

Parental Involvement in Primary Standard Three pupils' Reading at Home in Igembe South Constituency, Meru county, Kenya

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Abstract

Parents and schools play a fundamental role in assisting children to develop literacy skills. Studies internationally have proved that parental involvement in their children's reading has a positive effect on children's reading ability. In Kenya, limited studies have been conducted on parental involvement in children's reading; especially at the lower primary school level. This is despite research reports that many pupils are unable to read at their class levels and some, even by the time they complete primary school. This study examined the levels of parental involvement in standard three pupils' reading at home and the influence of parental role construction and teachers' invitations on this involvement. The study used a descriptive research design and was guided by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model of parental involvement, complemented by Grolnick's theory of parental involvement. Independent variables included parents' role construction and teachers' invitation for parental involvement. The dependent variable was parental involvement in children's reading at home which was examined under the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement. Structured interviews were used to collect data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to summarise and analyse the data. The Chi-square test was used to test the null hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. Analysis of responses from 137 parents randomly selected from both public and private primary schools in Igembe South Constituency revealed very low parental involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of parental involvement. The study also found that most of the parents had low levels of role construction regarding their involvement in their children's reading at home. Teachers' invitation for parental involvement was found to be very low. The study found significant relationships between parents' role construction and their involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. The study found significant relationships between teacher invitation and parental involvement in the modelling, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. It was concluded that parental involvement in children's reading at home in Igembe South Constituency was very low. This could probably be attributed to the low levels of parental role construction and low levels of teacher invitation for parental involvement. The major implications of the study are; low parental role construction and low teacher invitation are likely to lead to low levels of parental involvement in children's reading at home, parental role construction is a positive contributor to involvement, efforts by teachers to invite parents to be involved in children's reading is likely to raise involvement and inability to read and time constraints are the main hindrances to parental involvement in children's reading at home. The study recommended development of policies that would provide guidelines and standards for programmes which would be instituted to ensure high levels of parental involvement in children's reading

Key words: Parental Involvement, Primary Standard Three pupils', Reading at Home, Igembe South Constituency, Meru county, Kenya

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