

**FACTORS INFLUENCING ENROLMENT IN ECDE CENTRES: A CASE OF  
MBITA SUB COUNTY, HOMA BAYCOUNTY, KENYA**

**BY**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTERS DEGREE IN EARLY  
CHILDHOOD AND PRIMARY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF  
CURRICULUM INSTRUSCTIONAL MEDIA  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**MOI UNIVERSITY**

**2023**

**DECLARATION**

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated first to Almighty God for the gift of life and strength. Secondly I dedicate this work to my late mum Priska Maira who brought me and instilled in me the virtue of hard work and patience when still very young and which has continued to inspire me in all my endeavors in life. It is also dedicated to my wife Perez Ouru and children Jobby, Tyborn, Damesther, Mercy and Ray for the encouragement and perseverance they gave me in the times of strain and happiness as I journeyed in my academic pursuit as a post-graduate student.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere and deep appreciation goes to my supervisors Dr. Agumba M. Ndaloh and Prof. C. Mukwa for their sincere support, encouragement and guidance from the very beginning of the research; I also wish to thank Moi University for giving me a chance to undertake this study. Further, I would wish to acknowledge my fellow Moi University students with whose constant encouragement and support in diverse ways made me bring the work to conclusion. I can also not forget my wife and children whose contribution motivated me through this work in numerous ways. I also appreciate the head teachers and ECDE lead teachers for their genuine support and cooperation during data collection. All their efforts were source of inspiration to me in the course of the study. Finally, I would wish to thank Charles Atieno for typing the work.

Sincere thanks also go to members of the faculty of education and department of curriculum, instruction and educational technology at Moi University who directly and indirectly made my journey in this work fruitful.

## ABSTRACT

For Kenya to realize vision 2030 its socio-political and economic blueprint, there is need to invest more in education which is under the social pillar in the document. In terms of enrolment, pre-primary schools in Mbita Zone have recorded a low enrolment rate in the past years. This study investigated the factors that influence enrolment in Early Childhood Development and education in Mbita Sub County, Homabay County. The study was guided by three objectives; how parents influence enrolment in ECDE centers, how teachers influence enrolment in ECDE centers and how the government influences enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and obtained its data from primary and secondary sources. Questionnaire was used to collect primary data. The primary data were derived from the questionnaires and the interviews. The target population comprised of all the pre-school children, head teachers, ECDE lead teachers and parents from Mbita Sub County. The researcher used stratified random sampling to select 40 schools in the four zones. He used purposive sampling to select forty head teachers and forty ECDE lead teachers. Simple random sampling was used to select two parents from each school. The sample size was 40 head teachers, 40 ECDE lead teachers and 16 parents; all these were sampled for the study. However, only 12 parents were interviewed. Data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics and presented in form of tables and pie charts. Findings revealed that 72.7% of parents interviewed agreed that factors such as ignorance, poverty and attitude influenced enrolment in ECDE centers. 70.9% of teachers agreed that that teacher factors such as training, materials and remuneration influenced enrolment in ECDE centers. 75% of the respondents agreed that government factors such as Free Primary Education, Feeding Programs and infrastructure influenced enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita sub county, Homabay County-Kenya. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that parents, teachers and the government influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County. To enhance enrolment, the study recommended that the parents be sensitized on the benefits of early enrolment to pre-schools, the ECDE teachers be well trained, have enough teaching and learning materials and get good remuneration. The study also recommended that the government incorporate early childhood education into the Free Primary Education program to relieve the parents from the burden of fees, enact feeding program and develop infrastructure in ECDE centers to enable quality learning to take place.

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**ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS**

ECDE: Teachers: Early childhood development and education teachers

H/T: Head teachers

ECE: Early childhood education

MoEST; Ministry of Education Science and Technology

NACECE: National center for early childhood education

DICECE: District center for early childhood education

UNESCO: United Nations educational scientific and cultural organization

ECDE: Early childhood development and education

ECDE LEAD TEACHER: A teacher in charge of ECDE center.

PRE-SCHOOL: Early Childhood development and Education Centers.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, justification, significance and scope of the study. The chapter further examines limitation, assumption and conceptual frame work of the study. It also gives the definition of terms in this study.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Early childhood development and education (ECDE) refers to a comprehensive approach to policies and programs for children from birth to eight years of age with the active participation of their parents and caregivers (Smith JT, 2000). Its purpose is to protect the child's rights to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social, and physical potential. Early Childhood serves the critical role of preparing young children for subsequent levels of Education. The need for the holistic development of children is appreciated all over the world. Consistently, the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child (Organization of African Union, 1990) and the Government of Kenya (the Republic of Kenya, 1998) recognizes the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for its physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

The study of pre-schools is varied across continents. In Europe, pre-schools were created to provide humanitarian services related to the health and welfare of children from poor families and those affected by war and slum conditions (Jay, 2012). However, though created for the poor, the middle class hijacked pre-school education by taking their children to these schools in most countries except in France and

Belgium where the children from poor households were given prominence in enrolment. As a result, in most of the countries, parental factors such as poverty negatively influenced enrollment of pupils in ECDE centres.

In Britain, day nurseries and infant schools stressing education was established in the early 19th century. The infant schools provided an inferior form of care and education to the children of poor working women and covered 20 percent of three-year-olds and 40 percent of 4-year-olds in 1851.

In France and Italy, the developments began with 19th-century charitable institutions for poor, disadvantaged, often abandoned children (David and Lezine, 2007; Pistillo, 2001). With time, in France, the programs serving 3-5-year-olds were taken over by the Ministry of Education from 1836 and integrated into the public school system in 1886.

In many developing countries there has long been a split in ECDE policy (as in most industrialized countries just described) because services for children under age 3 are viewed as the responsibility of parents, and policy, where it exists, is in the domain of health and or social welfare while services for children aged 3-6 (or whenever compulsory school begins); are more likely to fall within the education sector (Pence, 2004).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the socio-cultural background of the people has greatly affected the education of children (UNESCO2010). More than 46 million children are not in school in Africa, which represents more than 40% of the worlds out of school children (UNESCO (2010)).

Kenya was the first country in this region to establish Early Childhood Education programs and the initiative has had a significant impact on its citizens. Kenya perceives education as a key to success in life, facilitating social mobility and development (George Eshiwani, 1993). The first recorded school for young children was founded at Rabai (Coast Province) in 1886, by the Church Missionaries Society (Bogonko, 1992, Eshiwani, 1993).

ECDE plays a crucial role in the education of children because it lays the foundation upon which all other subsequent levels of education are based. ECDE does not only help the country achieve its educational objective, but is also beneficial to children. The children who go through ECDE will develop good habits, feel safe and secure due to daily routines, develop literacy and numerical skills, develop emotional resilience, develop a lifelong love of learning. Despite the critical role that ECDE plays in learning, the rate of enrollment of pupils in ECDE centres is still wanting. The current study sought to determine factors influencing ECDE enrollment in Mbita sub-county in Homabay County-Kenya.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In addition to joining primary school, children aged between three and six are to attend pre-primary (pre-unit) for two years. The main objective of pre-primary education is to cater for complete child development, including the physical, spiritual, social, and mental growth, brought about through formal and informal interaction with the parents and the community taking a greater and leading role. A focus of pre-primary education has been health, nutrition, care, and basic education. Programs are run through partnership with the government, district based agencies, local communities and external agencies. The Pre-School section of the ministry of

Education is responsible for the registration of pre-schools and the coordination of all partners. It is estimated that 47% of eligible pre-primary school children were enrolled in those schools by 2007 (Chris Wosyanju, Undated).

The results of government financing in the two levels of education (F.P.E and S.S.E) are two-fold. Positively, it relieved the parents' financial burden on basic education, but negatively it developed a culture of free education that has impacted negatively on E.C.D.E which is expected to lay the foundation of the two levels. Little attention has been given to consider this implication on Early Childhood Education (Keith and Caillods, 2001). There has been a rapid increase of enrolment in E.C.D.E from 483,148 pupils in 1982 to 1,204,606 in 2003 (Republic of Kenya, 2010). Despite this increase, the general enrollment rate in pre-primary schools declined from 35.4% in 1990 to 33.4% in 1999, with 574,249 children of 4 to 5yrs old being out of school and many who entered primary school do not pass through pre-primary schools (Keith and Caillods, 2001). This has worsened after the introduction of F.P.E and S.S.E in Kenya. This study was carried out to find out ways through which parents, teachers and the government influence ECDE enrollment in Mbita sub-county in Homabay County-Kenya.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to establish what may have negatively influenced enrollment of pupils in ECDE centres in Mbita sub county, Homa Bay county, Kenya.

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following research objectives

- i. To establish parental factors influencing enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

- ii. To find out teachers' factors on enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.
- iii. To find out how government policies influence enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions

- i. How do parents influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County?
- ii. Do teachers influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County?
- iii. Does the government policies on ECDE influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County?

### **1.6 Justification**

Studies have been done on pre-schools operation in Homabay County but hardly have they focused upon factors that determine enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County. A greater difference has been realized in enrollment in Mbita sub county ECDE centers where some institutions have had very low enrollment while others registered increased enrollment. Finding out the factors that determine enrollment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County will help solve the discrepancies in the enrolment so that schools with low enrollment will raise their enrollment for better institutions operation and development.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study may benefit the parents by enfeebling them on the need to enroll their school age going children in pre-schools. It is hoped that, the head teachers may use the findings of this study to create awareness to all ECDE stakeholders on the importance of pre-school education. The findings may also help pre-school managers and the administrators to come up with strategies that may enhance enrolment of children in ECDE Schools. Further, it is hoped that the study may help in identifying training needs for ECDE teachers, administrators and institution heads for effective implementation of ECDE programs so as to enhance enrolment at this level of education.

### **1.8 Scope of the Study**

The study was carried out in Mbita Sub County, Homa Bay County. It was carried out in three ECDE centers attached to primary schools in each zone in the four zones that make up Mbita Sub County. Although there are several factors that influence ECDE, this study focused on enrolment of children in the ECDE programs in public pre-schools in Mbita, Homa Bay County and not any other aspects.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

The researcher encountered several limitations during data collection: Financial constraints during the entire research process were some of them. The researcher looked for opportunities to minimize expenditure, including requesting for volunteers to help with data collection and providing non-monetary tokens of appreciation to participants as appropriate.

Unpredictable weather changes including hot sun featured a problem but researcher earned himself with appropriate gear for the hot weather. It was not possible to cover the opinions of many parents and other sampled participants in the zone as tracing all of them required considerable time, finances and other logistics.

### **1.10 Delimitations of the study**

The area of the study was established within Mbita sub-county boundaries. This area of study was chosen because of the high concentration of ECDE centers, both public and private (Homabay County Education Network, 2014). The study focused on the parent, teacher and government based factors influencing enrolment in ECDE centers in the study area. The study was delimited to head teachers, ECDE lead teachers and parents with children enrolled in the ECDE centers.

### **1.11 Assumption of the study**

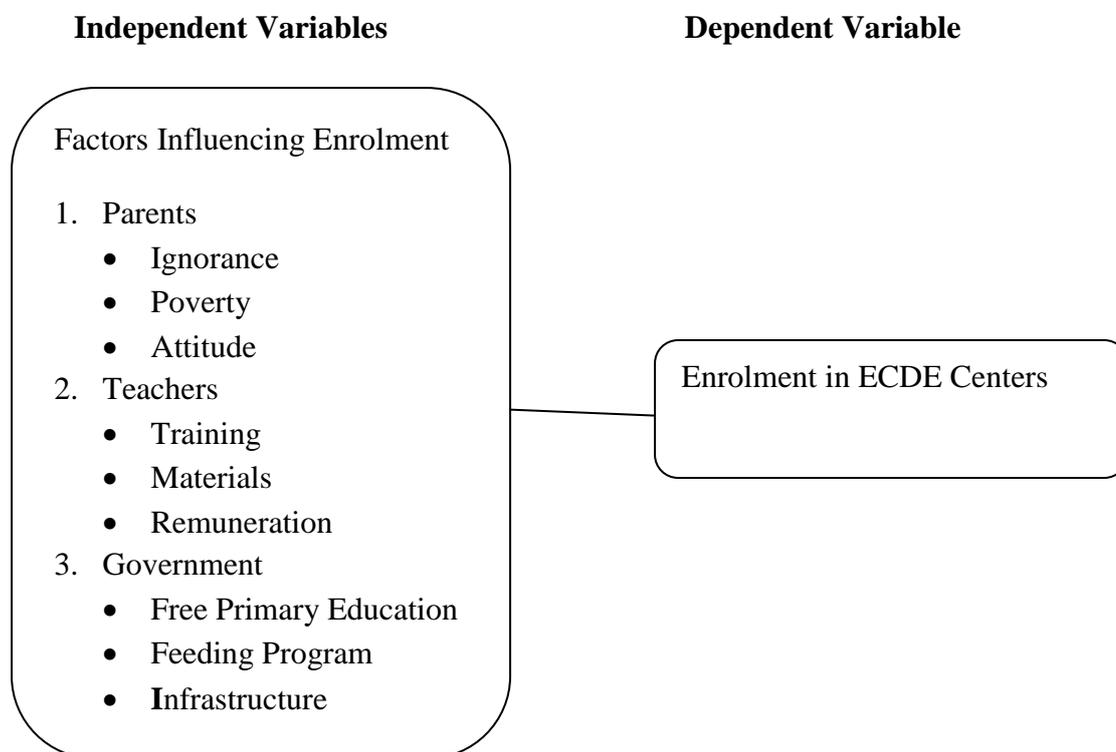
It was the researcher's assumption that parents of children in Mbita Sub County will support early childhood education by enrolling their children in ECDE centers, and that the respondents will be willing to avail information as stipulated in the questionnaires and provide honest responses that reflects real influence to children's enrollment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

### **1.12 Conceptual Framework**

The figure below shows the conceptual framework that was formulated to guide the study. This framework shows the relationship between the parent factors that influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers like ignorance, poverty and attitude. The teacher factors like training, material and remuneration. The government factors

like Free Primary Education, feeding programs and infrastructure and how they influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.



### 1.13 Operational Definition of terms

**Enrolment:** Admission of pupils in school.

**Materials:** These refer to things required by a pupil and a teacher in education such as chalk, books, pens, play models, maps, swings, cut outs etc.

### Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the researcher outlined the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, justification, significance and scope of the study. The chapter further examined limitation, assumption and conceptual frame work of the study. It also gave the

definition of terms in this study. The next chapter studied the related literature to the topic.

#### **1.14 Organization of the Study**

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one contains background information of the study, the research problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study. The chapter further explains the conceptual framework, definition of terms used in the study and organization of the study. Chapter two presents the literature review. Chapter three covers methodology which includes the research design, target population, sampling procedures and sample size, the research instruments, validity and reliability of the research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques and ethical issues. Chapter four addresses data analysis, presentation, interpretation and discussion of the findings while chapter five presents summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1: Introduction

This chapter focuses on existing literature on the factors that affected enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. The secondary data was obtained from books, theses, internet and journals. These constituted conceptual and research literature for the study. The chapter specifically deals with parental, teacher and governmental factors influencing enrolment in the light of the study.

The objectives of this study were;

- i. To establish parental factors influencing enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.
- ii. To find out how teachers influence enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.
- iii. To find out how government policies influence enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

#### 2.2: Influence of Parents on Enrollment in ECDE centers

Scholars have researched on many factors influencing enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers. In most of these studies, there is agreement that parents/guardians have an influence on the enrollment of their children in ECDE centers. However, no study has been done on the same in Mbita Sub County or in case there was, I came across none

by the time of this study. Therefore, this study sought to establish how parents and guardians influenced the enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub county.

### ***2.2.1: Ignorance***

Parents/guardians have a great influence on a child's education. This has been documented by many scholars. Several parental attributes have been found to contribute to this. On early childhood education, *Psacharopoulos and Woodhall* (1985) indicates that the children's access to education is determined by the father's level of education, level of income and occupation. Children of educated women are much more likely to go to school and the more schooling women have received, the higher the chances their children will from their education (UNICEF, 2004). Educated parents will be a role model to their children and will cultivate a positive attitude towards school in their children from an early age. They will encourage their children to develop interest in schooling unlike uneducated parents who may have less influence on the education of their children UNICEF (2004).

A research done by UNESCO in 2000 indicated that the level of illiteracy is very high in Kenya and Africa at large. The research showed that a whopping 142 million adults are illiterate in these regions. This has negatively influenced access to education programs especially the ECDE. However, a recent study done by UNESCO (2021) indicated that in Kenya, an adult literacy rate is 81.53%. However, the study did not capture how that influence enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers which this study sought to establish. A study was done in Tarbaj Division in Wajir District in 2010 indicated that illiterate parents denied their children access to ECDE as they detained them at home with their younger siblings as they went to fetch water and look after

livestock (Saadia, 2010). Literate and learned parents ensure their children are admitted and are always present at school. This is in sharp contrast to illiterate parents/guardians who have a negative attitude towards ECDE because they do not see its immediate feedback (MOEST, 2012). They are also not able to help their children in areas of academic difficulties which demoralize learners making them to dropout. Education of the mother is considered to be one of the greatest decisive factor of enrollment in pre-schools. The mother's education leads to sustained increase in education attainment from one generation to the next. It's the education level of the parents that determines whether and for how long children access schooling, and also determines the child's employment decision (Saadia, 2010).

Parents' academic level has additionally been associated with children's school attendance as well as basic intellectual growth (Saadia, 2010). The study further established that young children from parents having advanced schooling generally have greater school vocabulary, faster language progression, and higher efficiency in intellectual tests, and better school attendance. This impacts positively an enrolment.

Saadia, (2010) also estimated the connection of parent-child interactions to children's Brainiac accomplishments. The outcomes showed that even though interaction attributes are associated with children's perceptive accomplishments, this connection is moderated by circumstance aspects that could differ in every culture. A number of variations in academic systems among various nations need to be considered. Additionally, the connection between parents' schooling as well as private as opposed to public schools can vary across nations around the world. Though this may not be in

line with this study, it shows that parent's education has got an overbearing influence on the schooling of their children in one way or the other.

Some parents had a horrifying experience in school and therefore fear exposing their children to the same. Children whose parents have low levels or no education tend not to go to school since their parents do not see the benefit of school to their children. Koech (2010) did a study in Uasin Gishu which showed that parents with no education certificate and those with college diploma differed significantly in their level of involvement in pre-school activities. The study showed that parents with low level of education felt inept in their contribution to parent-school partnership modes than parents with a higher education. This study therefore, sought to establish how parent's education level influenced enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub county.

*Orodho* (2013) reported that better educated parents appreciate the value of education more than illiterate ones and this plays a significant role in enrolling children to preschool. He continues to state that illiterate parents are not able to assist their children progress in education in terms of both personal and material involvement. This is because most illiterate parents don't see the benefits of education in their lives that can influence them to educate their children. These parents claim that in ECDE centers, children are only taking the better part of their time playing which to them has no impact on their education. Because of this ignorance, these parents also find it hard to pay school fees for their children in ECDE centers claiming that it should be free as in primary schools. This leads to low enrolment levels in pre-schools as these parents wait for their children to reach primary school age so as to begin schooling. According to *Orodho* (2013), this has negatively affected the levels of education in

the country since these children do not have a proper education foundation. This study however, sought to establish how ignorance of parents influenced enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

A survey done in Kenya discovered that most head teachers and teachers fail to partner with parents in order to educate the children. Parents on the other hand are not aware of their responsibilities as parents for they are not concerned about the quality of education provided to their children. One teacher even said that —the government should clarify the role of parents as they are not taking anything the teachers tell them seriously (Republic of Kenya, 2005). It is possible that these could partly lead to poor enrolment of their children in pre-schools.

The government has been committed to education by providing basic education in pre-primary, primary and secondary school levels since the country attained independence in 1963. At pre-primary level, it has established directly and indirectly, E.C.D.E centers often attached to existing public and private primary schools or private pre-primary schools. Many parents and guardians have been unaware of the importance of Early Childhood Education which promotes holistic development of children (Mutua and Wasike, 2010). This has contributed to the low enrolment in public E.C.D.E. centers. Early years of life need to be utilized because these are the years that the child develops rapidly either physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. They form the milestone that lays the foundation of adulthood.

Saadia (2010) found that children's cognitive attainment benefited when parents were involved in children's learning activities at home. In order to influence the

development of children in disadvantaged areas, it was not sufficient simply to involve parents in the ECDE centers. Staff had to support parents' role in developing the home environment to support children's learning. For example, the study found that all the case study settings encouraged parents to read with their children, but there were better cognitive outcomes where settings also encouraged continuity of learning between the ECDE centers and homes. However, the study never focused on how involvement of parents influenced enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers which this study seeks to establish.

Hughes and MacNaughton (1999) reviewed 162 items from international literature, published in the late 1990s, which reported parental involvement programs or research about parental involvement in early childhood education settings. They concluded that much of the literature on staff/parent relationships in early childhood education concerned problems associated with the relationships. Problems consistently noted by most writers often arose from the constant bothering of parental knowledge by staff (Hughes & MacNaughton, 2000, p. 242), where parental knowledge was subordinated to the knowledge of teachers. Their analysis highlighted three themes underpinning this "bothering": parental knowledge being seen as inadequate; parental knowledge as supplementing and being of secondary importance to staff knowledge; and parental knowledge being unimportant, with parents voices absent from the literature.

Oruta (2009) stated that wealthier and better educated parents utilized basic education and resources in a manner to improve pre-school conditions. According to him, the life which a family attaches to school education, determines the motivation with

which a child pursues basic education. In addition, children may be viewed as: growing plants that need nurturance, miniature adults, natural and national resources. The need to be nurtured as future investments is critical to the sustenance of a society and its ability to compete in the technological age. It's at pre-school where most behavioral changes are linked to the child's growing sense of his/her own identity and increasing independence. The child develops a feeling of extreme pleasure in mastering of new skills and enjoys exploring the world outside their home.

According to Bredekamp (1987), at this early stage a child develops immunity from arbitrary exercise of authority, learns to choose and be responsible for the choices they make. It is in these years of life that one's development can be guided towards the highest potential and determines what one will be. Kabiru (1994) reckons that one of the most frequent reasons why families send children to pre-school is for them to learn to get along well with others. Teachers agree with parents that this is indeed a very important kind of competence to acquire. The focus of the teacher therefore must be geared towards helping the children acquire the ability to function successfully as part of a group, restrain their social impulses, obtain what they want in socially acceptable ways and find satisfaction in helping each other as they help their group as a whole.

Munyeki (1987) observes that family involvement in matters for young children's cognitive and social development is crucial. He argued that, for children and youth to be successful there must be an array of learning support around them. He further states that in the early childhood years, there must be a good home school relationship. There is need for formal and informal connection between families and

their young children's educational setting. Hence, both participation in pre-school based activities and regular communication between families and teachers are related to young children's outcome. When parents and teachers work together in the interest of children, the results are usually maximized. Parents provide continuity for children, which the professional cannot give. They also have a deeper knowledge of their children's interests and needs. Through participation in pre-school activities, parents can learn even more about the capacities of their own children. These are what Munyeki's study established.

Attitudes of parents who are educated and those who are not are conspicuously different. Michelle and Ayana (2006) in their research noted that parents who were educated had better attitudes towards their children's schooling than the illiterate ones. A research done by UNESCO (2000) highlighted that illiteracy level of adults is high especially in Kenya and Africa at large (though literacy in Kenya has recently increased to around 81% as indicated earlier). The research further shows that 60-70% of the African adults are illiterate. Lazar and Darlington (1982) noted that parents who were educated had a positive attitude towards their children schooling while the illiterate ones seemed not to care. According to Cotton and Greens (1988), most of the successful programs are initiated by educated parents. Herzog (1969) noted that literate parents rate or give first priority to their children's education. The educated parents want their children to learn how to read, write and work in school as a means to increase intellectual competitiveness and ability. A study carried out by Multiple Indication Cluster Survey (MICS), UNICEF/GOK (2000), showed that 29.5% of children whose mothers had Secondary Education were enrolled in ECE centers as

compared to 10.7% whose mothers had only completed primary school and 12.4% of those whose mothers had no schooling.

It is noted in the literature above that ignorance affected enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. This study, therefore, found out how ignorance influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub-county. However, the literature above did not specify whether ignorance resulted from illiteracy or from any other factor.

### ***2.2.2: Poverty***

In the previous subsection, it was identified that ignorance influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE Centers. Enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers requires money, and therefore poverty influenced the enrolment. The poverty ratio (or the income-to-needs ratio, as it is sometimes called) is a family's income divided by the appropriate poverty threshold for the family.

Poverty and economic challenges of the time is a factor to lack of motivation, negative self-concept in terms of academic abilities, failure at school, domestic violence, delinquency and higher drop outs (Abagi and Odipo, 1997). The income level is usually evaluated by the parent's occupation hence it is a factor that determines access to education. In Mexico, education expanded significantly between 1970-2000. Enrolment rose from 9.7 million in 1970 to 21.6 million in 2000. The poorest states like Nayarit and Chiapas continued to have low enrolment and attendance in schools, hence the Mexican government introduced several programs and the main one was "Oportunidades" formerly known as PROGRESSA which provided grants to low income families so that children could attend school and health services (Abagi and Odipo, 1997).

Research has indicated that children of wealthier households are less likely to drop out of school than their counterparts from poorer households. The former have been reported to perform better. It has been observed that the wealth effect is significant for both boys and girls, urban and rural children. The economic constraints emerge as an important barrier to learning achievement. The impact of economic constraints is not always immediate but cumulative, and can eventually lead to children dropping out of school (Koech Report, 1999).

In Latin America, Africa and South Asia, poor academic performance is prevalent among the pupils or students from low socio-economic background, in the rural than the urban regions and again among girls than boys (Koech Report, 1999). Factors influencing this school wastage according to Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985) are poverty which may give rise to illness, malnutrition, absenteeism, the opportunity cost of schooling for poor families, cultural factors, which affect girls in particular, inappropriate curriculum and examinations which is excessively academic and designed to prepare majority of pupils for upper secondary and higher education and a shortage of secondary school places, which leads to repetition at the primary level (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985).

In Africa, it is stated that more than 70% of the continent's poor people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for food and livelihood yet development assistance to agriculture is decreasing, Myers (1995). In Sub-Saharan Africa, more than 218 million people live in extreme poverty-majority of them being from Eastern and Southern Africa, an area with one of the world's highest population. Rural poverty in

many parts of Africa has its roots in the colonial system and the policy of institutional restraints that it imposed on poor people. In recent decades, economic policies and institutional structures have been modified to close the gap. Structural adjustments have dismantled the existing rural systems but have not always built new ones. In many institutional economies, the rural situation is marked by continuing stagnation and poor production, low incomes and the rising vulnerability of the poor people. The rural population is poorly organized and often isolated beyond the reach of safety needs and poverty reduction tends to favor those in urban areas (UNESCO (2000). Poverty is not only felt in African countries, other countries outside Africa also experience poverty. This study sought to establish how poverty influenced enrollment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub-county.

In Argentina, 58% of the children between one month and six years live in poverty and are at risk of contracting avoidable diseases due to high rates of malnutrition, low access to basic services, lack of education, early care and stimulation; Raxana, (2007) observes that only 4 out of each 100 children has access to integral attention and only 16 out of 100 children between 4 and 6 years attend a Pre-school Centre. In addition to this, there is a wide culture and social economic diversity in Argentina's population. ECDE program is not a priority for the government and interestingly, by extension the society. It is recorded that in the country, even families in poor households, do not care much about school-age going children.

In Brazil in 2003, the overall schooling rate of 2-6+year-olds was 38%. However, while the schooling rate was 68% for 4-6+year-olds, it was 12% for 2-3+year-olds; a

substantial gap between the two age groups. For the most part, Government of Brazil (2007) states that early childhood education in Brazil starts at 4+ years.

Brazil is no exception when it comes to socio-economic disparities in access to early childhood education services. Children from poor families are less likely to access early childhood education. This shows that poverty influence education of children. However, the study failed to mention how poverty influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers. This study sought to establish how poverty influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County (Government of Brazil, 2007).

As in any country, children in rural Brazil have more limited access to early childhood services than their urban counterparts .The schooling rate for below 6 years in rural areas was 27% in 2003 compared to 40% in urban areas, Government of Brazil; (2007).

The profile of rural poverty is in such a way that rural people live in poor households where labor is the primary source of income. Some are small- scale farmers, nomads and pastoralists, casual laborers, displaced people, jobless youth and landless people. The U.N convention on the right of the child, (1991) lists various rights that should be accorded to all children all over the world. Among the rights are: right to education, play, association, non-discrimination, role of parents and family in protecting the child and health care. The U.N (1991) in article 28 stipulates that a child has the right to education and the state should make basic education free and compulsory. Education in many countries according to UNESCO (2003) is not free and compulsory; this has made children from poor households not to access basic

education yet even the UN's sustainable development goal number 4 vouches for education. In Kenya, since 1980, the economy has been devastated by the declining world market prices of agricultural products (Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan 2001-2004). The Welfare monitoring Survey (1997) set absolute poverty at Ksh.1239 per month in rural area and Ksh.2648 per month in urban areas, Statistical Abstract, Nairobi, (2001). According to this definition, 1.5 million Kenyans were poor in 1997 compared to 3.7 million in 1972-73 and 11.5 million in 1994. An estimated 56% of the Kenyan population of which 8.6 million are children live below the poverty line. The causes of poverty include low agricultural productivity, insecurity, unemployment, low wages, poor governance and shortage of land, inadequate and poor infrastructure, high cost of social services including education and health. A combination of ignorance and poverty prevents children from partaking of the rich experiences offered by pre-schools which provide a head start to a solid foundation for development of lifelong learning (Maslow's Theory, 1970).

In India, most parents fail to take their children to school since they are not able to purchase them uniforms and other study materials. In Bangladesh, most dropouts come from lower income families (Sabates, 2010). According to the Republic of Kenya (2002), about 56% of the Kenyan population living below the poverty line is unable to enroll their children in school due to high cost of schooling both directly and indirectly. KIPPRA (2004) notes that under the FPE and FDSE programs, parents and local communities continue to meet some educational expenses such as building costs, uniform, transport and food. When these costs are very high, both the family and the society may neglect the provision of education. Financial constraints are the main causes of children not enrolling or completing school especially in hunger

stricken, ASAL and hardship areas. Children whose parents cannot afford fees go to school irregularly and in the long run drop out of school (Abagi and Odipo, 1997).

According to World Bank (2012), in Africa, children were educated and cared for by their parents and the society all together. Traditional African education was basically practical in nature. Its purpose was to help in character development, physical development, attitudes and actual life experiences to enable one to live a full and productive life in the society. Learning took place at all the time and anywhere unlike the formal and structured Kindergarten education with fixed timetable. According to Fredrich (2010) a child's education begun at birth unlike the recently adopted ECE Program where the child waits to age 3 to start basic formal education that is related to babysitting instructions or age 4-5 to get into nursery school that is purely book and examination oriented.

Normally, children were taught their first language generally known as mother tongue as soon as they start to speak. When the child is able to speak, they are asked questions to test how much they have learnt. Children learn by imitating or listening to their parents/guardians. However, how this influence enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers is not yet known.

A research which was done by Makoti (2004) showed that parent's income determined access to quality and relevance of ECE in Kwale. The researcher noted that poor parents found it hard to enroll their children in good schools because the schools charged higher fees to cater for among others, payment of salaries and other emoluments. This is in line with what was in the National ECDE policy framework

(2006) which indicated that parents have to pay for ECDE teachers. Poor parents were found to be unable to pay ECDE teachers and therefore, failed to enroll their children. This idea is supported by Van de Linde (2005) who states that children from poor families lack access to schools. This is in line with the current study. However, the current study sought to establish if the same influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County which geographically is different. The time factor may have also changed the state of things.

In terms of enrollment, *Ng'eno* (2012) explained that in Kenya, pre-school education has been going down in terms of enrollment. Majority of parents preferred to keep their children at home until they attained the age of six years to join standard one and thereby qualifying them for free primary education. The parents did this to avoid pre-school payment, arguing that the government should provide for free pre-school education as well. At this age the child is taken straight to standard one, which is free, without going through an ECDE program. Whereas *Ngeno's* study found that lack of money to pay school fees was the major deterring factor, *Johnson* (2011) indicate that house chores, equally made parents not take their children to school.

Due to low income levels, parents prefer that their children be working on nonprofessional jobs so as to supplement their low income rather than schooling. Parents with low income involve their children in home activities even during school days. This leads to school dropouts because children have to obey their parents. Though this may affect children's education, it does not point out how it influences enrolment of children in ECDE centers which is the main objective of this study. Poor parents are also unable to properly feed their children so instead of children going to

school they provide labor in various ways to get food (Daily nation, 2011). Children in different parts of Kenya have unique needs (Koech and Njenga, 2006) for example, observe that children from relegated to a lower and inferior groups, usually in arid and semi-arid regions need food and shelter more than anything else. These children spend time to satisfy their basic needs and boost their homestead income as well.

Alleviating poverty remains one of the key challenges in many developing economies. In Kenya, a recent nation-wide survey, the 2015/16 Kenya Integrated Household and Budget Survey, (KIHBS) found that the overall national poverty headcount dropped from 46.6% in 2005/6 to 36.1% in 2015/16 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Though there is a drop in poverty percentage, 36.1% is still high. This may still have a negative effect on children's education in general and enrolment in particular. However, the current study was to establish how poverty influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. There has, therefore, been some reduction in poverty across the country and across rural areas over the last decade.

Kenya has been described as highly unequal, ranking among the top ten most unequal countries in the world and fifth in Africa (SID, 2004). Inequality is worse in rural areas: the richest 20% of the rural and urban populations earn 62% and 51% of incomes, respectively (SID, 2004), while the bottom 20% earns 3.5 % of rural income and 5.4% of urban income (World Socialist Website, 2008). The literature on inequality has documented the positive and negative effects it can have on growth, a relationship that has been shown to be extremely non-linear and the causality of which has been greatly debated (Forbes, 2000 and Duflo and Banerjee, 2003).

Fifty six percent of the Kenyan population of which an estimated eight and a half million are children, live below the poverty line. According to Johnson (2011) the causes of poverty include low wages, unemployment, poor governance, low agricultural productivity, insecurity, and shortage of land. In addition, poverty is worsened by poor infrastructure and high cost of services such as education and health. The aforementioned factors hinder children from acquiring education from pre-schools which provide a basis for lifelong learning. Such parents propagate the risk of their children remaining poor and being caught up in the cycle of poverty which they grew in.

Poverty has a retrogressive impact on the development of children. Young children living in poverty tend to score poorly in exams (Black, Hess, & Berenson-Howard, 2000). These children will have poor school performance and are more likely to transfer poverty to the next generation. Children who do poorly at school are associated with a lower income as adults (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2007). Early intervention programs and pre-school education for young children can prevent the loss of potential in vulnerable children (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2007) and can have positive long-lasting effects on a child's development.

Due to poverty and illiteracy, most communities/parents, and the disadvantaged in particular, have not been actively supporting the development of ECDE in Kenya (Akwach, 2008). Besides, such parents are not ready to invest in the education and development of 0-5 year old children, arguing that primary education was declared 'free' by the government. Most parents, especially the illiterate and poor, in rural

areas, slums and ASAL regions have limited knowledge on the benefit of investing on care and education programs of children less than 4 years of age.

It has been noted in the literature above that poverty affect children's attendance and performance in school. However, this study intended to find out how poverty influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county, Homa Bay County.

### ***2.2.3: Attitude***

The home environment is the strongest predictor of children's language and academic skills. The quality of care and early learning in the home environment is influenced by factors including parental level of education (especially mothers), care giving practices, and parenting attitudes (Oruta, 2009). Parenting programs can promote protective factors such as the promotion of breastfeeding and caregiver attachment and they can also reduce risk factors associated with poor child development outcomes including inadequate stimulation, stunting, maternal depression and exposure to violence as noted by Ayot (1990). How this influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers remains a concern and is the objective of this study.

While the child is the first priority in early childhood, parents are second priority. Parents and teachers are partners in helping children learn. Parents are their children's first teacher and continue to have the primary responsibility for their children. Steiner, (1996) noted that one common quality of the most successful school in the country was the active involvement of parents and citizens in planning curriculum and instruction.

Still, on parents' attitude, Oruta (2009) states that wealthier and better educated parents utilize basic education and resources in a manner to improve pre-school conditions. This is difficult to match among the poor, uneducated parents. These families set their lifestyle and influences life chances for the child. The life which a family attaches to the school education, determines the motivation with which a child pursues basic education. In addition, children may be viewed as: growing plants that need nurturance, miniature adults, natural and national resources. The need to be nurtured as future investments is critical to the sustenance of a society and its ability to compete in the technological age. It is at pre-school level where most behavioral changes take place and are linked to the child's growing sense of their own identity and increasing independence. The child delights in mastering of new skills and enjoys exploring the world outside his/her home.

According to Bredekamp (1987) at this early stage, a child develops a personal independence, learns to choose and decides to accept the consequences of choice. It is in these years of a child's life that a parent's participation is essential for optimal development in early childhood education. She further indicates that this is done through, activating the individual potential that may be dominant through processes that are mutually interactive and independent. This shows that parents need to participate in the learning process of their children. as much as the scholars agree that parents' attitude have impact on children's education, they have not pointed out how it influences their enrollment in ECDE centers. Therefore, the current study sought to establish how parent's attitude influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

The attitude of parents who are educated and those who are not are conspicuously different. Chau and Ayana (2006) noted that parents who were educated had better attitudes towards their children's schooling than the illiterate ones. The study seems to relate attitude with the level of education of parents, however, this study sought to establish how attitude of parents (educated or uneducated) influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita sub county.

On the same note, Qadiri and Manhas (2009) conducted a study to assess how parental attitude towards pre-school education impacted early childhood education centers in India. The researchers found that most parents (81%) thought of pre-school education as a combination of concepts which included an age bound format related to preparation for primary schooling and provision of learning in an interactive manner. Most parents (25%) felt that children who attend early childhood development centers (ECD) cultivate good health and hygiene habits, develop pre literacy skills (19%) and communication skills (16%). Significant differences were found among the awareness of parents regarding the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) scheme. Most parents were aware about the nutrition facility but did not consider these centers as adequately equipped to provide pre-school education. Parents sending their children to regular pre-school centers were found to be less aware about ICDS scheme and its role in pre-school education. This can be said to be as a result of parent's attitude towards early childhood education even though the researchers were not clear on that. This study sought to find out how parent's attitude influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub county.

Stark, Gordon-Burns, Purdue, Rarere-Briggs and Turnock, (2012) conducted a study of parental attitudes towards pre-school among parents of children in New Zealand. The study found that most parents tended to have a low opinion of pre-school education. However, this study focused on attitudes of parents based on disability of children attending pre-schools. Johnson (2011) sought to investigate the teachers and parents attitude towards E.C.D.E centers in Kiambu County. From the findings, it was evident that some parents had varied views of the pre-school. Hiding in some cultural backgrounds 50% of the teacher respondents said that some parents abuse the pre-school going age children by giving them housework, babysitting or grazing duties compromising early enrolment into pre-schools. Parents' level of education was supported by majority of the respondents (teachers 66.7%) as being one of the factors influencing the time and rate of enrolling of the children in pre-schools. The study was in line with the current one on how parent's attitude influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers, however, that was done in Kiambu county, a region far away from Mbita sub county where the current study was carried out. Time has also elapsed since the study was done.

### **2.3: Influence of Teachers on Enrollment in ECDE centers**

This section sought to establish how teachers influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County. It was guided by three objectives; how training of ECDE teachers influenced enrollment, how learning materials influenced enrollment, and how remuneration of teachers influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

### **2.3.1: Training**

Pre-school teachers contribute immensely to the well-being and development of children (Campbell et al. 2002). Across the world, governments have placed immense attention to this cadre of teachers. In the United States of America for example, every state has its own set of minimum qualifications for people applying to be pre-school or elementary teachers. While some school jobs may only require a high school diploma, other positions require a college degree or a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. In the UK, India and Australia, pre-school teachers are expected to have a degree in Early Childhood education. According to Akwach (2008) about 44 per cent of Kenyan pre-school teachers are trained. Wangechi (2014) adds that a great challenge is the pre-school teachers; most teachers are untrained and have a misconception or lack of knowledge about early childhood development and care. She adds that where teachers have been trained, they are employed on very low salaries and therefore lack motivation. The situation is worse for teachers working in arid and semi-arid areas where infrastructure is poor and amenities are hard to come by such as Mbita. In addition, pre-school education in Kenya is not part of the 8-4-4 system. This makes pre-school teachers feel inferior to their counterparts in primary and secondary institutions.

There is an acute shortage of qualified teachers in most of the ECDE centers. According to Lila (2012) the man-power gap has been bridged by secondary school leavers who fail to join colleges. The high school leavers who become teachers in ECDE have little or no knowledge on how to teach pre-school children. However, the outcome of ECDE was not a concern in this study. The current study sought to

establish how training of teachers influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub county.

There is limited literature on the effect of teachers' qualifications on enrollment in pre-schools. Much of the available studies have concentrated on the effect of teachers' qualifications on performance of pre-school learners. This study sought to establish if a relationship existed between teachers' qualifications and enrolment in pre-schools.

According to Morrison, Bachman, & Connor (2005) the teacher's pedagogy, classroom management strategies, and interaction with students in the classroom can determine how much is learned. A survey by GOK and UNICEF (1995) revealed that lack of teacher training and poor teacher retention was a key barrier to effective curriculum implementation in both primary and high schools. The study show that teacher training influenced curriculum implementation, however, it does not show how it influence enrolment in ECDE centers which is the concern of this study. The key to getting teachers committed to an innovation is to enhance their knowledge of the program. This means teachers need to be trained and workshops organized for professional development. Certainly, an adequate teacher education program should include curriculum development if teaching is to be a profession and if opportunities for learners are really to be improved. Content knowledge aside, it is only when a teacher can communicate effectively that he/she will be able to draw upon the various socio-cultural contexts of the learner to facilitate learning. The current study however, sought to establish how training of teachers influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

Constructive working relationships between teachers and parents can enhance adults' knowledge and understanding of children and children's learning opportunities, and so contribute to children's learning and wellbeing at home and in the ECDE setting. Children who see their parents working closely together with their teachers gain a sense of continuity and of being cared for and experience a trusting and secure environment in which they can learn and grow (Whalley & the Pen Green Centre Team, 2001, p. 95). However, how this influences enrollment of children in ECDE centers remains a concern of which this study sought to establish.

On the same note, Bronfenbrenners (1979) offers a theoretical rationale for teachers and parents working in close collaboration. Children's most direct day-to-day reality is within their immediate settings of home, early childhood education service, and neighborhood. Children's interaction with significant others and their experiences within these settings influence their wellbeing, learning, and development. The quality of children's experiences is also influenced by surrounding ecological systems, such as workplace and community, and the macro system of cultural and ideological beliefs and values. The interrelationships between these systems influence the child's learning environment. However, it does not state how that can influence enrollment of children in ECDE which the current study sought to establish.

The Government of New Zealand's statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices (Crown, 1996) sets out mandatory requirements for ECE services to work in partnership with parents so as to promote and extend the learning and development of each child who attends or receives the service. There are specific requirements for communication and consultation with parents, especially with regard to their

children's progress, interests, abilities, and areas for development, and for management and educators to acknowledge and respect the values, needs, and aspirations of parents, where appropriate.

In New Zealand, Carr et al. (2001) and Kei Tua o te Pae (Ministry of Education, 2004) have discussed how particular forms of assessment can be effective in encouraging parents, children, and teachers to participate in an ECDE community, and to contribute to the education program. Narrative approaches to assessment that describe learning experiences as a story or series of stories over time are valuable in enabling learning to be set within context, and providing data for interpretation. They make sense and are of interest to a range of participants, including children and parents. Credit assessments, describing episodes of achievement, foreground what children can do and in this way encourage a view of the child as a learner. Assessment can draw on parental/guardian knowledge of their own children's performance and are useful in planning for further learning, whether at home or in the ECDE setting.

A study by Moyo, Wadesango and Kurebwa (2012) on factors that affect the implementation of early childhood development programs in Zimbabwe acknowledged effects of teacher qualification on the implementation of effective ECD programs. Most of the ECD teachers were unqualified. Interviews also confirmed that unqualified teachers lacked knowledge and skills in implementing ECD programs hence hindered the implementation of the programs. Unqualified ECD teachers lacked basic skills in ECD syllabus interpretation hence they resorted to formal teaching which went against the policy. Smith (2000) maintained that further education results in higher quality interactional patterns. Therefore unqualified teachers engaged in

ECDE programmer might hinder quality programs implementation. Another study by Moyo et al, (2012) revealed that teachers' attitudes were indicated by genuine interest in their work. Though the studies touched on the impact of training of teachers on the implementation of programs, they never studied how the same influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers which the current study sought to establish.

### **2.3.2: Teaching and Learning Resources**

This section dwells on how teaching and learning resources influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers. The teaching and learning resources referred to include any spoken, written or visual text or activity used or conducted by schools, for example: text books, novels, films, plays, radio programs, multimedia, digital learning resources including video, audio, text, animations and images, lectures and speeches. Lewis and Harclerod (2003) views textbooks as having advantages which include economy, individualism of instruction and improvement of teaching practices. The element of economy is seen from the fact that the textbooks can be used for a longer period of time. The textbook helps to individualize instruction. It helps the learner to proceed with the learning process at a rate determined by his or her abilities.

Teaching and learning materials are critical ingredients in learning, and the intended program cannot be easily implemented without them. For curriculum to be fully implemented as per plan, schools should be supplied with adequate materials such as textbooks, other teaching and learning resources in order to enable teachers and learners to play their role satisfactorily in the curriculum implementation process. No meaningful teaching and learning, which is a component of curriculum implementation, takes place without adequate materials. The materials must therefore

be available to the learners in adequate quality and quantities, and at the required time to enable implementation of various educational tasks (Mungai, 2014).

Learning resources play an important role in enhancing the teaching process. They assist the teacher in teaching by modifying the teaching situation. Resource use involves a broad range of human senses at the same time in the learning process. This facilitates learning and helps in conveying the intended message. According to Saunder (2011) eleven percent (11%) of what is learnt is through the sense of hearing and eighty three percent is through the sense of sight. He further states that only twenty percent of what is seen is retained in comparison to fifty percent of what is both seen and heard. Hence the use of more senses leads to more effective learning. This is supported by Njogah and Jowi (2009) when they say that for proper communication and learning, students want certain media available and used not because media are interesting and seem to make school time pass quickly but because when various senses are used in learning, there will be greater perception, understanding and reinforcement and hence retention of the subject matter. This of course is notwithstanding the fact that resources ability to make learning interesting, equally contribute to learning positively.

Close to that, Nguru (2006) indicates that overcrowding in classes affects teaching and learning. If children are crowded in their sitting positions, teachers find it difficult to move round a class. This means that teachers will not be able to teach with ease all children in order to check their individual work as they sit working in their places. Inability to move freely in a class means that the teacher can neither help the needy children nor can he/she mark the pupils exercises as they continue working. However,

the current study sought to investigate how materials influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

On the same note, Ouma (2008) also observes on the importance of the use of teaching resources in the classroom by saying that they encourage learners to participate in the learning process, motivate learners, cater for individual differences and enable learners to gain experience by use of the senses. Teaching resources can be used to perform various tasks. A good teacher does much more than merely communicates information. He/she will follow up the learners' progress, set him/herself tasks to give practice, discuss such issues and attempt to create interest and relationships for the subject (Rorniszowski, 2005). Kariuki (2009) and Ifukho (2005) in their studies point out that most primary schools in Kenya lack resources and that this impacts negatively on performance of learners. However, the studies were concerned with how lack of resources influenced performance of children which is contrary to what the current study sought to investigate. The current study sought to investigate how teaching materials influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County. Another study conducted by the World Bank and reported by Onwu (2005) indicated that textbooks and other instructional resources contribute 66 percent to positive learning in Africa. This portrays the importance of learning materials on the performance of children in schools. However, the current study sought to establish how learning materials influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

A study by Moyo, Wadesango and Kurebwa (2012) on factors that affect the implementation of early childhood development programs in Zimbabwe revealed that

early Childhood Development centers lacked essential resources for use. Both school heads and teachers acknowledged shortage of basic resources at their respective ECDE centers. Lack of resources was attributed to poor economic status of peasant parents as well as lack of government support. ECDE centers lacked adequate qualified teachers to manage them. This reduced teacher effectiveness as one teacher had to attend to many children. Chivore (1995) maintained that no institution can function without financial resources to back up its programs. Therefore if ECDE centers lacked basic resources, proper implementation of ECDE programs could not be realized. However, the researches never studied how lack of teaching and learning resources influenced enrolment in ECDE centers and this is what the present study sought.

A study conducted by Bitok (2013) also found that ECDE centres lacked the necessary learning materials and resources required for effective implementation of the curriculum. Goffin and Wilson (2003) in their study state that; teachers have a variety of critical roles in supporting integration of children's play in ECDE curriculum. The study further confirms that these roles include; providing materials for play, encouraging high quality play, structuring environments for play, modeling play and introducing children to new play opportunities. The study recommended that teachers should look after children, give them nutrition supplement through initiating a sustaining feeding program, play with children, teach them the alphabet and numerals and make them be aware of their cultural patterns through play, storytelling or music activities. However, the study failed to highlight how learning materials influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers. This is what this study sought to establish. The study by Goffin and Wilson (2003) also differs from this study in that it

was conducted in USA's pre-schools while the present study was conducted in the pre-schools in Mbita Sub-county, Kenya. The environment and time may make variations be possible.

A study by Mweru (2012) concurs with Goffin and Wilson's (2003) findings when it postulates that, teachers should also take care of their children's good grooming and hygiene; encourage children to work, discuss and solve problems in groups; introduce children to Mathematics, Language, Science, Social Studies, Play activities and games. The study emphasized that teachers are expected to use games, music, artwork, films, books, charts and the like to teach basic skills. Mweru's study focused on the teachers influence on children's selection and use of play materials in the whole country, while this study focused on how availability of resources to teachers influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

Still on the influence of learning materials, Ogott et al (2011) carried out another study on teachers' attitudes towards selection, development and use of language materials with regards to; target task, human, administrative and physical factors. Though the study used descriptive survey design as the current study, it employed attitude test questionnaires only as a method of data collection, while the current study employed interview schedule and questionnaires as methods of data collection. It also did not examine the factors influencing enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers which is the focus of the current study.

The study (Ogott et al, 2011) also found that most teachers had a positive attitude towards target task, human factors, physical factors and administrative factors with regard to language, material selection, development and use. This study on the other

hand examined the role of availability of resources to teachers in enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

A study conducted by Obuchere (2011) in Emuhaya District in Kenya on factors influencing implementation of ECDE curriculum pointed out that; ECDE teachers play a key role in the preparation of learning environment and play materials in ECDE centers to ensure school/home or parent/teacher relationship is achieved. The study differs from the current study because it looked at factors influencing implementation of ECDE curriculum while this study was meant to find out factors influencing enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers.

### **2.3.3: Remuneration**

This section investigated the influence of remuneration of teachers on enrollment of children in ECDE centers. The main reason for this phenomenon is that since the implementation of FPE, poor parents are choosing to withdraw their children from ECDE centers and/or keep them at home until they reach the age of primary school entry. They refuse to pay the fees for ECDE on the grounds that ECDE, like primary education, should be free.

Decreased enrolment has meant reduced salaries for ECDE teachers. In Kenya, ECDE teachers' salaries are in most cases covered by parental fees, unlike their counterparts in primary schools who are paid by the government according to an official teacher salary scale. In ECDE Centers, fees is collected in proportion to the number of children one enrolls and are mostly, if not entirely, used to cover teachers' salaries. Thus, the level of teachers' remuneration depends on the total number of children

enrolled as well as parents' ability to pay fees. As a result, the reduced number of ECDE enrolment brought about by FPE has been a blow to teachers, whose remuneration was meagre and unstable already before the introduction of FPE (Mukui and Mwaniki, 1995). Parents have increasingly become reluctant in paying ECDE and FPE and therefore making it hard to gather resources from them. Cases of increased job insecurity and ECDE Centre closures are on the rise, particularly in poor communities.

Relevant strategies should be geared towards motivating teachers and providing a child-friendly environment in ECDE centers. Satisfying teachers' hygiene needs, including favorable terms and conditions of service, a manageable workload, good remuneration as well as providing an adequate physical working environment is expected to result in motivating them (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 2009). Makoti (2004) found good conditions and terms of (private) pre-school teachers' service to be a source of motivation. Teachers' age and gender had a significant relationship with teachers working conditions and hence implementation of ECDE program. However, the studies never tackled how remuneration influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers. This is what this present study sought to establish.

A Study conducted by Njoroge (2011) in Thogoto and Karai Zone in Kikuyu Division, Kikuyu District in Kenya on factors influencing children enrolment in pre-school education mentioned the role of pre-school teachers as one of the major factors influencing children enrolment in pre- school education. The study pointed out that the role of teachers in early childhood education is highly influenced by their; training, attitude, motivation and remuneration. Njoroge's study is in line with this

one in relation to factors influencing enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. However, it was done way back in 2011 in a sub-county far away from the county of the current study. This is what makes the present study with undertaking.

#### **2.4: Influence of Governmental on Enrollment in ECDE centers**

This objective sought to establish how the government influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers. It was guided by the sub-headings namely; influence of Free Primary Education, school feeding program, and infrastructure.

##### **2.4.1: Free Primary Education**

Education is a basic need for every child, and a vehicle through which poverty, ignorance and disease could be eradicated. Kenya has invested in education in order to realize its development blueprint, vision 2030. In 1990 E.F.A conference in Jomtien, world countries reaffirmed their commitment to develop education in Africa (U.N.E.S.C.O, 1990). However, this has been a challenge to many countries. The conference asserted that learning begins at birth, and this forced Kenya to include 3yr old children into preschools in her 1989-1993 development plan.

The government has been committed to E.F.A goals by providing basic education in pre-primary, primary and secondary school levels. At the pre-primary school level, it has been offered in E.C.D.E centers often attached to existing public and private primary schools. Many parents and guardians have been unaware of the importance of Early Childhood Education which promotes holistic development of children (Mutua and Wasike, 2010). This has contributed to the low enrolment in public E.C.D.E. centers. Early years of life need to be utilized because these are the years that the

child develops rapidly either physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. They form the milestone that lay the foundation of adulthood.

The results of government financing in the primary and secondary levels of education have been two-fold. Positively, it has released the parents' financial burden in basic education, but negatively it has encouraged a culture of free education that has impacted negatively on E.C.D.E, expected to lay the foundation of the two levels. Little attention has been given to consider this implication on Early Childhood Education (Keith and Caillods, 2001). There had been a rapid increase of enrolment in E.C.D.E from 483,148 pupils in 1982 to 1,204,606 in 2003 (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Despite this increase, the G.E.R in pre-primary schools declined from 35.4% in 1990 to 33.4% in 1999, with 574,249 children of 4 to 5yrs old being out of school and many who entered primary school do not pass through pre-primary schools. This has been due to minimal government support to E.C.D.E and lack of community awareness on the importance of E.C.D.E.

Since 2003, the mandate of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (M.O.E.S.T) expanded to cater for E.C.D.E, but services for children under 3yrs of age were not well developed (U.N.E.S.C.O, 2005). Since the introduction of F.P.E in 2003, poor parents have tended to keep their children at home until they attain primary school going age. Many parents have refused to pay E.C.D.E school fees on the argument that like public primary schools, E.C.D.E should also be free.

At the sub-county level, inspection of schools which is done by Zonal Inspectors of Schools has become more concentrated on primary schools and less frequent in

E.C.D.E thus lowering its quality. Despite the importance of E.C.D.E, the government only allocates it less than 1% of its annual budget. In 2009, Uwezo Kenya conducted an assessment on basic literacy and numeracy skills of children aged 6 — 16 years in 70 out of 158 districts in Kenya. At Std. 2, 85% of the pupils could not read English, 81% could not read in Kiswahili and 79% could not do subtraction of sums. The findings also showed that 50% of the pupils were not enrolled in E.C.D.E; many pupils were older than their classes. A.S.A.L.S were found to have low enrolment and attendance. In each class, pupils with educated parents performed better than their uneducated counterparts (Wikipedia, 2010).

Training of E.C.D.E teachers remains a priority for enhanced quality of E.C.D.E in Kenya (Mbugua, 2010). According to the study, the T.S.C has been unable to absorb the E.C.D.E teachers citing inadequate funds to employ them. The World Bank sponsored a project from 1997 to 2004 to improve capacity building by training E.C.D.E for service delivery and meeting nutritional, health and learning needs of children. In order to integrate early childhood and formal learning and holistic development, the government extended E.C.D.E to cover from 0 - 8yrs. M.O.E.S.T also recognized and detached it from primary education, into a subsector under Directorate of Basic Education.

Teachers in primary schools have reported that children who skipped E.C.D.E had difficulties in coping with lessons in primary school and performed poorly (Mbugua 2010). The study further established that the low salaries for teachers in public E.C.D.E make them feel inferior to their primary counterparts in the same compound. This is worsened by the notion and condemnation by the society that E.C.D.E recruit

teachers from students with low grades as reflected by the respect they get from the society. Due to low enrolment as a result of parents who skip E.C.D.E, the learners are often merged with class one pupils under primary school teachers who are not trained on multi-grade teaching.

Teacher quality is determined by training. A World Bank capacity building through N.A.C.E.C.E and D.I.C.E.C.E from 1997-2002 reduced the teacher: pupil ratio from 1:89 to 1:41. The curriculum developed by K.I.C.D is child centered and puts emphasis on holistic development of the child. However, E.C.D.E teachers and centers must buy materials. This however, does not give the picture of how it influences enrollment in ECDE centres. This study therefore, seeks to explore how free primary education influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centres in Mbita Sub County.

According to UNESCO (2006), enrolment in E.C.D.E had been declining in Kenya even before the F.P.E was introduced, but F.P.E has also been found to accelerate reduction in participation rates (U.N.E.S.C.O, 2006). F.P.E has enabled over 1.3 million poor children in Kenya to benefit from primary education, raising enrolment from 86.8% in 2002 to 101.5% in 2004 (MOEST, 2005). An increasing number of children are not benefiting from pre-school experiences. They move from home directly into primary schools. Such children lack the head start preparation for pre-schooling given in the pre-schools which is known to cushion them against the hostile primary experience is Standard One (MOEST, 2005).

An assessment study of Free Primary Education (FPE) carried out jointly by the MOEST and UNESCO in February 2004 found that ECDE programs had almost collapsed because children's enrollment had decreased after the introduction of FPE. The parents refused to pay for ECDE on the ground that it should also be free. ECDE managers and local authorities are now faced with parents who resist contributing to ECDE centers. Since teachers' salaries in ECDE centers depend entirely on parental contribution, the lack of funding leads to the loss of teachers and eventually the closure of ECDE services (UNESCO Policy Brief, 2005). A study conducted by UNESCO (2006) showed that some of the District and Zonal Inspectors of schools are reportedly spending more time visiting primary schools but fail to visit ECDE centers. According to UNESCO (2006), MOEST has remained silent on the issue of children's attendance in pre-schools because these services are mainly provided by parents/guardians and local communities. This affects the quality of the services in these institutions.

The literature above noted the impact of Free Primary Education on ECDE. However, it did not capture how it influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers. This study sought to establish how Free Primary Education influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

#### ***2.4.2: School Feeding Program***

The term school feeding has been used over the years to mean the provision of meals or snacks at school to reduce children's hunger during the school day. According to the World Food Program (2004) school feeding has become an effective strategy in increasing school enrollment. The report added that school feeding has multiple

benefits. In addition to increasing school enrollment it also contributes to achievement of other development goals such as reducing child mortality through health and nutrition interventions. Several nations and multinational organizations have committed a lot of resources to school feeding programs. A mention of a few of these will suffice. The World Food Program (WFP) had offered a comprehensive school feeding programs in some sixty eight countries of the world in 2008 (Bundy, Burbano, Grosh, Gelli, Jukes & Drake, 2009). In the United States of America, the school feeding program is known as the National School Lunch Program. It covers 99% of public schools (Schanzenbach, 2009). This has made the life of children comfortable in the schools.

School feeding programs are common in both developing and industrialized countries, (Del Rosso, 1999). The objective of the feeding programs is to reduce hunger so that the learners can concentrate and learn better. In addition, it aims at attracting learners to school and to have them attend regularly. According to Ahmed (2003), children affected by hunger and malnutrition as well as ill-health did not have the same potential to do well at school in comparison with well-nourished and healthy children. Sometimes hungry children do not go to school but instead involve themselves in child labour to get food. This may have influence on enrollment of children in ECDE centres which the present study sought to establish.

Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) caters for children between 0-3 years and 3-6 years of age. The ECDE programmes are largely provided by communities, individuals and local authorities and are crucial for social, physiological and cognitive development of children. some county governments have also included

ECDE into the feeding programmes (The Standard News Paper, May 19, 2020, p, 17). It lays a firm foundation for primary, secondary and further education, exposing children to various experiences that enhance their development, prepare them for high-level professions and ultimately help them to lead a better life, (Cueto, 2005).

Many countries have come up with school feeding programmes. These have been intended to benefit the child. In Britain, day nurseries and infant schools stressing education were established in the early 19th century. By 1901, 43 percent of 2-5 year olds were attending these schools and England seemed well on the way to providing a voluntary but free educational service for all young children from the age of 2 or 3, if parents chose to avail themselves of it, until 5, when compulsory education began. The government also provided free food to the learners.

In France and Italy, the developments began with 19th century charitable institutions for poor, deprived, often abandoned children (David and Lezine, 1974; Pistillo, 1989). Later, in France, the programs serving 3-5 year olds were taken over by the Ministry of Education in 1836 and integrated into the public school system in 1886.

In South Africa, the South African Department of Health introduced a national-scale primary school feeding program. This program was subsequently taken over by the Department of Education in 2004. The principles of South Africa's school feeding program (SFP) are outlined in Section 18 of the constitution, which declares the provision of basic education a right for all. The National School Nutrition Program (NSNP) in South Africa aims to foster better quality education by enhancing children's learning capacity, encouraging regular attendance and punctuality,

decreasing gender disparity, addressing micronutrient deficiencies, and alleviating short-term hunger by providing 30% of daily energy requirements of the child . Additionally, the three key pillars of South Africa's national school feeding policy are: to have a school feeding program in place; to use school gardens to stimulate local farm production; and to promote healthy lifestyles (Cueto, 2005).

The school feeding program initiative in Kenya did not start with the collaboration of world Food program (WFP) and the Kenya government in 1980. It existed even before 1969 and it was managed by the National School Feeding Council (NSFC). In his speech while outlining KANU election manifesto blueprint in 1969, president Mzee Jomo Kenyatta noted that school feeding program, which was then operating in some areas, would be expanded to cover other parts of the country. KANU believed that only healthy children could utilize fully the opportunities provided by schools to develop their full intellectual potential (KANU Manifesto 1969). This attested to the crucial role of the program in the child's development.

WFPs new five-year development program (2009-2013) emphasized the need to hand the program over to the Kenyan Government after 28 years of assistance. Management responsibilities are gradually being transferred. The government receives external assistance for purchasing and providing food for the program, and is responsible for food distribution to each assisted school. One interesting, innovative approach to dealing with school feeding challenges in Kenya has been the development of computer-based monitoring system jointly run by the Ministry of Education and the WFP. This tool is designed to gather timely reports from school feeding project review committees and has resulted in the identification of poor

management practices and the need for assistance in vulnerable areas (Alderman, Gilligan and Lehrer, 2008).

In Brazil, schools are required to purchase 30% of food from the local communities. In South Africa, over 8.8 million children from marginalized provinces get their mid-day meals from school (Bundy et al., 2009). In Ecuador and South Africa, structured school feeding units have been established to cater for the feeding needs of learners (Drake et al., 2016).

In Kenya, the government through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) developed the National School Health Policy in 2008 whose rationale is to improve learner health and nutrition (Republic of Kenya, 2015). On a similar note, the New Partnership for Africa Development aims to increase children direct access to food through School Feeding Program with a target of 50 million children by 2020 (WFP, 2009). WFP (2009) points out that the program is expensive not only for many governments but also for donors. This is supported by a study done by the Ministry of Education (2009) which pointed out that, the government was facing financial challenges in funding the school feeding programs in Kenya arid and semi-arid regions.

Research indicates that the implementation of the initiative increased access and promoted retention at both pre-primary and primary school levels (RoK, 2015). Home Grown School Meals (HGSM) program carried out under the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology has seen over 1.5 million children fed at primary school level. Several studies have been conducted in this area. A study carried out by Mungai

(2004) found that school feeding programs played a major role in enhancing learning and school attendance. The debate on sustainability of the programs in terms of adequacy of supplies and organization has however remained a recurrent theme (Bundy et al., 2009). From the research findings, food provision in schools plays a significant role in child retention. The results shows that although most schools have implemented the school feeding policy, parents play a vital role in funding the feeding program, despite the fact that it was meant to cushion children from vulnerable circumstances (Kiilu & Mugambi, 2019). Despite the vital role played by school feeding programs, there is dearth of information on its role on the enrollment of children in ECDE centers. The current study sought to establish the influence of school feeding initiative on the enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

The Kenyan Education Support Program provided an institutional framework by including school feeding as one of the main components of the School Health, Nutrition, and Feeding Program, and the 2008 National Nutrition and Food Security Policy included a section on school meals and the need to enhance and expand the school feeding program. The current schools covered by the program include pre-primary and primary schools in arid and semi-arid areas, schools in unplanned urban settlements of Nairobi, and early childhood development centers in arid districts. Children in the beneficiary schools receive a midday meal, with children in slum schools and early childhood development centers receiving an additional 40 grams of corn soya .Some additional support for the unplanned settlements comes from the private sector and from non-governmental religious organizations operating in the area. The full cost of running the school feeding program in Kenya, including

community contribution, is estimated to be \$28 per child per year (Hall, Drake & Bundy, 2001).

School feeding programs themselves contribute to enhanced enrolment. Several factors influence the enrollment of students in the primary grades. Children in poor health start school later in life or not at all. A study in Nepal found that the probability of attending school was 5% for stunted children versus 27% for children of normal nutritional status (Moock and Leslie, 1986). In Ghana, malnourished children entered school at a later age and completed fewer years of school than better nourished children (Jacoby, 2002). A recent evaluation of an on-going school feeding program in Burkina Faso found that school canteens were associated with increased school enrollment especially among girls. This is in line with what the current study sought to establish in Mbita Sub County.

A small pilot school feeding program in Malawi was evaluated for its effect on enrollment. Over a three month period there was a 5% increase in enrollment compared to control schools over the same period (WFP, 2001). The same study found out that providing food as a take home ration can be an effective incentive for school attendance, but alternative programs, such as cash transfers, may be more cost-effective and simpler to administer. The study in Malawi confirms that feeding program increase enrollment in schools, however, it is not clear which level increased in enrollment. The current study sought to establish the position of the situation in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

In Bangladesh a program of school-based food distribution increased attendance rates by 20% versus a 2% decline in non-participating schools (Ahmed and Del Ninno, 2003). Attendance in FFE assisted schools was found to be 12 points higher than in non-assisted schools (70 percent compared to 58 percent respectively). Drop-out rates were also found to be 9 points lower in FFE assisted schools than in non-assisted schools (6 percent compared to 15 percent respectively). That may seem obvious. What's less obvious is that the consequences of low attendance are serious for all children and for the community, not just the pupils who miss school. The attendance rate indicates the average percentage of students attending school each day in the given year.

A 2008 study conducted by the Rodel Community Scholars at Arizona State University that tracked students from kindergarten through high school found that dropout patterns were linked with poor attendance at all levels. According to the National Centre for Student Engagement, schools are most effective in achieving high attendance rates when parents, school leaders and community members work together to focus on reducing absenteeism and truancy, and keeping children in schools (Ranivnder, 2007).

A study done by Akwach, (2008) noted that all public and community-based pre-schools (except those with school feeding programs supported by MOE/World Food Program/UNICEF) had no formal school-based feeding program. In addition, Akwach (2008) observed that in most private pre-schools there was a formal feeding program comprising a balanced diet. This finding is supported by Mbugua (2013) who also found that feeding programs were only available in private pre-schools. The programs

were financed by parents through the school fees paid to the centers. This had enhanced children's retention in the private ECDEs as the enrolment in such centers were either consistent or increasing. However, the studies failed to establish the position in public ECDE's. This study sought to establish how school feeding program influenced enrollment of children in public ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

On enrollment, Munyiri (2010) sought to determine the impact of the School Feeding Program (SFP) on enrollment and performance of pre-school children in Kikuyu, Kiambu County. The study found that school meals were a good way of channeling vital nourishment to the children which in turn helped promote the children's performance. This was realized as good performance was reflected in schools with the feeding program, compared to schools without it. The study also concluded that the program improved the attendance and enrolment in pre-schools. However, reviewed studies indicated that programs are not well implemented in pre-schools in Kenya. The majority of SFPs are found in private schools thus leaving out a large segment of the school going age of ECDE learners from benefitting from the program. The current study also aimed at establishing how school feeding program influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

The literature above shows the importance of feeding program in pre-primary schools. However, it does not show how it influences enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers which is the focus of this study.

### ***2.4.3: Infrastructure***

In this section, the study sought to investigate how infrastructure influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers. Infrastructure covers vast areas such as accessibility to school, school compound, classroom, lighting, etc. Good infrastructure gives both the teacher and the learner conducive environment to teach and learn respectively. In the USA, students and teachers comfort is considered the most important aspect of the school physical environment and it determines how easy learning will be. The study that was conducted by Huston-stein, Friedrich and Susman, (1977) established that a classroom is the most important area of the school because it is where both teaching and learning takes place (Huston-stein, Friedrich & Susman, 1977). According to Munyiri (2010), a child's moral behavior and degree of motivation depends on the conditions on which the class works. Munyiri (2010) continue to state that a learner cannot perform well where the condition is uncomfortable. According to a report by the World Bank (1988), poor infrastructure can highly affect school attendance. However, the studies did not cover how poor infrastructure influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centres. This is what the current study sought to establish.

In Nigeria, studies done by Farrant (1991) and Farombi (1998) defines physical facilities as facilities that are available to facilitate student learning. It includes classrooms, administrative offices, staffrooms, latrines, playing facilities, availability of tables, chairs, chalkboards, and shelves where instruments are arranged. Ayot (1990) shows that learning can take place when one interacts with the environment. According to Bogonko (1992), facilities constitute a strategic factor in organizational functioning because they determine to a very large extend, enrolment in public

primary schools. Oruta (2004), noted that improved infrastructure such as buildings enhances teaching and learning activities and therefore bring about improved academic performance. Studies done in Botswana and New Guinea revealed that factors such as physical facilities, classroom size, effective school discipline policies, administrative support, and effective leadership contribute to the number of pupils admission to a school. (Muli, 2005). However, the study was done in a different geographical area far from Mbita Sub-county where the current study was conducted. It also mentions schools generally and not a specific level of schooling as done in the present study.

Another study done by Orodho (2005) on access and participation in secondary education in Kenya, found that physical materials and infrastructures and learning materials are quite crucial to students learning. However, the FPE has utilized available facilities to the limit, occupied classrooms, desks are inadequate and so are textbooks thus making learner benefit a challenge. According to Muli (2005), the number of classes, availability of libraries, ratio of toilets verses students, defines an ideal environment for learning as it makes students feel safe and able to achieve their full intellectual, physical and emotional potential. Myers (1995) define school as an institution with specialized personnel apparatus, formal and stereo typed means of instructions, a curriculum and rational defined manifesto and objectives. However, it did not establish how that affect enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers which the current study sought to establish.

The quality of a learning institution is determined by the physical facilities available and this in turn defines the achievement and number of pupils enrolled to the school.

Studies show that lack of privacy for girls such as the absence or poor toilet facilities contribute to periodic truancy and ultimately lead to some girls dropping out of school (Kwesiga, 2002). According to Mutai (2006), provision of necessary learning materials and equipment develops an interest of learning to students and therefore encourages more students to study. All these studies point to the vital role of physical facilities and instructional resources in the instructional process. However, they fail to bring out how physical facilities influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers. This is what the current study sought to investigate.

United Nations (1993) and Children's Act (2001) recognize that education is one of the basic human right that every child should enjoy. Kenya is bound to the same international conventions that promises free education to primary pupils and is putting up policies to make primary education compulsory. Under the new (FPE) policy, every school receives a monetary aid from the Kenyan government twice every year that caters for class maintenance; improve furniture, purchase books and other learning materials. Due to this government intervention, these institutions are not expected to collect this fee from parents as before. This government intervention has contributed to high number of student's admission (Makori, 2003). However, the government wasn't fully prepared for the increased demands for infrastructure and other physical facilities and this has drastically raised their expenditure and therefore brought about fight for the limited resources. Schools lost revenue for lack of tuition fee .According to Glennester and Kremer (2011) even though the government intervened in providing resources to schools and got rid of tuition fee, parents still face the challenge of providing other materials such us uniforms, learning materials, pay for transport and provide meals to their children and therefore still affects school

attendance. The fees are especially difficult for marginalized children especially those from rural and financially underprivileged communities. Acker and Hardman (2001), point out that unavailability of learning resources, poor conditions of classrooms, writing boards and text books are factors that hinder the progress of learning in schools. This is seen in the Kenyan school situation at virtually all the levels.

According to African Education in Focus Journal (2010), Besides failure of students to read the available books, other problems faced by this institutions are inadequate supply of structures such as desks/chairs, tables, maps, study pictures and posters. ,reading books are not the only problem which faces schools in the side of teaching materials and equipment. The journal therefore concludes that for every successful learning process the teachers need to plan and prepare adequately and use relevant learning materials during their teachings. This means that the availability of adequate education resources cannot be downplayed in the journey to excelling academically at whatever level of learning. However, that was not in the scope of the current study. The current study sought to find out how it influences enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

In most cases, books, charts, maps and other teaching and learning resources are inadequate. The quality of the available learning materials is low. While in other cases, the materials are not learner friendly as they are full of stereotyping, poorly developed, full of errors, and even at times gender biased. This affects the quality of learning and at the same time discourages learning (Myers, 1995). However, the concern of this study was to understand and establish how infrastructure influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers.

Concerning teaching resources, Lydia (2008) noted that there is notable shortage of teaching materials and equipment in most of the schools today. She observes that there are instances where reading materials (books) are not available when it comes to reading time, lack of writing chalks when there is need of illustrations on the chalkboard. She therefore encourages the school administration and management to find a solution to this blooming problem which can highly bring about poor performance by the school. (Lydia,2008). Unfortunately, even with such appeals, by the time of the present study, little had changed in the pre-schools which formed the focus of the study. The present study was aimed at establishing how infrastructure influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers.

To reduce problems of teaching and learning resources, teachers need to borrow materials such as radios to broadcast lessons, tape recorders, cassette players, projectors and other equipment from teaching resource centers to help enhance learning in schools. (World Bank, 2008).This will help especially where teachers find improvisation challenging.

On the same note, Maicibi (2003) also declares that when the right quantity and quality of human resources are brought together, they can manipulate other resources towards realizing institutional goals and objectives. Mutai (2006) states that learning is strengthened when there are enough reference materials such as textbooks and other teaching and learning resources. These can positively change teachers and learners attitudes hence promoting learning. However, the current study was concerned with how that influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

The generalization of educational innovation is accompanied by the need for new resources, which should be available for sufficiently long time in order for the innovation to become part of the daily life of educational establishment, Bruce (1997). Sufficient coherence should be maintained between the supply of different resources, building equipment, and finances for the salaries of ECDE teachers. Mostly, the parents and the community provide funds for the ECDE centers as they build classes, give support, grant, and pay the ECDE teachers, Republic of Kenya (2006). However, how these influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers remains a concern. This forms the gist of the current study.

The local authorities have been in the past, a major financial source to the ECDE program. Some of their assistance has been directed towards salaries for their sponsored ECDE teachers, supervisors, training, development of curriculum, and maintenance of their institutions. According to UNESCO (1979), the responsibility of promoting children education lies with the state in Kenya, this is a devolved function hence in the domain of county government. Nonetheless, social organizations such as charitable, religious, and other Non-governmental Organizations (NGO's), play an important role in financing ECE, Myers (1995). With adequate finance, implementation of ECE Curriculum is made possible as teachers are motivated and school facilities and instructional resources are availed to improve and enhance learning.

The main task of the school is to provide education which involves a series of programs and activities. The successful conduct of these programs and activities depends mainly upon the availability of proper infrastructure in the school. School

infrastructure includes buildings, play grounds, furniture and apparatus along with equipment essential for imparting education (Imazeki, 2004). Every learning institution should thus ensure that the resources are in place. The current study sought to establish how it influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers.

In an ideal school infrastructure program, the school building should be well planned, spaciouly, functionally and with pleasing architectural features. The rooms of the building should be spacious and ventilated with all facilities like fans etc (Wayne & Youngs, 2003). While constructing a school building, one must ensure that buildings have different facilities such a library, art and craft rooms, staff room, principal's office, school office, multimedia room, conference room or theatre along with assembly ground, gymnasium among others (McCarthy & Guiney, 2004). In the schools visited, some of these facilities were absent. Aside from this, the state of many that were available was also poor.

The classroom is the backbone of any school physical infrastructure. An ideal school infrastructure program has adequate number of classrooms and every classroom has a pleasant look. Walls should be painted with light colors and rooms carefully decorated. New charts and paintings should be fixed on the walls. The front wall should have a blackboard at an appropriate height (Hawa, 2011). In a classroom where there are movable seats and work tables, and where varied resources for learning are readily available in storage cabinets, variety of activities can be changed. The classroom should be well lit so that learners seated at different corners are able to see the teacher and the blackboard (Dhanalakshmi, 2008). This will make the learner to benefit from the instructional process. The present study sought to establish how

physical and other facilities influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County.

In a study on the administrative challenges faced by public primary school head teachers in the management of pupils in Embakasi District, Nyaga, (2013) found out that the majority of the teachers had above 32 lessons per week. This indicated that the teaching load for the teacher was too high which compromised the quality of education they offered to the pupils as they did not have adequate time to prepare for all the forthcoming lessons. This could be attributed to the high teacher: pupil ratio in a majority of the public schools. She further explained that the classroom furniture in schools surveyed were inadequate to cater for the high enrollment of the pupils. The findings further augment the fact that the school heads faced lack of adequate learning facilities which is critical for pupils' management and learning. It also points to the fact that the school lacked good atmosphere for learning as most of the classes faced congestion and the available furniture was inadequate for the pupils. The study by Obuchere (2011) revealed that teachers in early childhood education play an important role in the implementation of ECDE programs and are highly influenced by their training, attitude, motivation and remuneration. However, how this influence enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers is not well documented in the studies I came across. This is what the present study sought to establish.

Library according to Dash (2005), is a counterpart of the school physical infrastructure program. It plays a vital role in the learning process of the school. The library room should be located in such a place where pupils do not get disturbed by noise (Dash, 2005). The study brought out the importance of a school library but did

not touch on how that can influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers. This is what the present study attempted to establish.

Still on infrastructure, a well maintained playground is also important to learners. Sports and games play a vital role in education that they cannot be totally dispensed with. Playgrounds not only enable pupils to develop their physical but also help them to grow cognitively and effectively. Any school that has its eye on the total development of children should have enough facilities for indoor as well as outdoor sports and games (McCarthy & Guiney, 2004). The current study sought to establish how infrastructure influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers.

Most schools in the urban slums of Kenya continue to lack adequate infrastructure and several still face a severe shortage of teachers (Nyaga, 2013). Many complain about the poor quality of institutional support for teacher's professional development. The usual assumption is that if these gaps are filled, children will learn and learn well. This "theory of change" explains the push from within the government as well as from outside to ensure the timely provision of adequate inputs, and to point out the urgent need to build institutions that support schools and teachers. Classrooms consist of sheet metal nailed to posts for walls and roofs, dirt floors, and wooden plank desks. Chalkboards are scarce and those that exist are in poor state hence requiring repair (Darling-Hammond, 2003). However, how this can influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers is what the present study sought to establish.

A study on the role of co-curricular activities in pupil development by the Qurtuba University in India (Barber et al, 2000), recommended that the government and

regulatory authorities should ensure that the schools do have the appropriate infrastructure for sports and other co-curricular activities before they are issued with the permission to run their classes. The study however, did not cover how infrastructure influenced enrollment of children in ECDE centers. This is what the present study sought to investigate.

The literature seen above on infrastructure noted that there is need for good infrastructure in all learning institutions. The studies confirmed that many schools lack enough teaching and learning resources resulting in poor performance of the learners. However, the studies did not clearly state how infrastructure influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers. This study sought to establish the influence of infrastructure in learner enrolment in ECDE level in Mbita sub-county.

## **2.5: Summary of Identified Gap**

The chapter studied several literatures on factors influencing enrollment of children in ECDE centers. It was guided by three main objectives. Objective one sought to study how parents influenced enrollment. Objective two studied how teachers influenced enrollment. Objective three studied how the government influenced enrolment. Objective one noted that parents have influence on enrollment of children in ECDE centers. However, the studies supporting this were done in regions far away from the region of the present study. On objective two, the studies found that teachers have influence on the learners. However, the studies failed to give how teachers influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers. The present study sought to establish how teachers influenced enrollment in ECDE centers in the sub-county. In objective three, the literature studied how government influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE

centers. Most of the studies noted that the government has done a lot in most of the learning institutions. This was confirmed by the provision of free primary education, school feeding program, and infrastructure. However, the studies also noted that the provisions are still inadequate and more still need to be done. Though the studies I came across pointed how the government is concerned with the learning institutions, they failed to bring out clearly how it influenced enrollment in ECDE centers. The present study sought to establish how the government influence enrollment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County. From the literature studied, it is evident that little has been studied on how parents, teachers, and the government influence enrollment in ECDE centers. Therefore, it is significant for the present study to be carried out.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1: Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research design, target population, sampling technique and size, research instruments, procedure for data collection, validity and reliability, data analysis and concludes with ethical considerations.

#### **3.2: Study Area**

The study was conducted in Mbita Sub County, Homa Bay County which is bordered by Rangwe Sub-County on the east, Ndhiwa Sub County on the south and Suba Sub County on the west. Mbita Sub County has four zones. These zones are: Lambwe, Rusinga, Mbita and Mfangano zones. Mbita sub-county is situated approximately 24 kilometers away from Homabay Town. It has two rainy seasons per annum, one coming in the month of April and the other in October. The major crops grown are maize, millet, tomatoes and kales grown along the lake. They also practice livestock farming and fishing in Lake Victoria. This locale was chosen as it was easy to access the respondents and also due to its familiarity to the researcher. Mbita sub-county is located on the shores of Lake Victoria in Homabay County, one of the 47 counties in Kenya. It is a mostly rural area found between latitudes 08 21' and 08 32' south and longitudes 348 04' and 348 24' east. It is about 400km west of Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya and it covers 163.28 km<sup>2</sup>.

### **3.3: Research Design**

This study used descriptive survey research design to establish factors influencing enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county, Homabay County, Kenya. According to Cooper and Schindler (2003) a detailed study is done to determine who, what, where, how and why this variables affect pupils enrolment. This was the concern of this research. Kothari (2004) observed that descriptive research is concerned with specific predictions, with narration of facts and characteristics concerning individual, group or situation. This design method was preferred for this research since it enables full description of the circumstances, and ensured there is limited or no biasness in data collection and therefore reduces wrong interpretation of the collected data. This method also enabled easy description of the phenomenon under the study.

### **3.4: Target Population.**

Johnson and Christensen (2012) define target population as the larger population to study. The target population comprised of all the pre-schools in Mbita sub-county comprising of four zones. The zones and number of pre-schools are as follows; Lambwe zone-40, Rusinga-42, Mfangano-32 and Mbita-53. The total number of pre-primary schools in the sub-county was 167.

### **3.5: Sampling Procedures and Sample Size**

The researcher wanted to take 40 schools as sample size and therefore, used stratified sampling method and the size of the sample in each stratum was taken in proportion to the size of the stratum as follows:

**Table 3.2: Sample Size of the schools**

Zone	Schools	Percentage	Sample Size
Lambwe	40	24	10
Rusinga	42	25	10
Mfangano	32	19	7
Mbita	53	32	13
Total	167	100	40

Simple Random Sampling was used to select two parents from each pre-school. The total number of respondents was 160.

**Table 3: The sample size for schools, teachers and parents**

	Lambwe zone	Rusinga zone	Mfangano zone	Mbita zone
Number of schools	10	10	7	13
Head Teachers	10	10	7	13
ECDE Lead Teachers	10	10	7	13
Parents	4	4	4	4

The basis of selection was in both public and private schools with ECDE centers attached to them.

### **3.6: Research Instruments**

The study employed different instruments for data collection. Questionnaires were used for head teachers and ECDE lead teachers while interview schedule was used for parents. For the questionnaire and the interview instruments, see appendix 2 and 3 respectively.

### ***3.6.1 Questionnaire***

The study used both open and close ended questionnaires which were administered to the head teachers and ECD teachers. The questionnaires were used because they could be completed at the respondents' convenience, and they offered great assurance of anonymity among other advantages. The questionnaires included closed and open ended questions. Closed ended questions were used in an effort to save time and money as well as to facilitate an easier analysis, while the open ended questions were used to get an in-depth response from the respondents as noted by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). With open ended questions, a respondent's response was expected to give an insight to their feelings, background, hidden motivation, interests and decisions. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents, and then collected immediately after they were filled. The questionnaires helped the researcher to collect data on the teacher and government factors influencing enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers.

### ***3.6.2 Interview Schedule***

The researcher employed the use of interview schedule to parents in data collection to establish the background, level of education, poverty and attitude on the enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. Of the 16 parents who were to be interviewed, 4 missed the interview and therefore only 12 were interviewed.

An Interview schedule was used to collect data from the parents. It was used in data collection because it enabled a social encounter and respondents were more willing to respond in a socially acceptable and desirable way (Wiersma, 1986). They were also

more willing to talk than write (Best and Khan, 1993). An interview gives a higher response rate in a natural setting and the researcher can probe the respondents to express their views freely and openly (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The interview guide included issues touching on ignorance, poverty and attitude. For more information on the interview guide, see Appendix II.

### ***3.6.3 Pilot Study***

The aim of the pilot study was to help identify instrument deficiencies hence enable coming up with suggestions for improvement of the study. It was also meant to validate the research instruments and ascertain their reliability. Piloting was done in Suba sub-county due to its proximity and similarity in settings to the area of the present study. The area had good transport infrastructure. This enabled easy access to the piloting institutions. Four pre-schools were used for piloting. The respondents in the pilot study were not involved in the main study. From the findings of the pilot study, alterations were made on test tools which included, reframing, removal or addition of some questions. These made the instruments to help in the realization of the objectives of the study.

### ***3.6.4 Validity***

Validity is defined as accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the study results (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Validity can also be defined as the degree to which results obtained from an analysis of data actually represents the phenomena under study. According to Borg and Gall (1989), instrument validity is the degree to which the test measures what it purports to study. According to Borg and Gall (1989), validity of instruments is improved through expert judgment. As such, assistance was sought from the supervisors, other academic members from the school

of education, and colleagues (students). Suggestions given were incorporated to improve the instruments.

### ***3.6.5 Reliability***

The instruments were administered to the pilot respondents and scored manually. One week following the first administration, the same instruments were administered to the same respondents and the responses scored manually. A comparison of answers from the two administrations was made. A Pearson's Product Moment formula for the test was employed to compute the correlation coefficient in order to establish the extent to which the content of the instruments were consistent in eliciting the same responses every time the instruments were administered. A correlation coefficient of 0.813 was established which was considered high enough to judge the instruments as reliable for the study.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher first got a letter from the Dean, School of Education Moi University which allowed him to collect data. He then sought authority to conduct the research from the Ministry of Education before seeking clearance from Mbita sub county education office in Homa Bay County. He then sought permission from Head teachers and ECDE lead teachers of the sampled schools before the actual administration of the research tools. The questionnaires were then administered to the Head teachers and the ECDE lead teachers. The interview schedule was administered to parents.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

According to Orodho (2003) data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging field notes, data and other materials obtained from the field with the aim of increasing one's own understanding and to enable one to present them to others. Before analysis, data was cleaned by checking for logical consistency and any unnecessary data was removed. Coding involved converting responses to numbers.

The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics where the responses from the questionnaires and from the interview schedules were tallied, tabulated and analyzed using percentages and frequencies using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). According to Martin and Acuna (2002), SPSS is able to handle large amounts of data and is efficient because of its wide spectrum of statistical procedures purposively designed for social sciences.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Considering that the research was done on head teachers, lead teachers and parents who are human beings, utmost consideration was done to observe ethical issues. Confidentiality was practiced and no name was mentioned on the questionnaires for anonymity. The respondents' consent was sought first before participating in the process. Finan (2010) suggest that great care must be taken to prevent harm to these people.

The researcher first applied for a clearance letter from the dean of the school of Post Graduate Studies, and the M.O.E Homabay County that allowed him to collect data from the respondents. After receiving the consent letters from the officers, the

researcher sought for permission from the head teachers to collect data from their schools. Confidentiality was practiced and each and every respondent was informed of his or her right to pull out of the study at any point.

### **3.10 Chapter Summary**

The chapter outlined aspects of research design and methodology as outlined in the introduction section. The next chapter presents presentation of findings, interpretation and discussion.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents, analyze, interpret and discusses the findings of the study based on the three objectives; parental, teachers, and governmental factors that influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centres in Mbita sub-county. The discussion focused on response rate, demographic data of the parents, data from the head teachers and demographic data of the ECDE lead teachers. The chapter also presents and interprets data from the interview guide for parents on the influence of poverty, ignorance and attitude on enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County. Quantitative data derived from questionnaires was descriptively analyzed using frequencies and percentages.

#### **4.2 Parents Responses**

The researcher met the parents during a parent's meeting duly called by the head teachers. The researcher employed a one-on-one interview with the informants. During the interview, the researcher asked the respondents to respond to the questions as honestly as possible and assured them that the information gathered would be confidential and would be used solely for research purposes.

#### **4.3. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Several demographic factors were considered which were important in interpretation of responses given. The demographic data sought in the study included general profile of the study's respondents with regards to gender, age, professional qualification, and duration as teachers. It was necessary to get the demographic information of the

respondents so that the study samples the experiences of the respondents who understand the real situation in their centers regarding the factors influencing enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita, Homa Bay County, Kenya.

#### **4.3.1. Parent's Background Information**

The respondents were asked to indicate their professional training. The results given in table 4 shows that a few number of the parents had post-secondary education. A majority of the parents 7(58.3%) had primary education level while 3(25.0%) had secondary education and 2(16.7%) had no education at all. This revealed that semi-illiteracy level in this region was high and may have influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers.

**Table 4.3: Parents' Background Information.**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Education	Frequency	Percentage
Male	5	41.7	College	0	0
Female	7	58.3	Secondary	3	25.0
Total	12	100.0	Primary	7	58.3
			None	2	16.7
			<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **Parents' Level of Income**

The respondents were asked about their sources of income. The result given in table 5 presents the findings. It shows that 23 (31.8%) said that they do peasant farming, 26 (36.4%) do small business, 10 (13.6%) were in formal employment and 13(18.2%) in casual Labor. The results indicate that insignificant number of parents of the pupils in ECDE centers had no formal employment and therefore relied mainly on low income

activities from peasant farming, small business and working in the neighbors' farms as casuals. Such income is not enough to sustain basic domestic requirements like, food, medical expenses and school fees.

**Table 4.4: Parent's Level of Income**

Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Peasant Farming	7	58.3
Business	2	16.7
Employment (formal)	1	8.3
Casual Worker	2	16.7
Total	12	100.0

#### ***4.3.2. Head teachers and Lead Teachers Background Information***

**Table 4.5: Age of the Respondents (Head teachers and lead teachers)**

Age in Years	Head Teachers		ECDE Lead Teachers	
	Freq.	Percentage	Freq.	Percentage
Below 20	0	0	0	0
20-30	0	0	3	8.3
31-40	16	41.7	27	66.7
41 and above	24	59.3	10	25
Total	40	100	40	100

From the results of the study shown in table 6, all the head teachers were above 30 years of age. Majority of the ECDE teachers (66.7%) were aged between 31 to 50 years. This shows that they were mature and understood the importance of pre-schooling.

**Table 4.6: Level of Education**

	Head Teachers		ECDE Lead Teachers	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No Formal Education	0	0	0	0
Primary	0	0	0	0
Secondary	0	0	0	0
Certificate	0	0	27	66.7
Diploma	20	50.0	13	33.3
Degree	20	50.0	0	0
Total	40	100	40	100

According to table 7, a majority of the ECDE lead teachers 27 (66.7%) were trained certificate holders while 13 (33.3%) had diploma in education with a bias towards ECDE. This means that they were aware of the importance of early childhood education in a child's education.

**Table 47: Consistency of Children Enrolment.**

	Head Teachers		ECDE Lead Teachers	
	Freq.	Percentage	Freq.	Percentage
Low Enrolment	27	66.7	33	83.3
High Enrolment	13	33.3	7	16.7
Total	40	100	40	100

Despite the fact that there is a common understanding that early childhood education is important for a child's development, a high percentage (H/Teachers, 66.7% and ECDE lead teachers, 83.3 %) agreed that there is low enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

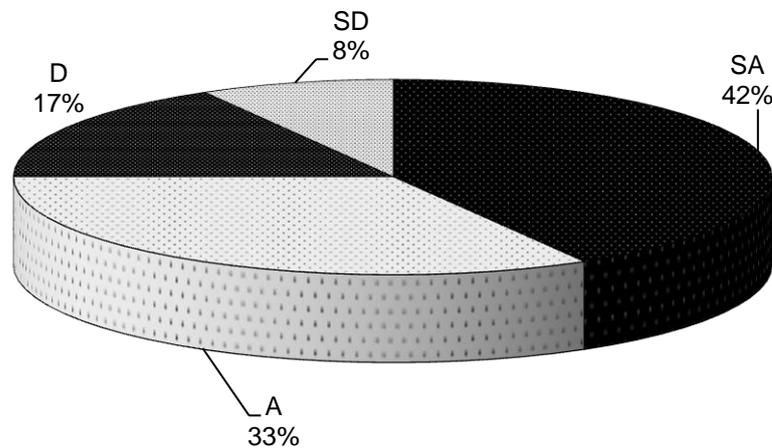
**Objective One: Findings on how parental factors influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.**

This objective involved interviewing parents on the influence of parental factors such as ignorance, poverty and attitude on enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

***4.4.1. The Influence of Education of Parents on Enrolment***

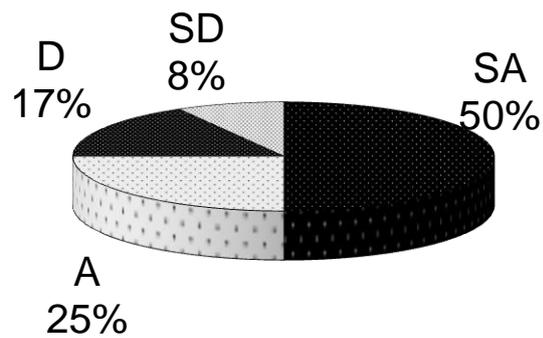
The respondents were asked whether their educational levels influenced enrolment of their children in ECDE centers. The result given in figure 1 provides the findings. It shows that 5 (41.7%) of parents strongly agreed that their level of education influenced enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers. 4 (33.4%) agreed that their level of education influenced enrollment. 2(16.7) and 1(8.3%) disagreed that their level of education influenced enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers. This finding is in line with Oruta (2009) who observed that wealthier and better educated parents utilized basic education and resources in a manner to improve pre-school conditions. However, he did not state how that influences enrollment of pupils in ECDE centers. Michelle and Ayana (2006) in their research noted that parents who were educated had better attitudes towards their children's schooling than the illiterate ones. Therefore, it can be argued that the low level of education of parents' influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

**Figure 1: Education of Parents on Enrolment**



#### ***4.4.2. The Influence of Parental poverty on enrolment***

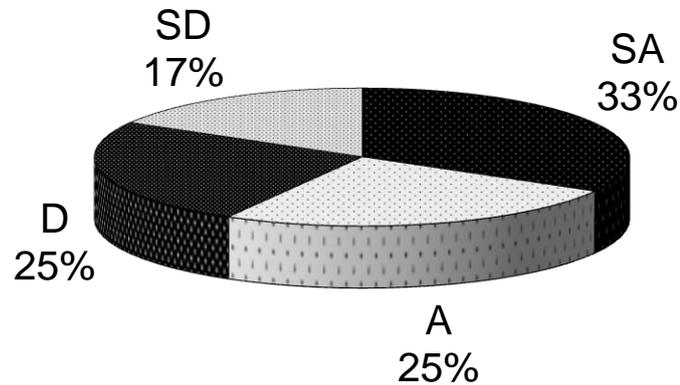
The respondents were asked whether their level of poverty influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. The result in figure 2 shows that 6(50%) strongly agreed that poverty negatively influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers, 3(25%) agreed, 2(16.7%) disagreed, while 1(8.3%) strongly disagreed that poverty of parents influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. This finding is supported by Salazar (2007), who noted that in Argentina 58% of the children between one month and six years live in poverty and are at risk of contracting avoidable diseases due to high rates of malnutrition, low access to basic services, lack of education, early care and stimulation; only 4 out of 100 children had access to integral attention while only 16 out of 100 children between 4 and 6 years attended a Pre-school Centre. From the result, it was found that poverty among parents influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.



**Figure 2: Poverty of Parents on Enrolment**

#### ***4.4.3. The Influence of Attitude of Parents on Enrolment***

The respondents were asked whether their attitude influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. The result in figure 3 presents the findings. It shows that 4(33.3%) strongly agreed that the attitude of parents influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. 3(25%) agreed, 3(25%) disagreed, while 2(16.7%) strongly disagreed that the attitude of parents influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. This finding is in line with Michelle, (2006) who states that attitudes of parents who are educated and those who are not, are conspicuously different. He noted that parents who were educated had better attitudes towards their children's schooling than the illiterate ones. However, he did not show how parent's attitude influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers. The result showed that the attitude of parents influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

**Figure 3: Parent's Attitude**

From the interview schedule, the results showed that parental factors such as ignorance, poverty and attitude influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county, Homabay County, Kenya.

**Objective Two: Findings on how teachers influence enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County, Homa Bay County-Kenya.**

This objective shows the data on the influence of teachers on enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. It shows how lack of training, lack of teaching/learning materials and how remuneration influenced enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

**4.5. Questionnaire Response Rate**

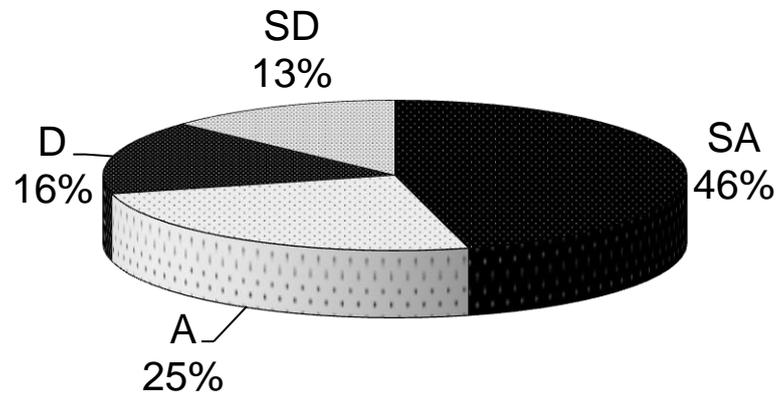
Eighty questionnaires were distributed. Questionnaires were issued to Head teachers and ECDE lead teachers. Forty questionnaires for Head Teachers were filled and returned, and thus representing 100% questionnaires return rate. A similar number

(40) of questionnaires for the ECDE lead teachers were also filled and returned representing 100% questionnaire return rate.

#### **4.5. The Influence of lack of Proper Training of Teachers on enrolment**

On how lack of proper training of teachers influenced enrolment, the study found that 37(46.2%) strongly agreed and 20(25.2%) agreed that lack of proper training of teachers influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. 13(16.8%) disagreed, while 10(12.6%) strongly disagreed that lack of proper training of teachers influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. This finding is supported by Smith (2000) who maintained that further education of teachers results in higher quality interactional patterns. Therefore unqualified teachers engaged in ECDE programs may hinder the programs' implementation. However, he did not mention how unqualified teachers influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers. From the study, it was established that parents tend to take their children where there are qualified teachers and therefore, lack of proper training of teachers may have negatively influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. The following figure shows the response of teachers on lack of proper training:

**Figure 4: Lack of Proper Training of Teachers**

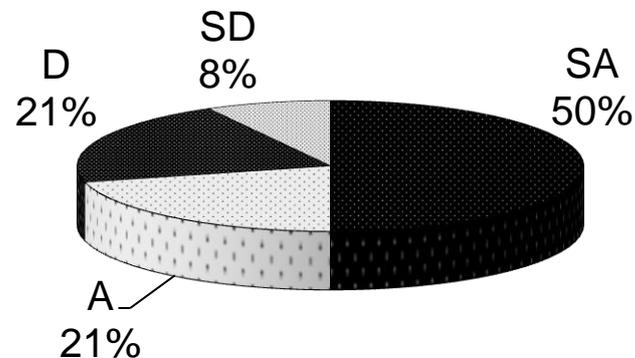


#### **4.6. The Influence of lack of teaching and learning Materials**

On how lack of teaching and learning materials influenced enrolment in ECDE centers, the study found that 40(50%) and 16(21%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively that lack of teaching and learning materials influenced enrolment in ECDE centers in that parents like to take their children to schools with enough teaching and learning materials. 16(21%) and 8(8%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that lack of teaching and learning materials influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. This finding is supported by Mungai (2014) who opined that materials must be available to the learners in adequate quality and quantities, and at the required time to enable implementation of various educational tasks. The educational tasks may include enrolment of children in ECDE centers. The present study found that lack of teaching and learning materials negatively influenced

enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. The following is the figure showing the response on lack of teaching and learning materials:

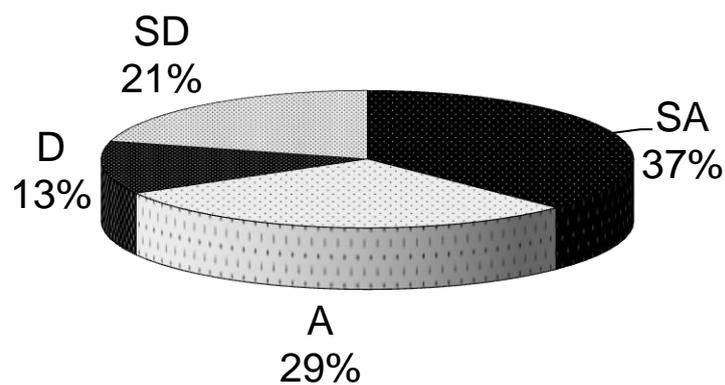
**Figure 4.5 Lack of teaching and learning materials**



#### **4.7: The influence of Remuneration on enrolment in ECDE centers**

On how remuneration influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers, the study found that 30(37.5%) and 23(29.2%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively that remuneration influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers while 10(12.5%) and 17(20.8%) disagreed and strongly disagreed that remuneration influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. This finding is supported by Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, (2009) who stated that satisfying teachers' hygiene needs, including favorable terms and conditions of service, a manageable workload, "good" remuneration as well as providing an adequate physical working environment is expected to result in motivating teachers. Njoroge (2011) mentioned the role of pre-school teachers as one of the major factors influencing children's enrolment in pre-school education. This study pointed out that the role of teachers in early childhood

education is highly influenced by their; training, attitude, motivation and remuneration. The study found that remuneration influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. The following figure shows the data on influence of remuneration on enrolment: this concurred with Njoroge (2011).



**Figure4. 6: Remuneration on Enrolment in ECDE Centers**

From the findings of objective two which studied how teacher factor such as lack of proper training and remuneration influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers, the study found that it negatively influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county, Homabay county, Kenya.

**Objective Three: Findings on how the government influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County, Homa Bay County-Kenya**

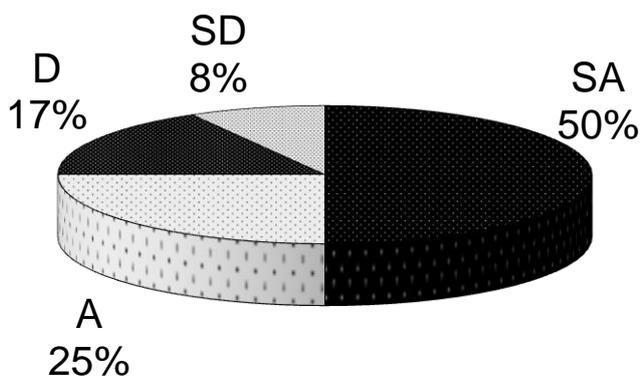
This objective gives the data on how governmental factors influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. It gives how free primary education, lack of feeding program

and infrastructure all exert influence on enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county

#### 4.8: The Influence of Free Primary Education on Enrolment in ECDE centers

On Free Primary Education, the study found that 40(50%) strongly agreed and 20(25%) agreed that Free Primary Education influenced enrolment in ECDE centers. On the other hand, 13(16.7%) disagreed and 7(8.3%) strongly disagreed that Free Primary Education influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. This finding is supported by U.N.E.S.C.O, (2005) which states that since the introduction of F.P.E, poor parents tended to keep their children at home until they attained primary school going age. Many parents refused to pay E.C.D.E school fees on the argument that like public primary schools, E.C.D.E should also be free. The findings therefore, confirmed that Free Primary Education negatively influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. The figure below shows the data on Free Primary Education:

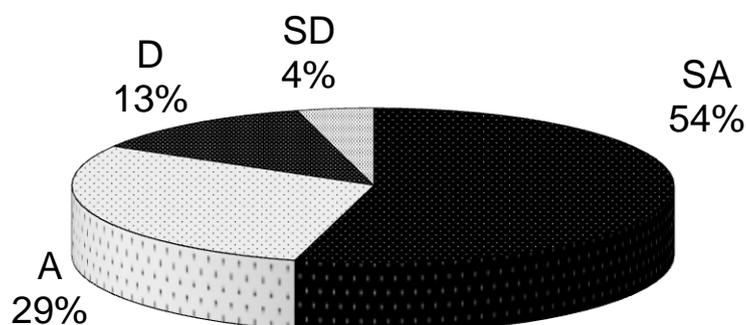
**Figure 4.7: Free Primary Education influence Enrolment in ECDE centers**



#### 4.9: How lack of School Feeding Program Influenced Enrolment in ECDE centers

On how lack of school feeding program influenced enrolment, 43(54.2%) strongly agreed and 24(29.2%) agreed that lack of feeding program influenced enrolment in ECDE centers. On the other hand, 10(12.5%) disagreed and 3(4.1%) strongly disagreed that lack of feeding program influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. This finding is supported by WFP, (2001) which states that a small pilot school feeding program in Malawi was evaluated for its effect on enrollment. Over a three month period there was a 5% increase in enrollment compared to control schools over the same period. However, that was in Malawi and not in Kenya. Time factor might also have changed the situation. Nonetheless, findings agreed with the WFP's finding that lack of feeding program negatively influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centres in Mbita sub-county. Below is the figure showing data result in percentage:

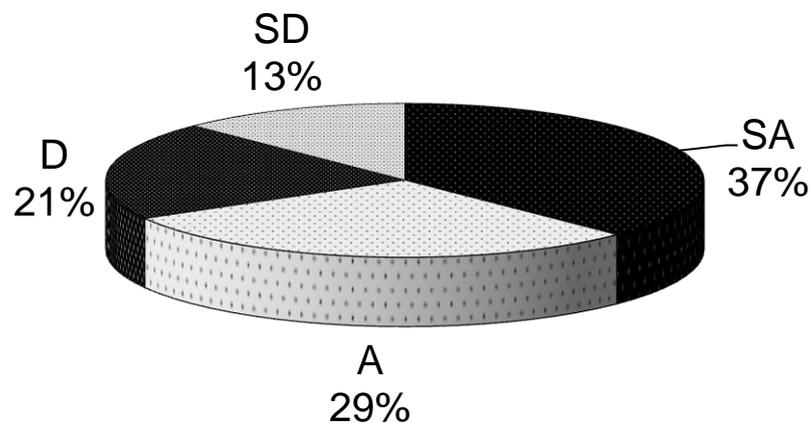
**Figure 4.8: Lack of Feeding Program on Enrolment in ECDE centres**



#### 4.10: How poor infrastructure influence enrolment in ECDE centres

On how poor infrastructure influenced enrolment in ECDE centres, 30(37.5%) strongly agreed and 23(29.2%) agreed that poor infrastructure influenced enrolment. However, 17(20.8%) disagreed and 10(12.5%) strongly disagreed that poor infrastructure influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centres in Mbita sub-county. This finding is supported by Darling-Hammond, (2003) who noted that lack of adequate infrastructure leads to poor learning and performance in schools. However, she did not mention how it influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centres. The finding shows that poor infrastructure negatively influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centres in Mbita sub-county. Below is the figure showing the findings in percentage:

**Figure 4.9 Poor Infrastructure Influence Enrolment in ECDE centres**



#### **4.11 Summary**

Early childhood Education prepares children early to develop skills, knowledge, and values that are required to support the growing economy. It provides education geared towards development of the child's mental capabilities and physical growth. The learner enjoys living and learning through play hence develops self-awareness, self-esteem and self-confidence, promotes creativity, self-expression and discovery through exploration of skills. From the study, it is found that parental factors such as ignorance, poverty and attitude influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. Teacher factors such as training, lack of teaching/learning materials and remuneration influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. Further, it was found that governmental factors such as Free Primary Education, food program and infrastructure influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county, Homabay County, Kenya.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations arising from the research findings of the study.

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors influencing enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita, Homa-Bay county, Kenya. This was done by examining various variables that would influence the rate of enrolment of children into Early Childhood Education institutions. These variables included parental factors such as ignorance, poverty and attitude. It studied teacher factor such as training, teaching/learning materials and remuneration. It also studied governmental factors such as Free Primary Education, food program and infrastructure. To help realize these variables, three research questions were constructed thus linking the research study to the objectives. Research objective one sought to establish the influence of parents on enrolment in ECDE centres. Research objective two sought to establish the influence of teachers on enrolment in ECDE centres while research objective three sought to establish the influence of the government on enrolment in ECDE centres.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Findings

##### *5.2.1 Parental factors*

On the first objective, the researcher sought to investigate the influence of parents on enrolment of children in ECDE centers. The findings revealed that parental factors such as ignorance, poverty and attitude influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. For example 29(40.9%) strongly agreed and 22(31.8%) agreed that ignorance influenced enrolment in ECDE centers. Only 13(18.2%)

disagreed and 6(9.1%) strongly disagreed that ignorance of parents influenced enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

The findings revealed that poverty influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. For example, 33(45.5%) strongly agreed and 20(27.3%) agreed that poverty influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. Only 13(18.2%) disagreed and 6(9%) strongly disagreed that poverty influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. It also revealed that the attitude of parents also influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers. For example 26(36.3%) of the parents strongly agreed as another 20(27.3%) agreed that attitude influenced enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county. Therefore, it was found that parental factors such as ignorance, poverty and attitude influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

### ***5.2.2 Teacher factors***

In objective two, the study found that teacher factor such as training, teaching and learning materials and remuneration influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. For example, 37(45.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed as another 20(25%) agreed that lack of proper training of teachers influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

It was found that teaching/learning materials influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers. For example, 40(50%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 17(20.9%) agreed that lack of teaching/learning materials influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

It was also found that remuneration influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers. For example, 30(37.5%) strongly agreed and 23(29.2%) agreed that remuneration influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

### ***5.2.3: Governmental factors***

In objective three, the study found that Free Primary Education influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. For example, 40(50%) of the respondents strongly agreed as another 20(25%) agreed that Free Primary Education influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers.

It was also found that lack of school feeding program influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. For example, 43(54.2%) strongly agreed and 23(29.2%) agreed that lack of school feeding program influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

On infrastructure, the study found that poor infrastructure influenced enrolment in ECDE centers. For example, 30(37.5%) strongly agreed and 23(29.2%) agreed that poor infrastructure influenced enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county.

### **5.3 Conclusion of the study**

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that ignorance of parents influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. Majority of the parents are semi-illiterate which affected their understanding of the benefits of enrolling children in ECDE centers. The study also concluded that poverty among parents affected enrolment of children in ECDE centers. Parents who are very poor cannot manage to pay school fees hence are unable to enroll their children in ECDE. It can also be

concluded that parental attitude plays an important role in enrolment of their children in pre-schools in Mbita Sub-county. Parents with negative attitude towards ECDE don't enroll their children hence affecting enrolment of children in ECDE centers.

The study also concluded that lack of training for teachers influenced enrolment of children in ECDE centers. In addition, lack of enough teaching and learning materials affected enrolment. The same was established on remuneration of teachers.

The study further concluded that Free Primary Education influenced enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers. Poor parents waited until their children can be able to attend primary schools where fee was not charged. It is also concluded that lack of food program in ECDE centers affected enrolment.

#### **5.4 Recommendations of the Study**

The study has revealed that professional qualifications of the parents affect the way they take their children to Pre-schools. Illiterate parents should join Adult Education Centers so as to understand the value of education and be role models to their children. They should also involve themselves in income generating activities to get money which can educate their children in ECDE centers. They should also have positive attitude towards ECDE education. On the same note, awareness seminars should be organized to sensitize the parents on the best time to enroll their children in the pre-schools.

Those who want to join ECDE centers as teachers should go for in-service programs and courses so as to equip themselves with knowledge to handle young pupils. The government in conjunction with the community should provide ECDE centers with

resources required for teaching and learning. The county government should also give teachers a reasonable remuneration to motivate them in their work. If they are unable to motivate teachers, then the government of Kenya through the M.o.E should incorporate E.C.D.E teachers within T.S.C in order to motivate them, pay their salaries and remuneration which in turn will boost their morale.

In order to increase the enrolment levels of children in ECDE centers, the parents themselves, through teachers, should also come up with school feeding programs. County governments should provide food to ECDE centers since ECDE has been rolled down to them. The Kenya government through the M.o.E should supervise how county governments implement the program in ECDE centers. Since the national government offers Free Primary Education, it should also include ECDE centers in that system to enable poor parents to enroll their children in ECDE centers.

### **5.5: Suggestions for Further Studies**

- (i) This study needs to be replicated in other sub-counties throughout the country in order to compare the results and affirm parental factors influencing enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Kenya.
- (ii) A study should be carried out on teacher factors which influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in other sub-counties in Kenya.
- (iii) Further study should be done in other sub counties on governmental factors which influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers.

### **5:6. Chapter Summary**

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendation arising from the findings of the study. The purpose of this study was to investigate factors influencing enrolment of children in ECDE centers in Mbita, Homa-Bay county, Kenya. The variables that guided the study were; parental factors such as ignorance, poverty and attitude; teacher factor such as training, teaching and learning resources and remuneration; and, governmental factors such as Free Primary Education, School Feeding Program and infrastructure. From the findings, the study established that all the variables negatively influenced enrollment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub-county.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix I: Letter from school of Education



MOI UNIVERSITY

Office of the Dean School of Education

Tel: (053) 43001-8

(053) 43555

Fax: (053) 43555

P.O. Box 3900

Eldoret, Kenya

REF: EDU/PG/EDH/1007/11

DATE: 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2022**The Executive Secretary**

National Council for Science and Technology

P.O. Box 30623-00100

**NAIROBI**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH PERMIT IN RESPECT OF SAMUEL MAIRA –  
EDU/PG/EDH/1007/11**

The above named is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Master of Education (M.Ed) student at Moi University, School of Education, Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Media, School of Education.

It is a requirement of his M.Ed Studies that he conducts research and produces a thesis. His research is entitled:

**“Factors Influencing Enrolment in ECDE Centres: A Case of Mbita Sub County, Homa Bay County, Kenya.”**

Any assistance given to enable him conduct research successfully will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Moi University  
School Of Education  
DEAN  
23 SEP 2022

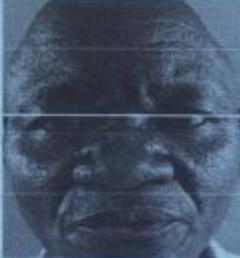
**Appendix II: Authority Permit - from NACOSTI**

  
REPUBLIC OF KENYA

  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 903909 Date of Issue: 22/October/2022

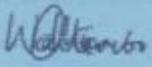
**RESEARCH LICENSE**



This is to Certify that Mr., Samuel Ohuru Maira of Moi University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Homabay on the topic: **FACTORS INFLUENCING ENROLLMENT IN ECDE CENTERS. A CASE OF MBITA SUB-COUNTY, HOMABAY COUNTY, KENYA** for the period ending : 22/October/2023.

License No: NACOSTI/P/22/21226

903909  
Applicant Identification Number

  
Director General  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &  
INNOVATION

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See overleaf for conditions

**Appendix III: Letter of introduction to the Head-teachers/ECD Teachers**

Samuel Maira,

Date: May: 2016.

Department of Early childhood and Primary Educational,  
Moi University  
P.O.Box .....  
ELDORET

Dear Sir/Madam,

**REF: A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESPONDENTS**

I am a Master of Education student in the Department of Early childhood and Primary Education, Moi University. I am carrying out a research entitled “Factors influencing children enrolment in Pre-school Education in Mbita Sub County.” The questionnaire attached is aimed at gathering relevant information about your school. Your response will be confidential.

Therefore do not indicate your name or the name of your school in the questionnaire. Please complete all the sections of the questionnaire as objectively as you can. Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,

Samuel Maira

### Appendix IV: Interview Guide for Parents

Please answer the items of the interview guide as best as you can. The information you give will be used solely for research purposes and that it will be treated with confidentiality. The findings will be helpful to the improvement of enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers.

1. What is your educational level?

Level	No. of Parents
University	( )
Other Post-Secondary	( )
Secondary	( )
Primary	( )
None	( )

2. What is your income generating occupation?

Occupation	No. of Parents
Farming	( )
Business	( )
Employment	( )
Others	( )

<b>Parental Factors on Enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita zone</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Do you agree that your level of education influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers?				
2. Do your income influence enrolment of your pupils in ECDE centers?				
3. Do you like taking your pupils to ECDE centers before they join primary?				

6. What do you think can be done to improve parents' education level?.....

.....

7. What do you think can be done to reduce poverty so that all parents can enroll their pupils in ECDE centres?.....

.....

8. What do you think can be done so that all parents can have good attitude towards ECDE?.....

.....

9. What other factors do you think influence enrolment of pupils in ECDE centers in Mbita sub-county?.....

.....

## APPENDIX V: Self-administered Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of Moi University in the school of Education Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education undertaking a study on; **“Factors influencing enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita, Homa Bay County-Kenya.”** You are therefore requested to respond to the few questions below with honesty. The response given will be treated with confidentiality and will be used for academic purpose only.

### Instructions

- i. Do not write your name on this questionnaire.
- ii. Carefully read the instructions on each section before you respond.

### SECTION A

Please tick (√) to indicate your option on the items below

1. Gender    Male ( )            Female ( )
2. Age    20-30 ( )    31-40 ( )    41-50 ( )    51 and above ( )
3. Level of education No Education ( ) Primary ( ) Secondary ( ) College ( )
4. Length of Stay in the Institution: 1-3 years ( ) 4-6 years ( ) 7 and above years

### SECTION B

Use the following scale to tick (√) the questions bellow: **Y = Yes; N = No**

Enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita zone	Y	N
5. Are there ECDE centers in Mbita Zone?		
6. Do enrolments in ECDE centers lower than that in Primary Schools?		
7. Do you think there are factors influencing enrolment in ECDE centers?		

### SECTION C

Use the following scale to tick (✓) the questions bellow: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3 =Agree, 4= Strongly Agree.

Teacher Factors	1	2	3	4
8. Poor training of teachers influence enrolment of children in ECDE centers				
9. Lack of enough teaching/learning materials influence enrolment of children in ECDE centers				
10.Low payment of teachers influence enrolment of children in ECDE centers				
Government Factor				
11.Free Primary Education influence enrolment of children in ECDE centers				
12.Lack of Feeding Program influence enrolment of children in ECDE centers				
13.Infrastructure influence enrolment of children in ECDE centers				

### SECTION D

14. What do you think parents can do to enhance enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County?

-----  
 -----  
 -----

15. What do you think teachers can do to enhance enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County?

-----  
 -----  
 -----

16. What do you think the government should do to enhance enrolment in ECDE centers in Mbita Sub County?

-----  
 -----  
 -----

Thank you for your cooperation

**MAP OF MBITA SUBCOUNTY**

