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INFLUENCE OF READING RESOURCES ON LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT AMONG GRADE 3 PUPILS IN KISUMU EAST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

Odhiambo Winnie Sharon Anyango[1i],
Everline Nyokabi Maina[2]
[1]Master's Student,
School of Education,
Department of Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation,
Maseno University,
Kisumu, Kenya
[2]Lecturer, Dr.,
Department of Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation,
Maseno University,
Kisumu, Kenya

Abstract:
Reading literacy is a cornerstone of educational achievement and personal development, particularly in the early years of formal schooling. In Kenya, concerns have been raised about the ability of Grade 3 learners to achieve expected reading proficiency levels. This study investigates the role of reading resources in shaping reading literacy achievement among Grade 3 pupils in public primary schools in Kisumu East Sub-County, an area with one of the lowest literacy rates among children aged 8–10 years. The research adopted descriptive and correlational research designs and targeted a population of 3029 pupils and 368 teachers. A sample comprising 317 Grade 3 pupils and 172 trained teachers was selected using Slovin's formula. Data collection tools included structured questionnaires, classroom observation checklists and standardized reading achievement tests. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient were used to analyze quantitative data, while qualitative responses were thematically analyzed. Findings revealed a significant positive relationship between the availability of reading resources and reading literacy achievement ($r = 0.525$, $p < 0.05$). Pupils in schools with adequate reading materials such as textbooks, storybooks, charts and digital tools demonstrated superior performance in comprehension, fluency and vocabulary use. The study underscores the need for equitable distribution of instructional resources, investment in teacher capacity-building and promotion of reading culture. Recommendations are made for policymakers, educators and development partners to adopt evidence-based interventions to bridge resource gaps and uplift literacy outcomes.

[i] Correspondence: email winniesharono@gmail.com

Keywords: reading resources, reading literacy, grade 3 pupils, literacy achievement

1. Introduction

Reading is essential for assisting their education, especially for youngsters; consequently, it is a fundamental component of every child's education (Association for the Development of Education in Africa, 2016; Whittingham, Hoffman & Teale, 2018). A basic life ability, reading shapes a child's academic and personal achievement as well as their life (Marima & Runo, 2016). For a child's development and education, it offers a strong basis and motivating source (Talley, 2017). Children's love of books fuels their development of a reading culture and, so, drives them toward future academic excellence. It also lets kids grow mentally, which helps shape long-standing behaviors and character (Talley, 2017).

Research worldwide shows that more than a third of primary school-aged youngsters lack grade-level reading ability (UNESCO, 2015). A good majority of early grade children in Sub-Saharan Africa fall short of functional literacy (Gove & Cvelich, 2010; Uwezo, 2013). Academic learning has not advanced at the same pace even if primary school enrollment has surged globally (Abeberese *et al.*, 2014; Pritchett & Sandefur, 2017; Spier, 2016). According to Spier (2016), early grade learning is becoming more and more important in literacy studies conducted in underdeveloped nations, therefore exposing notable disparities in fundamental literacy competency.

Though significant progress has been achieved in Kenya with Free Primary Education and curricular changes like the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), learning outcomes, especially in literacy, remain a major issue. Orodho *et al.* (2013) claim Kenya has not quite reached its Education for All (EFA) targets. English is a fundamental language taught under the CBC and a tool of instruction, which emphasizes the need to give literacy first priority.

Ten percent of kids in Europe did not meet average reading competency (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), according to a 2018 survey; a UNESCO research in the United States (2011) revealed that many youngsters struggled with reading and suffered low academic performance. Like patterns are observed all throughout Africa. For example, Taylor and Taylor (2013) found in South Africa that in a reading evaluation, the typical Grade 3 student scored just 20%. According to SACMEQ (2007), reading proficiency still shockingly poor in many African countries.

Acquisition of literacy is strongly influenced by the availability and efficient use of reading materials. Effective reading tools and instructional practices are typically lacking in underfunded schools (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009; Medadi, 2014). According to Uwezo (2011), almost seventy percent of East African Grade 3 students couldn't read a Grade 2-level tale. These results beg serious issues about teacher preparation, instructional support and access to reading resources.

Classroom textbooks, library books, magazines, printed materials, charts, recordings, images, videos, online tools and instructional technology UNESCO, 2018;

Amunavi, 2015 are among the reading resources available, but not limited to. Children in contexts rich in literacy are more likely to acquire fundamental literacy skills, according to research (Gakii, 2015; Anigbogu, 2017; Ali *et al.*, 2017). Promoting a reading culture calls for making learning materials easily available, diversified and contextually relevant, claims Morara (2014), UNESCO (2015), and Freudenberger and Davis (2017).

This assertion is supported by several empirical studies. In a study done in rural Malaysia, Chun and Rahim (2017) found that access to locally relevant teaching resources improved literacy development for students. Likewise, Michalak (2015) discovered that although libraries and print materials are vital, classroom layout and learner involvement are far more likely to promote reading comprehension. Though the study concentrated on secondary school students, Anigbogu (2017) revealed in Nigeria a favorable correlation between literacy materials and language development.

Amunavi (2018) examined reading materials in Hamisi Sub-County and came to the conclusion that poor instructional resources greatly hampered literacy rates. Kurgatt and Omuna (2016) noted comparable patterns in English classroom visual aid use. Teachers occasionally lacked the required knowledge to make good use of the given reading resources, Wolf *et al.* (2018) pointed out. Studying Kiswahili teaching in Tanzania, Ngussa and Chiza (2017) discovered that many teachers neglected instructional materials even when they were at hand. These results point to a regional issue with regard to the availability and pedagogical application of reading materials. The difficulty is especially noticeable in several areas of Kenya. With a literacy rate of 58.7%, Kisumu East Sub-County has the lowest among children aged 8 to 10 according to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2018). This runs counter to Nyakach (68.2%) and Kisumu Central (72.3%). These differences highlight how urgently focused literacy campaigns are needed.

Table 1: Literacy Rates in Kisumu Sub-Counties

Sub-County	**Literacy Level**
Kisumu Central	72.3%
Nyakach	68.2%
Muhoroni	67.7%
Seme	64.6%
Kisumu West	60.4%
Nyando	58.9%
Kisumu East	58.7%

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2018).

Given the fundamental value of reading skills, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension, this study attempts to investigate how access to and usage of reading materials affect reading literacy proficiency among Grade 3 kids in public primary schools in Kisumu East Sub-County. Especially in peri-urban and underfunded environments, the project seeks to produce context-specific evidence to guide policy and practice.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations

Education can be generally divided into inputs and outputs, each of which is quite important in influencing the results of the process (Okotoni & Fareo, 2009). While outputs are the cognitive, behavioral and skill-based outcomes reached by students, Cummins (2001) defines inputs as the mix of human and material resources used in the instructional process. This perspective holds that the synergy between inputs and outcomes determines how well an educational system works. Fundamental inputs for literacy education include reading materials, teacher preparedness, classroom settings and teacher-perceptions. In Kenya, the Ministry of Education advises that to enhance language acquisition and academic growth, learning environments should be overflowing with literacy-promoting materials like textbooks, charts, storybooks and digital content.

2.2 Access to Reading Materials

One of the most important factors influencing literacy acquisition in early schooling is still access to varied and age-appropriate reading resources. Makotsi (2015) and Nderatu (2018) underlined that environments devoid of books, newspapers, and other resources cannot allow a reading culture to grow. For Sub-Saharan Africa, where classroom libraries and school-wide reading programs are sometimes lacking or underfunded, the low availability of such materials is a regular difficulty. According to UNESCO (2004), numerous of the local schools run without a single working library. Likewise, the EFA Report (2000) observed that even libraries in schools can have obsolete or inadequate resources.

According to Clark and Hawkins (2011), academic performance is favorably influenced by reading material access as well as ownership of it. Regular access to working libraries helps students, according to Krashen and Lee (2012), to attain better literacy rates. Adams (2000) proposed the institutionalization of reading spaces inside classrooms where students might interact with books as free agents, therefore encouraging independent literacy practices. Nevertheless, in resource-constrained schools, scheduled instructional time still rules most and leaves little space for exploratory or interest-based reading in spite of such data.

2.3 Use and Pedagogical Integration of Instructional Resources

Having reading tools by themselves does not guarantee good acquisition of literacy. Their inclusion in classroom learning is also rather important. Homan and Biggs (2009) support the deliberate use of print resources and visual aids to raise student involvement and understanding. If used effectively, instructional resources can help to offset teacher shortages and foster student critical thinking.

Lack of pedagogical training and support causes many Kenyan instructors to underuse the tools at hand. Karanja (2015) noted that rote techniques are heavily relied

upon in classrooms when basic instructional visuals including charts and posters are lacking. In UK schools, Watson (2012) also discovered that poor pedagogical methods and resource constraints degraded students' reading skills. These studies show that boosting literacy results depends on the availability of resources as well as teacher capacity to make use of them.

2.4 Locally Developed and Learner-Generated Reading Materials

Research Studies confirm that using community and learner-generated content will help to contextualize literacy education. Emphasizing the relevance and relatability of materials produced by students or community members, Omulando (2015) and Piper *et al.* (2016). Stories about local events, health concerns, or known persons improve participation and help to build a closer understanding. According to Karanja (2014), these kinds of resources improve students' critical thinking and cultural identity in addition to their reading competency. Therefore, especially in linguistically and culturally varied areas, locally produced resources provide reasonably affordable instruments for inclusive literacy education.

2.5 Empirical Evidence on Reading Resources and Literacy Achievement

Many studies from Kenya and other developing nations show a clear link between literacy results and the availability and efficient use of reading materials. Studying literacy in rural public schools in Narok County, Mwoma (2017) discovered that a major factor influencing students' reading ability was the existence of reading materials at both home and school, together with supporting adults. Examining Hamisi Sub-County, Amunavi (2018) found that poor literacy performance was caused by insufficient teaching tools.

Rochayani (2010) discovered in Nigeria that using instructional resources greatly raised students' mathematical performance, therefore underscoring the transferability of instructional success across disciplines. Louisa (2010) showed that better audio-assisted education was in enhancing pronunciation abilities than explanatory methods. Nalusiba (2010) exposed in Uganda that a scarcity of reading materials hampered the growth of reading culture. Shayne and Richard (2010) linked insufficient resource availability in South Africa with inadequate literacy results among rural Grade 1 pupils. Their research urged ongoing professional growth as well as funding for instructional materials. Likewise, Wangui (2012) found that many Kenyan schools lacked both diversity and volume of reading materials, therefore compromising the quality of instruction.

2.6 Synthesis and Research Gap

The examined studies demonstrate that developing reading interest, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension depends on access to reading materials. In many settings, it has been demonstrated that literacy results are much influenced by the presence and use of reading materials. Still, many underfunded schools struggle constantly to match their teaching plans with the resources at hand. Many educators claim not knowing how to

employ reading aids, and frequently classroom supplies are not catered to the language and cultural background of the students.

Although regional and international studies show the overall value of reading resources, there is still a dearth of empirical evidence concentrating on how reading materials affect literacy rates in particular Kenyan sub-counties. Specifically, no thorough research has looked at how reading resources relate to literacy achievement for Grade 3 students in Kisumu East Sub-County. This study closes this gap by evaluating how early literacy results in a peri-urban, resource-limited school environment depend on the availability and pedagogical use of reading materials.

3. Material Method Tools

3.1 Research Design

This work applied a mixed-method approach combining correlational research approaches with descriptive surveys. The descriptive survey methodology helped to enable thorough data collection on instructional strategies and reading resource availability in natural school environments (Bhat, 2019). The correlational methodology allowed the researcher to investigate correlations between the dependent variable, reading literacy achievement, and independent variables reading resources, teaching strategies, instructional methodologies). Correlational designs, as Creswell (2014) points out, measure the degree of relationship between variables without changing the study environment.

3.2 Study Area

One of seven sub-counties in Kisumu County, Kenya, all 46 public primary schools in Kisumu East Sub-County were surveyed. Kisumu East has a population of 220,997 and covers 141.6 square kilometers according to the 2019 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics census. With a tropical temperature of 22.9°C, average annual rainfall of 1321 mm, and latitude 0.0917°S and longitude 34.7680°E, it lies at Five wards—Kajulu, Nyalenda A, Manyatta B, Kolwa East, and Kolwa West make up the area. Mostly rural and peri-urban, it has a variety of economic activities including woodworking, farming, fishing, and small-business entrepreneurship. Kajulu, Ragumu and Rweya make three clusters within the educational zone. Since all public elementary schools in the sub-county have the Tusome Literacy Program in place, it is an appropriate venue for literacy study.

3.3 Target Population and Participants

Targeting all Grade 3 students (n=3029) and their certified instructors (n=368) in Kisumu East Sub-County, the study Participants comprised learners aged 8 to 10 years as well as male and female teachers. Schools were selected depending on Grade 3 student availability and Tusome program participation.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Slovin's formula was used to calculate an appropriate sample size at a 5% margin of error:

$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$

Based on this formula, the study sampled 317 Grade 3 pupils and 172 Grade 3 teachers. A pilot study was conducted with 10% of the population, after which saturated sampling was employed to include all eligible participants in the main study.

Participant Type	Target Population	Sample Size	Percentage (%)
Grade 3 Pupils	3029	317	10.5
Grade 3 Teachers	368	172	47

3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Three tools were used: teacher questionnaires, pupils' reading tests and classroom observation checklists.

3.5.1 Teacher Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire with both open- and closed-ended questions was administered to Grade 3 teachers. The instrument consisted of five sections addressing reading resources, instructional methods and reading strategies. It was validated through expert review by the Department of Early Childhood Education.

3.5.2 Pupils' Reading Test

A researcher-designed test assessed pupils' phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. The test was scored out of 50 and analyzed using Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) benchmarks. Scores were categorized into four tiers: exceeding expectations (≥50), meeting expectations (40–49), approaching expectations (25–39) and below expectations (<25). Reading fluency was scored according to the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) standards.

3.5.3 Classroom Observation Checklist

Non-participant observations were conducted using structured checklists. Observations focused on the use and availability of reading resources, instructional strategies, and learner engagement. Each session lasted 30 minutes, with a maximum of two sessions per class.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

3.6.1 Validity

Content and face validity were established through expert judgment. The instruments were reviewed by faculty from the Department of Early Childhood Education and revised accordingly to ensure representativeness of constructs being measured.

3.6.2 Reliability

Test-retest reliability was used for the questionnaire and the pupil reading test. A pilot study involving 5 schools, 35 pupils and 19 teachers produced a reliability coefficient of 0.87. Inter-rater reliability was applied for observation data using coded video sessions. Agreement between coder and observer exceeded 80%, meeting the accepted threshold (Krippendorff, 2004; Keyton *et al.*, 2004).

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Approval was sought from the Maseno University School of Graduate Studies and the Kisumu County Education Office. Introductory letters were presented to head teachers, and parental consent was obtained through the PTA. Data collection occurred in three phases: classroom observation, pupil reading test administration, and teacher questionnaire completion. Tests were administered over three days, and teachers returned completed questionnaires within a week.

3.8 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics included means, percentages, and frequencies. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to assess relationships between variables. Interpretation followed standard guidelines: $r \geq \pm 0.50$ (strong), $r = \pm 0.30–0.49$ (moderate), and $r < \pm 0.29$ (weak). Qualitative data from observation checklists were categorized into themes and analyzed using frequency distribution.

3.9 Ethical Issues

Regarding consent, confidentiality and voluntary involvement, the study followed ethical guidelines. The ethical review committee at Maseno University granted ethical approval. Teachers, parents and students themselves granted informed permission. Participation was optional; no names were entered into instruments. Every correspondence explicitly expressed the goal of the research, and data confidentiality was scrupulously followed.

4. Results and Discussion

The results of the impact of reading materials on reading literacy achievement among Grade 3 students in Kisumu East Sub-County are presented in this part in a thorough comparative and descriptive manner. The results are arranged to mirror the goals of the research and are followed by a discussion stressing ramifications within the framework of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya and including current literature.

4.1 Teachers' Perceptions on Availability and Use of Reading Resources

Using a five-point Likert scale, teachers were asked to answer a series of questions gauging their opinions of reading resource availability and use.

Table 1: Teachers' Responses on the Influence of Reading Resources (n=172)

Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	SWA (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean
There are adequate resources in the school for reading	22.1	30.8	23.8	12.2	11.1	2.6
Reading resources are available but inaccessible to pupils	24.3	20.4	19.8	25.1	11.1	2.7
Learners are not able to access the reading resources independently	21.5	14.5	16.3	22.7	26.8	3.6
The school has set a reading area for all pupils	40.7	20.9	15.7	12.2	10.5	2.4
Teachers are not trained to identify suitable materials for each learner	28.5	24.4	11.6	22.1	18.1	2.4
The school has learner-generated resources	28.5	34.3	17.5	10.5	9.3	2.3
There is adequate space for reading and the manipulation of resources	25.0	30.8	17.4	14.5	12.3	2.5
Content in available resources is adequate for Grade 3 learners	28.5	19.8	22.1	16.3	13.4	2.3
Teachers are a resource to learners during reading	9.3	12.2	18.6	26.2	33.7	3.5
Teachers use visual aids to enhance creativity	25.0	30.2	22.7	15.7	8.2	2.6
Teachers are not able to use digital materials	11.6	14.5	16.3	32.6	25.0	3.3
Learners use locally available materials	9.3	12.2	36.6	25.0	16.3	3.1

Key: Strongly Agree (4.5–5.0); Agree (3.5–4.4); Somehow Agree (2.5–3.4); Disagree (1.5–2.4); Strongly Disagree (1.0–1.4)

Results showed that while teachers perceived themselves as a significant instructional resource (M = 3.5), other essential resources—particularly learner-generated materials, digital tools and dedicated reading corners remained significantly underutilized. The overall mean score of 2.8 signals a moderate but insufficient presence of adequate reading resources in the study schools.

4.2 Frequency of Resource Utilization

Teachers also reported the frequency with which different types of instructional resources were used in their reading sessions.

Table 2: Frequency of Resource Use Among Grade 3 Pupils (n=172)

Resource	Not at all	Rarely	Moderately	Frequently	Very Frequently	Mean
Charts	35.5	25.0	21.5	11.6	6.4	2.3
Drawings	7.0	14.5	23.8	18.1	36.6	3.6
Blackboard	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0	97.7	4.9
Classroom library	30.2	25.0	18.6	13.9	12.3	2.5
Flashcards	46.5	28.5	16.3	8.7	0.0	1.9
Variety of textbooks	12.8	13.8	27.3	18.6	26.2	3.3
Storybooks	15.1	36.1	19.6	20.9	8.2	2.8
Projector	50.0	20.9	12.8	12.8	3.5	1.9
Computers	18.1	19.6	33.1	16.9	12.3	2.8
Video	72.7	18.6	5.8	2.9	0.0	1.8
Radio	87.8	6.9	5.2	0.0	0.0	1.3
Tape recording	46.5	21.5	18.1	8.7	5.2	1.9
Real objects	6.3	12.8	37.8	23.3	19.8	3.1

The blackboard was found to be the most dominant resource (M = 4.9). However, flashcards, projectors, radios and videos were rarely used (M = 1.3–1.9). Such findings

underscore a resource gap in the integration of varied and technology-based materials that support the CBC's goals on digital literacy and inclusive pedagogy.

4.3 Classroom Observation Findings

Classroom observations were conducted to validate the questionnaire data. Below is a summary of the researcher's non-participant observations.

Table 3: Summary of Observation Checklist Across Schools

Resource	Very Rarely	Rarely	Not at All	Frequently	Very Frequently
Drawings	–	–	–	✓	–
Props	–	✓	–	–	–
Classroom library	–	✓	–	–	–
Flashcards	–	✓	–	–	–
Textbooks	–	–	–	✓	–
Storybooks	–	–	–	✓	–
Technology	–	✓	–	–	–
Charts	–	–	–	✓	–
Workbooks	–	–	–	✓	–
Blackboard	–	–	–	✓	–
Projector	–	✓	–	–	–
Reading area	–	✓	–	–	–
Teacher as a resource	–	–	–	✓	–
Realia	–	✓	–	–	–

The most frequently used resources observed were blackboards, textbooks, workbooks and drawings. Technological resources were scarcely used. The findings echoed the teacher responses and highlighted a consistent gap in diversified instructional media.

4.4 Correlation Analysis Between Resources and Literacy

To determine the strength of association between resource availability and reading achievement, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was calculated.

Table 4: Correlation Between Reading Resources and Literacy Achievement

Variable	Reading Resources	Reading Literacy Achievement
Reading Resources	1	0.525**
Reading Literacy Achievement	0.525**	1

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.525$, $p < 0.01$) was found, suggesting that increased access to and use of reading resources leads to higher levels of literacy achievement. These results are consistent with the findings of Krashen and Lee (2012) and Clark and Hawkins (2011), who also reported strong associations between access to books and literacy success.

4.5 Interpretation and Implications

The results highlight the crucial part that different reading materials play in determining literacy results. While digital and audio-visual technologies remain underused, traditional tools like blackboards and sketches are quite often employed. This discrepancy affects student involvement, particularly in the CBC framework that requires early grade integration of ICT and learner-centered approaches.

Particularly in resource-limited classrooms, insufficient reading materials reduce exposure to rich vocabulary, fluent decoding and text comprehension. Comparable research by Amunavi (2018), Okwara (2009) and Shayne & Richard (2010) demonstrates that reaching literacy targets in Sub-Saharan Africa is greatly hampered by inadequate resources.

Moreover, the strong link between learner results and resource availability justifies systematic investment in instructional resources, teacher training on resource use and community involvement in producing localized learning materials.

5. Recommendations

Drawing from the findings and the broader theoretical and contextual framework of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen reading literacy achievement among Grade 3 pupils in Kisumu East Sub-County:

5.1 Theoretical and Educational Policy Recommendations

5.1.1 Adoption of Constructivist and Socio-Cultural Learning Theories

Based on constructivist learning theory, which stresses learner-centered contexts where children generate knowledge by interaction with various books and materials, the study advises that instructional approaches in literacy education be anchored. Furthermore, underlining the role of social contact and culturally relevant instruments in improving reading learning is Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory. These ideas should guide curriculum delivery and national literacy campaigns.

5.1.2 Reinforcement of CBC Resource Frameworks

The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) mandates inclusive learning resources and differentiated instruction. It is advised that the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) include more clear instructions on the kinds and volume of reading resources anticipated at every grade level, including digital and learner-generated materials.

5.2 Practical and Pedagogical Recommendations

5.2.1 Make Investments in Locally Relevant Low-cost Resources

Schools should be helped to create and apply low-cost, culturally relevant reading materials like pictorial aids, learner-authored stories and community narratives. This

contextualized approach improves understanding and drives among students and fits with the CBC's focus on inclusive education.

5.2.2 Providing Teachers with Pck, or Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Teachers have to be not just equipped with tools but also possess the ability to meaningfully include them in their lessons. Especially in underfunded schools, targeted professional development seminars on resource-based pedagogy, digital literacy, and adaptable education should be set up.

5.2.3 Establishing Resource-Rich Literacy Centers

Every Grade 3 classroom should provide a well-stocked reading nook with a range of books easily available to students on their own. These areas should encourage, in line with CBC objectives, exploration, inventiveness, and language development.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

5.3.1 Comparative Research among Counties

More studies should be done to evaluate the impact of reading materials over several counties with different degrees of literacy. This might offer a national-level understanding of differences in resource allocation and application.

5.3.2 Longitudinal Effect of Resource Consumption on the Development of Literacy

Longitudinal research might look at how regular access to enhanced reading materials affects comprehension over time, vocabulary development and reading fluency.

5.3.3 Investigating Lower Primary Digital Reading Tools

Future research should investigate the obstacles to including technology in early grade classes and evaluate the efficacy of digital reading tools on literacy outcomes, given the low utilisation of digital resources noted.

5.4 Socio-Cultural and Systemic Recommendations

5.4.1 Community Involvement in Literacy Development

Communities should be engaged in the creation and dissemination of reading resources. Storytelling sessions, parental reading clubs and community libraries can enhance literacy outside the classroom and reflect local cultural narratives.

5.4.2 Equity in Resource Allocation

Policy makers should consider implementing resource allocation models that account for socio-economic disparities and prioritize schools in peri-urban and rural areas, such as Kisumu East Sub-County, which consistently report lower literacy outcomes.

5.4.4 Inclusive Education Considerations

Reading materials must cater to learners with diverse needs, including learners with disabilities. Braille books, large-print texts and audio materials should be part of literacy interventions to promote educational equity.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to ascertain how reading materials affect the reading literacy performance of Grade 3 students in Kisumu East Sub-County. The results showed that most schools still lack sufficient availability and efficient use of reading resources, even while instructors are taught to recognize suitable materials. Important teaching aids, including digital tools, flashcards and learner-generated materials, were either lacking or misused.

Reading materials were judged as somewhat available, with an overall mean of 2.8, and this directly affected students' literacy results. Reading resource use and literacy achievement showed a noteworthy positive connection ($r = 0.525$, $p = 0.05$), meaning that better access and use of reading materials increases literacy performance.

Consequently, the study finds that poor reading literacy rates among Grade 3 students are caused in part by limited and erratic usage of reading materials. Achieving better learning results in early primary school depends on these materials being of higher quality, diverse and accessible.

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About the Author

Ms. Sharon Winnie Odhiambo is a postgraduate student pursuing a Master of Education in Early Childhood and Primary Education at Maseno University, Kenya. Her academic background includes a Bachelor's degree in Education (Early Childhood Development) from Maseno University. She has a keen research interest in early grade literacy development, inclusive education practices and competency-based curriculum implementation in public primary schools. Ms. Sharon has participated in regional educational workshops on foundational literacy and is currently collaborating with educators and school administrators to enhance pedagogical approaches in early grade reading. She is a member of the Kenya Early Childhood Education Association (KECEA)

and has contributed to various research activities focused on improving literacy outcomes among young learners.

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Appendix

Figures and Tables

Table 1: Teachers' Responses on the Influence of Reading Resources on Reading Literacy Achievement Among Grade 3 Pupils in Kisumu East Sub-County

This table presents the distribution of Grade 3 teachers' perceptions on the adequacy, accessibility, and effectiveness of reading resources. Responses were rated using a 5-point Likert scale.

Abbreviations:
SD – Strongly Disagree, D – Disagree, SWA – Somehow Agree, A – Agree, SA – Strongly Agree.

Table 2: Frequency of Use of Various Reading Resources to Enhance Reading Literacy Achievement in Grade 3 Classrooms

This table outlines the reported frequency of different reading resources used by Grade 3 teachers across the sub-county.

Abbreviations:
1.00 - 1.4 = Not at all,
1.5 - 2.4 = Rarely,
2.5 - 3.4 = Moderately,
3.5 - 4.4 = Frequently,
4.5 - 5.00 = Very Frequently.

Table 3: Observation Checklist Results on Availability and Utilization of Reading Resources in Grade 3 Classrooms

This table summarizes findings from non-participant classroom observations to assess the presence and frequency of instructional materials and reading-related infrastructure.

Symbols: ✓ – Resource was observed at the stated frequency level.
Categories: Very Rarely, Rarely, Not at all, Frequently, Very Frequently.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Between Reading Resources and Reading Literacy Achievement Among Grade 3 Pupils

This table reports the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficient showing the strength and significance of the association between reading resources and reading literacy achievement.

Abbreviations:
r = Pearson correlation coefficient,
p = Significance level.
Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).