

**PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE)  
TEACHERS USE TO TEACH LITERACY SKILLS IN RURAL CENTERS OF  
PEMBA DISTRICT IN ZAMBIA**

**BY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO CHALIMBANA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF RESEARCH REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF  
MASTERS DEGREE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

**CHALIMBANA UNIVERSITY**

**LUSAKA**

2024

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This dissertation of NZILA LUMAMBA has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master’s Degree in Early Childhood Education by Chalimbana University.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to thank my supervisor Dr. Nyimbili, Friday for his support and encouragement throughout the stages of this dissertation by his quick helpful feedback. I also thank the staff in Department of Early Childhood Education at Chalimbana University.

Lastly, I thank my wife, children and friends for supporting me build my success.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my lovely children and my wife.



## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the study was to assess Pedagogical Practices Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers use to teach Literacy Skills in Rural Centers of Pemba District in Zambia. The study objectives included finding out the strategies teachers use to teach literacy in ECE centers in Pemba rural schools, identifying the teaching learning method (TLM) being used to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba district and assessing the challenges faced in teaching literacy in rural ECE center of Pemba district. This study used a qualitative research approach and employed a phenomenological design. To obtain data for the study, the target population for the study consisted of the District Official School managers, ECE teachers and learners. Purposive sampling was used to come up with the

ECE teachers and School managers. The findings of the study indicated that there were a number of methods that were being employed in the teaching of literacy which included role play, songs games and dramatizations. The study also established that play methods were usually the most effective technique because this method helped learners to learn on their own will and pace. The study further established that the major challenges teachers faced were lack of understanding of the language policy, lack of teaching and learning materials and inconsistent in administrative material support from the school administration. The study concluded, there were various pedagogical practices that early childhood education teachers used to teach literacy skills in rural centers of Pemba district in Zambia such as role play, songs games and dramatizations. The study recommends that teachers should intensify incorporating of teaching strategies into their teaching because this will help in enhancing children's understanding, socialization, and problem-solving skills.

**Key words:** *Pedagogical Practices, Teaching Learning Method (TLM), Skills Development, Play based learning*

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Overview of the Chapter

The chapter will provide the background to the study in which the context of the study will be given. The chapter will also give the statement of the problem and the purpose of the study together with the research objectives and questions that will guide the study. In addition, the chapter will give the rationale for the study, limitations and delimitation of the study.

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Pedagogy is an encompassing term concerned with what a teacher does to influence learning in others. As the importance of high-quality early childhood education and care services for children has become more clearly understood, so has the teacher/educator's role in the provision of these services (Anderson, 2021). This demands a clear understanding of the meaning of 'pedagogy' and how it plays out in individual educators and services. Quality teaching is defined as pedagogical practices that facilitate for diverse children their access to knowledge, activities and opportunities to advance their skills in ways that build on previous learning, assist in learning how to learn and provide a strong foundation for further learning in relation to the goals of the early childhood curriculum and cultural, community and family values (Anderson, 2021).

Illiteracy has been a major bottle neck to the development and the growth of the Zambian economy for quite some time. Policies as well as strategies have been formulated to curb the scourge (Mundeda, 2020), the quality of education in Zambia is low, despite many positive developments, such as improved access to education and rising enrolment rates. Literacy levels are one of the education sector's greatest problems, experts say. In 2021, the government took broad steps to reverse low literacy framework, a policy that promotes instruction in local languages. Pupils from ECE to one, those between the ages of 5 and 7 are to be taught in their local languages instead of in English. Zambia has more

than 45 languages. A year after the policy was implemented there were still challenges. Pupils in grade two who received instruction in their local dialect fared better on a 2014 assessment, but they still struggled. In most cases, more than half of the children could not read passages in the predominant language of the area where they lived. It is for this reason that the Ministry and the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) conduct the national assessment surveys every two years (Mundeda, 2020).

Pedagogic theory is a systematic conceptualization of the process of education and conditions of human development in both the individual and the societal life sphere. It deals with processes of upbringing, teaching, learning, and social and cultural development. Aims and means, values and norms, and objectives and methods of education are systematically reflected therein. Pedagogic theory building starts with two fundamental anthropologic questions: What is a human being, and what should he or she be in the system of learning in ECE? Combining these questions, pedagogic theory examines educational aims and means of helping human beings to develop toward what they should be after ECE stages. Pedagogical practices associated with this theory include educators reinforce appropriate behavior through rewards ranging from a positive statement to tangible rewards such as star charts; educators avoid reinforcing inappropriate behavior or remove children who are behaving inappropriately; educators draw children's attention to the consequences of their behavior (Cohen, 2022).

Previous studies indicate that the lack of pedagogical skills of teachers who work with young children (ECE) is closely associated with children's delay in achievement of developmental goals and milestones and causes serious disadvantage in their future work and careers (Herbert, 2022). It is probable that Zambian pre-school teachers may not have enough knowledge about Learner Centered Pedagogy (LCP). Learner-centered curricula have long been established in the education systems to facilitate the pedagogical practices ECE teachers use to teach literacy skills in rural centers of Pemba District in Zambia. According to Lupele (2020), although the Zambian government has put in place the new breakthrough to literacy to help grade one pupils read local languages, studies show that some children who have gone through NBTL fail to break through to literacy. As to



whether or not the literacy programme under review in this current study has adopted some strategies used in NBL to enhance literacy teaching skills is what this study is trying to investigate.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In early childhood education (ECE), learning takes place whenever children are engaged in any Activity student experiences both at home and at school play critical roles in their literacy development. Evidence suggests children learn related knowledge at home through caregiver and sibling interactions while they learn code related knowledge like phonemic awareness at school (Hutton, 2015). Literacy instruction in both of these spaces can be both spontaneous and planned, literacy skills and knowledge are not something that exist exclusively in a classroom and rather they can be taught and learned in all aspect of pre-schoolers of life (Snow, 2006).

Zambian education vision is that, in order to have an innovative life-long education and training for all by 2030, literacy skills rates should be increased by 80% and work towards eliminating illiteracy by 2030. Literacy can improve the lives of both boys and girls, once these are able to read and write, they can acquire more knowledge to safe guard and improve their lives and families. Literacy has been taught through making literacy-related prop boxes. Prop boxes are themed dramatic play activities bundled together in a decorative box. These prop boxes give kids endless opportunities to practice early literacy skills while using role-play (Dale, 2022). The aim of this study was to investigate pedagogical practices ECE teachers use to teach literacy skills in rural centers of Pemba District in Zambia. Sence to show the impact of using any c

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the pedagogical practices ECE teachers use to teach literacy skills in the rural centers of Pemba District Zambia.

## **1.4 Main objective of the study**

The aim of this study was to establish effective the pedagogical practices ECE teachers use to teach literacy skills in the rural centers of Pemba District Zambia.

## **1.5 Specific objectives**

The specific objectives were as follows:

- i Establish the strategies teachers use to teach literacy in ECE centers in Pemba rural schools.
- ii Identify the teaching learning method (TLM) being used to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba district.
- iii Assess the challenges faced in teaching literacy in rural ECE center of Pemba district.

## **1.7 Specific research questions**

To help investigate the research problem, the following research questions were answered.

- i What are strategies being used by the teachers to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba rural?
- ii What teaching and learning methods (TLM) are being used to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba district?
- iii What are the challenges faced in teaching literacy in rural ECE center of Pemba district?

## **1.8 Significance of the study**

Zambian education vision is that, in order to have an innovative life-long education and training for all by 2030, literacy skills rates should be increased by 80% and work towards eliminating illiteracy by 2030. Literacy can improve the lives of both and girls, once these are able to read and write, they can acquire more knowledge to safe guard and improve their lives and families. The ministry of education was long aware that language

in education policies can be a source of education quality. As noted by the national education policy, educating our future, there is strong evidence that children learn literacy skills more easily and more successfully through their mother's tongue and subsequently they are able to transfer these skills more efficiently to English or another language. It is that experience for Zambian children have not performed well in reading, writing in the first four years of their education and therefore efforts have been made to find effective strategies to improve literacy. This study would help to empower teachers to effectively apply these teaching strategies in the learning process and improve performance, participation as well as motivate learners. The knowledge gap to be filled by the study findings will be useful for educational stakeholders, such as policy makers, school inspectors, politicians, and teachers, curriculum developers, planners of programs head teachers on the right measure of establishing effective strategies to improve literacy in lower primary school pupils the information would also be used to improve the teaching learning situation and hence improve and or raise literacy performances.

### **1.9 Delimitations of the study**

This study was conducted in selected schools of Pemba District in Southern Province of Zambia. This was because of its closer proximity to the researcher which eased on data collection and other logistics.

### **1.10 Limitations of the study**

The anticipated limitations were that some teachers would be busy. However, the researcher made appointments for interviews rather than just appearing in unexpectedly. The other anticipated challenge was that the researcher would not have ample time and financial resources, therefore data collection would be done within the available resources and time possible.

### **1.11 Theoretical Framework**

This study was based on Shulman's (1987) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) theory in attempting to explain the pedagogical practices ECE teachers use to teach literacy skills in rural centers of Pemba district in Zambia. According to Shulman's PCK theory, effective teaching involves more than just knowing the content. It's about

understanding how to teach that content effectively. PCK integrates both pedagogical knowledge (how to teach) and content knowledge (what to teach) to create a powerful teaching approach. The principles of the Pedagogy Content of Knowledge (PCK) theory were as follows.

### **1.11.1 Integration of Pedagogy and Content Knowledge**

Shulman (1987) emphasizes that effective teaching requires the integration of pedagogical knowledge (knowledge of teaching methods, strategies, and techniques) and content knowledge (knowledge of the subject matter being taught). Through this principle in this theory the researcher will be able to understand integrated methods that help the teacher to deliver or teach well in the classroom, for example, through group work or group discussions.

### **1.11.2 Knowledge Transformation:**

Shulman (1987) states that PCK involves transforming subject matter knowledge into forms that are accessible and comprehensible to students. Teachers must be able to translate complex concepts into language and activities that are appropriate for their students' level of understanding. Through this knowledge transformation, the study will show how the new content of the knowledge affects the learners in their performance during learning and teaching of new content of topic in the classroom and it would help the teacher to assess the progress of the children or learners through the adoption of new knowledge.

### **1.11.3 Understanding pupils Conceptions and Misconceptions**

Effective teachers possess an understanding of the preconceptions and misconceptions that students bring to the learning environment. This awareness allows teachers to anticipate students' difficulties and tailor their instruction accordingly. Through this principle in this theory (Pedagogy and Content Knowledge), the researcher will identify the perceptions of teachers that they encounter during lesson delivering in the learning conducive environment and non-conducive environment with its impacts to the learners especially the slow learners within the same classroom of learning environment.

#### **1.11.4 Knowledge of Curriculum**

Teachers need to have a deep understanding of the curriculum they are teaching, including its goals, standards, and objectives. This knowledge enables teachers to plan and sequence instruction effectively, ensuring that students meet the intended learning outcomes. Through this principle the researcher will understand how the findings will be made important to the curriculum and also how the knowledge of the curriculum brings impacts to the learners during the implementation of the curriculum through teaching and learning process.

#### **1.11.5 Adaptability**

Good teachers are adaptable and flexible in their approach to teaching. They are able to adjust their instructional strategies based on the needs, interests, and abilities of their pupils. Through this principle, in this theory the study would bring out the ways in which learners and teachers may help them to have effective relationship or rampart in the classroom, as the strategy of well delivery of the new concepts of subjects to the learners, that is through role play and games in the same classroom.

#### **1.11.6 Reflection and Professional Growth**

Shulman emphasizes the importance of reflection and ongoing professional growth for teachers. Reflective practice involves critically examining one's teaching practices, identifying areas for improvement, and actively seeking opportunities for professional development. Through this principle, the researcher will find out how teacher interactions can help them to improve their lessons delivering as they are preparing to teach. For example, this may be done through CPD (Continuous Professional Development) and lesson study among the teachers as the way of improving the performance of the learners.

#### **1.11.7 Contextual Nature of PCK**

Shulman (1987) acknowledges that PCK is highly contextualized and situational. Effective teaching requires an understanding of the unique characteristics of the learning environment, including the cultural, social, and institutional factors that influence teaching and learning. Through this principle, in this theory, the study would be able to understand the different factors that lead to good performance of learners in the

classroom, for example, this may be internal and external factors that must be known by the teacher. Using these principles in line with literacy levels in Pemba rural, more effort would be put in finding out if the level of content being offered to learners is enough to help them adequately acquire literacy competence. Furthermore, they would be needed to find out the types of pedagogical skills learners are being offered so as to ascertain the real cause of low rates of literacy acquisition in the district. This approach will help in bridging the gap between knowledge and pedagogical expertise teachers have so as to help them meet the diverse needs of learners in Pemba rural.

### **1.12 Definition of terms**

The following key terms used in this study were defined for the purpose of the study as set out below.

**Early childhood education** – is an organized form of educational provision for children from birth through age 8.

**Pedagogical** \_ it concerns teaching, from lesson plans to approaches to teaching, even how the classroom looks.

**Rural/Remote school-** A school very far from the central part of the district.

### **1.13 Chapter Summary**

Chapter one provides an introductory overview of the study, presenting the context, problem statement, objectives, rationale, limitations, and delimitations. The chapter discusses the significance of pedagogy in early childhood education and the challenges faced in literacy development within the Zambian context. The chapter outlines the theoretical framework based on Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) theory, emphasizing its principles as a guide for enhancing literacy levels in Pemba District's rural early childhood education canters. Lastly, key terms relevant to the study are defined. The next chapter will present literature review.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Overview**

Chapter two presents a critical review of the literature on the subject matter and generates further context. It outlines relevant theories pertaining to Challenges in ECE. Additionally, this chapter outlines the teaching methodologies used in teaching literacy in ECE classes and lastly it provides discussions on the best practices of teaching ECE learners using local languages. Therefore, the outlines are centered on the theoretical framework, empirical review and conceptual framework with a view of exploring the literature gaps based on global, regional and local perspective.

#### **2.2 Strategies Teachers use to Teach Literacy in ECE Centers**

Garry (2018) noted that the use of various teaching strategies in the classroom helps to create an environment suitable for learning for children from different backgrounds. Primarily, the availability and proper use of suitable teaching strategies such as role plays, games and songs are essential for effective literacy teaching in ECE classes. Conversely, strategies are missing in the teaching curriculum, teaching ECE learners becomes more imaginative than practical (Reddy, 2012).

##### **2.2.1 Global Perspective**

A study by Lackson (2020) on Teacher's satisfaction with teaching strategies in ECE in Oslo, Norway. The study adopted a quantitative research approach. Simple random technique was used in the selection of participants. Data was analysed descriptively with the help of Anova. This study measured teachers' satisfaction with teaching strategies in ECE. The study was based on a comprehensive education in ECCED and implications for

education policy formulation. The study findings indicated that efficient teaching strategies in ECE reliable as less time was spent on explaining concepts and ideas to learners as learners learnt on their own. However, these characteristics had a stronger effect on satisfaction among teachers with bigger classrooms. The study under review concentrated much on the teacher's satisfaction ignoring the major challenges faced by learners. This study looked at the teaching strategies used in teaching literacy in ECE classes in Pemba district of Zambia.

A study by Lewis et al. (2018) on teaching strategies used to teach initial literacy for children in Saudi Arabia looked at the strategies that teachers could best use to teach initial literacy in local language. The study adopted a mixed method approach and data was collected using questionnaires, semi structured interview schedules and classroom observation schedule. Data was collected through a questionnaire and interview schedule. The study found that teaching and learning strategies such as role plays and collaborative learning helped teachers to support learning and enhance children participation in class for effective learning of literacy. The study under review did not pay attention to the question of bilingual language approaches in classrooms which this study did.

Similarly, Moken (2017) conducted a study in Nigeria on teaching strategies that were being used to teach Yoruba language to early grade classrooms in Igbo state. In this study that comprised of 19 teachers, 23 parents and 90 learners it was observed that there was an outcry from teachers on the dependence on traditional strategies to teach children. The findings indicated that curriculum developers gave little emphasis to which strategies to be used to teach specific areas such as literacy. Thus, this study recommended that curriculum developers should work hand in hand with teachers to suggest teaching strategies that should be used to teach initial literacy. The study under review lacked a comprehensive methodology to deal with salient issues on the traditional strategies devised to teach children. This study adopted a comprehensive research methodology bringing hidden issues that borders on tradition way of teaching children.

In another study conducted by Garry (2018) in Georgina indicated that teachers also use inquiry-based learning that promote the idea of learning by investigation, where children



can complete projects, ask questions and find answers by themselves in literacy. The study employed a descriptive survey method. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis were used. The target population for this study were public preschools. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews and observations and it was analyzed thematically in which tables of frequencies and percentages were used to generate statistics. The study found that while teachers act as resources in these times, the goal is for children to solve problems and discover information on their own. The study had inadequate sample size to extensively deal with a large number of participants. This study had a relatively bigger sample size representative enough to warrant to the legitimacy of findings.

A study conducted by Durkin (2018) in Malaysia looked at the integrating of the strategies being used to teach initial literacy at school and the strategies that parents use at home to continue the learning process in the children. The study included 100 participants' parents' 50 teachers, and 42 learners found that parent involvement in poor and average communities varied dramatically. Some families living in especially harsh circumstances had few resources, such as access to books and opportunities for involvement. Other parents, even though poor economically, had rich kinship networks and could draw from family relationships to help their children. Sometimes these kin would help the child regularly visit the library for story hour. The study indicated that there was little similarity in the teaching and learning strategies used at home and those used at school. The study under review lacked clarity on whether it sought to see the same strategies used in the classroom from parents who never acquired any education or training in teaching children. This study took into consideration the difference in structures of families and the difference in engagement into academic activities in families that had siblings and those that did not have.

### **2.2.2 Regional Perspective**

The use of interesting strategies is key to teaching literacy in local language more especially to children who are exposed to a bilingual community. A study conducted by Mwalumba (2019) on the strategies that teachers use to teach children in South Africa indicated that there are a number of interesting teaching and learning techniques that play

a key role in a child's learning. The study included 90 parents, 45 learners and 35 student teachers in South Africa. The findings established that the use of interesting teaching strategies such as games and drama provided learners with a platform for learning. The study also suggested that teachers should ensure that pupils receive a balanced and relevant curriculum, which will lay down strategies and strategies of teaching children. The study under review paid little attention to the extent to which games and drama activities would be used in the classrooms. This study suggested a well-planned and time bound playful activities with specific goals to be achieved tied to them.

Maduabum et al, (2017) conducted a study on the practical strategies used in ECE in Kenya. This study adopted a mixed method research approach with a sample size of 49. The study used purposive and simple random sampling techniques in drawing participants for the study. The data collected were analysed using content analysis and descriptive statics. The findings of the study established that there were a number of strategies that were being used to teach literacy in ECE classrooms. The strategies that were found being used included role play, Dramatization, Games, songs, storytelling and retelling as well as demonstrations. The study under review concentrated so much on teaching strategies in general without concentrating on specific ECE methods. This study assessed specific strategies on ECE with special reference on local language as a medium of instruction.

A study conducted by Esomonu (2016) on the importance of using activities such sand play, role play, building blocks, character play, drawing and painting as teaching strategies in Zimbabwe. The study used a qualitative research approach with a sample size of 54. Convenience sampling technique was used. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews and observations. Data was analysed through narrative analysis. The study found that, children constructed by themselves based on the experiences they gather from their environment. The gap identified from the study was that the study concentrated much on the social aspect of pupils without concentrating the scientific mental learning processes.

Another study conducted in Malawi by Awishi (2017) in Mzuzu on the strategies that can be used to teach literacy to grades 1 to 4 learners indicated that early grade teachers teach their children through the use of kinesthetic strategies of learning and teaching language. The study included 45 learners, 45 parents and 20 teachers showed that children mainly learn language through movement activities. Teachers move around the classroom and use hand gestures while they speak to engage children visually and kinesthetically. The study found that, the teaching strategies were not addressing the needs of other students like those with hearing impairments and partially blind. The study also reviewed that learners were more adaptive to role play method than kinesthetic method. This study under review never outlined how other learners with learning challenges were integrated in the learning process and the instructional language used. This study outlined how other learners with learning challenges were integrated in the learning process and the instructional language used.

In a study conducted in Kenya, Bwika (2021) on the role of instructional strategies in Literacy and Numeracy. For this study, concurrent triangulation was employed, and the study population included preschool teachers, head teachers and learners. A sample of 73 respondents was used and purposive and random sampling techniques were utilised in the selection of participants. The study used an interview Guide, Questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion for primary data collection. Quantitative data from the survey questionnaire was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data on the other hand was analysed using qualitative descriptive analysis (QDA). The study found that teachers teaching ECE use much of reading a book aloud (read aloud). The study also found out that when children are listening to a text, it helps them to improve their active listening skills, which can deepen their ability to concentrate on new information and develop their own reflections about a language. He further adds that when teachers read in a conversational tone, children also learn how to use new vocabulary words and become more engaged in the story. The study under review concentrated so much on the story way method as a mode of teaching forgetting that learners tend to forget stories with time and not everyone is a good story teller. This study proposed how story method can be complemented with other methods.

In a study conducted by Marshy (2020) in Zimbabwe on the use of cooperative learning to teach children pointed out cooperative learning as one of the strategies that teachers use to teach initial literacy. The study comprised of 39 teachers, 50 learners and 50 parents found that children that work together in a group can quickly learn or grasp a concept compared to those working alone. The study found out that in cooperative learning, children work together in small groups to complete a structured task or goal. The study under review did not specify the age range of learners in which cooperative learning was used and not all learners can learn well using one method of teaching. This study suggested teaching strategies that can be used to cater for all learners in the ECE primary schools.

### **2.2.3 Local Perspective**

Phiri (2017) on the assessing the effectiveness of cooperative learning method in Rural Schools in Katete District of Zambia. For this study, qualitative approach was employed, and the study population included teachers, head teachers and learners. A sample of 115 respondents was used and purposive and random sampling techniques were used in the selection of participants. The study used an interview Guide, Questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion for primary data collection. Quantitative data from the survey questionnaire was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data on the other hand was analysed using qualitative descriptive analysis (QDA). The study found that, in cooperative learning, members of the group are not only rewarded based on the success of the entire group but are also individually accountable for their own work it is all too often the case that only some members of the group do all of the work. The study under review's empirical studies used were not adequate to holistically explain all the concepts. This adopted a funnel empirical review structure explaining themes and concepts from global, continental and locally.

Munsaka and Kalinde (2017) looked at teaching techniques that can be used to enforce the current language policy that favours the use of familiar languages to teach initial literacy. The study focused on techniques that teachers can use in both urban and rural settings to actualize the requirements of the 2013 literacy curriculum. This study comprised of 100 teachers, 40 parents and 100 learners indicated that teaching children

takes a number of techniques that can be used separately or together to attain one or several goals. The study found that, different teaching and learning techniques would apply for different learners because learners learn differently. The study under review partially outlined how the sample size was arrived at, and the sampling techniques were not conclusive.

A study conducted by Mumba (2017) in Kitwe on pedagogical approaches of teaching early grades, established that there are several classroom games that teachers used as strategies to improve literacy. The study used a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena. The study targeted community members, primary Head teachers and Early Childhood Education teachers. The sample size used in this study was 48 participants and purposive sampling were utilized in this study. The study used semi-structured questionnaires for data collection and the data collected was qualitative, presented and analysed thematically. The study found that teachers allow children to play children play games with characters or vocabulary words from a text recently read in class. The gap identified from this study was that the sample size used was not convincing enough to warrant to findings of the study because the sample size was not representative enough to represent the study population. This gap was addressed in this study through the use a sample large enough for inference on the study population.

In another study done by Mwila (2016) on the best teaching strategies practices in ECE. The study used the qualitative approach. This qualitative study drew on a sample of 10 ECE teachers: 20 teachers, 10 pupils, 5 officials, and 10 school managers. The schools in which these teachers were working were purposively selected. Data was collected using both the teachers and headteachers that were offering early childhood. Open-ended questions were used. The questions were intentionally broad in order to elicit an open discussion. The study found that the use of visual organizers that stand in as physical representation of information from a text, such as a chart drawn on a poster or a graph made on a computer is beneficial. The study laments that visual representations strategies can help children better understand a text's main idea and retain more details. The study did not specify the language environment in which such games could be used. This study paid much attention to the actual number of languages the child is exposed to and what

kind of language is used as a language of instruction when such games are being administered. The gap identified from this study was that the study did not outline some of the practical teaching and learning strategies that were used to argument learning disabilities of learners. This study assessed the language abilities spoken by the learners as well as parents at home.

Chewe, Nyimbili, & Mwinsa (2023) conducted a study on Teachers Perceptions and Strategies on the Integrated Early Childhood Education Curriculum in Serenje District of Zambia. The study utilized a qualitative research design to gather in-depth insights into teachers' experiences with the IECEC. The study focused on a purposive sample of early childhood education teachers in the Serenje District. The study revealed that, many teachers expressed a positive attitude toward the IECEC, appreciating its holistic approach which integrates various learning areas. Despite positive views, several teachers highlighted challenges such as lack of training, resources, and support from the educational authorities, which hinder effective implementation. Teachers' understanding of the curriculum's goals varied greatly, with some feeling inadequately informed about the curriculum's objectives. Teachers engaged in adapting materials and activities to suit the local context and the needs of their students, demonstrating creativity in their approach. Teachers emphasized collaboration and sharing of resources and strategies as crucial, especially in resource-constrained environments. Ongoing professional development was noted as vital for sustaining effective implementation, with some teachers actively seeking further training. The gaps Identified in the study were that the research primarily gathered data from teachers without including perspectives from other stakeholders, such as parents, students, and educational administrators, who also play critical roles in the education. The study was restricted to Serenje District, meaning district differences in curriculum implementation and perceptions may be overlooked.

In addition, Nyimbili (2021) conducted a study on the Impact of Translanguaging on Pedagogical Practice on Literacy Levels among Grade One Literacy Learners in Lundazi District, Zambia. The study adopted a qualitative research approach, utilizing a mix of observations, interviews, and classroom interaction analyses to derive insights into the impact of translanguaging practices on literacy levels. The study targeted Grade One

learners in Lundazi District, a region characterized by its multilingual population. A sample of both students and teachers was shared to grasp the perspectives of all stakeholders involved in the educational process. Data were gathered through classroom observations to monitor linguistic interactions among children during literacy activities. Interviews with teachers provided deeper insight into their pedagogical practices and attitudes toward translanguaging. Thematic analysis was employed to examine the collected data. This approach enabled the identification of recurring themes related to the facilitators and barriers of using translanguaging in literacy instruction. One of the most significant outcomes was that translanguaging increased student participation and engagement during literacy lessons. By allowing learners to utilize their native languages alongside the instructional language, teachers created more inclusive and relatable learning environments. The analysis demonstrated that students who engaged in translanguaging showed higher literacy levels, particularly in comprehension and creative expression. The ability to use multiple languages allowed students to make connections between concepts and ideas, thereby enriching their understanding. Teachers exhibited a generally positive attitude toward translanguaging as a strategy. However, they highlighted the necessity of professional development to enhance their skills in effectively integrating this approach into their teaching. While Nyimbili's research yielded insightful findings, certain gaps were identified. The reliance on qualitative data, while rich in narrative, does not provide quantitative metrics to measure literacy levels. The different ways in which teachers implemented translanguaging were not extensively explored. Differentiating the outcomes linked with various degrees of translanguaging practice could illuminate which strategies are most effective. Although teachers' views were highlighted, the learners' perceptions of translanguaging and its impact on their learning experiences were not sufficiently incorporated.

### **2.3 Teaching Learning Method (TLM) being used to Teach Literacy in ECE Centers**

There are a number of teaching methods used to teach literacy in ECE centres across schools in Zambia. Twoti (2018) laments that a well-arranged environment enhances children's development through learning and manipulating of the play materials as it facilitates classroom management and supports the implementation of curricular goals

and objectives. In addition, the study suggests that the physical environment allows for the goals of education to be achieved. As a result, teachers always strive hard to ensure that they provide for such an environment, -an environment that will enable children to develop holistically. This study addressed this gap through the adoption of a comprehensive research methodology.

### **2.3.1 Global Perspective**

Paul (2017) studied how early childhood teachers were utilizing teaching methods in teaching ECE learners in Norway. The study included 63 teachers, 13 parents and 100 learners. The results showed that, curriculum designers did not place much attention on the best teaching techniques for literacy. Therefore, this study advised curriculum designers to collaborate with teachers to offer effective teaching methodologies for introducing early literacy. The gap detected from this study was the lack of a thorough technique to address important difficulties on the conventional teaching methods created for kids. The research gap will be addressed in this current through analyzing the teaching methods used when teaching ECE learners in Pemba district. To ensure quality control in the teaching of literacy, tools for monitoring of the teaching and learning environment must be developed. A study conducted by UNICEF (2012) on the implementation of language policies in Africa gives a recommendation of tools for monitoring the physical environment to ensure that the place is conducive for learning. Studies have shown that quality education can only be released and sustained if teachers have good and practicing knowledge, which are developed through strong effective initial teacher training and on-going professional development. These trainings can be achieved in the teacher training colleges, universities and in schools while teachers are in employment. The study found that Continuous Capacity Building Development Programs are a key measure that teachers also get to know more about policies associated with inclusive education and appropriate ways to address learning issues. However, it's not known the period in which CPDS should be conducted whether weekly, monthly or annually therefore creating a gap in this study.



A study by Deanery (2019) on the assessment of teaching methods used in teaching ECE learners. The study used a quantitative research approach. Data was collected using closed ended questionnaires and an interview guide. The study found that children have nothing to do about the language that is used for instruction. All they do is to quickly learn it and be able to use for them to benefit from it. The learners can barely have something to do in such kind of issues. All they do is to wait for instruction and when instruction is given, they take as it is. The study under review generalized the findings to other elements that were not included in the study. An empirical study by the World Bank (2019) on community participation, established that parents are usually concerned about their children's education and often willing to provide assistance that can improve the education delivery. The study further noted that the community can help in identifying and addressing factors that contribute to educational challenges, low participation and poor performance. The study only focused parental involvement of parents in areas where they were familiar with the language of instruction. This study was carried out from an environment where the language of instruction was not fully understood and used by parents, teachers and learners. The gap identified from the study was that this study was mostly concentrated on parental involvement in the education of their children hence, the findings could not be generalized to the current study as the variables under study are different, hence creating the gap.

### **2.3.2 Regional Perspective**

Similarly, a study by Kandall (2017) also noted that parental and community involvement in schools affects quality of education in a number of ways. These include managing children's attendance. To add on, in Botswana, the study found out that the Ministry of Education had set up School Intervention Teams (SITs) within schools in order to help teachers to respond to the learning needs of individual children. SITs are a school-based resource service whose membership consists of the head teacher, senior teachers, a social worker and the child's parents. Thus, the SITs were set up in schools to avoid the unnecessary referral of children with relatively mild learning challenges to the Central Resource Centre (CRC) for special education services. Furthermore, the study stated that the SITs has helped the schools become more self-sufficient and more skillful in

managing children experiencing learning difficulties and those with mild impairments. The study under review did not discuss how parent's involvement in the education of their children was of paramount importance to children's sustained education especially in ECE. This gap was addressed in this study through assessing the role of parent involvement in ECE.

Maxwell (2018) on the role of CPDS in the professional development of learners in Eswatini. The study adopted a qualitative research approach. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews and observations. The study found that, CPD prepares the teacher educator, again and again, to keep abreast with the latest development. The findings also suggested supporting teachers holistically and equipping schools with enough teaching materials for ECE classes and activities. They indicated that they needed to equip schools with enough teaching materials for ECE classes and activities to enhance teacher proficiency and productivity as most of teachers failed to deliver because of shortage of teaching and learning resources which seemed to be their biggest challenge in delivering the best content. The study under review did not mention the main causes of challenges faced by teaching in the delivery of their lessons.

Another study conducted in Malawi by Phiri (2017) in Mzuzu on the methods that can be used to teach literacy to grades 1 to 4 learners indicated that early grade teachers teach their children through the use of kinesthetic methods of learning and teaching language. The study included 45 learners, 45 parents and 20 teachers showed that children mainly learn language through movement activities. Teachers move around the classroom and use hand gestures while they speak to engage children visually and kinesthetically. The study found that, the teaching methods were not addressing the needs of other students like those with hearing impairments and partially blind. The study also reviewed that learners were more adaptive to role play method than kinesthetic method. This study under review never outlined how other learners with learning challenges were integrated in the learning process and the instructional language used. This study will outline how other learners with learning challenges can be integrated in the learning process and the instructional language to be used.

In a study conducted in Kenya, Bwika (2021) on the role of instructional methods in Literacy and Numeracy. For this study, concurrent triangulation was employed, and the study population included preschool teachers, head teachers and learners. A sample of 73 respondents was used and purposive and random sampling techniques were utilised in the selection of participants. The study used an interview Guide, Questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion for primary data collection. Quantitative data from the survey questionnaire was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data on the other hand was analysed using qualitative descriptive analysis (QDA). The study found that teachers teaching ECE use much of reading a book aloud (read aloud). The study also found out that when children are listening to a text, it helps them to improve their active listening skills, which can deepen their ability to concentrate on new information and develop their own reflections about a language. He further adds that when teachers read in a conversational tone, children also learn how to use new vocabulary words and become more engaged in the story. The study under review concentrated so much on the story way method as a mode of teaching forgetting that learners tend to forget stories with time and not everyone is a good story teller. This current study will assess how story method can be complemented with other methods.

In a study conducted by Marshy (2020) in Zimbabwe on the use of cooperative learning to teach children pointed out cooperative learning as one of the methods that teachers use to teach initial literacy. The study comprised of 39 teachers, 50 learners and 50 parents found that children that work together in a group can quickly learn or grasp a concept compared to those working alone. The study found out that in cooperative learning, children work together in small groups to complete a structured task or goal. The study under review did not specify the age range of learners in which cooperative learning was used and not all learners can learn well using one method of teaching. This study will suggest teaching methods that can be used to cater for all learners in the ECE primary schools.

### **2.3.3 Local Perspective**

Primarily, the availability and proper use of suitable teaching materials such as the teacher guides, good textbooks and workbooks are essential for effective literacy teaching in ECE classes. A study carried out by Lumuuno (2018) in Southern Province of Zambia on best practices in early childhood education that in which 34 learners, 16 teachers and 34 parents from 5 were the target population. The study found that when materials are missing in the teaching curriculum, teaching becomes more imaginative than practical suggests for teaching and learning resources aids teachers to assist learning and enhance children's participation in class for effective learning. It could be observed that there was an outcry from teachers on lack of the basic resources like textbooks. Incidentally, curriculum developers give little emphasis to development and production of teaching learning materials for languages besides textbooks and more attention is given to production of materials and resources for sciences and technical subjects. However, the study emphasized that teaching and learning materials should be suggested and produced by curriculum developers, ignoring the teachers' ability to use their creativity in the suggestion and production of teaching and learning aids. This study emphasized on the training of teachers to be able to produce learning and teaching aids using locally available raw materials. Although this study brought our pertinent issues on the creating of learning and teaching aids using locally available materials, the study did not outline the alternative options in an event that teachers are unable to find suitable materials hence creating a gap in this study. This gap will be addressed in this current study through outlining practical recommended and the ways of creating learning and teaching aids using locally available materials.

Phiri (2017) on the assessing the effectiveness of cooperative learning method in Rural Schools in Katete District of Zambia. For this study, qualitative approach was employed, and the study population included teachers, head teachers and learners. A sample of 115 respondents was used and purposive and random sampling techniques were used in the selection of participants. The study used an interview Guide, Questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion for primary data collection. Quantitative data from the survey questionnaire was analysed using the Statistical Package for the

Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data on the other hand was analysed using qualitative descriptive analysis (QDA). The study found that, in cooperative learning, members of the group are not only rewarded based on the success of the entire group but are also individually accountable for their own work it is all too often the case that only some members of the group do all of the work. The study under review's empirical studies used were not adequate to holistically explain all the concepts. This adopts a funnel empirical review structure explaining themes and concepts from global, continental and locally.

Munsaka and Kalinde (2017) looked at teaching techniques that can be used to enforce the current language policy that favours the use of familiar languages to teach initial literacy. The study focused on techniques that teachers can use in both urban and rural settings to actualize the requirements of the 2013 literacy curriculum. This study comprised of 100 teachers, 40 parents and 100 learners indicated that teaching children takes a number of techniques that can be used separately or together to attain one or several goals. The study found that, different teaching and learning techniques would apply for different learners because learners learn differently. The study under review partially outlined how the sample size was arrived at, and the sampling techniques were not conclusive. This gap will be addressed in this current study as the current intends to use comprehensive sampling techniques.

A study conducted by Mumba (2017) in Kitwe on pedagogical approaches of teaching early grades, established that there are several classroom games that teachers used as methods to improve literacy. The study used a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena. The study targeted community members, primary Head teachers and Early Childhood Education teachers. The sample size used in this study was 48 participants and purposive sampling were utilized in this study. The study used semi-structured questionnaires for data collection and the data collected was qualitative, presented and analysed thematically. The study found that teachers allow children to play children play games with characters or vocabulary words from a text recently read in class. The gap identified from this study was that the sample size used was not convincing enough to warrant to findings of the study because the sample size was not

representative enough to represent the study population. This gap was addressed in this study through the use a sample large enough for inference on the study population.

A study by Nyimbili & Mungala, and Sakala (2023) on Pedagogical Practices Teachers use to teach Cinyanja in Monolingual Tumbuka Secondary Schools of Chasefu District in Eastern province of Zambia. The researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers in monolingual Tumbuka secondary schools. Classroom observations provided practical insights into pedagogical practices. The researchers reviewed relevant curricular documents, lesson plans, and teaching resources to understand the instructional designs in place. The study revealed that Teachers employed various pedagogical strategies, including code-switching, visual aids, and interactive activities to teach Cinyanja. This adaptability was crucial in catering to the linguistic needs of students who primarily speak Tumbuka. The study identified significant challenges teachers encountered, such as a lack of teaching materials specific to Cinyanja, insufficient training for teachers to effectively teach a second language, and student reluctance or difficulty in learning a language different from their mother tongue. The research indicated that while some students showed enthusiasm in learning Cinyanja, the majority struggled with motivation and comprehension, predominantly due to language barriers. The teachers often needed to balance the use of Tumbuka with Cinyanja to facilitate understanding. The gaps identified from the were that the research was conducted in a specific in Chasefu District therefore limited the generalizability of the findings. A larger, more diverse sample across different regions could provide broader insights into pedagogical practices. The study does not critically examine how national language policy affects the teaching of languages in schools. An exploration of policy implications could add depth to the discussion of pedagogical practices.

## **2.4 Challenges ECE teachers face when teaching literacy using local language**

Although the growing importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE), there are a number of challenges that have continued to pull down its effective implementation. Different scholars have discussed a number of them, which include lack of adequate teaching and learning resources, socio-economic factors, high teacher-child ratio with

poor remunerations and financial constraints. Additionally, many ECE centres lack adequate teaching and learning resource facilities suitable for ECE in their learning environment such as lack of properly ventilated classrooms, furniture suitable for young children and play materials.

### **2.4.1 Global Perspective**

A study conducted by Kelly (2009) in South America, on the study dabbled challenges facing teachers handling bilingual classrooms. The study employed a descriptive survey method. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis were used. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews and observations and it was analyzed thematically in which tables of frequencies and percentages were used to generate statistics. This study established that the language of instruction was a language that was hardly understood by the learners. The study under review concentrated on code-switching where two languages used are well understood by both the learners and the teachers. This study looked at the challenges ECE teachers face when teaching literacy using local language in the primary schools of Chongwe District in Zambia.

Another study by Salahuddin, Khan and Rahman (2013) on the challenges of implementing English curriculum in rural primary schools of Bangladesh. The study adopted a mixed method approach and data was collected using questionnaires, semi structured interview schedules and classroom observation schedule. A sample of 310 participants was used. Data were collected through a questionnaire and interview schedule. The study established that most teachers had no training in the teaching of English or were not specialized in teaching a particular subject. Otherwise, in a situation where these teachers do not have the training, their teaching of English becomes problematic since they might not have the professional skill to enrich their knowledge about the teaching methodology, using teaching materials, accurate evaluation system and management. That is, teachers find it difficult to follow proper teaching methods and conduct classroom activities perfectly as desired. The lack of teaching learning materials also poses a problem to the implementation of the subject. The gap identified from the study was that the study did not address challenges that come with lack of materials to use to teach initial literacy, which was one of the findings of this study. This study

assessed the challenges for lack of teaching and learning materials in local language as a method of instruction in ECE.

Garry (2018) conducted a study on the challenges encountered by schools in the implementation of ECE governments policies in New Zealand. The study adopted a mixed method approach. Simple random technique was used in the selection of participants. Data was analysed descriptively and thematically. Data were collected through the use of questionnaires, interviews and observations. The study found that, schools that received little administrative support did not achieve their ultimate goals. The study under review concentrated on the challenges encountered by schools in the implementation of ECE in general.

Hanushek (2019) studied and compiled a report of the research on large classroom and learning resources in developed countries. The study employed a mixed method approach to conduct the research. The total sample size for this study was 133 participants. Data collection tools employed was questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides. Data analysis was done using manual methods and computer based Statistical Package for Social Sciences-IBM (SPSS-IBM). The study revealed that in developing countries, one of the biggest problems faced in large classes is the quality and quantity of learning resources available to each learner, such as classroom furniture, textbooks and other essentials like teaching and learning resources. Children learn best when the first language of instruction is their mother tongue. Results of learning assessments show that when home and school languages differ there is a negative impact on test scores. The gap identified from this study was that the study did not investigate further how language of instruction could deter a child from learning well in preceding years of schooling. The gap was addressed through additional detail regarding how the language of instruction could prevent a child from learning effectively in earlier years of school.

Lack of the zeal to implement was drawn in the curriculum is another challenge faced in Early Childhood classrooms. A study conducted by Trudell (2016) in Indiana. The study adopted a qualitative approach, and data was collected using questionnaires, semi



structured interview schedules and observation. A purposive sampling technique was used in this study. A sample of 95 participants was used. Data was analysed through thematic analysis. The study found out that while many countries have a national language policy that supports the use of local languages, such policies are not always implemented in the classroom. The study further explained that there may be a number of reasons for this misalignment, and this includes perceived status of the mother-tongue language. In communities where many languages are spoken, there may be a disagreement about which language should be taught as the 'majority language'. A minority language may have a lower status within the community, making acceptance of mother-tongue instruction more difficult as well as the reluctance of mother-tongue learners to use their language. The study under review did not specify the implications for teachers not participating in policy formulation and the criteria used to select a language of instruction in ECE preschools was not clear hence creating a gap for further research. These gaps were addressed in this study, as this study discussed the criteria used by Ministry of General Education to come up the language of instruction in ECE.

Lack of support from parents in the usage of the language of instruction hinders teachers and learners from achieving the goals of learning literacy. A study conducted by UNESCO (2016) in Canada on challenges that teachers face in enforcing a second language as a language of instruction indicated that children are unable to receive support from their parents if they also do not understand the language of instruction. If a child's parents lack familiarity with the language of instruction used in school this can further reinforce the gap between minority and majority language groups. Children learning to read in an unfamiliar language face a double burden. Not only must they learn new academic concepts and skills, but they must also do so using words they do not understand. The study under review did not suggest the remedies that were put in place to address the challenges faced by children who could not read in the familiar language were dealt with. This study addressed this gap through assessing measures that were put in place to help children with difficulties in understanding the language of instruction.

## **2.4.2 Regional Perspective**

The physical environment where learning and teaching takes place from has been a huge challenge that has been faced in teaching local languages. A study by Vuita (2010) on the impact of the teaching and learning environment with Grades 1 to 4 pupils in Malawi, the study employed a qualitative approach in which both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis were used. The target population for this study were grade 1 to 4 pupils, preschools teachers, and school headteachers. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews and observations and it was analyzed through content analysis. The study found that there were a number of challenges that teachers in Malawi were facing in class when teaching literacy. His findings showed that physical environment had negatively impacted on the teaching and learning process in Grades 1 to 4 classes because the learning environment was not appealing to the learners. Additionally, the study recommended that learning environments must be conducive and appealing for effective learning to take place. The study under review did not illustrate thorough results on how learning environment and language of instruction affect the long-term learning abilities of pupils. This study discussed the effects of learning environment and language instruction on the long-term learning ability of a child.

Rotff (2019) conducted a study on effects of Scaffolding on the education development of learners. This study used a qualitative research approach in which participants were selected purposively. Questionnaires and focus group were used in data collection. Data from primary sources was analysed through content analysis. The study found that there was need for proper Scaffolding that would help to break learning into chunks. The study under review did not outline how the quality education would achieve collectively.

Dante (2018) conducted a study on the impact first language as a medium of instruction in Africa. The study adopted a quantitative research approach. Simple random technique was used in the selection of participants. Data was analysed descriptively. The study found that, that real objects might help children learn new vocabulary by capturing the meaning of a word and using it. The study under review concentrated much the psychomotor development of a child sidelining the cognitive development.

In Kenya, findings from a study conducted by Benson, (2016) pointed out the process of determining the language policy as the main challenge in schools. The study looked at comprehensive language planning requires an in-depth situational analysis of the sociolinguistic and educational context of the community. Data for this qualitative study were collected through 29 individual interviews. Descriptive content analysis was used to identify themes reflective of the data from the individual interviews and field notes. His findings indicated that the analysis may include that a mapping exercise is needed to gather reliable and up-to-date information about which languages are spoken, read, and written; in which areas; at what proficiency level; and attitudes towards the language. Discussions would need to be held with a wide range of stakeholders, including education officials at all levels of the system, teachers, and language specialists, nongovernmental organizations that support education, community representatives, parents, and school management associations. Any language in education policy which is developed and implemented needs to be linked to the goals of the education system and support a country to reach its education goals in terms of learning outcomes, access and equity, and language proficiency.

Taylor (2018) conducted a study the effects of language acquisition on the cognitive development of pupils. The study adopted a mixed methodology approach with 105 participants participated in the study. A concurrent triangulation was used for data validation drawing from questionnaires, interviews and observations. The study found that, when children learn using all of their senses, they remember the material better. The study under review concentrated much on the cognitive development of child ignoring the psychomotor development.

Another study conducted in Botswana by Adams and Swadener (2017) on early Childhood Education and Teacher Development in Botswana: Lessons Learned. Cross-national studies of early childhood professional development and the roles of the state in providing for early childhood development and care can be informed through the lessons learned in one contemporary African society. The study found that the government does not help in the construction of the needed learning facilities for early literacy. Hence, a number of preschools do not have a permanent building. Teaching and learning are usually held outdoors under trees. Equally unequal are the availability of professional

development opportunities and the implementation of curricula. The ratio of children to teachers is also an issue because some programs have a 1 to 100 ratio. The study under review did not outline the factors contributing to government's failure to construct ECE centres in as much knowing the role of government in education development.

### **2.4.3 Local Perspective**

Being expected to teach in a language that they are not familiar with is another challenge that teachers face. A study conducted by Meki (2015) in Lusaka on the challenges that teachers face in teaching literacy. In meeting the specific objectives of the study, a mixed method approach was used because the study concurrently conducted the quantitative and qualitative elements in the same phase of the research process and it weighed the methods equally, analysed the two components independently, and interpreted the results together. Descriptive survey research designed was employed and a purposive sampling technique in selecting participants who deemed potential information depositaries. A closed and open-ended questionnaire was designed and used to collect data on a sample size of sixty (60) respondents. The study found that teachers are expected to use a language of instruction themselves and children are not familiar with. The study also found that, familiar language-based instruction was more supportive than others were. The gap identified from the study was that the study did not mention measures that were put in place to address the challenges faced by teachers who could not neither read nor speak the local language of instruction. This gap was addressed in this study through establishing measures used when teaching ECE learners using local language.

A similar study conducted by Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) on impact of translanguaging as pedagogical practice on literacy levels among grade one literacy learners in Lundazi District, Zambia. The study involved two classes and one teacher. An experimental class was treated with translanguaging practices while the second class was a control class. One teacher taught literacy in the two classes and the sample was 83 participants broken down as 41 pupils per class who wrote the pre and post-tests as well as one teacher. Standardized regional tests were used to collect data from the two classes while classroom observation, field notes and interviews with the teachers were used to collect qualitative data. Quantitative data from the tests was analysed using SPSS version 21 and

a Levene's test provided the means and compared them to understand the significance of the results in the study. Qualitative data was analysed thematically. The study findings revealed that the Post experimental test results showed higher average mean scores for the experimental group (M=15.10) than the control group (M=11.71). The performance of learners in the experimental group was significantly different from the control group [ $t(52.960) = 4.454, p < 0.001$ ]. Thus, the difference in literacy performance can be attributed to the translanguaging practices which were used to teach literacy in the experimental class. This means that translanguaging led to increased learner performance while monolingual language practices negatively affected learner's literacy performance. Additional results showed that as a result of translanguaging, there was increased learner classroom participation, multiliteracy development, cultural preservation and learners' identity affirmation. The study also pointed out that there was a mismatch between the language of instruction and dominant learner's familiar language. The study under review did not concentrate much on how multilingual language impacted teachers' teaching experiences but rather paid much attention to the benefits of multilingualism in classrooms. This study assessed how multilingual language impacted teachers' teaching experiences in the Zambian education system with special reference to ECE.

A study by Kalindi (2015) on reading problems in Bemba of 60 Grade 2 poor readers (identified by teachers) from selected basic schools in Kasama and Mpika urban, Northern province. This study used a qualitative research approach in which participants were selected purposively. Questionnaires and focus group were used in data collection. Data from primary sources was analysed through content analysis. The study established that 13 per cent of the children could read two-syllable words, and only 8 per cent could identify 20 letters of the alphabet. The study showed that even with excellent and intensive instructions in place, some children still failed to make satisfactory progress in reading. It turned out the exclusive use of standard Bemba was a barrier to initial literacy. The variety of Bemba used in multi-ethnic/multilingual classes was not the mother tongue or familiar language to a good number of pupils, and hence they struggled to learn to read and write it. There is a sense that the misrecognition of the standard language aside, the imposition of zonal languages as of official languages of education has negative effects on initial literacy development in communities that speak a different

local language from the one officially sanctioned. The study under review was silent on the interventions that should be put in place to help learners who cannot grasp local language of instruction. These established measures used when teaching ECE learners using a local language.

In a similar study, Mubanga (2017) concludes that since the pupils in Lwimba area mostly speak Soli they have problems with Nyanja which is the language of initial literacy for the region. The negative effects of the institutionalized collective misrecognition of the standard official language as described above, are in part a consequence and are compounded by outdated orthographies in use. The study has lamented the fact that opaque orthographic systems in Zambia and other African countries have also contributed to poor literacy levels in African languages. He gives examples in which familiar sounds and words are made unfamiliar due to faulty writing systems or spelling rules that make children's knowledge of particular languages 'invalid.' The study under reviewed lacked ambiguity on the kind of difficulties learners in Lwimba were having with the local language. This study assessed the challenges encountered by learners and teachers in the use of mother tongue as a language of instruction.

Musango (2010) conducted a study the factors affecting teaching and learning process in ECE centres in Zambia. The study used a qualitative research approach with a sample size of 54. Convenience sampling technique was used. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews and observations. Data was analysed through narrative analysis. The study found that physical environment has a serious impact on the teaching and learning process. The study under review concentrated much on the social environments influencing the learning process of pupils.

Sikwasha (2021) conducted a study on the implications for local language as medium for instruction in ECE in Zambia. The study adopted a mixed methodology approach with 105 participants participated in the study. A concurrent triangulation was used for data validation drawing from questionnaires, interviews and observations. The study found that, that teaching literacy required a lot of support from both teachers and parents. The

study under reviewed ignored the cultural aspects of pupils using a mother tongue as home as a medium of instruction.

## **2.5 Chapter summary**

Under this chapter, the researcher reviewed literature and other studies on the topic of study at global, regional and local levels in order for the researcher to have a better understanding of the topic in line with the outlined objectives and research questions in chapter one. The cited literature helps the study in understanding what others have said on the study “pedagogical practices early childhood education (ECE) teachers use to teach literacy skills in rural centers of Pemba District in Zambia”.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter concentrates on research design, area of the study, sample or population of the study, sampling procedures, method of data collection, data collection tools, reliability and validity of the data, data analysis methods, work schedule and expected budget.

### **3.2 Research Paradigm**

According to Green (2019), the research process has three major dimensions: ontology, epistemology, and methodology. According to them a research paradigm is an all-encompassing system of interrelated practice and thinking that define the nature of enquiry along these three dimensions. The term paradigm originated from the Greek word paradigm which means pattern and was first used by Thomas Kuhn (1962) to denote a conceptual framework shared by a community of scientists which provided them with a convenient model for examining problems and finding solutions. Kuhn defines a paradigm as: “an integrated cluster of substantive concepts, variables and problems attached with corresponding methodological approaches and tools...” According to him, the term paradigm refers to a research culture with a set of beliefs, values, and

assumptions that a community of researchers has in common regarding the nature and conduct of research. A paradigm therefore implies a pattern, structure and framework or system of scientific and academic ideas, values and assumptions (Howard, 2018).

Ontological and epistemological aspects concern what is commonly referred to as a person's worldview which has significant influence on the perceived relative importance of the aspects of reality. Two possible worldviews are: objectivistic and constructivist. These different ways of seeing the world have repercussions in most academic areas; yet none of these views is considered to be superior to the other. Both may be appropriate for some purposes and insufficient or overly complex for other purposes. Also, a person may change his/her view depending on the situation. In this regard, this study will make use of elements from both views and will consider them as complementary.

Furthermore, Howard (2018) classified research paradigms into three philosophically distinct categories as positivism, interpretivism and critical postmodernism. This three-fold classification is considered ideal for this study because these three categories can be used to conveniently place the more specific psychological and sociological theories used in the field of education. This study falls more on the interpretivists approach because it intended to interpret the findings into meaningful themes for easy understanding.

### **3.2.1 Interpretivism**

Interpretive researchers believe that the reality to consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world; thus, they may adopt an inter-subjective epistemology and the ontological belief that reality is socially constructed. According to Willis (2018) interpretivists are anti-foundationalists, who believe there is no single correct route or particular method to knowledge. Walsham (2019) argues that in the interpretive tradition there are no 'correct' or 'incorrect' theories. Instead, they should be judged according to how 'interesting' they are to the researcher as well as those involved in the same areas. They attempt to derive their constructs from the field by an in-depth examination of the phenomenon of interest. Howard (2018) argues that interpretivists assume that knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation, hence there is no objective knowledge which is independent of thinking, reasoning humans.



Interpretive paradigm is underpinned by observation and interpretation, thus, to observe is to collect information about events, while to interpret is to make meaning of that information by drawing inferences or by judging the match between the information and some abstract pattern (Reeves, 2016). It attempts to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them Reeves (2016:34) note that the “interpretivist” paradigm stresses the need to put analysis in context. The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals. They use meaning (versus measurement) oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects. Interpretive research does not predefine dependent and independent variables but focuses on the full complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges (Kaplan and Maxwell, 2019). This is the interpretive approach, which aims to explain the subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind social action. The interest of interpretivists is not the generation of a new theory, but to judge or evaluate, and refine interpretive theories. The use of this theory will be iterative process between data collection and analysis in this current research study.

### **3.3 Research Approach**

This study used a qualitative research approach which is based on methods of observation and enquiry. Qualitative research “explores the meaning of human experiences and creates the possibilities of change through raised awareness and purposeful action” (Taylor & Francis, 2016). Qualitative research focuses on life experiences; they are more about the “why” and “how” rather than the “how many”, or “how often”.

Furthermore, qualitative research is naturalistic; it attempts to study the everyday life of different groups of people and communities in their natural setting; it is particularly useful to study educational settings and processes. “. Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter; it attempts to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (Charles, 2017). According to Domegan and Fleming (2007), “Qualitative research aims to explore and to discover issues about the problem on hand, because very little is known about the problem. There is usually uncertainty about dimensions and characteristics of problem. It

uses soft data and gets rich data. According to Myers (2009), qualitative research is designed to help researchers understand people, and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. Such studies allow the complexities and differences of worlds-under-study to be explored and represented. In qualitative research, different knowledge claims, enquiry strategies, and data collection methods and analysis are employed. Therefore, this study will adopt a Qualitative approach through employing the use of phenomenological research design which is descriptive and objective in describing the state of affairs at the time of study.

### **3.4 Research Design**

This study used a phenomenological research design. The researcher sought to describe as accurately as possible the issues around the pedagogical practices early childhood education (ECE) teachers use to teach literacy skills in rural centers of Pemba district in Zambia.

Phenomenological research design aims to uncover what a particular experience means to a group of people and how they experienced it and for this study this approach requires researchers to set aside their prejudices and a priori assumptions and focus mainly on the immediate experience as it requires the researcher to first describe the lived experiences objectively and then reflect on the description with reference to the existing theories about the pedagogical practices early childhood education (ECE) teachers use to teach literacy skills in rural centers of Pemba district in Zambia.

### **3.5 Population**

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observable characteristic. In other words, population is the aggregate of all that conforms to a given specification. McMillan defines population as a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that confirm to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research. Population can also refer to an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. Population also refers to the larger group from which the

sample was taken. According to Bryman (2017), target population is defined as the units from which the sample population is selected for a particular study. In this study, the target population consisted of the District Officials, School Managers, ECE teachers and pupils in the three selected ECE centers in Pemba District.

### 3.6. Sample size

The study consisted of the 1 District official, 3 School Managers, 15 ECE Teachers drawn from three schools, and 90 pupils for observation in the three schools which gave a total sample of 109 participants.

**Table 3:1-Number of respondents**

SN	Respondent	Number of respondents
1	District official	1
2	School managers	3
	ECE Teachers	15
4	ECE learners from 3 schools	90
	<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>109</b>

### 3.7 Sampling Procedures

Purposive sampling was used to come up with the district official, ECE teachers and School Managers, this was entirely on the judgment of the researcher. Simple random sampling was used to come up with the 3 schools, this was done by getting an inventory of all the ECE centers and conduct a ruffle draw to come up with 3 ECE centers. The learners were conclusively used for class observations only with the help of class teachers from 3 schools in which a minimum of 30 learners were housed in one class. Purposive sampling technique was used to come up with 30 early childhood learners from each of the three schools that were selected.

### 3.8 Research Instruments and Procedure of Data Collection

The study used Interview Guides, Classroom Observations and Interview Guide.

### **3.8.1 Interviews**

Interviews are the common method of collecting data in any qualitative study. This study used semi-structured interviews on teachers and head teachers as another method of data collection and in-depth interviews were conducted. This helped to collect more information from respondents with easy probing of more answers. Hornby (2019) as quoted defines an interview as the meeting in which a researcher asks somebody questions in order to find out his or her views. In addition, Bogdan and Birklen (2018) define interview as face-to-face version of the questionnaire. For the target key informants, teachers and head teachers, the Rationale for selecting interview method was based on the potential method had to help the researcher obtain more information and in greater depth, through probing beyond the predetermined questions. Semi structured interviews were selected because unlike the structured interview, the researcher was free to ask for additional detailed questions that could explore more deeply into the participants deep inner feelings, that means a researcher did not have to stick to the interview guide only. Therefore, the researcher used personal interviews in collecting data.

### **3.8.2 Observation**

The observation method was used to observe ECE classes and collect data. Marshall and Rossman (2019) define observation as "the systematic description of events and behavior in the social setting chosen for study". This method implies to the collection of information by way of investigators own observation, without interviewing the participant. The information obtained relates to what is currently happening and is not complicated by either the past behavior or future intentions or attitudes of participants (Kothari, 2017). When the investigator observes by making himself more or less a member of the group, he /she is observing so that, he/she can experience what members of the group experience. This kind of observation is called participant observation. In the present study, non-participatory observation was used to verify or abolish information provided in interviews. Particularly, this was used to verify teacher's professional ability to communicate effectively especially on teacher students' interactions during the teaching and learning processes.

### **3.6.3 Documentary Analysis**

This method of data collection was used to review documents as school reports, schemes of work and lesson plans specially on pedagogical practices early childhood education (ECE) teachers use to teach literacy skills. A document is a source of data in its own right (Daniel, 2019). Documents are described as communications between parties in the study, where the researcher acts as verifier (Tellis, 2017). According to Kombo and Tromp (2011), there are two major sources of data used in research. These are primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are data gathered directly from participants through interviews, focused group discussions, observation, circulars, minutes from meetings, newsletters, newspapers, teaching documents and photographs.

On the other side, a secondary source involves gathering data that already has been collected by somebody else. Examples of secondary data are those involved in collection and analysis of published materials from books, journal materials and electronically stored information. These sources were used because written materials can provide important insights into both public and private opinions. Hence, documents were a vital source of data in this study.

### **3.6.4. Quality Assurance**

The assurance of quality for information and data in this study was based on its validity and reliability. Mugenda and Mugenda (2016) define reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. Thus, Reliability is the consistency or accuracy of the research instrument, in measuring whatever is measured. An instrument gives similar results for the same individual at different times to the degree. On the other hand, validity refers to the extent to which a measurement does what it is supposed to do.

Credibility is present when the research results mirror the views of the people under study. Credibility in qualitative research means the confidence of the data. Validity and reliability are justifiable in research despite the fact that qualitative researchers make use of various procedures to establish validity and reliability. This represents investment of adequate time to learn culture, test for false information, build trust and usually repeating

the procedure central to the case study. This can be attained through consultation of appropriate documents and preliminary visits to the companies themselves.

In this study, every participant contacted were given opportunities to decline to participate in the study in order to make certain that data collection sessions include only those who were prepared to take part and ready to offer information openly. Credibility in research is an assessment of whether or not the research findings represent a “credible” conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants’ original data (Braun, 2016).

Transferability in research is utilized by the readers of study. Even though generalizability typically is applicable only to certain forms of quantitative methods, transferability can apply in varying degrees to many types of research. Unlike generalizability, transferability does not involve broad claims but invites readers of research to make associations between elements of research and their own experience. For this study, it is crucial that adequate thick description of the phenomenon under study is given to allow audience to have a proper understanding of it, thus enabling them to compare the instances of the phenomenon explained in the research document with those that they have seen emerge in their situations.

Dependability ensures that the research findings are consistent and could be repeated. This is measured by the standard of which the research is conducted, analysed and presented. Each process in the study should be reported in detail to enable an external researcher to repeat the inquiry and achieve similar results. This was attained through Ongoing support to address feedback, reducing revisions and this research establish dependability by having an outside researcher conduct an inquiry audit on the research study (Boyatzis, 2019).

Conformability in a qualitative study is how the research is objective, especially when collecting and analyzing the data (Lichtman, 2018). It helps to make sure that the findings remain neutral and be confirmed and collaborated by others. Conformability is the last criterion of Trustworthiness that a qualitative researcher must establish. This

criterion has to do with the level of confidence that the research study's findings are based on the participants' narratives and words rather than potential researcher biases. This study will achieve this through Audit Trail where the researcher details the process of data collection, data analysis, and interpretation of the data. These details can help provide valuable insight for readers to understand how the themes emerged from the data.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

The collected data was analysed through thematic analysis. This study used thematic analysis a technique for conducting qualitative research as it helped in understanding the patterns of meaning within a text and this analysis technique works well for both primary and secondary data types. In this study both inductive and deductive approaches were used for conducting this analysis and used any data including interviews, observations, field research, and even qualitative data. Thematic analysis is essential for qualitative research as it is used to understand the in-depth meaning of the data (Kiger and Varpio, 2020). Researchers understand their meanings and then generate codes. These codes further generated themes that helped reach specific results. As a qualitative research, thematic analysis was also helpful in dealing with a large amount of data.

### **3.8. Ethical Considerations**

Ethical concerns pertaining to the study was taken into consideration. Prior to the fieldwork, the researcher wrote a letter to seek authority from Pemba District Education Board Office and copy to the Provincial Education Officer. Verbal consent was sought from the respondents Creswell, (2017). The researcher briefed all respondents about the purpose of the research and of the fact that participation in the study was voluntary. Furthermore, the researcher assured the respondents that all data to be collected was given maximum confidentiality and that the names of respondents and schools involved was not going to be disclosed or be used in the report for academic purpose only. Above all the researchers will have to respect the privacy of respondents.

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

The chapter presented the research design, area of the study, sample or population of the study, sampling procedures, method of data collection, data collection tools, reliability

and validity of the data, data analysis methods, expected findings, questionnaires and documentary search as data collection tools for the study which was analysed using thematic analysis and data analysis methods respectively.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Overview**

This chapter presents findings that were gathered in the field. The study sought to establish the Pedagogical Practices Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teachers use to Teach Literacy Skills in Rural Centers of Pemba District of Zambia. Research respondents that took part in the study included were District Officials, school managers and ECE teachers in Pemba District. The instruments used in the study included Interview guides and observation checklists.

#### **4.2. Strategies teachers use to teach literacy in ECE centers in Pemba rural schools**

To gather information on what teaching methodologies being used in teaching literacy in ECE classes in Pemba, the study engaged ECE teachers, School managers and the district official.

##### **4.2.1 Findings from the district official**

The district official was asked on the teaching methodologies which teachers of ECE used to teach their classes in Pemba district. The study established that, learner centered, demonstration and role play were some of the main methodologies used the lessons. The district official said as follows:



*“I know of many strategies that can be generally used to teach literacy to learners. However, methods that can be specifically used to teach Literacy to learners in Pemba Rural Schools should be methods that are involving or learner centered. As such, I think methods including Group work, listening and speaking are ideal for children.”*

The participants were asked on the teachers’ experiences when using effective strategies in teaching literacy. The study established that, some teachers had good experiences where others did not but those that had bad experiences were the teachers who were not familiar with the language of instruction. The district official observed that:

*Teachers have good experiences- those that have good command of the language of instruction. However, there is a possibility that those teachers with a poor command of the language could be facing challenges, and their experiences could be bad.*

The participant was further asked to explain the Teachers activities in teaching literacy in the schools. The study established that, children learnt well when teachers used playful activities such as games, song rhymes and poems. The District Official stated that:

*I am not quite sure of the actual activities that ECE teachers engage in with the children. What I know is that young children learn well through songs, games poems and rhymes.*

#### **4.2.2 Findings from School managers**

Participants were asked to mention the teaching methodologies ECE teachers used in teaching literacy in their classes. The study established that, teachers used a number of methods which were, Games, song, storytelling retelling, and role-play as a method of teaching. School manager 1 observed that:

*There are many methods that I have come to realize that they are being used to teach literacy to children. There is one workshop I attended, and I realized that methods such as Games and*

*Storytelling are currently being used to teach literacy for children.*

School manager 2 noted that:

*I observed one lesson in my school and the teacher used wide range of teaching methods to teach children. For instance, I could see she used methods such as Role play, Storytelling and retelling methods and Songs. These methods were very effective methods because they kept children focused on one activity for a longer period of time and kept them active rather than bored.*

School manager 3 said:

*There is a wide range of teaching methods that any teacher can pick on to teach literacy to children. These methods are methods that have been tried, tested and used for some time now. Methods such as Role play methods, Demonstration, Games and Songs have existed for a long time and have really helped teachers to teach literacy. I should also mention interactive methods such as Dramatization and Storytelling and retelling (Field data, 2024).*

Participants were also asked to describe the pupils' experiences in learning literacy in the language of instruction. The study established that, pupils were not struggling as the language being used to teach in classrooms was their learner's language of play and learners who were very familiar with the language being used in class enjoyed the lessons.

School manager 1 observed that:

*There is a time I observed an ECE class during our routine checks for classrooms. The experiences I found were just okay, I think. Learners were responding well, and the teacher was using a lot of songs to teach, so it was so interesting all in all.*

School manager 2 mentioned that;

*I do agree with the local languages policy of teaching literacy as the experience of pupils is encouraging as pupils are able to relate what they learn to their own situations.*

Participants were also asked to explain the teachers' experiences in learning literacy in the language of instruction. The study established that, meaningful learning takes place only when the medium of instruction is familiar to the teacher. School manager 1 observed that said:

*I think meaningful learning will only take place if the language of instruction brings meaningful and authentic communication between teachers and learners. The language used matters most especially in dealing with situations which detail learners' familiarity with the medium of instruction that is being used. That is the only time when children are seen to be having good experiences with the language being used.*

School manager 2 said:

*I think there are good experiences teachers are having, more especially at my school. ECE teachers some have challenges with the language of instruction.*

School manager 1 said:

*I have been receiving a number of complaints from teachers about the language of instruction. This has shown that teachers are having quite an experience that is uneasy for them.*

Participants were also asked about the teachers' activities in teaching literacy in local language. The study established that, ECE teachers used play, stories and games. School manager 1 noted that:

*I have been seeing different activities being done by the ECE teacher at my school. Some of the activities I have seen include plays, drama, games and stories. Sometimes I see a lot of play going on and the teacher surely plans for it.*

School manager 2 said:

*ECE teachers have several activities that they engage in with their learners. When it comes to teaching literacy, I see our teacher use games, songs and stories. These are the only ones I have noticed, although there could be more.*

School manager 3 said:

*On the activities that teachers do to teacher literacy, there are actually several of them. I have physically seen learners say poems, alliterations and games. The teachers are usually part of these activities when children are playing.*

### **4.2.3 Findings from ECE Teachers**

Participants were asked to mention the teaching methodologies being used in teaching literacy in ECE classes. The study established that, the participants used Picture reading, look and say, demonstration, role-play songs and stories. Teacher 1 said:

*I use a number of methods to teach literacy in my class. Sometimes the methods I use depend on the number of learners I have. However, most of the times I use methods such as Picture reading methods look and say methods and demonstration.*

Teacher 2 said:

*There are a variety of teaching methods that are used to teach literacy. But the most prominent if you want to teach learner to recognize sounds you can use the look and say methods. Sometimes, when the teacher wants to enforce a certain way of doing something, for instance, how to correctly pronounce or say a sound, we can use demonstration methods.*

Teacher 3 said:

*Teaching methods are very cardinal to teaching and learning of learning in and outside the classroom. More especially methods such as picture reading are good for a teacher teaching literacy to children.*

Participants were also asked on their experiences in learning literacy in the language of instruction. The study established that, participants taught in a zonal language. Teacher 1 observed said:

*My experience as a teacher teaching literacy in a zonal local language has been quite interesting. I think it is just fine that Chitongo is used in school. And when these pupils are playing you hear some of them using Chitongo.*

Teacher 2 noted that:

*For me obviously I would have wished that teaching and learning of literacy was English as early as grade two. We can't put English aside because where ever a child goes to learn even in other provinces or countries one can communicate in English without any problem and it won't affect their performance. So, I think both local familiar language and English are very important.*

Teacher 3 said:

*There is really an issue when it comes to teaching children literacy using this so called zonal local language. Children are barely able to understand just even the smallest concepts. So, we cannot say that the experiences that these children have are good experiences.*

Participants were also asked if the ECE teachers understood the policy of language of instruction. The study established that, the participants understood the policy however, issues that hinder policy implementation, including that the policy talks about the

language of instruction being the language of play; familiar language and local language which is rather confusing to them. Teacher 1 noted that

*Personally, I have understood the policy very well. I know exactly what it expects of me, however, apart from just the policy, there are other external factors that affect program implementation.*

Teacher 2 said:

*As teachers, we have been attending workshops and CPDs addressing the subject of language policy implementation. We have been well informed and enlightened, and we know the right things to do. What is disturbing us are these teacher group meetings that we have about the language of instruction. I personally, I am very aware of the current language policy and its expectations.*

Teacher 3 said:

*I think the language policy is not easy to understand. It has so many things in it. It talks about the language of instruction being the language of play, familiar language and local language. It is not so clear in my view.*

Participants were also asked to mention the activities in teaching literacy in local language. The study established that some of the activities that ECE teachers used when teaching literacy in a local language were sand play, building blocks, role-play drawing, painting, music and dance, jigsaws, shape sorting, nature play, role play, songs, games, rhymes and card games. Teacher 1 said:

*There are so many activities that we use to teach literacy. These activities are carefully planned for, and they really make teaching literacy an exciting experience. Some of the activities include sand play, role play, building blocks, character play, drawing and painting*

Teacher 2 said:

*Some of the activities that I use to teach literacy include music and dance, games jigsaws, shape sorting, and nature play. Normally, these activities are meant to trigger the literacy development in children even just by allowing them to talk. We also use memory games and card games.*

Teacher 3 said:

*Teaching literacy to children involves the use of a number of activities. Activities such as role play, songs, games, rhymes and card games help to make the process of learning interesting to the children. As such, it becomes easy for the teacher to enforce or impart knowledge in young children.*

### **4.3 Teaching learning method (TLM) being used to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba district.**

To gather information on the teaching learning method (TLM) being used to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba district, the study engaged ECE teachers, School managers and the district officials.

#### **4.3.1 Findings from the ECE teachers**

The ECE teachers were asked what they understood by the term teaching learning method, various responses were given pertaining to this question. Teacher 1 observed that:

*"When I think of the term 'teaching-learning method,' the first thing that comes to mind is the various strategies and techniques that I can use in my classroom to facilitate student learning. One method that I find particularly effective is the use of group work and collaborative learning.*

Teacher 2 noted:

*"When I think about the term 'teaching-learning method,' I see it as the various approaches and strategies that I can use to facilitate the process of learning in my classroom. One method that I really enjoy using is the inquiry-based approach, where I present pupils with a problem or question and then guide them through the process of exploring and discovering the answer."*

Teacher 3 said:

*"One method that I find particularly effective is the use of cooperative learning. In this approach, I divide my pupils into small groups and have them work together to complete a task or solve a problem. This not only encourages teamwork and communication skills, but it also helps to reinforce the material for the pupils as they teach and learn from one another. I also believe that it's important to incorporate a variety of learning modalities into my teaching, such as visual aids, audio recordings, and kinesthetic activities."*

To gain a deeper understanding of the realities of ECE teaching, the study interviewed experienced ECE teachers, asking them to share their perspectives on teaching and learning methods. The study established a range of effective teaching and learning methods, including play-based learning, student-centered approaches, differentiated instruction, social-emotional development, and collaborative learning. Teacher 1 noted that:

*"In my experience, young children thrive when their learning is centered around play. I try to create an environment where they can explore, discover, and learn through hands-on activities."*  
*"For example, when teaching a unit on shapes, I might set up a learning center with various shape-sorting toys, blocks, and art materials. The children freely engage with these materials, experimenting and problem-solving as they play."*



Teacher 2 noted:

*"I have found that when I involve the children in the learning process, they become more engaged and invested in their own growth. I try to tap into their interests and prior knowledge, and then build upon that foundation."*

Teacher 3 said:

*"Each child is unique, with their own learning styles, strengths, and challenges. I have found that a one-size-fits-all approach simply doesn't work. Instead, I try to tailor my teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of my pupils." She explained, "For a lesson on counting, I might have one group working with manipulatives to practice one-to-one correspondence, while another group focuses on number recognition through interactive games."*

Participants were asked on the availability and usefulness of teaching learning resources. The study established that, there was a shortage of teaching and learning materials in the school as such, it was difficult to plan effectively because some resources were not locally available. Teacher 1 observed that:

*"There is a shortage of teaching and learning materials in the department as such, it is difficult for me to plan effectively because some of the materials are not locally found guides available for ECE teachers."*

Teacher 2 noted:

*"I have found that not all teaching materials are readily available at this school."*

Teacher 3:

*“For the time I have here, we experience shortages of teaching learning materials because the department take long to request for materials.”*

Participants were asked on the methods teachers use in teaching literacy in ECE. Participants established that, role play, stories and games were some of the noted methods that were used in ECE. School manager 1 observed that:

*I have been seeing different activities being done by the ECE teacher at my school. Some of the activities I have seen include role play, games and stories.”*

School manager 2 noted that:

*When it comes to literacy, I see our teachers use games, songs and stories.”*

School manager 3 also noted that:

*I have physically seen learners say poems. The teachers are usually part of these activities when children are playing.”*

The ECE teachers were asked to mention the techniques being used in literacy in ECE classes. The participants pointed to demonstration, role-play songs and stories as the main techniques being used in literacy in ECE classes. Teacher 1 observed said that:

*I use a number of methods to literacy in my class. Sometimes the methods I use depend on the number of learners I have. However, most of the times I use methods such as demonstration, games and role play in my lessons.*

Teacher 2 noted that:

*There are a variety of techniques that are used literacy. But the most prominent if you want to teach learner to recognize sounds you can use the look and say methods. Sometimes, when the teacher wants to enforce a certain way of doing something, for instance, how to correctly pronounce or say a sound, we can use demonstration methods*

Teacher 3 said:

*Teaching methods are very cardinal to teaching and learning of learning in and outside the classroom. More especially methods such as demonstrations are good for a teacher literacy.*

#### **4.4 Challenges faced in teaching literacy in rural ECE center of Pemba district**

The third objective explored the challenges that ECE teachers face when teaching literacy using local language. To gather information under this objective, the study included respondents such as the District Official, School manager and ECE teachers. The findings are presented under the following headings:

##### **4.4.1 Findings from the District Official**

The District Official was asked about the Challenges ECE teachers face when teaching literacy in a local language. The study established that language policy, language of play activities and language of instruction were some of the notable challenges some teachers were facing. The District Official noted that:

*One challenge I have come to notice is that of the language policy. We have a lot of teachers who seem not to understand what the language policy is all about. When I visited their schools one teacher even said, I'm not too sure of the language policy as we were not oriented on what language should be used, but we use local languages which seem to be in conflict with their dialects which are being used at household level. This is in a case where pupils get confused when you use certain words which seem to be off their vocabulary.*

The Participant was also asked if the District Education Office provided administrative support in teaching literacy in local language. The study established that, most of the

schools in the district received the support, nevertheless sometimes materials were limited to reach all schools in the district. The District Official noted that.

*All the schools in my District receive the support but sometimes the materials are not enough for all the schools in the district.*

Participants was also asked if teachers had enough teaching materials to use when teaching literacy in a local language in Pemba district. The study established that, materials were available in most schools but were not just enough to cater for all the schools in Pemba district. The District Official stated that:

*Materials are available but not just enough to cater for all the learners. That is why we always encourage teachers for be creative to use the locally available materials.*

#### **4.4.2 Findings from School Managers**

Participants were also asked the challenges ECE teachers faced when teaching literacy in a local language classroom. The study established that, the inability to use the language of instruction among teachers was one of the major challenges. School Head teachers 1 observed that:

*I think one challenge that ECE teachers face is the use of Chitonga in the teaching of initial literacy. They face challenges in which language to use because the language in the classroom. This is because children use English at home but learn Chitonga at school.*

School manager 2 noted that:

*One challenge that I have noticed is that some teachers are not well-versed in Chitonga. As a result, they do not teach confidently, and they always have to ask their colleagues about some words in Chitonga as they plan. This becomes challenging when these teachers are planning in the absence of those that they ask.*

School manager 3 said:

*The challenge that is very noticeable is the teaching of learners that come on transfer from private schools and also from other provinces because they were using a different language where they came from. Teachers are really finding it challenging to teach such children because whatever they say the child will either just be looking at them, failing to understand what is being talked about.*

Participants were also asked if they offered support to the ECE teachers when they teach literacy in a local language. The study established that, they offered support to the ECE teacher in their schools. School manager 1 observed that:

*At my school we do offer administrative support to the ECE teachers by taking them for workshops and CPDS we also advise them to be creative as they plan activities for literacy.*

School manager 2:

*I support them by organizing CPDS in the school and we also give the teachers materials for them to make teaching materials. Our school budgets for teaching and learning materials every term. I think that itself is being supportive enough.*

Participants were also asked if the teacher-centered approach of teaching, affect pupils' learning to read and write in teaching literacy in schools they responded that that the teacher-centered approach of teaching actually affected teaching in several ways including that it limits the learners in terms of language use. The study established that, the method was quite unfair to the learners because the teachers were the ones in command of the language being used. School manager 1 observed that:

*I think it does. The approach makes the teacher to be in command of what the learner learns. So, I feel that if the teacher is effective so will be his learners.*

School manager 2 said:

*Teaching using the teacher centered approach is not a bad thing per se, just that the variations that it is used should be different. What I mean is it must not be used every time, because it limits the learners in terms of language. Learners also know something and as such, they must be allowed to do what they know.*

School manager 3 said:

*The teacher-centered approach is a good method to teach literacy. However, we should remind ourselves that we are talking about teaching literacy in local language and the learners know this language. In this case, the approach becomes a little unfair to the learners because they also know something that teacher can learn from them.*

Participants were also asked if they had enough teaching materials to use when teaching literacy in a local language in their schools. The study established that, some schools did not have enough materials to use and in most cases. School Manager 1 noted that:

*I cannot say that we have enough teaching materials no, the ECE teachers are advised to use locally available materials to enable them to teach smoothly in their classrooms.*

School Manager 2 observed that:

*At my school we have materials, but they are not enough, the teachers find some materials which the school does not have from other sources and help them to teach literacy properly.*

School Manager 3 said:

*We don't have any current material at all. All the materials available are outdated and are literally unusable.*

#### **4.4.3 Findings from ECE teachers**

Participants were asked about the challenges they were facing in teaching literacy in a local language. The study established that, challenges bordered around the understanding of the language policy and the language that was being used in learning and teaching materials. The study also established that, teachers did not understand the language policy and also that the materials for learning and teaching had a different language from what the learners were using when playing. Teacher 1 observed that:

*It seems this new policy was just brought for teachers to implement without providing teaching resources as well. As I am talking now, there are no books in our school or any other teaching and learning material. Our school cannot even afford to buy manila paper. I think government was just interested in telling us to implement without concern for materials. So this has really been a challenge and it has made our work so difficult and this has negatively contributed to learner participation in class.*

Teacher 2 noted that:

*I think one big problem is that there are no books for us to implement the 2013 revised curriculum using learner centered approaches. You know it is already difficult for us to teach in Chitonga and making teaching and learning aids without raw materials such as manila paper. Yes, sometimes a teacher can improvise but there is a limit to what one can improvise.*

Teacher 3 said:

*I know Chitonga but not the one that we are expected to teach in class. The syllabus and the textbooks have very difficult Chitonga that the learners in this area find very difficult to understand. The learners also complained that the Chitonga that they learn was*

*too complicated compared to the one some of their friends who speak it use.*

Participants were also asked if they received administrative support in teaching Literacy in local language. The study established that the support participants received only had to do with generally planning for school activities and not specifically teaching literacy. Teacher 1 observed that said:

*It cannot be true if I said that I receive administrative support in teaching literacy in my classroom. However, the support that I receive only has to do with merely planning for school activities and such. Sometimes, materials that I use to teach literacy are provided but I still have to take it upon myself to plan for literacy activities that I can use to teach the learners.*

Teacher 2 noted that:

*In my case, I absolutely receive administrative support when it comes to teaching of literacy. The thing is that I am not well versed in the language of instruction, so I always ask for help from the administration with materials that can help me to quickly learn the language of instruction and use it in the classroom. They have been very helpful and without them, it would have been very tough for me to teach literacy in local language*

Teacher 3 said:

*Teaching literacy requires a lot of support from both teachers and parents. The administration also has to play a directional role in teaching literacy in local language which is not the case at my school. What is on the ground is that parents want their children to learn English, and not local language. They do not see a point in learners going to school and still use the same language that they use at home. Teachers that are knowledgeable in the local*



*language and literacy issue are also negligent to those that need help. As a result, very little is being achieved.*

Participants were also asked if the teacher-centered approach of teaching, affected pupils' learning to read and write in teaching literacy in schools. The study established that, participants had other teaching methods that they used other than the teacher-centered methods because the teacher-centered approaches were not too effective to be used to teach children. Teacher 1 noted that:

*As an ECE teacher we have methods that we use to teach children. The teacher centered is not one of our preferred methods. We have methods that we use such as role play games and songs. For children to learn properly they have to be involved in the process of teaching and learning themselves.*

Teacher 2 said:

*The teacher centered method is not a good method to use when teaching literacy. The reason is that it limits the children from fully explore the language. ECE is about letting children be in charge of their own learning and the role of the teacher becomes just like that of a facilitator.*

Teacher 3 said:

*I feel we have completely downplayed the teacher-centered method of teaching. It has been used for a long time and it has borne fruits. It is not a bad method to use to teach literacy. It is very helpful when you as a teacher wants to instil certain knowledge in the children. Although as ECE teachers we have gone into learner centered approaches to encourage learners to be involved in their own learning.*

Participants were also asked how challenges can be reduced. The study established that, one of the ways in which these challenges can be reduced was the use of different

instruction in the classrooms as well as a Multisensory instruction approach in classrooms. Teacher 1 observed that:

*There is need for differentiated instruction. With this approach, teachers change and switch around what pupils need to learn, how they'll learn it, and how to get the material across to them. When a student struggles in one area, the teacher creates a plan that includes extra practice, step-by-step directions, and special homework. Find out more about [differentiated instruction](#).*

Teacher 2 said that:

*There is need for proper Scaffolding. This is a method that breaks learning into chunks. The chunks follow a logical order and move toward a clear goal. Teachers form a bridge between what pupils already know and what they cannot do on their own. These bridges are referred to as "scaffolds." They can include charts, pictures, and cue cards.*

Teacher 3 said that:

*There is need for a Multisensory instruction. This method links what pupils see, what they hear, how they move, and what they feel. When pupils learn using all of their senses, they remember the material better. Math teachers might use base ten blocks and two-sided counters so that pupils learn through touch. Drawing might help pupils [learn new vocabulary](#) by capturing the meaning of a word and sketching it. Each child learns differently. Teachers will use many creative methods to teach children, so they all learn.*

The District Official was asked about the Challenges ECE teachers face when teaching literacy in a local language. The study established that, a number of teachers in his district lacked the understanding of the language policy, language of play and language of instruction had them confused. The District Official said:

*One challenge I have come to notice is that of the language policy. We have a lot of teachers who seem not to understand what the language policy is all about. When I visited their schools one teacher even said, I'm not too sure of the language policy as we were not oriented on what language should be used, but we use local languages which seem to be in conflict with their dialects which are being used at household level. This is in a case where pupils get confused when you use certain words which seem to be off their vocabulary.*

The District Official was also asked the administrative support in teaching literacy in local language. The study established that, most of the schools in his district received the support, nevertheless sometimes materials were limited to reach all schools in the district. The District Official observed that:

*All the schools in my District receive the support but sometimes the materials are not enough for all the schools in the district.*

The District Official was also asked if teachers had enough teaching materials to use when teaching literacy in a local language in Pemba district. The study established that, materials were their but were not just enough to cater for all the schools in his district. The District Official observed that:

*Materials are available but not just enough to cater for all the learners. That is why we always encourage teachers for be creative enough to make these materials be used by all the learners.*

#### **4.4.4 Findings from School Managers**

Participants were asked if the ECE teachers understood the policy of language of instruction. The study established that, they were a number of challenges such as the inability to use the language of instruction among teachers. School Manager 1 observed that:

*I think one challenge that ECE teachers face is the use of Chitonga and not English in the teaching of initial literacy. They face challenges in which language to use because the language in the classroom.*

School Manager 2 said:

*One challenge that I have noticed is that some teachers are not well-versed in Chitonga. As a result, they do not teach confidently, and they always have to ask their colleagues about some words in Chitonga as they plan. This becomes challenging when these teachers are planning in the absence of those that they ask.*

School Manager 3 said:

*The challenge that is very noticeable is the teaching of learners that come on transfer from private schools and also from other provinces because they were using a different language where they came from. Teachers are really finding it challenging to teach such children because whatever they say the child will either just be looking at them, failing to understand what is being talked about.*

Participants were also asked if they offered support to the ECE teachers when they teach literacy in a local language. The study established that, schools were offered to support to the ECE teacher in their schools. School manager 1 observed that:

*At my school we do offer administrative support to the ECE teachers by taking them for workshops and CPDS we also advise them to be creative as they plan activities for literacy.*

School manager 2 said:

*I support them by organizing CPDS in the school and we also give the teachers materials for them to make teaching materials.*

*Our school budgets for teaching and learning materials every term. I think that its self is being supportive enough.*

School manager 3 said:

*I do not understand what kind of support is exactly needed by these ECE teachers. What I know is that as long as we include them in the school plan for T/L materials that's all. Do we need to also help them do teach literacy in their own classrooms?*

Participants were also asked if the teacher-centered approach of teaching, affected pupils' learning to read and write in teaching literacy in schools. The study established that, the teacher-centered approach of teaching actually affected teaching in several ways including that it limits the learners in terms of language use. School manager 1 noted that:

*I think it does. The approach makes the teacher to be in command of what the learner learns. So, I feel that if the teacher is effective so will be his learners.*

School manager 2 said:

*Teaching using the teacher centered approach is not a bad thing per se, just that the variations that it is used should be different. What I mean is it must not be used every time, because it limits the learners in terms of language. Learners also know something and as such, they must be allowed to do what they know.*

School manager 3 said:

*The teacher-centered approach is a good method to teach literacy. However, we should remind ourselves that we are talking about teaching literacy in local language and the learners know this language. In this case, the approach becomes a little unfair to the learners because they also know something that teacher can learn from them.*

Participants were also asked if they had enough teaching materials to use when teaching literacy in a local language in their schools. The study established that, most schools did not have enough materials to use and in most cases, they had to improvise. School manager 1 observed that:

*I cannot say that we have enough teaching materials no, the ECE teachers are advised to use locally available materials to enable them to teach smoothly in their classrooms.*

School manager 2 said:

*At my school we have materials, but they are not enough, the teachers find some materials which the school does not have from other sources and help them to teach literacy properly.*

School manager 3 said:

*We don't have any current material at all. All the materials available are outdated and are literally unusable.*

Participants were asked about how the challenges could be reduced in ECE. The study established that, supporting teachers holistically and equipping schools with enough teaching materials for ECE classes and activities were some of the ways in which challenges could be reduced. School manager 1 observed that:

*We have to support our teachers holistically and allow them to attend workshops to enhance their individual skills and competence.*

School manager 2 said:

*We need to equip our schools with enough teaching materials for ECE classes and activities to enhance teacher proficiency and productivity as most of teachers fail to deliver because of shortage of teaching and learning resources that has now seem to be their biggest challenge in delivering the best content.*

School manager 3 said:

*There is need to have round table discussions with ECE teachers, so we get to understand the challenges facing their teaching. This is to say, us heads have to engage our teachers in one way or another to allow them to have a workable environment.*

#### **4.4.5 Findings from ECE teachers**

When the ECE teachers were asked about the challenges that teachers face in teaching literacy in a local language the responses that were given bordered around the understanding of the language policy and the language that is being used in learning and teaching materials. The study established that, teachers did not understand the language policy and also that the materials for learning and teaching had a different language from what the learners were using when playing. Teacher 1 observed that:

*It seems this new policy was just brought for teachers to implement without providing teaching resources as well. As I am talking now, there are no books in our school or any other teaching and learning material. Our school cannot even afford to buy manila paper. I think government was just interested in telling us to implement without concern for materials. So, this has really been a challenge, and it has made our work so difficult and this has negatively contributed to learner participation in class.*

Teacher 2 noted that:

*I think one big problem is that there are no books for us to implement the revised curriculum using learner centered approaches. You know it is already difficult for us to teach in Chitonga and making teaching and learning aids without raw materials such as manila paper. Yes, sometimes a teacher can improvise but there is a limit to what one can improvise.*

Teacher 3 said:

*I know Chitonga but not the one that we are expected to teach in class. The syllabus and the textbooks have very difficult Chitonga*

*that the learners in this area find very difficult to understand. The learners also complained that the Chitonga that they learn was too complicated compared to the one some of their friends who speak it use.*

Participants were asked if they received administrative support in teaching Literacy in local language. The study established that, the support ECE teachers received only had to do with generally planning for school activities and not specifically teaching literacy. Teacher 1 observed that:

*It cannot be true if I said that I receive administrative support in teaching literacy in my classroom. However, the support that I receive only has to do with merely planning for school activities and such. Sometimes, materials that I use to teach literacy are provided but I still have to take it upon myself to plan for literacy activities that I can use to teach the learners.*

Teacher 2 noted that:

*In my case, I absolutely receive administrative support when it comes to teaching of literacy. The thing is that I am not well versed in the language of instruction, so I always ask for help from the administration with materials that can help me to quickly learn the language of instruction and use it in the classroom. They have been very helpful and without them, it would have been very tough for me to teach literacy in local language.*

Teacher 3 said:

*Teaching literacy requires a lot of support from both teachers and parents. The administration also has to play a directional role in teaching literacy in local language which is not the case at my school. What is on the ground is that parents want their children to learn English, and not local language. They do not see a point*



*in learners going to school and still use the same language that they use at home. Teachers that are knowledgeable in the local language and literacy issue are also negligent to those that need help. As a result, very little is being achieved.*

Participants were also asked if the teacher-centered approach of teaching, affected pupils' learning to read and write in teaching literacy in schools. The study established that, ECE teachers, they actually had other teaching methods that they used other than the teacher-centered methods because the teacher-centered approaches were not too effective to be used to teach children. Teacher 1 noted that:

*As an ECE teacher we have methods that we use to teach children. The teacher centered is not one of our preferred methods. We have methods that we use such as role play games and songs. For children to learn properly they have to be involved in the process of teaching and learning themselves.*

Teacher 2 observed that:

*The teacher centered method is not a good method to use when teaching literacy. The reason is that it limits the children from fully explore the language. ECE is about letting children be in charge of their own learning and the role of the teacher becomes just like that of a facilitator.*

Teacher 3 said:

*I feel we have completely downplayed the teacher-centered method of teaching. It has been used for a long time and it has borne fruits. It is not a bad method to use to teach literacy. It is very helpful when you as a teacher want to instil certain knowledge in the children. Although as ECE teachers we have gone into learner centered approaches to encourage learners to be involved in their own learning.*

Participants were also asked if they had enough teaching materials to use when teaching literacy in a local language in their schools. The study established that, that most of the times they had to improvise or use outdated materials and interpret them to a language the children can understand. Teacher 1 observed that said:

*The materials to use when teaching literacy are not available. The materials that are available are not in the language that is being used. For instance, most materials are in English language. So, what I do is that I just use the pictures, not the actual words in the books.*

Teacher 2 noted said:

*For me I can say the materials are not available. Some are bought by the school, and I also produce those that I can manage. In the end it's me to teach my class.*

Teacher 3 said:

*The materials are not available. That is just the truth. We do too much to just find a teaching material to teach literacy. The books available are old and outdated. We really need help with materials for literacy specifically.*

Participants were asked on how challenges in ECE can be reduced. The study established that, one of the ways in which these challenges can be reduced was through the use of different instruction in the classrooms as well as a Multisensory instruction approach in classrooms. Teacher 1 observed that:

*There is need for differentiated instruction. With this approach, teachers change and switch around what pupils need to learn, how they'll learn it, and how to get the material across to them. When a student struggles in one area, the teacher creates a plan*

*that includes extra practice, step-by-step directions, and special homework. Find out more about [differentiated instruction](#).*

Teacher 2 said that:

*There is need for proper Scaffolding. This is a method that breaks learning into chunks. The chunks follow a logical order and move toward a clear goal. Teachers form a bridge between what pupils already know and what they cannot do on their own. These bridges are referred to as “scaffolds.” They can include charts, pictures, and cue cards.*

Teacher 3 said that:

*There is need for a Multisensory instruction. This method links what pupils see, what they hear, how they move, and what they feel. When pupils learn using all of their senses, they remember the material better. Math teachers might use base ten blocks and two-sided counters so that pupils learn through touch. Drawing might help pupils [learn new vocabulary](#) by capturing the meaning of a word and sketching it. Each child learns differently. Teachers will use many creative methods to teach children, so they all learn.*

#### **4.5 Findings from observations checklist**

The checklist was espoused to assess a number of themes such as knowledge and skills in Pedagogical Practices Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teachers Use to Teach Literacy Skills in Rural Centers of Pemba District in Zambia. Implementing Pedagogical Practices in Early Childhood Education, teachers interest in creating a learning environment for learners, teacher support to learners during play-based learning activities, learners displaying acquisition of skills during learning activities, availability of resources to support learning, adequate to support learning, teachers ability to use a variety of activities to support the acquisition of skills among learners, parental support, extended learning through home work among other variables. The researcher observed and ticked

the appropriate option. Table 4.1 below depicts the results obtained from the observation check list.

**Table 4.1: Findings from observations checklist**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Teacher demonstrates knowledge and skill in teaching literacy	On teacher demonstration of knowledge and skill in implementing Pedagogical Practices learning. The study revealed that, ECE teachers were knowledgeable and skilled in implementing Pedagogical Practices in ECE.
Teacher shows interest in creating a conducive environment for learners when teaching literacy	On the level of teachers interest in creating a learning environment for learners. The study revealed that teachers were involved in creating a best a learning environment for learners.
Teacher supports learners during teaching literacy	The study also revealed that teachers supported learners during learning activities through engaging in active activities with learners.
Learners display acquisition of skills	The study also revealed that learners displayed acquisition of skills during learning activities through being socializing with their peers.
Teacher is supplied with resources to support teaching learning process	It was observed that, the study areas had limited resources in place as such teachers were not fully supplied with resources to support learning.
Teacher is able to use a variety of play activities to support the acquisition of skills among learners	On average, the researcher observed that, the space was adequate to support learning in all the schools visited by the researcher. On the availability of a variety of play activities to support the acquisition of skills among learners, the study revealed that, overall, there were a variety of activities to support the acquisition of skills in the schools.
Teacher provides extended play-based learning through home work	It was also observed that, teachers were providing an extended learning through home work because learners in most of the times were not being helped to by their parents and guardians due to the busy activities.
Teacher has opportunities of improving their skill and knowledge in teaching literacy	The study revealed that, teacher had greater opportunities of improving their skill and knowledge in implementing ECE learning through various local materials available in their schools.

#### **4.6: Chapter summary**

This chapter has presented the findings on the Pedagogical Practices Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teachers Use to Teach Literacy Skills in Rural Centers of Pemba District in Zambia. The chapter was divided in three parts according to the specific objectives which were to establish the strategies teachers use to teach literacy in ECE centers in Pemba rural schools, identify the teaching learning method (TLM) being used to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba district and assess the challenges faced in teaching literacy in rural ECE center of Pemba district.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the discussion findings in relation to the literature review and theory presented earlier in this study on pedagogical practices early childhood education (ECE) teachers use to teach Literacy Skills in Rural Centers of Pemba District in Zambia. The discussion is presented using the themes from the research objectives.

## **5.2 Strategies teachers use to teach literacy in ECE centers in Pemba rural schools**

The findings of the study established that there were a number of methods that were being used to teach literacy in ECE classrooms. The methods that were found being used included role play, dramatization, games, songs, storytelling and retelling as well as demonstrations. These findings are in line with Maduabum et al., (2017) who states that children learn through methods that actively involve them in both the teaching and learning processes. Maduabum et al., (2017) add that methods such as role play, dramatization, demonstrations, games, songs and storytelling provide children with a platform to be actively involved in their own learning. However, the study brought out some methods that were mentioned by the District Official which included listening and speaking which ECE teacher denied that they were not the methods that ECE teachers use to teach children literacy in Chitonga.

The study also established that teachers did not understand the language policy and had little knowledge about what was expected of them. The study further established that the language policy was confusing, and the government just approved the policy without providing the much-needed materials to be used. These findings were coherent with the findings of Phiri, (2017) who revealed that teachers were confusing the terms 'local language' and 'familiar language'. The current education curriculum states that locally familiar languages shall be used as medium of instruction from ECE to grade four in all primary schools. The findings of this study, however, reveal that most ECE teachers had misinterpreted the guidelines of the curriculum by using Chitonga as the only language of instruction instead of other local language which was also prominent in the area of study. The findings, thus, reveal a violation of the policy guidelines.

Further, the study established that ECE teachers were using playful activities such as games, song rhymes and demonstrations. These findings are in coherence with the findings of Mwalumba (2019) who revealed that the teacher should always use methods that are interesting to teach children. In addition, the study established that the use of stories, alliterations and games were used to engage learners during the teaching of literacy in Chitonga. The findings imply that, that ECE teachers are using effective,

engaging teaching methods to support young learners' development, particularly in the area of literacy. This finding suggests the teachers recognize the importance of making learning fun and interactive for their learners as playful, hands-on activities help to capture learners attention and foster active engagement. It can be therefore, deduced that, ECE teachers are utilizing developmentally appropriate, research-backed teaching methods that are well-suited to promoting learning, particularly in foundational areas like literacy.

The study also established that some of the activities that ECE teachers use when teaching literacy in a local language were sand play, building blocks, painting, music and dance, jigsaws, shape sorting, nature play, rhymes and card games. These activities were carefully planned for, and they really made teaching literacy an exciting experience. In agreement with these findings, Esomonu (2015) maintains that playful situations keep the children alert, active and responsive. As such, using activities such as sand play, role play, building blocks, character play, drawing and painting draws the attention of learners. This finding implies that, learners especially children are bound to adapt to learn through interactive sessions that are activity based. As such, it was observed that learners were actively engaged through games, dance, songs and play and they learnt literacy in a joyful way.

The findings of this study align with Vygotsky's theory of constructivism, particularly his work from the 1930s, and highlight the principle of the "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD) (Lev Vygotsky, 1934). This principle asserts that children learn best when they engage with their environment in ways that challenge their current understanding, supported by more knowledgeable others. By providing rich, stimulating, and engaging environments, teachers help children to be active construction of knowledge within their ZPD, fostering independent exploration and deeper learning rather than relying on passive, teacher-directed instruction.

### **5.3 Teaching learning method (TLM) being used to teach literacy in ECE centers in Pemba district.**

The study established that, play methods were usually the most effective methods used techniques because this method helped learners to learn on their own will and time. These findings are in line with Brown (2016) who found that, play way method is the most effective way used in children as children feel astonished when they engage in a play way method. The finding of the study suggests that play-based methods foster a learner-centered approach to education, where children are given free space to engage with the content and learning process at their own pace and in their own way. This is in contrast to more teacher-directed, one-size-fits-all instructional methods. Furthermore, the findings of this study indicates that when learners are allowed to learn through play, they are more intrinsically motivated to engage with the material. In this way, learners feel a sense of agency and ownership over their learning, which lead to deeper understanding and better retention of the content.

The study also established that there were a number of methods that were being used to literacy in ECE classrooms. These findings are in line with Maduabum, et al (2017) who stated that children learn through methods that actively involve them in both the teaching and learning processes. Methods such as role play, dramatization, demonstrations, Games and songs provide children with a platform to be actively involved in their own learning. Therefore, the finding suggests that hands-on methods allow children to be actively engaged in the learning process, rather than just passively receiving information. By participating through things like role-play, games, and songs, children are more actively involved in constructing their own understanding of literacy concepts. This aligns with best practices in early childhood education, which emphasize the importance of engaging young learners through interactive, child-centered approaches.

Furthermore, the study established that, there were a number of activities that teachers were utilizing in the teaching literacy. It was found by this study that teachers were making use of activities that could prompt interest in learners as they learnt literacy through demonstrations. The study established that ECE teachers were using playful activities such as games and song rhymes in learning. These findings are in coherence with the findings of Lewis et al., (2018) who found that the teacher should always use



methods that are interesting to teach children. Therefore, this finding suggests that the use of demonstrations, games, and songs reinforces learners intrinsically ability to be in charge of their learning process.

The study further established that some of the activities that ECE teachers used when teaching in literacy were demonstrations, painting, music and dance. These activities were carefully planned for, and they made teaching in literacy an exciting experience. In agreement with these findings, Brown (2016) found that that playful situations keep the children alert, active and responsive. As such, using activities such sand play, role play, building blocks, character play, drawing and painting. Therefore, based on this finding, effective literacy teaching in early childhood education with reference to Pemba District involves incorporating a range of interactive, hands-on, and playful activities that capture the learners' attention and actively engage in the learning process. This constructivist, child-centered approach to instruction is well-supported by phenomenon on best practices in early childhood education. Hence, it can be emphasised that making literacy learning interesting, it important to engage learners in activities that are interesting rather than relying solely on more traditional, teacher-directed methods. This aligns well with the broader principles of play-based and experiential learning in ECE.

These findings are in line with the Vygotsky's Theory and on the principle of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) particularly his work from the 1930s (Lev Vygotsky, 1934). The ZPD represents the gap between what a learner can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance or collaboration as learning happens most effectively when a learner is working with their ZPD. Vygotsky believed that children learn best when engaged in activities that fall within their ZPD - the range of skills they can develop with the guidance and support of more knowledgeable others. The use of demonstrations, games, songs, and other interactive activities by the ECE teachers aligns with Vygotsky's idea of scaffolding learning within the child's ZPD. Vygotsky emphasized the crucial role of social interactions and cultural tools in driving cognitive development. The collaborative, participatory nature of the play-based activities used by the teachers, such as role-play and character play, reflects Vygotsky's view of learning as a social process.

#### **5.4 Challenges faced in teaching literacy in rural ECE center of Pemba District**

There were a number of challenges that ECE teachers faced when it came to teaching literacy in local language. The study further established that, one of the challenges that ECE teachers faced was the understanding of the language policy. These findings are supported by Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) who found that the teaching literacy in regions have proved to fail because some languages are different from the regional languages and have to be treated as such. It was thus made evident that the language of instruction issue was far from being solved. The policy that has been in existence for 9 years has not been understood by teachers who have been teaching literacy raises a question of how teachers are actually using it if they do not understand it.

The study established that there was lack of teaching and learning as teachers had to most of the times improvise for the materials to use to teach. This in turn made the learning environment to be poor and hence contributing to the inability to achieve the desired outcomes. These findings are supported by Musango (2010) who found that, physical environment has a serious impact on the teaching and learning process and the findings of this study suggest that there was little or less teaching and learning materials based on the local language that was prominently used by children in Pemba District. These findings showed that the ministry of education hastily introduced the new language policy before certain logistics on policy implementation could be put in place.

Further, the study established that there were inconsistent in administrative support in some schools. The ECE teachers only received support that had to do with generally planning for school activities and not specifically in the teaching of literacy in local language. The support that ECE teachers received only had to do with merely planning for school activities and such. In contrast, the findings of Sikwasha (2021) suggests that teaching literacy requires a lot of support from both teachers and parents, the study identified a gap because the administration also has to play a directional role in teaching literacy in local language which is not the case in schools. What is on the ground is that parents want their children to learn English, and not local language. In line with the findings of Garry (2018) schools that receives little administrative support do not achieve

their ultimate goals and ultimately results into poor academic performance of learners. Therefore, it can be deduced from the findings that, the lack of administrative support can hinder the development of literacy skills in the local language among learners. This can ultimately lead to poor academic performance if not addressed.

The findings also established that there was need for a multisensory instruction to teach children literacy using a local language. It was established from the findings of the study that this method links what children envision, what they hear, how they move, and what they feel. These findings were in affirmation with Taylor (2018) who found that when children learn using all of their senses, they remember the material better. Dante (2018) further noted that real objects might help children learn new vocabulary by capturing the meaning of a word and using it. These findings deduce that, there is a need for a more holistic, multisensory instructional approach to teaching literacy in the local language. By engaging children's visual, auditory, tactile, and kinaesthetic senses, this approach can enhance their ability to learn, understand, and retain literacy skills in the local language. The implication is that schools and ECE teachers should consider adopting multisensory instructional methods, incorporating things like visual aids, hands-on activities, and real-world objects, to improve the effectiveness of local language literacy education. This could help address the gaps identified earlier and lead to better learning outcomes for students.

Furthermore, the study established that ECE some teachers and learners are not familiar with Chitonga which was used a language of instruction in the ECE classes hence their delivery of the lessons was affected negatively. These findings are supported by Nyimbili (2021) who stated that the language of instruction in the regional zone does not represent the sociolinguistic reality which is in the communities and classrooms. The classrooms of today are no longer a regional representation according to the regional languages but according to the economic activities which are in the region and area. The implication of this finding means that the mismatch between the language of instruction (Chitonga) and the actual language familiarity of the teachers and learners is a significant barrier to effective literacy instruction in the local language. This means that the language of instruction used in ECE classrooms may need to be reconsidered to better align with the

linguistic language of the local area that shape language use. Relying on a regional language that does not reflect the actual languages spoken and understood by teachers and students hinder the learning process.

The findings of the study can be linked to Vygotsky's principle of the "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD), which emphasizes the importance of social interactions in learning and the necessity of guiding learners through familiar linguistic contexts. According to Vygotsky (1978), learners can achieve higher levels of understanding and skill acquisition when they engage with more knowledgeable peers or educators in a supportive environment, using language they are comfortable with. This principle illustrates the critical role of social context and language familiarity in facilitating cognitive development. By grounding the findings in Vygotsky's ZPD, this study highlights the urgent need for educational practices that prioritize familiar languages and promote meaningful social interactions, ultimately enhancing literacy instruction in local languages.

## **5.5 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, the major findings of the study have been analyzed and discussed using the themes and other related literature presented in Chapter Two. As the findings reveal, ECE teachers use stories, demonstrations, games, role play, dramatization, songs, storytelling and retelling to deliver their lessons. The study also revealed a number of challenges as they teach literacy in local language. The experiences that ECE teachers faced include misinterpretation of the language policy and lack of teaching and learning materials.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the discussion findings on pedagogical practices Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers use to teach literacy skills in rural centers of Pemba District in Zambia. This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

#### 6.2 Conclusion

Arising from the presented discussion of findings on pedagogical practices early childhood education (ECE) teachers use to teach Literacy Skills in Rural Centers of Pemba District in Zambia, the following conclusions can be drawn for the study.

The first objective established the strategies that teachers used to teach literacy in ECE centers in Pemba rural schools. The study found that, were a number of strategies that were being used to teach literacy in ECE. The strategies that were found being used included role play, Dramatization and Games. Other strategies included songs, storytelling and retelling as well as demonstrations. Therefore, the study concludes that, through the use of these strategies, children were provided a platform to be actively involved in their own learning.

The second objective sought to identify the teaching learning method (TLM) being used to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba District. The study found that play methods were the most effective methods that were being to teach children in Pemba Rural Schools because this method helped learners to learn through intrinsic interactions. The study concludes that play-based methods fostered a learner-centered approach to education as children were given a free space to engage with the content and learning process at their own pace and in their own way without the interference of teachers.

The last objective looked at the challenges teachers faced in teaching literacy in rural ECE center of Pemba district. The study found that the major challenges teachers faced were lack of understanding of the language policy, lack of teaching and learning materials and inconsistent in administrative material support from the school management. Therefore, it can be deduced that, although there has been remarkable progress in the implementation of pedagogical practices in Early Childhood Education (ECE) particularly in Pemba's Rural Schools, there are still challenges that need to be addressed for smooth learning of children.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Arising from the presented conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Teachers should intensify incorporating of teaching strategies into their teaching because this will help in enhancing children's understanding, socialization, and problem-solving skills. It is recommended therefore, that, teachers should use a variety activity that stimulate different areas of development such as communication skills, critical thinking, numeracy skills, and problem-solving skills.
- Play activities were found to facilitate communication, mutual relationships, and cooperation among children. Therefore, it is recommended to include group play activities that encourage interaction and teamwork. This can help children develop social skills and respect for others, as well as learn to share ideas and discuss differences.
- Teachers should use their capacity to develop teaching and learning materials from low-cost resources such as card boards and strings because not all materials can be provided on time, as such teachers should think outside the box and use the locally available materials.
- Policy makers should consider including stakeholders such as teachers in policy making on a larger extent, so that their voices should be heard in such important decisions more especially on effective pedagogical practices teachers can use to teach literacy skills in rural areas.

## **6.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter has presented conclusion and recommendations of the study on pedagogical practices Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers use to teach literacy skills in rural centers of Pemba District in Zambia.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix one: Information sheet



CHALIMBANA UNIVERSITY

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Dear Respondent,

#### **RESPONDENT INFORMATION SHEET**

You are one of the select few chosen to take part in this investigation titled **“PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE) TEACHERS USE TO TEACH LITERACY SKILLS IN RURAL CENTERS OF PEMBA DISTRICT IN ZAMBIA.”** Your contributions will only be used academically and not for any other reason. If you don't want to, you are not forced to write your name on the questionnaire. I will value your sincere and trustworthy answers to the questions on this research tool.

**Thank you in advance.**



## Appendix two: Interview guide



### CHALIMBANA UNIVERSITY

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**Dear Respondent,**

You are one of the select few chosen to take part in this investigation titled **“PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE) TEACHERS USE TO TEACH LITERACY SKILLS IN RURAL CENTERS OF PEMBA DISTRICT IN ZAMBIA.”** Your contributions will only be used academically and not for any other reason. If you don't want to, you are not forced to write your name on the questionnaire. I will value your sincere and trustworthy answers to the questions on this research tool.

### **Interview Guide for ECE Teachers**

- 1. To find out the strategies teachers use to teach literacy in ECE centers in Pemba rural schools.**
  - a. What teaching strategies are being used in teaching literacy in a local language?
  - b. What are the pupils' experiences in learning literacy in the language of instruction?
  - c. What are the Teachers' experiences in learning literacy in the language of instruction?
  - d. What are the teachers' activities in teaching literacy?
  
- 2. To identify the teaching learning method (TLM) being used to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba district.**
  - a) What do you understand by the term teaching learning method?

- b) How often do you use teaching learning method in your lessons?
- c) How can you describe your experience teaching learning method?
- d) What strategies do you apply in preparing in literacy?
- e) How available is literature or teaching guides on teaching learning method?
- f) How eager are learners to participate in teaching learning method?

**3. To assess the challenges faced in teaching literacy in rural ECE center of Pemba district.**

- a. What Challenges ECE teachers face when teaching literacy in the classroom?
- b. Are you receiving administrative support in teaching literacy?
- c. Does teacher-centered approach of teaching, affect pupils' learning to read and write in teaching literacy?
- d. Do you have enough teaching materials to use when teaching literacy?
- e. How do you think the challenges can be reduced?

### **Appendix three: Interview Guide for School Head teachers**

**Dear Respondent,**

You are one of the select few chosen to take part in this investigation titled **“PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE) TEACHERS USE TO TEACH LITERACY SKILLS IN RURAL CENTERS OF PEMBA DISTRICT IN ZAMBIA.”** Your contributions will only be used academically and not for any other reason. If you don't want to, you are not forced to write your name on the questionnaire. I will value your sincere and trustworthy answers to the questions on this research tool.

**1. To find out the strategies teachers use to teach literacy in ECE centers in Pemba rural schools.**

- e. What teaching strategies are being used in teaching literacy in a local language?

- f. What are the pupils' experiences in learning literacy in the language of instruction?
- g. What are the Teachers' experiences in learning literacy in the language of instruction?
- h. What are the teachers activities in teaching literacy?

**2. To identify the teaching learning method (TLM) being used to teach literacy in ECE center in Pemba district.**

- g) What do you understand by the term teaching learning method?
- h) How often do you use teaching learning method in your lessons?
- i) How can you describe your experience teaching learning method?
- j) What strategies do you apply in preparing in literacy?
- k) How available is literature or teaching guides on teaching learning method?
- l) How eager are learners to participate in teaching learning method?

**3. To assess the challenges faced in teaching literacy in rural ECE center of Pemba district.**

- 4. What Challenges ECE teachers face when teaching literacy in the classroom?
- 5. Are you receiving administrative support in teaching literacy?
- 6. Does teacher-centered approach of teaching, affect pupils' learning to read and write in teaching literacy?
- 7. Do you have enough teaching materials to use when teaching literacy?
- 8. How do you think the challenges can be reduced?

#### Appendix four: Observation Checklist

	Yes	No	Comment
Teacher demonstrates knowledge and skill in teaching literacy			
Teacher shows interest in creating a conducive environment for learners when teaching literacy			
Teacher supports learners during teaching literacy			
Learners display acquisition of skills			
Teacher is supplied with resources to support teaching learning process			
Teacher is able to use a variety of play activities to support the acquisition of skills among learners			
Teacher provides extended play-based learning through home work			
Teacher has opportunities of improving their skill and knowledge in teaching literacy			



## Appendix five: Clearance approval Letter



**Chalimbana University**

Office of the Director  
Department of Research & Postgraduate  
Private Bag 21, Lusaka  
Email: [ethics@chalimbanauniversity.ac.zm](mailto:ethics@chalimbanauniversity.ac.zm)  
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Phone: +260 973 001011

Research Ethics Clearance Form 01

**ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSED RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN  
PARTICIPANTS**

**Researcher:** Nalla Lambana

**Supervisor:** Dr. Nyimbili F.

**Title of research:** Pedagogical

Thank you for application for research ethics clearance by Chalimbana University Ethics Review Committee for the above-mentioned research.

The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to an applicable national legislation, professional code of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.

Ethics approval is granted for the period July, 2024 to July 2025 on condition that the researcher will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved proposal by the supervisor. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date, July 2025.

Kind regards,

Dr. R. Chikopela

Chairperson

Research Ethics Committee

Dr. A. D. Sikalumbi

Director

Research, Innovations and Postgraduate

Integrity. Service. Excellence.

## Appendix Six: Introduction Letter



**Chalimbana University**

RESEARCH, POSTGRADUATE STUDIES & CONSULTANCY  
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Phone: +628177588751

12<sup>th</sup> July, 2024

**SUBJECT: INTRODUCTORY LETTER- POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DATA COLLECTION**

**STUDENT NAME: NZILA LUMBAMA**

**STUDENT ID NO: 221136688**

Chalimbana University Directorate of Research Postgraduate Studies, Consultancy and Innovation would like to introduce the above named student pursuing Master of Education in Early Childhood Studies. The student is currently collecting data on the research study entitled "Pedagogical practices early childhood education teachers use to teach literacy skills in rural areas." We request you to allow her collect data for her dissertation as it is part of the University requirements for the award of a postgraduate degree.

Your assistance rendered to the student will be greatly valued.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. SIKALUMBI A. D.

**DIRECTOR**

**RESEARCH, POST GRADUATE STUDIES, CONSULTANCY AND INNOVATION**



*Al Head teacher*

## Appendix seven: Appendix Six: Introduction Letter



**Chalimbana University**

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12<sup>th</sup> July, 2024

**SUBJECT: INTRODUCTORY LETTER- POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DATA COLLECTION**

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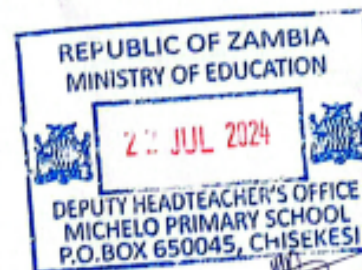
Your assistance rendered to the student will be greatly valued.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. SIKALUMBI A. D.

**DIRECTOR**

**RESEARCH, POST GRADUATE STUDIES, CONSULTANCY AND INNOVATION**



*for Head*



## Appendix eight: Introductory Letter



**Chalimbana University**

RESEARCH, POSTGRADUATE STUDIES & CONSULTANCY  
PO BOX 502  
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12<sup>th</sup> July, 2024

**SUBJECT: INTRODUCTORY LETTER-POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DATA COLLECTION**

**STUDENT NAME: NZILA LUMBAMA**

**STUDENT ID NO: 221136688**

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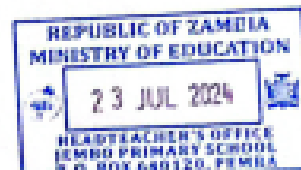
Your assistance rendered to the student will be greatly valued.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. SIKALUMBI A. D.

**DIRECTOR**

**RESEARCH, POST GRADUATE STUDIES, CONSULTANCY AND INNOVATION**



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