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IMPLEMENTATION IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN  
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# INTRODUCTION OF LIFE SKILLS CURRICULUM AND THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHER RELATED FACTORS ON ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN AINAMOI DIVISION, KERICHO COUNTY, KENYA

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## ABSTRACT

Life Skills are coping skills that enhance the quality of life and prevent dysfunctional behaviour. One of the most important objectives of education is the socialization of the individual. The school is a socializing agency, while curriculum is a tool used to address challenges and emerging concerns of society hence constant effort is needed to make this tool useful and to evaluate its effectiveness. Life skills were introduced in Kenyan school curriculum to help address challenges and concerns of society. Children face challenges that include gender bias, early sexual debut, drug and substance abuse, rape and exposure to Human Immunodeficiency Virus leading to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. Introduction of pre-primary school Life skills curriculum could help address some of these challenges. However since life skills curriculum was introduced, no documented study has been carried out so far on pre-primary school level to identify factors influencing its implementation. This paper presents findings from a study that was done to determine factors influencing introduction and implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum. The study revealed that some of the reasons why life skills curriculum was introduced are; to inculcate moral values among children at an early age, to provide them with protective skills in response to every day challenges and to enable them to be responsible in making appropriate choices on issues affecting safety and related aspects. The study further revealed that the curriculum meets the needs of learners; teachers have a positive attitude towards life skills curriculum and that school administrators support its implementation. However, Results from the study found that adequate preparation was not carried out before life skills curriculum was implemented hence implementation is hampered by inadequate teaching/learning resources and that teachers were not adequately prepared to implement pre-primary school life skills curriculum.

**Key Words:** Life Skills, factors; professional qualification, teaching experience, initial teacher training, instructional methodology, seminars/workshops/conferences, teachers' attitude.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Life skills are abilities for adopting positive behaviour purposed to enable individuals to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life. The need for life skills as a critical response to the challenges facing young children today has found expression in international declarations such as the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989), Education For All (EFA, 1990) and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS, 2001). In June 2001, heads of state and government representatives met for the UNGASS on HIV/AIDS and this resulted in the issuance of a declaration of commitment. One of the commitments was to ensure that by 2005, at least 90% and by 2010 at least 95% of young men and women have access to information, education, including peer education and youth-specific HIV education. Provision of Services necessary to develop life skills required to reduce vulnerability to HIV infection, in full partnership with young persons, parents, educators and health care providers was part of the targets (UNGASS Declaration of commitment, 2001). This declaration called for a need to expanded access to information and education as a means of combating HIV/Aids and related problems. There are many challenges facing children as a result of the fast changing world. These include among others, negative peer pressure, gender bias, early marriages, kidnapping, trafficking, poverty, early sexual debut, substance abuse, rape, Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome ( HIV/AIDS) pandemic and all other forms of child neglect occasioned by dysfunctional families (KIE, 2002). Straugham (1982) notes that modern society is becoming increasingly lawless, violent, indiscipline and permissive. Further, there is a general decline in respect to authority, politeness and good manners. Teachers are not doing enough to impart the right values to children to ensure that their behaviour is socially acceptable. The situation in Kenya is not different considering the widespread use of television and access to internet. Hence the introduction of Life skills is envisaged to help children adjust and function appropriately in a dynamic social context.

**i. Factors for introduction of life skills curriculum and teacher related factors influencing its implementation. Reasons for Implementation of the Pre-Primary School Life Skills Curriculum**

The fundamental reason for the implementation of the pre-primary school life skills syllabus was as a critical response to the challenges facing young children today. According to KIE (2008) Life skills development activities are effective intervention measures in response to children's developmental needs. They are intended to equip young children with essential values and guiding principles to help them cope with every day challenges. Acquisition of positive attitudes, values and skills enable a child to live positively and responsively (KIE, 2008).

According to the KIE implementation of the Aids Education program monitoring exercise, (2000, 2004) on HIV and AIDS project, the results indicated that there existed a gap between knowledge and behavior change among the learners. Psycho-social competencies were perceived as a missing link and Life skills education was seen to be the stop gap measure and therefore the need to treat life skills as a component on its own and Inco- operate it into the school curriculum.

**ii. Teacher Related Factors Influencing Implementation of Pre-primary School life Skills Curriculum  
Teacher's professional qualification**

Muhammad (2011) in a study on the impact of teacher quality on the academic achievement of students at secondary stage in Punjab (Pakistan) noted that teachers with higher levels of education teach well and are competent than those with low levels of education. Academically qualified teachers had more authentic knowledge about the relevant subject than the academically less qualified teacher. A study done by Ng'asike (2004) found out that the majority of pre -school teachers had low academic qualification and the low academic qualification was affecting the quality of teaching of ECDE teachers. If the teacher is qualified, he/she is likely to have well performing students but unqualified teacher is likely to have poor performing students. According to KIE (2005) the numbers of trained ECDE teachers have increased significantly over the years in Kenya. This is attributed to increased number of DICECE Centers and Private colleges countrywide. This research has identified the professional qualifications of the pre-primary school teachers involved as this has an implication on the success of curriculum implementation.

**iii. Teaching Experience**

Both individual teacher characteristics and collective factors play roles in determining implementation (Murungi 2013). Some teachers, depending on their previous experiences and stage of career, are more self-actualized and have a greater sense of efficacy, which leads them to take action and persist in the effort required to bring about successful implementation. According to Barbara (2004), quality teachers are the single greatest determinant of student achievement and further assert that teacher education, ability, and experience account for variation in student achievement than all other factors. Therefore, it is vitally important that teachers be well prepared when they begin teaching and that they continue to improve their knowledge and skills throughout their careers. Unfortunately, most new teachers are not adequately prepared to meet the needs of their students, and many experienced teachers have yet to adapt to new standards (Barbara, 2004). Hence teachers, like practitioners in other professions, need to deepen their knowledge and improve their skills over the course of their careers. Gillian (2010) carried out a study on challenges faced in the provision of quality Early Childhood Education in Kitui District and found that 50% of the ECDE teachers had teaching experience of over 5 years, 40% of teachers had teaching experience of between 1 and 5 years, while 10% of teachers had less than 1 year of teaching experience. This implies that teachers had enough teaching experience to enable them interpret the curriculum effectively. Therefore this research identified teaching experience of teachers involved in the study.

**a. Initial Teacher Training**

Barbara (2004) describes quality teachers as the single greatest determinant of student achievement and further asserts that teacher education, ability, and experience account for variation in student achievement than all other factors. Therefore, it is vitally important that teachers be well prepared when they begin teaching and that they continue to improve their knowledge and skills throughout their careers. Unfortunately, most new teachers are not adequately prepared to meet the needs of their students, and many experienced teachers have yet to adapt to new standards (Barbara, 2004). In order for teachers to deal with a continuously changing environment, they must upgrade their professional knowledge and skills on a continuous basis (Ministry of Education, (1984). Barbara (2004) notes that teachers, like practitioners in other professions, need to deepen their knowledge and improve their skills over the course of their careers. According to the Ministry of Education, the trainers should be qualified and experienced in their disciplines and well informed in current research findings and any emerging trends in teacher education. Life skills being relatively new in the curriculum, not much research has been carried out on teachers' level of preparedness and the challenges being experienced.

### **b. In-Service Training**

The main aim of in-service courses, according to the Ministry of Education, 1994, is to improve the teacher's qualifications; to enlarge the scope of their work and to bring them up to date with new innovations and development in content and methods in their respective subjects. Muhammad (2011) describes in-service education and training as a continuous ongoing process for teachers throughout their professional life which may be provided at any time between joining into service until retirement. It includes orientation and refresher courses, a special training and self reading and writing by the individual teachers. Refresher courses are very important in providing teachers with new ways of implementing curriculum and classroom instructions. Luvanga (2003) in his study on teacher related factors that affect implementation of integrated secondary school Christian Religious Education (CRE) syllabus in Mombasa District found out that 75% of the teachers had not attended in-service course, while 25% had attended some in-service teacher training.

According to Kingori (2013) whose study aimed at assessing whether the necessary conditions were present for effective implementation of life skills education in Ruiru district, Kenya, teachers were not adequately prepared to implement the curriculum and concluded that implementation encountered problems like inadequate teaching and learning resources, lack of guidance on the implementation and besides life skills was yet to be implemented in some schools. Similarly Mutai (2011) carried out a study on challenges faced by teachers in implementing HIV/AIDS Curriculum in Primary Schools for Hearing Impairments in Rift Valley, Kenya. The study revealed that teachers were not adequately prepared to implement the curriculum and recommended that the government and other Organizations should provide seminars, workshops and Conferences to teachers to enhance implementation of HIV/AIDS Curriculum for the hearing impaired in Rift Valley Province. Magoma (2011) in his study on teacher related factors which influences the implementation of integrated English course in secondary schools in Ibacho Division, Kisii Central District, reports that more than half of teachers of integrated English course had not been in-serviced due to lack of time, lack of proper information and that the ministry of Education had not organized one for them. The study further asserted that teachers should continue learning throughout their professional career to keep up to the dynamics and socio-cultural settings in which they operate. This research investigated whether teachers were prepared through in-service programs before the implementation of pre- primary school life skills syllabus. The life skills curriculum can be effectively implemented when the teachers are involved in the curriculum preparation and are in-serviced on the content, materials, and application strategies. Teachers also require a good support from school's administration to implement the curriculum and only then will they have the right attitude which results in effective curriculum implementation.

### **iv. Teachers Instructional Methodology**

Teachers' instructional methodologies play a role in ensuring that the content reaches the target and desired feedback is received. Hyman (1970) indicates that to teach a certain thing, a particular way of teaching had to be chosen and that way has significant effect on the entire teaching and learning situation. There have been various attempts to impart life skills to children and young people in East and South Africa; however, to date there is no consensus on the definition, scope and methods for including life skills education in the school curriculum. This may account for the reason why the implementation of life skills programs has been sporadic and why some countries are yet to start such programs. In Kenya the recommended approach for the teaching of life skills by KIE is an interactive approach. Teachers are expected to use role play, mini dramas, games, music and dance and a variety of other innovative teaching techniques to keep the learners wholly involved in the sessions (KIE, 2008). However pre-primary school teachers can only use these teaching techniques if they have been oriented through in service courses and provided with adequate teaching /learning resources. Teachers require skills and confidence to facilitate experimental learning activities in life skills lessons (Kinsmen, Nakinyingi, Carpenter, & Whitworth, 2001). Studies by Kwakman (2003); Schneider & Krajcik (2002); Davis (2002) highlight the need to provide teachers with something other than traditional in-service training to bring about change in their classrooms and coordinate curriculum. This can perhaps be achieved through organized seminars and workshops to enable teachers to interact share their experiences and enlarge their scope on methodologies of handling life skills curriculum.

### **v. Teachers' Attitude towards the Curriculum**

Guilford, 2004 defines attitude as strongly held beliefs, opinions and feelings, which are reflected in peoples' behaviors. A teachers' attitude towards a given subject to a great extent also influences the way he handles it, his motivation and his effectiveness in teaching it. Luvunga (2003) who did a study on teacher related factors that affect implementation of Christian Religious Education in Mombasa (CRE) found that teachers had a negative attitude towards the new syllabus, did not prioritize nor enjoyed teaching it and felt that it had no value over the old syllabus. In the implementation of a school curriculum, the teacher's attitude is very important. This is because teaching is an

art guided by educational values, personal needs and by a variety of beliefs or generalizations that the teacher holds to be true. Abobo (2012), in a study on challenges facing implementation of life skills in secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia West District, observes that teachers had a negative attitude towards the teaching of life skills and in fact prefer to teach other examinable subjects during life skills lessons; and 80% of them had not been trained on life skills education. Thus effective teaching of life skills were hampered by school context factors that made it difficult for teachers to deliver the content appropriately. This study identified that although teachers' attitude was positive towards the implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum there were other intervening variables.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. The design employs open ended items where respondents are given an opportunity to express their views thus yielding rich data for the study. The population of the study was pre-primary school teachers, ministry of education officials and Kenya Institute of Education officers were interviewed. The sample of the study was 47 pre-primary school teachers randomly selected from four Zones of Ainamoi Division; two officers in charge of life skills curriculum at Kenya Institute of Education and two Ministry of Education officials in charge of Curriculum implementation. The study used document analysis, interviews and questionnaires as research instruments. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic approach, whereby each objective under study was described in relation to the categories of responses given. Descriptive statistics involving frequencies, means and percentages were used to analyse data. Qualitative data was analysed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences. The dependent variable of this study is the implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum while the independent variables are the factors influencing implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results from data analysis are presented in the following sub-sections.

### i. The genesis of Pre-Primary School Life Skills Curriculum in Kenya

To identify why pre-primary school life skills curriculum was implemented, an analysis of available documents revealed that life skills education entails the acquisition of abilities for adoptive and positive behavior that enables individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. It was further revealed that Life skills aims at equipping the learner with psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that would help him/her make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with those in need and manage his/her life in a healthy and productive manner.

Ministry of Education and KIE officers interviewed on reasons for introduction of pre-primary school life skills syllabus indicated that it was important in; inculcating moral values among children at an early age; to equip the children with protective skills; enable them to make appropriate choices on issues affecting safety and relating to strangers; assist young children avoid risky situations like rape, drugs and other forms of abuse at home or on their way to school as well as to think creatively for instance scream or seek help when in danger.

### ii. Teacher Related Factors Influencing Implementation of Pre-primary School life Skills Curriculum

Teacher related variables were outlined as professional qualifications, teaching experience, initial teacher training, in-service training, instructional methodology, seminars, workshops and conferences as well as teachers attitude towards life skills curriculum.

### iii. Teachers Highest Level of Professional Training

The study therefore sought to find out the teachers' highest level of professional qualifications. The findings are presented on table 1.

Table 1: Teachers Highest Level of Professional Training

Highest level of professional training	Frequency	Percent
ECDE certificate	25	53.2
ECDE diploma	17	36.2
Untrained teacher	2	4.3
B.Ed (ECE)	1	2.1
Undergoing training	2	4.3
Total	47	100.0

The results shows that 53.2% of the respondents had ECDE certificate, 36.2% had ECDE diploma and 4.3% were untrained, while a similar number were undergoing training. Only 2.1% had a degree in ECE. This implies that majority of the pre-primary school teachers were professionally trained, equipped and have the required academic and professional qualifications to handle the implementation of the ECDE life skills curriculum with great competency and understanding. Although this study showed that majority of the teachers are professionally trained to implement life skills curriculum, lack of in-service courses and teaching and learning resources is impeding effective implementation of the curriculum.

#### iv. Pre-Primary School Teachers' Teaching Experiences

In relation to teaching experience teachers were asked to indicate how long they had been in the teaching profession. Their responses are shown on table 2.

Table 2: Teacher's Teaching Experiences

Teaching experience	Frequency	Percent
less 1 year	5	10.6
1-3 years	4	8.5
4-6 years	12	25.5
7 or more	26	55.3
Total	47	100.0

From table 2, 55.3% of the teachers had experience of 7 or more years. The others were 25.5% with 4-6 years, while those with 1-3 years and less than 1 year were 8.5% and 10.6% respectively. The result implies that majority of teachers have long teaching experience which should contribute to effective curriculum implementation. This concurs with Gillian (2010) in his study on challenges faced in the provision of quality Early Childhood Education in Kitui District who found that 50% of the ECDE teachers had teaching experience of over 5 years, 40% of teachers had teaching experience of between 1 and 5 years, while 10% of teachers had less than 1 year of teaching experience. This implies that teachers have enough teaching experience to enable them interpret the curriculum effectively. According to (Fullan, 2001) some teachers, depending on their previous experiences and stage of career, are more self-actualized and have a greater sense of efficacy, which leads them to take action and persist in the effort required to bring about successful implementation. It is important to note that even though most teachers in this study had adequate years of experience in teaching, they were unlikely to have necessary skills needed for successful implementation of life skills curriculum because most of them have not been oriented.

#### v. Initial Teacher Training

The study sought to determine the effectiveness of teachers in handling life skills curriculum based on the initial training they received from college. The findings are as indicated on figure 1.

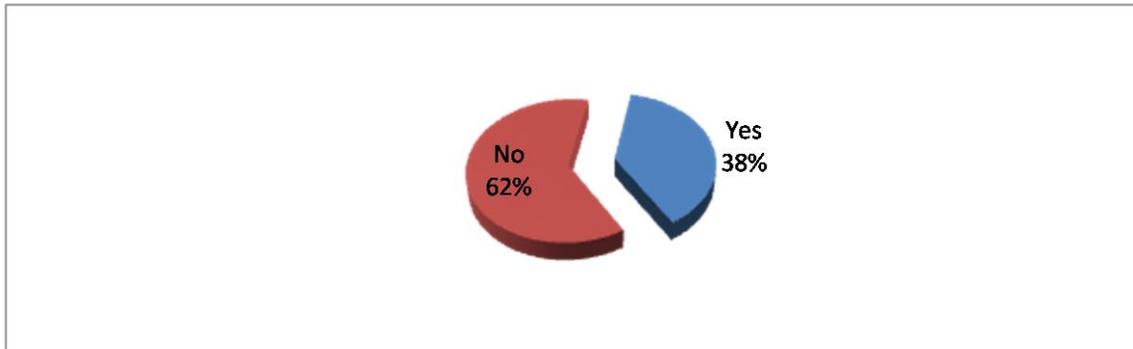


Figure 1: Effectiveness of Initial Teacher Training

From the responses 38% indicated that the training they had was sufficient, while majority 62% indicated that the initial training they received in college did not expose them to a variety of teaching methods to effectively handle pre-primary school life skills curriculum, The later argued that since life skills was not part of their original college training, organizing workshops or seminars for them could enhance their understanding and improve their delivery skills. Those who were untrained or still undergoing training also suggested that updating them on emerging issues would help them in achieving the desired objectives of life skills. This conforms with (Barbara, 2004) that unfortunately, most new teachers are not adequately prepared to meet the needs of their students, and many experienced teachers have yet to adapt to new standards. According to her, teachers, like practitioners in other professions, need to deepen their knowledge and improve their skills over the course of their careers. Therefore teacher's professional development is vitally important in improving the implementation of life skills education in pre-primary school level.

#### vi. In-Service Training

The study further sought to determine if teachers attended in-service training or not on how to teach pre-primary school life skills curriculum before they started teaching the subject this was to determine whether they were well acquainted with the necessary skills to handle issues in life skills. The results are shown on figure 2.

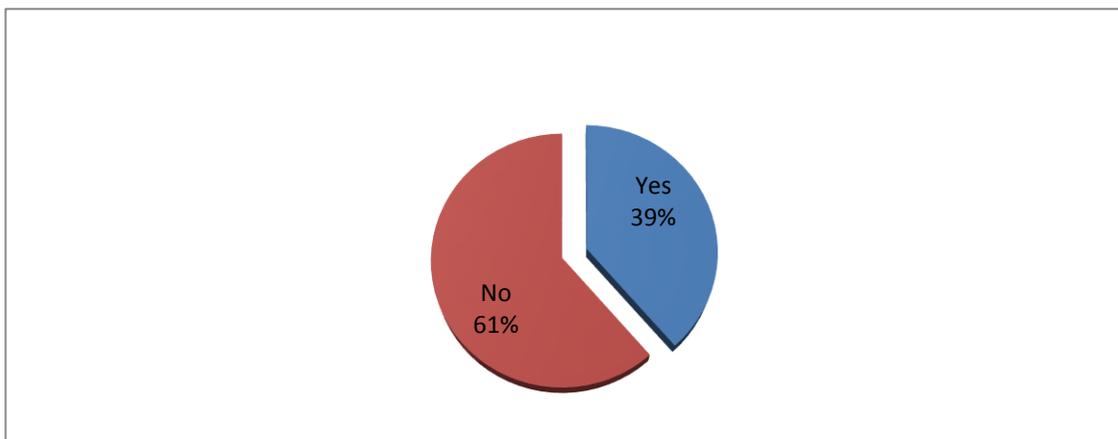


Figure 2: Teachers Attendance of In-service Training

Figure 2 shows that 38.3% had attended in-service through their ongoing self-upgrading courses while 61.7% had not attended any. When asked why they did not attend in-service training they responded that there have been no specific seminars on the curriculum hence they lacked an opportunity to do so. Many pre-primary school teachers therefore felt that they are on their own and they need opportunities for peer support through working together, sharing ideas, to jointly solve problems and cooperatively create materials to enhance successful implementation of life skills curriculum.

Magoma (2011) reports that more than half of teachers of integrated English course had not been in-serviced due to lack of time and proper information; and further asserts that teachers should continue learning throughout their professional career to keep up to the dynamics and socio-cultural settings in which they operate. These results are in

agreement with the current research that many teachers have not attended in –service training hence they are not well prepared to implement the pre-primary school life skills curriculum.

#### vii. Teachers Instructional Methodology

The study also sought to find out how instructional methodology may be influencing implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum. The results have been summarised on table 3.

Table 3: Teachers Instructional Methodology

	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Std Deviation
Talks by resource Persons	4.0	1.0	1.5	0.7
Role playing	4.0	1.0	2.7	0.8
Mini Dramas	4.0	1.0	2.4	0.8
Games	4.0	1.0	2.9	0.8
Music and dance	4.0	2.0	3.2	0.7
Story Telling	4.0	1.0	3.4	1.0

Table 3 shows that storytelling, music and dance, games and role playing were the most used teachers' instructional methodology as indicated by mean of 3.4, 3.2, 2.9 and 2.7 respectively. However very few teachers indicated use of talks by resource persons, and mini dramas as indicated by means of 1.5 and 2.4 respectively. The teachers indicated that they prefer storytelling, music, dance, games and role playing, because they are more exciting to the children and involve them fully. However the uses of talks by resource persons are rare because they are not available and children react differently to strangers. The use of mini dramas is also rarely used by teachers because the method requires a lot of preparation and that the method is not suitable for large classes. A study by Mutegi (2012) showed that teaching methodologies influenced the implementation of life skills education and that use of demonstrations; question and answer method were preferred by majority of the teachers in primary schools due to lack of resources and their ability to involve the pupils. The recommended approach for the teaching of life skills by KIE is an interactive approach. Teachers are expected to use role play, mini dramas, games, music and dance and a variety of other innovative teaching techniques to keep the learners wholly involved in the sessions (KIE, 2008). However pre-primary school teachers can only use these teaching techniques if provided with teaching resources and oriented through in service courses. This implies that teachers use methods that are convenient and do not require a lot of time and resources in implementing pre-primary school life skills curriculum.

#### viii. Seminars, Workshops and Conferences Held by KIE on Implementation of Life Skills

The study also sought to determine whether or not KIE had held seminars, workshops or conferences to empower pre-school teachers on how to implement life skills syllabus. The results are indicated in table 4.

Table 4: Seminars, Workshops and Conferences Held by KIE on Implementation of Life Skills

Seminars, Workshops and Conferences Held by KIE	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	7	14.9
No	40	85.1
Total	47	100.0

Table 4 shows that majority 85.1% of the teachers indicated that they had never attended any seminar, workshop or conference held by KIE, on the teaching of life skills, while only 14.9% of the respondents have benefited from their ongoing self-upgrading ECDE courses.

#### ix. Attendance of seminars, workshops and conferences held by MOE on Life Skills

The study further inquired whether the Ministry of Education had held any seminars, workshops or conferences to empower pre-primary school teachers on how to implement pre-primary school life skills syllabus. The results are indicated on the table 5.

Table 5: Attendance of Seminars, Workshops or Conferences held by MoE on Life Skills

Attendance of Seminars, Workshops and Conferences Held by MoE	Frequency	Percent
Yes	5	10.64
No	42	89.36
Total	47	100.0

The results on table 5 show that majority 89.36% of the teachers indicated they had never attended any seminar, workshop or conference, on the teaching of life skills organized by MoE. However, only five respondents indicated they attended seminars though not specifically on life skills but in those forums life skills was mentioned. These results indicate that there has been no real forum addressing pre-primary school life skills in Ainamoi Division and only a few teachers who privately sponsor themselves for upgrading courses have been empowered. On strategies employed by teachers to improve the teaching of pre-primary school life skills curriculum teachers reported they have no real strategies but rely on what is available. On the contrary a study by Magoma (2011) in Nairobi found that majority of integrated English teachers share ideas, materials and strategies with colleagues, on how to improve curriculum implementation. Thus KIE should organize seminars and workshops to enable pre-primary school teachers interact and share their experiences in the implementation of life skills curriculum.

Studies by Kwakman (2003); Schneider & Krajcik (2002); Davis (2002) highlight the need to provide teachers with something other than traditional in-service training to bring about change in their classrooms and coordinate curriculum. This can perhaps be achieved through organized seminars and workshops to enable teachers to interact and share their experiences. According to Kingori (2013) whose study aimed at assessing whether the necessary conditions were present for effective implementation of life skills education in Ruiru district, Kenya, teachers were not adequately prepared to implement the curriculum. The study further indicated that implementation encountered problems like inadequate teaching and learning resources and a lack of guidance on the implementation and besides life skills was yet to be implemented in some schools. This study's finding is consistent with Mutai (2011) in his study on challenges faced by teachers in implementing HIV/AIDS Curriculum in Primary Schools for Hearing Impairments in Rift Valley, Kenya. The study revealed that teachers were not adequately prepared to implement the curriculum and recommended that the government and other Organizations should provide seminars, workshops and Conferences to teachers to enhance implementation of HIV/AIDS Curriculum for the hearing impaired in Rift Valley Province. This study therefore identified that pre-primary school teachers were not inducted on life skills curriculum before its introduction and this is impacting negatively on its successful implementation.

#### x. Attitude of Teachers towards the Life Skills Curriculum

The study further found it of paramount importance to determine teachers attitude towards the implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum in order to provide an insight of their views that may influence the implementation process. The scoring of the statements utilized a likert scale of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. The results are presented in table 6.

Teachers Attitude Towards implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum

	Max	Min	Mean	Std. Deviation
Content of pre-school life skills syllabus is beneficial to learner	2	1	1.4	0.5
Pre-primary school life skills syllabus is broad	5	1	2.7	1.1
Pre- primary school life skills is easy to teach	5	1	2.6	1.3
Content of pre-primary school life skills syllabus is suitable for pre-primary school children	4	1	1.7	0.6
Pre-primary school life skills should continue to be taught in an integrated manner	5	1	2.1	1.1
Like teaching life skills	3	1	1.6	0.6
Life skills is relevant to real life	5	1	1.4	0.8
Confident Teaching life skills	4	1	2.0	0.9
Embarrassed communicating to pupils some of the issues in life skills	5	1	3.7	0.9

Duplication of content of pre-primary school life skills in other subjects	5	1	2.1	1.0
Overall Mean			2.1	0.9

Table 6 shows that the overall mean of teachers' attitude towards the implementation of life skills curriculum was 2.13. The results indicate that pre-primary school teachers are generally positive towards the implementation of life skills curriculum although there could be a few challenges. This implies that pre-primary school teachers appreciate life skills curriculum as very crucial to the development of children.

On the contrary, Abobo (2012), in a study on challenges facing implementation of life skills in secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia West District, revealed that teachers had a negative attitude towards the teaching of life skills and in fact prefer to teach other examinable subjects during life skills lessons. According to him, 80% of the teachers interviewed had not been trained on life skills education. He concluded that effective teaching of life skills is hampered by school context factors that made it difficult for teachers to deliver the relevant content appropriately. Similar results were reported by Luvuga (2003) who did a study on teacher related factors that affect implementation of Christian Religious Education (CRE) syllabus in Mombasa. The study found that teachers had negative attitude towards CRE syllabus, they did not enjoy it and felt it is not an important subject.

#### 4. FINDINGS

This study established that the fundamental reasons for the introduction of the pre-primary school life skills syllabus were:

- (i) To inculcate moral values, to equip learners with psychosocial competencies that help them make informed decisions, solve problems, think creatively and communicate effectively as well as providing children with protective skills which enables them to make appropriate choices on issues affecting safety like relating to strangers who are potential abusers.
- (ii) On teacher related factors influencing implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum the findings show that:
  - (iii) That majority of the teachers were professionally trained and have long teaching experience hence should be equipped to handle the implementation of the ECDE life skills curriculum with great competency and understanding.
  - (iv) The initial teacher training was not adequate in handling life skills curriculum since it did not expose them to a variety of teaching methods to effectively implement the pre-primary school life skills curriculum.
  - (v) That no in-service training on life skills has been organized for pre-primary school teachers before its introduction.
  - (vi) Methods recommended for teaching pre-primary school life skills are not being used due to inadequate teaching/learning resources but teachers use methods that are convenient and do not require a lot of time and resources to prepare.
  - (vii) With respect to attendance of seminars, workshops or conferences, on the teaching of life skills held by MoE or KIE, respondents indicated that there has been no real forum to address pre-primary school life skills in Ainamoi Division and only a few teachers who privately sponsor themselves for upgrading courses have been empowered.
  - (viii) However teachers' attitude towards the implementation of pre-primary school life skills was positive as the curriculum has been embraced by all pre-primary schools included in this research.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that it was important to introduce the pre-primary school life skills syllabus as it is beneficial to the learners and that pre-primary school teachers in Ainamoi Division of Kericho County have positively embraced its teaching. The teachers agreed that life skills content is suitable and beneficial to learners in inculcating psychosocial skills needed for life. However, although teachers note that it is not difficult to teach life skills, majority say they lack adequate teaching and learning resources to effectively implement life skills curriculum. Results from the study have shown that teacher related factors influencing implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum are: lack of adequate preparation of teachers, inadequate teaching learning resources and the fact that teachers have not been updated through seminars and workshops to empower them with more effective delivery approaches. The research therefore concludes that pre-primary school teachers lack frequent refresher courses to cultivate the various skills with respect to children's activities and teaching methods in life skills. Hence, sensitization of teachers through workshops and seminars should be scaled up to enhance implementation of the curriculum. The research also concluded that the distribution of resource materials have not been effective as most schools only use a syllabus and teacher's guide book and that other text books have not been purchased by most of the Ainamoi pre-primary schools. These would enhance story telling approaches for life skills development in children. The study concluded that although school heads support implementation of this curriculum they lack necessary funds to purchase extra

textbooks and other material for the implementation of the curriculum. However few public schools which benefited from the community support grant have purchased extra materials to enhance their teaching.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum, the following are recommendations to different stake holders:

- Curriculum developers should design and provide adequate support materials to enhance effective implementation of life skills curriculum since children learn more through interaction with learning materials.
- Secondly MoE should upscale their efforts of orientation of teachers through seminars and workshops on life skills to empower teachers on delivery approaches of life skills and to enable them to interact and share their experiences with their peers.
- KIE should carry out a monitoring and evaluation exercise to determine the extent of implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum, identify gaps or challenges in implementation and recommend necessary improvements.
- School managements should be financially empowered by the County Governments through budgetary allocations to enhance provision of teaching and learning resources for effective implementation of pre-primary school life skills curriculum.
- Teachers should be encouraged to go for refresher courses even if it means paying for it for self development this will enable them to keep abreast with emerging issues in pre-primary school curriculum.

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