of children in a class varies from 15-20 with teaching facilitated by one or more adults. According to UNESCO (2013), the recommended pre-school class size is 15. In Kenya, the preferred number of children in pre-school is an average of 25 (Government of Kenya, 2008).

Although the effect of class size on overall student achievement continues to be a subject of discussion, Ehrenberg et al. (2001) posit that the number of children in a classroom affects learning in diverse ways: it could influence the way children interact with each other, it could also affect how much time the teacher is able to focus on individual children and their specific needs. An effective class size allows children to be adequately and effectively prepared in all aspects of learning including SEC. This is consistent with the observations of other scholars: While Piketty (2004) found that a lower-class size had a positive effect on third grade children Lazear (2001) noted that low class sizes (below 23 children) results in lower frequencies of disruptions among the children, and therefore higher levels of SEC in children. Both scholars are in agreement that low-class size is beneficial to children's developmental needs. According to Whitehurst and Chingos (2011) benefits of effects of low class size have also been observed in Israel although in Florida and Connecticut studies have shown that there is no significant effect of low class size on overall children's achievement.

The debate on class size and children's achievement is attributed to the fact that the pool of credible studies on this area is small and individual studies differ in terms of settings, methods, grades, and magnitude (Whitehurst & Chingos, 2011). Such differences make it difficult to arrive at solid conclusions. One of the most credible studies on class size was done in the late 1980's in Tennessee, that is, the Student Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) project. The STAR project according to Ready and Lee (2007) was a longitudinal study that placed children randomly in 'small' classes with an average of 15 and 'regular' classes of an average of 22 kindergarten children. The study found that the achievement of children by the end of first grade was almost two months ahead of other children (ES = 0.2 – 0.25 standard deviation).

Another longitudinal study by Tienken and Achilles (2006) in Arizona on class size among middle graders with small sizes of less than 20 concluded that benefits of small class sizes were both cognitive and non-cognitive (behaviour). These benefits could be as a result of the fact that small class sizes allow the teachers to know the children better and therefore tailor instructions to suit the children's needs. In small classrooms, the teacher is able to enforce discipline and there are likely to be fewer disruptions from the children (Ready & Lee, 2007). The teacher, therefore, spends less time on classroom management and more time on instructions resulting in overall high student achievement. Bascia (2010) study was an analysis of data collected between 2003 and 2008 in 84 classrooms to find the effect of reducing class size on children's achievement. The results of Bascia study indicated that almost all teachers reported higher quality relationship with children due to low class size while the parents indicated that their children were more comfortable with school amongst other benefits.

Although class size has been found to have an effect on student achievement, class size alone may not be the issue, but the classroom environment that is created in small

classrooms. In small classrooms because of the close level of interaction between the teachers and children, student behaviour is checked and can be controlled in good time. The children are also likely to monitor each other. Class size benefits may therefore accrue from the change in children's behaviour. This study therefore is important in that it makes a contribution to the on-going debate on the influence of class size on children's achievement, specifically SEC.

2.6 Teachers' Relationship with Children and Children's Socio-emotionalm Competence

Teachers are the most influential adults in the lives of children. As observed by Paris and Paris (2010), teachers are best placed to provide information and opportunity to learners of all ages that make them strategic, motivated and independent individuals. Since teachers spend many hours a day with children, their impact on children's SEC development is substantial and long lasting (Honig & Hirallal, 2014).

With regard to pre-school, the focus of this study, studies have shown that children's relationship with their teachers is one of the most important sources of development of their social skills as well as behavioural problems (Sabol & Pianta, 2012). According to the ecological theoretical framework (Bronfenbrenner's, 1979) on which this study is based, children's development is influenced by the dynamic mutual interplay between the child and the child's social context. Bell's (1968) bidirectional model explains the active role that children play in building relationships with adults.

Like parenting styles, pre-school teachers' relationship styles with children have a direct influence on children's development, specifically SEC. The authoritative style of relationship for example, has been found to be effective in helping children develop SEC as it requires that the teacher sets boundaries, use supportive rather than punitive

methods of control and be consistent with enforcing demands. Such an approach helps children develop a sense of autonomy as they are encouraged to express their own thoughts, feelings, and desires (Shanker, 2014).

Children who enjoy authoritative relationship with their teachers have a high level of SEC development (Buskist & Benassi, 2012; Snyder & Basset, 2011, Sternberg, 1997). Having respect for the child's interests, allows the child to develop and have high self-esteem. On the contrary, teachers who enforce strict discipline in the classrooms and offer children no opportunity to discuss or argue out issues, like the authoritarian parents end up with children who have damaged self-esteem, motivation, and self-efficacy (Pellerin, 2004; Snyder & Basset, 2011).

Park and Buriel (2006); Bornstein, Suwalsky, and Breakstone (2012) observe that the permissive style of relationship in which the teacher makes very limited attempt to enforce discipline results in children who display heightened impulsivity, lack of motivation and chronic anxiety. Children who are taken care of by indulgent teachers also end up with poor SEC development. Such freedom end up undermining the children's' motivation and may weaken their relationship with their teachers (Konstantina, 2014, 2002; Feldman, 2013).

Similarly, according to Honig (2002) teachers who shout at children and act in a very irritated way or blow up at naughty children give the children the message that it is okay to lose control. The quality of relationship that pre-school teachers have with the children is therefore, helpful in making the teachers identify children's' emotional needs and help them appropriately and promptly (Kremenitzer, 2005).

Collins (2008) quasi-experimental comparative study on the role of adult-child relationships and early SEC development found that the style of interaction that the pre-

school teachers had with the children determined the ability of the children to develop SEC skills. According to Collins, such interventions produced substantial improvements in both typically developing children and those with disabilities. This is consistent with the earlier findings of Rutter (2000) that lack of appropriate SEC experience and relationships with consistent caregivers were the primary causes of developmental delays and SEC deficiencies in children.

In a longitudinal study to examine the relationship between student-teachers conflict, children's social skills and externalizing behaviour, Skalicka, Stenseng, and Wichstom (2015) found that children's externalizing behaviour played a prominent role in their development of SEC skills. Here was reciprocal relationship between student-teacher conflict and externalizing behaviour between pre-school and first grade. The study suggested that externalizing behaviour was a stronger predictor conflict between children and their teachers and affected that and children's social skills. This study sought to examine the quality of relationships that pre-school teachers have with their children, as a strategy in scaffolding SEC.

2.7 Socio-emotional Competence Scaffolding Strategies

Research shows that a number of variables can be attributed to the development of SEC in children (Dash et al., 2012; Marsh, et al., 2003; Matson, 2009). In more than 800 meta-analyses based on over 50,000 research articles and 240 million children to find out factors that promote effective learning in school going children, Hattie (2009) found that most strategies that teachers employ in any field of learning may work. This means that there is no one size that fits it all when it comes to effective strategies. Hatties' observations have been backed by Lloyd and Trangmar (2012) who acknowledge that excellent teachers are those who identify how best to present subjects by: creating optimal classroom environment for learning; monitoring learning and providing

feedback to the children. Such teachers believe that all children can learn and as such influence a wide range of children's outcomes by using different strategies according to contexts (Hattie, 2009).

Effective learning therefore requires that teachers diversify strategies, remain persistent and consciously monitor the children until the children's reactions become automatic in a specific task being learnt. The Carolina–Abecedarian Project, the High/Scope Perry pre-school project and the Chicago Child–Parent centre in the USA are examples of experimental longitudinal studies done to examine the effectiveness of children's programs as a strategy in helping them develop SEC. These studies confirmed that a stimulating school environment could help prevent developmental delays in SEC among disadvantaged children from low income families (Myers, 2005). Other strategies to support the development of SEC in Children have been in the use of: child development strategies, alternative thinking strategies and asset building strategies as discussed in 2.7.1.

2.7.1 Child Development Strategies for Scaffolding Socio-emotional Competence

A number of child development strategies have been successfully used in scaffolding SEC in children. Caring Community of Learners (CCL) is one such strategy that has been used in the United States to create an effective school environment, where the child feels cared for and enjoys supportive relationship with other children and with the teachers. According to Battstitch, Schaps, and Wilson (2007), CCL is a strategy that ensures that children have the opportunity to participate in significant decision making about their own learning and behaviour as they are also involved in setting norms and making decisions. This ensures that children remain responsible for the consequences of their behaviours as they also monitor each other.

Another strategy that has been widely used to scaffold socio-emotional competence in children is Cooperative Learning (CL). With CL children are encouraged to work with each other in groups on interesting and challenging tasks. While at such tasks, teachers coach children on values such as fairness, consideration for others, responsibility as well as on specific social skills and behaviour (Battistich et al., 2007).

Although Literature Based Reading Instruction (LBRI) is a strategy that has emphasis on high order understanding and reading fluency, it helps children to understand themselves and others and to internalize the role of values like responsibility and fairness (Schap & Lewis, 2000). In this kind of strategy, the children read and teachers engage with stories that have moral lessons.

Making children complete an assignment or face the consequences of their actions and coaching them to be good listeners are strategies intended to help children develop self-management skills (Shanker, 2014). Similarly, during some subjects like social sciences or literature where children learn about other people and other cultures, they can be helped to develop social awareness as well as relationship management skills.

Extra-curricular activities like drama, sport, music, and community service coach children to learn to work with others and also help them develop team spirit (Shanker, 2014). Other child development strategies include character education where ethical values such as caring, honesty, responsibility, respect for self and others and supportive values like diligence and perseverance are taught to children (Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 2002). Lickona et al. observe that such stand-alone programs can be the first steps to SEC development in children.

A review of strategies to scaffold SEC by Schap and Lewis (2000); Battstich, Schaps and Wilson (2004) found that these strategies were effective in reducing anti-social

behaviour and developing SEC in children. Shanker (2014) observes that such strategies that aim at developing social awareness, self-management, interpersonal relationships and positive development and have been used with elementary children in the United States.

Schap and Lewis (2000); Battstich, et al. (2004) observe that in schools where child development strategies were effective, the effect sizes ranged from 0.41 to 1.10 and where they were not effective, effect sizes ranged from -0.06 to 0.020. Further analysis confirmed that child development strategies were effective in producing positive effects in social competence that included social awareness, interpersonal skills and positive development.

2.7.2 Alternative Thinking Strategies for Socio-emotional Competence

Supporting children to develop alternative thinking as a SEC strategy has been done with children from pre-kindergarten to Grade 6 with an aim of developing social awareness, self-management and interpersonal skills. In using this strategy children are given lessons on how to identify, label, express, assess, manage and understand different emotions; how to control impulses, delay gratification, manage stress, monitor self, understand the perspective of others, develop a positive attitude towards life (Shanker, 2014).

Studies done to evaluate the effectiveness of coaching children to develop alternative thinking strategies found that it was effective in increasing academic performance and positive social behaviour, improving school climate and emotional attitudes and skills as well as reducing conduct problems and emotional distress (Crean & Johnson, 2013; Greenberg et al., 2003; Shanker, 2014). Just by asking children to think about how they can make an argument stronger, for example, they are coached to develop self-

awareness (Shanker, 2014). The effect sizes of this strategy ranged from .15- .24 (Crean & Johnson, 2013).

Developing alternative thinking strategies in children has significant effects on 5-7 year olds in areas such as: emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems (Curtis & Norgate, 2007). Alternative thinking strategy is designed to improve children's range of emotional vocabulary, ability to provide appropriate personal examples of experience of basic feelings, belief system as well as their ability to understand cues for recognizing feelings in other children in daily classroom and school activities (Shanker, 2014). Shanker believes that teachers have countless opportunities to encourage the promotion of important SEC skills like empathy and relationship management.

Strategies for alternative thinking have been found to be useful even among special needs children. Kam, Greenberg, and Kusche (2004) observed that special needs children with high rates of self-reported conduct problems and depressive symptoms when coached in alternative thinking strategies have been found to show significant reduction in these tendencies.

2.7.3 Asset Building Approach for SEC

As an approach, Asset Building Strategy focuses on children' character and behaviour and is aimed at coaching children by using reinforcement strategies to develop and promote positive behaviours in all areas: physical, emotional, social and cognitive. It is an approach that encourages reinforcement of core competencies in the children's environments, both at home and at school (Shanker, 2014).

A study to review the effectiveness of this approach found that it contributed to the improvement of elementary school quality in terms of school safety, teacher, student,

parent involvement as well as the quality of support (Snyder et al., 2012). In another study conducted in 20 racially and ethnically diverse schools in Hawaii, benefits of the approach were observed in academic achievement and also in decrease in behaviours such as bullying, conduct problems and absenteeism (Snyder & Basset, 2011). In concurring with these findings, Snyder et al. (2012) observes that encouraging the building of assets in children increase positive child outcomes in the areas of: academic achievement, prosocial behaviour, emotional and mental health. These effect sizes have ranged from 0.34 – 0.72.

The child development strategy, asset building strategy, and alternative thinking strategies are examples of stand-alone strategies that pre-school teachers can use to scaffold SEC amongst children. The strategies have been used in the West to find out their effectiveness in helping children develop SEC in different environments. This study sought to identify the strategies pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC in children within Eldoret town, Kenya.

2.7.4 Relationships as a Strategy for Developing Socio-emotional Competence

Having effective relationships with peers and teachers is one way through which children develop SEC (Greenspan, 1994; Feldman, 2014). Through relationships children are exposed to complex and emotional conflicts that contribute to the development of their SEC **(**Denham, Wyatt, Bassett, Escheverria, & Knox, 2009; Saarni, 1999). As children relate, the rivalries they experience, the friendship and alliances they form, their shared common interests and their working together for common outcome are important life experiences that result in success and happiness in their later years.

Peer relationships formed through participating in school activities like sports, music, drama or science club has been found to be just as important as teacher to child relationships in the development of SEC as evidenced by longitudinal research among the children and youth (Shanker, 2014). School activities provide children with opportunities to explore their identities, develop their self-initiatives, learn how to manage their emotions, develop peer relationships and acquire social skills (Gue´vremont, Findlay, & Kohen, 2014). With such skills Gue´vremont et al. (2014) observes that children are less likely to indulge in negative behaviour.

The relationships that children have with their teachers are equally important in helping children develop SEC. A warm and nurturing teacher has a positive influence on the child's development of SEC (Shanker, 2014). According to Goleman (2006, p.16) a teacher's own positive affect has a strong influence on her children, a phenomenon known as 'limbic resonance'.

Studies reveal that a teacher's response to the struggles and achievements of her children has a way of influencing their development of executive functions and metacognitive skills (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). This complements what Wentzel (1997) observed that a teacher's passion for helping children maximize their potential has a profound effect on their self-evaluation, self-monitoring, and self-esteem. When a teacher breaks problems into smaller manageable chunks, draws children' attention to important facts, and helps children to organize their thoughts, she helps them plan and sequence their thoughts, and this enhances their ability to stay focused on a problem and ignore distractions (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998), a self-management strategy. This study aimed at observing the classroom interactions that pre-school teachers have with the children and which may support children to develop SEC.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter was mainly based on examined literature related to the influence of teacher attributes (teacher's training levels, teacher's experience, and teacher's gender) and school predictors (children's developmental levels, school type and class size) on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children. Although from the literature it was noted all children require SEC skills to succeed in life, scholars observe that most children lack this important skill. Reviewed literature confirmed that as part of the microsystem, pre-schools are the immediate environment where children spend most of their active hours of the day with teachers as their care givers. Consequently, pre-schools provide a conducive environment where SEC can be scaffolded in children with ease. This is because children of this age are malleable and whatever they learn is easily retained.

It was evident from Literature reviewed that the debate on the influence of teacher attributes and school factors on children's overall performance is far from over. From the literature, it was evident that the pool of credible studies on the development of children's SEC was still small to give solid conclusions. Most of the documented studies on children's SEC have been done in the West; with vulnerable children or were intervention studies. Others have been attempts to measure children's SEC. The current study, however, focused on pre-school teachers in typical pre-school classrooms and was done in Eldoret town, Kenya. The following chapter is an attempt to explain the methodology that was used to achieve the objectives of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

The chapter examines the design and methods that were employed to achieve the objectives of the study. It begins with a brief description of Eldoret town in Uasin Gishu County, where the study was conducted. It gives the underlying philosophical foundation and explains the research design; research methods; the research population; the sample and sampling techniques that were used in the study. It also gives a brief description of data collection instruments; how validity and reliability of the instruments were ensured; data collection procedures and methodologies, ethical considerations and finally describes the procedures for data analysis and how interpretation of data was done.

3.2 Geographic Location of the Study

This study was conducted in Eldoret town in Uasin Gishu County of Kenya (see Appendices V&VI) which is located about 300km North West of Nairobi on the Trans-African highway and 65 km north of the equator. The town is within the highlands and therefore enjoys high, reliable rainfall that is evenly distributed resulting in a variety of economic activities. The economic activities range from agricultural to industrial.

Eldoret town was an appropriate choice as a location for this study for several reasons. First, it is the fifth largest town in Kenya, with a high population of approximately 500,000 people (Kenya Information Guide, 2015). Eldoret is one of the fastest growing towns in Kenya with the mostly highly populated residential areas being: Kimumu, Kapsoya, Tanning, Bacon, Munyaka, Rock Centre, Kamukunji, Langas, Huruma, and Mwenderi, Kahoya, among others (Eldoret Municipal Council, 2011). According to the Kenya Information Guide (2015) Eldoret town is home to different communities who,

though have many things in common also differ in some aspects of life like eating habits, economic activities, values, beliefs and dressing. Given that most inhabitants of the town are actively engaged in economic activities directly or indirectly, many pre-schools offer full day care, and children are likely to spend more hours of the day at school than at home. The scaffolding strategies that pre-school teachers used were therefore envisaged to be likely affected by the diverse children's backgrounds.

The high population in Eldoret town has also led to a high number of schools. Education records from the county offices indicate that within Eldoret town centre alone, there are 160 registered public and private full day pre-schools, with each pre-school having an average of two teachers in each classroom (Uasin Gishu County Office, 2014; Kenya Bureau of Statistics, 2009). Records from Uasin Gishu County Office (2015) indicate that the town has over 10,000 children of between 3-5 years of age attending these pre-schools. Given the high number of children and pre-schools as well as the highly diversified population, Eldoret town was understood to provide an information rich study area. The study was therefore keen to examine the strategies pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC in children in Eldoret town.

3.3 Research Design

A research design is the framework used to plan and conduct a study, the procedures and techniques used to address the research problem and the research questions. Yin (2003) describes a research design as an action plan for getting from 'here' to 'there', meaning from questions to conclusions. This study used the mixed methods design that espouses the pragmatic philosophical worldview derived from the work of Peirce, James, Mead, and Dewey (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Creswell, 2014). In this design, the convergent parallel model was used where both qualitative and quantitative data were collected roughly at the same time and the information integrated at the interpretation

of the overall results. Pragmatism, an approach that embraces dualism influences the whole research practice and should therefore be acknowledged (Creswell, 2014).

Creswell (2003; 2014); Morgan (2007); Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) are among scholars who advocate for the use of mixed methods approach in social sciences because it helps researchers focus and understand a research problem better. In this study the survey research design of causal comparative research approach was utilised for the quantitative aspect of the study. Pre-school teachers as knowledgeable participants provided information on the strategies that they used to scaffold SEC components in children. Data was generated using questionnaires and interviews as advocated by Creswell (2014), Morgan (2007), Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010).

Causal comparative design is a type of research that examines conditions that already exist with an attempt to determine the reasons or causes for the existing differences between individuals or groups. In this kind of research design, inferences are made concerning relationships among variables without direct control of the independent variables. As observed by Kothari (2004), causal comparative design allows the researcher to collect data about one or more variables from participants and then compare the data. Since the independent variables are not manipulated, the design attempts to identify a causal relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable. In the current study, the researcher went to the field to examine the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in children. The researcher had no control over the pre-school teachers' attributes, such as, gender, training level and experience. Neither did the researcher have control over the school predictors such as type of school, class size and the development level of the pre-school children. All these variables under investigation were in existence prior to the study.

Qualitative data was generated using case study research design. According to Creswell (2014), case studies are restricted to time and activity and can be used to collect detailed information using a range of data collection procedures over a period of time. The present study used interviews and observation techniques. Non-participant observation strategy was employed to observe the strategies pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in the children. Non-participant observation allows the researcher to understand a phenomenon by entering into the social system involved while staying separate from the activities observed (Liu & Maitlis, 2010). The researcher stayed for a longer period of time in the observed classroom as a way of dealing with the observer effect. Interviews were subsequently carried out with pre-school teachers to clarify what was observed.

The use of multiple strategies of data collection was important because as Creswell (2014, p. 8) observed, there are times when one data source may be insufficient, and 'may not tell the complete story'. This study was concerned with examining the influence of teacher attributes and school predictors on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC among children. Teacher attributes referred to characteristics such as: gender, teacher training and teacher's experience while school predictors denoted factors such as: the type of pre-school, pre-schooler's developmental levels and class size. Pragmatic researchers focus on the 'what' and 'how' of the research problem and places the research problem as central, applying all approaches to understanding the problem (Creswell, 2014). The question of what works in this study was evident; what strategies did pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children? Did the teacher attributes and school predictors influence the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC amongst the children?

3.4 Research Methodology

Mixed research method was used in data collection and analysis. In this study, quantitative data was collected and analysed followed almost immediately by qualitative data. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data (see Appendix III & IV) while interviews and observation schedules were used to collect qualitative data (see Appendix V & VII). In this way, it was possible to use the qualitative results to explain the quantitative ones (Creswell & Clark, 2011). This is an approach that is currently widely used by scholars (Clark & Creswell, 2008; Creswell, 2014; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Tashakkori &Teddlie, 2010). By collecting multiple data using different approaches, strategies and methods, it was possible for the researcher to offset weaknesses inherent in one method with the strengths of the other (Clark & Creswell, 2008; Creswell, 2014; Joffrion, 2010).

Generating both qualitative and quantitative data was meant to expand the understanding of strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in children as suggested by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2004). This is also supported by Creswell (2014) who explained that mixed method results in well validated and proven findings. Qualitative data was generated using observations and interview schedules on strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components to enrich the quantitative data collected by use of SEC Questionnaire. This added strength and precision to the study.

Quantitative approaches were employed to obtain data to achieve the objectives regarding the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC. These objectives were concerned with ascertaining the relationships between teachers' strategies and various variables, namely: teachers' gender, teachers' level of training, teachers' experience, pre-school class size, children's developmental levels and type of schools.

To meet these objectives, the Socio-emotional Competency Questionnaire (SEC) was used to generate information from pre-school teachers on their strategies in scaffolding SEC components. According to Ayiro (2010) quantitative research is a means for testing objectives and hypotheses by examining the relationship among variables. He further avers that questionnaires are effective data collection procedures in quantitative studies.

Qualitative approaches were employed to give meaning to the quantitative findings and to obtain data to achieve the objective that was concerned with the quality of interactions between pre-school teachers and the children as a strategy of scaffolding SEC. This was achieved through individual interviews and observation. Qualitative research is often used to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem (Ayiro, 2010). Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) and Adler and Adler (1994) have suggested that interviews and observations are acceptable data generation techniques in qualitative research.

To complement the results from the SEC questionnaire, information was solicited from pre-school teachers on their perceptions of the strategies they used to scaffold SEC components in children. Since it was important to obtain the perspectives of pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding SEC components from other sources other than the self-assessment, individual interviews and observation techniques were used. Such an approach was in line with the concurrent triangulation strategy, which allows for mixing of data collection strategies to seek convergence and similarities in results. It was important to triangulate the methods particularly for the SEC questionnaire data due to the bias tendencies that are common with self-assessments.

3.5 Research Population

The study population comprised 480 pre-school teachers from 160 registered private and public pre-schools in Eldoret town, Kenya. Rubin and Babbie (2011, p. 359) define a study population as "that aggregate of elements from which the sample is actually selected". Pre-school teachers were found to be important in this study because of the care they give to children at this critical time of development. Secondly, children at pre-school are at a stage when they can best acquire skills including SEC (Burchinal et al., 2010; Feldman, 2014; Goleman, 2005; Pianta & Stuhlman, 2004; Sternberg, 1997).

3.6 Sample Size

Mason (2002) defines the sample size as the number of observations included in a statistical sample. The sample size is a central feature of any empirical study whose aim is to make inferences about a population from a sample. To satisfy this criterion, the sample size for pre-school teachers was determined with reference to Raosoft (2004) sample size calculator $p < .05$. The number of pre-school teachers who taught the children in 2015 was subjected to the research system survey software to obtain the sample size that was required.

The required sample size for the research population of pre-school teachers was 381 from 89 private and 38 public pre-schools; however, only 78 private and 20 public schools participated in the study as 29 pre-schools did not meet the requirements for the study and were disqualified. Two pre-schools declined to participate in the study while two other pre-schools had more than the three pre-school classrooms giving seven extra teachers. The total number of pre-schoolteachers who therefore participated in the study was 301.

For the qualitative part of the study, six teachers were interviewed, one male and five females. Only one male teacher accepted to be interviewed and observed. According to Adler and Adler (1994), Hamre et al. (2012), Etel and Yamgmurlu (2015) observations as a data generation approach should be used with willing participants. Other male pre-school teachers who declined to be interviewed or observed cited lack of time as they also doubled as school administrators. Two 'baby class' classrooms were observed having met the following criteria: one private and one public classroom; with male and female pre-school teachers; with experienced and novice pre-school teachers and with a certificate and diploma training levels of teachers; with different class sizes, having children with the same developmental levels at the same time for four consecutive days.

3.7 Sampling Procedures

Pre-schools were stratified into public and private and using a 5% margin of error and a confidence level of 95%. Raosoft (2004) sample calculator was used to calculate the sample size. To reduce bias and make the study representative, a table of random numbers was used to select the pre-schools for the study (Serem, Boit, & Wanyama, 2013). The selected schools, however, had to meet the following criteria: (1) Seeking of consent from the school administration and the teachers (2) having the children taught in three developmental levels. Only one teacher per class answered the questionnaire and where there was more than one teacher, random sampling was done. The study focused on the teachers who regularly taught the children and not those who were standing in for the regular teacher or on teaching practice.

For the qualitative aspect of the research, six pre-school teachers who were interviewed formed the unit of analysis after the saturation level was reached. The teachers were purposively selected based on the following criteria; (1) were typical of other teachers in relation to strategies they used to scaffold SEC components (2) were from private

and public pre-school (2) had high scores from the questionnaire (3) had over 20 children in their classes (4) willingness to participate in the study. Teacher interviews were done in schools although a follow up interview was conducted on phone for confirmatory purposes.

Two classrooms were selected for observation. The classrooms were identified for observation based on the following criteria (1) Teachers' willingness to participate (2) private and public pre-schools (3) high class size (4) baby class developmental level. High class size was taken to mean parental preference and the baby class was chosen because in second term, children were still reporting to school and a lot of adjustment had to be made on the part of the teacher and the child. Although the classroom observations began during the last week of March 2016(27th to 31$^{st)}$, for purposes of familiarizing with the classrooms, it was not until the June 5th 2016 that the actual data generation began. The classroom observations were done from 8.50 am when the children reported to school to 11.30 am when the children were released for break. This was done for two weeks and each classroom was observed four times between Monday and Thursday. Fridays were excluded because during the preliminary observation, it was apparent that in most schools, Fridays were disrupted by various school activities.

The use of purposive sampling technique for observation and interview helped the researcher to obtain greater depth of information from a smaller number of carefully selected cases. At first, the researcher had projected that a sample of ten pre-school teachers and six classroom observations in two pre-schools was sufficient to provide information saturation level. However, information saturation level was achieved after interviewing the six pre-school teachers and observing the two pre-school classrooms four times each.

3.8 Research Instruments

In this study four research instruments were used in data collection: (1) self-administered biographical form (2) SEC questionnaire (3) interview schedule and (4) observation schedule. Data from the biographical form gave personal information about the pre-school teachers and background information about the pre-schools. The SEC questionnaire was used to generate quantitative data on the four components of SEC: self- management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. Both the observation and interview schedules were used to generate qualitative data with reference to the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children. The information obtained from the observation and interview schedules were also used to confirm and clarify those obtained from the SEC questionnaire.

3.8.1 Biographical Form

This form was developed by the researcher and was used to collect data on teacher variables such as: level of training, experience and gender. It also provided data on school predictors, for example: school type, class size and children's developmental levels (see Appendix III).

3.8.2 SEC Questionnaire

Developed by the researcher, the teachers' SEC questionnaire (see Appendix IV) was used to generate information about the strategies they used to scaffold SEC based on four components: Self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management items. Questionnaires according to Eaves (2010) refer to a list of questions that a researcher designs for study participants to respond to. Questionnaires were administered to 301 pre-school teachers in the 126 sampled schools to find out the influence of teacher attributes and school predictors on the strategies that pre-school

teachers used in scaffolding SEC among children. A summary of constructs that were measured by each item in the questionnaire is given in Table. 3.1

Table 3.1: Constructs Measured in the Questionnaire

	Construct	Items in questionnaire
1	Self-management	1-10
2	Self-awareness	11-20
3	Social awareness	21-30
4	Relationship management	31-40

3.8.3 Observation Schedule

Observational data was generated with the use of field notes. According to Creswell (2014), the researcher using this strategy has some prior questions whose answers he records as information in an unstructured or semi structured way. The researcher can choose to be a participant or non-participant observer. In this study, the researcher was a non-participant observer and used an observation checklist with four items derived from the survey instrument. Observation was made on four thematic areas: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management.

If done accurately, Kothari (2004) notes that observation as a data collection method has several advantages: it helps to eliminate subjection bias; it is a method that gives information on what is currently taking place; it is independent of the respondents' willingness to respond and therefore does not demand active cooperation of the client. Four observations were done in two classrooms, giving a total of eight observations. Before the observation, the scores from the SEC questionnaires were considered and teachers with the highest scores selected. The date and times of observations were decided upon and the pre-school teachers' consent sought. All the male teachers declined to be observed citing the fact that they doubled as administrators and did not have the time.

The observation data was captured via a video camera. The main disadvantage experienced during observation was the effect of the presence of the researcher on the pre-school teachers and children. Subjects are likely to pretend to be what they are not during observation. However, this was mitigated by the researchers' presence in the classrooms for one month consecutively prior to the exercise. Secondly, videotaping the classroom experiences was done for two weeks continuously until the teachers and the children got used to the presence of the researcher in the classrooms.

3.8.4 Interview Schedule

An interview schedule was used to validate and supplement information derived from the questionnaire (see Appendix V). Semi-structured interviews provide information on perceptions and opinions and are effective for providing understanding and clarity into responses obtained from sources of data such as questionnaires (Cohen, 2006b). The interview schedule was used to get the views of the pre-school teachers concerning the strategies they used to scaffold SEC amongst the children. Six teachers were interviewed: three from private and three from public schools. The interviews were done in the afternoons when the pre-school teachers were free and the children given time to rest in the full day pre-schools. In half-day pre-schools, the afternoons were often free and therefore used for the interviews. The teachers were interviewed for one hour and the interviews kept short and precise given that by afternoon, most pre-school teachers were too tired. In cases where the interviews were scheduled and the pre-school teachers were not ready, the researcher was flexible to reschedule at the convenience of the teacher.

In this study questions were asked from the four thematic areas according to the survey: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. The

pre-school teachers were made aware that they were free to only answer questions they were able to.

3.9 Reliability

Reliability refers to whether: the item responses are consistent across constructs; whether scores are stable over time when administered a second time; whether there is consistency in test administration and scoring. Test re-test which is also called repeatability test was be used to determine the reliability coefficient of the SEC questionnaire. This method was appropriate because the participants were available to take the test on more than one administration. The reliability coefficient of r =.80, a figure above 0.7, was obtained and was considered high and appropriate for this study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

To ensure reliability for the qualitative part of the research, the researcher reviewed the responses with the participants for confirmation. Respondents were also for clarifications during the interviews, after every classroom observation and this was followed up with a telephone conversation. This ensured that the accounts provided by the researcher and the participants were accurate, trustworthy and was credible (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The researcher further documented the procedures for data generation and analysis to enable external audit.

3.10 Validity

The instruments used in this study were developed by the researcher. Before use, content validity to assess the accuracy, meaningfulness, appeal and appearance of the instruments for data collection was established. Validity of an instrument is the success of a scale in measuring what it sets out to measure so that the differences in individual scores can be taken as representing true differences on the characteristics under study

(Koul, 1992). Content validity refers to the subjective agreement among professionals that a scale logically appears to reflect accuracy in what it purports to measure (Kothari, 2004).

To determine content validity of the items in the instrument, the researcher's supervisors assisted in ensuring that the instruments were in relation to the set objectives and content area under study. Their suggestions and comments were used as the basis for modifying the research items. This made the items adaptable to the study. For example, item 3 which read 'Under what circumstances are children likely to exhibit negative emotions?' Was broken down into two items on self-management: I encourage children in my class to learn to respond positively to each other with courtesy words such as 'thank you', 'sorry', 'excuse me' (item 15) and I reprimand children in my class who do not apologize when they wrong others (item 23). Item 23 that asked teachers to describe the kind of interactions that they have in school was deleted, and instead converted to a qualitative question, that required an observation and interview on the strategies used to scaffold SEC in pre-school children.

Trustworthiness of qualitative validity was ensured by triangulation of data sources. In triangulation, observation and interviews were used to examine information obtained from the questionnaire to build a coherent justification for themes. The study made use of rich thick description and clarification of bias that the researcher might have brought to the study (Creswell, 2014). The use of thick description provided detailed descriptions which helped make the results more realistic and richer. The researcher went in for observation with a preconceived mind on what to expect in the pre-school classrooms. However, by reflexivity, the researcher was able to address bias emanating from background, gender, culture, history and socioeconomic orientations that may have influenced the data collection process and findings. For example, the researcher

had never witnessed male teaching pre-school children and had this thought lingering in the mind that ‘he cannot’. With the use of reflexivity, the researcher was able to identify the bias and remind herself of her role as a researcher. As observed by Holland (2006), reflexivity is a human aspect that allows one to understand and intervene in human relationships. It is not possible not to be reflexive in the process of data collection (Parahoo, 2006). Audit trail was also used to review the data base and qualitative results as is recommended with qualitative research (Creswell, 2014).

3.11 Piloting

The SEC questionnaire was pre-tested in two pre-schools in Eldoret town to confirm its validity. The schools were both private and public within the same environment as the other pre-schools where the respondents were drawn from (Kothari, 2004). The pre-test was helpful in that through it, the researcher was able to identify the difficulties the respondents were likely to face when filling the questionnaire. For example, before piloting, the data questionnaire was in two categories: the biographical form was separate from the SEC questionnaire. The researcher realized that respondents would fill the SEC questionnaire but fail to fill the biographical form. Asking them to fill it again appeared cumbersome to them. The researcher made a decision to have the form as one with part one and part two. Secondly, the researcher realized that the initial questionnaire had some abstruse items and sentence structures were hence revised. Some items also needed to be deleted, for example, the question item on the level of education was substituted with level of training and clarity of the questions enhanced. After the pre-test, the item questionnaire was restricted to the regular pre-school teachers and not those on teaching practice. During piloting, it was also clear that if the observations were to be objective, the pre-school teachers had to be observed at the same time for every pre-school classroom. Morning hours when energy levels of the

children, pre-school teachers and the researcher were high were preferred. It was also observed that Fridays were not very conducive days for observations. Apart from the common disruptions of the school schedules, many teachers were often away with permission and for those who were present; they were already fatigued by the end of the week.

3.12 Scoring of the Instruments

The items in the questionnaire were scored using a five point Likert scale and scores allocated depending on whether they were favourable or unfavourable responses (Kothari, 2004). In the questionnaire, Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Neutral (N) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) were scored as; 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, for positive statements and 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively for negative statements. In this study items 1, 4, 6, 8, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 33, 35, 39, and 40 were scored negatively while the remaining items were scored positively. The scores were calculated as per the components of SEC and the final score also established for each teacher. The strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC were therefore established within the four components: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. Within every component, the highest score that pre-school teachers could obtain was 50 and the lowest 10.

The scores from the SEC questionnaire were as follows: in the self-management subtheme, the highest scores obtained by the pre-school teachers were 50 and the lowest 10 with a sample mean of 39.79. For self-awareness, the highest score was 47 and the lowest 10 with a sample mean of 33.50 whereas for social awareness the highest score was 50 and the lowest 20, with a sample mean of 41.67. For relationship management, the highest score was 50 and the lowest was 19 with a sample mean of 43.21. Pre-school teachers whose scores on the subthemes were below one standard deviation below the

sample means were considered to scaffold less competencies that would result in ineffective SEC amongst children. Pre-school teachers whose scores on the subthemes above one standard deviation above the sample mean were considered to scaffold more competencies that would result in effective SEC amongst the children.

On the overall, pre-school teachers' scores on the four SEC subscales ranged from 2 to 50. The scores were categorized into four: Highly proficient for pre-school teachers who scored between 40 and 50 in the SEC subscales; proficient for those who scored 30 and 39, fairly proficient for those who scored 20-29 and low proficiency for those who scored below 20. Teachers whose scores were below one standard deviation below the sample mean were considered deficient in scaffolding SEC amongst children. Teachers whose scores were above one standard deviation above the sample mean were considered to be doing well in scaffolding SEC amongst children on the average.

3.13 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher had an introductory letter from Moi University which assisted in getting permission from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct the research (see Appendix XIII). With the approval from NACOSTI, the county director of education gave a second approval letter for the study to be conducted within his area of jurisdiction (see Appendix XIV). The researcher administered the questionnaires to the teacher respondents. The respondents were asked to read and sign informed consent letter for teachers (see Appendix I) before participating in the study. Likewise, parents/guardians of children who were involved in the study were asked to read and sign the informed consent letter for parents (see Appendix II). By way of signing the letter, the parents authorized their children to participate in the study.

For observational data, the researcher observed that strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in the children by using a check list and taking field notes during observation. Both quantitative and qualitative data were coded. The quantitative data was coded into demographic information, school information and the SEC questions in relation to the four components: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. The qualitative data generated from observation and interviews were coded for themes with reference to the four SEC themes in the survey instrument. Both sets of data were analysed separately but in relation to each other.

3.13.1 Themes Emerging from Qualitative Data

Various themes emerged from the data generated during observation and interviews.

3.13.1.1. SEMA Themes

Both private and pre-school teachers interviewed and the classrooms observed revealed that pre-school teachers used several strategies for this competence. For example strategies such as: use of instructions, making demands, monitoring children, warning children, reprimanding children, non-verbal cues, time outs, silent moments and ignoring were used to scaffold self- management in children. These were analysed for close association and put into two subthemes: ‘non-verbal and ‘monitoring’. The non-verbal themes included strategies such as: modelling, use of time out or breaks, and silent moments during which teachers left the children to follow laid down routines. Monitoring comprised of those strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold self-management in children such as: reprimanding to correct them, warning them to prevent them from doing something outrageous, making demands on what she wanted the children to do, etc.

3.13.1.2 SEAW Themes

For strategies to scaffold SEAW, interview and observation data revealed that teachers used strategies such as: encouraging children to appreciate themselves, urging children to complete tasks, allowing children to express feelings, congratulating children, allowing children to be and modelling which were categorized into five subthemes: appreciation, task taking, freedom of expression, let children be and modelling. Allowing children to appreciate themselves and congratulating children was collapsed into one theme 'appreciation'.

3.13.1.3 SOAW Themes

The study findings revealed that pre-school teachers use strategies such as: monitoring, showing concern for others, appreciating individual differences, conversation with children, and encouraging children to learn to wait for their turns scaffold social awareness in children. Four subthemes were generated from these strategies: peer monitoring, empathy, embracing diversity and communication. Strategies such as waiting for turns and showing concern for one another were combined into 'empathy'.

3.13.1.4 REMA Themes

Observation and interview data revealed that to scaffold relationship management in children, pre-school teachers used strategies such as: listening to children, warning, encouraging helping behaviour, monitoring, settling disputes, discouraging mean comments and the use of reprimands. These were categorized into two subthemes: modelling and monitoring. This is because the researcher felt that listening to children, encouraging helping behaviour, discouraging mean comments were all meant to model appropriate behaviour to children. Monitoring on the other hand comprised strategies such as warning and the use of reprimands.

3.14 Data Analysis

In this study, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the quantitative data generated using the SEC questionnaire. The analyses employed computer Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. The statistical level of significance was set at .05

3.14.1 Descriptive Statistics

After data collection, responses from all questionnaire items were cross-checked to facilitate coding and processing and data analysed quantitatively. The descriptive statistics used in this study were the mean, standard deviation and percentages. The mean, as the most widely used measure of central tendency helped to summarize the essential features of research data (Kothari, 2004). The use of the mean was based on the fact that the data generated was in the form of interval scale.

In this study the mean was used to summarize scores on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC based on the four components; self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. It was also used to examine the influence of teacher attributes (gender, training levels, and experience) and school factors (developmental level, class size and type of school) on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in children.

The standard deviation is a measure of dispersion. In this study, it was used to determine the homogeneity of the population from which the sample was drawn since it gives the distribution of scores around the mean. Standard deviation, like the mean was used in the study because the data was in the form of interval scale.

The frequencies were used to classify data of each variable in the study. The categories were drawn from the teacher attributes and the school factors: pre-school teacher's gender, experience, level of training, type of school, pre-school children's developmental levels and class size. Frequencies were also used to analyse the interviews from pre-school teachers and pre-school classroom observations.

3.14.2 Inferential Statistics

A one-way ANOVA and independent t-test were used to determine the effect of variables on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components in children. An ANOVA test was conducted to find out the effect of: pre-school teachers' training levels, pre-school teachers' experience, children's developmental levels, and pre-school class size on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC components. The use of ANOVA was justified because data on pre-school teachers' training levels and experience as well as data on children's developmental levels and class size were categorized in three or more independent groups. It was important to determine whether there was any statistically significant difference between the means of the groups (Creswell, 2014; Kothari, 2004).

Independent t-test helped to establish the effect of gender and pre-school type on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components in children. According to Kothari (2004), independent tests are used to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means of two unrelated groups. The types of school and the teachers' gender were unrelated. A p value of $< .05$ was considered significant.

3.14.3 Analysis of Qualitative Data

Qualitative data from observation and interview schedules were first subjected to data condensation method of analysis to extract the frequently recurring themes from data collected from the pre-school teachers and pre-school classroom observations. The researcher coded the data into four predetermined themes that summarized the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC amongst children. These were: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management; which were identical to those in the quantitative data.

In the analysis, a frequency of strategies reported by the pre-school teachers during the interviews and pre-school classroom observations was tallied. The occurrences were then compared to the quantitative data for similarities, difference and explanations with regard to the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC amongst children.

3.15 Ethical Considerations

This study honoured the principle of autonomy; that is the participants had the right to freely decide whether to participate in the study and withdraw at any stage without penalty. The participants were therefore asked to read and sign an informed consent letter (see appendix I). Throughout the study, the consent of the participants was negotiated for especially during the interviews and the classroom observations. Parents were also asked to give consent for their children to participate in the study (Appendix II).

The principle of beneficence was maintained; the participants were not required to write their names in the questionnaires nor were the names of schools observed and pre-school teachers interviewed indicated. Instead, pseudo names were used. The participants were informed that the results of the study would be purposively used for

academic purposes and the researcher requested them for permission to publish the results of the study.

The possibility of compromising the principle of confidentiality was envisaged. However, the participants were informed that the study would likely be reviewed by other researchers in future.

3.16 Chapter Summary

This chapter explained the research design and methodology used in the current study. The chapter began by explaining the geographic location of the study, the research design, the methodology, the research population, sampling and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, reliability and validity of the research instruments, piloting, scoring of the instruments, data collection procedures, the emerging themes from the qualitative data, data analysis techniques and ethical considerations issues have been presented. In chapter four, data from the seven research questions are presented, analysed and interpreted.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSES, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the results of data analyses pertaining to the objectives and research questions posed in this study. The reporting of statistical analyses follows a fairly specific format: a restatement of the research questions and hypotheses, after which descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and appropriate interpretations are presented. According to Gravetter and Wallnau (2014) reporting descriptive statistics is usually the first step in any statistical analysis regardless of its simplicity or complexity. This is so because descriptive statistics enables one to examine the characteristics of individual variables involved in the study before looking at the results of the inferential statistics.

This fourth chapter also reports the results of thematic analyses of qualitative data collected through observation as well as interviews administered to the participants. This is with reference to the four thematic areas: SEMA, SEAW, SOAW and REMA. In addition, the chapter provides a detailed discussion of the findings obtained through interpretation of the quantitative data analysed. The chapter opens with a brief demographic description of the participants involved in the study.

4.2 Demographic Descriptions of Participants

The participants involved in this study were drawn from 117 schools (89 private and 38 public) in Eldoret town, Uasin Gishu County. The demographics of the participants is presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Demographics of Participants

	N	%
Training levels		
Untrained	4	1.3
Certificate	139	46.2
Diploma	140	46.5
Degree	18	6.0
Total number of teachers	**301**	**100**
Gender		
Male	11	4
Female	290	96
Total number of teachers	**301**	**100**
Developmental levels		
Baby class	98	32.6
Middle class	102	33.9
Top class	101	33.6
Total number of teachers	**301**	**100**

4.3 Test of Hypotheses

4.3.1 Relationship between Pre-School Teachers' Training Levels and the Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC

The first hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between pre-school teachers' training levels and the strategies they use to scaffold SEC components: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management in children. To test this hypothesis the participants were asked to indicate their level of training on the Biographical Form which was used in data collection.

The participants were also asked to respond to the 40 items in the SEC Questionnaire which was used to measure the strategies used to scaffold SEC components. The strategies for scaffolding each of the four components of SEC were assessed by 10 items in the questionnaire as follows: Self-management items 1-10; Self-awareness 11-20; Social- awareness 21-30; and Relationship Management 31-40.

The responses of the participants to the items in it were scored and the mean scores calculated and reported in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Mean SEC Components Scores by Training Levels

	Training Levels											
	Untrained			Certificate			Diploma			Degree		
	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
SEC components												
Self-management	4	41.5	2.5	139	39.6	6.0	140	39.9	4.7	18	40.0	4.5
Self-awareness	4	33.0	6.1	139	32.9	5.7	140	34.0	4.8	18	34.0	3.9
Social-awareness	4	39.0	2.8	139	41.6	5.0	140	41.7	4.1	18	42.9	2.4
Relationship management	4	43.0	2.4	139	43.1	5.1	140	43.2	4.0	18	43.2	2.4

SD = Standard Deviation

Table 4.2 reveals that most of the pre-school teachers who participated in this study had the qualifications that were relevant for pre-school teaching as most of them were trained (98%). This is quite encouraging given that previous studies in Kenya found that most pre-school teachers were untrained secondary school leavers (Gakii, 2003; Ngure, 2014. Research renounces the old belief that care givers of young children need little formal education and training (Cobbold, 2015; Cooper, 2014; Son et al., 2013). In fact, research indicates that the high variation in the quality of pre-school teachers' behaviour can be explained by their level of formal training in early childhood education (Bierman, 2011; Bornset in et al., 2010; Downer & Pianta, 2006; Hamre et al., 2012).

To test the relationship between teachers' level of training on each of the four SEC Components, a one-way ANOVA was conducted using the IBM SPSS program. The results of the analyses showed that there was a non-significant effect of teachers' training levels on all the strategies used to scaffold the four SEC Components: Self-

management, F (3,297) = .001, p = .998; Self- awareness, F(3, 297) = .156, p=.693; Social awareness, F(3, 297) = .056, p=.813; and Relationship management, F(3,297) =.039, p= .844. From these results, it was concluded that pre-school teachers' training levels do not affect the strategies they use to scaffold self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management in pre-school children. Table 4.3 is a summary of the ANOVA results showing the relationship between preschool teacher training and SEC components.

Table 4.3 ANOVA Summary for the Relationship between Preschool Teachers' Training Levels and SEC Components

SEC COMPONENTS	Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
Self –management	Between	81.295	3	27.098	.001	.998
	Within	1500.227	297	5.051		
	Total	1581.522	300			
Self-awareness	Between	.308	3	.103	.156	.693
	Within	83.499	297	.281		
	Total	83.807	300			
Social awareness	Between	2.049	3	.683	.056	.813
	Within	68.509	297	.231		
	Total	70.558	300			
Relationship management	Between	6.957	3	27.098	.039	.844
	Within	1883.110	297	5.051		
	Total	1890.066	300			

SS=Sum of squares; df=degrees of freedom; MS=mean squares

The argument that supports training for early childhood teachers continue to gain support and scholars believe that pre-school children's overall quality of care increases with increased teachers' education levels (Cobbold, 2015; Raikes, 2015; Yoshikawa & Kabay, 2015). According to Cobbold (2015), teachers' specific training in child development enhances the quality of care given to children. Likewise, Raikes (2015); Yoshikawa and Kabay (2015) suggest that pre-school teachers who are well trained and equipped with the right and appropriate knowledge, conditions and skills are more likely to support age and developmentally appropriate practices, which include rich

reciprocal interactions and appropriate teaching that positively influence children's conditions, language development, socio-emotional development and cognitive skills.

Although the current study found that the majority of pre-school teachers had different levels of training, both quantitative and qualitative results showed that this did not affect the strategies they use to scaffold SEC in children. This not only contradicts research findings but goes against general expectations that training increases one's knowledge and competence (Cobbold, 2015; Raikes, 2015; Yoshikawa & Kabay, 2015). Therefore, it was interesting to note that in this study, there was no significant relationship between pre-school teachers' training levels and the strategies that they used to scaffold SEC.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, pre-schools do not operate in isolation. Parents, other pre-schools, the county governments under which the pre-schools operate and the surrounding communities in general influence how pre-schools function. This includes pre-school programs like SEC that supports children's growth and development. For example, a school may want to initiate a program such as CCL to help scaffold relationship management in children. This is a strategy that is being used in the United States to help develop healthy relationships in children as they learn about consequences of their behaviour and also monitor each other (Solomon et al., 2007). Unless the pre-schools get support from the parents and the community, even the local governing authority may not sanction such a programme especially if it is not in line with the curriculum. Likewise, even though the pre-school curriculum requires that other learning activities apart from language and mathematics be included in the daily routine unless parents support, the pre-school teachers may not be able to initiate or sustain such programs. This is the effect of the macro-systems on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC.

Secondly, the fact that the Kenyan education system is inclined towards meritocracy could explain the lack of relationship between pre-school teachers' training levels and SEC strategies used (Ruto-Korir, 2010). Before admission to most primary schools in Kenya, children are subjected to placement interviews that do not include SEC. Due to such pressure; parents prefer to take their children to pre-schools where children are able to acquire cognitive skills as fast as possible for placement in schools of choice. Consequently, pre-schools whose children excel in cognitive tasks usually considered for class one are able to remain superior and in business as they attract more children. The effect of this is that whether trained or not, pre-school teachers will most likely do what is expected or required of them: prepare children in cognitive skills for primary schools.

From the results emanating from the current study, there is therefore need to ascertain the kind of training pre-school teachers receive in colleges and universities with regard to SEC. This is despite the fact that some aspects of training that early childhood educators receive cannot be specified or examined in terms of content or quality (Fukkink & Lont, 2007). Such challenges with the assessment of the quality or content of pre-school teachers' training have led researchers to recommend the need to improve the quality of pre-service training and provide opportunities for early childhood educators to attend in-service training courses with a focus on professional development (Bronson, 2000; Petrogiannis, 2010; Rentzou, 2011). Training, an aspect of professional development will not only help the pre-school teachers deal with stress and challenges that characterize their profession but will equip them with knowledge and skills that would make them perform their tasks better (Bronson, 2000; Dash et al., 2012; Son et al., 2013).

Apart from in-service training courses, pre-school teachers like other professionals need to belong to a professional body. The challenge that pre-school teachers may face in belonging to a professional body however, may be that professionalization requires the acquisition of more formal knowledge and techniques (Becker, 1962). The work of pre-school teachers is often not viewed by many as a profession. It is actually mostly regarded as preparation for primary school or foster care that suits the needs of working mothers. For a long time, pre-school teaching has been viewed as an occupation that requires less preparation and therefore perceived as work that can be done by anyone; trained, untrained or even a school dropout (Becker, 1962; Ngure, 2014). This is basically due to the fact that pre-school teaching does not require a high level of education and extensive training like other professions (Becker, 1962). Such perspective makes it worse for the pre-schoolteachers and may be a major factor that contributes to the poor pay that most of them get. In most cases in Kenya, what a prospective untrained pre-school teacher needs to teach at pre-school is just to register with the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and obtain a reference number. After registration, the untrained teacher can train at their own pace to whichever level they are willing and able, with the basic being certificate.

Given the importance of early childhood education, the current study observed that pre-school teachers should be encouraged to belong to a relevant professional body. Professionalism is likely to encourage training and give pre-school teachers some form of social regulation that provides them an occupation with a social status. According to Opper (1992), such an occupation social status is likely to be accompanied by economic reward and political power. According to Yungmeyer (1983, p. 264) professional bodies have diverse roles aimed at facilitating members' professional growth. These include: organizing conferences and meetings; sponsoring or conducting educational

related research, publication programs, provision of continuing education, certification of members, development and adoption of standards for professional education and implementation of accreditation programs apart from providing professional development. With professionalization, the pre-school teachers are likely to make a voluntary commitment to a set of principles that govern their activities as professionals. Where professional development is standardized and pegged on registration, training, certification and promotion, the quality of service provision given to pre-school children by pre-school teachers is likely to improve. A case in point is the medical profession. Among the medical practitioners in Kenya precisely the medical doctors, certification for practice is based on specific number of points awarded by the professional certifying bodies like the Kenya Association of Physicians or Kenya Association of Paediatrics. Such points are awarded for attending and participating in continuous medical education through conferences during which medics share experiences, challenges and innovations. This helps one to grow in a profession.

Through professional development, therefore, teachers could be supported to develop their own SEC. According to Bryk and Schneider (2002) the commitment to develop SEC of staff is important. This has been supported by Rogers (2015) who asserts that while focusing on children' SEC is important; teachers' SEC needs to be well-developed. Teachers' SEC is likely to affect their motivation, beliefs and goals in their practice, and hence affect the pre-school children's SEC. Teachers with well-developed SEC are likely to be flexible with change and with current trends with regard to children's emerging SEC needs.

Besides training, professional development and professionalization pre-school teachers need to be intentional in their effort to scaffold SEC in children. Scholars posit that for children to learn and sustain some skills teachers must be intentional (Blair & Diamond,

2008; Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Zimmerman, 1994). Making pre-school teachers intentional in their effort to scaffold SEC in children can be done with adequate supervision that is both internal and external. In internal supervision, there could be internal mechanisms of supervising the pre-school teacher, either by the head teacher or more experienced teachers can supervise the novices. External supervision may be carried out by quality assurance personnel charged with the responsibility of maintaining education standards at pre-school level. Regular and efficient supervision may help pre-school teachers be intentional with scaffolding SEC in children. As observed by Elias (2006) unless SEC is taught systematically like reading and math, children cannot learn and internalize. This may seem a difficult task but with concerted efforts, it can be done. In the West, strategies to scaffold SEC in children are already in place in pre-schools because the governments long realised that the social and economic price to pay for SEC deficient children is higher in the long run (Arghode, 2013; Banu, 2014; Galinsky, 2010; Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Tremblay, 2000; Tymes et al., 2016).

The current study found that pre-school teachers were not intentional in scaffolding SEC in children. For example, in the development of self-awareness aspect, whereas more than half (63%) of the pre-school teachers strongly disagreed that they gave specific tasks to specific children; 50.2% strongly disagreed that they trained children to appreciate each other's abilities respectfully. This is a pointer that the pre-school teachers themselves may not have had adequate content from which to develop their reasoning on how and why children should be helped to develop self-awareness as a SEC skill. The pre-school teachers' training levels did not significantly influence their responses to these items.

Similarly, developmentally appropriate practices suggest that children be given tasks commensurate with their developmental needs, in addition to training them to

appreciate each other's abilities to develop social awareness skills (Blair & Diamond, 2008; Lewis, 2011). Arghode (2013) observed that teachers need adequate training in SEC to connect with their own feelings first before they can be able to teach the children. Furthermore, teaching and imparting SEC skills in children should be done through varied means because it is one thing for teachers to be trained and it is another thing to learn how to integrate SEC into practice for the children to emulate (Wang, 2013). Pre-school teachers must therefore provide opportunities for children to develop SEC as well as practice and reinforce it using different approaches in multiple contexts: in classrooms, during learning, during play, as the children interact with each other and with the teacher (Devaney, O'Brien, Resnik, Keister, & Weissberg, 2006).

Apart from training and professional development, pre-school teachers need to genuinely connect with children and create a reciprocal relationship to be able to bond with the children on a deeper and meaningful level (Neuman, Josephson, & Peck, 2015). Most of the time, children are likely to emulate their teachers. From this study, it can be deduced that the majority of the pre-school teachers whether trained or not trained did not genuinely connect with the children and this hampered their efforts to scaffold SEC components in the children. For example, when the children were not able to exercise self-control a number of the pre-school teachers (3) regardless of their level of training punished them by denying them what they loved such as snacks and play breaks. The pre-school teachers were not also able to explain to the children what wrong they had done. They kept on issuing warnings like, *'wewe! nitakugonga'* meaning *'you! I will hit you'* (see Appendix IX). Furthermore, a good number of the pre-school teachers did not train the children to accept apologies and a significant number (49.8%) did not give the children a chance to explain themselves.

Since most components of SEC develop with little or no formal instruction the pre-school teacher's guidance in social situations such as during play, sharing, conflict resolution, and empathy is important. Pre-school teachers are better placed to use every opportunity to scaffold SEC in children including modelling the correct behaviour and attitude. According to Hobson et al. (2006) for children to develop self-awareness, they need to identify with attitudes of their caregivers. Regardless of their training levels, pre-school teachers also need to scaffold the right SEC vocabulary in children as advocated by Kityama et al. (1995). Languages enables a child identify and describe emotional expressions. This is important given the interconnectedness between language and emotional development (Vygotsky, 1978).

During observation, the current study found that similar songs and poems were used by pre-schoolteachers regardless of their levels of training in an attempt to scaffold self-management in children. However, these songs were more of routine and lacked intentionality.

One such poem that the children recited everyday was:

"Johnny, Johnny, Yes papa, eating sugar, no papa, open your mouth, hahaha, close your mouth, mmm" (Interview with teacher Rachael*, 8th Feb 2017, row 28, line 35).

The children accompanied the poems with appropriate gestures, and emotional expressions but there was no attempt by any of the teachers whether trained or untrained to explain the moral behind the songs and poems. Even though the poem was meant to teach self-management in children by being trained to refrain from the habit of licking sugar, the children simply recited the poems and songs as a routine. The teacher for example did not explain to the children why they should not lick sugar or why it is wrong to take anything that doesn't belong to them without permission.

It is important that pre-school teachers explain to children morals behind songs and poems with practical examples that children can identify with at their levels. To refer to one of the famous quotes of William Arthur Ward, 'a mediocre teacher tells, the good teacher explains, the superior teacher demonstrates and the great teacher inspires'. The pre-school teacher should go beyond telling the children what they should do; to inspiring them to be what she would want them to be by giving explanations as well as modelling.

As had been observed by Paris and Paris (2002), children live in an era of constant distractions from mobile phones, computers, television and therefore require intentional teaching on self-management to be able to succeed in life. This situation has not changed, if anything children presently have more challenges than what they faced a few years ago. Given the number of hours children spend at school, regardless of the level of training, the pre-school teacher should be able to intentionally scaffold SEC skills in children. This therefore points out that investment in pre-school teacher's initial education, progressive mentoring and motivation is of great importance in promoting essential skills like SEC in children. Such qualification is expected to enhance pre-school teachers' ability to scaffold SEC among pre-school children in Eldoret town, Kenya.

As part of the microsystem, the pre-schoolteacher and the school have a role to play as far as the child's SEC is concerned. By systematically teaching, modelling and facilitating the application of SEC competencies in all aspects of teaching, pre-school teachers can help children apply these skills in their day to day life. Likewise, teachers should also provide a safe, caring and highly engaging environment not only in the pre-school classrooms but in the school community as a whole. With an environment that is conducive, children are more likely to learn and further develop SEC competencies

(Rothbart & Bates, 2006; Tores, 2011). During classroom interactions, pre-school teachers can monitor and ensure that children practice SEC appropriately. Having frequent conversation with the children during classroom interactions has also been found to be an important strategy of scaffolding SECin children (Boyatzis et al., 1995; Cherniss, 2000; Knudsen, 2004). This is not without regard to the fact that pre-schoolchildren's SEC can also powerfully influence the strategies that pre-school teachers according to the bidirectional influence of the Brofenbrenner's theory (Berke, 2013).

As an exosystem, the county and the central governments ought to ensure that pre-school teachers and pre-school environments provide an opportunity for children to be equipped with SEC. This can be done by supporting appropriate training and staff development and guaranteeing proper remuneration of pre-school teachers in order to motivate and retain those that are efficient in pre-schools. Pre-schools and pre-school classrooms comprised of children with effective SEC skills are more caring and safe and contribute to children's overall achievement (Boyatzis et al., 1995; Cherniss, 2000).

Pre-school teacher training that includes in-service training and professional development is therefore important if the pre-school teachers have to become more aware of the role of SEC in children's overall achievement. With effective professional development, pre-school teachers will be required to integrate their commitment with their knowledge and skills and work in the context of collegiality, contractual and ethical relationships with children. This will place them to an equivalent position with all other professionals.

4.3.2 Relationship between Pre-School Teachers' Experience and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC Components

The second hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between the pre-school teachers' experience and the strategies they use to scaffold SEC components: Self-management, Self-awareness, Social awareness and Relationship management in children. To test this hypothesis the participants were asked to indicate their level of experience on the Biographical Form which was used in data collection. The participants were also asked to respond to the 40 items in the SEC questionnaire and their responses were scored and the mean scores calculated and reported in Table 4.4

Table 4.4: Mean SEC Components Scores by Experience Levels

	Teachers Experience Level								
	Early Career(0-5 years)			Averagely experienced (5-10 years)			Experienced (over 10 years)		
SEC Components	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
Self-management	96	40.0	5.8	131	39.7	5.4	74	39.7	4.7
Self-awareness	96	32.9	5.6	131	34.1	5.0	74	33.2	4.8
Social-awareness	96	40.3	4.6	131	42.2	4.3	74	42.5	4.2
Relationship management	96	43.0	4.6	131	43.1	4.6	74	43.6	3.8

To test the effect of teachers' experience level on each of the four SEC Components, a one-way ANOVA was conducted using the SPSS program. The results of the analyses showed that there was a significant effect of teacher's experience on strategies they use to scaffold social awareness skills in children, F (2, 298) = 6 .045, p= .003. On further analysis, a post-hoc test revealed that the teachers' strategies to scaffold social awareness improved with experience; Novice teachers with less than 5 years (40.3, 4.6) had less competence with scaffolding social-awareness compared to those considered experienced with over 10 years of pre-school teaching (42.45, 4.2). Pre-school teachers' experience, however, did not have a statistically significant effect on other constructs;

self-management $F(2, 298) = .116$, p=.891; Self-awareness F (2, 298) =1 .537, p= .217 and relationship management $F(2, 298) = .403$, p= .669. Table 4.5 is ANOVA summary for relationship between preschool teachers' experience and SEC components.

Table 4.5 ANOVA Summary for the Relationship between Preschool Teachers' Experience and SEC Components

SEC COMPONENTS	Source	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig
Self -management	Between	81.295	2	4.075	.772	.463
	Within	1500.227	298	5.280		
	Total	1581.522	300			
Self-awareness	Between	.577	2	.288	1.033	.357
	Within	83.230	298	.279		
	Total	83.807	300			
Social awareness	Between	1.594	2	.797	6.045	.003
	Within	68.964	298	.231		
	Total	70.558	300			
Relationship management	Between	10.691	2	5.345	.848	.429
	Within	1879.376	298	6.307		
	Total	1890.066	300			

SS=Sum of squares; df=degrees of freedom; MS=mean squares

During observation (see Appendix X), the study found that in the public pre-school where the pre-school teacher had over 10 years of experience the teacher engaged the children in conversations regularly which contributed to the scaffolding of social awareness skills in children. Scholars in child development believe that having conversation with children enhance their language development. Having emotional conversation with them therefore increases their emotional vocabulary and consequently their emotional understanding (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Kityama et al., 1995; Saarni, 1999; Vygotsky, 1978).

The current study also found that the experienced teachers structured activities in a way that catered for individual differences more compared to the inexperienced ones (see Example of DAP Appendix XVI).This is because they were able to identify and accurately interpret children's emotions given their experience with handling children

(Fetler, 2001; Podell & Tournaki, 2007; Rivkin et al., 2005).With the understanding of their own beliefs and values, experienced teachers develop better strategies of helping children learn (Wang et al., 2016). This was evident especially during teaching, as the researcher observed that the experienced pre-school teacher appeared more composed, handled the children with warmth, interacted more with the children and was in control. The researcher's presence in the classroom did not threaten the public pre-school teacher and she followed a steady routine throughout the four days of observation. According to Chang et al. (2007), teachers have a powerful influence on children's social lives. It can therefore be deduced that an experienced teacher has even more powerful influence on the children's SEC. Equally important is the fact that due to experience, pre-school teachers are aware of their effect on children and can use this to positively scaffold SEC competence in children especially in areas that require competencies in self-management and relationship management.

Amongst the strategies that pre-school teachers scaffolded for self-management competencies were routines. Routines are important for the development of self-management component in children (Berke, 2013; Feldman, 2014). The pre-school classroom routines observed included, bathroom breaks, snack breaks, schedule of learning activities, with physical education just before lunch break every day. The novice teacher who was from the private pre-school took more time to get used to the presence of the researcher and even seemed frustrated when the children behaved awkwardly. The teacher did not appear confident with the daily routines. On two consecutive days, the novice pre-school teacher seemed not decided on what schedule was to come first. As observed by Cobbold (2015), increased levels of teachers' experience with child care enhance their quality of care. Such a teacher is aware of the importance of routine with children.

The results of this study therefore contribute to the longstanding debate on whether pre-school teachers' experience has a significant effect on children's performance (Greenwald et al., 1996; Jesper & Rivkins, 2002; Phillips, 2010; Rivkin et al., 2005; Wang et al., 2016). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2012) acknowledges that experience improves professional development and this significantly contributes to quality of pre-school education. Such quality education in the pre-school classrooms is highly correlated with better child outcomes, cognitively and socio-emotionally. According to Banu (2014); Thao and Boyd (2014), experienced teachers are more likely to hold child-centered beliefs and engage in similar pedagogical practices, which can be associated with better learning outcomes for children. This has been affirmed by other scholars (Goleman, 2006; Felters, 2001; Jesper & Rivkin, 2002).

The fact that the study found a statistically significant relationship between pre-school teacher's experience and the strategies they use to scaffold social awareness component of SEC in children is worth noting. As observed in Chapter Two, social awareness is critical as it lays the foundation upon which other skills, both cognitive and non-cognitive are based (Denham, 1998; Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Given that most pre-school classrooms were actually found to have a greater than the recommended class size, the pre-school teachers' focus was mainly on classroom control.

By focusing on social awareness, the pre-school teachers help to scaffold in children the ability to take other's perspectives, show empathy, and predict the feelings and reactions of others as well as recognize how their own actions or speech affect others (Shanker, 2014). Brofenbrenner's theory highlights the importance of interactions within the microsystem. Children often duplicate relational values and skills modelled around them and have a great influence on each other (Bronson, 2000).

The findings of this study further revealed that although the pre-school teachers' experience had a statistically significant influence on strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold social awareness component of SEC, the majority of pre-school teachers (4) interviewed however did not intend to remain longer in the profession. The pre-school teachers were of the opinion that should they advance in their careers, they had no option but to find alternative jobs. One teacher explained that having a master's degree in early childhood would open up 'green pastures' for her (Interview with teacher Jane*, 16th April, 2016 row 20 line 6).

The lack of a high number of experienced pre-school teachers in Eldoret and in Kenya as a whole can be attributed to high turn-over that characterises the early childhood teaching profession compared to other professions. This high turnover is ascribed to the fact that pre-school teachers are poorly paid, have limited chances for growth and advancement and also have little guidance and support (Cobbold, 2015). High turnover denies the children the opportunity to form meaningful child-teacher relationships important in development of SEC while greater stability among pre-school teachers produces higher levels of SEC (Cobbold, 2015; Goleman, 2006). Such stability comes with experience on the job.

Experienced teachers have been found to have a higher level of interaction with children. This has further been supported by Harter (2006) who suggested that interactions between pre-school children and teachers increased with experience and greatly benefited the development of children's self-awareness. This relationship between pre-school teachers and children is a building block upon which further self-awareness and other SEC components take place. Emotional quality of interactions lays foundation for secure attachment bond and development of secure working model of self and others.

Experience in pre-school teaching culminating from long years of dealing with children is, therefore, one way of ensuring secure attachment with children. This helps children develop SEC skills. As has been observed by Wang et al. (2016), time and experience enables teachers develop better strategies of helping children learn. It is a widely held belief that in order to retain pre-school teachers they should be rewarded on performance, given reasonable workloads, have better career paths, be given clear performance expectations, be given opportunities for training and development, and be given adequate compensation (Landry, 2005). This way, pre-school children can gain from the accumulated effects of experienced teachers.

4.3.3 Relationship between Pre-School Teachers' Gender and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC Components

The third hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between pre-school teachers' gender and the strategies used to scaffold SEC components: Self-management, Self-awareness, Social awareness and Relationship management in children. To test this hypothesis the participants were asked to indicate their gender on the Biographical Form which was used in data collection. They also responded to 40 items in the SEC questionnaire and their responses were scored and mean scores calculated and reported in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Mean SEC Component Scores by Gender

	Teachers' Gender					
SEC components	Female			Male		
	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
Self-management	290	39.9	5.3	11	38.1	4.7
Self-awareness	290	33.6	5.2	11	31.7	3.7
Social-awareness	290	41.7	4.4	11	40.0	5.4
Relationship management	290	43.2	4.4	11	43.0	5.0

An independent samples t-test was conducted to test the relationship between preschool teachers' gender on each of the four SEC Components: Self-management, Self-awareness, Social awareness and Relationship management. The results showed that there was no significant difference in the scores for males and females pre-schoolteachers in the four SEC components: Self-management t (299) = -.080, p = .281; Self-awareness t(299) = -1.163, p = .246; Social awareness t (299) = -1.196, p = .233; Relationship management t(299) = -.162, p = .871.

These results suggest that gender does not have a statistically significant effect on strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold the four SEC components: Self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. The current study therefore concluded that teachers' gender does not affect SEC competence skills in pre-school children. Regardless of their gender, pre-school teachers were more concerned with the children's social awareness and relationship management skills more than self-awareness and self- management. This was further supported by qualitative results.

From the results of this study an attempt was made to explain why pre-school teachers regardless of their gender were more likely concerned with social awareness and relationship management compared to self-awareness and self-management. As mentioned in literature review in Chapter Two, with social-awareness skills, children are likely to have decreased behaviour problems. Similarly, children with relationship management skills are more likely to deal with aggression, stress and negative behaviour from other children. Pre-school teachers are therefore able to manage children with social awareness and relationship management skills better even if the class size is large as is often the case (Bascia, 2010; Ngure, 2014; Whitehurst & Chingos, 2011). Secondly, because of their young age, many parents view pre-schools

as an institution where their children are prepared for the next level of education as well as where they are protectively taken care of (Cooper, 2014; Opper, 1992). Pre-school teachers therefore double as care givers to children and children's competence in relationship management and social awareness skills make their tasks lighter.

The current study also found that females dominated pre-school teaching; a scenario that agrees with the global perspective of feminization of Early Childhood Development and Education [ECDE], Neuman et al., 2015). In Kenya, female ECDE teachers have been found to constitute up to 94% of the workforce globally. For example, a study by Waithaka (2002) in Thika Municipality found that out of the 166 pre-school teachers in the municipality only one was male. Similarly, Gakii (2003) also established that the total number of pre-school teachers in Miriga Mieru division in Meru, was 475 and only 2 were men. The disparity shown here is in not in agreement with educational and development policies where teachers for pre-school pupils should be made up of males and females (Arbeau & Coplan, 2017; England, 2010; Kalsen, 2012; Ngure, 2014; Solberg, 2004).

In fact, scholars have argued that the contribution of both men and women is important for the development of children as each gender is endowed with unique traits and characteristics (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Buschmeyer, 2013; Tennhoff, Nentwich, & Vogt, 2015). Female teachers, for example, have been found to be more supportive and expressive, nurturing, informal and more open towards children, spend more time encouraging and allowing children' participation, give more compliments as well as maintain class control in a way that keeps relationships with children, provide love and warmth of a mother (Good, Sikes, & Boophy, 1973; Maner, 1987; Rashidi & Saher, 2012; Statham, Richardson, & Cook, 1991; Wood, 2012). Male teachers on the other hand have been found to be more domineering, emphasize structured activities, and ask

more display questions that make them have short exchanges with children. Male teachers are a symbol of authority and security (Chavez, 2000; Wood, 2012). Both traits and characteristics are important to the growing pre-school child's SEC development.

Buschmeyer (2013) reiterates that women are not able to meet the needs and interests of boy children satisfactorily, just like men are not able to meet the needs and interests of girl children satisfactorily. Research findings also reveal that children imitate rather than re-interpret what they observe (Skelton, 1991). The pre-school boys therefore need male pre-school teachers to imitate while the girls need female teachers to imitate.

There are also gender differences as far as preferences are concerned. According to Sandberg and Samuelsson (2005) whereas male teachers preferred plays that were vigorous, their female counterparts preferred calm types of play. Further, male pre-school teachers were more focused on play that resulted in physical development while the female focused on play that resulted in SEC. Earlier, Lacey, Saleh, and Gorman (1998) had examined inclusion and sensitivity preferences between male and female pre-school teachers. Lacey et al. found that female teachers allowed learners to define learning experiences for themselves while male teachers were more authoritarian and believed they knew what was best for the children.

Singer (1996) assessed teaching paradigms of faculty through the use of a survey instrument by asking the teachers to assess their own attitudes and behaviour. Singer's study used factor analysis to construct scales that represented the paradigms: attitudinal (content oriented, process and motivation) and behaviour (student involvement, discipline centred). The results from regression analysis showed that gender was a significant predictor of each of the paradigms. Females were more likely than men to plan for their teaching. Likewise, Sturbuck (2009) examined gender differences in

teaching styles while controlling for discipline area. Sturbuck found no significant differences. This was consistent with Laird, Garver, and Niskode (2007) study that analysed the teaching styles of over 9000 men and women teachers across United States. Therefore, the integration of both males and female teachers in pre-school is important for children's development of SEC.

Despite the difference in the way male and female pre-school teachers perform their tasks, reasons have been advanced to explain why there are more female pre-school teachers than males. Ngure (2014) revealed that one of the reasons that led to the low number of male teachers in the profession is poor remuneration and non-conducive terms of service. According to Neuman et al. (2015) remuneration is a vital indicator of the attractiveness and the status of the ECDE professionals particularly among the male teachers and this may also affect the teacher's motivation and job satisfaction. Therefore, low salary for ECCE personnel may deter qualified and committed male teachers from entering the profession (OECD, 2012). The high number of females can be supported by the argument that ECD teaching has historically and culturally perceived as a maternal task (Shaeffer, 2015). According to OECD (2012, while research has not linked gender to the quality practices in the classroom, it can be argued that both girls and boys need a male role model in the school from an early age to help counter traditional views of women in child rearing and ensure that school and learning remain gender neutral.

Another reason likely to attract more female teachers to pre-school teaching could be parental preferences. In the study by Ngure (2014) results from focus group discussion found out that 53 out of 62 parents (85%) preferred female teachers handling their children in pre-school while nine out of 62 parents (15%) preferred their children to be handled by male teachers. The reasons given included cultural norms based on gender

stereotype where the responsibilities of bringing up children are relegated to women. Those who preferred male teachers had boy children. This brings to the light that gender stereotyping and cultural norms had a role to play in the gender of the teachers employed to work at the pre-schools in Kenya and other countries. In this regard, many concerted and policy efforts have been made to increase the number of men working in the ECD with limited success (UNESCO, 2006).

However, the current study finding that there were more female than male pre-school teachers contradicts other African studies. International Labour Organization [ILO] (2012) found that men make up more than 50% of the pre-school teachers in Tanzania and Liberia, and about 45% in Gambia (Education International [EI], 2010). Having good gender representation of pre-school teachers, therefore, is important as it is likely to: expand children's understanding and construction of gender roles; provide positive male models for the boys; prevent early externalizing problems common with boys (Bennet & Lipman, 1999; McCormark & Brownhill, 2014; Skelton, 2001). However, it is not just gender representation in early pre-school that is important. Both male and female pre-school teachers should intentionally scaffold SEC in children given that these skills have an impact on pre-school children's future overall development.

According to Islahi and Nasreen (2013), the issue at stake may not be gender but teaching styles. Islahi and Nasreen believe that men and women have different teaching styles, which affects children's learning and achievement. Even in homes, mothers and fathers may have different ways of dealing with the same issues. The fact that the interview results corroborated the quantitative results further confirms the assertions of Islahi and Nasreen. Male and female teachers used the same strategies to scaffold self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management in pre-school children but in different styles. For example, calling out children's names

whenever the teacher wanted to warn them or ask them to desist from an act was a common self-management strategy employed by both genders (see Appendix X).

This was further confirmed during the interview and observation where it was evident that although the strategies pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC were the same, the styles differed according to gender. For example, one of the pre-school teachers explained that she had the patience to call on the attention of children severally before taking action while another explained that he only called a child once and the tone of his voice was enough to send a strong message to the children on what would follow. Other strategies that both pre-school teachers used to scaffold relationship management competence in children included 'settling disputes among children' and 'listening'. Like with self-management, pre-school teachers used the same strategy but different styles. The female pre-school teacher preferred training children in settling disputes making them aware of what was expected of them. In this classroom, it was observed that the phrase 'not at all' was commonly used when a child offended another or when a child did what was not approved by the others. This phrase was meant to alert the child, the others and the pre-school teacher that something awkward or unacceptable had happened. The offending child immediately stopped the offending act. In the pre-school classroom with the male teacher, the teacher explained that in his class children were encouraged to report to the teacher whenever they were aggrieved, after which the offender immediately apologized. Children could be observed frequently running to the teacher to report others. Although it seemed like disruption, it seemed a classroom routine meant to put the children in check.

During the study, it was observed that most of the male pre-school teachers who participated in the study did not actually actively teach in the classrooms because of their administrative roles. However, because they still taught the children at one time

or another, the study found it appropriate to observe those who were willing and only one was.

The fact that the male pre-school teachers were not willing to be observed supports studies that have been done on gender and pre-school teaching (Cooney & Bittner, 2001; Drudy, 2005; Ngure, 2014; Kalsen, 2012). Most male pre-school teachers still find it embarrassing to teach young children and suffer from low self-esteem especially in Africa (Peeters, 2007; Republic of Kenya, 2012). Despite the fact that employment opportunities are scarce, pre-school teaching remains the last option for most men (Interview with teacher Francis*, on 7th April, 2016, row 5, line10).Applying the principle of autonomy also meant that the male pre-school teachers were not coerced to participate in the study.

4.3.4 Relationship between Pre-School Type and Strategies Used by Pre-School Teachers to Scaffold SEC

The fourth hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between the pre-school type and the strategies pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components: Self-management, Self-awareness, Social awareness and Relationship management in children. To test this hypothesis the participants were asked to indicate their pre-school type on the Biographical Form which was used in data collection. In addition the respondents were requested to respond to the 40 items in the SEC questionnaire and their responses presented in Table 4.7

Table 4.7: Mean SEC Components by School Type

SEC Components	Type of School					
	Private			Public		
	N	x̄	SD	N	x̄	SD
Self-management	242	39.9	5.52	59	39.9	5.52
Self-awareness	242	32.3	5.31	59	34.4	4.49
Social-awareness	242	41.3	4.49	59	42.3	4.34
Relationship management	242	43.2	4.49	59	43.2	4.13

An independent samples t-test was conducted to test the effect of pre-school type on pre-school teachers' strategies to scaffold each of the four SEC Components: Self-management, Self-awareness, Social awareness and Relationship management. There was no significant difference in the scores for private and public pre-school teachers in the four SEC components: Self-management $t(299) = .840$, $p = .402$; Self-awareness $t(299) = -1.489$, $p = .137$; Social awareness $t(299) = -1.184$, $p = .237$ and Relationship management $t(299) = .018$, $p = .986$.

These quantitative results suggest that the type of school does not have a significant effect on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold: Self- management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management. Schools can play an important role in the promotion of social-emotional development in children by implementing universal intervention programs focused on increasing social-emotional learning (Pahl & Barret, 2009).

Several factors could explain the reason why in this study there was no significant association between the type of school the children attended and the strategies that the teachers used to scaffold socio-emotional competence in the children. Lucas and Mbiti (2010) for example explain that no matter the type of school that a child attends, parents often believe that the early childhood education should focus on the promotion of academic skills to increase the competence of the children. This therefore gives one of

the reasons why pre-school teachers do not focus much on the socio-emotional aspect of learning. One teacher, Charity* interviewed from a private pre-school explained that:

> Parents want their children to read and write after one month and as a private school, if you do not adhere to what they want, they can even take their children to other schools. So, we are at their mercy (Interview with teacher Charity*, 6thMay, 2016; row 6 line 2).

Such sentiments from teachers indicate even though the ECD policy framework in Kenya is documented to be based on principles that are universally accepted, pre-school practices do not adhere to them fully. Teacher Charity's* statement is a clear indication that pre-schools practices are greatly influenced by parental needs rather than what the curriculum stipulates. One of the cornerstones of quality early childhood development according to the ECD policy document is to ensure that the 'holistic needs of young children are met' (Republic of Kenya, 2012, p. 6).

Practices that are contrary to ECD policy framework were found to be common in both public and private pre-schools visited. For example, in most of the pre-schools, there were no evidence of play or play materials both in and outside the classroom. As a result, during breaks, children basked in the sun or could be seen in small groups chatting. Although the public pre-schools had large playing grounds, they were bare: with no swings, no seesaws play balls, or other play materials. In the classrooms, only books, pens and occasionally coloured pencils were visible, an indication that all focus was mainly on academics. This is against the standard service guidelines that states that ECD centres should have play and play equipment that is age and developmentally appropriate, adequate, safe and securely attached to protect children from injury. The guidelines further note that the play and learning equipment shall be 'serviced and maintained once a term' (Republic of Kenya, 2012b, p. 7). It is recommended that as children learn social and emotional skills, it is important that they have opportunities to

practice and apply the skills in actual situations and be recognized for using these skills across a variety of settings (Weare & Nind, 2013).

The critical role of play in the development of SEC skills pre-school children has been documented (Berk, 2013; Feldman, 2014; Harter, 2006). Play is important as it helps children develop socially and emotionally and it also stimulates brain growth and development (McGiginnis, 2012). Play also makes crucial contributions to young children's development during the early childhood years, as play supports children's development of language and abilities to control their cognitive and emotional processes i.e., self-regulation (Denham & Brown, 2010; Whitebread, 2010). This shows, therefore, that equipping the pre-schools with play facilities may help contemporary Kenyan young children better acquire social-emotional and cognitive skills that prepare them for learning through engaging in more play-based, child-centered, and creativity-oriented learning during the pre-school years. Apart from the play grounds and play facilities, the study found that some of the private pre-schools were within residential homes and children shared facilities like toilets with residents. Other pre-schools were not fenced and did not provide the much-needed security to children at this level. The safety and security of children in schools remains an issue of global concern (UNESCO, 2006).

The findings of this study are further supported by other scholars. For example, Kariuki, et al. (2007) observed that although the curriculum of Kenya's pre-school education requires that children are prepared in all areas of their development including: personal, social and emotional development studies show that this rarely happens. The current study findings reveal that parents and guardians insistent on children's cognitive development continue to affect children's competence in other important areas. Parents can also not be blamed '*in toto'*. The focus on academics by

parents is mainly due to the fact that primary schools that they perceive to be ‘good’ are few and very competitive. Such schools only admit children who pass their entry examinations, comprised of reading, writing and math skills. Due to such high stakes testing, parents are forced to put undue pressure on pre-school teachers so that their children may not fail to be admitted in schools they perceive as ‘good’. Such revelations are supported by Bronfenbrenner’s theory, on which this study is based on the role of the macrosystem on a child’s development (Feldman, 2014). To remain attractive to parents, pre-schools prefer to compromise on the developmental needs of the children. This puts in doubt the role of county quality assurance personnel in ensuring that pre-school curriculum is implemented.

Though the focus on academics alone should not be encouraged, it is not only in Kenya where cognitive skills are over emphasized. A study by Ssentanda and Nakayiza (2015) and a review of ECD in low income countries of the world by Neuman et al. (2015) reveal that in developing countries, most of the private pre-schools are geared towards children’s intellectual achievement, which is an expectation of their parents. This is further supported by the fact that parents and teachers too often have a bias towards believing that only cognitive skills are of fundamental importance to success in life. A school that has the biggest percentage of its candidate’s transit to the next education level with excellent grades is often celebrated and as a result automatically be assured of a high pupil turn up the following academic year. Similarly, the study revealed that academic performance overrode socio-emotional development of the children, hence morality and discipline was ignored.

As observed by scholars dealing with children’s issues, pre-schools whether public or private should also focus on the development of socio-emotional competence in children especially during the early childhood years. This is because pre-school years

offer a window of opportunity where children can learn many skills with little effort (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007; Baron, 2006; Landry, 2005; Pahl & Barret, 2009). With the current increase in social ills in schools: bullying, drugs and sexting, SEC skills are even more critical. Pre-schools teachers are therefore crucial in creating awareness in parents on the fact that the cognitive dimension alone does not make a child successful in life. Instead of parents determining what practices are enforced in pre-schools, pre-school teachers should influence the kind of holistic practices that they engage in for the benefit of the child.

Observation data in this study contradicted the quantitative results. Although the quantitative results had suggested that there was no significant effect on the type of pre-school and strategies pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC, during observation, the researcher found that pre-schools differed to a very large extent. The public pre-schools (3) had an average of thirty-five children against one teacher while the private pre-schools had less than twenty children in a classroom against one teacher. The teacher-child ratio is a debated issue to date. Although some scholars have argued that the type of preschool has no direct effect on the children's achievement, the effect is cumulative (Miles & Gamoran, 2006; Betts & Shkolnik, 1999). Preschools with smaller class, a sensitive and caring teacher is able to monitor the children and limit any form of disruption that would interfere with learning. However, it is important to note that class size alone does not have an effect on the children' achievement. Teacher qualification, teacher experience, adequate classroom facilities as well as student population that is not diverse are some of the factors that work with class size to bring about a positive effect.

Further, the current study found that teachers from private pre-schools (2) showed concern and were sensitive about children's need. This was commendable given that

care givers of young children ought to have some of these characteristics (Ackerman &Izard, 2004; Harter, 2006; Thomson, 2007). However, the pre-school teachers were not warm towards the children. The researcher concluded that concern and sensitivity towards children could have been out of duty rather than out of the love and passion for their job. This was confirmed by one of the interviews when teacher Charity*, a pre-school teacher had this to say:

> 'in this school we use diaries to communicate with parents……even if a child is hurt, we must indicate who hurt the child, the measures we took, and what I would like the parent to do…….This is what is expected by the administration with problems with administration (Interview with teacher Charity* on 6th May 2016, rows 25 and 26 lines 4-4 and 5-8).

This was interpreted to mean that any negative report from a parent would jeopardize a teacher's job. Therefore, teachers' seemingly caring attitude towards the children was out of fear of repercussions.

In Kenya, many parents prefer private schools to public schools because of their perception that private schools are more likely to make their children have better learning outcomes. This is because of the perception that private pre-schools are better equipped and have more and better extra-curricular activities. Private pre-schools are therefore imagined to provide environments where children are moulded holistically (Kitsao-Wekulo & Hungi, 2016; Lucas & Mbiti, 2010; Sarangapani & Winch, 2010). From the qualitative research, the current study however proves that private pre-schools can be as good as the public ones. The study findings revealed that children from some public pre-schools could even end up better than some from private pre-school because they hada more relaxed classroom atmosphere and learned at their pace. Such pre-school childrenappeared to be under no pressure to perform from the pre-school teachers.

A study among Kenyan pre-school children by Kitsao-Wekulo and Hungi (2016) that assessed the preparation of pre-school children to join primary by use of a Tayari School Readiness Index (TSRI), a composite index that measures performance across 10 tasks found that Kenyans have for long been obsessed with the qualitative differences between public and private education. But the initial results from the pre-school study showed no significant difference between the learners in public and private pre-primary schools in terms of literacy, numeracy, executive functioning and socio-emotional readiness. The study further revealed that the children's school readiness was generally found to be poor. Most did not possess the majority of skills assessed by the TSRI. In both public and private ECDE centres, mean index scores were 50% or below. This was attributed to lack of proper SEC skills in the children as evaluated by the comprehensive TSRI tool. This therefore is a pointer that most of the pre-school children no matter the type of school they attend are less likely to possess adequate SEC skills before transition to primary school.

The result of the current study is a pointer to parents and guardians of pre-school children that the success of their children's future lives does not just depend on the schools that their children attend. For a long time, parents have abdicated their roles as the primary nurturers of children. Given that there is a positive relationship between all aspects of development: physical, social, emotional and cognitive, successful children are not born, they are made. Like the African traditional cooking that requires three stones, without parents, involvement in children's, overall development, even if the school is good and the pre-school teacher knowledgeable and skilled, the result will be an incompetent child.

Heckman (2000) asserts that an important lesson that should be learned during successful SEC skill development in pre-school is that social skills and motivation of

the child are the key aspects that can be altered and not the intelligence quotient. According to Heckman the pre-occupation of teachers and parents with cognition and academic "smarts" as measured by test scores excludes the critical importance of social-emotional skills, self-discipline, and a variety of other non-cognitive skills that are well known to determine success later in life. Therefore, there is need for change in policy to consider a more holistic approach to early education, one that balances positive social and emotional outcomes with more traditional academic outcomes (Campbell et al., 2016).

Change in policy encompasses suggestions such as funding high quality education where teachers and administrators are trained and supported to work in social-emotional learning; improving access to quality early childhood education; early intervention for children who are at risk to social-emotional problems and also teaching Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) skills to children and families (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Furthermore, according to the recommendation of Campbell et al. (2016), creation of SEL-inclusive early childhood programming goes hand-in-hand with accurate and complete reporting on the nation's children's social emotional development, which is rarely done in the Kenyan perspective.

Pre-schools should therefore be attentive to challenging life events that children go through and try to provide them with support and coping strategies to overcome troubling moments. In Kenya, a ten-year-old child was beaten to death by the teacher and fellow children simply because she could not read (Nkomu, 2017). The teacher who beat the girl doubled also as an administrator in the school, yet according to the grandmother, the child was actually unwell. Such aggression meted against children goes unspoken about until something worse happens. In this case, it was only after the little girl lost her life that parents were now vocal on the kind of aggression the teacher

would often unleash on the children. What parents and stakeholders seem to forget is that when children are exposed to difficult life events at school, they get distracted from learning. Even when their learning is not disrupted, such children may not take in what the teacher is working hard to provide. According to Zins et al. (2004), schools must make every effort to make children feel cared for, welcomed and valued for them to learn.

The implication of this finding is that no matter the school type that the child attends chances that the child will be exposed to adequate SEC skill development is low. This shows that most pre-school children are not likely to exercise self-control, self-management, handle depression and frustrations, listen and communicate well, appreciate other person's differences, be tolerant to one another and learn different aspects of courtesy. On the other hand, it has been documented that children who are socially and emotionally well-adjusted do better at school and have increased chances of having good relationships, confidence, take on and persist at challenging tasks and also communicate well. From the findings of this study, it is obvious that Kenyan pre-school children are likely to exhibit challenges in key areas of life and are more likely to experience difficulties within the classroom. This could further affect their abilities to develop normal peer relationships and to behave in ways conducive to learning. As a consequence, such children are less likely to be socially and academically prepared for school (Weare & Nind, 2013).

Young children require healthy social emotional development in order to be prepared to learn once they enter school. This requires not only caring and supportive teachers but also conducive environments. However, from observation, only one of the private pre-schools had an environment that could contribute to the development of SEC skills in children. This included facilities where children could play different types of games

that involved role taking, decision making, regulation of emotions and self-control in case one lost the game and also, the ability of the student to report any breaking of the game rules by one of the pupils during play. This finding corroborates that of Ssentanda and Nakayiza (2015) who found out those most private pre-school centres in Uganda were equipped with adequate playing and learning materials as compared to the public schools.

However, to believe that all private pre-schools are well endowed with facilities that would enhance overall growth and development in children is a fallacy. As private schools become ubiquitous in many countries, Kenya included, they come with many problems. Most of them are established without proper policy guidelines and were business entities more concerned with profit rather than children's welfare. However, it should be noted that private pre-schools are with us to stay (Ngware, Hungi, Mahuro, Mutisya, & Abuya, 2016). What is needed, is effective policy guidelines to manage the operations of private pre-schools. Coupled with policy guidelines, quality assurance personnel must regularly and frequently enforce these guidelines by either closing down or deregistering pre-schools that fail to meet the standards.

The current study found that although private pre-schools provided children with snacks unlike the public pre-schools, the snacks were not prepared under very hygienic conditions. In one school, the children were given half a cup of porridge and their call for more ignored. The growing needs of children at this age require that they are given a balanced diet which is also enough. Given the relationship between all aspects of development, children's diet needs can be one of the important focus of the quality assurance personnel.

Kitsao-Wekulo and Hungi (2016) asserts that apart from having few trained teachers, the early childhood education development sector in Kenya, especially the public pre-schools, receives little financial support from the government to be able to have adequate resources to equip the learning environment of the children. Meanwhile, the increased enrolment in public pre-schools has resulted in a drop in the quality of instruction, and this points that the ability of the teachers in the public schools to handle SEC development apart from the academics is quite overwhelming.

According to Neuman et al. (2015), ECD centres with poor working conditions such as those characterized by limited resources, as in this case, and long working hours may have a harder time attracting and retaining qualified teachers, which in turn result in high staff turnover. Turnover rates are also linked to poor remuneration in Kenya (Ngure, 2014). Staff turnover in pre-schools has been reported to be high as 40% in developing countries, (Kenya included) creating inefficiencies in the education system as training staff becomes a costly, "revolving door" (Hein & Cassirer, 2010). More importantly, this instability may have a negative effect on ECDE quality by disrupting trusted relationships formed between teachers and children.

Kitsao-Wekulo and Hungi (2016) further state that pre-school characterized by inadequate play and learning materials do not support children's SEC development. They cite the *Tayari* programme that was aimed at developing a tested, cost-effective, affordable and scalable model for ensuring that pre-school children are cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally prepared for primary school. The Tayari programme concluded that most of the pre-school children in Kenya are not adequately prepared to join primary school (Kitsao-Wekulo & Hungi, 2016).

Unlike in Kenya and many other nations, Chinese Early Childhood Education (ECE) practitioners view social-emotional competence as a valued dimension of young children's school readiness (Yang, Chen & Wang, 2014). Data collected from several cities in North-eastern China reveal that Chinese pre-school and early elementary teachers consider socio-emotional development the most important or one of the most important aspects of school readiness (Ren, Knoche, & Edwards, 2016; Yang et al., 2014). The survey conducted by Ren et al. (2016) found that early elementary teachers rated cognition and general knowledge as the least important set of skills for children's adjustment and learning in pre-school. They therefore concluded that most of the children who were socially-emotionally competent were prepared to function well in primary school. However, results from this study are contrary to these results. In Eldoret, cognitive development is highly rated by pre-school teachers. The type of school a child attends is therefore, only a predictor of the academic achievement.

Sadly, parents in most cases do not consider socio-emotional development of their children while choosing schools for them (Oyier, Odundo, Obat, Khavugwi, & Akondo, 2015). There is therefore need to create awareness in parents and guardians on the existing standard service guidelines on the provision of pre-schools programs and services. It is very likely that many parents and guardians are not aware of the existence of these guidelines. Secondly, just like with economic principles, with appropriate and adequate knowledge of children's growth and development, parents and guardians should control the demand for pre-school institutions. As it were, the pre-schools presently control the forces of demand.

4.3.5 Relationship between Pre-School Class Size and the Strategies Pre-School Teachers Used to Scaffold SEC

The fifth hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between the pre-school class size and the strategies pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components: Self-management, Self-awareness, Social awareness and Relationship management in children. To test this hypothesis the participants were asked to indicate their pre-school class size on the Biographical Form which was used in data collection. The participants were also asked to respond to the 40 items in the SEC questionnaire and their responses were scored and the mean scores calculated and reported in Table 4.8

Table 4.8: Mean SEC Components Scores by Class Size

	Class sizes								
	Low			Optimum			High		
Socio-emotional components	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
Self-management	301	39.5	4.35	301	40.1	5.57	301	38.6	4.92
Self-awareness	301	34.1	5.27	301	33.26	5.17	301	34.08	5.17
Social awareness	301	41.7	4.21	301	41.8	4.52	301	41.24	4.53
Relationship management	301	43.57	3.25	301	43.1	4.74	301	43.6	38.5

To test the effect of pre-school class sizes on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold each of the four SEC Components, a one-way ANOVA was conducted using the SPSS program. The results of the analyses showed that there was no significant effect of pre-school class sizes on the strategies that pre-school teacher use to scaffold the four SEC components in children: Self-management $F(2, 298) = 1.514$, p=.222; Self-awareness $F(2, 298) = .242$, $p = .785$; Social awareness $F(2, 298) = .242$, $p = .664$; Relationship management $F(2, 298)$, $p = .664$. These findings indicate that the size of class does not have a significant effect on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold the four SEC components in pre-school children. Table 4.9 shows the summary of ANOVA for the relationship between preschool class sizes and SEC components.

Table 4.9 ANOVA Summary for the Relationship between Preschool Class Sizes and SEC Components

SEC COMPONENT	Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
Self –management	Between	1.118	2	.559	1.514	.900
	Within	1580.403	298	5.303		
	Total	1581.522	300			
Self-awareness	Between	.634	2	.103	.242	.785
	Within	83.173	298	.281		
	Total	83.807	300			
Social awareness	Between	.067	2	.034	.242	.867
	Within	70.491	298	.237		
	Total	70.558	300			
Relationship management	Between	4.667	2	2.3398	.242	.664
	Within	1885.389	298	6.327		
	Total	1890.066	300			

SS= Sum of squares; df=degrees of freedom; MS=mean squares

Plausible explanations can be given for the existence of large class size which contradicts the global UNESCO recommendations for the teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15. First, in Kenya, pre-schools whether public or private are supposed to be self-sustaining and therefore must meet their own operational costs. With the free primary education (FPE) in Kenya primary schools no longer charge parents any form of levy. However, most public pre-schools are attached to the primary school and are managed by a committee selected by parents. These committees are responsible for paying the teachers, the care takers as well as ensuring that the children are given snacks, either tea, porridge. For this reason, public pre-schools charge a small fee and therefore rely on the number of children to make enough money to be operational. This is the same case with private pre-schools which like the public must meet operation costs. Most of these pre-schools therefore rely on advertisements, referrals or strategic campaigns to get enough number of children that can make them break even.

Secondly, the small number of public pre-schools cannot meet the needs of parents. In the study area, records from the county education office showed that there were only 43 public against 117 private registered pre-schools (Uasin Gishu County Office, 2015).

Even for countries like Kenya that offers free primary education, the demand for low-fee private pre-schools is rising. This is because parents often feel that public pre-schools with their large class sizes may not be the best for their children. As observed by Heyneman (2015), private schools, therefore, are becoming more common around the globe. For instance, in 2000, private schools accounted for 16% of the total number of schools. This increased to 20% in 2009, and currently the number may have doubled.

Thirdly, a large pre-school class is a matter of choice. Although some parents prefer private pre-schools; others simply prefer public pre-schools. Those who prefer private pre-schools cite overcrowding, poor individual attention, lack of security, as well as social amenities that characterize public pre-schools (Heyneman, 2015). Similarly, some parents prefer public pre-schools because they perceive that large class sizes offer their children the right competition that would propel them to excel academically. Some of the public pre-schools also enjoy large class sizes because they are within the estates and are therefore accessible to more children, charge less fees, have low teacher turn overs, or simply because parents have had experience with them with previous children.

The current study found that the average class size in the respondents' school was 25.53±10.21. This shows that the highest number of children recorded in the classroom was 35 pupils. The recommended teacher to pupil ratio is 1:15 (UNESCO, 2013). In this study, the number of children per teacher was twice that of the recommended number. Studies by Duflo, Dupas, and Kremer (2016); Mutindi, Chepngeno, and Jeruto (2016) among public and private schools from Western Kenya and Kericho respectively showed that even though the FPE increased access to universal education for young children, it compromised the quality of education in the teaching centres. The study found out that most of the classrooms were crowded and lacked proper infrastructure

such as desks and other teaching materials. A similar study in China found out that high teacher to pupil ratio decreases the amount of interaction between the teacher and the children and therefore the child may not be able to develop SEC skills that they may be lacking (Neuman et al., 2015).

Large class sizes have been found to have negative implications on children's overall achievement (Ehrenberg et al., 2001; Laezear, 2001; Whitehurst & Chingos, 2011). Because of bidirectional relationship that characterises the mesosystem, pre-schoolteachers and children in low class sizes are likely to influence each other's SEC positively. As observed by Ready and Lee (2007), pre-school teachers in small pre-school classrooms have better potential to experience fewer disruptions and discipline problems from the children. With small class sizes, pre-school teachers are able to know the children well to be able to predict their behaviour and instruct each one of them appropriately (Tienken & Achilles, 2006). Many parents prefer small class size for their children.

A study by Ngware et al. (2016) found that 73% of parents in Uganda were dissatisfied with the quality of education in both public and private schools because of high class sizes. The same scenario could be the case in the Kenyan ECED centres. Early childhood development centres with high teacher to pupil ratio are likely to engage more in large group activities. The implication of this is that children with difficulty regulating aspects such as attention may be less able to be engaged and participate in learning activities compared to their peers with better attention regulation skills especially in large groups. This could also imply that children's SEC skill development will be minimal (Wang, 2013) as children likely to have SEC deficits are most likely to be neglected in big class sizes (Ren et al., 2016).

According to Ngure (2014), early childhood education has, for a long time, been at the periphery of the education programming in Kenya. It was formerly considered as social rather than an education activity. There are no specific budget allocations for ECE, except for school inspection and minimal amounts for teacher training. Parents and the community, therefore, have to provide learning facilities and materials, somehow take care of the teacher, and generally run the programme. All these factors have serious implications for the class size and consequently, the cognitive and SEC development of the child at this foundational level. Weare & Nind (2013) assert that the development of SEC skills is best done through effective classroom instruction, student engagement in positive activities in and out of the classroom, and broad parent and community involvement in program planning, implementation, and evaluation. Given such revelation, the study found that effective classroom instruction that includes SEC could not be achieved because of the number of children in the classes and lack of adequate instructional and teaching materials.

To furthermore compound the challenge of class size, it has been documented that most of the pre-school centres in Kenya do not give proper incentives and remuneration to the teachers. This means that apart from the heavy work load because of the high number of children in the classrooms, pre-school teachers are not able to further develop the SEC skills whether in class or outside the classroom setting. According to Ngure (2014) pre-school centres in Kenya employ teachers on a low remuneration package where sixty out of 80 teachers agreed that the salary payment was irregular and unpredictable. In Ngure's study, the problem of low and irregular salaries was voted by 72 (90%) out of 80 teachers as a cause that discouraged them in the profession. This shows that provision of quality education in pre-school goes beyond proper

infrastructure and adequate materials but most importantly, the motivation of teachers to enable them deliver efficiently.

Observation and interview data confirmed the quantitative findings. The class size did not determine the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC in children. For example, for self-management, regardless of the class size, pre-school teachers interviewed explained that they used strategies such as 'discipline' to instill self-management in children (see Appendix IX). Specific strategies under discipline included: the use of school rules, warning and threats'. During observation, the use of 'instruction' as a strategy stood out (see Appendix X). These were mainly used to enforce self-management competence in children, regardless of the class size. Teachers gave both verbal and non-verbal instruction on almost every activity.

From both qualitative and quantitative data, it can therefore be concluded that most of the pre-school teachers whether in low, medium or high class sizes did not intentionally engage children in activities that would help them develop SEC skills. For example, children were rarely encouraged to take turns or work with each other. This finding corroborate a recent study in Kenya which revealed that pre-school teachers devoted very little time (less than 30% of the lesson time) to individual children or group work where children are likely to take turns (Kitaso-Wekulo & Hungi, 2016). According to Kitsao-Wekulo & Hungi, teachers hardly engaged in actions that would encourage learners to work cooperatively. This comes in the recent wake to improve teaching quality in early childhood classrooms. For instance, in the United States pre-school programs with small classes with no more than 20 children and reasonable staff-pupil ratios (less than 1:10) was found to produce strong short and long term educational gains for their children (Barnett, 2003; Barret, 2011).

4.3.6 Relationship between Pre-School Children's Developmental Level and the Strategies Pre-School Teachers Used to Scaffold Socio-emotional Competence

The sixth hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between pre-school children's developmental levels and the strategies that the teachers used to scaffold SEC components: Self-management, Self-awareness, Social awareness and Relationship management in children. To test this hypothesis the participants were asked to indicate the developmental level of the pre-school children that they taught on the Biographical Form and to respond to the 40 items in the SEC questionnaire. Their responses were scored and the mean scores calculated and reported in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Mean SEC Component Scores by Children's Developmental Levels

SEC Components	Children's Developmental Levels								
	Baby class			Middle class			Top class		
	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
Self-management	98	39.4	5.17	102	40.2	5.58	101	39.9	5.23
Self-awareness	98	33.2	5.35	102	34.0	4.8	101	33.2	5.30
Social awareness	98	41.6	4.63	102	41.7	4.5	101	41.7	4.30
Relationship management	98	42.8	4.51	102	43.4	4.67	101	13.4	4.13

To test the effect of pre-school children's developmental levels on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold each of the four SEC Components, a one-way ANOVA was conducted**.** The results of the analyses showed that there was no significant effect of pre-school children's developmental levels on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold the four SEC components in children: Self-management $F(2, 298) = .570$, $p = .566$; Self-awareness $F(2, 298) = .761$, $p = .468$; Social awareness $F(2, 298) = .031$, $p = .969$; Relationship management $F(2, 298) = .570$, $p = .566$. These findings indicate that the children's developmental levels did not have a statistically significant effect on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to

scaffold the four SEC components in pre-school children. Table 4.11 is ANOVA summary for relationship between children's developmental levels and SEC components

Table 4.11: ANOVA Summary for Relationship between Children's Developmental Levels and SEC Components

SEC COMPONENT	Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
Self -management	Between	9.010	2	4.505	.570	.566
	Within	1572.512	298	5.277		
	Total	1581.522	300			
Self-awareness	Between	.846	2	.423	.761	.468
	Within	82.961	298	.278		
	Total	83.807	300			
Social awareness	Between	.095	2	.048	.031	.969
	Within	70.463	298	.236		
	Total	70.558	300			
Relationship management	Between	10.228	2	5.114	.570	.566
	Within	1879.839	298	6.308		
	Total	1890.066	300			

SS=sum of squares; df=degrees of freedom; MS=mean squares

From the interviews with the pre-schoolteachers, the study findings revealed that the same teachers taught children from their first to final year in pre-school (baby to top class). With such an arrangement, all pre-school teachers had an opportunity to have the same group of children from their first to their third and last year in pre-school. Therefore, no teacher specialized with a particular developmental level of children. This is referred to in elementary education as looping (Haines, 2006). In looping, a pre-school teacher moves with her class from the first to the last grade. Looping according to Haines, improves relationship between the children and the teacher. This is because the teacher has an opportunity to know the children well, know what their interests are as well as their personalities (Minkel, 2015). This was proved true in the public pre-schools where the teacher turnover was lower and looping was encouraged. The pre-school teachers even knew how best the children learned and enjoyed a close relationship with most of the parents. Teachers who looped therefore did not apply

undue pressure on the children. According to the teachers orienting children to school is a challenging task and once children had been taught basic skills, it was convenient for the teachers handling them at the next level.

However, looping also has its own disadvantages. For example, a teacher not endowed with SEC skills was likely not to scaffold any of these skills in children for the next three years for pre-schools where the three-year cycle was mandatory. Other teachers interviewed who were against looping explained that learning standards and curricula for two or three consecutive years was challenging. The teachers also feared getting 'stuck' with pre-school classrooms that had behavioural issues. Some even claimed that it was boring to handle the same children for the next three years and likened it to caring for own children without a break. Such children would therefore be incompetent as far as SEC skills are concerned.

Given that early years are important periods of learning for children, pre-school children taught by teachers who do not intentionally scaffold SEC or who are not aware of these skills are likely to miss out on important learning aspects that would be of benefit to them in future (Baron, 2006; Heckman, 2000; Huang, 2014). Pre-school years should not be compromised for whichever reason. Teachers should be competent so that the children can also benefit; where they are not, professional training and in-service courses should be encouraged. This therefore calls for professional supervision as well as professional development for the pre-schoolteachers as advanced by Bronson (2000).

According to Public Impact (2012), some child experts even advocate for specialization in specific subject areas for pre-school children, if the children have to reap maximum benefits from their pre-school years. Such experts argue that subject specialization

enables excellent teachers to produce excellent results by directing all their energy totheir areas of gifting. Others child experts however argue that there are benefits of teaching multiple subjects to children (Minkel, 2015).

The fact that there was no relationship between children's developmental levels and the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC could also be explained by extraneous and compounding variables such as the teacher's level of experience and the teacher's individual ability to scaffold the aforementioned SEC skills. Studies have documented a significant relationship between SEC skill development and the parenting type, and the involvement of the parents in the SEC development of their young children (Ashdown & Benard, 2011).

The home, as part of the microsystem, is the first and the basic environment where children can be helped to develop SEC skills before they reach school going age. Research acknowledges the synergy between the home background of the child and academic and SEC skills acquisition. Children who come to school with poor social skills, regardless of their levels of development often encounter relationship issues with classmates, which affect their overall well-being and obviously, their academic achievement. Furthermore, parents play a central role in the SEC development of their children as they initiate and act as a bridge between the home and the school learning environment, which is very important for pupil's development in SEC.

According to Bufalino (2013) having parents, teaching staff and pupils with a common understanding and expectation of the SEC strategies that can be put in place in order to address conflicts would be beneficial to all. Hence, the entire school community would then be on the "same page" in enhancing the social well- being, academic achievement and the school community relationship. This points out the importance of creating and

maintaining connections and relationships between the school community and home, that is, appreciating the influence of the macrosystem on the child's SEC.

It is assumed that the pre-school children in this study came from different cultures, socio-economic backgrounds, communities and family structures because the area from which they were sampled was cosmopolitan. This could have an implication on the acquisition of the SEC skills because of these variables. For example, it has been documented that children who grow up in poverty are more likely to become resilient, form social connections easily and also make friends unlike children from better socio-economic backgrounds who never lacked most of the basic needs in their home (Ngaruiya et al., 2013). Conversely, Parents with greater education and wealth are assumed to provide more cognitive and positive socio-emotional stimulation of their young children than parents with less education and fewer economic resources (Blair& Cybele, 2012; Hackman & Farah, 2009).

Even though there are no specific SEC skills curriculums in Kenya, Garner et al. (2014) recommends that SEC programs in pre-school should include culturally sensitive content and materials and attend to the contextual factors that impact children's social and emotional behaviours in school. This implies that for each developmental level, knowledgeable pre-school teachers are expected to apply different strategies to meet children's growing socio-emotional needs. According to Mumme, Bushnell, DiCorcia, and Larvierre (2007), infants begin by familiarizing themselves with unfamiliar people by relying on another person's emotional reaction to a specific situation. Similarly, at the beginning of school; as pre-schoolchildren familiarize themselves with their new environment, they are likely to begin to evaluate the socio-emotional meaning of their teachers and peers by assessing other children's reactions to certain classroom situations.

With time the pre-school children are able to evaluate and understand the teachers' emotional reactions especially when the tone of voice is combined with facial expression (Mumme et al., 2007). By the end of pre-school years it is expected that even without turning towards the pre-school teacher, the children are able to understand what the teacher's voice is expected to convey (Feldman, 2014). This is because recall memory and language is likely to improve as children interact with their teachers. This is what is referred to as social referencing (Berke, 2013).

Each pre-school year, as children grow and develop, it is expected that a normal child's SEC improves as the child learns to refer to 'causes, consequences, and behavioural signs of emotions' as a result of classroom interactions (Feldman, 2014, p. 415). As observed by Mumme et al. (2007), the children's ability to predict actions of peers increase, they are able to appreciate the connectedness of feelings and actions, and can strategize on ways of relieving other's sadness by hugging or helping a child who has fallen down to stand up again. This was evident in this study especially with the 'top class' children who were quick to help each other, without the teachers' prompting, a sign that they understood each other's feelings quickly and accurately.

The limitation of the current study, however, is that data on children's socio-economic background and also observed behaviour of the children by their parents at home was not collected. However, it can be generally agreed that children from different backgrounds, and not necessarily their age, have different levels of reception to the SEC skills development.

Another compounding factor that could explain lack of association between strategies of scaffolding SEC and children's developmental levels is the gender of the children. Children of different gender respond differently to SEC and emotions in general. For

example, girls are more likely to respond and regulate their emotions than boys even though this could vary with age, presence of peers, relation factors such as friendship quality and the type of emotion. Boys are not likely to recognize their emotions and learn the consequences of the emotions as girls would do (Neumann et al., 2015). Therefore, this becomes quite difficult for the teachers to acknowledge the differences that exist between the genders and to create an enabling environment that supports and appreciates both.

The ethnicity and culture of the children could also have brought about this result. Children from the study area came from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. For example, in Kenya, a study by Dixon, Edward, Constance, & Berry (1981) found that in rural villages of Kenya, Gusii mothers avoided eye contact with their infants and young children because of the traditional beliefs that the direct gaze can be overly dangerous. These mothers rarely directed affectionate or social behaviours to their children. In the study, while the Gusii mothers were quick to protect and comfort their children, they tended to respond with touch and rarely with language. Furthermore, SEC scaffolding in the children was rarely observed. However, as the children grew older, parents spoke to them more often, but frequently used commands to direct the children to do something rather than using language to elaborate on the children's interest (Dixon et al., 1981). Other studies have also demonstrated that culture and the child's background determines the ways in which the community, family and the parents scaffold SEC skills to them (Bornstein & Putrick, 2012). With such a background and coupled with the fact that the pre-school teachers' backgrounds were also diverse, the results of this study are understandable.

The observation data indicates that most of the times, pre-schoolteachers encouraged children in their class to express feelings appropriately regardless of their levels of

development. This was stated by 72.8%(219) of the teachers who participated in this study. The other 24%(72) did not encourage children in their class to express feelings appropriately. Teachers did not exclude children who could not complete tasks in good time from other free time activities. This was according to 91.7%(276) of the respondents. However, 6.3%(19) exclude slow children from other activities. As shown in Table 4.6, majority (98.3%) of the respondents encouraged children to learn to wait for their turn whereas 1.4%(4) disagreed. It is also shown that 91%(274) of the teachers who participated in this study encourage their children to appreciate individual differences. Only 6.3%(19) of the respondents did not encourage their children to appreciate individual differences.

When asked about the strategies they used to scaffold SEC amongst the children, all the six pre-school teachers who taught children at different developmental levels were unanimous that it was important for the children to learn to follow routines and those who did not were given correctional measures. The researcher asked for examples of those correctional measures, and the responses were: correct children by talking to them (3) deny children privileges (3) warn children (2), cane children lightly (2), threaten children (2), and call out children's names (2).

Lansford, Wager, Bates, Dodge, & Pettit (2012) observed that African American and European American mothers used the same order of strategies when disciplining children: applying reasoning, yelling, denying privileges and frequently spanking. The findings of Lansford et al. are almost in tandem with that of the current study. In the current study, although the pre-school teachers did not use the term 'yelling', they actually yelled most of the time as they warned and threatened children with looming consequences of their actions.

In one of the private pre-schools, however, the children were made to ‘draw essential agreements’. This meant that every morning the teacher took some time to agree with the children on the expected conducts during the day. These were part of the strategies that the teachers used to scaffold social awareness in children to avoid interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts. Apart from essential agreement as a strategy, there were no significant differences in the strategies used to scaffold SEC amongst children in the three developmental levels. This was consistent with the quantitative results that showed no significant relationship between children’s levels and all the subscales of the SEC.

4.3.7 The Strategies Used by Pre-School Teachers to Scaffold Socio-Emotional Competence in Children

From the objective ‘to identify the strategies used by pre-school teachers to scaffold SEC in children, the ensuing research question was derived: What strategies do pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children? To answer this research question, the researcher generated observation and interview data. Observation results are presented in this section followed by interview results.

According to the Bioecological theory that guided this study, one’s development is a function of her biological self as well as the environment. This suggests that the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC in children were determined by teacher, the child and the environment in which they interacted. Therefore, because the children, the pre-school teachers and the pre-schools, are part of the microsystem, observing the strategies that pre-school teachers used in the classroom environment and interviewing the pre-school teachers was important in this study.

Observation data revealed that just as children were different, pre-school teachers were also different and pre-schools environments not the same in Eldoret town, Kenya. Apart from different backgrounds, children differed in other areas such as: gender, age, parental level of education, upbringing, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The same applied to the pre-school teachers who varied in many aspects including training, experience, and gender. The school environments also differed widely. Some public pre-schools had good amenities and could pass for private pre-schools. Likewise, some private pre-schools were so deprived that at some point the researcher wondered what actually motivated parents to send their children to the schools. All these differences influenced the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC in children.

Studies have shown that quality early learning environments are important for lifelong success (Barnett, 2003; Blair & Cybele, 2012; Konstantina, 2014). Brain research for example has revealed that nurturing environments are important during the critical periods of development (Rushton & Larkin, 2001). Teaching pre-school children in old dilapidated buildings; exposing them to congested classrooms with no windows and with broken chairs is not part of a nurturing environment that would stimulate their brain growth and development positively.

Social comparison dominates children's behaviour and is well developed by the time children are in pre-school (Berke, 2013; Feldman, 2014). During observation, this was evident as children frequently compared their work, snacks and even clothing with each other. It can therefore be deduced that children most likely compare their pre-school environments and teachers with each other. Children from schools with poor social amenities would feel deprived and suffer from low self-esteem. Children with low self-esteem are likely to remain enmeshed in a cycle of failure which may be difficult to break in future. Conversely, children with high self-esteem are more likely to fall in a

cycle of success because having higher expectations may lead to increased effort and lower anxiety which may increase one's prospects of achievement (Feldman, 2014).

The observation data on self-management strategy revealed that pre-school teachers advertently or inadvertently used some strategies more frequently than others. The study also identified specific strategies used for specific SEC competencies. The findings for the SEC strategies beginning with the self-management strategies that pre-school teachers use are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Pre-school teachers' strategies for SEC

STRATEGIES	CODES	% FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCES		DATA LOCATOR/IDENTIFIER (From table of interview transcripts; see Appendix IX)	
		PRIVATE PRE-SCHOOL	PUBLIC PRERSCHOOL	PRIVATE PRE-SCHOOL	PUBLIC PRE-SCHOOL
SELF MANAGEMENT	1. Monitoring (e.g. instruction giving, warning)	72	87	5,6,15	7,6,18
	2. Use of non-verbal cues (breaks, time outs)	20	16	5, 36, 38	29, 39, 49
SELF AWARENESS	1. Appreciation	20	28	6, 15, 26	1, 33, 53
	2. Task taking	9	-	13, 35	-
	3. Free to express	20	33	10, 17, 27	19, 30, 55
	4. Let be	31	43	1, 36, 48	11, 15, 57
	5. modelling	20	11	1, 5, 19	3, 35, 42
SOCIAL AWARENESS	1.Peer monitoring	22	8	24, 82, 32	7, 41, 42
	2. Empathy	39	31	7, 52, 57	7, 27, 43
	3. Embrace diversity	20	27	5, 59, 27	40, 43, 48
	4. Communication	12	21	17, 24, 45	30, 34, 43
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT	1.Modelling	38	88	5, 15, 23	1, 10, 18
	2. Monitoring	64	76	5, 36, 38	9, 21, 29

4.3.7.1. Strategies for Scaffolding Self-management in Pre-school Children

For self-management, the research study identified verbal and non-verbal strategies that pre-school teachers used. Although effective communication can be achieved by use of verbal and nonverbal strategies, in children, studies show that girls receive more verbal stimulation from pre-school years that makes them more proficient in language (Peterson & Robert, 2003). Nonverbal communication is also important in that it confirms the existence of relationship between people and relationships are important for SEC development (Wentzel, 1997).

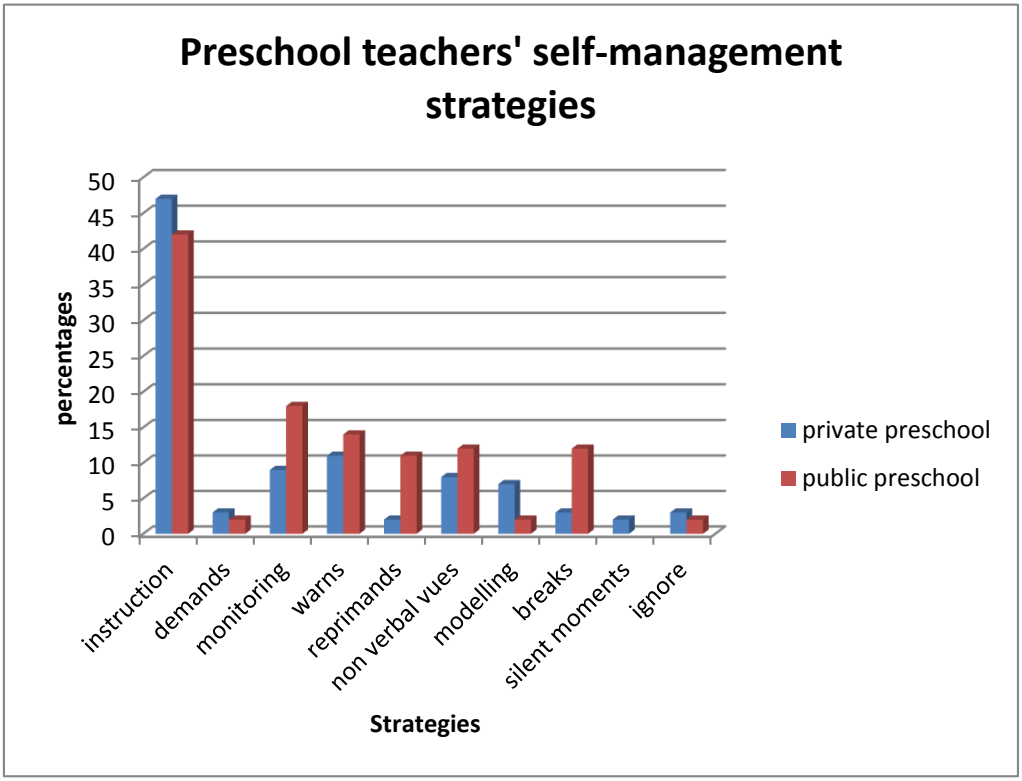

Figure 4.1: Strategies of scaffolding self-management competence

In this study, non-verbal strategies were categorized into two: monitoring and the use of non-verbal cues. The strategies observed under monitoring included strategies such as:'warning', 'reprimands', 'modelling', 'breaks' while those under non-verbal cues included: 'Silent moments', and 'ignoring'. The study findings revealed that the frequency of use of these strategies differed from one environment to another; that is

from public to private pre-schools (Appendix X). This is presented in Figure 4.1. On the average both private and public pre-school teachers relied on the use of ‘instruction’ as a strategy to scaffold self-management skills in children. However, some differences were observed; in the private pre-school, for example, the private pre-school teacher used ‘instruction’ (47%) and ‘modelling’ (12%) to scaffold self-management competence in children. Comparatively, the public pre-school teacher used ‘instruction’ (42%), ‘monitoring’ (18%), ‘warning’ (14%) and ‘breaks’ (12%). An example of ‘helping behaviour’ was observed when the private pre-school teacher went out of her way to give a chair to a child who did not have one. For the public pre-school teacher, the use of ‘non-verbal cues’ was seen when she gave a child a negative look which effectively communicated her expectation. Quickly, the child complied by handing over a hat that was not part of the school uniform to the teacher.

From the study findings it can be concluded that regardless of the type of school, pre-school teachers used both verbal and non-verbal strategies to scaffold self-management in children. The environment and the context were important in determining the strategies that were used. The use of instruction as a strategy of scaffolding self-management in children is important because at pre-school, children’s social speech grows remarkably (Feldman, 2014). As observed by research, at pre-school due to brain development, children are able to express themselves to others, listen to others, and are able to take into account what others are telling them (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Kam et al., 2004; Wentzel, 1997).

4.3.7.2 Strategies for Scaffolding Self- awareness in Pre-school Children

The self-awareness strategies were further categorized into six five subthemes: ‘appreciation’, ‘task completion,’, ‘free expression’, ‘let be’, ‘congratulating’ and ‘modelling’. The ‘appreciation’ strategies included: clapping for a child for giving the

right answer, or completing tasks on time or singing the common ‘well done ‘song. ‘Let be’ involved strategies that allowed children to have freedom to do whatever they loved, commonly referred to as ‘free choice activity’.

Observation data on self-awareness showed that in both private and public pre-schools in Eldoret town, allowing children “to be” was the most common strategy of scaffolding self-awareness. In private pre-schools ‘appreciation’ was emphasized and children were often encouraged to congratulate themselves. The least used strategy in both private and public pre-school was ‘urging children to complete tasks’ as is indicated in Figure 4.2.The fact that pre-school teachers did not urge children to complete tasks, whatever the reason was unfortunate. Urging children to complete tasks however difficult is one way of helping them develop resilience. Resilient children are known to evoke positive responses from peers, teachers and other adults. As described by Feldman (2014, p. 258), resilient children tend to be affectionate, easy going and good natured, traits that are very important for their future overall life success. In pre-schools lack of training in resilience could be explained by the high number of children in the classrooms making it difficult for the teachers to give children individual attention. In private pre-schools, however, the researcher concluded that most teachers were cautious not to upset the children and incense the parents.

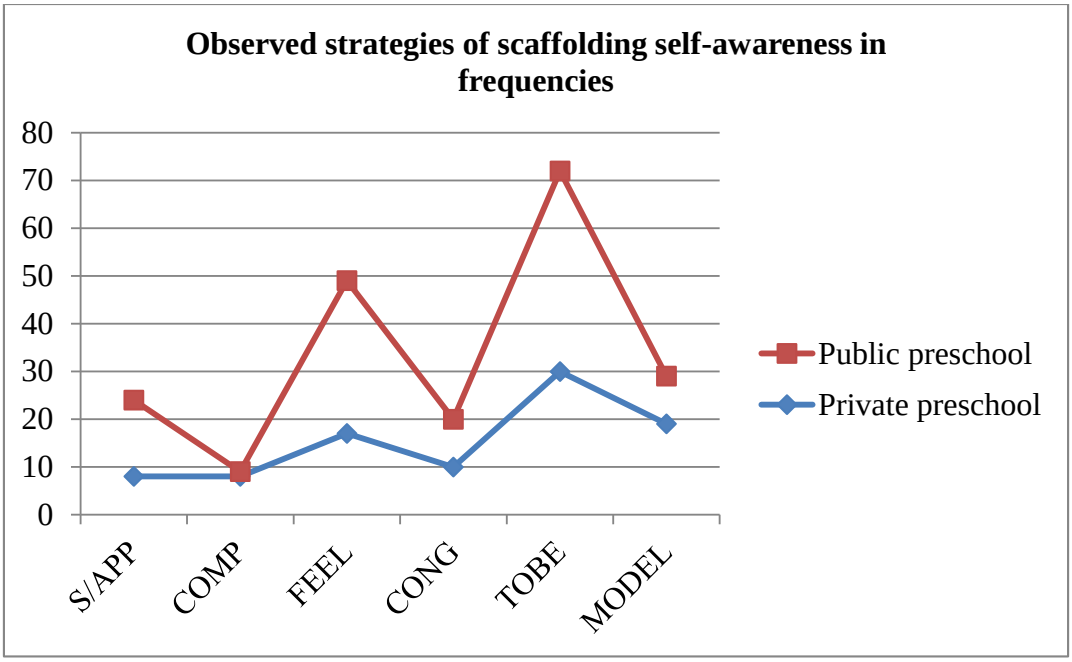

Figure 4.2: Strategies of scaffolding self-awareness competence

4.3.7.3 Strategies for Scaffolding Social- awareness in Pre-school Children

Strategies to scaffold social awareness were categorized into five: 'peer- monitoring', 'empathy', 'embrace diversity', 'communication' and 'turn taking'. Findings from this study reveal that in both pre-school types, teachers scaffolded social awareness in children by encouraging them to display 'caring behaviour' by training children to develop concern for each other, monitor each other and celebrate individual differences amongst other strategies. In public pre-schools, pre-school teachers took time to engage in conversations with the children about different aspects of social awareness. As observed in literature review, having conversations with children is not just important for language development but also helps children's brain development (Boyatzis et al., 1995; Cherniss, 2000; Knudsen, 2004). Interestingly, the least used strategy by pre-school teachers in private and public schools was training children to wait for their turns as illustrated in Figure. 4.3. Learning to wait for turns makes a child be socially well adjusted andvmay prevent the child from being a victim of bullying or being a bully as observed by Lovett and Sheffield (2007). Learning to wait for turns is not easy even for

adults. In banking halls and in hospital clinics it is common to see anxious, restless adults who cannot just sit and wait for their turns. Children often get frustrated when they have to wait, yet from the 'marshmallow test' described in chapter two, it is clear that 'waiting' is an important self-management strategy. It can also be effectively used as a social-awareness strategy. The pre-schoolteachers should intentionally create opportunities where children have to wait for their turn so that they develop patience, self-control, listening and negotiation skills.

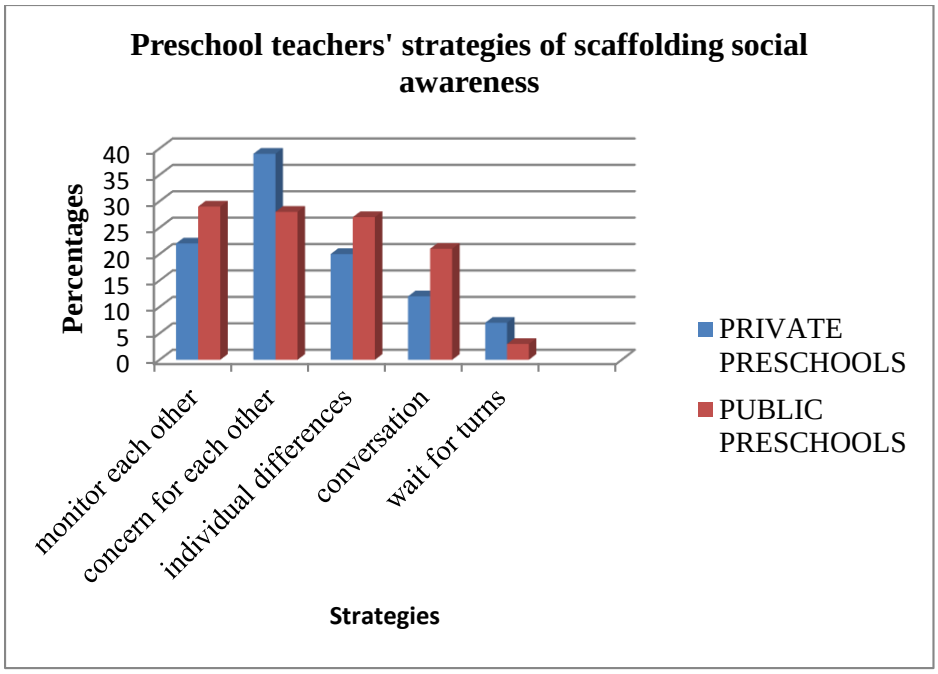

Figure 4.3:Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding social awareness

4.3.7.4 Strategies for Scaffolding Relationship Management in Pre-School Children

Two categories of themes were developed for strategies of scaffolding relationship management: 'modelling' and 'monitoring'. Under 'modelling', strategies such as 'listening' and 'displaying caring behaviour' were observed. For monitoring, strategies observed included: 'settling disputes', 'reprimanding children', and 'warning children'. The findings from observation data show that in private pre-schools, strategies for

scaffolding relationship skills in children were both proactive and reactive. Generally, the most commonly used strategy was ‘warning’, followed by ‘monitoring’ and then ‘listening’ to the children. However, there were some slight differences in the use of strategies depending on the school type. For example, for the public pre-school, the most frequently used strategy to scaffold relationship management was ‘settling disputes’ followed by ‘giving reprimands’. This could possibly be due to the fact that in public pre-schools, the class sizes are relatively large.

A large class size is often characterized by a higher number of behavioural problems (Ready & Lee, 2007). As observed in literature review, large pre-school class sizes make it difficult for teachers to have a one on one interaction with the children which may help them quickly note those with behavioural challenges. Similarly, a pre-school classroom with high behavioural problems is also likely to influence the strategies that the teacher use to scaffold SEC negatively due to bidirectional influences (Vygotsky, 1978).Figure 4.4 gives a summary of strategies used to scaffold relationship management in pre-school children.

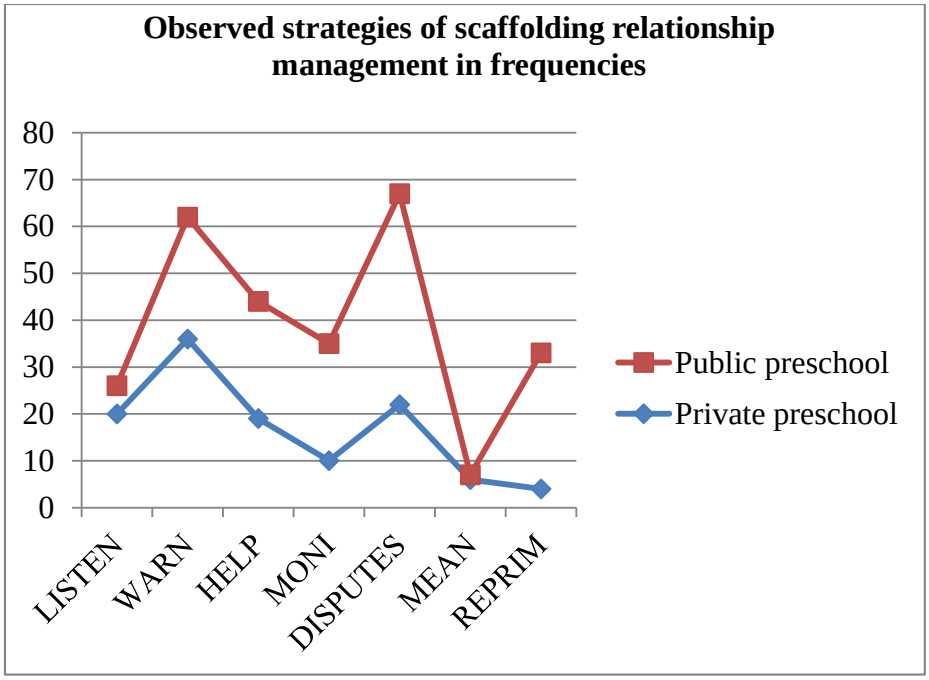

Figure 4.4: Pre-School Teachers' Relationship Management Strategies

From the observation data, it is evident that there are specific strategies that are more frequently used than others. Further, some strategies are used to scaffold more than one competence. The literature reviewed in chapter two identified various researches that have adopted different strategies to help children develop SEC skills especially in the western world. Examples of such strategies include: the use of 'child-development', 'alternative thinking', 'asset building', and specific children interaction as with games and sports (Feldman, 2014; Snyder et al., 2012; Schap & Lewis, 2000; Shanker, 2014). These strategies are interrelated such that one strategy can be used to scaffold more than one competence. For example, 'alternative thinking' approach has been used to help scaffold social management, social awareness and relationship management in children (Shanker, 2014). Equally, children's interaction strategy has been used to help scaffold relationship management as well as self-management in children (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998).

In the current study, it was also observed pre-school teachers used more than one strategy to scaffold different competencies in children. For instance, the pre-school teachers used 'modelling' to scaffold self-management and self-awareness in children. Likewise, they used warning as a strategy to scaffold self-management and relationship management skills in children. On the contrary, specific strategies were used for specific competencies: 'helping behaviour' was used to scaffold relationship management while 'time out' was used as strategy to scaffold self-management in children.

With reference to Bronfenbrenner's theory, strategies that work with children to modify their behaviour differ with context and culture. The pre-school teachers may not use the same strategies although they may have the same goals. Given that pre-school children in the study area came from different cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, schools can adopt a common strategy that works well with all children. For example, the researcher observed that in the public pre-school the teacher scaffolded self-management in children by ignoring them. The pre-school teachers did not attend to all the children's complaints. This could be due to several reasons: in public pre-schools, the study found that most pre-school classrooms had one teacher against 40 children with no teacher assistants. It was therefore difficult for the pre-school teacher to attend to all the needs of the children. This could be seen with how the teacher often admonished children generally without being specific to any one child. Phrases such as: 'who is making noise? (See Extract from observation data, Appendix VIII) were often used without being directed to a specific child.

4.3.7.5 Pre-school Teachers' Interview Responses to Strategies of Scaffolding SEC

An interview schedule was used to confirm data from observation on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC in children in the classrooms. The interview schedule was based on the four predetermined themes: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management (see Appendix VI). The interview questions were common to all interviewees, however, now and again; the researcher would probe into responses that were unanticipated as recommended by Rubin and Babbie (2011). For example, on one account, the pre-school teacher kept on mentioning the fact that she had furthered her education with a view of leaving the profession for better pastures. The researcher's interest was drawn to the fact that the teacher had numerous challenges some of which were socio-emotional as a result of the catchment that provided them with the children. With further probing, the teacher narrated incidences of indiscipline that characterized the school. By being attentive to the pre-school teacher's concerns the researcher felt that the teacher felt better and this encouraged her to respond to the items in the questionnaire better.

The interview data supported the observation data, albeit with slight differences in the use of terminologies. For example, whereas the researcher coded 'reprimand' as a self-management strategy, the pre-school teachers interviewed referred to it as 'discipline'. However, both terms meant the same as both described the strategies teachers used to scaffold self-management in children by monitoring, warning, or giving instruction to the children. Table 4.13is a summary of interview excerpts on strategies pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components.

Table 4.13 Pre-school teachers' interview responses on strategies used to scaffold SEC

VERBATIM QUOTES	CODE CATEGORIES	THEMES	DATA SOURCE/IDENTIFIER
'The children know that immediately they come, they sit and keep themselves busy. Sometimes they talk among themselves, but they know they must not fight or play risky games. They also will report to me any bad or unusual occurrence when I arrive.'	Setting expectations	SELF-MANAGEMENT	Rachel* row 5 line 6-8 (10/4/2016)
'No we don't have, the children must be creative and just manage themselves, though we are always on standby to watch over them and help them.'	Letting children be	SELF AWARENESS	Monicah* row 42 line 1-4 (14/2/2016)
'…I then make a roll call. Children are often keen on each other's whereabouts and I encourage them to do so. Sometimes the children themselves will tell me those who are absent, those who are sick, or even those who have changed school'.	Monitoring	SOCIAL AWARENESS	Rachel* Row 9 line 6-14
Oh yes, we teach them to say 'thank you' or else I withdraw what I have given	Courtesy	RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT	Franscis * row 53 line 5-6 (7/4/2016)

4.3.7.5.1 Interview Data on Strategies to Scaffold Self- Management in Children

From the interview findings, it was apparent that for self-management, pre-school teachers used strategies such as 'monitoring' and 'non-verbal cues'. In monitoring pre-school teachers used specific strategies such as: 'disciplining', 'self-care', 'warning', while the non-verbal cues included: 'modelling for children', 'ignoring', and 'withdrawing favours'. As mentioned in the section with observation data, there are many channels of communication.

The study findings revealed that some schools had unique strategies for scaffolding self-management, for example in one school 'essential agreement' guided children. In others, specific school cultures helped children manage themselves. In yet another school, the culture was such that if a child did something that the others found offensive chants of 'not at all' would rent the air and immediately both the child and the teacher would be made aware that things were not right.

The current study also found that specific teacher characteristics determined strategies used. For example, non-verbal cues were common strategies common with the experienced teachers and this confirms the observation of scholars that experience affects performance (Wang et al., 2016). Communication need not just be verbal. Alternative communication as long as it brings about the exchange of information about desires, needs, wants, perception is equally efficient. Studies have in the past suggested that approximately 93% of effective human communication is non-verbal passes (Mehrabian, 1975). Pre-school teachers need to be aware that non-verbal communication must be understood by the children as it is also culture and context specific. The responses of the interviewees on the strategies used to scaffold self-management are illustrated in Figure 4.5.

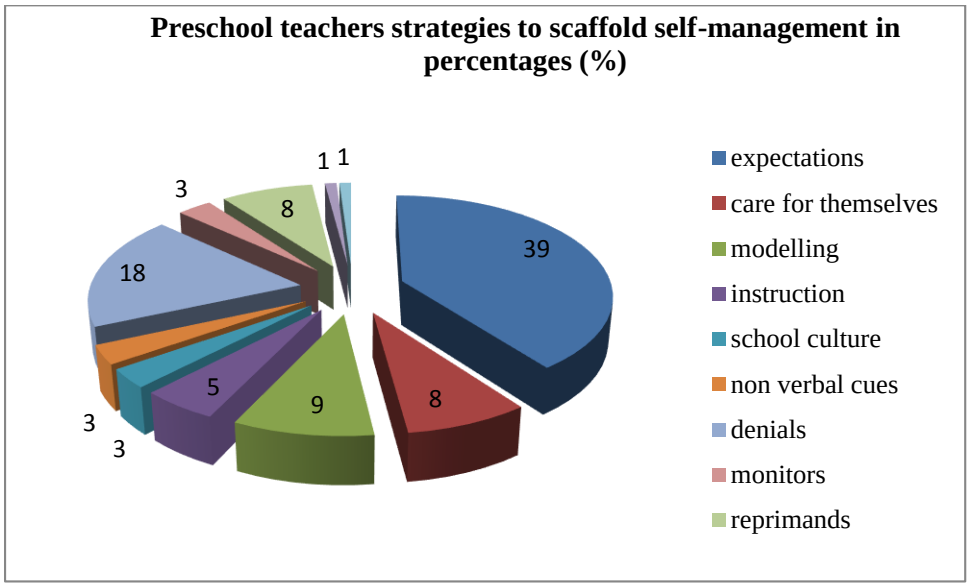

Figure 4.5: Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding self-management

4.3.7.5.2 Interview Data on Strategies to Scaffold Self- Awareness in Children

For self-awareness, pre-school teachers interviewed reported that they used strategies such as: 'self-appreciation' whereby they encouraged children to appreciate themselves; 'modelling' appropriate behaviour to children and encouraging children to 'appreciate each other'. In scaffolding self-appreciation, pre-school teachers in both private and public pre-schools teachers explained that they trained the children in such a way that anytime they answered a correct question, they would stand up and dance to the 'well-done' song that the others would spontaneously sing;

"Well done well done Tonny*! Try again another day".

Other versions were:

'Well done well done, Tonny*, another better, better, you shine like a star' (see Extract from Observation data, Appendix VIII).

Such strategies help to build self-confidence and self-worth in children which is important for their future well-being. As observed by Woolfolk (2013), early views of self and peers are often based on behaviours from the immediate environment. The pre-school child is more likely to develop positive self-awareness if this is what is consistently reflected in pre-school classroom. By encouraging children to know themselves, pre-school teachers help develop in them the ability to refute any false branding from their peers. As observed in chapter two, Ekman (1972) found a relationship between one's self awareness and one's feelings about others. With self-awareness, therefore children develop the ability to understand themselves and others and therefore enjoy a better relationship with their peers and teachers (Harris, 2009). Figure 4.6 gives an illustration of strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold self-awareness in children.

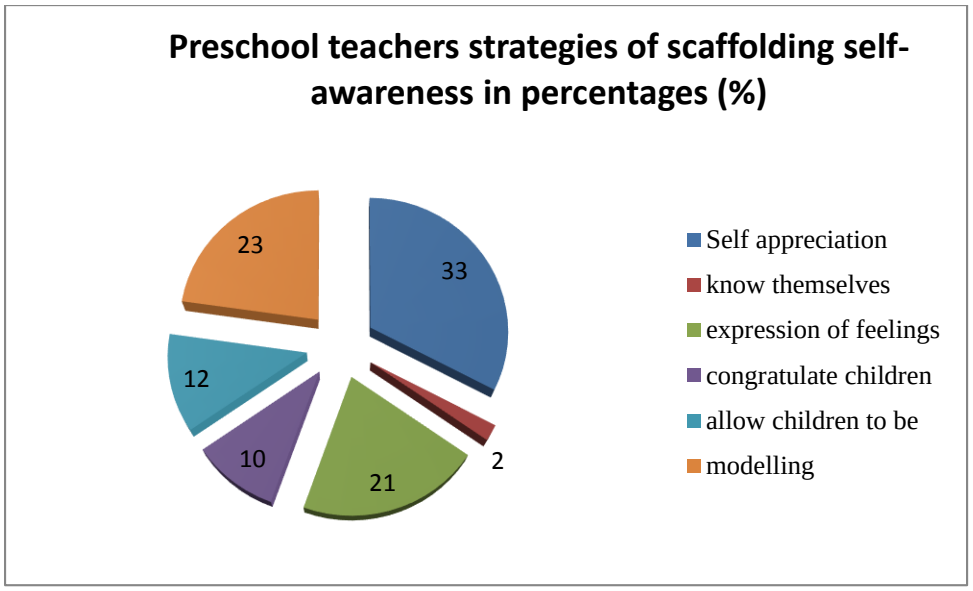

Figure 4.6:Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding self-awareness competence

4.3.7.5.3 Interview Data on Strategies to Scaffold Social-awareness in Children

From interview data, the study found that strategies used by the pre-school teachers to scaffold social awareness included: encouraging children to monitor each other; showing concern to the children; appreciating individual differences; encourage children to use courtesy words, encouraging children to appreciate each other and holding conversation with children. Although scholars have proposed that schools have a curricular that helps children develop social awareness and other skills, most of the teachers reported that schools did not have any specific curricular that was meant to develop any of the aspects of SEC (Cohen, 2006a; Elias & Arnold, 2006). The teacher's creativity determined the strategies that were used to scaffold SEC in children. One such teacher explained that her experience with children along the years has prepared her to deal with children's issues effectively. (Interview with teacher Monicah*, 14th May 2016, row 14, line 2).

The social awareness data revealed that pre-school teachers did a remarkable job of appreciating individual differences. Children in the same classroom were given different work as appropriate to their developmental stage (see data on DAP Appendix XVI). According to the interview findings which were supported by the observation results, this was done in all schools whether private or public. Advocates of Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) demand that pre-school teachers consider the developmental needs of children in their teaching (Ruto-Korir, 2010: Rushton & Larkin, 2001). Each individual child needs to feel challenged but not overwhelmed in the learning process. Figure 4.7 gives an illustration of the strategies pre-school teachers use to scaffold social awareness in children.

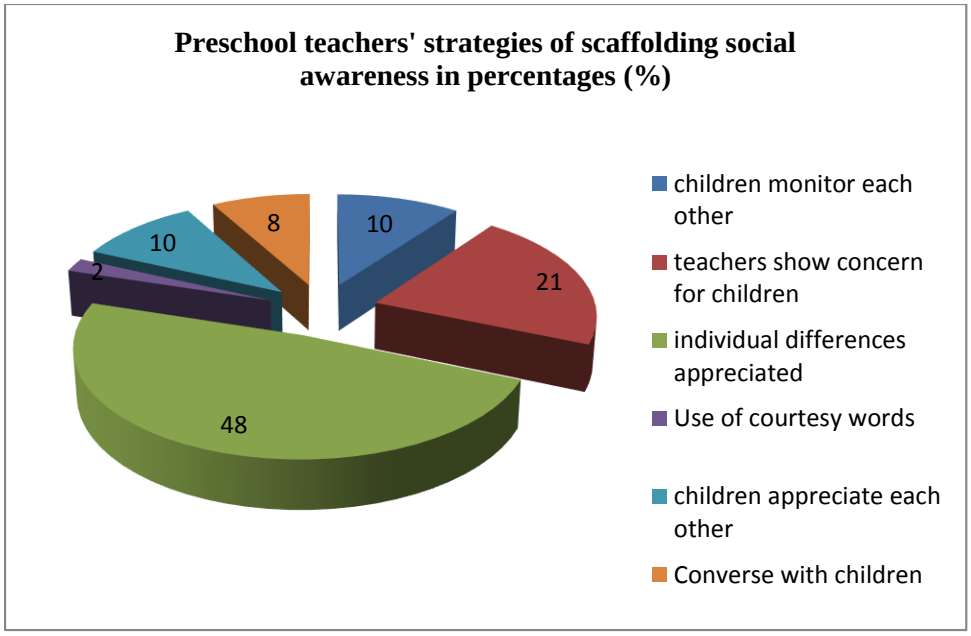

Figure 4.7: Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding social –awareness competence

4.3.7.5.4 Interview Data on Strategies to Scaffold Relationship Management in Children

Interview data on strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold relationship management showed that: listening to children; settling disputes among children; encouraging the use of courteous words in children as well as warning children were some of the commonly used strategies. This is illustrated in Figure 4.8

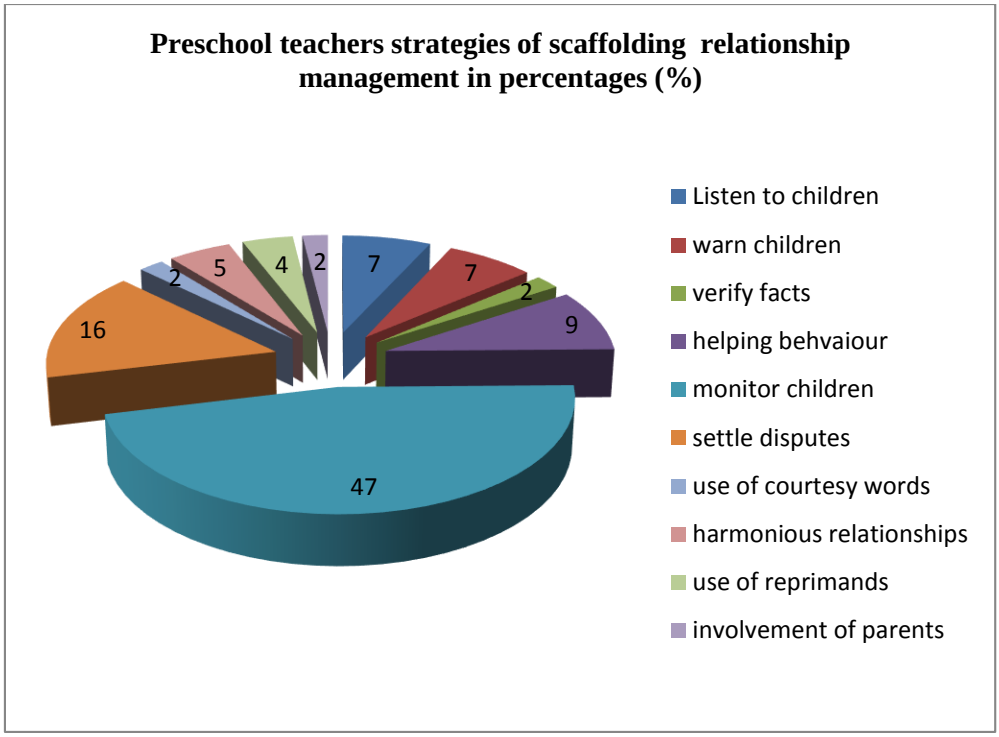

Figure 4.8: Pre-school teachers' strategies of scaffolding relationship management competence

The pre-school teachers explained that it was important for them to monitor the children all the time. "We watch over them so that they do not hurt each other or themselves. Parents are very sensitive and we avoid conflict with them as much as we can" (Interview with teacher Jane*, 16th April, 2016, row 6 line 2).

This means that the teachers tried as much as possible to create and sustain harmony among the students. Given the number of children in the classrooms and the recommended class size, this seemed a huge task for the teachers (UNESCO, 2013, Government of Kenya, 2008). As explained in chapter two, small classrooms allow for close interaction between teachers and the children and student behaviour can be easily addressed.

Pre-schools need to introduce programs that can inject positive relationships between children. If such programs are integrated into a supportive and congruent culture, they

can successfully ensure that children develop SEC competence. As has been mentioned in this study, there is no one strategy that can work for all children given the different classroom contexts and pre-school children's different backgrounds. However, teachers should systematically teach, model and facilitate the application of SEC competencies in all aspects of teaching to allow children to apply them in their day to day lives. As long as teachers are intentional, children will learn (Neuman et al., 2015). As observed in literature review, because children learn better through imitating, male and female pre-school teachers have an important role in scaffolding the right competencies in children (Buschmeyer, 2013; Skelton, 2001).

4.4 Connecting Data Findings to Theory

Brofenbrenner's Bioecological systems theory divides the environment into five levels: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem and the chronological system. Brofenbrenner's theory informed this study and helped the researcher understand and explain the effect of the complex layers of the environment on the pre-school child's SEC development. The pre-school teacher's own biology, the children's biology and the school constitute the primary environment that influences the strategies used to scaffold SEC in children. The pre-school teacher bring with her knowledge about SEC acquired over time as a function of age, gender, experience and even training. The child also brings along SEC acquired over the period of development. The school environment also constitutes the school culture with regard to SEC. Such SEC knowledge influences the pre-school teacher's behaviour towards the children and the children's behaviour towards the teacher and hence the strategies the teacher is likely to use to scaffold SEC in children.

The findings from this study revealed that schools have unique programs that help scaffold SEC in children. For example, the study findings revealed that some schools

used unique strategies such as ‘essential agreements’ that enhanced children’s SEC. In one private pre-school, children were encouraged not to laugh at others or say mean words or even act mean towards others. A child from such a school is therefore likely to internalize self-management and social awareness with regard to those different from them.

The mesosystem layer represents the connection or set of interactions and relationships among all the components of the microsystem (Berke, 2008; Woolfolk, 2013). For example, the connection between the child’s pre-school teacher and the parents or between the child and the peers may influence the child’s SEC, and so influence the strategies that the pre-school teacher may use to scaffold SEC. In one public pre-school, for example, the teacher explained that the school’s main catchment was basically slums. Because of the catchment area, most of their children had behavioural challenges. The school therefore tries to work closely with the parents so that they can help the children be well adjusted socially. As observed by Eisenberg et al. (2014) helping children adjust well socially requires concerted efforts of parents and pre-school teachers.

The exosytem is the layer that is comprised of the social setting that affects the individual although the person is not a direct member of the systems. For the child, the exosystem may imply the employment status of the parent, which may negatively of positively affect the child’s SEC and therefore determine the strategies that the teacher uses to scaffold SEC. For the pre-school teacher, the exosystem may imply the community expectations. The study findings for example revealed that many parents are more concerned about cognitive development of the children because of the of the fact that the education system in Kenya is academic oriented and grades matter more than social skills.

The macrosystem is considered to be the outmost in a child's environment and comprises the cultural values, customs, and laws which all have a cascading influence on other layers. In line with the Bioecological theory, the pre-schoolteacher's cultural values, customs and the pre-school system are some of the factors likely to determine the strategies used to scaffold SEC in children. This may result in inconsistent approaches to scaffolding SEC in pre-schoolchildren which may not auger well as far as children's SEC is concerned. Such uncontrolled practice can only be regulated if there were professional bodies to regulate pre-school teaching like in the western world. Such bodies can be in charge of training, certification, continued education and quality assurance of pre-schools teaching. Similarly, the child's cultural values and customs are likely to influence how the teacher interacts with the child. Such bidirectional interactions influence the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children.

The chronosystem is not a layer as such but refers to socio-historical conditions and time that affects life events. During the stages of biological development, the child goes through experiences that are likely to shape her SEC positively or negatively. The old adage that experience is the best teacher was confirmed in this study. The study findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between experience and strategies used by pre-schoolteachers to scaffold SEC. Experienced teachers were more creative with the strategies they used, for example, they encouraged conversations with children which not only stimulated their language development but also helped in their brain development with respect to SEC.

4.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter the results of the study have been presented, analysed and discussed objective by objective. The quantitative results were first presented followed by the

qualitative ones as a strategy of triangulation. This chapter provides information that reveals the pre-school teacher's experience is a teacher attribute that has a statistically significant relationship with the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC competence in children. Other attributes such as training levels, and gender as well as the school attributes such as the type of school, the pre-school class size and the children's developmental levels do not have a statistically significant relationship with the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC competence in children. Although the Kenyan government has standard guidelines for pre-school, there is no SEC curriculum that guides the provision of these services. However, pre-school teachers have devised strategies that they use to scaffold SEC in children, although unintentionally. The chapter concludes with an examination on how data from this study connects with the theory.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

This study examined the influence of pre-school teachers' attributes and school predictors on the strategies of scaffolding SEC in pre-school children in Eldoret town. Kenya. The study had seven objectives and six research questions. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse quantitative data. The qualitative data were examined for themes which were predetermined based on the following four themes: SEMA, SEAW, SOAW, and REMA. The quantitative results were first presented, analysed and then interpreted and were followed by qualitative results. Both results were discussed with regard to the literature reviewed and other related documented studies. The current chapter provides a summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations. The summary, conclusions and recommendations have been derived from the objectives and findings of the study.

5.2 Objectives of the study

5.2.1 The Relationship between Pre-Schoolteachers' Training Levels and the Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC

The first objective was to examine the influence of pre-school teacher's training levels on the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children. The study revealed that in pre-schools within Eldoret town, the categories of teachers according to their levels of training were: untrained, certificate, diploma and degree holders. The majority of pre-school teachers were diploma holders (46%) the untrained teachers were only 1% and all of them were in private pre-schools.

The ANOVA statistics revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between the pre-school teachers' training and the strategies that pre-school teachers

used to scaffold SEC in children. Although the majority of teachers were trained and qualified to teach pre-school children, they did not intentionally scaffold SEC in children. Further from the interview results, the study found that parents put undue pressure on pre-school teachers that made them focus on only children's cognitive development of children. This is despite the fact that studies reveal that for children to have a successful adult life, they need to be developed in all aspects: social, emotional, cognitive, physical and even language.

5.2.2 The Relationship between the Pre-School Teachers' Teaching Experience and the Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC

The second objective was to investigate the relationship between the pre-school teachers' teaching experience and the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children. The study revealed that in pre-schools within Eldoret town, the experience of teachers ranged from novice who had less than 5 years' experience in pre-school to the experienced who had more than ten years' experience in pre-school teaching.

Using the mean scores for the SEC components, the study findings revealed that the novice teachers had less competence in scaffolding social–awareness in children. The study findings established that pre-school teaching experience had a significant effect on the social-awareness component of SEC in children. However, pre-school teaching experience had no statistically significant effect on other SEC components. The observation results further supported the inferential statistics. Pre-school teachers who had over ten years of experience used unique strategies like engaging children in conversations and they appeared more relaxed than the novice teachers even in the presence of the researcher.

The current study findings also revealed that private pre-schools suffered from high turnovers. High turnovers have a negative effect on children's growth and development (Cobbold, 2015; Landry, 2005). This comes in the wake of recent studies that explain that children's secure attachment is only possible with adults with whom they have experience.

5.2.3 The Relationship between Pre-School Teachers' Gender and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC

The third objective was to find out the relationship between pre-school teachers' gender and the strategies that they use to scaffold SEC in children. The study findings revealed that in pre-schools in Eldoret town, there are more female (11%) than male (4%) teachers. This is not just specific to Kenya as the scenario is replicated in Turkey, Sweden, and Germany amongst other countries (Gakii, 2003; Peeters, 2007; Ministry of National Education, 2011). Most of the male teachers were in private public pre-schools and only one was in a public pre-school. In both private and public pre-schools, the male teachers doubled up as administrators.

The t-test statistics revealed that gender does not have a significant effect on strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components. This is contrary to findings that female and male teachers differ in their teaching roles (Buschmeyer et al., 2013; Rashidi & Saher, 2012; Wood, 2012). The male teachers were not observed and only one was interviewed. With such an insignificant number the qualitative results could not support or refute the quantitative results.

With the research findings that children require both gender in their growth and development, the study decried the low number of males in pre-school. Boy children

are therefore devoid of important role models in their critical stage of growth and development.

5.2.4 The Relationship between Pre-School Type and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC

The fourth objective was to explore the relationship between pre-school type and the strategies that teachers used to scaffold SEC in children. The study found that most pre-schools that served children in Eldoret town were private. The public pre-schools that were available were few and were attached to the primary schools. Compared to the private pre-schools, the public ones were the worst and the least developed structures in most schools.

The study findings revealed that the type of school had no statistically significant relationship with the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC. Although schools operate under different cultural context, the type of pre-school did not determine a child's SEC competence. Parents and guardians have all along held the belief that a child's overall success is determined by the type of schools he child attends (Cobbold, 2015). However, interview results of this study found that the pressure exerted by the parents on the pre-school teachers was counterproductive to children's overall development.

Pre-schools should prioritize healthy development that comprises all the aspects of growth and development. As Vargas-Baron (2009) pointed out, the damage done to children is irreplaceable. The government through the quality assurance personnel should ensure that all children are given the same environment that stimulates their growth and development in all aspects.

5.2.5 Influence of pre-school class size on strategies used to scaffold SEC

The fifth objective of this study was to find out the relationship between class size and the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children. The study divided the number of children in the classroom into three: Low class size for classrooms (below 19 children); optimum (20 -29) and high (above 30 children). The study findings reveal that high-class size, although normally associated with public pre-schools was a common phenomenon in both public and private pre-schools.

Inferential statistics revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between class size and the strategies that pre-school teachers used. This was corroborated by qualitative results. The findings support others previously done that have shown that Kenyan children are not well developed in other non-cognitive skills because teachers lack intentionality (Kitsao-Wekhulo & Hungi, 2016).

5.2.6 The Relationship between Pre-School Children's Developmental Levels and Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC

The sixth objective of the current study examined the relationship between children's developmental levels and the strategies that teachers used to scaffold SEC in them. Although the standard service guidelines refer to the categories as baby class, primary one, primary two, the study established that pre-schools were mainly categorized into: Baby class, middle class and top class.

In some pre-schools, a teacher would move with children through all levels while in others, different teachers were specifically assigned a permanent developmental level. It was a common practice by many schools to combine the classes in the event that a teacher was absent.

The ANOVA results indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between pre-school types and the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC. Qualitative results supported the quantitative ones with pre-school teachers from both schools interviewed unanimously agreeing on some strategies like: waiting for turns and training children to follow routines. In private and public pre-schools, self-management and relationship management strategies were more emphasized compared to self-management and social awareness. According to Coplan and Arbeau (2008) this is expected given that difficult peer relationships portend difficult life in early childhood education contexts.

5.2.7 Strategies Used to Scaffold SEC

The seventh objective of this study sought to investigate the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC components in children. The study found that the school as a microsystem provided the environment that determined the SEC competencies that pre-school teachers scaffold in children. The study also found that some strategies like 'modelling' and 'monitoring' were used to scaffold more than one SEC competence. Observation and interview results revealed that pre-school teachers scaffolded self-management and relationship management competencies more than social awareness and self-awareness. The study also found that regardless of teacher attributes and school predictors, most strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC were the same and only differed in the styles used or terminologies employed.

5.3 Study Conclusions

The study examined the influence of teacher attributes and school's factors on the strategies that pre-school teachers used to scaffold SEC in children in Eldoret town, Kenya. This study was significant in that it contributes to the few studies that exist with regard to this important development aspect of children. The realization of the

importance of SEC in children's lives is currently a global concern. Countries are beginning to realize that the economic prize to pay for SEC deficient adolescents and adults is huge. Yet, childhood offers a window of opportunity when SEC can be scaffolded in children with ease. With effective SEC, a child is endowed with skills and abilities that enable him take care of his own life and that of others. Among the teacher attributes that were studied, this current study found that the teaching experience of pre-schoolteachers was important in scaffolding social awareness competence in children. However, the study concludes although other teacher attributes like gender and training levels may not influence the strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC in children, they were equally important. With further training in skills and knowledge pre-school teachers may professionalize the occupation and give it a better standing in the society. School attributes like school type, class size and children's developmental levels were not found to have a significant effect on strategies that pre-school teachers use to scaffold SEC. However, the study found that some schools used unique and creative strategies that helped children develop SEC. it is worth noting that the false myth that private pre-schools are superior to public ones was found not to be wholly true. There are some public pre-schools and teachers that are exceptional in the way they scaffold abilities in children.

According to Bryk and Schneider (2002), for children achieve socio-emotional and academic goals, the teachers and those who care for the children must model appropriate behaviour. Secondly, if the children's SEC is to be developed appropriately, the school community, the teachers and the parents must all act in consonant ways so that they all work towards the same goal. The pre-schools should therefore integrate programs that bring parents, teachers and children together. In one private pre-school, the study found that parents often volunteer to be care givers to the pre-school children

on certain days of the week. In another public pre-school, during the observation weeks, three parents made a courtesy call to the school to discuss social issues that concerned the children with their teachers.

The study findings also revealed that it was necessary for schools to strive to integrate their SEC and academic programs. This is because the present child is bombarded with higher degrees of uncertainties and pressures regarding their daily lives and their futures. Many children currently feel insecure, marginalized, disenchanted and fearful. When this is coupled with school environments that are unsafe, full of conflict, characterized with expressions of disrespect from teachers and fellow students, their attention for learning ends up diverted or dissipated.

Since research evidence has proved that children who attend schools where SEC is intentionally taught are more social emotionally competent. Such children, are less likely to engage in violence, other vices or have related problem behaviours and are therefore more likely to be more academically engaged and successful, the study makes a few recommendations;

5.4 Recommendations

In view of the above summary and conclusions, the current study makes the following recommendations:

5.4.1 Recommendation for Policy

Although the standard policy guidelines recommend that pre-school children be exposed to holistic learning, the study established that pre-school teachers did not intentionally scaffold SEC competence in children. The Policy makers and educators ought toensure that stakeholders and partners in pre-school service provision focus on

healthy development of children by supporting the development of a curriculum that incorporates standalone SEC programs in early childhood education learning system.

5.4.2 Recommendation for Practice

Although teachers used different strategies to scaffold SEC competencies in children they lacked intentionality. Professional development and continuing education should be introduced among pre-school teachers to improve the status of the occupation.

5.4.3 Recommendation for Further Research

Most researches have continued to focus on intervention studies among vulnerable and at risk children. The actual number of professional development courses attended as training opportunities should be evaluated against the teachers' competences to scaffold SEC. More research studies on SEC especially on teacher training and professional development with respect to teacher's SEC should be done.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Informed Consent for Teachers

Elizabeth Akinyi Owino
Department of Educational Psychology,
Moi University,
P.O. Box 3900-30100,
KENYA

Dear Participant,

RE: Informed Consent

I am enrolled for a Ph.D. degree in Moi university and I have an interest in research in "The effects of teacher attributes and school predictors on scaffolding of socio-emotional competence among preschool pupils in Eldoret." which seeks to understand how preschool teachers support children's socioemotional development.

May I kindly request you to participate in my study by honestly and accurately responding to all items in the instruments used in data generation. Your responses will not be used for any other purpose except this study. Confidentiality of your responses is guaranteed by the researcher. Please do not write your name on any of the papers used in data collection. You have full right to withdraw from the study at any time you wish. You may contact me for more information about this study. You may also request me to communicate to you the findings of this study.

Please sign in the space provided below if you accept to participate in the study. Thank you very much for volunteering to participate.

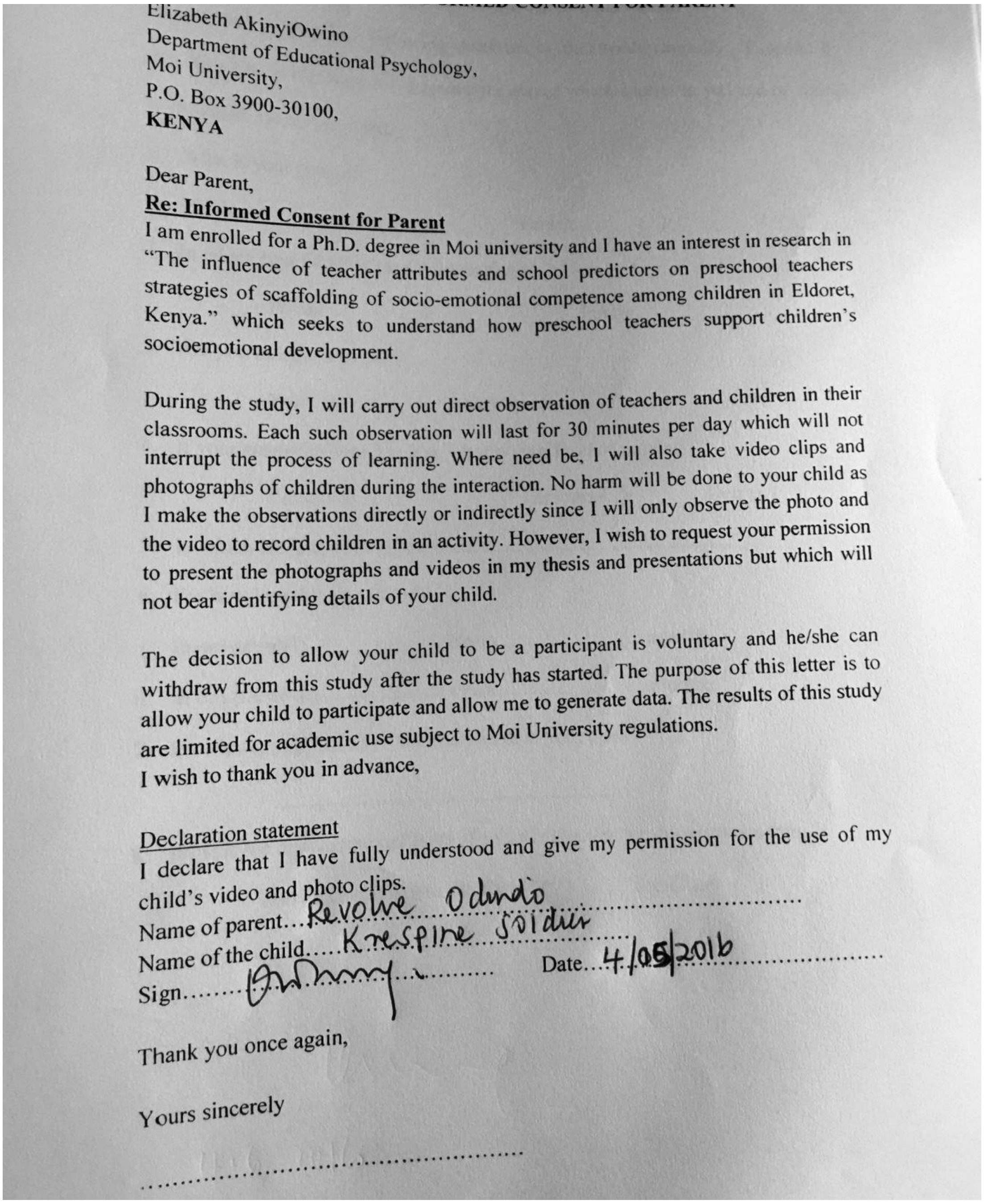
Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Owino (Researcher)

Participant's Signature.....

Date.....2/4/2016.....

Appendix II: Informed Consent for Parents



Elizabeth AkinyiOwino
Department of Educational Psychology,
Moi University,
P.O. Box 3900-30100,
KENYA

Dear Parent,

Re: Informed Consent for Parent

I am enrolled for a Ph.D. degree in Moi university and I have an interest in research in "The influence of teacher attributes and school predictors on preschool teachers strategies of scaffolding of socio-emotional competence among children in Eldoret, Kenya." which seeks to understand how preschool teachers support children's socioemotional development.

During the study, I will carry out direct observation of teachers and children in their classrooms. Each such observation will last for 30 minutes per day which will not interrupt the process of learning. Where need be, I will also take video clips and photographs of children during the interaction. No harm will be done to your child as I make the observations directly or indirectly since I will only observe the photo and the video to record children in an activity. However, I wish to request your permission to present the photographs and videos in my thesis and presentations but which will not bear identifying details of your child.

The decision to allow your child to be a participant is voluntary and he/she can withdraw from this study after the study has started. The purpose of this letter is to allow your child to participate and allow me to generate data. The results of this study are limited for academic use subject to Moi University regulations.
I wish to thank you in advance,

Declaration statement
I declare that I have fully understood and give my permission for the use of my child's video and photo clips.
Name of parent...Revolue Odundo...
Name of the child....Kresfine Soldier...
Sign.......... Date...4/05/2016...

Thank you once again,

Yours sincerely

....

Appendix III: Biographical Form

Please read each of the following questions or statements carefully. Respond by putting a tick in the bracket ( ) against the choice which applies to you and by filling in the blank spaces provided.

1. What is your gender?

   Male ( ) Female ( )

2. In which type of school are you teaching?

   Private ( ) Public ( )

3. Are you trained in ECDE?

   Yes ( ) No ( )

4. If your answer to item 3 is Yes, what is your level of training

   Certificate ( ) Diploma ( ) Degree ( )

5. In which institution were you trained?.....

6. For how long have you taught

   1. In pre-school?_____Years ……months

   2. In this pre-school……Years……..months

7. How many pupils do you normally have in your class?

   _____

8. What is the developmental level of ECDE class you are currently teaching?

   Baby Class ( ) Middle Class ( ) Top Class ( )

Appendix IV: Teachers' Socio-Emotional Competence (SEC) Questionnaire

This questionnaire contains statements designed to assess the strategies you use to help pre-school pupils develop the components of Social and emotional competence (SEC): Self -awareness, social awareness, self-management and relationship management skills. Please note that these statements are not meant to measure your competence in teaching and that there are no right or wrong answers. Read each statement carefully and on the scale provided, circle the response that best describes how you perform the task in your class.

	SELF AWARENESS	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1.	I believe that because of their age, children in my class cannot appreciate each other's abilities.					
2.	I give some children specific tasks (e.g. picking up toys, clearing the table), especially those that I find responsible.					
3.	When I am tired or sad, I should not freely express it to children in my class even if it is in a positive way.					
4.	Talking about their strengths, talents, what they can do best, is something I do not encourage children to do as it can discourage others' spirit at this age.					
5.	In my class, I encourage children to cope with mean comments and insults from their peers by not hitting back or abusing.					
6.	I do not expect children in my class to regret their wrong actions on others (e.g. by not repeating the mistake) because they are still young.					
7.	In my class, I encourage children to do all their work together.					
8.	I do not give each child enough time to complete individual tasks because I am not able to attend to each child.					
9.	When children in my class make me happy I do not express it.					
10.	I do not usually encourage children in my class to talk about their weaknesses as this may negatively affect their self-esteem.					
	SOCIAL AWARENESS					
1.	I encourage children in my class to be tolerant towards others' weaknesses in a healthy way (those who cannot read, model, by encouraging them).					
2.	I vary responsibilities that I give to the children in my class so that there are no fixed roles (e.g. no prefect)					

	Greeting each other at the beginning of the day and saying goodbye at the end of the day is not something I train children in because of their age.					
3.	I encourage children in my class to be concerned about the whereabouts of each other every time and everyday					
4.	Children at this level cannot be trained to listen to words, sentiments, feelings of each other.					
5.	I encourage children in my class to make polite requests to others to share with them what they may not have and must have (e.g. pens, book).					
6.	Most of the times, I do not encourage children in my class to express feelings appropriately (e.g. I am happy, I am full).					
7.	Children in my class who cannot complete tasks in good time are usually excluded from other free time activities.					
8.	In my class I encourage children to learn to wait for their turn (e.g at a queue)					
9.	Children in my class are too young to appreciate individual differences without looking down on each other.					
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT						
1.	During group activities, I encourage children in my class to listen to each other as they work.					
2.	I usually discourage unnecessary disagreements amongst children in my class					
3.	I will often reprimand /warn a child who is reported by the other to be the cause of conflict in any disagreement					
4.	Children in my class sit in such a way that they can work with each other easily.					
5.	Learning to cooperate with each other is not a priority for me when handling children in my class					
6.	In my class, I encourage children to appreciate each other's strengths, talents, abilities (e.g. clapping for each other, praising each other).					
7.	I train children in my class to accept apology when wronged so that they are not hurt.					
8.	I do not allow children in my class to display inappropriate behaviour (e.g laugh at a child who falls or wets himself/herself)					
9.	When children in my class have disagreements I listen to both parties.					
10.	After dealing disagreements between children with the conflict, I help them have harmonious relationships.					

SELF MANAGEMENT						
1.	Because of their age, I do not mind when children help themselves with what does not belong to them like pens, rubbers, without permission.					
2.	I train children in my class how NOT to get frustrated when they do not get what they want from their friends.					
3.	I encourage children in my class to be ready to accept another choice if their choice is not readily available (if they want a red pen and only a blue pen is available)					
4.	I encourage children in my class to respond positively to each other with courtesy words such as 'thank you', 'sorry', 'excuse me'.					
5.	I reprimand children in my class when they do not apologize when they wrong others.					
6.	I do not reprimand children who distract others when tasks are to be done individually because of their age					
7.	I have a schedule of routines which children in my class must follow.					
8.	In my class children who do not follow routines as scheduled without a reason are reprimanded/warned/punished					
9.	I encourage children in my class to follow through a task that is given even if it is difficult (e.g. encourage them, give them additional work).					
10.	I am always unable to give an upset child time to calm down because of the schedule of activities and the number in class.					

Key:

SD	STRONGLY AGREE
A	AGREE
U	UNDECIDED
A	DISAGREE
SA	STRONGLY DISAGREE

Appendix V: Interview Schedule for Selected Teachers

(1)What are some of the strategies that you use as a pre-school teacher you use to help children relate well with you and with each other?

.....

.....

(2) How do you ensure self-control among the children in your pre-school class?

……

……

(3). Explain some of the strategies you use in your pre-school class to help the children appreciate themselves

……

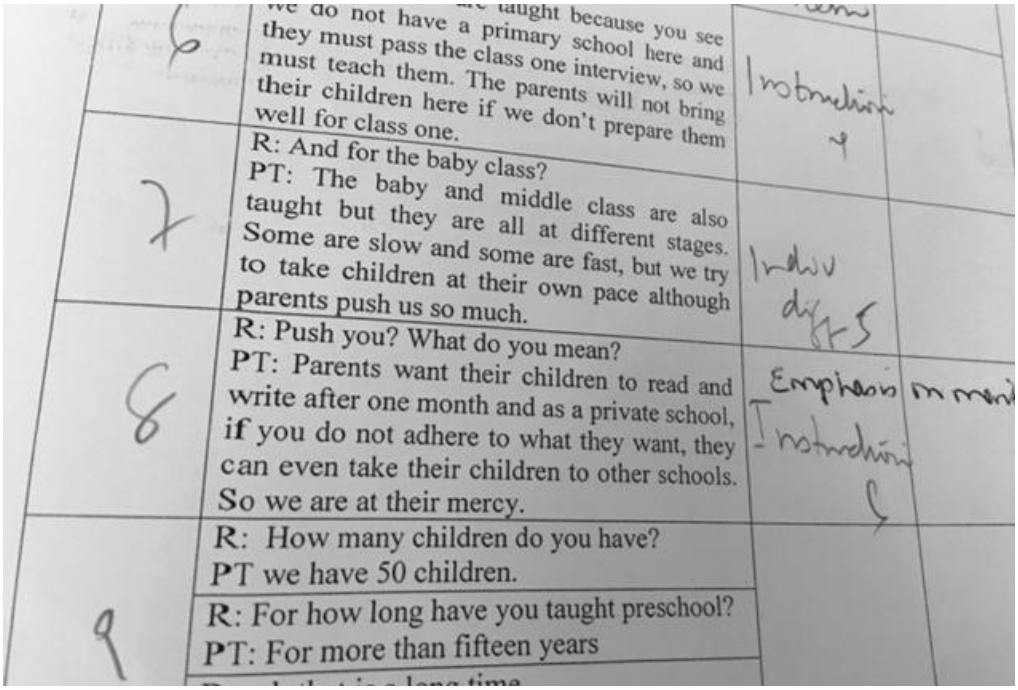
……

(4) Which strategies would you use to make the pre-school children aware of other children and to inculcate harmonious relationships among them?

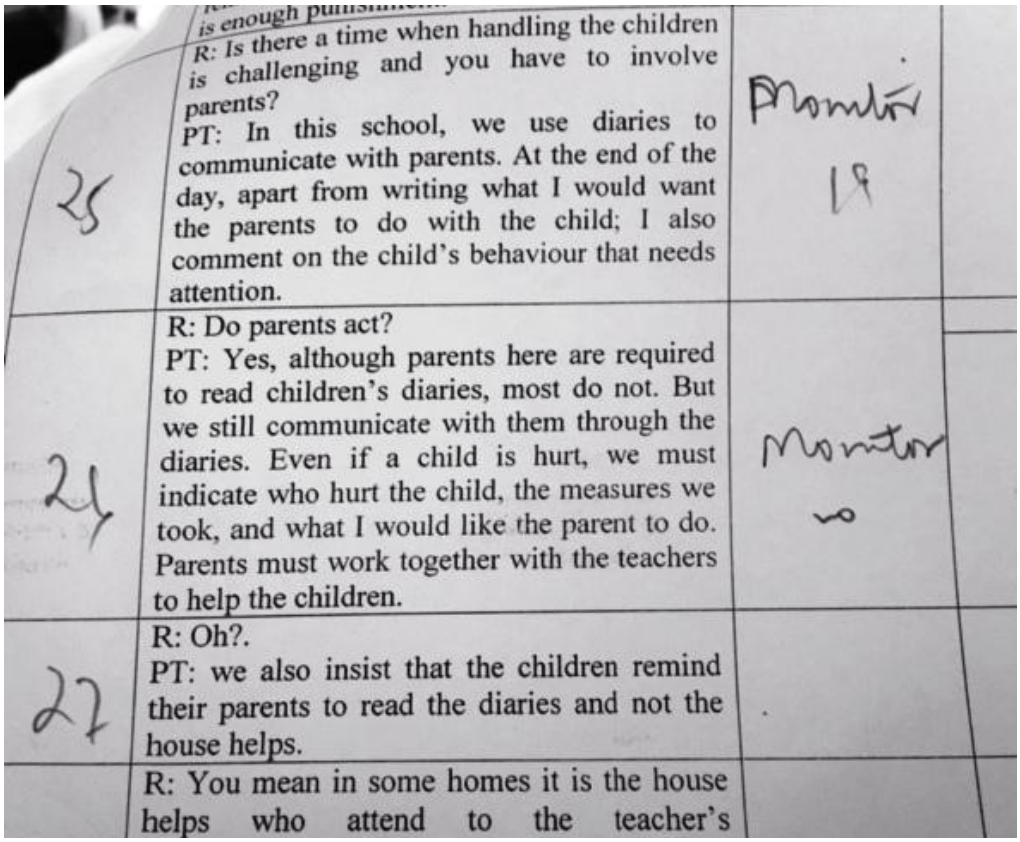
……

……

Appendix VI: Examples of Extracts from Interview Data



6	we do not have a primary school here and they must pass the class one interview, so we must teach them. The parents will not bring their children here if we don't prepare them well for class one.	Instruction 4
7	R: And for the baby class? PT: The baby and middle class are also taught but they are all at different stages. Some are slow and some are fast, but we try to take children at their own pace although parents push us so much.	Indiv diff 5
8	R: Push you? What do you mean? PT: Parents want their children to read and write after one month and as a private school, if you do not adhere to what they want, they can even take their children to other schools. So we are at their mercy.	Emphasis Instruction 6
9	R: How many children do you have? PT we have 50 children.	
	R: For how long have you taught preschool? PT: For more than fifteen years	

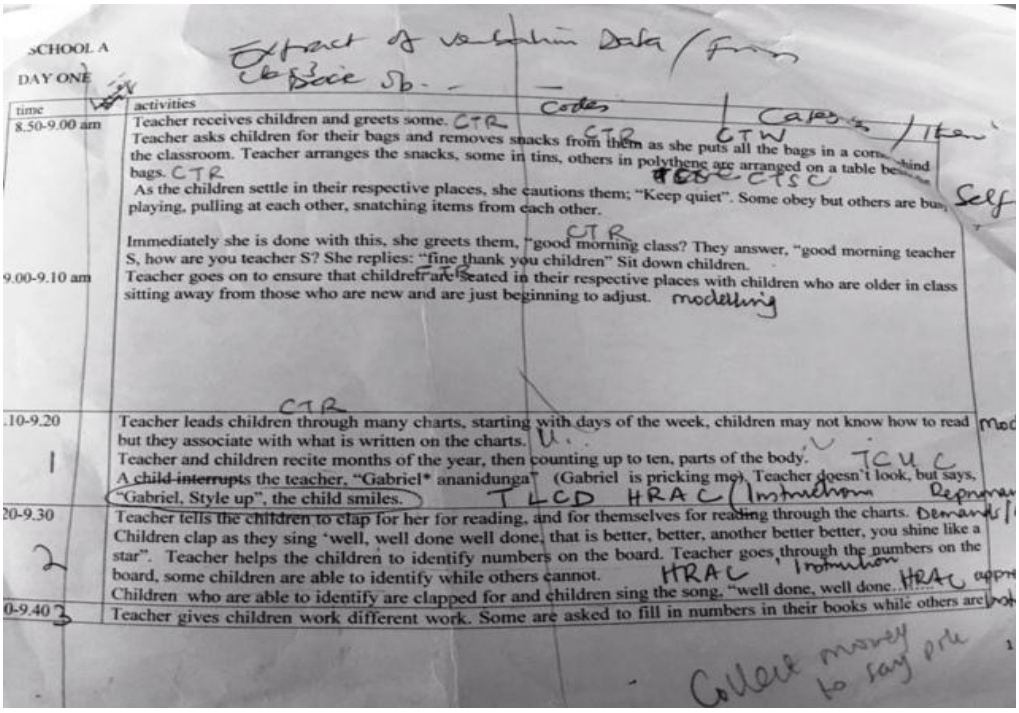


	is enough punishment.	
25	R: Is there a time when handling the children is challenging and you have to involve parents? PT: In this school, we use diaries to communicate with parents. At the end of the day, apart from writing what I would want the parents to do with the child; I also comment on the child's behaviour that needs attention.	Monitor 19
26	R: Do parents act? PT: Yes, although parents here are required to read children's diaries, most do not. But we still communicate with them through the diaries. Even if a child is hurt, we must indicate who hurt the child, the measures we took, and what I would like the parent to do. Parents must work together with the teachers to help the children.	Monitor 20
27	R: Oh?. PT: we also insist that the children remind their parents to read the diaries and not the house helps.	
	R: You mean in some homes it is the house helps who attend to the teacher's	

Appendix VII: Observation Checklist

	STRATEGIES	**OBSERVED**	**DESCRIPTION**
1.	Self-management strategies		
2.	Relationship management strategies		
3	Self-awareness strategies		
4	Social awareness strategies		

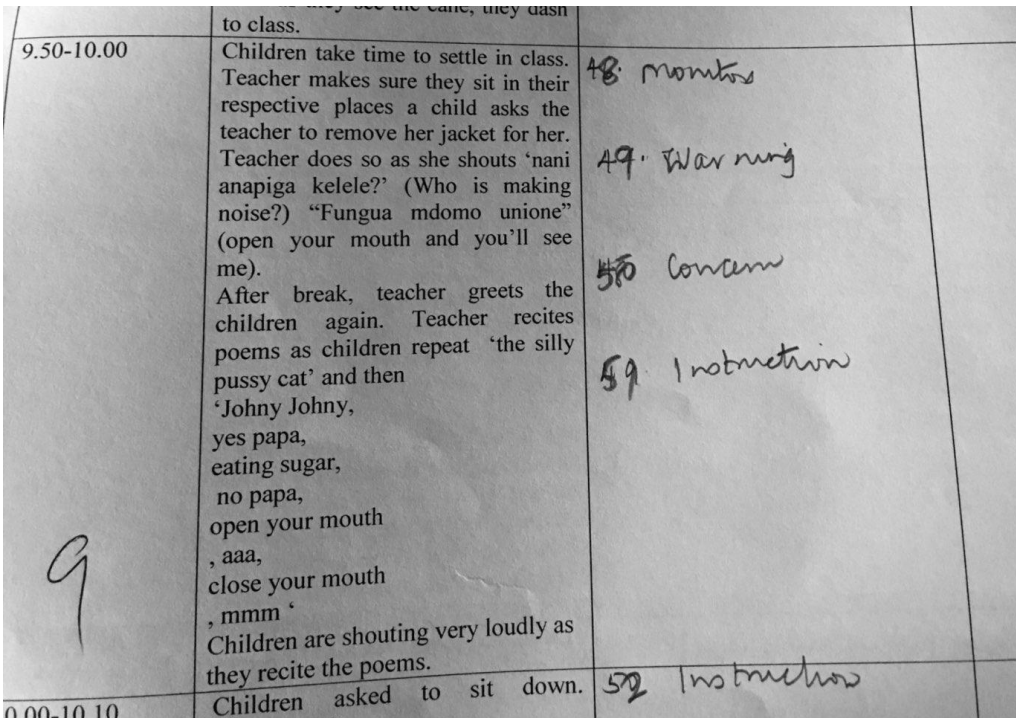
Appendix VIII: Examples of Extracts from Observation Data



SCHOOL A

DAY ONE

time	activities
8.50-9.00 am	Teacher receives children and greets some. CTR Teacher asks children for their bags and removes snacks from them as she puts all the bags in a corner behind the classroom. Teacher arranges the snacks, some in tins, others in polythene are arranged on a table behind bags. CTR As the children settle in their respective places, she cautions them; "Keep quiet". Some obey but others are busy playing, pulling at each other, snatching items from each other.
9.00-9.10 am	Immediately she is done with this, she greets them, "good morning class? They answer, "good morning teacher S, how are you teacher S? She replies: "fine thank you children" Sit down children. Teacher goes on to ensure that children are seated in their respective places with children who are older in class sitting away from those who are new and are just beginning to adjust.
.10-9.20	Teacher leads children through many charts, starting with days of the week, children may not know how to read but they associate with what is written on the charts.
1	Teacher and children recite months of the year, then counting up to ten, parts of the body. A ~~child interrupts~~ the teacher, "Gabriel* ananidunga" (Gabriel is pricking me). Teacher doesn't look, but says, "Gabriel, Style up", the child smiles.
20-9.30	Teacher tells the children to clap for her for reading, and for themselves for reading through the charts.
2	Children clap as they sing 'well, well done well done, that is better, better, another better better, you shine like a star". Teacher helps the children to identify numbers on the board. Teacher goes through the numbers on the board, some children are able to identify while others cannot. Children who are able to identify are clapped for and children sing the song, "well done, well done.
0-9.40 3	Teacher gives children work different work. Some are asked to fill in numbers in their books while others are



	to class.	
9.50-10.00	Children take time to settle in class. Teacher makes sure they sit in their respective places a child asks the teacher to remove her jacket for her. Teacher does so as she shouts 'nani anapiga kelele?' (Who is making noise?) "Fungua mdomo unione" (open your mouth and you'll see me). After break, teacher greets the children again. Teacher recites poems as children repeat 'the silly pussy cat' and then 'Johny Johny, yes papa, eating sugar, no papa, open your mouth , aaa, close your mouth , mmm ' Children are shouting very loudly as they recite the poems.	48. Monitor 49. Warning 50 Concern 51 Instruction
9		
0.00-10.10	Children asked to sit down.	52 Instruction

Appendix IX: Interview Data (Extracted from full data transcripts available)

THEME	CODES	NUMBER OF TIMES CODE APPEARS	VERBATIM QUOTES	SOURCE/REFERENCE
SELF MANAGEMENT	1. Discipline 2. Care for themselves 3. Modelling 4. Instruction 5. Timeout 6. Non-verbal 7. Ignore 8. Withdraw favours/likes 9. Monitor 10. Warn 11. Reprimand	60 12 14 8 1 4 1 27 4 2 13	**On Discipline** ***1.*** *The children know that immediately they come, they sit and keep themselves busy. Sometimes they talk among themselves, but they know they must not fight or play risky games. They also will report to me any bad or unusual occurrence when I arrive* **2.** *They know from the tone of my voice when I am not happy and they can always imagine what follows.* ***3.*** *Children are children, when they are many, at times, you have to use a cane, even if you just carry it; they get to know that things are serious.*	Rachel* row 5 line 6-11 (10/4/2016) Monicah* row 11 (14/4/2016) Francis*row 12 (7/4/2016) Jane*row 20 (16/4/2016)

			4. *We have rules that we go by, those who spill their porridge are not given more. But if someone carelessly spills another's, he or she forfeits hers or his. If one takes another's snack without permission, sometimes we cane lightly. In most cases, caning lightly works although we are not allowed.* **6.** *Yes even to go to the toilet. It is good to train children not just to do what they want or have what they want.*	Charity*row 42 (6/4/2016)
SELF AWARENESS	1. Self-appreciation 2. Know themselves 3. Allow expression of feelings 4. Congratulate children 5. Allow children to be 6. modelling	17 1 11 5 6 12	**On self-appreciation** **1.** *Often times we sing the 'well done' song and as soon as I say 'good', the children are already up with the song.* **1.** *Oh, we teach children to know themselves and not to believe what others say about them.*	Monicah* row 11 (14/4/2016) Jane*row 20 (16/4/2016)

			We can ask for example, is it really true what he is saying about you? We reprimand children who make mean comments.	
SOCIAL AWARENESS	1. children monitor each other 2. show concern 3. appreciate individual differences 4. Use of courtesy words 5. Appreciate each other 6. Converse with children	5 10 23 1 5 4	**Appreciating individual differences** **1** *No, you see like these two (pointing at some very young children barely three years), came last week. So they are still new, they don't even know how to handle a pen, all they can do is scribble, but those at the back can write, so we give them work as per their ability.* **2** *Children are given tasks according to their abilities. Some are fast, others are slow, but yet at the end of the day, the structures in this school demand that every child is attended to.*	Jane*row 20 (16/4/2016) Catherine*row 11 (16/4/2016)

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT	1. Listen to children 2. Warn children 3. Verify what children say 4. Use of helping behaviour 5. Monitor children 6. Settle disputes 7. Use of courtesy words 8. Encourage harmonious relationships 9. Use of reprimands 10. Involvement of parents	4 4 1 5 27 9 1 3 2 1	**Monitor children** **1** *Exactly, l manage the classroom by: ensuring the children are doing the work, correcting those who are not, encourage the slow ones, waking up those who are asleep. It is at this time that I may notice an unhappy child, and I find out what the problem they have.* **2** *Yes, we watch over them so that they do not hurt each other or themselves. Parents are very sensitive, and we avoid conflict with them as much as we can.*	Monicah* row 9 (14/4/2016) Jane* row 60 (16/4/2016)

Appendix X: Observation Data (Extracted from full data transcripts available)

THEMES	CODES	NUMBER OF OCCURENCES		SOURCE/REFERENCE	
SELF-MANAGEMENT		Private pre-school	Public pre-school	Sessions in Private pre-school	Sessions in public pre-school
	Instruction	38	35	1,3,30,51	1, 22, 31,44
	Demands	3	2	22, 24,	52, 54
	Monitors	8	15	24, 43, 54	29, 37, 39
	Warns	10	12	24,28, 34,	1,41, 56
	Reprimand	2	9	4, 36	2, 20
	Non-verbal cues	7	2	2, 19, 29,	19, 29
	Modelling	9	6	17, 27, 36	3, 10, 50
	Time out	6	10	35, 46, 54	6, 8, 25
	Silent moments	2	-	14, 30,	-
	Ignore	3	2	7,45	3, 25
SELF AWARENESS	1. Self-appreciation	3	9	6, 23	1,19,46
	2. Urged to complete tasks	3	-	13, 35	-
	3. Express feelings	7	18	10, 17, 27	19, 30,55
	4. Congratulate children	4	6	15, 26	33, 53
	5. Allow children to be	11	15	1,36,48	11, 15, 57
	6. Modelling	7	6	1, 5, 19	3, 35, 42

SOCIAL AWARENESS	1. Children monitor each other	9	6	24, 28, 32	7,41, 42
	2. Show concern for Others	16	20	1, 7, 27	40, 43, 51
	3. Individual differences appreciated	8	19	5, 29, 44	48, 54, 58
	4. Allow conversation with children	5	15	17,24,45	30,34,43
	5. Children wait for turns	3	2	31, 52, 57	7, 27
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT	1. Listen to children	4	8	5, 6, 7	7, 10, 25
	2. Warn children	10	12	24, 27, 28	11, 15, 37
	3. Encourage helping behaviour	11	9	6, 15, 23	1, 6, 18
	4. Monitor children	9	15	2, 7, 25	9, 12, 29
	5. Settle disputes between children	1	-	38	-
	6. Discourage mean comments	3	-	5	-
	7. Reprimand children	2	9	36	21,39,49,

Appendix XI: Map of Uasin Gishu County

Appendix XII: Map of Uasin Gishu County Showing the Location of Eldoret Town

Appendix XIII: NACOSTI Research Authorization

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471, 2241349, 310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No. **NACOSTI/P/16/74308/9380**

Date: **7th March, 2016**

Elizabeth Akinyi Owino
Moi University
P.O. Box 3900-30100
ELDORET.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on ***"The influence of teacher attributes and school predictors on the strategies that preschool teachers use to scaffold socio emotional competence among children in Eldoret, Kenya"*** I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Uasin Gishu County** for a period ending **4th March, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Uasin Gishu County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. S. K. LANGAT, OGW
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
UASIN GISHU COUNTY
6/4/16

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Uasin Gishu County.

The County Director of Education
Uasin Gishu County.

Appendix XIV: Approval Letter for Research (Ministry of Education)

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Telegrams: "**EDUCATION**", Eldoret
Telephone: **053-2063342** or **2031421/2**
Mobile : **0719 12 72 12/0732 260 280**
Email: cdeuasingishucounty@yahoo.com
: cdeuasingishucounty@gmail.com
When replying please quote:

Ref: No. MOEST/UGC/TRN/9/Vol II/157

Office of The County Director of Education,
Uasin Gishu County,
P.O. Box 9843-30100,
ELDORET.

20th April , 2016

Elizabeth Akinyi Owino
Moi University
P.O Box 3900 – 30100
Eldoret

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

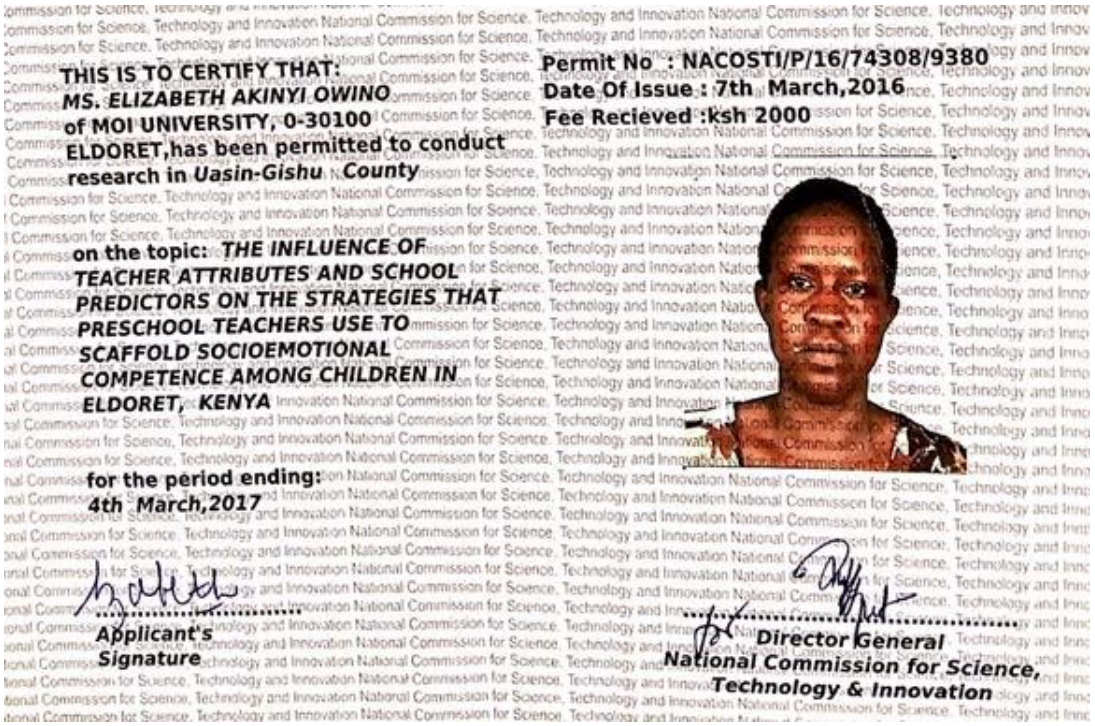
This office has received a letter requesting for an authority to allow you carry out research on ***"The influence of teacher attributes and school predictors on the strategies that preschool teachers use to scaffold socio emotional competence among children in Eldoret,*** Within Uasin Gishu County**".**

We wish to inform you that the request has been granted for a period ending **4th March, 2017.** The authorities concerned are therefore requested to give you maximum support.

We take this opportunity to wish you well during this research.

Wamukoya Magdalene
For: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
UASIN GISHU.

Appendix XV: NACOSTI Research Permit



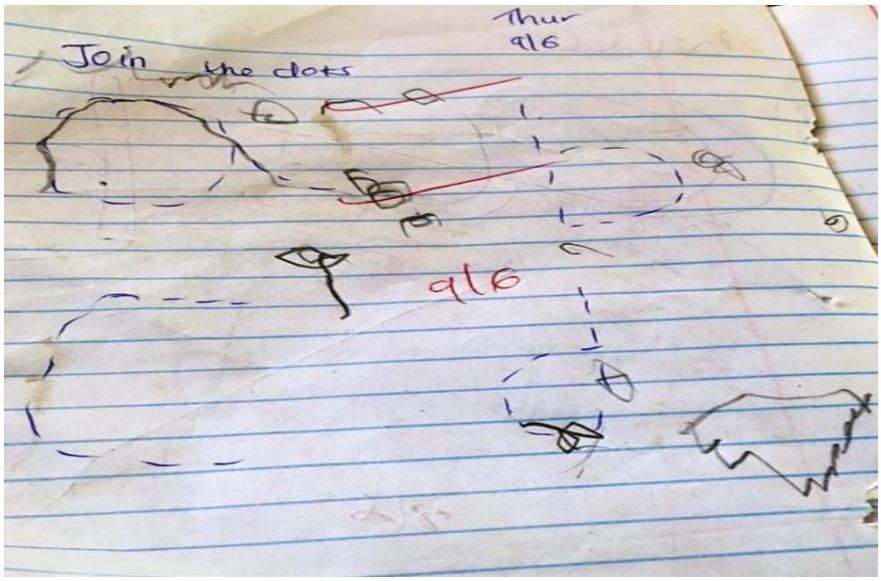
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. ELIZABETH AKINYI OWINO
of MOI UNIVERSITY, 0-30100
ELDORET,has been permitted to conduct
research in *Uasin-Gishu County*
on the topic: *THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHER ATTRIBUTES AND SCHOOL PREDICTORS ON THE STRATEGIES THAT PRESCHOOL TEACHERS USE TO SCAFFOLD SOCIOEMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AMONG CHILDREN IN ELDORET, KENYA*
for the period ending:
4th March,2017

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/16/74308/9380
Date Of Issue : 7th March,2016
Fee Recieved :ksh 2000

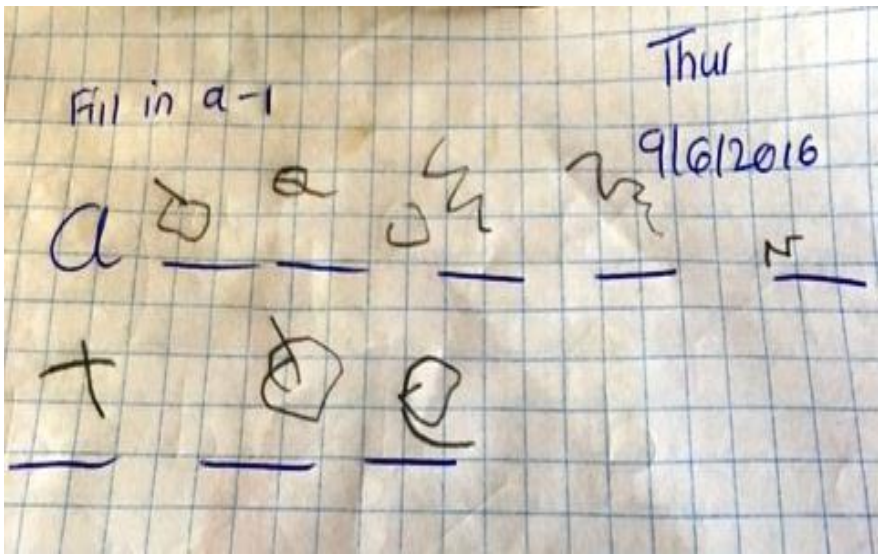
.....
Applicant's Signature

.....
Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

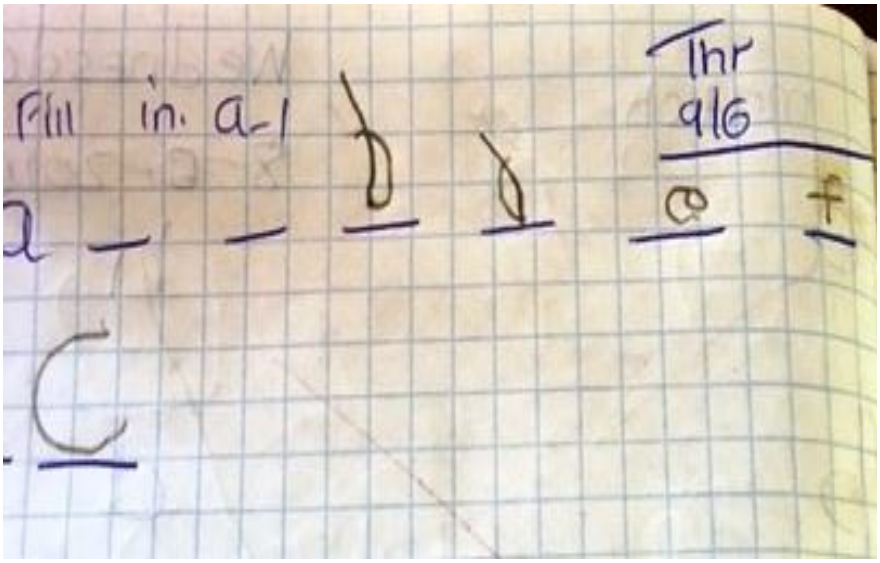
Appendix XVI: Examples of Developmental Appropriate tasks



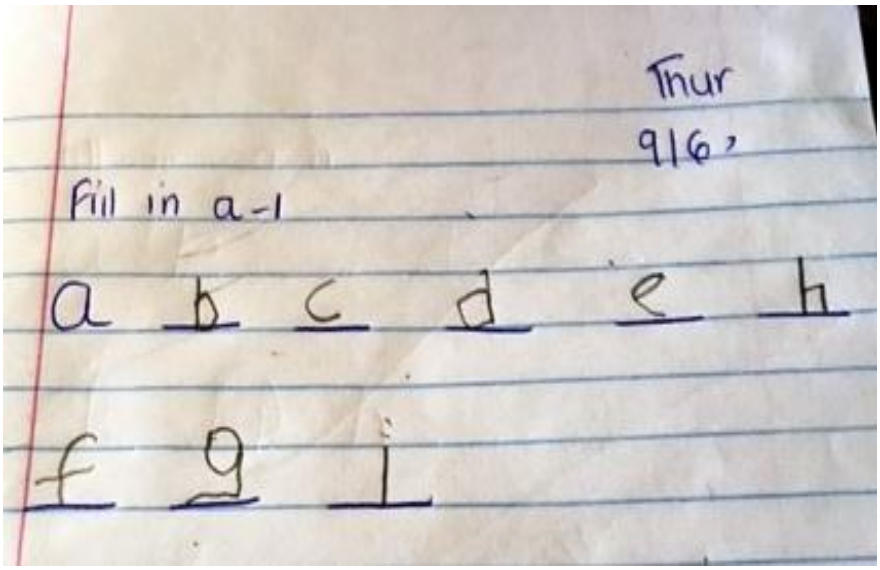
Development Appropriate Practice 1



Development Appropriate Practice 2



Development Appropriate Practice 3



Development Appropriate Practice 4