

## ABSTRACT

Literacy skills play a significant role in everyday communication in life from infancy to early childhood through to primary school level and beyond. Learning during early years is important in building a firm foundation for children in literacy skills. A critical analysis of literature indicates a majority of studies especially in Kenya relate to the use of instructional resources generally. Literature specific to the link between use of improvised instructional resources and teaching of Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) literacy skills is minimal thus having a gap for studies specifically focusing on the relationship between improvised instructional resources and teaching of ECDE literacy skills. The purpose of the study therefore was to establish the link between improvised instructional resources (IIR) and teaching of ECDE literacy skills in Kiambaa sub-county, Kiambu county, Kenya. The objectives of the study were; to establish the extent to which ECDE teachers improvise instructional resources used during teaching of ECDE literacy skills, to determine the extent of use of improvised instructional resources during teaching of ECDE literacy skills, to establish the influence of improvised instructional resources on the teaching of ECDE literacy skills and to find out the challenges that ECDE teachers face during improvisation of instructional resources. The study was guided by constructivist theories by Jean Piaget and Jerome Bruner. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The target population included 130 ECDE teachers and 26 headteachers. Census survey was employed which included all the ECDE teachers and their headteachers in the research. Piloting was undertaken by administering the instruments to 31 ECDE teachers and their headteachers in 5 ECDE centers in Kiambu county to establish validity and reliability. Content validity was established through expert judgment by the university supervisors. Reliability was established by the use of the Cronbach's Alpha Method all variables achieving reliability the 0.7 Cronbach's Alpha threshold. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and presented in narrative form. Quantitative data was screened, coded and analyzed descriptively and inferentially with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) version 25.0 and presented using tables. Descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages were used to describe the existing relationship between the variables. The research hypothesis was tested at 95% level of significance using Chi-Square. Findings indicated that visual resources are the most commonly improvised and utilized IIR during the teaching ECDE literacy skills. Chi-square results  $\chi^2(1) = 33.69, p < 0.001$  indicated a significant influence of IIR on teaching of literacy skills. Teacher support and technical support were found to be the most prominent challenges to improvisation of instructional resources. The study concluded that most teachers improvised instructional resources at a high extent though they mainly improvised visuals such as charts and flashcards. The study therefore recommends that teachers should improvise and integrate various types of IR such audio, concrete and audio-visual resources during the teaching of ECDE literacy skills. Headteachers and the county government should also improve on the provision of instructional resources for the teaching of ECDE literacy skills.