INFLUENCE OF CORNERS OF INTEREST ON INSTRUCTION OF CREATIVE ACTIVITIES COMPETENCIES AMONG PRE-PRIMARY LEARNERS IN PUBLIC PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN IMENTI SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, MERU COUNTY, KENYA

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

This thesis is of my original work and has not been presented for an award of a diploma or conferment of degree in any other University.

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Recommendation

This thesis has been examined, passed and submitted and with our approval as University supervisors

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband and mentor, Samwel Kimathi, my children Hillary and Norah and my beloved granddaughter Angel Makena.

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ABSTRACT

The enthusiasm children exhibit indicate learning is a natural and exciting activity done out of curiosity for pleasure and in the process, learning take place. Young children require stimulating and pleasant experiences to cultivate learning competence to form a firm attitudinal foundation for later learning by creating learning corners to sustain interest and also engagement in preschool classroom learning activities. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary school learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County. The study determined the influence of availability of corners of interest, utilization of corners of interest, adequacy of corners of interest and the challenges encountered in the utilization of corners of interest on the instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in Imenti South Sub- County, Meru County. The study was guided by Social Learning theory by Bandura and Cognitive Development theory by Jean Piaget. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study considered five wards in the sub county as strata and obtained 48 head teachers and 123 teachers a total of 171 respondents. Pilot tests were done in the neigbouring Imenti Central sub county where five preprimary schools were involved; five headteachers and 13 teachers were involved. The questionnaires content validation was done and judgmental approach involving 5 experts was done. The content validity ratios for the question items were 0.99. Half split method was used to determine the reliability index of the questionnaire giving a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.787. The study considered the tools valid and reliable for the study. Both qualitative and quantitative data were captured from the respondents. Qualitative data captured was thematically analyzed. Quantitative data captured was analyzed giving both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics which were presented as frequencies and percentages. Chi-Square test was done and gave inferential statistics; the p-value at 0.025 significance level that was used to rule on whether to reject the null hypothesis or not, the contingency coefficient that measured the degree of association between the independent variable and the dependent variable and linear to linear value that estimated the level of influence of the independent variable over instruction of creative activities competencies. All the null hypotheses were rejected and the study concluded that the four investigated components of corners of interest had significant influence. The study made recommendations focusing on ways to improve on ensuring consistently in skill acquisition among the preprimary learners and continuous improvement in the sector. The study suggested areas for further research which can lead to generalization of the conclusions and recommendations. The study provided sufficient empirical literature to the domain of early childhood education, the teacher, head teachers, parents and government organs in the sector.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CC	**:**	Contingency Coefficient (measure of association)
CVR	**:**	Content Validity Ratio
ECDE	**:**	Early Childhood Development Education
MOEST	**:**	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
NACOSTI	**:**	National Commission of Science Technology and Innovation
OECD	**:**	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SPSS	**:**	Social Package for Social Sciences
STEM	**:**	Science, Technology, Engineering and mathematics
UAE	**:**	United Arab Emirates
UK	**:**	United Kingdoms
UNESCO	**:**	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
USA	**:**	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Early Childhood Development and Education is critical for holistic growth and development of children as lifelong learning. The learning experiences at the first level of schooling for children is central to growth and development to prepare children for higher levels of education for realization of a learners' potentials in life (Ali et al., 2018). The early years, from birth to age five, lay the crucial foundation for a Childs' future. Stakeholders in education emphasize the importance of effective early childhood education during this critical period. Pre-primary school education provides a strong base for lifelong learning, fostering the development of skills, knowledge, self-confidence, and social responsibility. All children should have access to high-quality early childhood development and education (Jairam & Chopra, 2020).

Progress has been made globally in increasing pre-primary school participation, enhancing teacher training, and improving enrollment and transition rates, disparities remain (Chauhan & Kumar, 2022). In Canadian context Dicheva et al. (2015) investigated the influence of classroom design on children' engagement and learning behaviors. The study suggested that classroom environments featuring flexible furniture arrangements, natural lighting and designated activity areas fostered higher levels of engagement and participation in learning activities. Healey (2022) investigated the positive influence of well-designed learning spaces on both academic achievement and overall well-being among pre-primary school learners in Canada. The study suggests that considerately designed environments that promote collaboration, exploration and access to nature can contribute to a more positive and supportive learning atmosphere, ultimately leading to improved social-emotional well-being among pre-primary learners. In USA past studies have focused on investigating the impact of well-designed learning environments where corners of interest were included, demonstrating that existence of corners of interest had positive influence on the academic performance and social development of young children.

A study by Siraj et al. (2017) in California highlighted that corner of interest have crucial role in interactive learning, they foster cognitive and socio-emotional skills

among pre-primary learners. Similarly, Ali et al. (2018) conducted research in New York, and observed that children with access to diverse corners of interest exhibited higher levels of engagement and motivation, ultimately leading to improved learning outcomes. In Latin America, there is a growing body of research that underscores the significance of corners of interest that yield valuable insights into the positive impact of these designated play spaces on early childhood education, (Mejía-Arauz & Quiñones, 2018; Ndlovu et al., 2023; Tekyi-Arhin, 2023). In Argentina Rodriguez-Gutiérrez (2021) examined the role of corners of interest in fostering inclusive learning environments. The study found that corners of interest were designed with accessibility and diverse needs in mind to promote social participation and a sense of belonging for all children, regardless of their abilities. A study by Hernandez-Silva et al. (2022) in Mexico explored how the design of corners of interest encouraged scientific exploration in pre-primary schools. The study revealed that children engaged in well-designed learning spaces demonstrated increased curiosity, critical thinking skills, and a deeper understanding of scientific concepts. The study findings were tandem to (Rodriguez-Gutiérrez et al., 2021).

In Brazil Santos et al. (2023) investigated the effectiveness of implementing culturally relevant corners of interest in promoting sense of identity children and appreciation for children heritage. The findings suggested that incorporating traditional materials, music, and stories within these spaces fosters cultural awareness and self-discovery among young learners. This supported findings by scholars in Asia (Allee et al., 2020; Qiftiyah, 2020). Studies from Europe have consistently emphasized the pivotal role of enriched learning environments in promoting holistic development among pre-primary learners (Alam, 2022). Studies conducted in Germany have yielded positive results regarding the impact of well-equipped learning environments on child creative development. An assertion by Bergström et al. (2016) is that children exposed to well-equipped corners of interest demonstrate enhanced language acquisition and problem-solving abilities. Additionally, Becker et al. (2016) observed that children in enriched daycare centers exhibited stronger cognitive development compared to those in less stimulating environments. Documented by Moll et al. (2013) is that there is a positive correlation between the quality of daycare center equipment and children' social competence. Manja et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of sensory-rich

environments with corners of interest on fostering creativity and social interaction. The findings aligned with Durand et al. (2018) investigation on the impact of nature-inspired play spaces in French pre-primary schools, which found that nature-inspired play spaces promoted children's emotional well-being and connection to the natural world. Furthermore, Dubois et al. (2020) explored the effectiveness of technology integration within enriched learning environments in UK preschools. The findings supported Durand et al. (2018) and further reported they had positive effects on cognitive skills among children. These studies echo the importance of well-equipped environments and provide further insights into specific design elements that benefit child creative development.

Studies by Alam, (2022); Bautista et al. (2023) in Asia have highlighted the efficacy of play-based learning approaches in early childhood settings. In Singapore Lam and Chua (2019) examined the positive effects of inquiry-based learning environments, which share similarities with corners of interest, on promoting critical thinking skills in young learners while Allee et al. (2020) in China explored the benefits of integrating play-based activities into the curriculum in early child education. These two studies echoed similar sentiments that demonstrated improvement in children's social-emotional development and creativity. In Japan, Qiftiyah (2020) conducted a study that revealed a positive link between engagement in corner activities and children's cognitive development. The study found that children who actively explored and participated in activities within these designated spaces exhibited heightened curiosity and a deeper desire for exploration which supported findings by Durand et al. (2018). In Japan Lee (2020) investigated the influence of corner design on children's learning experiences. The study suggests that well-designed and thoughtfully curated corners can significantly enhance children's' engagement and promote deeper exploration of specific themes or concepts. The designated spaces provided opportunities for collaborative play, communication, negotiation and teamwork skills. Scholars in Asia have researched into the influence of corners of interest on learning outcomes across diverse cultural contexts. The studies have in turn led to improvements in various cognitive domains. Like in Europe and Asia studies in the field of early childhood education and development exists in Australia. A study by Malone and Stuart (2023) investigated the influence of open-ended

materials within corners of interest on children's creative expression in Australian pre-primary schools. The study suggested that providing a variety of materials that encourage divergent thinking can significantly enhance children creativity and innovation. As well, Caldwell and Thorpe (2021) had explored the effectiveness of incorporating technology elements into corners of interest in Australian classrooms. The study findings demonstrated that thoughtfully integrated technology can foster collaboration and problem-solving skills among children as they engage with these enriched learning spaces. Although little evidence is shown by studies in Australia, they highlight the role of learning environments, including corners of interest, in promoting children's creativity, problem-solving abilities and social skills.

Within the Gulf region studies conducted in early childhood development and education by Bacsal et al. (2021) and Alhosani (2022) have indicated that, providing children with access to diverse learning opportunities, including well-designed corners of interest, contributes to the overall academic success and social-emotional well-being. Bacsal et al. (2021) in Dubai found that learning spaces fostered positive social interactions, emotional regulation and self-expression among pre-primary learners. Alhosani (2022) found in Qatar that when corners of interest are implemented effectively, critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of curricular concepts in young learners is promoted. In a generalized manner the study findings were similar to findings by Bergström et al. (2016); Siraj et al. (2017) and Hernandez-Silva et al. (2022). In Africa studies conducted in this domain underscored the significance of creating stimulating learning environments for young children. On a more specific aspect these studies have yielded promising results regarding the benefits of corners of interest (Wamalwa, et al., 2019; Jegede et al., 2020; Ebenezer, 2022; Ackah-Nyamekye et al., 2023). According to Wamalwa, et al. (2019) incorporating corners of interest in pre-primary school settings, cognitive skills, social-emotional learning and language acquisition are enhanced in overall development of children.

A study Kotze (2015) in South Africa provided empirical evidence of the positive impact of well-equipped corners of interest on pre-primary school learners. The study demonstrated that children who had access to enriched learning environments

exhibited higher levels of creativity and problem-solving skills. Hoddinott et al. (2022) investigated the impact of incorporating corners of interest into pre-primary school settings in Ethiopia on children's' learning outcomes. The findings highlighted that enriched learning environments have positive effects on cognitive development and school readiness skills in young children. By offering diverse materials and opportunities for exploration and discovery, corners of interest enable children to develop essential skills that encompasses critical thinking, collaboration, and self-regulation, all of which are fundamental for academic achievement and well-being (Kaizar & Alordiah, 2023). In Kenya Mitei and Mwoma (2021) explored the role of corners of interest in promoting creativity and social interaction among pre-primary learners. The study emphasized the importance of providing children with opportunities for open-ended exploration and play within these designated areas, aligning with the concept of child-centered learning environments. A study by Ole'Toole et al. (2019) in Mombasa focused on the impact of parental involvement in supporting engagement of children with corners of interest. The two studies highlighted that the pivotal role of parental engagement in reinforcing the benefits of corners of interest and maximizing learning outcomes of the learners.

A study conducted in Nairobi, focusing on the impact of interactive learning environments, including corners of interest and on various aspects of child development highlighted positive correlation between access to well-designed corners of interest and child language development, social interaction skills, and overall academic engagement (Wawire, 2020; Ugalde et al., 2021). In Kisumu a study by Mbagaya (2021) investigated the effects of corners of interest on learning outcomes among pre-primary school learners. The study revealed that children who were exposed to thoughtfully designed corners of interest exhibited heightened levels of engagement and motivation in various learning activities. This heightened engagement translated into enhanced learning outcomes, including improved cognitive abilities and social skills. On the same field Kushwaha et al. (2023) in Eldoret explored the role of corners of interest in fostering creativity and problem-solving skills among pre-primary learners. The study emphasized the importance of incorporating diverse and stimulating learning environments like corners of interest,

to nurture children's creativity and critical thinking abilities from an early age which were tandem to (Bautista et al., 2023).

In Nakuru Mbugua et al. (2021) explored into the cultural relevance of corners of interest in Kenyan pre-primary school settings. The research emphasized the need to tailor corners of interest to respond to cultural learning environment so that they effectively support children's learning and development. In Meru County, Kenya, a study by Nyaisa (2024) focused on the influence of corners of interest on pre-primary school learning outcomes. The study found that pre-primary schools in Meru County had established reading corners, art corners, and other designated spaces to facilitate experiential learning and play-based activities. Previous studies conducted across various countries in pre-primary schools' discipline have highlighted that corner of interest have positive influence on various aspects of children's development; cognitive development, social skills and cooperation, language development and creativity development (Qiftiyah, 2020; Manja et al., 2022). There exists flimsy literature on influence of corners of interest on instructions of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in the Kenyan context. The OECD (2022) conventional frame work emphasized that government should be in the forefront to minimize challenges of an ageing population in all education sectors. MOEST (2022) ensured that education policies, classrooms and play-based learning in all public institutions create stimulating learning environments. From this perspective this study addressed the gap by investigating the influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in Imenti South Sub-County and contributed to the existing body of knowledge in pre-primary schools in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Early Childhood Development and Education in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya, faces several challenges that impede the holistic development of pre-primary learners. Despite efforts by the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders to enhance curriculum implementation process the effectiveness of corners of interest in promoting instruction of creative activities remains uncertain. Limited availability and inadequate resources within designated corners of interest hinder engagement in

meaningful learning experiences potentially affecting learners cognitive, social and emotional development associated with inadequate provision of materials for instruction raising the need for improvement to realize education. The study therefore sought to fill the existing research gap by investigating the influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub County, Meru County.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

i. To determine the influence of availability on corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub- County, Meru County.
ii. To determine the influence of utilization of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub- County, Meru County.
iii. To establish how adequacy of corners of interest influences instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County.
iv. To establish how the challenges encountered at the corners of interest influence the instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in Imenti South Sub- County, Meru County.

1.5 Null Hypotheses

The study tested the following null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using Chi-square;

$H_0$1: There is no statistically significant influence of availability of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County.

$H_0$2: There is no statistically significant influence of utilization of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County.

$H_0$3: There is no statistically significance influence of adequacy of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County.

$H_0$4: Challenges encountered at the corners of interest have no statistical significance influence on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study revealed the importance of corners of interest on instruction of creative activity competencies among Pre-primary school learners. Ultimately, the research findings were of benefit to Pre-primary school instructors and quality assurance officers. The study provided the way forward on how to equip Pre-primary school centers within the county to enable comfort in learning. The Meru County government may get insight on how to develop early childhood education implementation policies in order to ensure smooth learning process. The Pre-primary school teachers as professionals were provided with adequate awareness on how to execute duty irrespective of their teaching experience. To the domain of Pre-primary school, the study contributed sufficient empirical literature and opening for further research, that will benefit scholars in future.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The study was limited to lack of sufficient literature for some study variables. The researcher had to integrate literature searched from journal, ebooks and thesis in institutional repository in the early childhood education. The study was conducted in Imenti South Sub County which would have limited the generalization of the findings. The researcher ensured that the data captured from the respondents was not study area oriented to enable generalization.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in Imenti South Sub-County, Kenya. The respondents included the head teacher and pre-primary school teacher. The study focused on the influence of corners of interest on the instruction of creative activities among pre-primary school learners in Imenti South Sub County. The indicators of corners of interest were availability, utilization, adequacy and challenges encountered while using corners of interest, while instruction of creative activities competencies are aspects of drawing, colouring, construction and modeling. The research instruments adopted by the study were interview schedules for head teacher, questionnaire for pre-primary school teacher, and observation check list for a Pre-primary school learners' group.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The researcher assumed that:

i. The respondents were conversant with the methods of instruction of creative activities in pre-primary learning.
ii. Pre-primary learners engage in creative activities as drawing, colouring, construction and modeling during lesson.
iii. The respondents provided sufficient, accurate and relevant data.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

Adequacy of Corners of interest	Describes the sufficiency, quality, relevance and maintenance of materials provided within each corner of interest. In this study, it signifies the appropriateness and upkeep of resources to support learning and development.
Availability of Corners of Interest	Refers to the presence and accessibility of different corners of interest within the preschool setting. In this study, availability of corners of interest denotes the provision of physical space and resources necessary for children to engage with these designated areas effectively.
Corners of Interest	Defined as designated areas within a classroom setting that offer various activities and materials aimed at stimulating different aspects of a child development. In this study, corners of interest refer to specific areas in preschools designed to enhance learning outcomes among preschool children.
Creative Activities	The artistic production of items for beauty or utility of significant things. In this study it involves drawing, Colouring, construction and modeling.
Instruction	The activities of educating or instructing activities that impart knowledge or skills. In this study it implies teaching learners on how to use corners of interest to sharpen improve artistic skills.
Pre-primary school	Institution offering early childhood education before they begin elementary education at primary school. In this study it refers to learning of children aged 4-5 years.
Utilization of Corners of Interest	Signifies the degree to which children engage with and make use of the different corners of interest when in class. In this study, this represents children's active participation in activities and exploration of resources provided in these designated areas.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies and Corners of Interest

2.1.1 Instruction of Creative Activities

Children are naturally curious and learn best through active exploration and repeated interaction with their environment, interaction with diverse learning areas and well-equipped learning corners comprehensive promotes development and fosters a deeper connection to the educational system (Gelman, 2019). Support demonstration is that children's' attention is limited therefore teachers need to incorporate engaging activities and experiments to spark their curiosity when introducing new skills (Sandberg & Heden, 2019). Previous studies have recorded that the physical classroom environment plays a crucial role. Learning spaces with tangible teaching tools and resources stimulate sensory development of children aged early learning stages (Samuel, 2019). Creative competences in learners are defined as the ability to produce products that have characteristics that reflect original and possibly with new features (Müller et al., 2019). Further argument is that learners gain these competencies from different ways as dictated by the instructional environment and activities undertaken. According to Alomari et al. (2019) early childhood education instructional environments can impart diverse skills. These demonstrated by the study the process of skill learning commences from drawing the intended the object, colouring the drawing the third and last stages are modelling the object and finally constructing the designed object.

For children at early education drawing is as process that start from scribbling to actual drawing of the picture. According to Gencer and Gonen (2015) literature analysis reveals that the ability to be creative at early childhood education should developed in terms of fluency, flexibility, original thinking ability, and detailed thinking ability. By drawing, children can express their mentality through their scribbles and explore by selecting desired colors (Sit et al., 2016). Learning drawing in early childhood can be divided into two stages; the first stage is the cross-out stage starting at the age of two years until the age of four years, in the second stage namely the touching stage, beginning at the age of four years to seven years where the child can control his hands and imagination (Sari et al., 2020). Asserted by Sari et al is that

children in preschool level should be exposed to curriculum that is based on developing children's ability to draw neatly using various media and also develop child's ability to form basic images using basic shapes.

Papadopoulos (2020) classified the indicators of drawing skills as child's ability to produce images initially and independently with various media, child's ability to draw with different and unique characteristics where drawing becomes fun, children are able to channel various kind of their imaginations expressed through drawing and drawing expressing the mood of the child. Areljung et al. (2021) emphasized that for drawing creativity to develop in a child the teacher should prepare all materials required and provide them to the learner, give proper explanation of the activities to be carried out, give the child the opportunity to carry out the drawing activity by supervising the arrangement and not getting involved thus allowing freedom of expression, and after a certain period of time in the activity the teacher then order for termination of the activity to allow the proteges raise questions emanating from the activity.

Camellia (2019) states that another important child's creativity development aspect is the motor physique. Camelia defines motor physique as the ability of the child to perform motor physical activities without incurring injuries. Based on this study drawing, coloring and construction are listed among the category of motor physical activities by (Camellia, 2019). Exposing children in fun learning at early education enable them harness full creativity potential. When fun learning is well cultivated at learning environments the children are able to interact with the environment and the peers (Okitavia et al., 2019). Fun learning which includes sings, plays drawing and coloring, simple modelling and construction enable learners acquire interest in being at school. This in totally translate to both gross motor and fine motor development (Nugroho et al., 2021). As stated by Francias et al. (2019) coloring is the peak point of fun in a drawing activity. The coloring activity in itself is done by giving color to paper media. This activity according to Evans and Pamadhi (2019) makes the child excited and lead to stimulated learning, training the child realize need to be clean, patient and skilled in expressing desire through color strokes on images.

In early childhood education modeling is the extremely a useful skill that learners need to be taught. During the learning process the instructor is required to adopt strategies that explicitly shows the learner how to complete an activity before it commences (Dooren, 2019). Modeling stage is preceded drawing and coloring according to (Camellia, 2019). A finding by Francias et al. (2019) was that learners who exhibited good drawing skills and coloring skills internally have modelling and construction skills developing in them. Modelling according to Gellen (2019) is that act of emptying the imaginations about a structure that conceptualized during the act of drawing. This means that the skills drawing and modelling are directly related. Francias et al., (2019) emphasize that the modeling activity is a key aspect of developing a learner's technological literacy which enhance understanding of the conceptual design of modeling. The overall creativity skill is full developed when a learner develops the ability to construct modelled structures, earlier drawn and colored (Eddowes, 2019).

Construction activity is another appealing area in early childhood learning. Construction according to Gellen (2019) is the act of creating different structures using different available materials. Gellen continue to state that in construction a learner can express different abilities through control and manipulation of materials, arrangement to develop the picture in mind of the structure. Through construction activity learners are able to bring about the permeance in the brain connection, thinking ability and new idea creation (Honig, 2019). Engaging child in construction activities at early education enable them develop enquiry skill (Mc Donald, 2019). During the activity, the elements of nature pop up leading to discoveries of new things and ideas. From this unanswered question aspect of innovation, problem solving skills develop alongside emotional growth (Badillo et al., 2019; Mc Donald, 2019).

High-quality Pre-primary school facilities are crucial for achieving this goal, as they provide the central environment for delivering effective training. However, this requires a two-pronged approach. First, educators need to be committed to utilizing available resources effectively. Second, government-mandated training standards that equip teachers with the necessary skills are essential Pre-primary School Policy Framework, 2016). The framework emphasizes that procedures to develop sequential

skills is mandated by how the instructors lay down the procedures to the learners. Provision for materials need for each skill development is also key. The Kenyan Pre-primary school policy framework (2016) emphasizes the importance of improving resource allocation and the quality of instruction within early childhood development and education programs. Providing materials at the learning spaces in early childhood education that enable children draw sense of next steps in the process is key in ensuring quality instruction. Conversely with such leading materials ease for teaching and learning among the learners is noticeable (Bušljeta, 2019). The realm of this review enables this study to investigate how availability of corners of interest, utilization of corners of interest, adequacy of corners of interest and the challenges encountered at the of corners of interest influence instruction of creativities competencies among preprimary learners in public preprimary centers in Imenti South Sub-County.

2.1.2 Corners of Interest

In the last decade, research on the influence of corners of interest on the instruction of creative activities among pre-primary school learners has garnered significant attention worldwide (Aktulun & İnalKızıltepe, 2018; Hjetland et al., 2019). Pellegrini (2017) defined corners of interest as well-equipped spaces where learners can actively engage in groups with classroom or outside classroom setting. Pellegrini (2017) further urged that these spaces would vary from stage of learning to another. A research study by Bodrova and Leong (2017) reported that in developed countries, Pre-primary school classroom setup have learning spaces that are designed to enable the child develop a new point of view in learning and further enable learners capture diverse skills in different aspects. Deep assessment found that learning spaces in countries like USA, Canada and UK are segmented with focus on a specific skill to be captured. Ranging from psychomotor, cognitive, linguistic and social emotional skills. In UK, France and Belguim learning spaces designated for elementary school are designed aiming at enhancing learner creativity and critical thinking skills (Milrad, 2018). Supportive findings by Qiftiyah (2020) in Australia shows clearly that learning spaces should be designed to foster cognitive development, social emotional skills and creative thinking in young learners than just learning.

In Nigeria, Adeyemo (2016) investigated the effectiveness of play-based learning center in a primary school in Nigeria. In South Africa Akpan (2015) in a study on how music-based learning centers influenced upper grade learners. In Kenya Mbatha and Mwangi (2018) explored the impact of reading corners in Class 6 and 7 primary pupils in Muranga county. From these highlights it is clear that use of learning spaces to foster mental development of children as early as Pre-Primary Schools have been neglected in African or unnoticed in the past decades. Even though the recent research has shown the importance of well-designed learning space at all stages of learning, Richards (2018) urged that children who are exposed to learning spaces as early as Pre-primary school rapidly become competent, realize the potential early and start becoming productive individuals. This is so only if learning spaces are well designed and with appropriateness to enable cognitive creativity, social emotional skills and communication skills than rote learning. Designing learning spaces requires experts or instructors who have adequate knowledge on the requirement of a skill development (Craft, 2018).

Creativity being a process, is a critical component of making sense of learning experiences. Berki (2018) urges that a number of approaches to teaching and learning how to nurture creativity exist. Beghetto (2019) states experts designing learning spaces at early childhood learning stage should focus on use of equipment that enables students to apply their imagination to generating ideas, questions and hypotheses, experimenting with alternatives and to evaluating their own and their peers' ideas, final products and processes. Further the equipment use should meet the conventional standard in line with cultural perspectives, health measures and technological trend.

Stated by Sternberg (2012) and revised by Beghetto (2019) is that the designer learning space should identify the space that led to Mini-C-creativity for early childhood learning. Scholars have defined Mini-C-creativity as the novel and personally meaningful interpretation of experience, actions and events. A transformation or reorganization of incoming information and mental structures based on the individual's characteristics and existing knowledge (Beghetto, 2019; Craft, 2018). According to Craft Mini-C-creativity can be nurtured by teachers and parents

and is noted to happen when a learner demonstrates flexibility, intelligence and novelty in their thinking. Early studies state that Mini-C-creativity may not be visible to outsiders but it plays an important role in the development of practical skills and abilities which are important for children's everyday life, as well as seeming to be the more appropriate level for investigating children's creativity (Vygotsky 1967, cited by Richards, 2018). A framework by Vygotsky referred to us Vygotsky's zone of proximal development states that creative learning activities, like any other, need to be appropriate scaffolded by a teacher and both the learner and the teacher should clearly understand the broader learning objectives (Richards, 2018). This study focuses on investigate how learning corners integrated in a normal preprimary classroom setup influence the creativity development in learners in public primary school in Imenti South Sub-County.

2.2 Availability of Corners of Interest and Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

Pre-primary school environments play a crucial role in promoting early childhood development and fostering children's learning experiences (Triantafyllou, 2022). One significant contribution to the effectiveness of pre-primary school settings is the availability of various learning spaces. Corners of interest in Kenyan context form part of learning spaces in classroom setup across all the learning stages in education (Jalongo. 2019). As stated earlier in the review, learning corners provide learners with access to materials that enable them harness their positive potential as they learn and develop new skills (Mbatha & Mwangi, 2018; Craft, 2018; Qiftiyah, 2020). It is also documented that instruction of creative activities competencies among children is derived from their interaction with the learning space at home or at school (Clements & Sarama, 2018; Alomari et al., 2019; Mwatha et al., 2019; Das et al., 2023). Further documentation is that through interactive sessions with the well designated learning spaces, learners develop different skills, among them is instructional creativity. This support Pekdogan and Kanak (2016) findings that different designated learning spaces in learning environment offer unique benefits to the learners hence different learning outcomes. But there are several factors that can hinder learning process in children. Review show availability of different learning spaces may hinder holistic skill development (Das et al., 2023).

In a review of literature on this domain Nganga (2019) reported that presence of learning corners in classroom is not enough if they are inadequate for learning process. In other words, the review emphasized that corners of interest made available in class rooms should have adequate physical space, adequate equipment allocated, provide flexible learning materials that take care of safety of children and in a general themselves should be adequate and diverse. Research has shown that children thrive in environments where they have ample space to move, explore, and engage in different activities. A study by Dowdell et al. (2020) in Australian found that pre-primary schools with well-designed physical spaces, including specific areas for different corners of interest in early education classrooms, fostered children's independence and engagement in learning. Further assertion is that well-utilized physical space ensures that children can freely access and navigate different corners, facilitating their exploration and discovery of various learning materials. In Germany KleineStaarman et al. (2017) research revealed that social interactions, cooperative play and peer learning among children were facilitated directly by the size of the space of the interactive learning space. This finding was echoed by Kariippanon et al. (2018) in Sweden who found that physical space solely depend on how the learning space was organized, since the design highly contributed to the relationship of the space and the learners.

The availability and allocation of learning materials play a vital role in the effectiveness of corners of interest in pre-primary school settings. Providing a rich array of learning materials supports children's engagement, creativity and skill development. In higher learning stages age-appropriate books, art supplies, scientific tools, and props for imaginative play are essential components of various corners of interest (Were 2017). A study by Dowdell et al. (2020) found that pre-primary schools that prioritize learning material allocation to different corners not only offer diverse learning experiences but also promote children's autonomy and decision-making skills. When children have access to a wide range of equipment, they can choose materials that align with their interests, fostering a sense of ownership and agency in their learning process. Mwatha et al. (2019) found that adequate supply of centers of learning and learning materials well deposited at each center enabled simultaneous learning and fostering equal opportunity to develop all the skills. This helps prevent

competition or conflicts over limited resources, allowing each child to fully explore and utilize the materials available. From the view corners of interest impact on the mode of learning. Fuller et al. (2021) suggested that classroom setup should consider having learning spaces, rich of learning materials. In this case they boost learning interest among learners. Corner of interest with mixed learning material promote children's autonomy and decision-making skills. When children are exposed to a wide range of learning materials for a particular task rote-learning is ironed out (Güven, 2019).

In Nairobi Kenya Gakoya (2022) conducted a study on Assessment of Safety measure of learning materials used by preprimary school in Pre-primary school centers in Nairobi County. The study emphasized that when learners are provided with learning material that are adaptable, they acquire skills easier. Using material that are either toxic or pose danger to children lead to delayed skill development, as the children do not identify themselves with the materials. This supported (Manduku et al., 2017) finding that children are keen on using material that injure or cause pain, injury or unwellness in their daily to day activities. By considering and optimizing these factors, educators and administrators can create engaging and effective learning environments that cater to the diverse interests, needs, and developmental stages of pre-primary learners. Providing dedicated physical spaces, allocating appropriate resources, offering a variety of corners and ensuring adaptability contribute to the overall quality of pre-primary school education hence enhancing children's learning experiences and outcome (Nganga, 2019; Gakoya, 2022).

Social learning theory by Bandura (1967) and revised by Schunk (2012) urge that the essence of social learning theory which Schunk also call observational learnings is to test behaviorism among members of a group who are in a learning process. Johnson states that during the learning process a member of the group is required to learn through imitation. That is by observing what others are doing or as instructed. This learning is referred to as insight learning and with continuous insight learning incremental learning occur (Raye, 2017). These categories of learning then present well a change of mental processes that create capacity to demonstrate different behavior that occurs as a result of learning which is referred to as skill development

by (Gerrig & Zimbardo, 2015). From Social learning theory the idea is that preprimary learners should gain insight learning from both the teachers and peers at a corner of interest. Then with continued learning by observation incremental learning occurs and finally they develop skills. This study will seek to find out whether with diversified resources that are adaptable at corners of interest both insight and incremental learning occurs among learners in preprimary in public primary school in Imenti South Sub County.

2.3 Utilization of Corners of Interest and Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

The revised Piaget theory of cognitive development by Nabavi (2014) claims that children between age of 7 years and 11 years undergo concrete operational development where the intellectual development is demonstrated through the use of logical and systematic manipulation of symbols, which are related to concrete objects. At this stage of development, the increasingly becomes aware of external events and records references. Despite Piaget undermining children learning research has found that when children are exposed to repetitive action, they often learn more advanced concepts with relatively brief instruction. This theory will enable the study measure whether period of usage which zeal to repeated task influence the creative development in preprimary learners. According to learning psychologist, Maria Montessori known as founder of the kindergarten concept, behavior is learned through observational learning and interaction with the environment (Morse et al., 2019), The experts claim that interaction means getting involved at the learning space. In the presence of attractive stimulating and well-organized learning spaces, the space itself call for interaction (Raye, 2017).

Previously it has been stated that interaction with a given environment can be measured by period of use and frequency of interaction with the environment. Offering consistent opportunities to interact with these learning spaces, automatically increase the period of utilization of a learning space (Tuimur & Chemwei, 2019). The assertion ends up reinforcing that, at preschool age children should be allowed to actively interact with learning environments whether at school or at home. Experts say that the novelty and beauty of the materials used in a learning center significantly

determine the call for use or visit to a learning space by the learner. According to Michael (2019) cognitive, linguistics, motor, social and emotional developments occur when a learner is properly exposed to learning experiences and importantly at different spaces. Heromun (2017) stated that competencies in creative activities is best developed if learners are trusted to make discoveries on their own at any learning process. Sandal and Joseph (2019) raised argument that learning centers that accommodate the interest of learners with either new or repetitive tasks are appropriative for creativity growth and competency development. The two experts stated that instructors need to setup a learning center that accommodates the interests of children and allow for programmed period of use in order to shape creative skills learnt. Curl and Edwards (2019) criticized previous assertion made by studies in this domain that increased period of use of material significantly lead to improved skill acquisition. The criticism shown that when a learner is exposed to use of a specific tool or equipment without change to accomplish certain tasks then rote learning occur. With rote learning the study deem this a weaken way of creativity skill and competence growth. They advised that learning spaces at any corner should provide diversified material or tools, where utilization is programmed.

From instructors' perspective programmed period of use means coming up with scheduled time for use. Mounting evidence from scholars as shown the importance of programmed period of utilization of learning spaces to children. According to Bentely (2017) programming times required by learners to interact with a learning space fosters sequential picture of the reality of using a tool to gain a skill. Therefore, the broken period of use fosters better skill acquisition that prolonged use. A study by Saeed et al. (2022) criticized the fact that programmed time as no strong correlation with skill acquisition. the concept derived by the study is that in such scenario's skill acquisition vary from individual learners and not the frequency of using the learning space. From substantial literature reviewed from past studies Melpomeni (2018) defined extended hours of use of a learning space as the time spent by a learner doing similar tasks away from the ideal classroom learning space. The study quoted that when learner go home and continue to perform task like at school, is engaging in extended period of use of a learning space. When this occurs to a learner it is a clear indicator of discovery and acquired creativity skill at school point. Saeed et al. (2022)

supported this definition and stated that when learners engage in extended hours performing a task either at home, school but outside classroom broken memory led to the actual cognitive skill acquisition eliminating aspects of rote learning.

A study conducted by Were, (2017) investigated the impact of different frequencies of engagement on children's social interactions and language development within corners of interest. The study found that learner's consistent engagement with a learning space built a learning relationship that reciprocated to sense of ownership and mastery fostering autonomy and self-regulation abilities. Assertion made by experts and recommendations made by past studies guided by the underlined aspect of period of utilization evidently show that there is a strong correlation between time of interaction and skill development despite some few detailed criticisms. This study anchoring on the revised Piaget theory of cognitive development will investigate how period of utilization of corners of interest in public preprimary school influence instruction of creative activity competencies of Pre-primary school learners enrolled in Imenti South Sub-County.

2.4 Adequacy of Corners of Interest and Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

A review by Hussain et. al. (2022) on studies in the domain of early childhood education in Asia and Middle East shown that effect implementation of early child education curriculum depended on establishment of quality and adequate learning materials, enough learning physical space, well skilled teacher and curiosity deriving centers. Allowing children to independently explore their surroundings while providing them with tangible objects to interact with had been noted to be an effective teaching approach (UNESCO, 2005 cited by Hays & Reinders, 2020). A study Bušljeta (2019) had established that teaching and learning materials to which young children are exposed to in any environment capture the attention of children, foster interest in learning, and facilitate the communication of concepts. From this finding an assert by Hays and Reinders (2020) was that creating unsustainable learning environment can slow learners improve their learning process and mental development. An establishment is that children should be allowed to explore the environment and be provided with concrete objects to interact. This is a finding by

McNally and Slutsky (2016) who studied Reggio Emilia educators in Italy. The study observed that children at Reggio Emilia were exposed to learning centers with enriched materials, which were well displayed.

Clear display of children group activities was observed at each learning center. From these observation McNally and Slutsky (2016) concluded that well designed learning centers can be the first teacher and the real teacher becomes the second teacher in a child's learning experience. Gonczy (2018) similar findings shown that children learn best through play, utilizing their senses and engaging with their physical and social surroundings. The psychologist Maria Montessori emphasized that, play is a natural way for children to learn and advocated for education that allowed children to interact with learning environment that best enable holistic development (Dar, 2020). An emphasizes by Cass et al. (2021) was that concrete learning occurs in children when learning by doing, use of tangible materials and gradual guidance occur in a learning activity. Slade and Griffith (2019) supported the believe by Maria Montessori that every child should be assisted and guided in their development, with training tailored to their individual needs. Children activeness at a learning environment contribute to well understanding and skill acquisition if the learning environment is rich of materials that assist in learning. It is crucial for educational centers to provide learning materials and offer the necessary supplies, that suggest activities benefiting both the teacher and the learner (Leven & Long, 2018).

The absence of instructional resources can hinder learning, especially for early childhood education learners who engage in tasks like sorting, drawing, and coloring (Tuimur & Chemwei, 2020). Urged by Gollopeni et. al. (2022) is that teachers are limited to giving the expected instruction and learning activity when constrained by inadequate learning materials. Research by Allee and Roberts (2020) suggests that purposefully chosen materials directly linked to learning objectives lead to more engaged play and development of essential skills coupled with adequacy. Earlier stated by Bodrova and Leong (2007) cited in Morse et al. (2019) was that adequacy encompasses several key aspects; quantity and quality of materials are crucial, availability based on learning objective and learners' social interaction got from the material. Therefore, an organized and clean display of materials allows children to

locate and use them effectively. Thus, it is the responsibility of educators to prioritize and supply adequate materials that meet different learning needs.

Highlighted by Cumbo et al. (2019) in a study is that well equipped learning environment in early childhood education should factor presence of different learning materials when element of technology, culture and safety on top of adequacy. The study found that different equipment based on technology gave the learners the real-life situation picture concerning innovation and creativity, hence facilitated effective learning. In a similar perspective Negussie and Slater (2019) explored a different aspect of materials utilization in Pre-primary school and examined the role of indigenous knowledge and investigated how play, songs, proverbs, and cultural memory contribute improvements. The study revealed that incorporating these elements into teaching creates a cultural framework that strengthens the connection between home and school life for children. Proper maintained learning materials as highlighted by Naisianoi et al. (2020), cultivate learning curiosity among learners, indicating that well-maintained materials contribute to a positive learning environment, promoting children's independence and responsibility. On top of well-maintained materials blended material provide opportunities for children to explore concepts, develop critical skills, and achieve desired learning outcome (Isbell et al. 2015; Durand et al., 2018).

The MOEST Pre-primary school policy (2017) commended the notion by scholars that a wide range of materials and equipment is essential for children's play, learning, and development. A study in Baringo County by Sitati et al. (2017) found strong correlation between the availability of educational materials and teachers' command on class activities. In Kitui County Mwatha et al. (2017) found that having adequate supply of materials enabled children to actively participate in activities, explore their interests, and engage in cooperative activities. Children thrive in environments where there are enough materials to support their play and interactions with peers. The study concluded that the quantity of materials available at each corner of interest is an essential factor for ensuring multiple children engaging simultaneously. Having readily available materials and supplies can prevent delays, disruption and confusion when children are preparing for activities (Were, 2017).

Sufficient literature has shown that well-chosen blended materials can promote development across various domains, including cognitive, social, and physical skills among learners. The materials provide opportunities for imaginative play, creative exploration, and problem-solving activities, high-quality materials can significantly enhance children's learning experiences (Güven, 2019). This has been supported by scholars globally and Kenyan context inclusive (Sitati et al., 2017; Mwatha et al., 2017; Were, 2017; Nganga, 2019; Tuimur & Chemwei, 2019; Zafeiroudi, 2021).

A benchmark from the learning corners in Reggio Emilia, Italy, that children need learning centers rich of quality and quantity materials and the converse that cluttered or damaged materials can be unappealing hindering children's engagement with the learning space enrich the study objective of investigating the influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners. The two theories that support this study too strengthen the study as they enlighten that individuals learning should directly have an active relationship with the learning environment, element of perception as perceptual activity determine the mutual relationship between the learner and the environment. Individual interaction with the environment become the strong bridges to the gap for this study toward determining the extent to which adequacy, presence of variety of learning materials and maintenance of those material at corners of Interest influence instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners in public preprimary schools in Imenti South sub county.

2.5 Challenges Encountered while using Corners of Interest and Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

Different school of thought have defined challenge in different perspectives. This study will adopt the definition that challenge is a task that involves uncertainty and requires the skills, abilities, motivation and knowledge of the person performing it (Kubat et al., 2018). There is much debate in the educational field regarding challenges hindering learning process at all learning stages. According to Pollard et al. (2018) learners interacting with learning environments encounter different challenges that hinder smooth learning process. Established by Gemme et al. (2016) were some factors that hindered smooth learning among middle age learners in Malaysia. These

challenges were posed by technology, diversified cultural backgrounds, unskilled instructors, unstable curriculum and inadequate learning resources. On a similar dimension, Chesloff (2017) studied factors that affected creativity in students learning engineering and mathematics in five universities in Turkey.

The study demonstrated that the materials exposed to learners posed the greater challenge from technological aspect. The learners could not easily grasp the knowledge of using the equipment to complete tasks at hand. Chubb (2017) urged that any learning environments should be equipped with materials the fit and enable learner easily get skilled than strenuously struggle to use. This demoralizes the learner and lead to withdrawal from the learning process. On the same argument Chubb (2017) continue to urge that it is the responsibility of the curriculum developers and the direct learning instructor to identify the most suitable and appropriate equipment for learning at all learning levels. Although technology pose challenge to learning process it is documented that when learners are exposed to the right technological trend learning process becomes easy as they explore different areas and integrate different equipment hence foster creativity and learning new skills (Pollard et al., 2018). When technological challenge is minimal at any learning space, critical thinking skills and problem-solving capabilities and social emotional interact are noted to improve among learners in the space. Novelty or originality, usefulness or value within a particular field can be defined well in such spaces (Billings, 2017).

Culture is defined by specific characteristics of a group such as language, ethnicity, religion, attitude and behaviour (Pares et al., 2018). The 21st century studies on cause effect of ethnicity, religious backgrounds on altitude and behaviour have indicated flimsily relationship among groups (Branternfors, 2017). A study carried by Knight (2018) in Sweden indicated that Swedish early childhood curriculum highly accommodated children from other nations. The study finding found that learning materials used by the children in there learning process were just protective, promotive and transformative than of ethnic or religious orient. Cited in Rogers et al. (2005) United Nations General Assembly (1989) emphasized that all children in the world should be prepared to live in a global society with dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality, and solidarity. Education was cited as the main driver. Cultural patterns

differ based on as low as family backgrounds and in most case these diverse cultural patterns create misunderstanding between peer learners and also teachers in a learning space (Cazden, 2001). The way learner perceives equipment use at a learning space from a cultural dimension can also slow learning process. This may affect the learners' roles during activities in a learning task (Isrealsson, 2016).

As advised by Clewell and Villegas (2001) learning spaces should be equipped with materials that have little or no cultural interference to enable ease in skill acquisition among the learner in the group. Personalities are complexity of characteristics that distinguishes an individual or nation or a group, especially the totality of an individual's behavioral and emotional characteristic (Hui et al., 2015). In a learning space a teachers as primary figure and that in a classroom scenario teachers need to keep to the mutual intelligibility in an open and respectful manner in order to accommodate all learners' interests. This enables the teacher's expected ideas and discourage further exploration of unexpected creative idea (Clewell & Villegas, 2001). Additionally, Bramwell (2011); Chan (2015) state that teachers should be in stable states to see what skill acquisition and creativity means to learners during an activity. Therefore, when teachers are unaware of the meaning and importance of fostering creativity learning is compromised. According to Christie (2019) the teaching methods rely on some form of guided discovery where the teacher attempts to guide the student through questions, learning activities and knowledge discovery and avoiding direct instruction. In a generalized manner reviewed pieces of literature emphasis that with proper planning, where the instructor considers the needs of the learner and well-designed procedures on how to tackle problems and learning tasks, cooperative learning process can ease, and learning become interesting.

Formation of the learning groups helps the learners discover new knowledge. Kirimi (2019) stated that instructors should consider the needs of the learners when coming up learning groups. The assertion is that well packaged procedures on how to tackle problems and learning tasks presented to a group, cooperative lead learning process becoming easy and interesting. Classroom setup specifically at every early childhood learning is important. The arrangement should show sense of equality among the learners to promote morale to learn. When children are comfortable, free and

motivated to learn they socially interaction with peers and the teacher leading to ease in learning (Byers et al., 2018). Some natural and environmental elements like building design, noise, temperatures and lighting can also pose challenge to learning (Martin et al., 2016; Manca et al., 2020). This study sought to understand whether and to determine the challenges emanating from corners of interest directly influence instruction of creative activities competencies among the preprimary learners. The two theories guiding the study anchor on cognitivism approach meaning that when learners actively engage in a learning space passive learning scenarios are ironed leading to knowledge discovery. From this perspective the study needs to investigate learner's activeness at corners of interest are hindered by the challenge due to technological, cultural, teachers' personality and grouping made at the activity. In this action the study will fill the knowledge gap that is missing in the study domain on how materials at the corners of interests at early childhood learning influence instruction of creative activity competencies among learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County in Meru County.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study anchored on two theories; the revised copy of social learning theory by Bandura (1977) revised by Schunk (2012 and the revised version of Theory of Cognitive Development, by Nabavi (2014) originally proposed by Jean Piaget in the year 1957. There two theories work under cognitivism approach where psychological aspects of human behaviour are considered. In argument cognitivism urges that learning is a process where the learner grasp things, skills as whole as opposed to behaviorist approach where teaching approach employ grills to memorize.

2.6.1 Social Learning Theory

Bandura's Social Learning Theory focuses on the role of observation and modeling in learning behavior. It suggests that behavior is learned through observing others and that reinforcement and punishment play a crucial role in this process. The theory also highlights the importance of social interactions and relationships in learning, as individuals are more likely to imitate behavior exhibited by role models they can relate to. Bandura identifies three types of representation; verbal, imaginal and

motoric help individuals understand and internalize concepts. As highlighted by Bandura's Social Learning Theory the study recognized the significance of social interactions in learning, as highlighted by Bandura's Social Learning Theory. By incorporating corners of interest, the study acknowledges the role of social and cultural perspectives in shaping the child competencies development. Bandura's Social Learning Theory also emphasizes the importance of early stimulation and the use of suitable learning resources to foster self-confidence and promote experiential and experimental learning.

2.6.2 Theory of Cognitive Development

Theory of Cognitive Development suggests that cognitive development in children progresses gradually and cooperatively, starting from concrete experiences and gradually moving towards more abstract thinking. According to this theory, children are not passive learners but active participants in their own learning process. Their desire to learn and explore increases as they advance through different stages of cognitive development. Piaget emphasized that for effective learning a child should be exposed to a spectrum of appropriate learning tools and materials as well as given proper guidelines so that they actively engage in the learning process to construct their own understanding.

The central elements of these two theories that are important to this study are that individuals learning should directly have an active relationship with the learning environment, element of perception since perceptual activity determine the mutual relationship between the learner and the environment and individual interaction with the environment. The learner’s interaction with the environment leads to relatively in perception and finally organizes the stimulus to meaningful patterns. The further assertion is interaction with the environment lead to knowledge development and storage for use in new situations.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

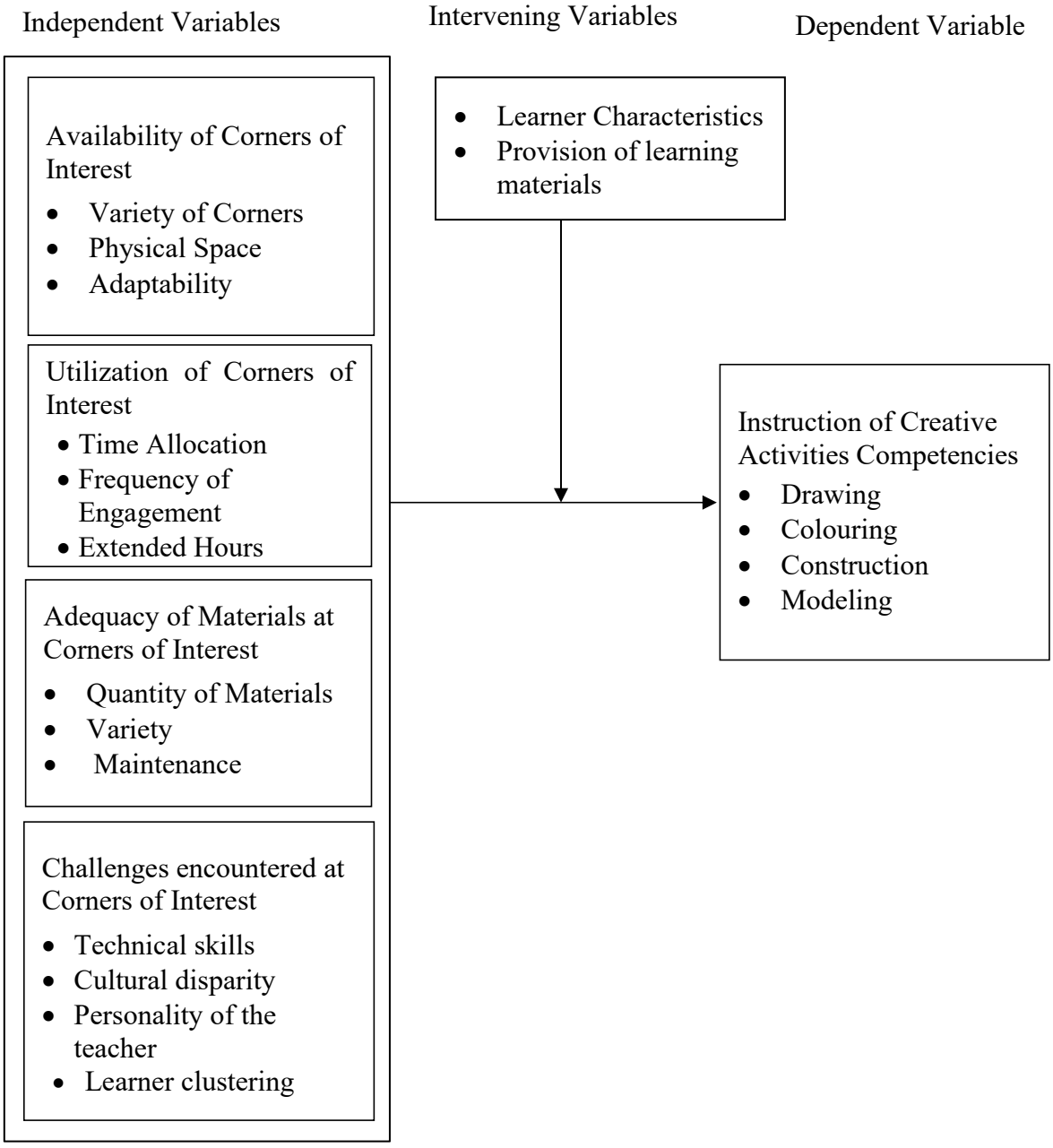

Figure 1: Relationship between Corners of Interest and the Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

The study investigated influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary. The independent variables formulated from the study objectives were; availability of corners of interest, utilization of corners of interest, adequacy of materials at corners of interest and challenges encountered at corners of interest. The dependent variable

alleged to be influenced by the four independent variables was instruction of creative activity competences among preprimary learners in Imenti South Sub-County. Aspects of drawing, colouring, modeling and construction were considered as indicators of the dependent variable. This study further allege that the four independent variables directly influence the instruction of creative activity competence and also indirectly instruction of creative activity competence under moderation of learner characteristics and government policies implementation.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Location of the Study

Meru County, situated in eastern Kenya, is one of the 47 counties (Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, 2020). Meru County has nine constituencies; Imenti South, Imenti Central, Imenti North, Buuri, Igembe Central, Igembe North, Igembe South, Tigania East, Tigania West. The study was done in Imenti South Subcounty. Imenti south and Imenti central are neigbhour sub counties. Imenti south is then divided into five wards; Nkuene/Mitunguu, Igoji East, Igoji West, Abogeta East and Abogeta West. The location was suitable for the study because the researcher noted that there was need to investigate how corners of interest influenced the creative activities competences among the preprimary learners in public preprimary schools in Imenti South subcounty.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is a work plan illustrating how the researcher intends to conduct the research study and the connection of the research objectives to the data that is collected (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Descriptive survey research design was considered to be most suitable for this study as it enabled the study to focus on systematic data gathering as well as understanding the characteristics of a phenomenon studied. In the context of this study, this design was appropriate for investigating the influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners in public preprimary schools in Imenti south. As guided by Mertens (2018) descriptive survey research design also supported mixed-methods approach and allowed both quantitative and qualitative data to be analyzed. The study adopted a mixed -method research approach which incorporated both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

3.3 Target Population

The target population of the study was made up of 210 public pre-primary school teachers and 123 head teachers in 123 public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya, the distribution of the teachers within the sub county based on wards within the sub county is as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Target Population

Imenti South Sub- County Wards	Pre- primary school teachers	Pre-primary school Head teachers	Total
Nkuene/Mitunguu	47	25	72
Igoji East	49	16	65
Igoji West	31	20	51
Abogeta East	35	25	60
Abogeta West	48	37	85
Total	210	123	333

Source: Sub-County Education Office Imenti South Sub-County (2022).

3.4 Determination of Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

3.4.1 Determination of Sample Size

Imenti South sub-county is divided into five wards. The researcher considered the wards as clusters. According to Cooper and Schindler (2013) a sample size of 30-50% of the target population is recommendable for social sciences research. For this study a 39% sample of head teachers determined the number of teachers to be involved in the study. Based on this approach 48 head teacher were involved meaning a projection of 48 school were also involved. To minimize sampling error rotary sampling technique was used to identify the fifty centers and selection was based on strata; the wards.

Proportionate formula was used to get the number of schools in each stratum and were as shown in table 2. The proportionate formula is as shown in equation i.

$s = (x/K) * p$……..(i)

where ***s*** the number of preprimary schools to be selected, ***x*** is the total number of schools in the ward, ***K***, is the total number of centers in the sub county and ***p*** is the projected number to be selected across the sub county.

Table 2: Number of Schools to be Involved in the Study from Wards in the Sub-County

Imenti South Sub- County Wards	Stratum projected number of Pre-primary schools (s)
/Mitunguu	11
Igoji East	7
Igoji West	7
Abogeta East	9
Abogeta West	14
Total	48

Source: Researcher

3.4.2 Sampling Procedure

From the approach the total number of centers yielded the respondents; 48 head teachers were sampled which satisfy the recommendation by (Cooper & Schindler, 2013). Using lottery technique again the centers from each cluster to be involved in the study were selected. This was done by giving schools in the clusters codes as shown in appendix V. From appendix V the total number of pre-primary schools selected for the study were 123. The distribution is as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Study Sample Sizes

Imenti South Sub-County Wards	Total number of Pre-primary schools (x)	Cluster projected number of Pre-primary schools (s)	Total
Nkuene/Mitunguu	25	11	36
Igoji East	16	7	23
Igoji West	20	7	27
Abogeta East	25	9	34
Abogeta West	37	14	51
Total	123	48	171

Source: Researcher

From the data presented in the tables 2 and table 3 indicate that the study sample sizes for the category of respondents have been obtained from the clusters. 48 head teachers and 123 Pre-primary school teachers were selected from 48 Pre-primary schools selected across the sub county.

3.5 Research Instruments

The study used a questionnaire for Pre-primary school teacher, an interview guide for head teacher, and Pre-primary school learners group activity observation checklist as the data collection tools attached in the Appendix i, iii and iv . The integration of data collection tools enabled gathering both qualitative and quantitative data which supported the underlined research design.

3.5.1 Questionnaire for Pre-Primary Teachers

The questionnaire for the pre-primary school teacher had had two main parts; Part I and Part II. Questions in part I captured demographic data of the respondent. Part II of the questionnaire had question items were arranged in order of study objectives and

presented in sections A to E. Each section had both open-ended and closed ended questions. The closed-ended questions were constructed on a 5 scale Likert; Strongly agree (SA), Agree(A), Undecided(U), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree (SD), with their weights as SA-5, A-4, U-3, D-2 and SD-1.

3.5.2 Interview Guide for Head Teachers

The interview guide for the head teacher contained structured question items that served as a guide to captured qualitative data from the head teachers. The question items captured overview responses on the use of corners of interest.

3.5.3 Observation Checklist

An observation checklist was used to captures observations made during learners group activities on instruction creative activities competencies.

3.6 Pilot Study

The researcher conducted a pilot study in 5 schools in Imenti Central Sub County. Imenti Central Sub County was suitable for the study since Imenti South and Imenti Central Sub counties are under one county jurisdiction and also under the same county government. This study used a pilot sample size of 13 pre-primary school teachers and 5 head teachers picked at random from the five schools. This was as guided by Teijlingen and Vanora (2017) assertion that a pilot sample should be within the range of 1% to 10% of the actual study sample size. The essence of conducting the pilot test was to ensure that the tools used in the study were valid and reliable for use.

3.6.1 Validity of Research Instruments

A suggested by Wilson (2019) reliability is important although when combined with validity. This study pretested the degree to which items in the questionnaire reflected the content universe to which the questionnaire was generalized in other words the content validity. To facilitate validation judgmental approach involving 5 experts established the content validity of the questionnaire by question item reviewing. Using Lawshe method content validity ratios for all question items were computed. According to guideline by Lawshe (1975) an item is significant if the CVR is within the critical level.

The results were as presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Teacher's Questionnaire Validity Test Results

	Initial number of questions	Number Eliminated[a]	Number significant	CVR
Variable 1[i].	5	0	5	0.99
Variable 2[i].	5	0	5	0.99
Variable 3[i].	5	0	5	0.99
Variable 4[i].	5	0	5	0.99
Variable 4[d].	4	0	4	0.99

a. Listwise deletion based on the procedure.
i. Independent Variable.
d. Dependent Variable.

From the findings all the questionnaire items with CVR equal to 0.99 which met the threshold for considering them significant as suggested by Lawshe (1975) that the critical level for 5 panelists is 0.99 (check appendix V).

3.6.2 Reliability Test

As established by Hanson and Creswell (2017) reliability of a research tool is the measure of consistency a tool provides in terms of stability and repeatability. The study used half-split method to determine the reliability index also known as Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the Pre-primary school teacher's questionnaire since the question items are constructed on a Likert scale. From the pilot study results the computed Cronbach Alpha coefficients were within the range of 0.7 – 0.9. As guided by Robinson (2019) any index within the range 0.7 – 0.9 indicate moderate reliability, the study established the extent to which a measurement of a phenomenon provides stable and consist result for the Pre-primary school teacher's questionnaire. Since Likert scale was used to build the question items in the questionnaire, Cronbach's correlations were most appropriate to measure the internal consistency (Whitley, 2017). The Cronbach Alpha coefficients for the variables and overall Cronbach Alpha coefficients for the questionnaire were as presented in in table 5 and table 6.

Table 5: Teacher's Questionnaire Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Availability of Corners of Interest	0.798
Adequacy of Materials at Corners of Interest	0.785
Utilization of Corners of Interest	0.779
Challenges encountered at Corners of Interest	0.789
Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies	0.801

The results in table 5 show that all the variables in the study had Cronbach's Alphas greater than 0.7 thus the reliability was high. Results for the overall tool reliability were as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Overall Reliability Test Results

Cronbach Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on: Standardized Items
0.785	0.787

Based on standardized items a value of 0.787 was obtained and according to Wilson (2019) a value equal to or greater than 0.7 indicates existence of strong relationship among the variables investigated thus the Pre-primary school teacher's questionnaire was considered reliable.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

To gain authorization for administering research instruments at the selected pre-primary schools, the researcher visited each selected school each and sought permission from the head teachers. Subsequently, arrangements for data collection activities were made by the researcher with help of inducted research assistants. The researcher adopted drop and pick later method when administering questionnaires to the respondents in order to enhance the rates of response. Follow-ups was made through face-to-face interactions and phone calls to respondents.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the interpretation of collected raw data into meaningful information (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Data collected was crosschecked to identify the tools that were complete and valid. Data collected from the interview schedule and the observation checklist were organized according to the patterns identified which then were presented thematically. Data collected from the questionnaire was coded as guided by the 5 scale Likert. To enable efficiency, precision and accuracy a statistical package SPSS version 26 was used. The analyze yield both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics include the frequencies and percentages and the mean. The inferential statistic; the chi-square statistics that helped in ruling on whether to reject or not reject the study null hypotheses.

Table 7: Methods of Data Analysis

Research Null Hypotheses	Independent Variable	Dependent variable	Test statistics
$H_0$1: There is no statistically significant influence of availability of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County.	Availability of corners of interest	Instruction of creative activities competences	Chi-square
$H_0$2: There is no statistically significant influence of utilization of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County.	Utilization of corners of interest	Instruction of creative activities competences	Chi-square
$H_0$3: There is no statistically significant influence of adequacy of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County.	Adequacy of corners of interest	Instruction of creative activities competences	chi-square
$H_0$4: Challenges encountered at the corners of interest have no statistical significance influence on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County.	Challenges encountered on corners of interest	Instruction of creative activities competences	Chi-square

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Principles and ethical considerations were observed to maintain the study within the limits of research projects. Following the ethical principles, the researcher sought approval from Chuka University Ethics Review Board (Appendix VII) then requested for a research permit from NACOSTI (Appendix VIII) . With the research permit, the researcher visited the sub county Education office, Meru County to inform them on the researcher's intention to collect data within the jurisdiction. The researcher then visited sampled schools to book appointments and also obtain sampled informed consent from the respondents. To ensure ethical conduct is paramount throughout the study as Leedy and Ormrod (2005) emphasize that careful consideration must be given to the ethical implications when researchers involve human subjects in research. Throughout all phases of the study the researcher prioritized the rights of participants

to confidentiality, informed consent and privacy. To address potential concerns and encourage participation, the researcher provided participants with a clear explanation of the study objectives to alleviating any anxieties about potential repercussions and ensure participants make informed decisions on involvement. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process. All data was anonymized and no personal identifiable information can be linked to participants. Finally, the researcher ensured proper attribution of all information sources used in the study and avoided plagiarism.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response Rate

Out of 123 questionnaires administered to the pre-primary school teachers from 48 pre-primary schools, 4 were incomplete hence 119 were considered valid which translated to (96.7%) response rate. Forty-eight head teachers were interviewed and 48 observations checklist were filled well thus the response rates was (100%). The response rates finding were as presented in table 8.

Table 8: Response Rate Results

	Total	Valid	Percentage
Pre-primary school teachers Questionnaire	123	119	96.7
Interview Schedules	48	48	100
Observation checklist	48	48	100

The response rate was considered adequate as guided by David (2019) suggesting that percentage greater than 40 is considered adequate

4.2 Demographic Information

The study captured the pre-primary school teacher's demographic information; gender status, age bracket, highest level of education attained and pre-primary schools teaching experiences. This was vital to the study as it helped the researcher to understand cross-cutting issues and characteristics of the sample involved in the study. For the head teachers gender status, age bracket, highest level of education attained and head teacher experiences. The findings were presented in the successive sections.

4.2.1 Gender of the Respondents

The gender characteristics of 119 pre-primary school teachers and 48 head teacher who were involved in the study were as presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Gender of the Respondents

		Male	Female	Total
Head Teachers	f	26	22	48
	%	54.2	45.8	100.0
ECDE Teachers	f	29	90	119
	%	24.2	75.6	100.0

Findings in table 9show that out of 48 head teachers (54.2%) were male and (45.8%) were female. This indicates that there is gender parity in terms of positions of head teachers in the Sub-County. About the pre-primary school teachers (24.4%) were men and (75.6%) were Women. This indicated gender imbalance in the profession giving an impression that this pre-primary school teachers profession is dominated by women.

4.2.2 Age of the Respondents

Study respondents gave their age bracket. Responses from the two categories were as portrayed in Table 10.

Table 10: Age of the respondents

		Below 25 years	25 – 40 years	Above 40 years	Total
Head Teachers	f	0	9	39	48
	%	0	37.8	81.2	100.0
ECDE Teachers	f	13	61	45	119
	%	10.9	51.3	37.8	100.0

Findings presented in Table 10 show that pre-primary school's teacher in the Imenti South Sub County had diverse age brackets. Only (10.9%) of the teachers involved in the study were below 25 years. The age bracket of 25 – 40 years carried the largest number (51.3%) with (37,8%) having age greater than 40 years. Findings from the head teacher shown that no head teacher was below 25 years. 18.8% had age between 25 and 40 years. With (81.2%) of then having age greater than 40. This demonstrated that the respondents had a diverse of ideas and their opinions were sufficient for analysis.

4.2.3 Academic Background of the Respondents

The respondents were requested to state their highest level of education. This was important in order to establish whether teachers and head teachers had adequate skills which would enable them to understand pre-primary school dynamics. The feedbacks for the two categories were as depicted in Table 11.

Table 11: Academic Background of the Respondents

		Diploma and below	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
Head Teachers	f	23	21	4	48
	%	47.9	43.8	8.3	100.0
ECDE Teachers	f	51	52	16	119
	%	42.8	43.7	13.4	100.0

The findings in table 11 indicated that the respondents involved in the study had a blended education background, with majority of the head teachers having diploma and below level at (47.9%) and (43.8%) having undergraduate degree level and (8.3%) having Graduate level. For the pre-primary school teachers, the majority had undergraduate (43.7%), (48.8%) having diploma and below and (13.4%) having attained graduate level. These showed that all the respondents were knowledgeable and capable of interpreting questions directed to them during data collection.

4.2.4 Working Experiences of the Respondents

The study investigated pre-primary school teachers work experience in teaching in the pre-primary school domain to determine whether the respondents had rich information on how to interacting with young children and teaching them occurred. Equally, there was need to understand whether the pre-primary school teachers had useful data for the study. For the head teachers, years of holding the position as head teachers was also captured. This was to find out if they had sufficient information regarding how pre-primary schools learning is done. The findings were as presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Working Experiences of the Respondents

		Less than 3 years	4 – 8 years	Above 8 years	Total
Head Teachers	f	5	27	16	48
	%	10.4	56.3	33.3	100.0
ECDE Teachers	f	13	58	48	119
	%	109	48.7	40.4	100.0

Findings in Table 12 also shown head teachers experience of holding the position as head teachers was also captured. This was to find out if they had sufficient information regarding how pre-primary school learning is done. Results in table 12

shown that majority of the respondents had adequate working experience therefore had sufficient information relevant to the study.

4.3 Availability of Corners of Interest Influences the Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

The first objective of the study was to determine the extent to which availability of corners of interest influences the instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County. From the interview checklist the study noted that (77.08%) of the head teachers stated that the preprimary school had corners of interest and were spacious enough.

4.3.1 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Findings on Availability of Corners of Interest

A key response made by all the head teachers (100%) was;

"the county government construct ECDE classrooms."

On whether the constructed classrooms as well as the corners of interest were flexible, (85.42%) demonstrated that the corners of interest were adaptable to the learners. In (14.58%) centers there were sentiments that the corners of interest were not flexible.

Another key response made by the head teachers was on space and enrollment. Interviewee no. 20 among the (22.92%) head teachers reported that

"Classroom at the center were not spacious enough to accommodate the number of learners who enrolled each year".

The researcher observed that in (20.83%) centers involved corners of interest did not served the learners adequately due to high enrollment. A made by response by teacher labelled number 78 from the opened question in the teachers' questionnaire was corners of interest were congested due to the large number of learners enrolled in the school. The respondent made a suggestion that the county government and other stakeholder in the domain of early childhood education need to lay new strategies to improve on spacious classrooms. A teacher respondent labelled (number 12) responded from the opened question item that corners of interest were not adaptable since it is a variation of where a challenged child was in the group, which was not easily to notice unless if physically challenged. The respondent further stated that no

provision was set for any challenged eventuality especially physical ones. Another respondent (number 100) in the open-ended question stated that the classrooms had poor lighting and recorded this as a hindering factor to adaptability. In this dimension it is clear that learning in such classroom environment was not easy thus delaying skill development. This finding aligns with learning in poorly designed learning centers do not promote skill development and as stated by Beghetto (2019).

4.3.2 Descriptive Statistics for Availability of Corners of Interest

The study also sought responses from the pre-primary teachers through a questionnaire. The question items needed to establish whether there were learning spaces designated as corners of interest at the pre-primary school in the Imenti Sub-County. Availability of corners of interest were indicated by functionality, adaptability, curiosity level, ease of use of the materials found at each corner. The study interviewed the head teacher and made observations as the learners engaged with the corners of interest. The results were as presented in table 13.

Table 13: Descriptive Statistics for Corners of Interest

Item		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)	N	μ
There are corners of interest setup in our pre-primary school classrooms	*f*	104	15	0	0	0	119	4.87
	%	87.4	12.6	0	0	0	100	
The corners of interest setup are designated for different creative skill learning.	*f*	35	46	21	17	0	119	3.83
	%	29.4	38.8	17.7	14.1	0	100	
Learners' congestion at the corners of interest	*f*	65	26	0	15	13	119	3.97
	%	54.6	21.9	0	12.6	10.9	100	
All aspects of adaptability were considered during the designing the corners of interest.	*f*	71	12	18	12	6	119	4.09
	%	59.7	10.1	15.1	10.1	5.0	100	
Materials and equipment at the corners of interest are easy to maintain	*f*	28	45	0	37	9	119	3.39
	%	23.5	37.8	0	31.1	7.6	100	
Overall mean								4.03

μ - Mean, N – Total

From the finding presented in table 13 it is clear that 87.4% of the teachers strongly agreed that the pre-primary school had enough corners of interest are setup in Pre-primary school classrooms. (12.6%) agreed about the presence of corners of interest in the class. From this finding it was clear that all the schools had corners of interest as a requirement for early childhood education. Sentiments from the interview also indicated that there were learning spaces in every pre-primary school classroom in the Sub-County in generalized manner. This finding support previous studies in the domain at early childhood education child should be provided with enough learning spaces as a learning requirement in order to promote interaction and early skill development (Healey, 2022; Tekyi-Arhin, 2023; Qiftiyah, 2020; Dubois et al., 2020; Malone & Stuart, 2023; Alhosani, 2022; Wamalwa et al., 2019; Mitei & Mwoma, 2021).

On whether the designated corners had different functionalities, (29.4 %) of the teacher strongly agreed and (38.8%) agreed and (17.7%) where not very sure and (14.1%) disagreed on whether the children acquired the designated skill at each corner of interest. Echoed by the head teachers is that they are not very sure whether the corners of interest promote the skills intended since in some corners of interest materials required are not enough or may be old fashioned. This finding sheds some light that when the corners of interest are not well designed, there is high possibility of learner to fail gaining intended skills at the corner. This supports studies by (Mwatha et al., 2019; Das et al., 2023) who stated that with the well designated learning spaces, learners develop different skills and hence holistic growth.

On whether there was learner congestion at the corners of interest the teachers' response showed no pattern which mean that it varied from center to center. (54.6%) of the teachers strongly agreed and (21.9%) agreed that there was no congestion at the corners of interest. A cross check with the enrollment in the school indicated the same since the enrollment were low. Only (12.6%) and (10.9%) were in disagreement. This finding shows that in those corners where congestion was witness learning and skills acquisition was slow since learner did not have full control of interacting with the space although the same would lead to social emotional growth. This study finding support Triantafyllou (2022); Craft (2018) that when children share materials

socialization develop faster than cognitive skills and problem-solving skills. Out of 119 pre-primary school teachers involved, (59.7%) of the teachers strongly agreed with (10.1%) agreeing that corners of interest in the classrooms were adaptable to all learners, (101.1%) disagreed and (5.0%) strongly disagree while 15.1% were not sure.

As stated by Beghetto (2019) that experts designing learning spaces at early childhood learning stage should focus on use of equipment that enables students to apply their imagination to generating ideas, questions and hypotheses, experimenting with alternatives and to evaluating their own and their peers' ideas, final products and processes and more so have ensure that the environments are suitable, well ventilated and with enough lighting. The weighted mean for the question items in the questionnaire investigating objective one was 4.03. From the 5 scale Likert scale 4.03 fall in the scale of agree. The findings indicate that availability of corners of interest at the pre-primary schools learning centers or preprimary schools investigated had association with the instruction of creative activities competences among the learner which is testing the level of learning gained at the center.

4.3.3 Inferential Statistics for Availability of Corners of Interest

The study performed the chi-square test for the first null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant influence of availability of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County. The results were as shown in table 14.

Table 14: Inferential Statistics for Corners of Interest

	Value	df	Asymp sig(2-sided)	CC
Pearson Chi Square	58.65[a]	1	0.001	0.724
Likelihood Ratio	57.12	1	0.000	
Linear- by Linear	1.18	1	0.000	
N of Valid Cases	119			

a. The assumption all values used were with the range 1-5

The chi square test for the null hypothesis there is no statistically significant influence of availability of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County yield a chi-square statistics $\chi^2(1) = 58.65$, sig(2-sided) = 0.001 at 0.025

significance level. The sig value of 0.001 is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses. The study thereof shows that the availability of corners of interest have significantly influence instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County. A contingency coefficient (CC) measure of association illustrated that 72.4% of the total variance in on instruction of creative activities competencies could be attributed to availability of corners of interest at the centers. The value 0.724 indicate a moderate association between availability of corners of interest and instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners. The like hood ratio of 57.12 satisfy the assertion by Darry (2018) who stated that like hood ratio should be slightly lower than the Pearson chi-square statistics and that the linear-to-linear value of 1.18 is a better parameter to measure level of influence between the availability of corners of interest and instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners.

4.4 Utilization of Corners of Interest Influences Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

The second objective of the study was to determine the extent to which the utilization of corners of interest influences instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County. The study used an interview schedule for head teacher.

4.4.1 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Findings on Utilization of Corners of Interest

The study interviewed head teacher regarding utilization of the corners of interest by the learners. All the head teachers (100%) stated that preprimary learners utilized the corners of interest although they were not very sure of whether the utilization was done well. In a generalizes manner Interviewees number 12, 35 and 42 reported that;

> *"planning how the learner uses the learning space was a basic requirement policy, but they were not aware if learners used the corners during their free time".*

Another point noted from the (20.83%) head teachers was that it was the responsibility of the teacher to come up with a plan on how the learners used the

corners to ensure safety was maintained. This was supported by an interviewee number 13, 42 and 47 who in generalized manner stated that

> *"Several times I have seen learners in my school use corners of interest at their free time but under guidance of the teacher during sleep time".*

From the observations made it was noted that learner across the preprimary schools demonstrated to be interested with learning spaces where materials and equipment were deriving curiosity and anxiety during task performance. This was an indicate that all the learning spaces were not utilized equally and that the learning materials and equipment in (66.67 %) of the school did not excite learners during the learning process. In a generalized manner teacher respondents labelled number 23 and 54 in the open-ended question stated that if the corners were equipped with diversified learning materials learners' engagement at the corners of interest would be improved. Teacher respondent labelled number 2 stated the when diversified learning materials are placed at the corners of interest curiosity and anxiety to learner could be derived, which in return would make learners engage more with activities at corners of interest.

4.4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Utilization of Corners of Interest

Findings from the pre-primary school teacher's questionnaire for the second objective were presented in six question items as in Table 15.

Table 15: Descriptive statistics for Utilization of Corners of Interest

Item		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)	N	μ
There are corners of interest utilization programme in our center	*f*	32	41	12	28	6	119	3.55
	%	26.9	34.5	10.1	23.5	5.0	100	
Learners utilize the corners of interest during their free time	*f*	22	26	14	39	18	119	3.25
	%	18.5	21.9	11.8	32.8	15.1	100	
All corners of interest are utilized equally by the learners.	*f*	13	31	0	33	42	119	2.59
	%	10.9	26.1	0	27.7	35.3	100	
It is noticeable that learner extend skill learning at home.	*f*	17	25	11	24	42	119	2.50
	%	14.3	21.0	9.2	20.2	35.3	100	
Materials at the corners of interest derive anxiety and curiosity among learners	*f*	21	42	8	27	21	119	3.13
	%	17.7	35.3	6.7	22.7	17.7	100	
Overall mean								3.007

μ - Mean, N – Total

This question items needed to establish how the preprimary learners utilized and interacted with the designated corners of interest in the class. Utilization was

indicated time allocation, frequency of engagement and extended hours. On whether programmes on how the learners used the corners of interest utilization, programme in our center (26.9 %) and (34.5%) indicated that centers had a programme with (28.5%) showing that the were no programmes set on how the learners utilized the learning spaces. This finding supported Curl and Edwards (2019) who claimed that learners should be programmed to utilize learning spaces as well as being unlimited to use of the learning space. In favour of the responses that skewed to programmed usage the study supports the finding by Bentely (2017) who found that programmed times of using learning spaces fosters sequential picture of the reality of using a tool to gain a skill.

On whether learners utilize the corners of interest during their free time more than (50%) of the respondents indicated that learners are noted not to use learning spaces. Only (18.5%) and (21,9%) indicated that learners used learning spaces from their own derive. This study finding did not support Saeed et al. (2022) who stated that need to be encouraged to use learning spaces from unmonitored cases in order to polish their acquired skills and creativity. The study found that learners did not utilize all the learning spaces equally as indicated by (27.7%) and (35.3%) of the respondents showing that the spaces were not utilized equally. This finding aligned with Were, (2017) who found in a similar study that learners always over utilize some learning spaces were skills learnt are easy and realistic. The study finding was (20.2%) and (35.3%) of the respondents indicated that learners could not be extending learning at home aligned with Saeed et al. (2022) who demonstrated that with unmonitored activities learner who not grasp skill and be motivated to repeatedly do the task at school or away.

The finding (17.7% and 35.3%) in the table 15 indicated that materials used created anxiety and curiosity. Over 40% of the responses captured also indicated the materials used at the centers did not motivate learners by deriving curiosity. The findings agree with Tuimur and Chemwei (2019); Michael (2019); Sandal and Joseph (2019) reported that materials at the corners of interest derive anxiety and curiosity among learners.

4.4.3 Inferential Statistics for Utilization of Corners of Interest

The second null hypothesis was there is no statistically significant influence of utilization of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County. The test results were as shown in Table 16.

Table 16: Inferential Statistics for Utilization of Corners of Interest

	Value	df	Asymp sig(2- sided	CC
Pearson Chi Square	52.50[a]	1	0.000	0.667
Likelihood Ratio	51.83	1	0.000	
Linear- by Linear	1.36	1	0.000	
N of Valid Cases	119			

a. The assumption all values used were with the range 1-5

The chi square test for the null hypotheses; there is no statistically significant influence of utilization of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County yield a chi-square statistics $\chi^2(1) = 52.50$, and negligible sig =0.00 at 0.025 significance level. The negligible sig was sufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses. The study therefore shown that the utilization of corners of interest have significantly influence instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County. A contingency coefficient (CC) measure of association illustrated that 66.7% of the total variance in on instruction of creative activities competencies could be attributed to utilization of corners of interest at the centers. The value 0.667 indicate a moderate association between availability of corners of interest and instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners. The like hood ratio of 51.83 satisfy the assertion by Darry (2018) who stated that like hood ratio should be slightly lower than the Pearson chi-square statistics and that the linear-to-linear value of 1.36 is a better parameter to measure level of influence between the utilization of corners of interest and instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners.

4.5 Adequacy of Corners of Interest Influences Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

The third objective of the study was to establish how adequacy of corners of interest influences instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County.

4.5.1 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Findings on Adequacy of Corners of Interest

The study sought opinion of adequacy of corners of interest from 48 Head teacher. 42(87.50%) stated that the quantity of material at the corners of interest at the center varied with the intended use or purpose. Captured from interviewee number 20 was that;

> *"balancing the learning materials at pre-primary school corners of interest was a challenge since acquiring them and new enrollment are two dynamic factors"*

Other two interviewee numbers 31 and 33 stated that;

> " having adequate *materials* for some activities like *coloring and drawing all the time was a great challenge".*

About the variety of materials used at the corners of interest all the (100%) head teachers stated that the varieties varied depending with the source and intended learning purpose. Interviewee number 43 stated that;

> *"the materials at the corners of interest were sourced from different points; from the county government, parents who supplied available materials as requested by the teacher as long as they served the learning purpose".*

Regarding the opinion on maintenance of the material at the corner of interest (83.33%) stated that majority of the equipment used at the corners of interest did not need maintenance program since they were locally acquired and were an implementation of the real material required. During the observation the research that

most of the materials at the corners of interest in the involved centers were locally available and needed no maintenance.

Respondent number 68 on an open-ended question stated that due to inadequate material at some corners where some were substandard, children could not directly grasp the intended skill easily. Suggestions made by (35.34%) teacher on noticeable trends on how learners used corners of interest indicated that the aspect of utilization was subject to a programme made by the instructor/teachers. (20.34%) stated that children could be seen actively engaging in corner of interest activities outside classroom environments.

4.5.2 Descriptive Statistics for Adequacy of Corners of Interest

Findings from the pre-primary school teacher's questionnaire were as presented in Table 17.

Table 17: Descriptive Statistics for Adequacy of Corners of Interest

Item		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)	N
All corners of interest in our center have adequate learning material relative to our pre-primary school enrolment	*f*	15	35	0	50	19	3.2
	%	12.6	29.4	0	42.2	16.0	
Different materials found at corner of interest promote different approach to learn the same skill.	*f*	11	27	18	47	16	3.3
	%	9.2	22.7	15.1	39.5	13.5	
Parent play a great role in suppling Pre-primary schools learning materials	*f*	19	36	0	35	29	3.2
	%	16.0	30.2	0.00	29.4	24.4	
Materials at the corners of interest met technological trends	*f*	21	35	11	28	24	3.0
	%	17.7	29.4	9.2	23.5	20.2	
Materials at the corners of interest met cultural diversity among learners	*f*	23	36	8	31	21	2.9
	%	19.3	30.2	6.7	26.1	17.7	
Overall mean							2.75

μ - Mean, N – Total

This question items needed to establish whether the institution provided enough materials to facilitate preprimary learning at the center. The indicators of adequacy were quantity of materials, variety and maintenance. The study finding on whether the

ratio of learnings materials at the center were adequate relative to our pre-primary school enrolment, a larger percentage of (42.2% and 16.0%) indicated disagreement with (29.4%) and (12.6%) of the respondent showing satisfaction. It was clear this finding could be attributed to the enrollment from the fact that centers had varied enrollment. From the interview and observation made (33%) of the centers investigated did not have a moderate learner equipment ratio. (14%) had high learner equipment ratio.

From the pre-primary school teacher involved (39.5% and 13.5%) were in disagreement plus (15.1%) who were not sure indicated that the materials used at the center could promote different approach to learn the same skill. Less than (40%) formed by (9.2%) who strongly agreed and (22.7 %) indicated that the material could be used to impart different skills to the learner based on the activity. In a generalized manner the interviewees echoed those materials supplied to the centers for learning purpose are supposed to be used to impart different skills at a given activity but best to the ability of the teacher.

On whether parent play a great role in suppling pre-primary schools learning materials (24.4%) and (29.4%) response skewed to disagreement. This was echoed by the (70%) of head teachers interviewed who reported that in the current era of technology majority of the parents and guardians are not well informed about the skills need to be imparted to the pre-primary school learners therefore could not supply, unless under guidance by the teacher. Only (30.2%) and (16%) showing signs of agreement.

Regarding whether materials at the corners of interest met technological trends almost equal sentiments on agreeing and disagreeing were echoed with (23.5%) and (20.2%) showing disagreement while (17.7%) and (29.4%) showing agreement. Similar sentiments were echoed by the head teachers that some materials supplied or used at the centers not meeting the technological trend.

The finding from the teachers on whether the materials at the corners of interest met cultural diversity among learners demonstrated that the fact of cultural diversity was not spelt well although the large percentage of respondents indicated in favor of

agreeing. (19.3% and 30.2%). The portion of (26.1% and 17.7 coupled with 6.7%) indicated that the materials did not meet the cultural diversity. The study again attributed this to the respondent since the spectrum of cultural diversity was not indicated. Echoed by the head teachers was that from the perspective of the region and the segment of the centers studied it was okay with the type of materials used at the centers since there were diversity spelt. These findings were tandem to Cumbo et al. (2019); Negussie and Slater (2019) in a generalized manner stated that materials used at learning spaces should show elements of technology, culture and safety based on the need than imposing materials that are not helping in skill impartation.

4.5.3 Inferential Statistics for Adequacy of Corners of Interest

The third null hypothesis was there is no statistically significant influence of adequacy of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County. The study probed for opinion of challenges encountered at corners of interest from the head teacher. The test results were as shown in table 18.

Table 18: Inferential Statistics for Adequacy of Corners of Interest

	Value	df	Asymp sig(2- sided	CC
Pearson Chi Square	55.05[a]	1	0.000	0.683
Likelihood Ratio	53.61	1	0.000	
Linear- by Linear	1.34	1	0.000	
N of Valid Cases	119			

a. The assumption all values used were with the range 1-5

The chi square test for the null hypotheses; there is no statistically significant influence of adequacy the corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County yield a chi-square statistics $\chi 2(1) = 55.05$, and negligible sig =0.00 at 0.025 significance level. The negligible sig was sufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses. The study therefore shown that the adequacy of corners of interest significantly influence instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County. A contingency coefficient (CC) measure of association illustrated

that (68.3%) of the total variance on instruction of creative activities competencies could be attributed to utilization of corners of interest at the centers. The value 0.683 indicate a moderate association between adequacy of corners of interest and instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners. The like hood ratio of 53.61 satisfy the assertion by Darry (2018) who stated that likelihood ratio should be slightly lower than the Pearson chi-square statistics and that the linear-to-linear value of 1.34 is a better parameter to measure the level of influence between the adequacy of corners of interest and instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners.

4.6 Challenges Encountered at the Corners of Interest Influenced the Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

The fourth objective of the study was to establish how the challenges encountered at the corners of interest influenced the instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in Imenti South Sub- County, Meru County.

4.6.1 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Findings on Challenges Encountered at the Corners of Interest

The finding indicated that (50%) of the head teachers encountered technical skills at the learning spaces from the perspective of using the material since they were not standard as set by the curriculum. Interviewee number 17 stated that;

> *"using materials for construction were a challenge to many learners especially the girls since they were not motivated using timber and wood to be specific".*

Another notable remark was made by interviewee number 8 was stated that

> *"Technology being dynamic poses challenge since not all the personnel at the station be fully literate to cope with the emerging trends but to be able to understand and implement through creativity and improvisation"*

About the cultural disparity the all the (100%) head teachers said that cultural disparity was not a real challenge since the majority of the learners at the centers were again from the locally and were conversant with almost all the materials and

equipment used at the learning spaces. The head teachers also had not issue with the personality of the teachers but interviewee number 10 stated that;

> *"only the new teachers and especially males encountered a few challenges in keeping the learners motivated during the prolonged day activities".*

The researcher observed that the learner's rapport with the teacher was positive and high which meant that it was easy for the teachers to impart the skills.

4.6.2 Descriptive Statistics of Challenges Encountered at the Corners of Interest

Findings from the pre-primary school teacher's questionnaire were as presented in Table 19.

Table 19: Descriptive Statistics of Challenges Encountered at the Corners of Interest

Item		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)	N	μ
Cultural disparity among materials to pose learning challenge among learners.	*f*	23	29	4	30	33	119	2.1
	%	19.3	24.4	3.4	25.2	27.7	100	
Dynamic technological pose challenge on use of materials	*f*	26	30	14	33	16	119	2.9
	%	21.8	25.2	11.8	27.7	13.5	100	
Safety guarantee during use of materials pose challenge during learning	*f*	24	33	12	37	13	119	2.8
	%	20.2	27.7	10.1	31.1	10.9	100	
The way the learners perceive the teacher pose challenge during learning	*f*	15	23	11	41	29	119	2.0
	%	12.6	19.3	9.2	34.5	24.4	100	
*Clustering of learner at the corner of interest pose challenge during learning.	*f*	31	34	13	23	18	119	2.7
	%	26.1	28.6	10.9	19.3	15.1	100	
Overall mean								2.53

μ - Mean, N – Total

This question items established whether there existed challenges that could hinder smooth learning process at the preprimary learning center. The indicators of challenges encountered were technical skills, cultural disparity, personality of the teacher and learner clustering. On whether teachers encountered challenge on cultural disparity among materials to pose learning challenge among learners the greater

percentage shown by (25.2%) and (27.7%) indicated level of disagreement. Only (19.3%) and (24.4%) shown that they encountered challenges. Head teacher from school within urban region in the scope demonstrated that enrollment of learners from diverse cultural background was noted and the study attributed this to the percentage of teachers who reported to have had challenges.

The element of technology posing challenges during the learning process was voted to be encountered in many schools from the responses made. Different sentiments were echoed with (21.8%) and (25.2%) showing level of agreement while (27.7%) and (13.5%) indicating level is disagreement. This finding was similar to Pollard et al., (2018) who found that emerging technological can pose challenges or not during learning process. Regarding safety challenges posed during use of materials in the learning process, an average percentage of the teachers investigated indicated that safety was guaranteed during learning process shown by (20.2%) and (27,7%). Almost an equal portion indicated that disagreement. Noted from some questionnaires open ended question on safety over (50%) of the teachers said that it was not easy to control the learners during activities and some clarified that this was attributed to the learners themselves that the teachers controlling skills.

This finding supports an assertion by Hui et al. (2015) who stated that learner's behavioral and emotional characteristic determine how the learner fit in a group. On whether teachers encountered challenge during the learning process due to the way the learners perceived the teacher, (12.6% and 19.3%) indicated level of agreement with (24.4% and 34.5%) showing that the learners did not pose any challenge. From observation about half of the school had pre-primary school teachers who had less than five years working experience. This study attributed the finding that teachers encountered challenges to the finding on newly inexperienced teachers not able to control the learners well. This finding aligns to the assertion by Christie (2019) that it is the sole responsibility of the teacher to apply all means in order to control the class as well as being a role model in any activity. The study sought to understand whether clustering of learner at the corner of interest pose challenge during learning. Findings in table 12 show that (26.1% and 28.6%) were in agreement that class arrangement and clustering posted challenges to the teacher during learning process. About (33.4%)

of the teacher generally attributed this to the age difference and family background of the learners. This finding was in agreement with Byers et al. (2018) who attributed emotional differences among members of a group with age difference and family background. During observation the researcher noted in over half of the centers involved that learners in groups conflicted slightly over small issues due to different abilities and interests.

4.6.3 Inferential statistics of Challenges Encountered at the Corners of Interest

The fourth null hypothesis of the study was there is no statistically significance influence of adequacy of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County. The results for the fourth chi-square test are presented in Table 20.

Table 20: Inferential Statistics on Challenges encountered at the Corners of Interest Influenced the Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies

	Value	df	Asymp sig (2- sided, 0.025)	CC
Pearson Chi Square	67.08	1	0.000	0.754
Likelihood Ratio	65.34	1	0.000	
Linear- by Linear	1.93	1	0.000	
N of Valid Cases	119			

a. The assumption all values used were with the range 1-5

The chi square test for the null hypotheses; there is no statistically significant influence of challenges encountered at the corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County yield a chi-square statistics $\chi 2(1) = 67.08$, and negligible sig =0.00 at 0.025 significance level. The negligible sig was sufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses. The study therefore shown that the adequacy of corners of interest significantly influence instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public preprimary school in Imenti South Sub-County. A contingency coefficient (CC) measure of association illustrated that (75.4%) of the total variance on instruction of creative activities competencies could be attributed to utilization of corners of interest at the centers. The value 0.754 indicate a moderate association between adequacy of corners of interest and

instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners. The like hood ratio of 65.34 satisfy the assertion by Darry (2018) who stated that likelihood ratio should be slightly lower than the Pearson chi-square statistics and that the linear-to-linear value of 1.93 is a better parameter to measure the level of influence between the adequacy of corners of interest and instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners.

4.7 Descriptive Statistics for Instructions of Creative Activities Competences

The study investigated the aspects of instructions of creative competences among pre-primary learners in Imenti South Sub- County, Meru County. Findings from the pre-primary school teacher's questionnaire were presented as in Table 21.

Table 21: Descriptive Statistics for Instructions of Creative Activities Competences

Item		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)	N	μ
Corners of interest led to development of drawing competency among majority of learners	*f*	38	42	20	10	9	119	2.2
	%	31.9	35.3	16.8	8.4	7.6	100	
Through interaction with corners of interest majority of the learner's improvement so much on construction skills	*f*	21	33	25	25	15	119	2.8
	%	17.7	27.7	21.0	21.0	12.6	100	
Colouring competency in majority of the learners in this center has been derived from use of corners of interest	*f*	17	20	28	27	27	119	3.2
	%	14.3	16.8	23.5	22.7	22.7	100	
Modelling competency is well developed in majority of the learner through corners of interest	*f*	20	28	25	27	19	119	3.0
	%	16.8	23.5	21.0	22.7	16.0	100	
Overall mean								2.79

The indicators of aspects of instruction creative activities competences were drawing, colouring, construction and modelling. On whether learners developed drawing competency at the corners of interest (31.9%) and (35.3%) shown level of agreement with a total of (32.4%, 16.8%,8.4% and 7.6%) not in agreement. Regarding learning of construction competency varied sentiments shown by (35.4%) agreeing, (21.0%) not sure. Responses declined to disagreement were from (21.0% and 12.6%). of the respondents. About acquiring colouring competency through use of corners of interest

mixed sentiments were captured with (31.1%) showing level of agreement, (23.5%) being uncertain and (45.4%) showing level of disagreement. The study also investigated whether modelling competency is well developed in majority of the learner through corners of interest. The finding in table 16 show that (40.3%) were in agreement, (21%) not sure and (38.7%) in disagreement.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Finding

The study investigated the influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya. The researcher adopted descriptive survey research design that allowed mixed-methods approach that allowed collection of data collection without affecting the both quantitative and qualitative variables and was useful for learning about current situation. The target population was 210 pre-primary school teachers and 123 head teachers in the study area. The study respondent were 123 pre-primary school teachers, 48 head teachers and 48 pre-primary school learner groups. The researcher noted that all the pre-primary school teachers and head teachers were sufficiently informed on matters involving pre-primary schools learning. The study found that the pre-primary school involved had varied enrollment with 48% having spacious rooms while 52% had congested classrooms. Data was collected from 123 pre-primary school teachers and 48 head teachers together with 48 pre-primary school learner groups. A questionnaire for pre-primary school teacher, interview guide for head teachers and an observation checklist for pre-primary school learners' groups.

The first objective of the study was to determine the extent to which availability of corners of interest influences the instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub- County, Meru County, with variety of corners, physical space and adaptability being the indicators. From the finding the pre-primary school in the area of study had learning spaces designated for impartation of instructional creative activities competencies while over half of the centers did not have learning spaces that could accommodate all the learners at once. From the findings the researcher noted that the designated corners in the pre-schools involved were adaptable to all the learners and all the competencies could be acquired at any corner. The study also found that materials and equipment at the corners of interest were easy to maintain because meaning they were versatile. The chi square tested indicated that availability of corners of interest had significant influence on instruction of creative activities competences among learners

in pre-primary school in Imenti South Sub County. Further a finding shown by a CC value of 72.4% sufficiently indicated that availability of corners of interest directly moderately and positively associated with instruction of creative activities competencies. Any unit improvement in availability of corner of interest instruction of creative activities competencies would be improved by 1.18 shown by the linear-to-linear value.

The second objective of the study was to determine the extent to which the utilization of corners of interest influences instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub- County, Meru County, time allocation, frequency of engagement and extended hours were the variable indicators. From the findings there was sufficient evidence that in the larger proportion pre-primary schools investigated had utilization programmes that were defined to ensure that rote learning did not occur. In a different note the researcher noted that having programmed period of utilization limited learners from exercising self-driven activities that could boost skill learning. About the frequency of using the learning spaces the researcher noted that less the group of the learners did not use the spaces at their free time. The study attributed this to low motivation among the learners. The study found that learners utilized designated corners of different and attributed this to the type of equipment and materials that could arouse their curiosity and where the activities performed were realistic. The study also found that a large percentage of learners did not extend their class activities at home attributing this to learners lacking self-driven and centered activities. The Chi-Square test indicated that utilization of corners had significant influence on utilization of corners The CC value of 66.7% indicated that utilization of corners of interest had a moderate positive relationship with instruction of creative activities competencies and that instruction of creative activities competencies would improve by a value 1.36 for improved unit of utilization of corners shown by a linear-to linear value.

The third objective of the study was to establish how adequacy of corners of interest influences instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public pre-primary schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County. The indicators of the objective were, quantity of materials, variety and maintenance. From

the findings indicated that in almost all the pre-primary schools within the study area, had a challenge of balancing the ratio of learning materials and the enrollment. From data captured from the interviewee there was sufficient evidence that the challenge emanated from failure of supplies of learning materials by the responsible stakeholders. A further analysis demonstrated that there were diverse learning materials that could lead to different competencies acquisition. But the study found that this was not applicable at the centers since very small number of teachers claimed that the variety of material could not be useful to aid different skill development. Analysis on technology and cultural diversity influencing the skill acquisition indicated that the two factors had contributed on how the materials at the corners of interest would be termed as adequate. The result from the Chi-Square shown that adequacy of corners of interest significantly influenced instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners. Further findings from the test indicated that adequacy of corners of interest had an average positive relationship with that instruction of creative activities competencies as shown by a CC value of 68.3%. A unit improvement in adequacy of corners would lead to a 1.34 improvement on instruction of creative activities competencies shown by a linear-to linear value.

The fourth objective of the study was to establish how the challenges encountered at the corners of interest influence the instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in Imenti South Sub- County, Meru County. The indicator of the objective was, technical skills, cultural disparity, personality of the teacher and learner clustering. From the findings it was noted that teachers were skilled well in the ECDCE discipline. Further probe for whether the personality of the teacher indicated that newly inexperienced teacher faced challenges on controlling the learners thus could failure to impart necessary skill to the learners. The study also found that the way learners are grouped in class and during activities was key in child growth and development but was found to be attributed to characteristics like age family background and cultural background. The Chi-Square test demonstrated that challenges encountered at the corners of interest significantly influenced instruction of creative activities competencies. A CC value of 75.4% was sufficient evidence that challenges encountered at the corners of interest had moderate positive relationship with instruction of creative activities competencies, showing that one-unit

improvement in challenges encountered at the corners of interest would lead to 1.93 improvement in instruction of creative activities competencies. The overall analysis shown that shown that in decreasing order influence challenges encountered, utilization, adequacy and availability of corner of interest influence instruction of creative activities competencies.

5.2 Conclusion

First, on Availability of corners of interest the study concluded that availability of the corners interest had significant influence on instruction of creative activities competencies. The study also concluded that half of the center investigated could not accommodate all the learners at once compromising instruction of creative activities competencies.

Secondly on the utilization of corners of interest the study concluded that utilization of the corners interest had significant influence on instruction of creative activities competencies. The study also concluded that based on periodic programme on how the learner used the corners of interest, rote learning was promoted in over half of the pre-schools investigated. From another perspective the way period of utilization was setup, learners were deprived of the right of exercising self-driven learning activities.

Thirdly on adequacy of corners of interest the study concluded that adequacy of the corners interest had significant influence on instruction of creative activities competencies. The study also concluded that some centers did not have adequate learning materials which in return would slow the impartation of instruction of creative activities competencies. The study also found that there was no standard way of identifying how the materials used could impart diverse instruction of creative activities competencies

Lastly, on challenges encountered at the corners of interest the study concluded that challenges encountered at the corners of interest had significant influence on instruction of creative activities competencies. That newly inexperienced pre-primary school teacher encountered challenges during the instruction of creative activities competencies acquisition. There was no defined procedure of grouping the learners

which was a hindrance to instruction of creative activities competencies impartation like emotional skill. In general, the study concluded that all stakeholder; the parents the government policy makers and the teachers do not monitor the implementation of the pre-primary schools learning process, which to a great extent comprise acquisition of instruction of creative activities competencies.

5.3 Recommendations

The researcher made the following recommendations based on the research finding:

i. Proper monitoring of the learning process in pre-primary schools should be done by all the stakeholders to ensure acquisition of competencies among learners is consistent at all the centers
ii. Pre-primary schools should be well equipped with the right instructional material that are standard and meet technological requirement, safety and cultural diversities.
iii. Period of utilization of the learning spaces should be based on the level of understanding among the learners to ensure equitable skill development.
iv. Stakeholder should be sensitized on pre-primary schools learning needs and to ensure consistency in skill development.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

From the finding the study suggests the following for further studies;

i. Similar studies to be conducted in public pre-primary schools in different sub counties in Kenya.
ii. A similar study can be conducted in private pre-primary school.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Consent Form

Chuka University

Dear Respondent,

RE: Consent Form

I am a student at Chuka university pursuing a Master degree in Early Childhood Development Education. I intend to carrying out academic research as the of the requirements for the award of a degree in Master of Early Childhood Development Education. My research topic is; Influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among pre-primary learners in public schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya.

This research has been approved by Chuka university ethics review Board ensuring that it meets ethical standards and poses no danger to you. The information obtained will be used for academic research and the respondents' identities will be kept confidential.

You are kindly requested to take part in this study. I will be grateful if you allow me to involve you and some of your pre-school teachers in this study. If you agree to participate, please indicate you consent y signing in the space provided. Thanks in advance.

Yours Faithfully
Arimi Grace Muthoni
(Researcher)

Sign……. Date

Appendix II: Interview Schedule for the Head Teacher

i. Instruction: this interview schedule seeks your view on the influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies. Please provide honest responses based on your expertise as head of pre-primary school. The information you give will only be used for this study and as we proceed, I will be taking some brief notes based on your responses.

ii. For how long have you been a Headteacher in pre-primary school? _____

iii. (Probe for opinion of availability of corners of interest)
   a. In your opinion would you say that pre-primary school classrooms are spacious enough to accommodate establishment of corners of interest in your school? _____
   b. Comment on whether the corners of interest are versatile/Adaptable _____

iv. (Probe for opinion of utilization of corners of interest)
   a. In your opinion would you say that learners in your center use the designated corners of interest to develop instruction of creative activities competencies need equally and equitably? _____
   b. Do you have any substantial information on whether the learners use the corners of interest at their free time?

   iv. (Probe for opinion of adequacy of corners of interest) What is your opinion regarding the adequacy of corners of interest in your center in terms of
      a. Quantity of Materials_____
      b. Variety _____
      c. Maintenance _____

   v. (Probe for opinion of challenges encountered at corners of interest). Briefly comment on whether or about the following challenges encountered at the corners of interest.
      a. Technical skills_____
      b. Cultural disparity_____
      c. Personality of the teacher_____
      d. Learner clustering_____

vi. What is your opinion towards parent's involvement/support towards pre-primary schools learning at your center?

_____

_____

_____

vi. Kindly mention the possible instruction of creative activities competencies developed by the learners in this center at the corners of interest?

_____

Appendix III: Questionnaire for Pre-Primary Schools Teacher

The following questions intend to obtain information on the influence of corners of interest on instruction of creative activities competencies among preprimary learners in your schools. Please provide honest responses to the questions. Your willingness and cooperation to participate in this exercise is highly appreciated. On this questionnaire, please do not write your name anywhere.

Put a Tick (√) or complete where appropriate.

Section A: Demographic Data

1. Indicate your Gender
   Female [ ] Male [ ]
2. Indicate your Age bracket
   Below 25 yrs [ ] 25 – 40 yrs [ ] Above yrs [ ]
3. Indicate your highest level of education attained
   Diploma and below [ ]
   Undergraduate [ ]
   Graduate [ ]
4. Indicate your teaching experiences
   Less than 3 years [ ]
   4 – 8 years [ ]
   Above 8 years [ ]

Section II: This part consists of sections A, B, C, D and E. The questions in this part are built on a five scale Likert: Strongly agree (SA), Agree(A), Undecided(U), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The weights for each scale are SA-5, A-4, U-3, D-2 and SD-1. Using a tick (√) indicate your opinion in the appropriate box against each question item.

Section A: These questions capture on availability of corners of interest as an influencing factor on instruction of creative activities competencies among the learners.

	Question item	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	There are enough corners of interest in our pre-primary schools' classrooms					
2	Learners utilize the corners of interest during free time					
3	The corners of interest setup are designated for different creative skill learning.					
4	Learners' congestion at the corners of interest					
5	. All aspects of adaptability were considered during the designing the Corners of interest.					

Mention ways in which you think corners of interest can be improved in term of availability to learners.

_____

_____

Section B: These questions capture data on utilization of corners of interest as an influencing factor on instruction of creative activities competencies among the learners.

	Question item	SD	D	U	A	SA
. 1	There are corners of interest utilization programme in our center					
. 2	Learners utilize the corners of interest during their free time					
. 3	All corners of interest are utilized equally by the learners.					
. 4	It is noticeable that learners extend skill learning at home.					
. 5	Materials at the corners of interest derive anxiety and curiosity among learners					

Mention ways in which availability of diversified learning materials at corners of interests can be improved at your center.

_____

_____

_____

Section C: These questions capture data on adequacy of corners of interest as an influencing factor on instruction of creative activities competencies among the learners.

	Question item	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	All corners of interest in our center have adequate learning material relative to our pre-primary school's enrolment					
2	Different materials found at corner of interest promote different approach to learn the same skill.					
3	Parent play a great role in suppling pre-primary schools learning materials					
4	Materials at the corners of interest met technological trends					
5	Materials at the corners of interest met cultural diversity among learners					

Briefly state whether there is a noticeable trend on how the learners choose or visit specific corners of interest during indoor activity.

_____

_____

Section D: These questions capture data on how k at corners of interest as an influencing factor on instruction of creative activities competencies among the learners.

	Question item	SD	D	U	A	SA
. 1	. Cultural disparity among materials to pose learning challenge among learners					
. 2	. Dynamic technological pose challenge on use of materials					
. 3	. Safety guarantee during use of materials pose challenge during learning					
. 4	. The way the learners perceive the teacher pose challenge during learning					
. 5	*Clustering of learner at the corner of interest pose challenge during learning.					

*Clustering means how the learners are grouped.

In your opinion give any possible source of challenge that can hinder learning process at the corner of interest.

_____

_____

Section E: These questions capture data on the dependent variable; the aspects of instruction of creative activities competencies among the learners.

	Question item	SD	D	U	A	SA
. 1	. Corners of interest led to development of drawing competency among majority of learners					
. 2	. Through corners of interest interaction majority of the learners so much improvement on construction skills					
. 3	. Colouring competency in majority of the learners in this center has been derived from use of corners of interest					
. 4	. Modelling competency is well developed in majority of the learner through corners of interest					

Briefly mention any other possible competency learnt through use of corners of interest by the learners

_____

_____

_____

Appendix IV: Creativity Activities Competencies Observation Checklist

Number of learners in the center (to be got from pre-primary schools' teacher) _____

Record the number of learners satisfying the state according to the scale given.

		Total number of learners gauged according to aspects of instruction creative activities competencies among learners in the group			
	Scale	Drawing	Coloring	Construction	Modeling
1	Exceeding expectation				
2	Approaching expectation				
3	Meeting expectation				
4	Below expectation				
	Total				

Appendix V: List of Pre-Primary School Teachers' Samples from the Centers Selected based on the Five Wards

School code	Nkuene/ Mitunguu	Igoji East	Igoji West	Abogeta East	Abogeta West	
S1	3	2	3	3	3	
S2	2	2	3	3	3	
S3	2	2	2	2	2	
S4	2	3	3	3	3	
S5	2	2	3	3	3	
S6	3	3	3	3	2	
S7	2	2	3	3	3	
S8	2			3	2	
S9	2			2	3	
S10	2				3	
S11	3				3	
S12					3	
S13					2	
S14					2	
Total	**25**	**16**	**20**	**25**	**37**	**123**

Source researcher

Appendix VI: Guideline for the Valid Value of CVR by Lawshe (1975)

MINIMUM VALUE OF CVR, P = .05.	
No. of Panelists	Minimum Value
5	0.99
6	0.99
7	0.99
8	0.75
9	0.78
10	0.62
11	0.59
12	0.56
13	0.54
14	0.51
15	0.49
20	0.42
25	0.37
30	0.33
35	0.31
40	0.29

Appendix VII: Ethics Review Approval Letter

CHUKA UNIVERSITY

Knowledge is Wealth *(Sapientia divitia est)* Akili ni Mali

CHUKA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Telephones: 020-2310512/18
Direct Line: 0772894438
Email: info@chuka.ac.ke,
P. O. Box 109-60400, Chuka
Website: www.chuka.ac.ke

12th July, 2024

REF: CUIERC/ NACOSTI/576
TO: **Arimi Muthoni Grace**

RE: Influence of Corners of Interest on Instruction of Creative Activities Competencies Among Pre-Primary Learners in Public Pre-Primary Schools in Imenti South Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya

This is to inform you that *Chuka University IERC* has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is *NACOSTI/NBC/AC-0812*. The approval period is 12th July, 2024 – 12th July, 2025.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used
ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by *Chuka University IERC*.
iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to *Chuka University IERC* within 72 hours of notification
iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to *Chuka University IERC* within 72 hours
v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to *Chuka University IERC*.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) https://oris.nacosti.go.ke and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Benjamin Kanga
SECRETARY

Appendix VIII Research Permit from NACOSTI

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 639372

Date of Issue: 23/July/2024

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Ms.. ARIMI MUTHONI GRACE of Chuka University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Meru on the topic: INFLUENCE OF CORNERS OF INTEREST ON INSTRUCTION OF CREATIVE ACTIVITIES COMPETENCIES AMONG PRE-PRIMARY LEARNERS IN PUBLIC PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN IMENTI SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, MERU COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 23/July/2025.

License No: NACOSTI/P/24/38185

639372

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

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