

Effective Implementation Of Early Childhood Development Policy In Pre School Education In Kenya: A Case Of Central Division, Narok North Sub County

Chris Kamau Kiriba

Maasai Mara University

Dr. Nancy Ayodi

School of Arts and Social Sciences,
Maasai Mara University

Dr. Stella Kirui

School of Science and Information Sciences, Maasai Mara
University

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to examine the factors affecting the effective implementation of Early Childhood Development policy in Narok central division. The specific objective of the study was; to establish the various challenges affecting the effectiveness in ECD policy implementation. The target population consisted of 282 teachers and managers and 6 DICECE officers. 94 of the respondents were ECD managers, 188 ECD teachers, and 6 DICECE officers in the division. The sample size of the study was 172 respondents who were randomly selected from the study population. The study used a questionnaire which was developed based on the study objectives. Reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was tested and it was established at a coefficient 0.7, which was accepted as appropriate for the study. The data collected was summarized and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The study results revealed that the factors that affected the implementation of the policy were lack of appropriate skills, knowledge and resources to support the implementation of the policy. The study concludes that for effective implementation of ECD policy there is need for the teachers and the managers to get the right professional training in ECD. The DICECE staff must ensure that the curriculum is well defined to accommodate all elements of the implementation process. The research findings are beneficial to all the ECD managers, the teachers and the ministry of education as a whole as it sheds light on policy issues that affects the management of the ECD programmes. The study recommends that further research be done with a larger sample to establish whether similar results can be obtained.

Keywords: Childhood; Early Childhood Education; Early childhood development, ECD policy, DICECE.

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Since 1963 when Kenya attained its independence to date, the number of students enrolled at various levels of education that primary and secondary has substantially increased (Republic of Kenya 2005). At the Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE), enrolment grew from 483,148 children in 1982 to 894,295 children (420,741 girls and 473,554 boys) in 2003. Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for pre-primary, however, declined from 35.4 percent in 1990 to

33.4 percent in 1999. Considering the importance of ECDE, this GER is low as there are many 4-5 year-old children who are still out of school (Republic of Kenya, 2005). According to the report (ROK, 2005) The 1999 Population Census indicated that a total of 574,249 children were not enrolled in pre-primary schools and that a large proportion of children entering primary schools do not pass through pre-primary.

The low enrolment at pre-primary schools level is due to various factors including the fact that the government plays a limited role, lack of economic ability and awareness among

communities and parents disregarding the importance of pre-primary education (Republic of Kenya, 2005). These factors affect effective policy implementation in the ECD sector hence the need for this study. According to Ngigi & Macharia (2006), ECD policy calls for a holistic approach to childcare by integrating all development concerns into the existing operational systems. Empowering local communities in the management of Early Childhood Development programmes, participation and involvement of the Private Sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) was of paramount importance in all aspects of planning and management of the ECD resources. This not only instilled a sense of ownership but also a joint accountability by all stakeholders. Considering also the diversity of the needs of the child, it was necessary to prioritize interventions to ensure that the most strategic issues are given priority and allocated adequate resources. This policy underscores the importance of investing in children for sustainable development.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although efforts on ECD in Kenya have been made in the past by the Government and its co-operating partners to improve the situation hampering effective policy implementation, these efforts have been fragmented by many factors, therefore, without much impact. Efforts by the government to come up with an explicit ECD policy that would provide clear guidance to all co-operating partners have not been very effective, a number of factors affecting effective implementation of the policy are still undocumented particularly in developing countries. This study, therefore, sought to evaluate the factors affecting the effective implementation of ECD policy to in order to ensure that the current preschool education system in Kenya is effective.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to assess the effective implementation of preschool policy in Central Division of Narok North Sub County in order to enhance learning in ECD centres.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To assess the effectiveness of ECD policy implementation in Central Division of Narok North sub county.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How is the effectiveness of ECD policy implementation in Central Division of Narok North Sub County?

JUSTIFICATION

Understanding of Early Childhood Education (ECD) policies is one step forward to the achievement of high performance in the ECDE centers. Most efforts to explain policy issues in ECD have been overshadowed by the focus on the primary school policy. There is very little research documentation or single study that has looked at the ECDE

policy issues particularly in developing countries like Kenya. More so, not much has been done in the environment of the pastoralist communities. This is what triggered this study that examines the factors affecting the effective implementation of ECDE policy, in an environment of pastoralists in Central Division of Narok County.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The acronym ECD refers to a comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children from birth to eight years of age, their parents and caregivers. Its purpose is to protect the child's rights to develop his/her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential (UNICEF, 2005). According to this report, community based services that meet the needs of infants and young children are vital to ECD and they should include attention to health, nutrition, education, water and environmental sanitation in homes and communities. The approach promotes and protects the rights of the young child to survival, growth and development. The ECD policy is being developed in recognition of various conventions and other legal human rights instruments like the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Dakar Declaration on Children's Rights on Education, AU Charter, among others, to which the Kenya Government is a signatory.(ibid,2005). This is relevant to this study on effective policy implementation in general and specifically policy implementation in ECD.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT POLICY

According to UNICEF (2005), within the last two decades, much has happened in the field of ECCE in Kenya. Various Acts and Policies have been drafted and implemented. The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of these Acts and Policies by answering the following questions. Have these Acts and Policies been transformed into action plans? To what extent are these Acts and Policies effectively implemented? Are there any gaps in implementations? What are the challenges, if any, that have been encountered? The answers to these questions could help policy makers in Central Division of Narok North District in making decisions about the need to adjust, fine tune or enhance the implementation of these policy.

Early Childhood Care, Development and Education (ECDE) is an area whose time for serious consideration has come, both around the world and in Africa. That 'arrival' has been driven by a number of factors, many of which are international in scope, but the ways in which ECD develops varies from region to region and country to country. For the purpose of this study the main areas under consideration were, factors affecting the implementation of the ECD policy. The study took into account the fact that there are various factors that affect the implementation of ECD policy. However, there are other moderating variables that may affect the

effectiveness of the ECD policy besides the ones given as major independent variables as shown in figure 1.1.

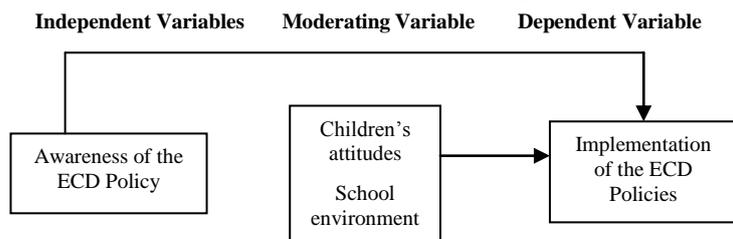


Figure 1.1: Conceptualization of Factors Affecting the Implementation of ECD Policies

This study considered the current existing policy in ECD as a basis for examining the implementation process. It sought first to establish the existing policy and make assessment of the effectiveness of its implementation. The study recognizes that the existing ECD policy affects negatively the entire implementation process if they are not supportive in its self. It is also noted that culture has an effect on the overall ECD policy implementation. The ability of the ECD managers and the teachers in terms of their qualifications and training is another important factor to be considered when assessing the implementation of policy. This study notes that those teachers and managers who are well qualified and have a better understanding of the policy and its implementation process are better placed in effective ECD programme implementation.

III. METHODOLOGY

TARGET POPULATION OF THE STUDY

According to the Housing and population census report of 2009 the total population of Narok North district is 258,544 of which 59,864 are children aged between 0-5 years. From this total, 16,692 are within the ECD going age of between 3-5 years. This study targeted the 93 ECD centres in central division with a total population of 93 managers and 188 teachers. There are 6 DICECE staff at the Narok DICECE centre. The study sample was therefore selected from the 281 teachers and the managers of the various centres.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used the descriptive survey design. It specifically intended to investigate the factors that affect the implementation of ECD policy in central division of Narok County. Such issues are best investigated through descriptive research design, since it generally helps to answer questions and gives precise information concerning the current status of a subject in question. The design also attempts to describe such issues as possible behaviour, attitudes, and values and reports things the way they are (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). This method was preferred because there was need to describe study respondents in regard to their behaviour, attitude, values and characteristics to the challenges that affect the performance of ECD in Narok central division. Descriptive data was collected through questionnaires and interview method. Abere (2006) also indicated that descriptive design is appropriate for minimizing time and

financial costs, for a study with a large number of respondents from whom data is collected.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE AND SAMPLE SIZE

The Central Division of Narok North District has four educational zones; Ole Sankale, Ilmasharian, Nkoban and Olchorro. These zones were used as strata from which the sample was selected using the simple random sampling method. The actual sample of the study was determined using the sample size formula developed by Bartlett, Kotrlik, & Higgins (2001) as shown below:

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

Where n is the expected sample size

N is the study population

e is the expected sampling error

Therefore the sample size for teachers and the managers was;

$$n = 287 / 1 + 287(0.05)^2$$

$$n = 172$$

The sample size for this study was therefore 172 respondents which is 59 % of the entire population. This percentage was used to draw the sample from the teachers and the managers. All the DICECE teachers were purposively selected for the study because the sample could be managed effectively due to their small number. The sample distribution from the division was as shown in table 1.

Division	Total Number of ECD Staff	Percentage	Expected Sample
Managers	93	33	55
Teachers	188	62	111
DICECD staff	6	100	6
Total	287		172

Table 1: Sample Distribution within the Divisions

The study therefore used 55 managers from selected centers and 111 teachers and the six DICECD staff. This made a total sample of 172 respondents.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

The study used a self-administered semi structured questionnaire of five liker scale to collect data from the managers and the teachers in pre schools. Mcmillan and Schumacher (2001) recommend a questionnaire if the researcher knows that the respondents will be in a position to answer the questionnaire. Closed ended and scaled items will be carefully used to generate information of influence, facilitates response since the questions are multiple choices and data can be categorized easily. The scaled items, according to Mcmillan and Schumacher (2001) allow fairly accurate assessments of opinions. Similarly it has the ability to solicit information from several respondents within a short time (Manani 2002). Questions to measure ability and perception were drawn on a 5 scale Likert. Open ended questions gathered in depth information and were used so as to enable the researcher gather data from a large number of respondents at a particular time (Manani,2002) while closed-

ended questions provided structured responses, which facilitated the ease of tabulation and analysis of the results.

INSTRUMENTATION

Data for the study was collected by means of questionnaires and an interview schedule developed by the researcher. The questionnaires were developed for the Preschool teachers, the first sections of the questionnaire sought to establish their ages, gender, marital status, the level of education, type of training and their teaching experiences. The second part of the questionnaire sought to find out the level of preparedness of preschool children as regards social-emotional skills. The respondents were required to indicate whether the children were prepared well enough in social-emotional skills as they join primary school. The third part of the questionnaire contained different social-emotional and academic skills, where the respondents were expected to respond to the different levels as given in the questionnaire in order to reflect their understanding of the various issues as covered by the objectives. The interview schedule was used for the DECECE staff.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

To establish reliability of research instruments, a pilot study was carried out in 3 ECDE centres which were later eliminated from the sample frame. It involved 18 teachers (10% of the study sample) using test-retest method. The two tests were administered at an interval of one week in order to save on time. This was done so as to find out whether the terms and statements used to build the questionnaire resonate with teachers. The researcher also verified their content for accuracy, consistency and assurance that ambiguous information is eliminated. Deficiencies and weaknesses were noted and corrected in the final instruments. Centre managers and teachers who participated in the pilot study were not involved in the main study.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The instruments were validated through a pilot study and a panel of experts from the School of Education Maasai Mara University. The researcher conducted a pilot study using a sample of 24 respondents selected from different preschools in the district. This sample was picked outside the designated main areas of data collection. The sample included pre-school teachers, pre-school managers and DICECE staff. On the other hand, the panel of experts comprised of the supervisors and experts from the School of Education, Maasai Mara University. In the process, the instruments were modified according to the results obtained from the pretest.

Reliability is the statistical criteria used to assess whether the research provides a good measure (Whitelaw, 2001). Reliability refers to the dependability of a measurement instrument, that is, the extent to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). A reliability coefficient indicates to the researcher that the instrument is capable of providing similar results if subjected

to another sample from the same population. In order to establish the reliability coefficient Cronbach's Coefficient alpha was computed on SPSS using the variance of the total test scores and the variance of the individual item scores. The reliability coefficient was worked out using SPSS, and an alpha coefficient of 0.882 was established. Any reliability values above 0.7 are acceptable for any social research according to (Kathuri & Pals, 1993) meaning that the questionnaire was reliable and was considered to generate the required data for the study.

PROCEDURE FOR CONDUCTING THE DATA COLLECTION

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the School of Education, Maasai Mara University. This letter was reproduced for each of the respondents to request for their co-operation. The researcher prepared a total of 172 questionnaires and approached the managers for various schools to get permission for the study. After meeting the managers and being introduced to the teachers the questionnaires were given out to the respondents and allowed a week to fill. The questionnaires were collected back, summarized, coded, and keyed into the computer for analysis by the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

The completed questionnaires were sorted out and checked for completeness and accuracy in filling. The questionnaires that were incomplete were considered spoilt and were not considered for the study. Qualitative data obtained from personal interviews and open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively through content analysis and organized into themes and patterns corresponding to the research questions. This helped the researcher to detect and establish various categories in the data which were distinct from each other. Themes and categories were generated using codes assigned manually by the researcher. Quantitative data such as statistical information on the policies and the challenges that face the implementation were analyzed by the help of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 16.). Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, averages and percentages determined quantitative data. The results obtained were evaluated to see its usefulness in answering the research questions, making deductions and recommendations.

FINDINGS

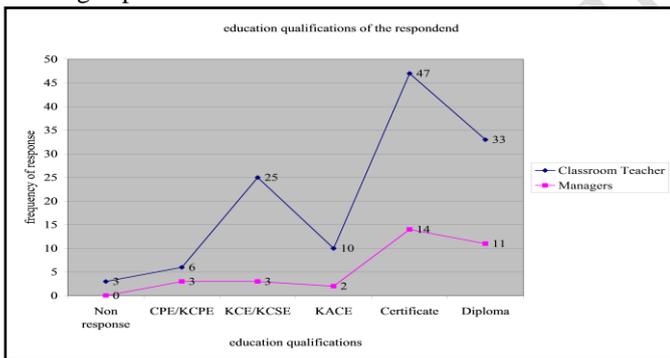
The study sought to establish the factors affecting the effective policy implementation of pre-school education in order to enhance learning in ECD centers. In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the following objective was taken into consideration Assess the effect of present policy on access to ECD programmes. The study sought to establish the reliability of the research instruments by carrying out a pilot study using 17 questionnaires which constituted 10% of the selected sample. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient

was established at 0.886 and the instruments were therefore declared to be reliable. For the actual research a total of 172 questionnaires were distributed to the ECD teachers, head teachers and the DICECD staff. The researcher was able to collect back 157 questionnaires which were used for the data analysis. This represented a 91.2 % response rate which was accepted as representative. According to Babbie (2002) any response of 70% and above is considered representative and adequate for analysis. The questionnaires were then coded for easy entry into the computer system through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 16.). The study sample comprised of 55 ECD managers, 111 ECD teachers and 6 DICECD teachers. (See table 1).

The descriptive statistics of frequency, percentage and the means were determined for the demographic characteristics of the respondents and for the various items used to define the study objectives. The relationship between the independent and the dependent variables was established and factor analysis was done to establish the factor that had the highest effect on the implementation of the ECD policy. This chapter was presented on the basis of the objectives but first it described the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE STUDY RESPONDENTS

The respondents' characteristics were considered important to this study as they helped to establish the respondents' differences and find out how they may affect the outcome of the results. The demographic characteristics of the respondents considered were academic qualifications and working experience.



ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION

Academic qualification was considered for this study as it helps one to understand the various policies and how they are implemented at the ECD centers in Narok central division. This has been summarized in figure 3 as follows;

Figure 3: Academic Qualification

The results presented in figure 3 show that most of the ECD teachers who responded to the questionnaire 47 (37.9%) had certificate qualification as their highest academic level. Similarly most of the managers 14 (42.4 %) also were holders of certificate qualifications. This was followed by 33 (26.6%) of the teachers who had diploma qualifications while 11 (33.3%) of the managers also indicated to have diploma qualification. The other set of teachers 25(20.1%) were

K.C.E/K.C.S.E holders. It was noted that 3(9.1%) ECD centre's had managers with only CPE/ KCPE qualifications while 6 () of teachers had similar qualifications. The results clearly show that majority of the ECD teachers had attained a certificate in teaching ECD. It has been reported that the educational staff in the area lack either managerial skills or skillful knowledge or that there was an insufficient number of teachers to achieve the schools' goals (District Education office, 2010).

YEARS OF WORKING

The study considered the number of years an employee had worked in the ECD centre and sought to find out whether it has an influence on the challenges that face the ECD centers in the district. The study first analyzed the ECD teachers, the centre managers and the DICECE staffs working experience and the years that they have worked at the current centre. The results were presented in table 4.1 and figure 4 respectively.

Response	Years of Working					Total
	Non responses	Below 10 years	10-20 years	20-30 years	Over 30 years	
Classroom Teacher	0	83(66.9%)	21(16.9%)	15(12.1%)	5(4.0 %)	124
Managers	3(9.1%)	10(30.3%)	9(27.3%)	2(6.0%)	9(27.3%)	33
DICECE teachers	0	2(33.3%)	4(66.6%)	0	0	6
Total	3	95	34	17	14	157

Table 4.1: Teachers and Managers Working Experience

The results presented in table 4.1 show that majority of the teachers 83 out of 124 (66.9%) who participated in the study had worked for below 10 years while the 10 (30.3%) of the managers had worked for a similar period of less than 10 years. This was followed by the 21 (16.9%) of the teachers who had worked for between 10-20 years. The other group of respondents 15 (12.1%) indicated having worked for between 20-30 years only 5 (4%) of the teachers had worked for more than 30 years as ECD teachers, while among the managers 9 (27.3%) indicated that they had worked for more than 30 years as ECD teachers. Among the DICECE staff it was noted that majority 4 out of 6 (66.6%) of the respondents had been in the profession for a period between 10-20 years while the rest 2 (33.3%) had been in the profession for less than 10 years.

EFFECT OF AWARENESS OF ECD POLICIES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ECD PROGRAMMES

The study sought to establish the effect of awareness of ECD policy on the implementation of ECD programmes. The results were presented in table 4.2.

	TEACHERS				MANAGERS			
	Non response	Not sure	No	Yes	Non response	Not sure	No	Yes
Awareness of the ECD policy	3 (2.4%)	13 (10.5%)	8 (6.5%)	100 (80.6 %)	0	5 (15.1 %)	10 (30.3 %)	18 (55.6 %)
Conversant with the ECD policy	4 (3%)	17 (13.7%)	21 (16.9%)	82 (66.1 %)	0(0%)	4 (12.1 %)	13 (39.4 %)	16 (48.5 %)

Familiar with the Implementation of the ECD policy	12 (9.7%)	15 (2.2%)	0	92 (74.2%)	0	6 (18.2%)	0	27 (81.8%)
--	--------------	--------------	---	---------------	---	--------------	---	---------------

Table 4.2: Teachers and Managers Awareness of the ECD Policy

The results presented in table 4.2 show that most of the teachers 100 (80.6 %) were aware of the policy on ECD while most of the managers also indicated the same with a response rate of 18 (55.6%). On the other hand 13 (39.4%) of teachers indicated that they were not aware of the policy while for the managers 10 (10%) indicated that they were not aware of the ECD policy. This is an indication that the majority of teachers were aware of the policy available for ECD. On whether they were conversant with the policy, majority of the teachers 82 (66.1%) indicated that they were conversant while for the managers 16 (48.5%) indicated that they were conversant with the policy. Similarly, the interview with the DICECD staff revealed a similar trend where by majority 5 (83%) agreed that they were well aware of the ECD policy. This clearly shows that both the teachers and the managers were aware and conversant with the ECD policy and hence they were expected to provide accurate information for the study. Among the teachers 92(74.2%) agreed that they were aware of the ECD policy implementation while among the managers again majority 27(81.8%) indicate that they were familiar with the implementation process. This shows that both the teachers and the managers were familiar with the implementation of the ECD policy.

EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PRESENT ECD POLICY TO DELIVER THE ECD PROGRAMMES

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the efficiency and effectiveness of the present ECD policy. It sought to establish whether the current ECD policy is effective and efficient or not in delivering the ECD programmes. The results were presented in table 4.3

Responses	Teachers			Managers		
	DA	NS	A	DA	NS	A
ECD policies are efficient and effective.	25 (20.2%)	20 (16.1%)	79 (63.7%)	3 (9.1%)	9 (27.3%)	21 (63.6%)
Policies on ECD ensure that there are proper mechanisms put in place for the implementation of the policies.	81 (65.3%)	8 (6.5%)	35 (28.2%)	18 (54.5%)	5 (15.2%)	10 (30.3%)
ECD policies define the curriculum for the ECD programmes in the country.	12 (9.7%)	15 (12.1%)	92 (74.2%)	0	6 (18.2%)	27 (81.8%)
The policies provide the standards to be maintained in the implementation of the programme	25 (20.2%)	11(8.9%)	88 (71%)	0	11 (33%)	22 (67%)
The policies define the required qualifications for the teachers and provide avenues for their training.	22(18%)	11(9%)	91 (73%)	2(6%)	1 (3%)	30 (91%)
There are funds set aside to support the implementation of the ECD policies.	42(34%)	67(54%)	15 (12%)	7(21%)	18 (55%)	8 (24%)

Policies address the challenges of enrolment and development of the ECD centers.	35(28%)	14(11%)	64 (52%)	9(27%)	8 (25%)	16 (48%)
There is proper monitoring of the ECD policies during the implementation by our office.	56(45%)	35(28%)	28 (23%)	20(61%)	7 (21%)	6 (18%)
Average	31 (25%)	23 (19%)	67 (54%)	7 (21%)	8 (24%)	17 (51%)

Table 4.3: Response on Efficiency and Effectiveness of the present ECD policies

The results of the study presented on table 4.3 show that majority of the respondents 67 out of 123 (54%) of the teachers and 17 out of 33 (51%) of the managers agreed with most of the statements that were identified to define the objective on effectiveness and efficiency. The results on individual statements showed that majority of the teachers 79 (63.7%) and 21 (63.6%) of the managers agreed that the ECD policies were effective and efficient. However, majority 81 (65.3%) of the teachers and 18 (54.5%) of the managers disagreed that the policies on ECD ensures that there are proper mechanisms put in place for the implementation of the policy. This shows that though the teachers and the managers agree that the ECD policy is effective and efficient, but they also note that there are no proper mechanisms put in place for the implementation of this policy. On whether the ECD policy in Kenya defined the curriculum for the ECD programmes in the country, majority of the teachers 91 (73%) and 30 (91%) of the managers agreed that the ECD policy defines the curriculum to be used in the country. It was also noted that most of the teachers 88 (71%) and 22 (67%) of the managers also agreed that the policy provides the standards to be maintained in the implementation of the ECD programmes.

It is also noted from the results that majority of the teachers 91 (73%) and 30 (91%) of the managers agreed that the policy defines the required qualifications for the teachers and provide avenues for their training. Similarly, 64 (52%) of the teachers and 16 (48%) of the managers at the ECD centers agreed that Policy addresses the challenges of enrolment and development of the ECD centers. This clearly indicates that both the teachers and the managers understand and are confident about the existing ECD policies. However, it was noted that for both the teachers and the managers most of them 67 (54%) of the teachers were not sure of that while 42 (34%) disagreed that there are funds set aside to support the implementation of the ECD policy.

Among the managers there was a similar, response where 18 (55%) were not sure of the availability of funds and 7 (21%) disagreed with the statement. Similarly, most of the respondents disagreed that there is proper monitoring of the ECD policy during the implementation by the District Education Office-Narok District. This shows that there is ECD policy and the teachers and managers of the ECD programmes understand it. However, they lack appropriate support for effective implementation of the policy in the preschools. The results of the interview schedule with the DICECD staff also provided a similar response, they all agreed that there exists ECD policy that guides the curriculum, the standards required teacher qualification among other key aspects of ECD. However, the policy lacked effective support during their

implementation especially in terms of funds and proper mechanisms for the implementation of the policy

CHALLENGES FACING ECD POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The last objective of the study sought to establish the various challenges affecting the implementation of ECD policy. The results revealed a number of the most common factors familiar to the teachers and managers of ECD as presented in table 4.4(appendix 1)

From the results presented in table 4.4 it is noted that among the challenges identified were; ECD is still ranked lowest in the education sector and in the community at large with a response of 108 (87%) from the teachers and 30 (91%) from the managers. It was also noted 92 (74%) of the teachers and 22 (67%) of the managers noted that there was lack of accurate information on the different components of this field. Lack of ECD data and/or incomplete and fragmented data pose challenges in the implementation of the ECD policy.

The study also noted that teachers 69 out of 123 (56%) see table 4.6, said that there is inconsistent ECD teachers training and programme approval across the country, on the other hand most of the managers 15 (45%) also noted the same. Similarly majority of the teachers 83 (67%) and 24 (73%) of the managers agreed that Early childhood teacher retention rates are among the lowest in the education field because of the policy that exists. Besides it was also noted that 109 (88%) of the teachers and 27 (73%) of the managers indicated that teacher remuneration and salaries has not kept pace with increased early childhood education requirements and therefore it posed a big challenge to the implementation of the ECD policy

It is also noted that there is lack of coordination between current research and theory and actual practice in ECD care and education centres, 74 (60%) of the teachers agreed with the statement while 22 (67%) of the managers also agreed. From this discussion it is noted that majority of the respondents both the teachers and the managers noted that the implementation of ECD policies is affected by various challenges which are emanating from either the teachers or managers.

The DICECE staff noted the same that there were various challenges that affected the implementation of the ECD policy. According to the DICECE staff the main challenges that affected the implementation of the ECD policy was lack of resources, both financial and working environment, lack of appropriate training for the teachers, lack of proper community support, the curriculum which is not appropriate and lack of government support that is the government is not doing enough to ensure effective implementation of the policy on ECD in the district and by extension the whole country.

THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PRESENT ECD POLICY

The results of this study agreed with the fact that efficiency and effectiveness of the present ECD policy was important for the implementation of the ECD programme. It was noted that the current ECD policy is effective and

efficient in delivering the requirements of the ECD programmes. The results indicated that majority of the respondents agreed with most of the statements identified to define the objectives on effectiveness and efficiency of the ECD policy. The results revealed that most of the respondents agreed that the ECD policy was effective and efficient. However, majority disagreed that the policy on ECD ensures that there are proper mechanisms put in place for the implementation of this policy. This shows that though the teachers and the managers agree that the ECD policy is effective and efficient they also note that there are no proper mechanisms put in place for the implementation of this policy.

On whether the ECD policy defines the curriculum for the ECD programmes in the country, majority of the respondents agreed meaning that the ECD policy defines the curriculum to be used in the country. It was also noted that the policy also provides the standards to be maintained in the implementation of the ECD programmes and the required qualifications for the teachers and provides avenues for their training. Similarly, the respondents agreed that the ECD Policy addresses the challenges of enrolment and development of the ECD centres. This indicates that both the teachers and the managers understand and are confident about the existing ECD policy. However, both the teachers and the managers were not sure of this policy. Majority of the respondents disagreed that there were funds set aside to support the implementation of the ECD policy. The respondents also noted that there was no proper monitoring of the ECD policy during the implementation by those responsible for policy formulation and implementation.

This shows that teachers and managers of the ECD programmes understand the policy but they lack appropriate support for effective implementation of the policy in the preschools. The results of the interview schedule with the DICECE teachers also confirmed the responses. They all agreed that there exists ECD policy that guides the curriculum, the standards required and teacher qualifications among other key aspects of ECD. However, the policy lacked effective support during its implementation especially in terms of funds and proper mechanisms for the implementation of the policy (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993). Resources are undoubtedly necessary for any policy implementation (Voradej Chandarasorn. (2005).

CHALLENGES AFFECTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ECD POLICY

The study sought to establish the challenges that face the implementation of the ECD policy in Narok Central Division. These are some of the challenges that the respondents identified as affecting the implementation of the ECD policy. One, ECD is still given the last opportunity in the education sector and in the community at large. Two, it was also noted that the teachers and the managers lack of accurate information on the different components of this field. Three, lack of ECD data and/or incomplete and fragmented data pose challenges in the implementation of the ECD policy in the division. Majority of the teachers and head teachers noted that the training and program approval across the country were not covering the management aspects of ECD dealing with policy formulation. Five, majority of the teachers and managers

agreed that early childhood teacher retention rates are among the lowest in the education field because of the policy that exists. Six, it was also noted that the teacher remuneration and salaries has not kept pace with increased early childhood education requirements and therefore it posed a big challenge to the implementation of the ECD policy. Seven, it is also noted that there is lack of coordination between current research and theory and actual practice in ECD care and Education Centres.

This discussion reveals that majority of the respondents both the teachers and the managers noted that the implementation of ECD policy is affected by various challenges which emanates from either the teachers or managers. The DICECE staff noted that there were various challenges that affected the implementation of the ECD policy. According to the DICECE staff the main challenges that affected the implementation of the ECD policy was lack of financial resources and appropriate training for the teachers, proper community support and a curriculum which is not appropriate and government support to ensure effective implementation of policy on ECD in the Country as a whole.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study sought to examine the factors affecting the implementation of Pre-school policy in Central Division of Narok North district. The study revealed that among the factors affecting the effective implementation of the ECD policy in the division was lack of awareness of the policy among the ECD teachers, managers and the DICECE staff, the effectiveness of the current policy in the development of the ECD centres in the division. The study noted that the current ECD policy do not support the development of the ECD centres. This is therefore a factor affecting the implementation of the ECD policy.

Among the challenges that affect the implementation of policy in ECD are as follows; a challenge of the teachers training where majority of the teachers teaching in ECD do not have the required skills for the implementation of the policy, the ECD centres lack the resource both financial and assets that support the policy in the ECD sector and the work environment in the schools is not conducive in enhancing the implementation process of the ECD policy. This study concludes that the implementation of the ECD policy requires that the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the policy be aware of the policy.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

- From these findings of the study it is recommended that;
- ✓ Policy makers to involve the teachers and the centre managers in the process of policy formulation.
- ✓ Policy makers to provide adequate materials and resources to support the effective implementation of the policies and the curriculum.
- ✓ The work environment within the ECDE centers needs to be improved by ensuring that the teachers are supported and are paid properly.

- ✓ There is need for the community and the government to build and equip more centers to ease the challenges of long distances to schools that affect the access.
- ✓ NGO's such as UNICEF's and the WHO to introduce Child Friendly Environment Initiative programmes to improve the quality of ECD centers as witnessed in some of the Muslim ECD centers.

AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The study recommends that the same study could be duplicated to cover a wider area and establish whether similar results would be arrived at. There is also need to have research to compare the performance of the centres in line with the policy and challenges cited in this study.

APPENDIX 1

Responses	TEACHERS			MANAGERS		
	DA	NS	A	DA	NS	A
ECD is still given the last opportunity both in the sector and community at large	8(6%)	8(6%)	108 (87%)	3(9%)	0	30 (91%)
There is lack of accurate information on the different constituents of the field	9(7%)	23 (19%)	92 (74%)	8 (24%)	3(9%)	22 (67%)
There is inconsistent ECD teachers training and program approval across the country	28 (23%)	9(7%)	69 (56%)	10 (30%)	4 (12%)	15 (45%)
Early childhood teacher retention rates are among the lowest in the education field because of the policy that exists	15 (12%)	26 (21%)	83 (67%)	4 (12%)	5 (15%)	24 (73%)
Teacher remuneration /salaries has not kept pace with increased early childhood education requirements.	6(5%)	9(7%)	109 (88%)	4 (12%)	2(6%)	27 (82%)
There is lack of coordination between current research and theory and actual practice in EC care and education centers	2(2%)	48 (39%)	74 (60%)	2(6%)	9 (27%)	22 (67%)

I think the government is doing enough to ensure effective implementation of policy on ECD in the district	105 (85%)	0	19 (15%)	28 (85%)	0	5 (15%)
Average	22%	22.75%	74.83%	7.75%	4.17%	20.25%

Table 4.4: Responses on the Challenges Facing Implementation of ECD Policies

REFERENCES

- [1] Aber, O. S. (2006) *Administrative Training Needs of Public Primary School Managers for Effective Management of Schools in Kuria District, Kenya*. Unpublished Med research project, university of Nairobi, Kenya.
- [2] Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2001. *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford. University Press.
- [3] Bartlett, J.E., Kotlik, J.W., and Higgins, C.C. (2001). "Organizational Research: Determining Appropriate sample Size in Survey Research". *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal*, 19(1), pp 43-50 (Spring).
- [4] Kathuri, J. N., & Pals, D. A. (1993). *Introduction to educational research*. Njoro: Egerton University Press.
- [5] Manani, H. K. (2002) *NACECE Programme. Experiences and Challenges of the NACECE Programme from a Humble Beginning to date 2002*. An unpublished paper presented during the ECD Regional conference held at Mombasa Beach Hotel from 17th to 23rd February 2002.
- [6] McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2001). *Research in education: A conceptual introduction* (5th ed.). New York: Longman.
- [7] Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) *Research Methods-Quantitative And Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi; Africa Centre For Technology Studies.
- [8] Ngigi, A. and Macharia, D. (2006) Education sector policy overview paper. Kenya Education Policy
- [9] Republic of Kenya. (2005) Sessional Paper No 1 (2005). *A policy Framework for Education, Training and Research. Meeting the Challenges of Education, Training and research in Kenya in the 21st Century*. Nairobi: The Government Printer.
- [10] Sabatier, Paul A. and Jenkins-Smith, Hank C. (1993). *Policy Change and Learning: an Advocacy Coalition Framework*. Boulder: West View Press.
- [11] Sekaran, U. (2005). *Research Methods for Business: A Skill-building Approach* (4th ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- [12] Silver, R. E. and Skuja-Steele, R. (2005). *Priorities in English Language Education Policy and Classroom Implementation*. *Language Policy*. 4 (1): 107-128.
- [13] UNICEF (2005) *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey*. Nairobi: UNICEF/Government of Kenya.
- [14] Voradej Chandarasorn. (2005). *An Integrated Theory of Public Policy Implementation*. Bangkok: TURA. (In Thai)