RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL COMPETENCE AND READING SKILLS ACQUISITION IN PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS: TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE, PERCEPTIONS, AND PRACTICES

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By

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A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy (Education) of the University of Dar es Salaam

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the University of Dar es Salaam a thesis titled: ***Relationship between Social Competence and Reading Skills Acquisition in Primary School Pupils: Teachers' Knowledge, Perceptions and Practices***, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Education) of the University of Dar es Salaam.

.....

Dr. Richard Shukia

(**Supervisor**)

Date:.....

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AND
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I, **Innocent Nasson Messo**, declare that this thesis is my original work and that it has not been presented and will not be presented to any other University for a similar or any other degree award.

Signature ----------

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DEDICATION

Socrates once viewed competent people as those who well manage situations which they encounter every day in their lives; and who possess perfect judgment in occasions they encounter; those who rarely miss the convenient course of action. Completing this thesis was in many ways a work of miracles: for instance, a challenge of prioritizing what was necessary to attend to, over what I wanted to do was insurmountable. Overall, I never lost sight of the ultimate goal of completing this work. Thus, I dedicate this work to my two daughters: Rose Innocent Messo and Rosabel Innocent Messo. The greatest joy I have ever known is being their father and I want them to remember to achieve their dreams, irrespective of how lofty they may seem, no matter how unattainable it may look at times. “Dig deep within yourselves and become individuals you were created to be”.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ACSE	:	Advanced Certificate of Secondary Examination
BEST	:	Basic Education Statistics Tanzania
CBO	:	Community-Based Organisations
CPD	:	Continuous Professional Development
CSEE	:	Certificate of Secondary Education Examination
DAS	:	District Administrative Secretary
DFID	:	Department for International Development-UK
EFA	:	Education for All
EQUIP	:	Education Quality Improvement Programme
ETP	:	Education and Training Policy
FBOs	:	Faith-Based Organisations
GPAs	:	General Performance Average
GPE	:	Global Partnership in Education
ICPS	:	I Can Problem Solve
ILO	:	International Labour Organisation
INSET	:	In-Service Education and Training
IY	:	Incredible Years
LANES	:	Literacy and Numeracy Education Support Programme
LGAs	:	Local Government Authorities
MESSY	:	Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters
MMRA	:	Mixed Methods Research Approach
MoEVT	:	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
NCFBTE	:	National Curriculum Framework for Basic and Teacher Education
NECTA	:	National Examination Council of Tanzania
OLS	:	Ordinary Least Square Regression Organization
OUT	:	Open University of Tanzania
PALS	:	Patient Advice and Liaison Service
PATHS	:	Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies
PEDP	:	Primary Education Development Programme

PReM	:	Primary Records Manager
PSLE	:	Primary School Leaving Examination
RAS	:	Regional Administrative Secretary
SBIT	:	School-Based In-Service Training
SDGs	:	Sustainable Development Goals
SES	:	Social Economic Status
SITT	:	Inclusive School-Based In-Service Teachers Training
SPSS	:	Special Package for Social Sciences
SSI	:	Semi-Structured Interview
TIE	:	Tanzania Institute of Education
UK	:	United Kingdom
UNESCO	:	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	:	The United Nations Children's Fund
URT	:	United Republic of Tanzania
USAID	:	United States Agency for International Development
WB	:	World Bank
ZPD	:	Zone of Proximal Development
3Rs		Reading, Writing and Arithmetic

ABSTRACT

This study set out to examine the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in public primary school pupils. The key objectives of the study were to; explore the factors that hinder the acquisition of reading skills in pupils,establish teachers' knowledge of social competence skills, examine the perceptions of teachers on the role of social competence skills on reading skills acquisition, appraise the social competence and reading skills enhancing practices employed by teachers in schools, and analyse the association between social competence and reading skills acquisition by primary school pupils. The study was guided by the Sociocultural and Social Learning Theories. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, as well as convergent parallel design. The population of the study was standard four pupils, standard four class teachers, standard four Kiswahili subject teachers, head teachers and parents/guardians. The study was conducted in 17 purposefully selected schools, where 340 pupils were randomly (20 from each school), 42 teachers, and ten parents/guardians were purposefully selected. Data were collected using observation, interview, questionnaire, and documentary review techniques. The analysis of interviews, observations and documentary review proceeded through the following three main steps: preparing and organising data, creating categories/themes, and coding, presentation and interpretation. For quantitative data, logistic regression analysis was run to estimate the impact of social competence skills on binary outcomes, while Ordinary Least Square Regression (OLS) with multiple predictors was used to estimate outcomes of continuous variables. The findings show that there were a number of factors that hindered the acquisition of reading skills in the pupils. It was further revealed that all teachers knew the concept of social competence. It was found that pupils with social competence skills were in a good position to acquire and the reading skills faster than their counterparts. The participatory teaching method was mostly reported in enhancing reading skills in pupils; followed by pairing pupils, the use of extra hours, the use of libraries, parental involvement in the pupils' reading-related activities, and school feeding programmes. As for social competence skills, there were no specific practices that were solely meant to develop them. Rather, the practices for developing social competence skills were coincidentally and unknowingly, embedded in those for developing the reading skills and other academic subjects. The most important social competence skills are communication skills, as other skills depend on the pupil's ability to communicate his/her ideas well. Findings from the questionnaire showed no significant relationship between social competence skills and the acquisition and mastery of reading skills. The study, however, concludes that social competence skills have a positive impact on pupils' acquisition of reading skills. The study recommends a reviewed curriculum that imparts pupils with social competence skills for an everlasting positive effect on the pupil's lives, positive social interactions and academic achievements.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

This is an introductory chapter that comprises several sections. It presents the background to the problem; where poor literacy acquisition problem is traced back since Tanzania got independence. The chapter also highlights some aspects of the Basic Education Curriculum for standards III and IV which are related to the topic under study. Statement of the problem follows, showing the ideal and the real situations of reading acquisition as well as the study gap. Furthermore, this chapter presents the purpose of the study, specific objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study. There is also a section on the limitations of the study, as well as definitions of the operational terms that have been used in this study.

The primary aim of this study was to establish the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition by primary school pupils, considering the teachers' knowledge, perceptions and practices. Social competence skills that were involved in this study are communication, cooperation, assertion, self-management, engagement, and self-control, whereas the reading skills were vocabulary, reading comprehension, silent reading, reading aloud, and word identification. In this study, social competence is defined as a person's effectiveness in social interaction to reach his/her goals. This study was conducted with standard four pupils.

1.1 Background to the Problem

The aim of taking children to school is to enable them to develop knowledge and skills that can help them to master their environment. Among the key skills that need to be instilled by teachers in pupils is the reading ability. The international community through different forums such as Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals agreed to address the illiteracy problem by reducing it by 50% at the end of 2015. According to UNESCO (2015), there was progress in Sub-Saharan Africa, however, still a big number of pupils graduate from schools without the required competence in reading.

Social competence skills have been identified internationally as of great importance educationally, especially in the lives of young pupils. It is recognized that successful reading adjustment at school requires not only cognitive competencies but also social competence (Bernard, 2006; Denham et al., 2009; Ladd et al., 2006). Evidence shows that pupils, who lack social competence skills, do less well in school (Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2004). On the other hand, the acquisition of basic skills such as reading and writing has been considered an absolute human right (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization-UNESCO, 2015) since 1948. Nevertheless, the persistence of illiteracy in Asian and African countries remains one of the societies' greatest shortcomings.

Tanzania's commitments and efforts towards education are reflected in several international instruments, to which Tanzania is a signatory (Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Article 26; Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 28; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 24; UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, Articles 4; ILO Convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour, preamble, Articles 7 and 8; African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Article 11; as well as African Youth Charter, Articles 13 and 16) (UNESCO, 2015).

Illiteracy in Tanzania can be traced back to the 1960s. Since independence, in 1961, the Tanzania Government has shown a strong commitment to providing primary education for all of its children. Shortly after independence, there were education reforms that aimed at ensuring that children had access to education. One of such reforms was Education for Self Reliance (ESR) in 1967, soon after independence, which focused on training a workforce to build a new nation (Fundi, 2016). The major purpose of this reform was to enhance pupils' learning inquiry, critical thinking skills, and self-confidence. ESR was followed by Universal Education for All (UPE) in 1974 with the goal to make basic education accessible to all Tanzanian children. The implementation of UPE led to the increase of primary schools as well as teachers to the extent that by 1980s, there was a primary school in each village and school enrolment rose to 100%. Tanzania achieved a high level of literacy among its

citizen from the early 1970 to mid-1980s (Kitta, 2004). By 1986, illiteracy was reduced to 9.6 percent from 75 percent in 1961.

This high level of literacy quickly dwindled due to the introduction of a cost-sharing policy in education. According to Fundi (2016), Tanzania suffered economically in the mid-1980s (the highs and the lows of the 1980s), and the countries that funded the expansion of schools during UPE withdrew their support. Due to the burden of the running costs to the government, educational outcomes deteriorated. Enrolment in primary schools, for instance, declined from 100% in the early 1980s to 82% in 1992. The illiteracy rate also increased from 10% in 1982 to 16% in 1992. The shortage of resources to run the schools and pressure from international financial bodies led to the government's gradual introduction of the cost-sharing model to run its schools effectively and efficiently. Among the immediate impacts of the introduced policy was an increase in the level of illiteracy, alongside the decline in school enrolment.

More policy changes had to take place to mitigate the problems in the education sector. The government of Tanzania in 1997 developed the Basic Education Master Plan policy to ensure growth and equitable access to quality formal education. This was to be achieved through quality improvement, facility expansion, and efficiency gains. Indeed, the Tanzanian Government has tried to address pupils' poor literacy in several ways. In 2005, for instance, the Government of Tanzania launched the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) which led to a convenient increase in the enrolment of pupils in primary schools. The programme had to, among other things; decrease the level of illiteracy in the country. Contrarily, a number of the enrolled pupils graduated without mastering reading skills (Ngorosho, 2011).

The problem of illiteracy, however, persists in Tanzania education since the high achievements of literacy in the 1980s. Studies indicate that 24% of standard seven pupils cannot read the standard two Kiswahili textbook (Carroll, 2011). According to Education and Training Policy (1995; 2014) pupils are expected to have achieved

basic literacy skills mainly the ability to read, write, and solve simple arithmetic problems after completing standard two. In a survey conducted by Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP) Tanzania (2015), only about 12% of pupils in Standard 3 had achieved Standard 2 level of skills in reading a Kiswahili simple story fluently. It was further revealed that close to 40% of the pupils had yet to acquire even emerging Standard 1 reading skills. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training found that about 5,200 pupils selected nationwide to join Form I in 2012 were not able to read Kiswahili fluently (Ligembe, 2014). In addition, nationwide research by the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) in 2013 on Standard II pupils' competence in the 3Rs showed that there was a low level of reading skills for pupils (Ligembe, 2014). This situation instigated the researcher to study the relationship between social competence skills and the acquisition of reading skills among primary school pupils, as one of the approaches to tame the illiteracy situation in the country.

Many factors have been mentioned worldwide to influence pupils' reading skills acquisition at school. The factors include ability, home environment, school experiences, and interest level. However, a knowledge gap that needed to be filled by the present study was the contribution of social competence skills to reading skills acquisition in pupils in Tanzania. Promoting social competence skills can be useful in preventing childhood psychosocial problems such as delinquency and drug abuse (Chung & Elias, 1996), thus, enhancing reading and academic adjustment (Gresham & Elliot, 1990). Promoting social competence skills also treats behaviour and emotional issues like oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder, anxiety, and depression (Vera & Gaubatz, 2002).

Other factors range from poor education supervision, unfavourable learning conditions, poor teachers' motivation and insufficient teaching and learning materials (Etsey, et al.,2005); large class sizes and poor administration of home works (Butler, 1987); as well as other home, school, and teacher-related factors. However, the position of social competence skills in the acquisition of reading skills is not fully examined.

Social competence skills have been regarded as important in the upbringing of pupils. Standard IV Curriculum (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology-MoEST, 2016) highlights some of such competencies as *enhancing the ability of pupils to think, create and solve problems; participate and appreciate games, sports, and arts activities; respect oneself and others; participate in different activities which enhance logical and analytical thinking, and collaborate with other people when performing acceptable activities in the community.* According to the Curriculum, these competencies are developed through social studies and civic and moral education subjects, as well as co-curricular activities.

Research has shown that social competence skills are among the cornerstones of school readiness, and therefore, earlier mastery of social competence skills predicts later academic success (Denham, 2006; Oades-Sese, Esquivel, Kaliski, & Maniatis, 2011). Social competence skills are further believed to be critical in laying down the foundation for good outcomes in the context of school, and provide healthy development in life (Durlak et al., 2011: Sklad et al., 2012). Pupils depicted as socially competent for instance, get higher scores on standardized maths and reading tests, while those without social competence skills are at greater risk for academic complications such as poor reading skills (Oades-Sese et al., 2011).

Previous studies have also documented that social competence skills are important for the development of early literacy skills such as decoding, letter-word knowledge, and phonological processing (Montroy et al., 2014). In addition, Lombardi (1992) maintains that early primary education provides the solid ground upon which both social competence and academic skills can be nurtured. Zins et al. (2007) corroborate that reading achievement is most directly linked to a pupil's success with five early reading skills namely phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Thus, teaching social competence skills is so important to educational settings as it promotes students' achievements, increases involvement, builds status and peer group acceptance, boosts self-esteem, and enhances other qualities central to school

success in general (Knapczyk & Rodes, n.d). Despite their critical role in reading achievement and school success in general, research shows that social competence skills are rarely taught systematically, and pupils have to acquire them through accidental learning, or by trial and error. Research has revealed that social competence skills are not prioritized in the classroom, and at the practical level. Some researchers have reported that formal social competence skills training does not exist in schools (Vaughn, 1985).

Howell (1985) argued that teachers place more emphasis on decreasing those behaviours that make classroom control difficult, than on teaching social competence skills. Several other studies have explored the attitude of teachers towards the importance of pupils' social behaviour (Gresham & Elliott, 1990) which leads to one being socially competent, and found the lack of social competence skills training by teachers in the schools.Empirical studies have shown that the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in pupils is closely related to the knowledge teachers have on the phenomena, their perceptions and practices on the topic under study. This is due to the fact that social competence studies are shown as an important contemporary component in schools because they can reduce undesirable behavior and disturbances in the social life of the pupils (Dubovicki & Nemet, 2015).

According to Sudarwan (2015), teachers' knowledge, perceptions, and practices on social competence and reading skills acquisition are important factors in improving the quality of education, especially the quality of processes and learning outcomes. Teachers' practices, for instance, are sociable in nature. This is because the learning process is seen as a social phenomenon where the teacher is one of the participants in that process. Therefore, the teachers' social competence level forms the basis for their perceptions and teaching practices (Whiddett & Hollyfirde, 2003). Academics may be becoming increasingly more important at the early primary school level; however, research shows that social competence skills to a greater extent affect school success (Ladd & Price, 1987; Ladd, 1990), thus teachers should not feel pressured to base more on academics (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). It was therefore imperative for

the researcher to study the teachers' take in the relationship between the possession of social competence skills and the acquisition of reading skills in primary school pupils.

1.2 Basic Education Curriculum-Standard III and IV

The government of Tanzania is committed to providing quality education to its citizens. Quality education is considered a basic need for development in Tanzania as pupils acquire the required competencies to meet the ever-changing world demands. In order to achieve the goal of quality education, there is a need for a curriculum that meets the social, national, and international needs. The current curriculum for pre-primary and primary education in Tanzania is a result of the reviewed 2005 curriculum, which ended in 2012; seven years since its conception (Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, 2016). Before 2005, the curriculum for Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, and Secondary Education emphasized the content of subjects. The 2005 curriculum covered Standard I-VII to emphasize competence. However, it was felt that the curriculum still emphasized content rather than competence.

In order to be more effective in the educational world market, the 2016 curriculum also reflects several national and international statements. Internally, it reflects the objectives set out in the National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction, one of which is to provide education that will give pupils the knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes to participate actively in their own development process to reduce poverty. The Tanzania Development Vision 2025 also emphasizes the provision of quality education that will enable the pupils to be innovative, inventive, and skillful in different fields. The aim is to produce skilled and competent people who can solve social problems by using science and technology. Internationally, the curriculum reflects the Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) that directly deal with education to ensure inclusive and quality education for all, and promote lifelong learning (Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, 2016).

The 2016 curriculum has the competencies that aim to prepare the pupil in Standard III to VI to communicate correctly in Kiswahili and English orally, and in writing, read confidently and understand specified texts, use theoretical and mathematical principles in daily life situations, apply scientific, technological, and vocational skills in real-life situations, and appreciate his/her culture and that of other communities. The curriculum further aims for the pupils to respect the diverse beliefs and ideologies of the community in which he/she lives, participate in games and sports and artistic activities, respect oneself and others. Other aspects are to perform patriotic activities, participate in different activities which are in line with his/her age, participate in activities that enhance his/her logical and analytical thinking, and collaborate with other people when performing acceptable activities in the community.

Furthermore, among the learning areas of interest to the current study which are found in this curriculum are language, social sciences, and moral education. The curriculum insists that language is an important foundation of human development and the identity of a culture. That is, language enables pupils to communicate in their daily activities in different situations and environments. Thus, language proficiency enables pupils to learn more successfully as they will be able to listen, read, speak and write well. Social Sciences, on the other hand, enable the pupil to know, appreciate, and promote appropriate culture in the society, and those of other societies. With moral education, pupils will grow up in a manner acceptable to the community and strengthen their abilities to think critically and get solutions to problems based on religious principles.

The curriculum has about ten competencies for each class (III-VI), but only two of them are presented in this section, as they inform the current study. For reading development, the curriculum asserts that a standard four pupil should acquire the following competencies in Kiswahili subject: comprehend oral and written information, communicate orally and through writing, as well as acquire and use vocabulary through the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).Under Civics and Moral Education, where social competence skills are

implied, the 2016 curriculum directs the acquisition of the following competencies: respect the community, appreciate the community, be responsible, be resilient, be a person of integrity, and promote peace and harmony.

Alongside 2016, there is also the National Curriculum Framework for Basic and Teacher Education (NCFBTE). This is an overarching document that stipulates the educational vision, the economic intention, and education policy in the context (Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, 2019). NCFBTE is derived from the National Development Vision, National Education Vision, and Education and Training Policy of 2014. Specifically, the framework is meant to coordinate related roles in the provision of education, identify and prioritize key generic competencies relevant for Tanzanian students and their teachers, and regulate all curricular development processes. In so doing, the framework seeks to specify standards in the education system, improve the internal consistency of the curricula, and articulate curricular implementation strategies.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Tanzania has recently made significant progress in ensuring that the majority of primary school-going-age pupils have access to education (Haki Elimu, 2014). According to the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training (2018), the total enrolment of pupils in standard I-VII increased by 8.5% from 9,317,791 pupils in the year 2017 to 10,111,671 pupils in the year 2018. This increase was attributed to fee-free education policy, and the presence of a strong partnership between government, private institutions, faith-based organisations (FBOs), and community-based organisations (CBOs) in the provision of primary education (MoESTVT, 2018).

Yet, the major concern has been on the learning outcomes. Studies on the factors associated with pupils' poor reading skills acquisition in Tanzania, in particular, have focused on learning environment, learning outcomes, and teachers' characteristics (Haki Elimu, 2014; Carroll, 2011; EQUIP-Tanzania, 2015); ignoring the social competence skills. This may lead to difficulties to mitigate the poor reading problem

for pupils in Tanzania. Alongside other approaches towards the understanding of the relationship between the two variables (social competence skills and reading skills); tapping the teachers' knowledge, perceptions and practices provides an additional avenue. This is because teachers are the key players in facilitating different skills in pupils. As a social environment, a school is where pupils get involved in classroom activities by harmoniously interacting with peers and teachers (Belskyet al., 2006), and where expectations and norms are established.

There is limited literature on the position of social competence skills in the acquisition of reading skills in Tanzania and Africa in general. Little is known on the position of social competence skills towards the acquisition of reading skills. Thus, investigating the relationship between social competencies on reading skills acquisition in the African context is important due to its social-cultural differences with the rest of the world, where most of the literature on the study topic comes. In light of the above background, the present study aimed to examine the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in public primary school pupils in Manyara region.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to study the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in primary education pupils in public schools.

1.5 Objectives

Specifically, the study aimed to:

i. Explore the factors that hinder the acquisition of reading skills in pupils,
ii. Establish teachers' knowledge of social competence skills,
iii. Examine the perceptions of teachers on the position of social competence skills on reading skills acquisition,
iv. Appraise the social competence skills and reading skills enhancing practices employed by teachers in schools,
v. Analyse the association between social competencies and readings skills among primary school pupils.

1.6 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following questions:

i. What factors hinder the acquisition of reading skills among primary school pupils?
ii. To what extent do teachers know the concept of social competence skills?
iii. How do teachers perceive the role of social competence skills on reading skills acquisition among primary school pupils?
iv. Which practices are employed by teachers for enhancing both social competence skills and reading skills in primary school pupils?
v. What is the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in pupils?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The present study is significant in several ways. First, since the studies on the relationship between social competencies and reading skills acquisition in school pupils are limited in Tanzania, this study gives policymakers a clear picture of how Tanzanian pupils stand in terms of their social competence skills, and how these skills may influence their reading acquisition. The findings of the study show the position of possessing social competence skills on reading skills acquisition. Secondly, the study is useful to curriculum developers in understanding, implementing, and modifying curriculum in schools to include the content of social competence skills development within the school context. The findings may be used for designing intervention strategies to support improving social competence skills in pupils, which would in turn enhance the acquisition of reading skills.

Thirdly, the process of teacher preparation in Teachers' Colleges may benefit from the findings of this study as it may bring about the need to review the curricula (by Tanzania Institute of Education) to include more social competence skills and the overall teacher preparation programmes. The aim is to support the development of pupils' ability to read, interpret and use different texts in learning to read.

Fourth, the study findings may help teachers in schools to enhance both academic and social competence skills equally. This is because schools are considered the most important places to promote different skills in pupils. Interventions focusing on fostering social competence skills such as cooperation, self-control, assertion, advancing pupils' communication skills, building on interactive skills, and engagement with others for mutual benefits; can be merged with reading skills strategies for the better academic development of pupils. The intention is to find out how best to support pupils' early reading acquisition.

Lastly, the study lays a foundation for further research in the same area to increase a body of literature and contribute to information generation on social competence skills and the reading acquisition domain. It paves the way for building up a far greater knowledge and evidence-based interventions that work with pupils.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The proposed study was intended to investigate the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in public primary school pupils in Manyara region. Thus, the study focused on primary school teachers from the selected areas, as well as standard four pupils. In addition, this study was confined to reading and social competence skills only. Acquisition and mastery of reading skills have been identified as a key aspect as they lay a foundation for mastery of other academic subjects. Thus, understanding ways of promoting the acquisition of reading skills for teachers was important for the academic development of pupils and their lives after school.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

Remarkable findings from this study should be considered against several limitations. Some of the limitations, however, imply exciting future research directions. The major limitation was the difference between the language used in the field and the medium of research instruments. The tools were developed in the English language, reviewed by the experts, and then translated into Kiswahili. A common language problem in research occurs when two sides (researcher and

participants) do not share the same language as they need an interpreter to facilitate communication. This was not the case in the current study, as the challenge was just on one concept; social competence skills. The Kiswahili word for *social competence* posed a challenge. During pilot study, the researcher agreed with the participants on the proper terminology that had to stand for social competence in Kiswahili; which was *mwenendo mzuri*.

It was observed during the study that 14 out of 17 classrooms were overcrowded. Though there is disagreement on the 'overcrowding' concept, it is obvious that a classroom is overcrowded where the number of pupils exceeds the optimum level in such a way it hinders the teaching and learning processes. In Tanzania, the teacher-pupil ratio is 40 to 45 pupils. Overcrowded classrooms in the current study limited the researcher to effectively administer the observational guide. The researcher had to ask subject teachers to re-arrange sitting plans in order to find a way for the researcher to move around in the classrooms. Among the components of the guide were the classroom management skills of teachers, yet, there were limited spaces for teachers to move around to manage their classes. Again, it was difficult to arrange for learning corners in the classrooms, which were also the components of the observation guide, and so forth.

1.10 Definition of Operational Terms

Reading: reading is a process of constructing meaning from written text. It involves word recognition and comprehension. It is also a process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among the reader's existing knowledge, the information suggested by the text being read, and the context of the reading situation (Kalanje, 2011; Yambi, 2010). According to Shihab (2011), reading is a process of thinking actively to unlock or understand the idea an author portrays. For this study, reading is simply defined as the making meaning from print that requires the words in print.

Social competence is a condition of possessing the social, emotional, and intellectual skills and behaviours needed for successful social adaptation and as a member of society. Social competence is defined by Leffert, Benson, and

Roehlkepartan (1997) as the possession of personal skills and knowledge that individuals develop to deal with their lives' challenges, opportunities, and choices effectively. For the context of the current study, social competence defines a child's ability to establish and maintain high quality and mutually satisfying social relationships for the acquisition of reading skills

Teachers' knowledge: according to Neta and Pritchard (2009) and Russell (1972), defining 'knowledge' and provide details for its nature proved to be hard to pin down, with no convincing and globally accepted agreement. However, a most accepted definition of knowledge is that of 'justified true belief' (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). In this study, the concept of knowledge is used to mean teachers' conceptualization of the relationship between social competencies and reading skills gained through experience or learning

Teachers' perceptions: perception is defined by Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English as *"a) the way you think about something and your idea of what it is like; b) the way that you notice things with your senses of sight, hearing, etc.; c) the natural ability to understand or notice things quickly,"* (Hughes, 1996). Perception under the current study refers to the way teachers regard or interpret the relationship between social competencies and reading skills.

Teachers' practices: defining practice is also challenging (Steadman, 2018). This is because the concept is linked with societal, historical, cultural, and philosophical implications. It becomes more complex when associated with teacher education. However, the concept's definition becomes central to the work of teachers, and the teaching and learning processes make its examination both necessary and helpful. In the current study, practices mean the teachers' actual application (methods) of the social competence and reading skills enhancing in classrooms

Early primary school: early primary school in this study refers to standard one up to standard four. According to the Basic Education Curriculum Standard III-VI (Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, 2016), the competencies that are emphasized in Standard I and II

(reading, writing, and early mathematics), are again emphasized in Standard III and IV

Academic achievement refers to a successful accomplishment in a particular subject area (reading in this study), as indicated by grades, marks, and scores of descriptive commentaries

Academic performance refers to how students deal with their studies and how they can cope with or accomplish various activities assigned to them by their teachers in a fixed time or academic year (Dimbisso, 2009). In this study, academic performance is simply a measurement of pupils' achievement across various academic subjects.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of selected literature provides a background for the understanding of major issues surrounding the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition. The review is organised into empirical literature and theoretical perspectives that guide this study. The empirical literature review is arranged according to the five objectives of the study. It starts with the review about the concept of reading and social competence skills development in childhood, and the teacher education system in Tanzania. Further, the section reviews the literature on the factors that affect the acquisition of reading skills among children, teachers' knowledge of social competence skills, teachers' perceptions of the role of social competence skills in reading skills acquisition, teachers' practices in enhancing social competence skills and reading skills in schools, as well as the relationship between social competence skills and readings skills acquisition. The review ends with the enlightenment about social competence and reading skills assessment techniques. The section also presents Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory and Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1971) and how they relate with the topic under study. Lastly, the chapter presents the conceptual framework showing the study variables, and the research gap.

2.1 Empirical Review

This subsection presents what other studies, within and outside Tanzania have documented in relation to the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition among pupils in public primary schools.

2.1.1 The Concept of Reading

Reading has been differently presented by several scholars. Shihab (2011), for instance, argues that reading is a process of thinking actively to unlock or understand the idea an author portrays. It involves connecting an author's idea to what one already knows and appropriately coordinating all the ideas for use. Reading, therefore, could be defined as a receptive skill, which involves the ability to interpret or decode printed symbols. Reading is a skill, which is the ground of almost all

processes of learning and is necessary for pupils to learn other subjects (Geske & Ozola, 2008).

Mastery of reading skills in schools forms the basis for all other areas of learning, where pupils can apply such skills independently as they try to obtain and utilize information from a variety of sources. More than 70 years ago, the international community declared literacy a basic human right. Recognition of its intrinsic value and evidence of its social and economic benefits have motivated an expansive international effort to estimate the percentage of adults that can read, especially in low-income countries where educational opportunities are limited (Smith-Greenaway, 2015). Unfortunately, this expectation has not been realised for many children, and the high rate of illiteracy continues to have an adverse effect in many nations (UNESCO, 2015). There is increasing demand from societies that schools meet the obligation to produce graduates with the required competence in reading. If a pupil's reading level is low, it implies difficulties in the acquisition of several other subjects, and consequently difficulties in obtaining education in general.

The government of Tanzania has put in place several plans to improve the development of reading skills in pupils. Initially, these plans were meant to improve teachers' skills in teaching reading among lower grades pupils in primary schools. In the 1970s, for instance, UNICEF/UNESCO and the Tanzania government launched a Primary Education Reform Project which involved a total of 10,000 in-service teachers who were teaching in grades 1 and 2 (UNESCO, 2014). This project aimed to improve the teachers' knowledge and skills to teach reading to the early grades; as literature shows that the poor early grades reader almost consistently continues to be a poor reader (Franciset al., 1996; Juel, 1988; Torgesen & Burgess, 1998).

2.1.2 Teacher Education in Tanzania

The concept of teacher education has different meanings among different scholars. In some cases, the concept has been categorized into two major perspectives (i.e., pre-service and in-service). Oyekan (2002) for instance, defined teacher education as the provision of professional education with special training in a particular period for the

preparation of individuals who are to develop, and nurture the youngsters into responsible and productive citizens in a country. He defined this while capitalizing on the pre-service aspect. On the other hand, Izuagba and Obiefuna (2005), referring to the in-service aspect, defined teacher education as concerning all programmes that are designed to facilitate teachers already at work to update their knowledge, skills, and attitude to contend with continuing changes in pedagogy, course content, and resources used in teaching. Nakpodia and Urien (2011) defined teacher education as the process which nurtures upcoming teachers, and renews qualified and experienced teachers' knowledge, skills, and attitude in the form of continuous professional development. The current study adopts Nakpodia and Urien's definition of teacher education as the review is intended for both pre-and in-service training.

The future of any country that desires to get rid of poverty and battle in the world of knowledge economy relies on the quality of its teachers. It is a fact that the knowledge of the economy embraced by the world depends on the ability of its people, which is determined by the quality of teachers in a particular country (Goodwin et al., 2014; Hardman, Ackers, Abrishamian, & O'Sullivan, 2011; Mosha, 2006). It is impossible to achieve quality education if the quality of teachers does not meet the standards, even when the educational policies, plans, curricula, materials, and educational leadership are all in good requisite standards. Based on this observation, teacher preparation and professional development are important for any effective and efficient system of education. The opportunities for educating teachers, and the extent to which their wellbeing, and motivation are addressed are key to improving the quality of teaching in schools. It also provides a good measure to make sure that pupils are given access to good and high-quality education.

The success of the teacher depends on his/her competence (academically and pedagogically) and efficiency, (ability, workload, and commitment), teaching and learning materials and methods; support from education managers and supervisors (Rogan, 2004; Van den Akker & Thijs, 2002; Mosha, 2004). Just as in many other nations around the world, education is also considered a foundation for social, economic, political, cultural, and technological development in Tanzania. Teacher

education in Tanzania is executed in two ways, and entails issues such as syllabus, recruitment, structure, governance, financing, accreditation as well as standards that are considered when making decisions about the teaching profession. There are pre-service teachers who are prepared and trained in teachers' colleges, universities, and university colleges. According to the National Framework for Continuous Professional Development for Practicing Teachers (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2017), this is the initial or pre-service teacher education, and it is the first step in teachers' professional development.

Teachers at the levels of certificate and diploma are trained in teachers' colleges, while higher education institutions prepare teachers at bachelor's degree level and beyond. Teachers from both institutions get employed to work in schools and colleges. Teacher education in Tanzania is offered in three clusters: Grade 'A' (certificate) teachers, Diploma teachers, and Degree graduate teachers. Grade 'A' teachers are trained to teach at the level of pre-primary and primary education, while diploma holders are prepared to teach at the level of secondary education, although most also teach in primary schools. Bachelor's degree graduates are meant to teach in secondary schools, preferably high schools, and teacher training colleges.

The diploma in education is a two-year course for candidates with a minimum qualification of two principal passes and a subsidiary in the Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (Kitta & Fussy, 2013). As such, from the 2018/2019 academic year, the diploma in education included Form Four graduates, but they have to pursue their Diploma in Education in three years while pursuing their Advanced Secondary Education at the same time, and taking the Advanced Certificate of Secondary Examination (ACSE) before their final diploma examination.

At the bachelor's degree level, before 2005, training lasted for four years. However, subjective evidence showed that there was significant demand for teachers over the past two decades that led to the duration of the programme being reduced to three years. The training at this level has different specializations that comprise two types

of teachers; those who are prepared as college tutors and specialize in professional courses with minimal academic subject courses, and those who are prepared for teaching in secondary schools, and specialize more in academic subjects with relatively fewer professional courses.

Underlining the significance of the quality and competence of teachers, the minimum entry qualification for admission into training colleges has been revised several times. For example, as from the 2009/2010 academic year, a two-year Grade A teacher certificate training programme was offered to candidates who had passed the Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE) with a minimum qualification of "Division IV" 27 points, compared to a previous minimum entrance qualification of Division IV 28 points. Moreover, credit passes in English and Mathematics subjects are the prerequisites for admission into teachers' colleges, particularly public colleges. From the 2016/2017 academic year, the entry qualification was increased from Division IV 27 points to at least Division III with at least two principal passes in the Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE). Similarly, for a Diploma in Education, entry qualification increased to at least Division III with two principal passes in teaching subjects.

The second way is the in-service training, as referred to as Continuous Professional Development (CPD) by the National Framework for Continuous Professional Development for Practicing Teachers (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2017).The administration of an In-Service Education and Training (INSET) for teachers in Tanzania is a prerequisite for effective teaching and learning in the education system. For many years, Tanzania has attempted to implement in-service teacher professional development to align teachers with the evolving changes in advances in science and technology, specifically the use of information and communication technology in teaching and learning. Since a good number of teachers are already in schools compared to the pre-service, teacher professional development becomes more important for realizing reforms in education.

Teacher professional development in Tanzania is dominated by a customary approach, involving seminars and workshops, and common when there are new changes introduced in the school curricula (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2017). It is also characterized by the existence of many providers, including internal and external institutes. These institutes are, however, not well-coordinated, and they are usually not evenly distributed in the country, dividing teachers into those who gain from the provided teacher professional development programmes and those who do not. For example, Quality Education Improvement Programme in Tanzania (EQUIP-T), funded by DFID; the Literacy and Numeracy Support Programme (LANES), funded by Global Partnership in Education (GPE); and the School-Based In-Service Training (SBIT), funded by UNICEF, to mention a few.

This seems to be a challenge, considering that the sustainability of the programmes is adversely affected, when the projects come to an end. In addition, some of the institutes do provide professional development programmes which are not necessarily reflective of the teachers' contexts. This is dissimilar to the fundamental nature of teacher professional development which is supposed to be progressive. However, the National Framework for Continuous Professional Development for Practicing Teachers (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2017) is aimed to have in place well-coordinated and systematic CPD services accessible to all teachers to fulfill the policy (ETP) and professional requirements of the teacher.

2.1.3 Common Factors Affecting Pupils' Reading Skills Acquisition

Several studies have reported factors affecting the acquisition of reading skills by pupils. Schiefelbein and Summons (1995) (cited in Mwangi, 2013) studied factors that determine reading achievement in developing countries. The factors included availability of textbooks, class sizes, presence of school libraries, teachers' qualifications, and school administration status, and teacher-student ratio. Other factors are school leadership styles, school culture and climate, teacher and student behaviour, and others. All these factors above may or may not influence the reading success of pupils, though, there may be other predictors, and therefore it is not easy

to generalize the factors. The factors are categorised as home-related, school-related, pupils' characteristics, and teachers related factors.

2.1.3.1 Home-Related Factors.

Rothstein (2000) identifies home-related factors like socioeconomic status (education, occupation, and income) the household size, type of discipline at home, family structure, as well as the level of parental involvement and interest in pupils' reading-related activities. Similarly, Christenson and Gorney (1992) reported family and environmental factors as barriers to pupils' reading acquisition. These factors were parents' expectations and attribution, structure and learning, home environment, discipline, and parental engagement. Engine-Demir (2009) also reported that pupils' reading success is greatly influenced by family characteristics. Schiller, Khmelkov, and Wang (2002) add that educated parents are in a better position to provide their pupils with the social and academic support crucial for educational success when compared with less-educated parents.

In the same line, Johnson and Kyle (2001) also found that parental education, especially mothers had a convenient impact on their pupils' reading achievement and overall school success; and fathers' education becomes more critical when they have attained tertiary levels. Fuchs and Woessmann (2004) came out with the findings that the parents' education and occupation had more substantial effects on reading than on maths test scores. They (Fuchs & Woessmann) contended that the occupation of parents, at least having one parent with a full-time job positively affects pupils' ability to read. This means that low level of parental education, poverty, parental and neighbourhood negative attitude towards education, and others have significant negative effects on reading achievement and academic success in general (Currie, 1995; Gregg & Machin, 1999). Pupils with educated parents have greater access to a wide variety of social and economic resources (family structure, home environment, parent-child interaction) that can be used to make them succeed academically. Higher family income is closely linked with higher pupils' reading performance (Hanushek, 1992).

Geske and Ozola (2008) conducted a study in Latvia on the factors affecting reading achievement at grade 4 primary school level. Findings revealed that the socioeconomic position of a family considerably influences pupils' acquisition of literacy skills. Pupils from better economy families usually have better achievements in reading skills; they have comparatively more books and their parents have a good education. It was further found that pupils' reading skills are substantially influenced by the collaboration of parents and pupils at the pre-school age. According to Asikhia (2010), pupils from poor families, are situationally forced out of school to engage in hawking, petty trading, and the likes to save money for school expenses (which are not instructional materials in most cases) as well as for family needs. The persistence of this situation for an individual pupil may spell doom for his/her reading achievements. Stressing on this point, Tracy and Walter (1998) as cited in Asikhia (2010) submit that the pupils at the low economic level are habitually the least served by the education systems.

The number of siblings that a pupil has at home can also have an impact on his/her reading success at school. This is because the larger the family size, the lesser the parental devotion and attention to the pupils; and the more the challenges encountered by the parents in meeting the pupils' both emotional and physical needs (Asikhia, 2010). Pupils from larger families were found to have unfavourable home environments, lower levels of verbal facility, as well as increased rates of behavioural problems, and lower levels of education success (Parcel & Menagham, 1994).

Research has reflected that the academic output of the pupils is also affected by the nature of parental discipline (Aremu, 2000). According to Oluwole (2001), the degree of anxiety and self-efficacy marked by pupils determines their reading achievement. Contrary, pupils from permissive houses are too complacent, unmotivated, and lack the personal determination to succeed. The democratic parenting style was found to be helpful to academic teaching and learning situations. A study conducted by Aremu (2000) found that pupils from democratic parenting styles succeeded in reading than their colleagues from autocratic homes.

Another home-related factor for pupils' reading achievement is the family structure. Traditionally, a family is intact or broken. For the context of this study, a broken family is the one that is not intact for several reasons ranging from parental deaths, separation, divorce, dissertation, and illegitimacy; in the case that the family is never completed (Coukline, 1996). Single parented families create stressful situations for both the parents and pupils. Such families are likely to be faced with financial difficulties due to assuming new roles and responsibilities, establishing new patterns in intra-family interactions as well as reorganisation of routines and schedules (Agulanna, 1999). These situations are not good for pupils' needs for academic success; as when a parent is overburdened by responsibilities and by their emotional reaction to the situation, they sometimes become impatient, irritable, and insensitive to the needs of their pupils, thus, affect their pupils' reading efforts (Nzewunwah, 1995 cited in Uwaifo, 2008).

It is also evident from various studies that pupils are likely to succeed in reading when parents are involved in their schooling practices. Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) showed that pupils whose parents are involved in their schooling have better academic success than their counterparts. Supporting these findings, Reynolds and Gill (1994) thought that there is a considerable relationship between parental engagement and pupils' reading achievement. Further studies have shown that parental engagement in their pupils' learning leads not only to higher academic success but also to greater cognitive competence, greater problem-solving skills, greater school enjoyment, better school attendance, as well as fewer behavioural problems in school environments (Melhinshet al., 2001 as cited in Ademola & Olajumoke, 2009). In addition, Tremblay, Ross, and Berthelot (2001) found a significant link between parental involvement in schooling and their pupils' reading success.

Parental engagement in school activities goes together with parental interests in academia, for the pupils' reading achievements. The interest of parents in schooling has been found to significantly influence the academic success of pupils. Odinko and Adeyemo (1999), for instance, found that parental interest in schooling combined

with socio-psychological factors were good predictors of pupils' learning outcomes in the English language as a subject. Examining the home environment effects on the pupil's success in primary schools in Winneba Township, Ghanney (2007) found that positive parental attitudes towards education, support, and interest combined enhanced pupils' progress in education rather than the level of parents' education attained.

2.1.3.2 School-Related Factors.

Pupils' reading achievement is also influenced by several environmental factors at the school level. Such factors involve the availability of stimulating reading materials, quality of physical facilities, school location, class size, pupils-teachers ratio, experience and qualifications of teachers, as well as school supervision in general. Instructional materials have also a role to play as they provide information, provide opportunities for pupils to use what they have learned, and organise the sequence and the scope of the information presented (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). Evidence shows that pupils do better in reading when they are exposed to learning aids and books to facilitate their learning. These resources range from teachers' guides, textbooks, wall pictures, and other reading-related aids. The availability and use of teaching and learning resources affect the teachers' lessons.

The location of the school and the quality of its physical buildings influence the reading success for pupils. This is in line with what was put forward by Harbison and Hanushek (1992) that good buildings and good sitting arrangements lead to reading success and general academic achievements. On the contrary, the bad buildings which are likely to be lacking mental stimulating facilities alongside low or not good sitting arrangements are not supportive academically. The school physical structure of the buildings which is not attractive may demotivate pupils to succeed academically (Isangedighi, 1998). Asikhia (2010) stressed that the location of the school to a large extent determines the patronage such a school will enjoy. Adepoju (2001) found that pupils in urban located schools were better at reading than their rural counterparts. Ogunleye (2002) also marked a significant variation in the pupils' reading success in urban and peri-urban areas.

The size of classrooms has also been marked to determine pupils' reading ability and academic success at large. Research has shown that schools with smaller classes perform better than those with larger classes. According to Fabunmi, Brai-Abu, and Adeniji (2007), there are three class factors that when taken together, significantly determined the pupils' reading success in Oyo state, Nigeria; these factors were class size, pupil classroom space, and class utilization rate. Additionally, a study conducted by Salfi and Saeed (2007) in Pakistan revealed a significant relationship between school size and pupils' reading achievement. It was found that small schools had better reading performance than large or medium schools. Class size also was found to be inversely related to reading success, particularly for pupils in early grades (Tremblay, Ross, & Berthelot, 2001). A study conducted by Kraft (1994) on ideal class size and its effects on teaching and learning in Ghana reported that there were negative effects on pupils' reading success for class sizes above 40 pupils. Thus, a large class size does not provide a conducive environment for serious academic work.

Effective school supervision of teaching and learning practices can also lead to high reading achievement rate. Etsey, Amedahe, and Edjah (2005) studied sixty schools; 29 from peri-urban and 31from rural areas in Ghana, and came up with the findings that reading achievement was better in privately owned schools as compared to public schools. This is a result of more effective supervision of teaching and learning activities in private schools. Etsey et al. (2005) added that if supervisors' visits are more effective in schools, the teachers would be alert to be earlier and more regular in schools. This would control teachers' absenteeism as well as enhance the teaching and learning process in schools. Pupils will be challenged to change their attitudes towards school if teachers are always present as a result of regular visits of circuit supervisors.

2.1.3.3 Pupils' Characteristics.

Pupils' characteristics have been identified to influence their reading achievements. Analysis by Stricker and Rock (1995) revealed that the pupils' initial characteristics had a relative impact on their reading achievement, parental education being the most

significant. Such characteristics are homework, time with books, attendance in schools, their attitude towards schooling, pupils' self-concept and motivation, nutrition, and health status.

Pupils who spend more time doing homework and assignments, regardless of intelligence improve their reading ability (Engin-Demir, 2009). Time invested in doing homework and assignments has been found to relate significantly to reading motivation. Butler (1987, as cited in Etseyet al., 2005) found a strong relationship between doing homework and reading success:

> ...homework bore a positive relationship with learning outcomes when it is relevant to learning objectives, assigned regularly in reasonable amounts, well explained, motivational, collected and reviewed during class time, and used as an occasion for feedback to students (p. 3).

Alomar (2006) argued that homework is an interaction between pupils and schools and thus, a crucial ingredient of the educational process when it comes to measuring reading success. School attendance also is correlated with pupils' reading and overall academic performance. Pupils' reading performance in school is to some extent predicted by attending school regularly. Poor school attendance behaviour such as truancy or unexcused absence, tardiness, cutting classes, and leaving school without permission is crucial in determining pupils s' reading achievement (Allen-Meares, Washington & Welsh, 2000).

According to Heady (2003), there is a negative relationship between work during school hours and reading success. Additional working hours were found to decrease pupils s' computational and reading ability. On the other hand, additional hours of schooling and study increase computational and reading ability. Ray and Lancaster (2003) also found a negative impact of that time spent at work on educational variables; weakening levels of study hours. Unbalanced demand for work and schooling leads to the mental and physical strain on pupils and may lead to poor reading performance.

Self-concept is one of the personal variables most studied concerning the group of thoughts and beliefs a pupil has regarding his/her academic ability. It is a result of a pupil's internalisation of his/her social image and is developed from interacting with social environments. According to Diaz (2003), the pupil's self-image and the rejection or acceptance by others are assigned great importance. Several scholars have also investigated the relationship between reading achievement and one's self-concept. According to Marsh's (1990) study on the reciprocal relationship between self-concept and academic success, a person's success is affected by prior academic self-concept, and that grades did not affect subsequent academic self-concept. Marsh and Yeung (1997) also found that prior academic success had effects on subsequent self-concept. Similarly, prior academic self-concept also had effects on subsequent reading success, with prior success being the control. Diverting from these findings, Helmke and Van Aken (1995) report that elementary reading success did not affect prior self-concept. A study conducted by Edwards (2002) showed that self-concept better predicted school success than variables such as gender or age.

Personal motivation is another variable for one's reading achievement, as it is considered to be the aspect that initiates the students' own engagement in learning. Diaz (2003) contends that a pupil is likely to devote all the effort and attention towards the achievement of a specific goal when he/she is strongly motivated, hence bringing to bear all the resources. Similarly, a pupil's reading success motivation is influenced by his/her perception of parental support and engagement. A positive perception of parental support and engagement makes pupils achieve well (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Wang & Wildman, 1995). Gottfried (1994) also found parental motivation practices being important and had direct effects on reading intrinsic motivation, and indirect effects on subsequent motivation and reading success.

It is a fact that health has the potential effect on reading ability and school achievement as a whole. Research shows that a pupil's health can have an impact on when and whether they go to school, what they do in school, and the time they stay at school. In Ghana, for instance, research has indicated a relationship between malnutrition, stunted growth, and delayed enrolment in school (Glewwe & Jacoby,

1995; Fentiman, Hall & Bundy, 1999, 2001) and reading achievement. Pupils' health situation influences their functionalities at school. Pupils who are affected by hunger and malnutrition or other nutrition-related aspects lack the same potential for learning as nourished and healthy pupils (Pridmore, 2007).

A large number of researchers have explored the important role of pupils' attitudes towards learning concerning their reading achievements. The attitude of pupils such as absenteeism, indiscipline, truancy, and the like can influence their reading success positively or negatively. According to McLean (1997), by differentiating the attitudes of low and high readers, about five factors related to attitudes were significantly related to reading success. Pupils' reading success may not only be affected directly by attitude, but the effects of other factors as well may have an indirect influence. Another study conducted by Abu-Hilal (2000) revealed the effect attitudes have on the pupils' level of reading aspiration. With the difference between what was found by these two studies, there was a consensus regarding the significance of attitudes in determining pupils' reading achievement. House (1997) and Hassan (2002) also had a compliment on the results of earlier studies, with the former proving that the initial attitudes of pupils towards school were significantly related to reading achievement; and the latter showed that the pupils' basic approach to learning to read was predicted by attitudes.

2.1.3.4 Teachers'-Related Factors.

Teachers' related factors that can influence reading ability are such as attendance at school, their interest and motivation, teaching effectiveness, and teaching methods. Teachers' absenteeism, for instance, contributes to poor pupils' reading success. Teachers who attend schools regularly are crucial in terms of both pupils' access to education and the nature of that access. Absenteeism is closely related to lateness. A study conducted by Fobih, Akyeampong, and Koomson (1999) in sixty schools in Ghana found more than 85 percent of teachers went to schools late. The lateness had ranged from five minutes to one and a half hours. This implied that the time for teaching was lost, and fewer subjects were taught, as well as school days for pupils were shortened. Absenteeism and lateness have a big influence on the completion of

syllabi, as failure to complete the syllabi make it difficult for pupils to capture the content that is to be taught in the next sessions where in most cases the foundation is based on the previous lessons (Etsey et al., 2005).

Both lateness and absenteeism according to Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) are the signs of education systems that are not able to effectively manage teachers, as well as providing incentives to motivate teachers to improve their working attitudes. A highly motivated teacher is likely to work to the maximum. Corroboration this assertion, Lockheed and Verspoor (1991) opined that poor teachers' motivation and lack of professional commitment leads to poor attendance and attitudes that are not professional towards pupils which in turn affect their reading and academic success.

Qualities of teachers, alongside their commitment to work, are the cornerstone inputs for better achievement in education. If the teacher is knowledgeable of the subject matter, relative to textbooks, instructional time, and other teaching and learning resources, she/he is likely to influence learning for pupils (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). According to Agyemang (1993), "a teacher who does not have both the academic and professional teaching qualification would undoubtedly have a negative influence on the teaching and learning of his/her subjects' (p.2). Darling-Hammond (2000) stresses that the quality-related characteristics of teachers such as certification and degrees in teaching subjects are crucial and correlate positively with subject outcomes.

Effective teaching involves a combination of several aspects of teaching such as mastery of the subject, good communication, preparation and presentation of lesson, pacing the class to the pupils' level considering individual differences, allowing pupils to apply and practice what they learn, letting pupils aware of what is expected of them, as well as monitoring and evaluating the pupils' performance so that they learn from their mistakes (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). In a study by Jacob and Lefgren (2006), there was a positive correlation between effective teaching and reading achievement. Similarly, Adediwura and Tayo (2007) found effective

teaching being a significant predictor of pupils' reading success, which in turn produces higher academic quality pupils.

2.1.4 Reported Factors Affecting Pupils' Reading Skills Acquisition in Tanzania

Studies conducted in Tanzania indicate that some primary school pupils cannot read Kiswahili fluently by the time they complete their primary education (Ngorosho, 2011).Several factors have been put forward about pupils' reading performance. Lymo (2015) studied the challenges and strategies of reading the Kiswahili language in lower standards in public primary schools in Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam. He found the factors affecting reading acquisition as lack of in-service training to teachers, lack of teacher's incentives, a large number of pupils in one class, and lack of teaching and learning facilities relevant to reading Kiswahili language in schools. As for pupils, it was revealed that the Kiswahili reading textbooks were not attracting them to read, and some of them had no books to read, which resulted in poor reading. Ligembe (2014) conducted a study on factors affecting the acquisition of reading skills in Kiswahili in primary schools in Musoma Municipality and Misungwi District Council in Mara and Mwanza regions, respectively. The findings revealed that the majority of teachers in public primary schools did not have adequate mastery of the methods, strategies, and steps of teaching reading skills. Other factors were overcrowding of pupils in classrooms, shortage of textbooks, supplementary books, and other reading materials, pupils' truancy, regular changes of the curriculum without proper training of teachers on the changes, and failure of pupils to attend pre-primary school education. Findings further show that there is a relationship between the shortage of material resources, infrastructures, and human resources and pupils' ability to read fluently (Uwezo, 2010).

In her study on literacy skills of Kiswahili speaking children in Rural Tanzania, Ngorosho (2011) found a connection between pupils' failure to acquire reading skills and the teaching of reading skills in primary schools (Ngorosho, 2010). She reported that the shortage of teachers and low teachers' salaries made them dodge from duty to attend their own business. She also identified the insufficiency of desks and books

as among the factors that affected pupils' reading skills acquisition in her study. Other factors were poor home environment and lack of appropriate pedagogical skills in teachers.

2.1.5 The Relationship between Social Competence Skills and Reading Skills Acquisition

One of the main primary education goals is to promote healthy social and emotional development in pupils, which results in academic achievement, particularly in reading skills. When pupils first set foot into primary classrooms, they enter a new world that involves unfamiliar social, behavioural, and academic experiences (Pianta & Cox, 1999). Evidence suggests that pupils' early social experiences can have positive effects on education and later life outcomes. Schools have a strong incentive for making sure that pupils acquire the necessary social alongside academic skills (Barnett, 2011; Duncan & Magnuson, 2013). According to Aunolaet al. (2004), if pupils are disadvantaged at early stages, early gaps in understanding of literacy or mathematics tend to be sustained or widened over time. It is, therefore, more imperative for education systems to identify strategies that move young pupils towards becoming independent and reflective pupils, as well as increasing the likelihood for reading skills mastery and school success in later years (McLoyd & Purtell, 2008).

Improving pupils' academic success is one of the major objectives of the Tanzanian education system. The new Education and Training Policy (2014) with its focus on competency-based teaching and learning has shifted the focus of the education system from pure knowledge acquisition to the competencies that are important to the pupils to success in education and life in general. Academic success foretells the extent to which pupils, their teachers, and schools have attained their educational goals (Amirtha &Jebaseelan, 2014). Therefore, countries around the world strive to improve their education system to augment the skills of their younger generations and create a competent labour force that will foreseeably contribute towards the social and economic development of the country (Qehaja & Aliu, 2018). In the social cognitive perspective, pupils' academic achievement skills result from continuous,

reciprocal interactions among behaviour (social competence), the external environment, cognitive, and other internal aspects that can affect perception and actions (Bandura, 1978).

However, apart from other academic skills, school success requires mastery of reading skills as the foundation for mastery of academic subjects. The link between social competence and acquisition of reading skills has been a focus of research in recent years, leading to evidence-based actions and interventions to address the concerns of poor reading worldwide (Amirtha & Jebaseelan, 2014). Although it is acknowledged by researchers for a long time that intellectual ability to a greater extent influences pupil reading achievement, their ability to interact with people around them, and appropriately behaving in their communities, is also important for effective and efficient use of their intellectual ability (Magelinskaite-Legkauskieneet al., 2016) because pupils' reading ability depends on their ability to build positive relationships with peers and adults. Social competence skills have repeatedly been linked to reading success (Shala, 2013), and it is considered to be crucial for school success, just as academic skills are (Raver & Zigler, 1997; Spruijtet al., 2018). Social competence skills are particularly significant at the school entry point, as well as in the first few years of school when social interactions are important for reading acquisition and academic success in general (Raver, 2002).

Several correlational, longitudinal, and experimental studies have established the importance of social competence skills to reading achievements among school pupils (Wentzel, 2003). Wentzel (1991) for instance, studied the quality of peer relationships as the objective aspect of social competence skills; he concluded that social competence skills in childhood are powerful predictors of reading attainment, even more than intellectual ability. Pupils with more appropriate classroom behaviour (socially competent) also have been found to spend more time on task and engage more with academic tasks, reading inclusive (Baxter, 2017; Coie & Krehbiel, 1984). When pupils adhere to classroom rules and display other socially competent behaviour, it allows teachers to focus their attention on teaching, rather than

classroom management, enabling all pupils to learn more (Evertson& Weinstein, 2013).

Quality of pupils' social competence skills has also been found to have a motivational significance, creating an environment that makes pupils feel like they are a valued part of the classroom, and making them more likely to adopt positive learning behaviours that lead to reading achievement. In other words, more socially competent pupils are in a position to faster acquire reading skills because they are better at initiating, sustaining, and regulating their motivation for goal-directed learning, compared to those with poor social competence skills (Valienteet al., 2011). Confirming the findings of previous studies, Panayiotou et al. (2019) assert that pupils with greater social competence skills reported greater connection to the school and learning. The study also revealed that social competence skills act as a protective factor and predict improved reading performance. When studying the effects of social competence skills on reading achievement, Wentzel (2003) found that social responsibility for instance, as one of the aspects of social competence, facilitates reading achievement in at least two ways; behaving in socially responsible ways can create a social context for pupils that is conducive to cognitive development which allows classroom instruction and learning to take place. Secondly, the motivational aspects of social responsibility can enhance the reading process.

Some scholars have investigated a possible bi-directional relationship between social competence skills and reading achievement (Caemmerer & Keith, 2015; Hinshaw, 1992; Miles & Stipek, 2006). Some studies found that early social competence skills predicted later reading achievement, yet reading achievement did not predict later social competence skills (Capraraet al., 2000; Miles & Stipek, 2006). Other researchers, though, reported that pupils reading achievement affected their social competence skills, and their social competence skills had significant effects on their subsequent reading achievements (Chen, Huang, Chang, Wang, & Li, 2010). A US study on pupils from kindergarten through eighth grade found that reading achievement had a strong effect on later social competence skills than social competence skills on later reading achievement (Caemmerer & Keith, 2015).

The importance of social competence to successful primary school pupils' reading skills achievement is well-known in developed countries (Fowleret al., 1991; Rimm-Kaufmanet al., 2007). Social competence skills such as communication, cooperation, assertion, engagement, self-control, and the ability to work independently are consistently identified as "survival skills" at the early education level (Fowleret al., 1991). The ability of pupils to fully engage in and benefit from their early primary education experiences has been shown to depend on the degree to which they successfully comply with the primary education environment, and the success is partially predicated by their home and early social backgrounds. Early childhood specialists universally understand that pupils' social and emotional skills are the building blocks for cognitive development and knowledge acquisition at early ages (Hyson, 2003). On the other hand, literature acknowledges social competence skills as key aspects of child development and they contribute to reading competence (Morriset al., 2013). Morris et al. (2013) content that reading skills such as reading aloud and reading comprehension are well mastered when pupils are socially competent. From this background, it is therefore imperative that social competence skills are important for the acquisition and mastery of reading skills.

Elias and Haynes (2008) in another study found that cooperation (i.e. relationship skills) was significantly related to academic success (reading ad maths grades). Social competence skills are linked to higher school graduation and college completion. Pupils with high self-discipline, or self-management, for instance, outperform their colleagues on some academic-performance variables (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005). It was also found that self-control (management) was significantly related to academic performance (reading and math grades) (Elias & Haynes, 2008).
In addition, locus of control (self-efficacy), social competence constructs under the umbrella of self-management and self-awareness were positively linked to general academic achievement; while self-esteem was highly linked to pupils' General Performance Average (Strassburger, Rosen, Miller, & Chavez, 1990). Self-regulated and self-efficacy learning is strongly linked to maths performance in a secondary school as well (Cleary & Kitsantas, 2017). The ability to identify and label emotions and emotional expressions correlated with reading achievement and social

adjustments (Izard et al., 2001). The study in addition discovered that emotional knowledge had long-term effects on reading success. On the other hand, emotions can however facilitate or hinder a pupil's school success (Izard et al., 2001). Proponents of social competence address the need for empirical evidence regarding the positive effect of social competence skills on pupils' reading skills achievement (Lopes & Salovey, 2006; Zins et al., 2007).

2.1.6 Teachers' Social Competence Skills Knowledge

School is the first context of socialization for pupils just after the household (Milicic et al., 2014). It is in school where pupils identify, observe, learn, and reproduce social competence skills, social norms, and behaviour codes. Teachers deal with classroom control, pupil discipline, interpersonal disagreements, and poor teacher-pupil interactions (Dickeet al., 2015; Evers, Tomic, & Brouwers, 2004; Frenzel, 2014; Hargreaves, 2000). Teachers stand as reference points for pupils, and have influence in their social competence skills growth through the way they model the skills in the classroom, encourage teacher-pupil interaction and organise and manage the classroom (Jones, Bouffard, & Weissbourd, 2013). Teachers can do this either directly or unintentionally and negatively or positively. Teachers have a unique role in the process of enhancing the social competence skills of their pupils in school, as the models in the classroom (Jones, Bouffard, & Weissbourd, 2013). According to Doyle (2006), teacher-pupil relationships in the classroom are intrinsically portrayed by multidimensionality and simultaneity, unpredictability, and immediacy of events, publicity, and shared history. These attributes make teaching challenging and emotionally demanding, particularly for beginning teachers (Friedman, 2000; Hargreaves, 1998).

Education research generally documents many challenges that many beginning teachers would face. These include heavy teaching loads, several preparations, the least "desirable" classes, extracurricular activities, few instructional materials, little support from management, and disciplinary issues. Others are professional isolation, insufficient salaries, high expectations from parents, unfamiliarity with routines and

procedures, and a mismatch between their expectations of teaching and the realities of the school environment (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

The mission of the teacher education system is to produce stable teachers with the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects, who will later become important national human resources endowed with social qualities. Such qualities develop the capability of beginning teachers, to face the challenges in their school environments. Beginning teachers face several sudden and dramatic situations as they transit from pre-service students to the school teacher. In the end, these interpersonal stressors are more related to the lower occupational well-being of teachers (Klusmann, Kunter, Voss, & Baumert, 2012; Chang, 2009; Fives, Hamman, & Olivarez, 2007; Klassen & Chiu, 2011).

According to Nelson and Low (2003), social competence skills form the single most significant influencing variable in one's achievement, career accomplishment, leadership, and life fulfillment. The authors believe that a socially fit person should be able to understand, identify, experience, and express human feelings healthily and productively (Justice & Espinoza, 2004). Social competence skills can, thus, help teachers to normalize their stress, establish and achieve their objectives: controlling challenging conditions, keeping pupils away from participating in risky behaviours, and helping pupils to build positive relationships with their peers (Whitmore et al., 2016). Durlak et al. (2011) says that both social competence skills and relationships play a significant role in the pupils' learning course of action. To teachers, social competence skills increase their efficiency to teach and handle their classroom, their relations with pupils, and their capability to persuade the school climate. This in turn affects the social competence skills improvement of students as well. Social competence skills help beginning teachers to become more capable, more confident, and more committed to their teaching career over the long term. As teaching is a social activity by nature, social competence skills, therefore, form an important aspect in teacher achievement. Cherniss (2000) advocates that social competence skills "provide the bedrock" for the personal competencies that lead to better performance in the career (Tait, 2008).

The importance of social competencies among teachers has also been explained in the prosocial classroom model by Jennings and Greenberg (2009). The model recommends a positive effect of social competence skills on the setting up of positive teacher-pupil relationships, effective classroom administration, pupils' psychosocial development as well as teachers' occupational well-being. Similarly, in their literature review, Mansfiled et al. (2016) have pointed out social competence skills as crucial resources for teachers, as they comprise a prerequisite for the development of positive relationships. In specific, they refer to communication skills and techniques which support the establishment of good relationships, on the one hand, and successful management of challenging relations on the other.

Social competencies influence the ability of teachers to execute their work satisfactorily. Teachers with social competence skills can have a direct influence over the status of the same skills and improvement of their pupils, either negatively or positively. Socially competent teachers have better levels of self-awareness, and they know how to control their emotions, behaviour, and relationships. They are also likely to carry out classroom management more effectively; and therefore, they are in a good position to influence their pupils' social competence skills and academic development, including reading skills (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Social competence skills increase teachers' ability to act in this role effectively, their ability to identify and control social and emotional challenges in the classroom, the teaching they get, and the resources they access to develop their social competence skills. In the end, teachers influence their students through what and how they teach, and through the way, they relate to one another.

Teachers have to understand the range of social competence skills and have the tools at hand to assess whether students are within these ranges. They must also have an understanding of the types of strategies that can be used to increase pupils' competence skills in different situations. Therefore, providing teacher training related to social competence skills as part of habitual teaching training is a crucial step in later enhancing pupils' social competencies in classrooms.

So, the teacher's social competence is significant not only for the teacher's professional development, but it is also important in enhancing a socially friendly learning environment which is featured by friendly communication, cooperation, and assistance together with the teacher's collegial communication with the pupils. Professional development means a certain expert knowledge acquisition and mastering of skills, constant learning, and promoting skills. The need to develop working activities is due to various reasons: learning to meet contemporary needs; learning to be assured with future needs.

Teachers in the learning and teaching processes for pupils try to construct a situation in which they can identify values. Having developed a system of values, pupils can be stronger, more understanding to each other, and maintain the life stronger in their hands; they would seek social harmony and comprehensive competencies in all situations.

Research findings underline the high significance of social relations in the teaching profession, and its importance for maintaining occupational well-being. Apart from the verification of the efficiency of interventions to enhance social competence (Klemola, Heikinaro-Johansson, & O'Sullivan, 2013), empirical research on the development of social competence skills in adulthood, and especially in forthcoming teachers, are lacking. On the contrary, when teachers lack social competence skills, access to training, resources, or methods to promote the social competence skills and/or academic development of their pupils, their behaviours and actions can also result in negative effects on their students.

About the teachers' acquisition of social competence knowledge skills, there are different programmes in place that can be used to enhance the said skills. Social competence skills learning programmes in teachers colleges can also target teachers directly, being aware that teachers (i) are adult learners who can gain from workforce development; (ii) can have a direct impact on pupils' behaviour and social relationship in the classroom through the way the control the classroom; (iii) can offer emotional support to their pupils; and (iv) have a direct influence on the

usefulness of social competence skills learning programmes through their own experience (Raveret al., 2008; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

In Tanzania, beginning teachers appear to know the subject content because they have to pass the centralized examination. They have also to complete teaching practice (classroom experience) in public schools successfully. They know some of the challenges they will face in the schools (Klemola, Heikinaro-Johansson, & O'Sullivan, 2013). The question is; are they socially prepared? The curriculum for teacher education at the level of the certificate (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2017), does not show directly that teachers are equipped with social competence skills knowledge in the teachers' colleges. However, the curriculum has few topics that are meant to prepare teachers to handle some social aspects in pupils at schools. One of the stated objectives of the curriculum is to enable teachers to use different techniques in adjusting the conduct and behaviours of the pupils so that they can learn efficiently. Adjusting pupils' behaviours under social competence may also mean equipping the pupils with the skills that make them behave well, such as self-control and self-management skills.

There are also some topics in the curriculum that have some aspects of social competence skills development. Such topics are 'child development, 'counselling', and 'classroom management. Under child development, for instance, there are components of the meaning of child development and its stages, teachers' position in the behavioural pupil's upbringing, teachers' importance of the acquisition of child development skills, as well as the role of family and community in child development.

Under counselling, teachers are exposed to the meaning of counselling, different approaches to counselling as well as the kinds of child-related problems, or challenges that need counselling at schools and homes. Similarly, under classroom management, teachers are equipped with knowledge of the meaning and importance of classroom management skills, and the things to consider when managing classrooms. The review of the curriculum, therefore, shows that teachers in Tanzania

(Grade A) are not directly taught about social competence skills. On the other hand, social competence skills are embedded in some aspects of the curriculum. This is because the stated topics intend to shape the pupil to behave well at both school and home; to be socially competent in other words. This shows that there is indirect learning of social competence development skills in the teachers in the colleges.

The current teacher education system in Tanzania is pressured by what can be termed as 'No Student Left Behind', which can arguably detract from a focus on teaching social competence skills in pupil-teachers. However, academic performance is directly linked to social competence (Tait, 2008). Therefore, giving teachers an understanding of the components that make up social competence as well as ways in which these skills may be identified and developed may positively affect pupil's social competence skills, as well as their academic performance, including the ability to read (Baker-Henninghamet al., 2009).

2.1.7 Teachers' Perceptions of Social Competence and Reading Skills Acquisition

There has been a slight shift in the focus of schooling in recent decades. This is because traditionally, schools had focused on academic instructions; maths, language, arts, science, and social studies. Efforts, however, to educate the 'whole child' through social and emotional learning have proved to be important towards improving the pupil's mental and physical health, alongside academic success (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011). Nonetheless, evidence shows that social competence and learning are related, and should also be the focus of education.

Pupils not only learn academics in the classrooms but also how to acquire academic content basically through interacting with others (Westby, 1997). As a result, social competence skills are important for pupils to learn alongside academic skills. According to Lopes and Salovey (2006), emotional control, for instance, makes students concentrate and engage in classroom activities by positively interacting with others in the school community. Consequently, schools must develop pupils' social

capabilities to produce not only responsible and good but also knowledgeable citizens (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg & Walberg, 2007). It is important to identify the contexts within which social competence skills programmes can have a commendable impact. Several aspects have been identified as being central to the effective implementation of social competence skills programmes; teachers being one of the important aspects (Graczyk, Domitrovich, Small, & Zins, 2006).

Since teachers are the primary deliverers of learning instructions at schools, their perceptions about and support for social competence skills learning can have an impact on the adoption and sustainability of the learning programmes. Their beliefs also are the key indicators of their judgments and perceptions, which in turn, affect their teaching practices (Pajares, 1992). First of all, teachers' confidence during supporting social competence skills are linked with their adherence to the programmes and classroom management during lessons (Ringwaltet al., 2003). In addition, teachers are more likely to continue enhancing the development of social competence skills when they feel comfortable with and passionate about the programme (Rohrbach, Graham, & Hansen, 1993). Therefore, teachers' confidence has been associated with their perception with regard to both the importance of; and challenges to teaching social competence skills.

Another aspect that affects the effectiveness of social competence skills teaching is the teacher's commitment. Teachers' have to be committed to promoting their ability to incorporate social competence skills into their classrooms against professional development. According to McCormick, Steckler and McLeroy (1995), professional development increases the likelihood of implementing social competence skills learning significantly. The commitment to social competence skills learning professional development from all school stakeholders, including the endorsement of a shared vision by the school community, is crucial for school success (Brackettet al., 2011). The commitment of teachers to social skills competence learning influences their ability to both support the pupils to attain both social competence and reading skills and to model the same skills they support in pupils.

The third important aspect determining teachers' adherence to social competence skills teaching programme is their perception about the importance of social competence skills to pupils' academic success, including reading (Buchanan, Gueldner, Tran & Merrell, 2009). Acknowledging the important role of social competence skills is among the barriers to pupils' academic attainment. Teachers who perceive the development of pupils' social competence skills to be crucial just like other subjects (maths and others) are more likely to set aside time to incorporate social competence skills into their daily teaching practices (Pajares, 1992).

Furthermore, the extent to which teachers perceive that their schools support social competence skills teaching can influence the impact of the social competence skills' teaching and learning process. Leadership by heads of schools may affect the implementation of the programme at its inception, and continue to affect its sustainability over time. It is a fact that the teaching and learning effects are much stronger when the school administrations provide support and implementation quality (Ransford, Greenberg, Domitrovich, Small, & Jacobson, 2009).

Research has been done on the perceptions of teachers concerning educational prosperity, and the impact of their perceptions and expectations. According to Hayes (2013), perception is an important factor influencing early educational practices. In his study on perspectives of preschool teachers in Australia, Peters (2002) found that teachers perceived social competence skills as the most important factor for the development of practical skills related to independence, self-help, ability to listen, ability to read, sit still as well as taking turns; which have a positive link with reading skills acquisition.

Gresham, Elliott, and Black (1987) contend that the type of social competence skills perceived by teachers as critical for the pupil's academic successes has implications for their selection of skills to teach. Thus, research has portrayed teachers to value academic-related skills more highly than social skills (Gresham et al., 1987). It should however be noted that schools are basically a social environment, and a lot of what pupils do to be achievers takes place in the form of social interactions in pupils

themselves as well as other school community members. According to Knapczyk and Rodes (n.d), these social interactions do not occur only on the playground, school halls, and cafeterias, but they are for the foundations of classroom instruction and manifest themselves in the teaching methods and activities teachers use while teaching the core basic skills.

Another study by O'Kane (2007) in Ireland, on the transition from preschool to primary school, found that early school teachers perceived three social competence skills as basic for reading performance in pupils at the primary school level: independence and self-help skills, communication and language skills, and the ability to concentrate sit and listen. Reading performance according to O'Kane involves understanding written text, developing and interpreting meaning, and using meanings of texts appropriately to the purpose and situation. Many teachers thought that pupils should be sent to school based on whether they have developed those skills in conjunction with their age. O'Kane's study forms a critical basis for the current study as it builds on the importance of pupils who are socially competent in relation to their reading performance.

2.1.8 Teachers' Practices Regarding Social Competence and Reading Skills Acquisition

The relationship between social competencies and reading skills in pupils has been well documented. Decisions on how to enhance young pupils' both social competencies and reading skills development have to be made on the basis of knowledge of crucial competencies to be enhanced, and effective practices to support those competencies. Teachers have the role to support the development of both social competence skills as well as reading skills in pupils.

2.1.8.1 Social Competence Skills Enhancing Practices.

Schools activities lead other activities in enhancing pupils' social competence skills and preventing the development of anti-social behaviours. The school trains pupils' social competencies like problem-solving, decision making, social approach, and engagement, as well as communication skills. Meta-analyses of social competence

skills-based interventions have consistently displayed average effect sizes on minimizing behaviour problems and improving social competencies (Consortium on the school-based Promotion of Social Competence, 1994). For instance, a meta-analysis by Durlak and Wells (1997) portrayed that behavioural and cognitive-behavioural prevention interventions minimize problem behaviours and increase social skills competencies.

Empirical research suggests that young children are more likely to get involved in peer interactions in informal free time than other times of a school day (Sainato & Carta, 1992). Well planned schedules of a day support pupils' self-regulation, as they manage their own activities. A schedule that is developmentally appropriate to pupils provides enough time to practice planning and decision making, as they make plans on how to use their free time (Katz & McClellan, 1997).

Planned activities can be used to enhance social competence skills in the school context. These are activities that are more structured and pre-mediated as compared to the on-the-spot mechanisms; a teacher intending to use these strategies must have particular objectives in mind. Activities are therefore designed to aim at maximizing the possibility of the pupils to attain the set objectives. Empirical evidence (Kemple, 2004) shows that planned routine activities to support social competence skills acquisition may fall into the following categories; PALS centres, listening to and reflecting about songs, singing, as well as group discussion of real classroom social issues.

For instance, group affection activities for pupils have been defined as pre-school games, songs, and modified activities to include teacher prompts for different types of affectionate responses (McEvoy, Twardosz & Bishop, 1990). This technique increases interaction as it allows pupils to exchange friendly behaviours and make contact using fun and activities that are not threatening. According to Twardosz, Nordquist, Simon, and Botkin (1983), group affection activities may be used easily to promote the use of interpersonal skills like expressing affections, having friendly contacts with others, and creating and maintaining good relationships. The strategy

also is potential in enhancing cultural competence; as it encourages pupils to create friendly and affectionate relations with peers of various cultures, races, or disabilities. This playful practice sometimes referred to as 'break the ice' may promote pupils' comfort and respect for individuals who are different from themselves.

Various social competence skills development programmes (including those designed to strengthen social and cognitive skills) have also been designed for early school pupils in different countries. These programmes include the Incredible Years (Webster-Stratton, Rinaldi, & Reid, 2009), Al's Pals (Lynch et al., 2004), Second Step (Committee for Children, 2002), Tools of the Mind (Barnett et al., 2008), Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (Domitrovich, Cortes, & Greenberg, 2007), and I Can Problem Solve (Shure & Spivack, 1982).

The Incredible Years series (IY) is considered to be the most well-researched early primary social competence skills programme, consisting of a set of teacher, pupil, and parent programmes that aim to promote social-emotional competence and prevent behavioural problems in pupils. Webster-Stratton, Reid, and Hammond (2004) for example found that pupils who received a teacher-training component added to either a parent-training or a child-training component were rated lower on peer-directed aggression and higher on social competence skills than those who received only one component. Anchored in a risk and protection framework, Al's Pals focuses on teacher training and parent education. Al's Pals appears to strengthen social competence skills and coping skills in individuals. Studies have significantly shown gains in prosocial behaviours, social interaction, and coping skills (Lynch et al., 2004) and effects that appear to delay or prevent increases in aggressive behaviour.

The second step is a fully articulated curriculum that provides social competence skills training to pupils from preschool through middle school. The Second Step aims to teach empathy, social problem-solving skills, and impulse control. Tools of the Mind (Tools) is a play-based social competence skills promoting method that

emphasizes the development of emotional self-regulation across a range of education settings. Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) has been shown effective in studies in regular and special education classrooms (Greenberg, Kusche, Cook, & Quamma, 1995; Kam, Greenberg, & Kusche, 2004). I Can Problem Solve (ICPS) is a school-based intervention designed to teach pupils to generate solutions to challenging interpersonal situations. The ICPS focuses on the potential consequences of behavioural choices. The ICPS was designed to promote social adjustment and prosocial behaviour while decreasing impulsivity and social inhibition.

Fabian and Dunlop (2002) point out that in most cases, pupils are socially undermined when entering educational environments, rather than equipping them with the tools needed for them to study new situations. The early primary education years are particularly regarded as being important for pupils to develop social skills which will help them survive at school (Brostrom, 2000). Social competence skills should therefore be an integral part of the pupils' literacy lives. Decisions on how to enhance the development of pupils' social competence skills have to be made on the foundation of knowledge of critical competencies to be developed, as well as efficient practices to enhance those competencies.

2.1.8.2 Reading Skills Enhancing Practices.

Reading can be explained as a process in which the meaning of the printed text is understood by the pupils (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). The art of reading is a crucial life skill, especially for pupils as it makes sure that the pupil succeeds in school, and even throughout his/her life in general (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985). Pupils need to be equipped with several reading strategies in their early years of primary education. Therefore, reading is being given high priority in any education system and considered as one of the most areas with challenges which demand considerable attention.

Teachers' practices and expectations are a vital part of the reading skills achievement process. The vision of teachers for their pupils' achievement affects what they (the

pupils) will become as readers and writers. As teachers, the objectives should be that pupils should not only "…learn to read and write, but also to learn the many purposes of reading and writing" (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001, p. 2). According to Fabian and Dunlop (ibid), the stresses involved in school are decreased with better social competence skills, with the help of teachers helping the pupils with more social competence skills to cope with the new situation while gradually developing reading skills.

The role of the teacher is to be responsive to the vast and varied needs of each pupil and to promote a learning climate that facilitates motivation and the desire to read. Reading must reflect the identity of the pupils by using images that reflect the pupil's physical (pictures of people in the community or of the pupils themselves) and social identity. If pupils see themselves as contributors, they can take responsibility for the reading process. The teacher also has to employ various behavioural and teaching strategies to promote pupil motivation. If pupils are motivated to learn to read, they will try to learn to read and continue to do so, even when faced with obstacles. The teacher is responsible for creating an environment that motivates pupils to read (Brostrom, 2000).

Researchers have studied different means of enhancing reading skills in pupils, and the common strategy is reciprocal teaching. Reciprocal teaching, according to Brown, Palincsar, and Armbruster (1984) is "a procedure where teacher and pupil take turns leading to a dialogue concerning sections of a text" (p.124). The strategy involves predicting, questioning, clarifying, improving standardized scores, and so forth. The role of the teachers is to act as a model for the classroom activities and to involve pupils at a level judged within their grasp at any moment in time.

On the other hand, combining reading and writing skills teaching has proved to be effective in making the pupils acquire the reading skills; as reading and writing are closely related (Clay, 2001). Learning to write and spell at the same time enables pupils to widen their awareness of printed texts, as well as making them aware of the symbolic nature of the print. When pupils write, they can establish the link between

written and oral language. According to Clay (2001), it is more convenient to guide pupils through the process of writing down what they can say about their experiences. The language experiences make vivid the link between writing and reading through oral language.

2.1.9 Assessing Social Competence in Pupils

Appropriate social behaviour is central to the development of a healthy lifestyle (Cox & Gunn, 1980). Different studies on assessing social competence skills show that assessment of social competence skills is a purposeful process and an individualized one that involves consideration of the social and environmental contexts in which pupils live. Recognition of the need to assess social competence skills has led to the emergence of several rating scales focused on children's and adolescents' social behaviours. These scales are developed to be used by teachers, parents, as well as other adults who are familiar with the rated individuals. The scales differ in composition from inventories with two or more scales measuring several areas of construct, to single scales assessing the narrowed defined constructs.

According to Merrell (2001), there are three popular rating tools: norm-referenced instruments that focus on the pupil's social skills in the school context, practical and psychometric sound measures that are used for the evaluation of intervention programmes, and the behaviour rating scales which are the most used techniques for assessing behaviours of young pupils. There are several advantages for using behaviour rating scales as follows:

i. they do not require much time and training to administer, then direct behavioural observation,
ii. they can provide information on behaviours that do not occur frequently, and which cannot be observed in the direct observation session,
iii. they provide more quantitative, objective, and reliable information than the one obtained through unstructured interviews or projective techniques
iv. they can be employed to measure individuals who cannot give out data about themselves, like young pupils

v. they make use of observations that are made over a period of time in an individual's natural context, like school or home
vi. they can be filled in by raters who are close and familiar with individual's behaviour, and
vii. They may have normative information against which an individual's behaviour can be compared.

Generally, rating scales provide an overview of the pupil's behaviour in a short time, at a convenient cost, and with practical utility and technical precision. Apart from these advantages, there are also disadvantages that are linked to using behaviour rating scales, as follows:

i. These scales are not specific, lack specificity, summarizing observations of the relative frequency of specific behaviours, not exact counts. Thus, they may be supplemented usefully by more direct techniques. In addition, the rating of social behaviours is not objective and is affected by a rater's standards for behaviour (Gresham & Elliott, 1990). Raters may decide at different times on whether a specific behaviour fits to be included in the item being rated or perceived differently how much of a specific behaviour constitutes 'seldom' or 'often' (Barkley, 1988).
ii. Pupils' characteristics influence social behaviour. For instance, Gresham and Elliott (1990) contend that sex is linked with differences in social behaviour more consistently. Females have been rated moderately as having higher levels of social competence and lower levels of problem behaviours than males (Gresham & Elliott, 1990; Merrell, 1993). Social skills rating scales that are filled in by teachers and parents have shown little indication of a strong or consistent developmental change in scores with age (Gresham & Elliott, 1990).

Consequently, Semrud-Clikeman (2007) says that assessment of social ability needs to include an interview with the pupil, parent, and teachers if possible, observations of the pupil in structured and unstructured situations. Having multiple informant pupils helps the evaluator to understand how the pupil functions in various situations:

> The environmental situation is important in establishing the expectation for appropriate social competence skills, and the social situation is the stage upon which life is played out. Pupils must be able to subtly shift and adapt their behaviour according to these varying situations (Dorman, 2002, p.4).

A person's behaviour, naturally, may change according to the context. Thus, collecting information from a variety of raters in different situations may paint a more comprehensive picture of a child, as well as being crucial for measuring the efficiency of the interventions across settings (Gresham & Elliott, 1990). Data obtained from several raters relate as each informant can have varying experiences with the different behaviours displayed by a specific child (Renk & Phares, 2004). Various raters may interpret the same behaviours differently, or a variety of influences may contribute systematic and random variance to the ratings of different raters. Cox and Gunn (1980) offer further guidance, contending that social competence skills are best assessed as the result of a series of interactions between behaviour, situation, judge, and child. However, a variety of both formal and informal methods can be used for social competence skills assessment (Williamson & Dorman, 2002).

The assessment of social competence skills necessitates the use of strategies that are broadly reflective of behaviour in genuine social situations (Waters & Sroufe, 1983). For instance, Matthews (1990) agreed with Waters and Sroufe (1983), who contended that social competence skills assessments such as peer ratings and social self-concept are far more likely to reflect the dynamic and interactive nature of the social domain. A current body of literature has shown that social competence skills would best be examined through parent/caregiver reports as opposed to self-report due to difficulties with poor insight in the populations (Matson et al., 1983).

2.1.10 Reading Skills Assessment

Several reading skills have been assessed in different ways. The key reading skills are vocabulary, comprehension, and reading fluency. The Tanzania curriculum for standard four (2016) requires pupils to be assessed in comprehension (for both oral

and written information), communication (orally and through writing), and vocabulary.

2.1.10.1Vocabulary Assessment.

Vocabulary knowledge is considered a key indicator of later oral language development, as well as proficiency in reading (Beck, & McKewon, 2007). Vocabulary can be assessed in more formal contexts involving the administration of standardized measures of receptive vocabulary.

2.1.10.2 Reading Fluency/Passage Reading.

According to Beck and McKewon (2007), several approaches can be employed to assess reading fluency in classroom contexts. The most common approach to assessing reading fluency is to count the number of words a pupil reads correctly per minute, based on one or more texts appropriate to his/her class level.

2.1.10.3 Comprehension.

There are several ways in which pupils' reading comprehension strategies can be assessed. Some aspects of strategy usage that can be assessed are: before pupils read a text (activation of background knowledge, prediction of text content), during reading (revision of predictions, self-questioning, inferencing, creating a mental image of the text) after reading (summarizing, identifying text structure, answering questions at different levels of complexity) (Beck, & McKewon, 2007).

2.2 Research Theories

The way in which individuals learn is something that has fascinated educators, psychologists, and researchers for centuries; with the first scientific studies of learning taking place in the late 1800s. Learning is considered a complex process that is influenced by many factors. Observation can play a central role in determining how and what a child can learn (Fryling, Johnston & Haye, 2011). Because of the complex nature of learning, several psychological theories explain how people learn. Learning theory tells how individuals take in and process information and knowledge.

This study was guided by two theories; Lev Semenovich Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory and Bandura (1977) Social Learning Theory. Theories provide researchers with different angles through which to look at problems and social issues, focussing their attention on several aspects of the data and providing a framework within which to conduct their analysis.

2.2.1 Sociocultural Theory

The theory underscores the significance of the social processes between adults and children for children's learning, which includes reading skills. It holds that participation in social interactions and culturally organized activities play influence the individual's cognitive and non-cognitive development. The theory asserts that the environment is critical for children's development, and it emphasizes the role of socially appropriate interactions and instructions. The role of teachers in the social and cognitive development of children is highly appreciated in Sociocultural Theory. Specifically, the theory puts it forward that:

> ...any function in the child's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First, it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. Social relations or relations among people genetically underlie all high functions and their relationships (Vygotsky, 1981: 163).

This seems to advocate that children at early years may learn and internalize upper psychological functions, such as reading; from being involved in relations with peers and adults.

The theory is relevant to the proposed study because it explains how individual mental functioning is related to cultural, institutional, and social contexts. Adopted here was the stance that learning is the result of a dynamic interaction between individuals, other people, and cultural artefacts; all of which contribute to the social formation of the individual's mind (Wertsch, 1991). Thus, the child and learning (through interaction) are situated in a social plane where learning emerges within the context of social and cultural practices.

This study examined the role of sociocultural and its different aspects concerning several opportunities for the acquisition of reading skills for children. As a result, sociocultural theory and its aspects of ZPD and scaffolding are reviewed to come up with a clear understanding of the process of acquisition of reading skills. Vygostky's (1978) concept of Zone of Proximal Development gives further insights for the understanding of several observable changes in the children's early years as they strive to attain their reading development potential. In this regard, a review of the scaffolding concept gives the needed clue on the concern of what adults could do to help children reach the ZPD while in the learning process. According to Damon (1984), skillful adults can help young children to attain new skills such as reading and writing.

2.2.1.1 Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

This concept Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) was founded by Vygotsky (1978). The concept advocates for social and participatory learning for children's development, including their reading development. It implies that all children can be guided at different stages to become independent readers. The concept addresses 'the distance between the actual development levels as determined through independent problem solving, and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or collaboration with more capable peers' (Vygotsky 1978: 86). The concept of Zone of Proximal Development has two stages of learning. The first stage is the one that is attained by pupils, commonly known as the actual development stage. Under this level, the pupil can deal with difficulties on his/her own, independently.

The second stage is the one that is not yet attained by the pupil. This is the stage of significant development (ZPD) where the pupil can reach a certain level with the assistance of a more capable peer or an adult. Therefore, ZPD is regarded as the range of activities that are hard for the pupil to attain alone, but with the help of a teacher or a more capable peer. This help is meant to assist the pupils to reach their zones of proximal development for learning.

In the context of the current study, Sociocultural Theory is relevant because pupils learn to read from young age. More significantly, the theory can explain the reasons for some pupils to be able to read so well, while others are still lagging at the stage of decoding and scribbling. With 'properly organized learning', it seems that not only these pupils (strugglers), but all pupils can be guided via different levels of reading development to become independent readers. The concept of Zone of Proximal Development goes hand in hand with the concept of scaffolding

2.1.1.2 Scaffolding.

Scaffolding is a concept that advocates that 'properly organized learning' aspects can be decided upon. It also refers to any assistance provided to the pupil by either capable peers or the teacher, in a learning process to achieve ZPD. It was introduced by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) to make learning attain the zone of proximal development. Wood (1988) defines scaffolding as tutorial conduct that is collaborative, contingent, and interactive. Scaffolding is collaborative as pupils cooperatively realize the results. It is contingent since, in the process of learning actions, pupils and teachers, influence each other, or are influenced by one another. It is also regarded as interactive because two or more individuals are mutually involved in the tasks.

Bruner (1975) also came up with the concept of scaffolding to explain the acts and speech that adults use to assist the increasing rate of children's knowledge construction. To realize scaffolding, Vygotsky (1978) further argued that the help provided by the adults during scaffolding has to be in i +1, with i standing for the activity pupils can complete independently, and 1 for another individual's level of support to the child. Bickhard (1992), in a similar way, views any form of making a social or cognitive problem simple constitutes a version of scaffolding. Building from Bickhard's view, Sowers (2000) opines that the speech or actions that adults can perform to help children to learn to involve in answering their questions, clarifying their misconceptions or assumptions, summarizing what the latter has previously done, questioning them on the consequences of their actions, or offering predictions of possible outcomes.

In the circumstance of giving instructional scaffolding for reading, Applebee and Langer (1983) suggest that the more skilled language users or adults have to provide the necessary assistance to the children to accomplish the tasks that are not familiar to them. For example, in reading comprehension, scaffolding means any kind of support provided to the pupil that assists him/her to get meaning, as well as the overall understanding of the text's content. According to Applebee and Langer, before a reading comprehension class, for instance, the teacher can show the meaning or pronunciation of difficult words contained in a text. Teachers can also provide foundation knowledge of texts to ease the understanding of the pupils of the meaning of texts. As they finish the lessons, teachers may wish to ask their pupils some questions which can promote their reading comprehension.

Knowledge, perceptions, and practices of teachers on the relationship between pupils' social competence skills and reading skills acquisition could be influenced by their (teachers) social experiences and cultural contexts. Teachers' attitudes and sources of knowledge emanate from families, society, and partly from the institutions they went through, as well as during their professional development. These perceptions and practices have implications on the development of social competence skills and reading skills in their pupils.

The influence of Sociocultural Theory on teachers' perceptions and practices may have three basic implications for pupils' social competence skills in primary school education. First, pupils' abilities to function in the social world rely on mental processes such as attention, memory, and reasoning, which are mediated by social and cultural tools, and therefore teachers must view them as a process that is situated within specific sociocultural contexts. Second, because social interaction is the basis for all higher-order learning, the development of effective social functioning is central to all other forms of learning, and therefore, is imperative for teachers to comprehend. And third, because formal schooling is only one context in which pupils learn, teachers must account for pupils' interaction between learning in the school setting and learning in other social settings (homes and community) in which pupils participate.

The theory, therefore, supports the importance of the social and cultural processes between caregivers and children to the children's learning, including learning to read and write. More specifically, the theory argues that any function in the child's cultural development appears on two planes: first on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. This seems to suggest that children at an early age may learn and internalize higher psychological functions including reading and writing from engaging in relations with others including adults.

Concerning Sociocultural Theory and reading skills acquisition among children, the concept of ZPD affirms that pupils can be pushed to go more than their current developmental level in acquiring reading skills. As such, for them to read should not be an impossible task, even though they might have not acquired a fair knowledge of the language. On how to make the task possible, Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding provides crucial information for parents and teachers to guide reading activities to their children and pupils.

In this study, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory was reviewed to come out with an understanding of how children learn to read. Several previous studies (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Yang & Wilson, 2006; Zuengler & Miller, 2006) revealed that reading cannot be achieved in solitude; rather it needs to be learned in a social context with the support of peers or adults. The works of Lev Vygotsky form the foundation for social characteristics of studying whereby pupils work together to attain objectives. An important view is created within the sociocultural structure to back up the pupils towards making changes, starting the discussion, creating ideas, or bringing them towards producing and understanding more complicated tasks.

2.2.2 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory is based on Bandura's premise that learning does not always occur as a result of firsthand experience alone, but through harnessing the power of observation and imitation (Bandura, 1978). Social Learning Theory insists on the importance of observing, modelling, and imitating the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. It considers the way both environmental and cognitive

factors interact to influence the learning and behaviour of individuals. According to Bandura, humans can develop ideas on how new behaviour is performed through observing others. There are four major aspects referred to by Bandura and Walters (1977) that makeup modelling or observational learning;

Attention: learning takes place through observation when individuals pay attention to the modelled behaviour. Characteristics of the observer, and the observed may influence the extent to which attention is given to the modelled activities. A sick observer, sleepy or otherwise distracted, for instance, will not likely be attentive as an observer who is fully focused on the model.

Retention: Bandura argued that individuals have to remember the modelled activities if they are to learn the observed behaviour. This process can be supported by the use of imagery and descriptive language to increase the likelihood that the modelled behaviour can be reproduced by the observer.

Reproduction: this is the stage where the observer translates the observed behaviour into appropriate individual actions, for learning to take place. This involves converting the retained imagery and the language observed from the model into responses that are in line with the modelled behaviour. Reproducing behaviour improves as the observer practices the newly learned behaviour.

Motivation: some motivation is required for an individual to reproduce the observed behaviour, as, without a reason for imitating the behaviour, it is not likely that an individual will make any effort.

Educators have found Social Learning Theory to be a powerful tool for teaching, learning, motivating pupils, and managing behaviour. In addition, observational learning can also occur through verbal instructions or listening to someone explaining or describing how something is done. Social Learning Theory has implications in classroom teaching and learning practices, as the ultimate goals of classroom teaching and social learning, is learning;

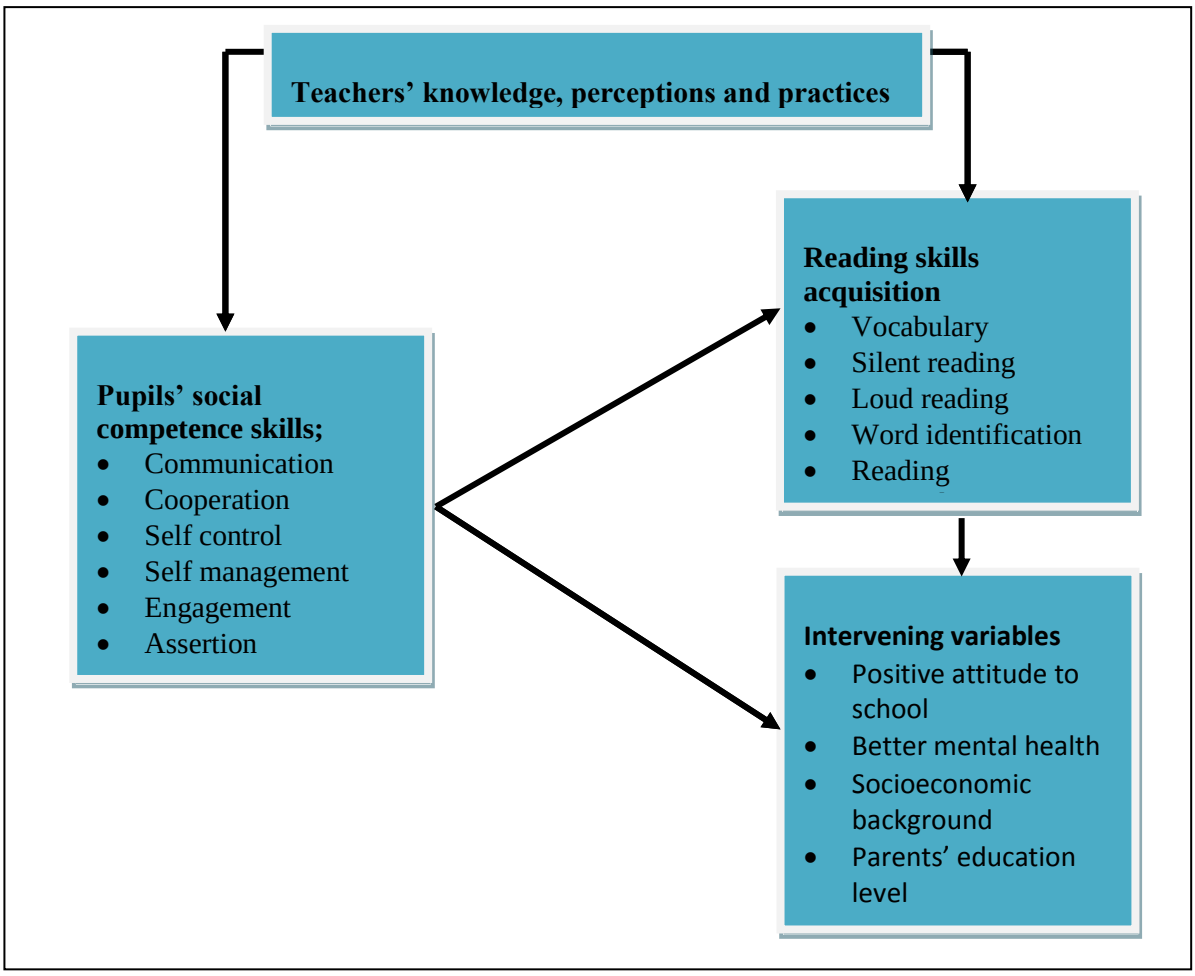
- Pupils learn a great deal by simply observing others.
- Describing the consequences of behaviour increases appropriate behaviours and decreases inappropriate ones. This includes discussing the rewards of various positive behaviours in the classroom.
- Modelling provides an alternative to teaching new behaviours.
- Instead of using shaping, an operant conditioning strategy, and teachers will find modelling is a faster and more efficient means of teaching new knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
- Teachers must model appropriate behaviours.
- Teachers must expose pupils to different models including peers and adults; this is important to break down stereotypes.
- Pupils must believe that they are capable of accomplishing a task (sense of self-efficacy). Teachers can promote self-efficacy by having pupils receive confidence-building messages, watch others be successful, and experience success on themselves.
- Teachers should help students set realistic expectations ensuring that expectations are realistically challenging. Sometimes a task is beyond a pupil's ability.
- Self-regulating techniques provide an effective method of improving pupils' behaviour.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study (Figure 2.1) builds on the review of the literature and the two theories; Sociocultural Theory and Social Learning Theory. The key notion here is that the development of children's social competence skills at early primary education provides a good foundation for their reading ability and subsequent academic progress. Knowledge, perceptions, and practices of teachers have a great impact on the development of both social competence skills and reading skills in public primary school pupils

Figure 2.1

The Conceptual Framework Showing the Link between Social Competence Skills and Reading Skills Acquisition



Social competence skills form an independent variable in the study with six components, namely; communication, cooperation, self-control, self-management, assertion, and engagement. These are social competence skills that according to the reviewed literature have a direct link to the acquisition of reading skills. Literature shows that successful acquisition of social competence skills is critical for stimulation of reading skills, which stand as the dependent variable. The reading skills under investigation were vocabulary, word identification, reading and listening comprehension, passage (loud) reading, and silent reading. However, some factors act as mediators between pupils' social competence skills and reading skills acquisition (positive attitude to school, better mental health, socioeconomic

background, as well as the parents' level of education). These are the factors that may interfere with the relationship between the two study variables.

The assumption behind this conceptual framework is that if teachers possess the required both social competence skills knowledge and instructional skills, it would be easier for them to build on social competence skills that would, in turn, facilitate the acquisition of reading skills in pupils. Teachers can naturally develop, or learn to develop pupils' social competence skills by adopting certain attitudes and behaviours. They also do so by implementing specific practices to enhance their pupils' well-being and learning climates, learning new information on the significance of social competence skills on reading skills acquisition, using social language in the classrooms while they teach. In addition, they can follow techniques that promote both social competence skills and reading skills, receive training, practices, and use coaching or supervision methods, and other related.

As for promoting social competence skills specifically, human interaction between teachers and pupils requires comprehensive self-actualization and full-sociality. One of the fundamental principles, which nurture social competence skills is the teachers' ability to make pupils learn with others, and learn from each other. This principle focuses on interoperability and shared activities. Thus, pupils' active participation; the ability to express their wishes and aspirations through activities is vitally important for social life expression.

Therefore, teachers who are well-informed of pupils' characteristics recognize the importance of the pupil's social competence skills development, and are also aware that the development of social competence skills lays a critical foundation for reading skills acquisition, and later academic achievement in general.

2.4 Research Gap

Several studies conducted on this (proposed) topic have indicated that there is a positive link between social competence skills development and reading skills acquisition; focusing mainly on pre-primary and primary school education. However, the reviewed literature has revealed that most of these studies are Western-based,

US, Australia, Canada, Lithuania, and so forth. Literature on the link between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition from Africa and Tanzania, in particular, is limited. Nonetheless, research on the relationship of these two variables particularly in Africa is narrow in scope and does not address the relationship between the two variables well (Ekeh, 2012). A few researchers who have focused on the area are such as Ekeh (2012) who investigated pupils' attachment styles, academic achievement, and social competence in early childhood. He eventually found that securely attached pupils demonstrated greater social competence skills with more academic achievement than insecurely attached pupils. Another study by Adams, Wiium, and Abubakar (2018) on developmental assets and academic performance of adolescents in Ghana, Kenya, and South Africa found that across all countries, adolescents who performed better academically reported more developmental assets. The available studies in Africa have, thus, focused on the impact of social competence skills on academic performance in general, rather than reading skills which are the focus of the current study. Studying such a phenomenon in Tanzania would add a practical understanding of the impact of the phenomenon in the African context.

Studies conducted in Tanzania reveal that the pupils' fail to master reading skills because of among other things, inadequate necessary inputs (resources) required in schools. The inputs include classrooms, libraries, laboratories, teachers' houses, and others (UWEZO, 2010; Ngorosho, 2011; Kalanje, 2011). Other studies on pupils' ability to read in Kiswahili have examined none- linguistic issues such as teachers' lack of motivation to teach, truancy, pupils' home environment, shortage of books, and other teaching materials in general, but not specifically on the position of social competence skills. In other words, the role of social competence skills in determining reading acquisition in schools in Tanzania has not been comprehensively studied. In the absence of a detailed study of the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition, it was imperative that a study to investigate the phenomenon be conducted. This study focused on filling this knowledge gap by investigating the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills

acquisition in primary education. This was based on the assumption that social competence skills have bearing on the acquisition and mastery of reading skills.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study investigated the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in public primary school pupils. In achieving its objectives, teachers' knowledge, perceptions, and practices on the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition were studied. Pupils were also examined on both social competence skills and reading skills to establish a relationship between the two variables, complimenting the findings from teachers. The study was also designed to capture some information from parents and guardians; hence, they were also involved in the study. The aim was to provide an informed information based on the contribution of social competence skills on reading skills acquisition in primary school pupils to create understanding about how to best assist pupils to succeed in the ability to read in school. This chapter outlines the methodological procedures that were employed by the study. It explains why the selected methods were regarded as the best to address research objectives. The chapter is organized into eleven sections, namely research paradigm, research approach, research design, study area, sampling procedures and sample size, data collection tools, data collection procedures, validity and reliability of the tools, ethical issues, and data analysis plan.

3.1 Research Paradigm

This study was informed by a pragmatic paradigm. In seeking answers to research questions, the researcher used the participants' experiences to construct and interpret his understanding of gathered data. This is because the pragmatic paradigm approaches reality typically from people who own experiences, and are of a particular group or culture. The acceptance of multiple perspectives in the pragmatic paradigm led to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in pupils in primary schools. The pragmatism paradigm was also selected for the current study because it allows the use of mixed methods research. This best fits the study through its ability to capture a deep understanding of the topic under study. According to Creswell (2013),

the pragmatic paradigm, therefore, has an intuitive appeal, permission to study areas that are of interest, embracing appropriate methods, and positively using the findings in harmony with the value system held by the researcher.

Furthermore, the pragmatic paradigm was chosen for this study due to its flexibility in research. The use of 'what works' allowed the researcher to address the questions without worrying about whether the questions are wholly qualitative or quantitative. Therefore, the researcher found the pragmatic approach with its epistemological focus on the inquiry process and practicality, more useful than research philosophies that lay a sole emphasis on abstraction or philosophical theory generation. Moreover, the pragmatic paradigm is of significant value to research on this study as it involves viewing people's ideas and beliefs as tools for problem-solving by involving subjects as active participants, rather than as passive descriptors of the world as it exists.

In addition, the researcher applied a pragmatic paradigm in this study focusing on two principles that he considered most relevant to the topic under investigation. The paradigm empathizes on useful knowledge; this enabled the researcher to engage with multiple experiences of teachers on the concepts of social competence skills and reading skills. This makes the utilization of research findings essential. Since the paradigm also emphasizes linking experience and action, this helped the researcher to link the teachers' experiences in teaching and learning processes, and their actions on teaching and learning in classrooms. This was possible because the pragmatic paradigm research investigates what people say as well as observing what they do, and how they act.

3.2 Research Approach

This study used a mixed-methods research approach (MMRA). The purpose of selecting the mixed-methods approach for the current study was that both qualitative and quantitative research approaches provide a better understanding of a research problem, or an issue than only one of these approaches. The information from teachers, parents/guardians and pupils was required to address the objectives of this study. The use of mixed methods research was appropriate for a better understanding

of the study topic, considering that each approach minimizes the weaknesses of another approach. The use of mixed methods in the current study aimed at validating the findings from qualitative (interview with teachers, parents/guardians, documentary review and observation) and quantitative (from pupils) sources of data. Teachers were interviewed and observed in relation to the study topic, parents/guardians were interviewed and pupils, on the other hand, were supplied with questionnaires to generate both qualitative and quantitative information.

In order to understand and derive meanings from the participants, the researcher saw the need to gather responses in a manner that preserves authenticity and meaning. The range of feelings, perceptions, and differences in perspectives; and the unique views from each participant in this study required a mixed-method research approach. Data from this approach provided well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations on the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in primary school pupils in identifiable local contexts. This is simply because mixed methods research approach tends to obey the criteria of scientific rigor. The scientific rigor in this study was adhered to by turning an eye towards two sets of standards: those for qualitative methods, and those for quantitative methods. The quality of the study was observed by collecting and analyzing data by using procedures appropriate to each method's tradition, such as ensuring an appropriate sample size for both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The use of mixed methods research approach provided the advantage of using the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods, while making up for the weaknesses of both.

Mixed Methods Research Approach has its strengths. The combined strengths and weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches can be found when using this approach. Further, terms, pictures, and narratives were used to add connotation to numbers. In addition, while using mixed methods research approach, there was also an advantage of using numbers to add precision to words, pictures, and narratives. Applying mixed methods research approach further allowed the researcher to tackle a broader and more complete range of research questions since the researcher was not confined within the tenets of a particular method of research.

In addition, the researcher could use the strengths of one method of research to counter, or overcome the weaknesses in another method (complementarily). Finally, since the mixed methods research approach is all about the incorporation of both qualitative and quantitative methods of research, it guided the researcher to produce a more complete knowledge necessary to inform theory and practice.

Unfortunately, this approach also has a few shortcomings, despite its overwhelming support for researchers. Owing to its duplicity content, the application of mixed methods research approach in one study can prove difficult to handle by anyone single researcher. This is the case when the researcher has to apply two or more approaches concurrently (as in the case of this study). A researcher choosing to rely on this method of research has to learn about multiple methods and approaches, and how to appropriately mix them. Moreover, the mixed methods research approach is more expensive and time-consuming than any other method of research due to its duplicity content. Finally, some researchers have as yet to fully workout problems of interpreting conflicting results.

However, the approach was selected due to its ability to first, triangulate different methods. The mixed-method research approach provides room for some sort of convergence or corroboration since by doing so the emphasis is shifted from the differences and moved towards the amalgamation of the methods. Second, the approach has complementary characteristics which seek the elaboration, or the results acquired from one method with the results of another method. Finally, the MMRA approach highlights the need to use the results from one method to either inform, or develop the contrasting method (development).

3.3 Research Design

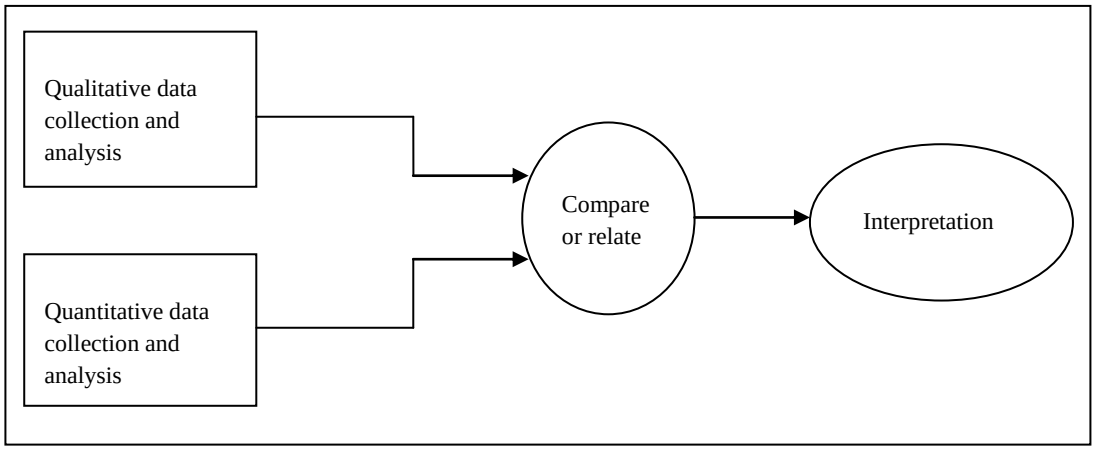
In order to come up with an in-depth understanding of the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in primary school pupils, the current study was carried out using one of the mixed-methods research designs: a convergent parallel design. Convergent parallel design allows researchers to use both qualitative and quantitative methods concurrently. This is where data collection and

analysis (both qualitative and quantitative) are simultaneously and independently done, while the results are merged to provide a more complete understanding of a phenomenon. In addition, the decision to use this design in this study was to bring together the differing strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses of quantitative methods (large sample size, trends, generalization) with those of qualitative methods (small sample, details, in-depth).

The convergent parallel design was employed to show whether there was a convergence or divergence between the two data sets, as well as comparing the findings from the two databases. Hence, in line with the design, the researcher weighed the methods equally, and concurrently (at the same time) employed the quantitative and qualitative methods in the same phase of the research process. He also analyzed the two sets of data independently, and merged the data sets during interpretation of the findings. The convergent parallel approach is summarized in the following figure.

Figure 3.1

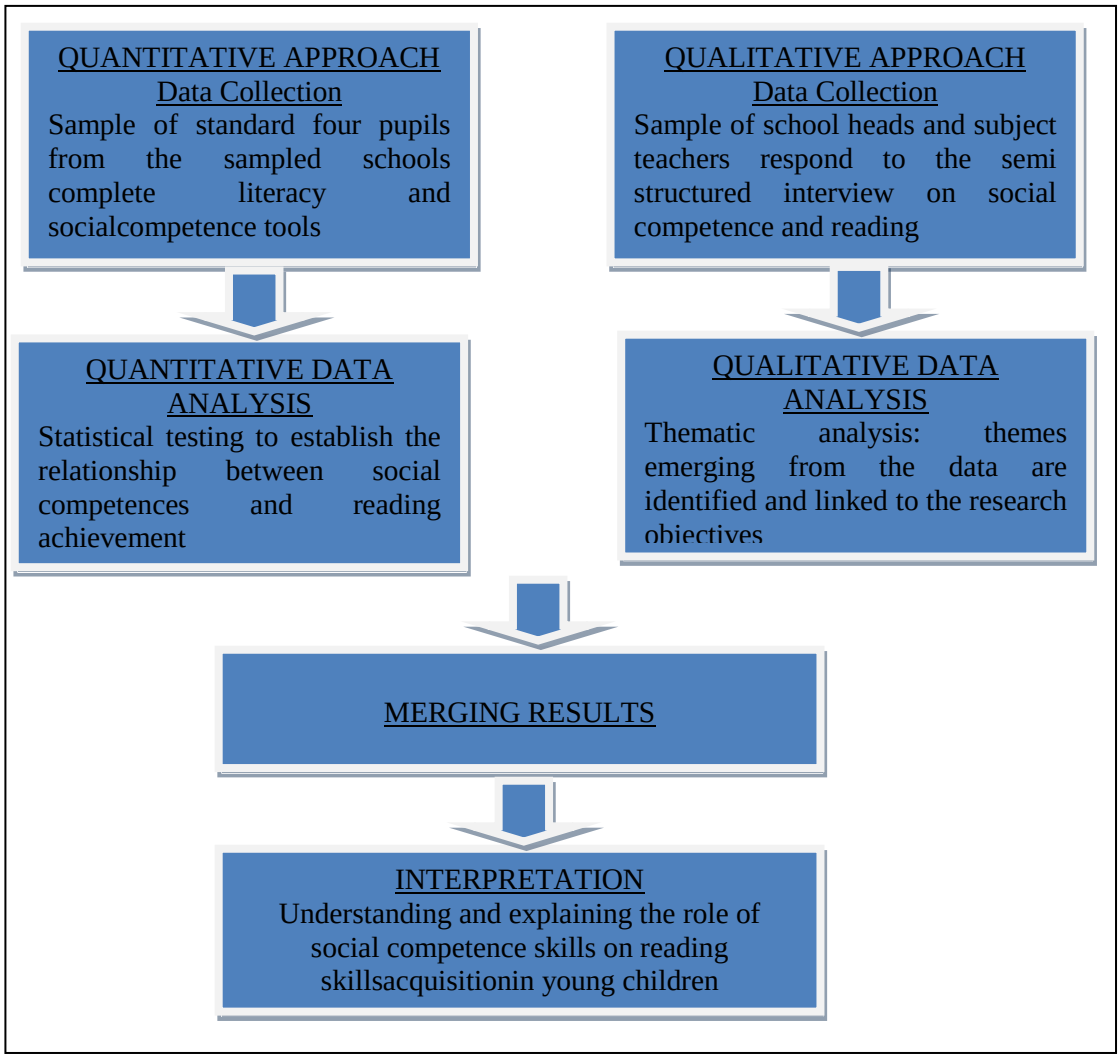
Convergent Parallel Design



The design also was particularly effective at bringing to the fore the experiences and perceptions of teachers from their teaching and learning experiences and perspectives. The following figure 3.2 shows how the current study was carried out using convergent parallel design.

Figure 3.2

Convergent Parallel Design



In addition, the design allowed the researcher to merge the findings at the presentation, interpretation, and discussion stages. This helped to provide a clear picture of the findings from both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The convergent parallel design has several strengths; it is an efficient design, in which both types of data are collected during one phase of the research at the same time. Furthermore, each type of data can be collected and analyzed separately and independently, using the techniques that are traditionally associated with each type of data.

Although this design is the most popular in mixed-methods research approach, it is also probably the most challenging of the major types of designs. Much effort and

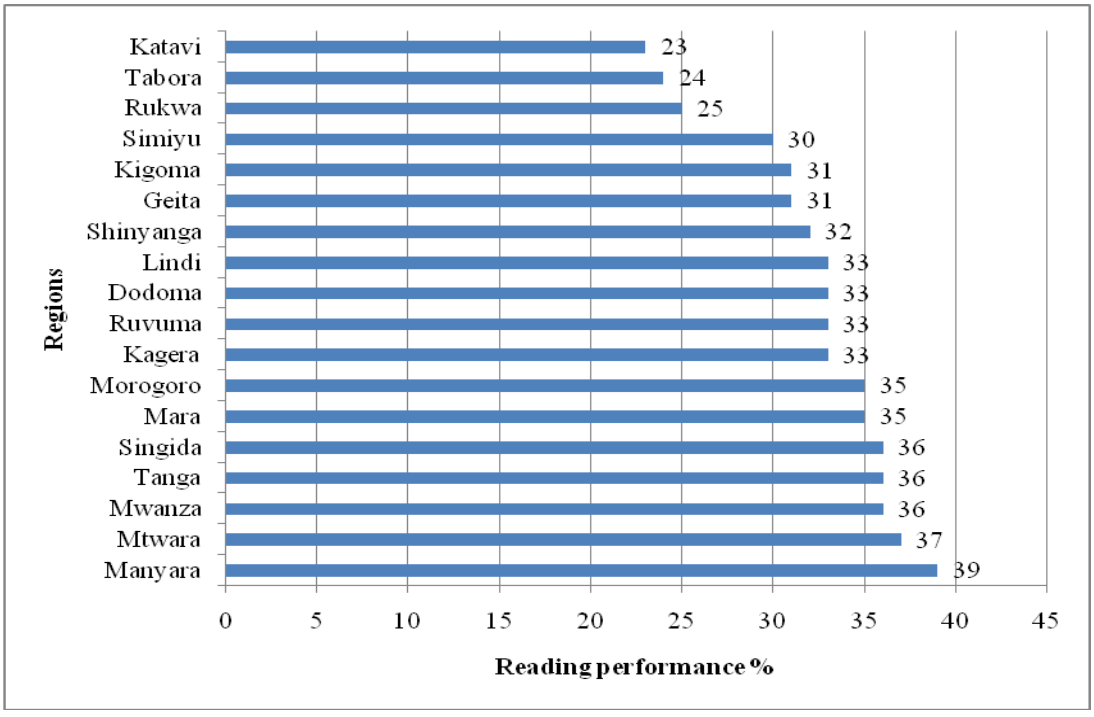
expertise are required, particularly because of the concurrent data collection and the fact that equal weight is usually given to each data type. In the current study, this was addressed by the researcher acquainting himself with both quantitative and qualitative methods. The design requires researchers to consider the consequences of having different samples and different sample sizes when merging the two data sets. It can be challenging to merge two sets of very different data, and their results in a meaningful way. To overcome this challenge, the current study was designed in a way that the quantitative and qualitative data addressed the same concepts. This strategy facilitated merging the data sets.

3.4 Study Area

This study was conducted in Manyara Region. The region was purposively selected based on the national assessment conducted by Uwezo (2017) on three tests (Kiswahili, English, and Numeracy) among pupils aged 9-13 years. The report (Uwezo, 2017) showed that more than half (18 out of 26) of all the regions' pupils performed below the national average (40%) in reading Kiswahili (see figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3

Regions with Kiswahili Reading Performance below the National Average



Manyara region was selected, among the regions with below national average performance due to its average performance (39%), which is closer to the national average (40%). The researcher was interested with moderate performing regions so as to avoid the two extremes; the most performing and the low performing regions. The reason for avoiding the two extremes was that in a moderate performing region, there was a good mixture of pupils who can read better and those who cannot read better. The researcher believed that this group of pupils with mixed reading abilities formed a sample that fitted the study, compared to either high or low performing regions where the sample could be one sided (good reader or poor readers).

Manyara Region, of which Babati Town is the capital, came into being in 2002 when part of Arusha Region was split to form a new region. It is one of Tanzania's 31 administrative regions. The region lies in the north-eastern quarter of Mainland Tanzania, between latitudes 3°40' and 6° south of the Equator and longitudes 33° and 38° east of the Greenwich Meridian. It is bordered by Arusha Region on the North, Kilimanjaro and Tanga regions on the East, Dodoma Region on the South, and Singida and Shinyanga regions on the West (Manyara Region Investment Guide, 2019).

Manyara Region has an area of 50,921 square kilometres (sq. km) that includes 49,576 sq. km of dry land and 1,260 sq. km covered with water bodies. The region is endowed with an area of 1,348,300 ha of arable land, out of which 440,197 ha are under agriculture (cultivation). Moreover, some 2,814,494 ha is under forest and wildlife reserves, 2,981,800 ha covered by grasslands and rangelands, while 36, 882 ha represent potential areas for irrigation with 11,715 ha being irrigated.

Administratively, Manyara Region is divided into five (5) districts namely, Babati, Hanan'g, Mbulu, Simanjiro, and Kiteto; seven (7) Local Government Authorities (LGAs) of Babati Town Council, Babati District Council, Hanan'g District Council, Mbulu Town Council, Mbulu District Council, Simanjiro District Council, and Kiteto District Council. The Region has 27 divisions, 142 wards, 449 villages, 35 streets, and 2030 hamlets. The main indigenous ethnic groups in Manyara Region are

the Iraqw, the Maasai, the Barbaig, the Mbugu, the Rangi, and the Gorowa, each of which constitutes distinctive ethnic and unique social-cultural ways of living.

3.5 Study Population

The population was to be properly defined to avoid ambiguity as to whether a given unit belongs to the population. The population for this study was made of all primary schools pupils, parents/guardians and teachers in the Manyara region.

3.6 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

The sampling strategies for this study were purposive (selective, subjective, or judgmental sampling) and stratified simple random sampling. Wards, schools, parents/guardians and teachers were purposively selected; while stratified random sampling was employed in the selection of pupils to participate in the study. Though purposive sampling is prone to researcher's biases because of its judgmental and subjective component which may lead to difficulty to convince the reader that the judgment used to select units was appropriate; and difficulty to convince the reader that the research might have achieved theoretical/analytic/logical generalization (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006); the technique was employed in this study due to its great ability to provide a wide range of sampling techniques. The aim of selecting a sample is to learn something about the entire population from which the sample is selected. There is no point in selecting a sample of the population where its characteristics are well known, or in making estimates when the actual characteristics of the population are available.

3.6.1 Selection of District Council

Babati Town Council was purposively recruited for this study, from seven district councils (Babati Town Council, Babati District Council, Hanan'g District Council, Mbulu Town Council, Mbulu District Council, Simanjiro District Council, and Kiteto District Council). The researcher was aware that a good purposive sampling depends on having a thorough knowledge of the context. With limited knowledge of the Manyara region context, the researcher consulted the Regional Education Office and shared that he wanted the district with balanced pupils' ability to read; those who

can read better and those who were struggling to read. The Babati Town Council was picked because it covers Babati town wards, and some peripheral wards with rural characteristics.

Administratively, the Council is comprised of two divisions namely Babati and Gorowa which together are formed by a total of 8 wards, namely Bagara, Babati, Bonga, Nangara, Singe, Sigino, Maisaka and Mutuka. The wards are further subdivided into 35 streets (Mitaa), 13 Villages, and 54 Hamlets *(Vitongoji)*, as presented in the following table.

Table 3.1

Administrative levels of Babati Town Council

WARD	STREETS	VILLAGES	HAMLETS
Babati	7	-	-
Bagara	8	1	5
Bonga	5	2	9
Maisaka	4	2	8
Mutuka	-	2	7
Sigino	-	4	17
Nangara	7	1	3
Singe	4	1	5
Total	**35**	**13**	**54**

Since the study was intended to capture the population which balances pupils who are better in reading and those who are relatively poor, we (researcher and REO) reached agreements that we avoid the two extremes (sampling councils that are based in a town or those which are in rural areas), and thus, Babati Town Council was selected for the study.

3.6.2 Selection of Wards and Schools

Wards and schools were also purposively selected. The Babati Town Council has only two divisions (Babati and Gorowa); both were recruited to participate in the study. From the two divisions, six wards were purposively selected. Limited knowledge of the Babati Town Council, again, made the researcher consult the

Council's education offices to balance between urban and peri-urban wards. Selection of wards also considered a number of primary schools in each ward, as the distribution of schools ranged from three to six schools in a ward. Therefore, six out of eight wards (AA, BB, CC, DD, EE and FF) were selected for this study.

Primary schools were again purposively selected from the sampled wards. Education is one of the social services that impart the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to the urban residents for the successful management of other activities. Babati Town Council like other councils promotes this sector to meet the objectives of Education and Training. Babati Town Council implements the Education and Training Policy (ETP) at the levels of basic education, secondary education, and informal education. There are currently 30 Primary schools, 12 Secondary schools, and The Open University of Tanzania in the Council.

From the selected six wards, with the help of Babati Town Council education officials, six schools were purposively sampled from EE Ward, three from Ward AA, and two schools from each of the rest of the wards to form research units. The selection of school also considered their distribution in ward. Selection was made considering the fact that the school locations were similar; thus, the schools were dispersed to make the sample more representative. The sample did not include private schools because public schools to a greater extent reflect the education system of the country. In addition, Kiswahili language, the focus of the study, is a medium of instructions in public primary schools. This, therefore, formed 17 schools out of 30 which were studied as presented in the table below.

Table 3.2

Distribution of Wards and Schools

Ward (N=8)	School (N=17)
AA	A
	B
	C
BB	D
	E
CC	F
	G
DD	H
	I
EE	J
	K
	L
	M
	N
	O
FF	P
	Q

Many schools were sampled from EE Ward because the ward was the largest and had scattered schools, some in Babati town and others along the sides of the town (interior). Thus, to avoid selecting school from one angle of the ward, purposive sampling was the appropriate approach. More than half of primary schools in the study area were recruited to participate in the study (17 schools out of 30), and therefore, the sample was representative.

3.6.3 Selection of Teachers

The current study opted the homogeneous purposive sampling in selecting teachers. A homogeneous sample is a sample whose units share the same characteristics or traits (e.g., a group of people that are similar in terms of age, gender, background, occupation). It is often chosen when the research question is specific to the characteristics of the particular group of interest, being examined in detail. Furthermore, teachers were purposively selected considering their values in providing rich information for the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the

relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in primary school pupils.

Teachers consisted of three groups: head teachers, teachers of the target classes (standard four), and subject teachers. Subject teachers who were involved in this study were those who taught reading, preferably Kiswahili. Kiswahili language was preferred because it is one of the emphasized items in the 2014 Education and Training Policy, as the national language, and is the medium of instruction in the public primary schools in Tanzania. While it was ideal to hear the voices of all the teachers in the region, their large number necessitated the sampling of 42 teachers to represent the rest.

3.6.3 Selection of Parents/Guardians

The inclusion of parents/guardians in this study was done after data analysis and interpretation of the findings. The interpretation of the findings from teachers necessitated the researcher to seek the parents/guardians views, as teachers provided some opinions related to the parents/guardians. It was, therefore, important to validate the teachers' information regarding parents/guardians by contacting the parents/guardians themselves. The parents/guardians were purposefully selected, as the researcher contacted the heads of all the 17 schools surveyed, and requested them for at least one parent/guardian. However, 10 parents/guardians were reached.

3.6.4 Selection of Pupils

The population was standard four pupils, in the selected schools and the sample size was at least 10% of the pupils. The selection of pupils was guided by a stratified simple random sampling technique, and 20 pupils were to be selected from each sampled school (10 boys and 10 girls). To get a representation by gender, the pupils were first sat in groups composed of boys and girls, before administering a simple random sampling technique to them. A simple random sampling procedure without replacement was employed to recruit pupils from each sampled school to avoid inconsistencies attached with random sampling technique with placement. In random sampling with replacement, the object can be reselected to get involved in the study.

A sample with replacement means that once a case is selected to be in a sample, that case is placed back in the population with the possibility of being sampled again. With this kind of sampling, the same individual could be sampled several times.

With simple random sampling without replacement, the order in which pupils were selected to participate in the study was not important; what mattered was if the pupils were in or out of the sample. Therefore, the sample was selected disregarding the order and without replacement. The population was known (standard four pupils in the selected schools), the sample size was determined (at least 10% of pupils in each class), and pupils were assigned with numbers from which the sample size was randomly selected.

Numbered cards were prepared and put in two boxes according to the number of pupils (boys and girls) in a particular classroom. Each pupil was then asked to pick one card from respective boxes, whereby only those with cards numbered one to ten (from each box) were involved in the study, resulting in a total of 340 pupils. The sample, therefore, involved 42 teachers, 10 parents, and 340 students (392 participants).

3.7 Data Collection Tools

This study employed, documentary review, semi-structured interviews (SSIs), modified caregivers' scale, observational checklist, teachers' social competence knowledge assessing tool, pupils' social competence assessment tool, and pupils' reading skills assessment tool.

3.7.1 Documentary Review

The documentary review was employed to supplement the findings from interviews and questionnaires. This tool was used because it is just as good as, and sometimes, even more, cost-effective than tools like in-depth interviews or observation (appendix XI). A thorough review of documents on the sampled schools was a critical aspect of this study, as the information from the documents supplemented data from other sources. The reviewed documents consisted of pupils' attendance

sheets, pupils' performance records, school committees' reports, academic teachers' reports, and pupils' discipline records. In addition, pupils' Kiswahili subject exercise books were reviewed to find out the way pupils comprehended to different tasks. The researcher managed to compare and contrast field notes and documents for triangulation of the information. Therefore, the use of documentary review provided an additional understanding of the phenomena under study.

3.7.2 Interview

This study employed a semi-structured interview (SSI) for collecting qualitative data (appendix III). Semi-structured interview questions were prepared and used to 17 head teachers, 17 subject teachers, and 10 parents/guardians. Class teachers were not interviewed as their role was to fill in the social competence skills tool for pupils in the place of parents/guardians. The format and sequence of questions were dictated by the context and the experiences of the individual teachers, based on the researcher's best judgment at any given moment in the interview. The major components included in SSI guides were: background information of respondents, their knowledge and perceptions of social competence skills, reading skills and academic prosperity in general, teachers' practices concerning possession of social competence skills and reading skills acquisition, and teachers' opinions on how to promote social competence skills alongside academics in primary education. Each interview session lasted for around 40-50 minutes.

The semi-structured interview was administered to head teachers and subject teachers to capture their views on the relationship between possession of social competence skills, and reading skills acquisition in primary school pupils. The guide had questions related to the teachers' knowledge of social competence skills, their perceptions on the role of social competence skills in reading skills acquisition, the strategies teachers employ in schools to enhance both social competence skills and reading skills, the association between social competence skills and reading skills in primary school pupils, and their recommendations on how to improve pupils' reading skills. The usefulness of semi-structured interviews in this study was that questions

were prepared beforehand, which helped the conversation and kept participants on the topic.

In addition, semi-structured interviews were preferred because they provided participants with the freedom to express their views on their terms. Interviews with head teachers were conducted in their offices, as all the visited schools had the head teacher's office. As for subject teachers, interviews were administered outside staffrooms, preferably under the trees. This is because other teachers were working in the staffrooms during the interviews – hence conducting interviews in the same offices would interrupt their activities and routines. There were instances that head teachers provided spaces in their offices for subject teachers to be interviewed. This happened at N, A, and P primary schools.

A structured interview guide was also prepared and administered to parents/guardians to capture their views in relation to different aspects of the study. The key focus was on the way parents/guardians handled their children both socio-economically and academically. Socio-economically, the researcher wanted to know from the parents/guardians whether they provided the basic needs to their children, to make them enjoy schooling. Academically, information was sought from the parents/guardians on whether they were engaged in their children's reading activities and learning in general. In addition, the parents/guardians were asked whether they made any follow-up to their children's academic development; and whether they cooperated with teachers on matters related to their children's development. All the interviews were conducted in the Kiswahili language; the language used in public primary schools and the targeted language in this study. All interviews, except for parents/guardians were recorded with the consent of the interviewees. The recording was done in order to capture the actual words said by the participants, something which could not be done by taking field notes.

3.7.3 Observation Guide

Observations in this study provided the researcher with an opportunity to gather information on a wide range of behaviours, capture a great variety of interactions,

and openly investigate the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition. By observing classroom operations and activities directly, the researcher was able to develop a holistic perspective, i.e, an understanding of the context within which the study was undertaken. Observations also provided the researcher with an opportunity to learn about issues that would be unnoticed by the participants, or that they were unwilling or unable to discuss sincerely in an interview.

In this study, an observation guide was developed to observe teaching and learning processes related to social competence skills and reading skills acquisition within classrooms (appendix IV). The lessons observed were Kiswahili subject lessons for standard four, for 40 minutes. The observation emphasis was put on both social competencies and reading skills. Aspects that were observed ranged from classroom arrangement (to find out whether all kinds of pupils were accommodated), and materials (to see whether they matched the level of the pupils). Others were whether the teacher provided social reinforcement to pupils, the way the teachers handled mischievous pupils in the classroom, whether daily schedules and routines were well planned and followed by both the teacher and pupils, whether there were group affection (games and songs) activities, and so forth. In addition, observations focused on the teachers' practices in developing both social and reading competencies.

The observation was accompanied by still photographs, presented with captions in this study to provide additional information. Photographs were captured with the consent of head teachers for pupils, and class teachers (in classrooms) (appendix V). The use of photography has become increasingly common within research over recent years (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2005). This is partly because of the advancement in mobile phone technology, which has increasingly enabled people to produce cheap, high-quality audio-visual products. In the current study, pictures were taken by using a smart phone.

In the current study, fourteen classroom sessions were observed in seven visited schools (two from each school). Other teachers' practices from the remaining schools were not observed as the researcher thought he had reached a point of saturation. The researcher was aware of the impact of the observer's effect (Hawthorne effect) on the quality and validity of the observed information. With that in mind, the researcher first of all built trust and developed empathy with participants, and made sure that the participants knew that data were truly confidential. He made sure that he went for observations when he was physically and mentally fit; physical and mental fitness are important for good observation. The researcher also employed note-taking and taking pictures during observations. In addition, the researcher made sure that the situations were judged quickly, in a judgment-free manner, and information was immediately recorded to avoid biases.

3.7.4 Teachers' Social Competence Skills Knowledge Assessment Tool

Teachers' social competence skills knowledge assessment tool was administered to the 17 subject teachers before interview sessions. This tool was intended to explore whether subject teachers understood social competence skills, especially those which are related to reading. The content of the tool involved inquired whether teachers understood the meaning of social competence skills; if yes, how did they get to know; whether they were able to differentiate social competence skills from academic skills; the importance of social competence skills to reading skills, and other related aspects. Due to the complex nature of measuring knowledge, the tool was in form of a questionnaire (appendixVI).

3.7.5 Pupils' Social Competence Skills Assessment Tool

The social competence skills assessment tool for pupils was adopted from the MESSY-II (Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters –II) to assess social competence levels among the selected pupils (standard four). The MESSY-II is a social skills measure for a broad range of children, aged 2–16, and based on observations of both appropriate and inappropriate social behaviours. The scale has one form, which is a parent/caregiver report form, and it was filled in by class teachers. The class teachers were guided by the researcher and research assistants to

fill in the tool concerning the behaviours displayed by the pupils while in schools. The MESSY-II has 64 items which are each rated on a Likert-type rating scale from 1 (‘‘strongly disagree) to 5 (‘‘strongly agree’’). Recent studies indicate that the scale has strong psychometric properties including internal consistency (Matson et al., 2013). For this study, only six items (behaviours) relevant to reading skills acquisition were selected from the 64 (appendix VII). The social competence skills assessment tool was administered to all 340 pupils who were recruited to participate in the study. The interest was to find out the extent to which participants displayed such behaviours (communication, cooperation, self-control, self-management, engagement, and assertion) and relate the scores with those of reading skills assessment. Reliability analysis was carried out on this scale’s items. Cronbach’s alpha showed that the tool had reached acceptable reliability (internal consistency) of 0.81, thus the items appeared to be worthy of retention.

3.7.6 Reading Skills Assessment Tool

After the assessment of social competence skills, the age-appropriate reading skills assessment tool was administered to all (340) the selected pupils. The tool was however meant for 10 years old pupils, though there were cases of age variations. The content and context of the instrument were in line with the Standard Four Curriculum for reading development. The tool was developed by the researcher based on the syllabus, and the content of standard four textbooks. Pupils were assessed on vocabulary mastery, listening comprehension, silent reading comprehension, passage reading (loud), and word recognition.

As for the mastery of vocabulary, a table was prepared with ten vocabularies. Against each vocabulary, there were five words in which one of them had the same meaning as the mentioned vocabulary. Thus, pupils were supposed to match the vocabulary with the word of the same meaning from the five words provided. Word identification involved the preparation of fifteen (15) words in a table, and after each word, there were three columns to tick (√) whether pupils identified the word ‘quickly and correct’, ‘slow but correct’, and ‘not correct’ by reading the provided words aloud before the researcher. It was the researcher who judged and scored

whether the pupil had read ‘quickly and correctly’, ‘slow but correct’, or ‘incorrect reading’. For listening comprehension, pupils were provided with a story ‘Why Anansi (spider) has Eight Thin Legs?’ (read before them by their local teacher who they are familiar to), after which comprehension questions were asked to pupils in writing. Thus, the pupil would be good at comprehending if s/he got all the questions right, and vice versa.

In assessing silent reading skills, pupils were given a story (Appendix VIII) ‘Mama Pweza-Mother Octopus’ to read silently, and then attempt the questions that followed. Same as in the reading comprehension, those who got all the questions right were good at reading silently than their counterparts. The last reading skill (loud reading) was assessed by providing a story in a table (see appendix IX) with columns to show the number of words read ‘quickly and correctly’, words read ‘correctly but slowly’, and the ‘incorrectly’ read words. The counting of words was done by the researcher when pupils read the story. A higher score under the ‘quick and correct’ column meant the pupils were good at that skill. The combination of the social competence caregivers’ scale (filled by the class teachers) and reading skills assessment tools was meant to compare the scores to find out if there was any link between the two components.

3.7.7 Parents/Guardians Interview Guide

This tool was developed in order to capture the parents or guardians views in relation to the study topic (appendix X). It was also important to countercheck the information provided by the teachers on parental concerns. The tool was intended to capture data on the parents’/guardians’ perceptions of education, their views on the importance of education to their children, as well as their income earning activities. It was important to inquire about their income earning activities because the researcher was interested on their social economic status. This would inform the study on the way they invest in their children’s education. The tool, further, inquired about their involvement in the children’s learning processes.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for the current study was conducted for two months (from October 2019 to November 2019) at the selected primary schools. For qualitative information, the researcher used three methods for collecting data, namely, observation, documentary review and interview. Quantitative data were collected using several scales that were administered to the selected pupils and subject teachers. Both interview and observation were conducted in natural settings; teachers were interviewed and observed in naturalistic settings (classrooms, offices, or school surroundings). The natural settings are situations where the events of interest to the researcher naturally occur (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Mertens, 2003).

The interview sessions were recorded with the due permission of the participants. The recorded interviews were transcribed in the language used within days and subsequently translated into English. Before interviews, the administration of teachers' social competence skills knowledge tool (for subject teachers) was conducted. As for pupils, they were first taken through an age-appropriate reading skills assessment tool, where subject teachers went through all the items and their instructions. Thereafter, every pupil was requested to respond independently to the items provided, with the help of a researcher or assistant researcher where they faced problems. Finally, the class teachers were requested to fill in the social competence skills assessment tool for each pupil involved in the study. The multiple data sources that were used to collect data for this study provided comprehensive data for studying the cases and also assisted in the validation and triangulation of the data.

3.8.1 Observation

The purpose of the classroom observations was to document the classroom settings and teaching and learning process about the enhancement of social competence skills alongside reading skills. Aspects involved in the observations were pupils' participation in literacy activities including reading, vocabulary identification, responding to comprehend to the questions, retelling, and pupil's language use; as well as social competence skills enhancement. The classroom setting included pupils' sitting arrangements (study groups and paired learning), and learning corners

during teaching and learning activities. Data obtained from classroom observations were verified by teacher interviews.

During classroom observations, the researcher was a passive participant; that is, he was present in the classrooms but did not interact with participants. The researcher sat where he could see the classroom settings and the ongoing teaching and learning processes. Pupils were aware that the researcher was in their classrooms observing them, and they were told the purpose of the visit; the teachers also knew the purpose of the observations because the researcher explained it to them in advance. The observations were made through an observation guide, accompanied by photos and notes taking to complement the collected information via the observation guide.

This method was considered effective to describe the aspects observed in their natural settings. However, the researcher acknowledges that it is time-consuming; both in terms of data collection, the amount of data generated, and subsequent data analysis. Regardless of the tool being time-consuming, it was valuable to provide the richest account of information. The issue of the researcher's intervention during the observation was taken into consideration. The researcher acknowledges that his presence in the classrooms, though minimally, could interfere with the behaviour of those being observed. The effort (building trust and developing empathy with participants, confidentiality, being physically and mentally fit during observation, observation, note and picture taking, judgment-free manner, immediate recording of information to avoid biases) was made by the researcher to make sure that his presence in classrooms caused as little disruptions as possible. To achieve objectivity, the researcher during observations observed the activities, recorded them exactly the way they were, and interpreted them at a later stage. For reliability measures, field notes from observations were re-read at the end of each day, alongside some initial analyses and interpretations.

Both head teachers and subject teachers were perceived to be happy to hold informal discussions on the topic under study after observations. This gave the researcher and teachers an avenue to discuss the observations, and provide advice if they would

consider the researcher's interpretation of observed activities was in line with their interpretations or not. Both the researcher and teachers were very forthcoming with their opinions and time, and their insights were valuable and were accommodated in the study.

The researcher further acknowledges that complete objectivity in observational methods is neither possible nor necessarily desirable. Although efforts (from sharing the tools with experts, pilot study to controlling observer's effect) were undertaken to ensure the reliability of the data, the outcome of the analysis would likely be a co-production of those who were observed and the observer (researcher).

3.8.2 Interview Guides

Semi-structured interview guides were administered with subject teachers, head teachers and parents/guardians. The semi-structured questions allowed the participants to have the freedom to provide as much information as possible on the study questions. All interviews, except for parents/guardians were audio-recorded to capture the whole conversation, and t were transcribed verbatim thereafter. In addition, whenever it was appropriate the researcher conducted informal short conversations with both class teachers and head teachers on questions about things he observed in the classrooms. Their responses were included in the observation field notes. The formal interview durations varied from teacher to participant but with an average of 50 minutes per participant. The interview questions focused on the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition, as well as the teachers' practices regarding enhancing both skills. The information collected from parents/guardians was related to their educational awareness as well as socio-economic status to afford educational expenses.

The researcher conducted two interviews at each school that was involved in the study; one with head teachers and the other with subject teachers, as well as 10 interviews with parents/guardians. The interview sessions for parents/guardians were conducted by phone and organized by school heads. The heads of schools were requested to suggest at least one parent/guardian, and link them with the researcher.

Thereafter, the researcher arranged with the head teachers for the parents'/guardians' interviews using the head teachers' phones.

3.8.3 Pupils' Assessments

Direct one-on-one pupil assessments were conducted in the five components of reading. The literacy assessment tool consisted of questions in five subject areas: word identification, vocabulary development, reading and listening comprehension, passage reading, and silent reading. The direct literacy assessments consisted of a set of two-stage procedures; at the first stage, subject teachers read the whole tool before the pupils so that they all get a common understanding. In the second stage, the researcher and assistants administered the tool to individual pupils.

For vocabulary mastery, pupils were tested whether they understood different vocabularies picked from the Standard Four Kiswahili text book, thus vocabularies were familiar to the pupils. Pupils were provided with words in list A which were to be matched with one of the correct words from list B; which had five distracters. For listening comprehension, a simple story developed by the researcher concerning Standard Four reading books was read before them by the subject teachers. Thereafter, multiple-choice questions from the read story were provided to pupils to find out whether they comprehended the story. Pupils were supplied with a written story individually for them to read silently and respond to the subsequent questions. This was employed to measure silent reading comprehension. They were also supplied with a passage to read aloud, and then respond to the multiple-choice questions. As for listening comprehension, the subject teacher, whom the pupils were familiar with (reading style), was requested to read the passage before them, followed by the questions to be answered.

For social competence skills assessment tool, the tools were filled in by the class teachers. The assumption was that class teachers were in a good position to be objective in assigning pupils the right behaviours than their parents.

3.8.4 Documentary Review Guide

The researcher had an opportunity to quickly scan the documents to assess the quality of information before going further with extensive analysis. In this study, the researcher reviewed the written public documents that were found in schools. The documents were requested and accessed from the head teachers' offices (school committee reports), discipline teachers (disciplinary reports), academic teachers (subject clubs' report-for the school with such clubs), Kiswahili exercise books (from pupils through their subject teachers), and class teachers (attendance books). The aim was to complement the information collected through other tools.

3.8.5 Parents/Guardians Interview Guide

Data from parents and guardians were collected through phone calls. Arrangements were made between the researcher and the heads of the studied schools so that at least one parent or guardian was recruited from each school. The heads of schools just summoned the participants to their offices, and introduced the researcher to the participants. The researcher, thereafter, proceeded with data collection, using the head teachers' phones.

3.9 Validity and Reliability of Tools

The SSI guides, reading skills assessment tools, observation guide, teachers' social competence assessment tool, and social competence assessment tool were developed by the researcher in English and reviewed for their content validity by the experts from both the fields of socio-emotional and education. Tools were refined to ascertain relevance, coverage, and consistency before being administered to participants.

While finalizing the tools, the instruments were evaluated by education expert panel, a practice that has been in use by different researchers. A group of four lecturers of The Open University of Tanzania in the area of education was contacted and asked to evaluate all the tools for the study. They all agreed to take part in the evaluation process. The group was asked to identify any shortcomings in the tools, highlight questions that they felt were most relevant to the study and comment on any areas

they felt of special interest. There were two major comments raised by this group. First, to address each objective of the study; the questions for the interviews were to be grouped according to the objectives. Second, it was easier to observe pupils in the classroom than outside the classroom. This is simply because in the classroom the sample is defined, whereas when they get out, they mix with other pupils, making observation more complicated. Other comments were on the wording of a few aspects of the tools. After studying the comments from the group of experts, the researcher modified the tools to include extra information and removed components that were considered of less relevance to the study. Changes were further made to the layout and the wording of the tools after this evaluation.

For further data validation, three methods were used: member checks, triangulation, and piloting. After the interview sessions in each school, the researcher sat with subject teachers and the head teachers to reflect on the interviews with sort of discussions, to verify data they provided to make valid interpretations. The participants' additional information 'if any' was incorporated in the collected data. Triangulation of information from different tools was conducted: pupils' assessments, observations, and interviews; this increased the internal validity of the study, as asserted by Lincoln and Guba (1985); Mertens (1998). For example, the researcher compared what he observed in classrooms with the information that the teachers provided during interviews. The researcher also compared students' reading status reported by teachers in the interviews with the data acquired from the pupils' reading assessments.

The tools were tested in two schools that were out of the sample to be studied. This was meant to assess their appropriateness and protocol in a context similar to the study area. The two schools were recruited from the ward (GG) that was out of the sampled wards. The selection of this ward was suggested by the Babati Town Council's education officials. The reason for the selection of this ward was because schools around the GG ward were semi-urban, and thus, it was anticipated that the participants would neither be rural nor urban-based, hence a balanced sample that reflect the study population. The ward had four schools namely Patrick Winters,

Dareda Mission, Seloto, and Bermi, and the researcher randomly selected two of them (S and T).

The participants that were involved in the pilot were head teachers, Kiswahili subject teachers, pupils, and their parents/guardians. Since the ward was semi-urban, parents and guardians formed a mixture of civil servants, traders, and farmers. The pilot study took two days; in the first day, the researcher went for introduction in the schools and sampled the pupils, as described in the selection of pupils. The sampled pupils, with the help of head teachers, were given consent forms (attached) requesting their parents/guardians to sign and come to school the next day. A total of forty pupils (20 from each school) and 35 parents/guardians (18 from school A and 17 from school B) participated in the pilot study. The pilot exercise was done on day two which involved head teachers, subject teachers, parents/guardians, and pupils. The participants commented on the improvement of the tools. One of the comments was to agree on the meaning of social competence in Kiswahili. The researcher had it as *'stadi za maisha'* equivalent to 'life skills'**,** which according to the participants did not meet the intended meaning. It was therefore agreed that we use *'mwenendo mzuri'* 'integrity' (good manners) instead; that a socially competent person is the one with *'mwenendo mzuri'*. The second comment was related to the participation of parents/guardians in assessing their childrens' (pupils) behaviours, after finding that the score in the tools was high. It was raised by the teachers that parents/guardians tend to favour their children, and therefore, class teachers were in a good position to fill in the pupils' behaviour tool, and become relatively objective than parents/guardians.

Upon completion of the pilot, the researcher had an opportunity to revise the tools and protocols, based on what was found during the pilot study. Observations were taken on board and used during data collection. However, the actual data collection was assisted by four research assistants who were trained and engaged in data collection, data management, and transcription.

Additionally, in the presentation of the study findings, the researcher has used verbatim narratives to provide thick descriptive explanations. According to Creswell (2013), thick descriptive explanations may transport readers to the study settings and provide the discussion on elements of shared experiences, or give the reader the experiential knowledge. Thick descriptions were employed in this study to give weight to the findings and provide credibility to the evidence.

Data trustworthiness was also observed in this study. Credibility was ensured through triangulating data collection methods and member checks. A combination of interviews and observations was used to collect data. Few transcripts of the interviews were shared with the participants via e-mails for feedback, correcting the interpretation, and challenging what they perceived to be 'wrong' interpretations. However, there were no significant changes reported from members after member checks. Audit trial was employed to attain dependability and confirmability: providing a complete set of notes on decisions made during the research process, sampling, research materials adopted, and information about the data management. For transferability of the findings, the researcher provided a rich account of descriptive data, such as the context in which the research was carried out, its setting, behaviour, and experiences of participants, their demographic and socio-economic characteristics, as well as interview procedure and topics.

3.10 Ethical Issues

The current study observed inherent potential risks for all the participants involved. The important thing was to take measures in every step of the study to make sure that the privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality of the participants were observed. The researcher personally met with each participant, except for parents/guardians, at the onset of the study. Informed consent forms were presented to request their participation (Appendices VIII & IX). The content of the consent form involved the aim of the study, the procedures to be used in collecting information, and respect for confidentiality and anonymity of all participants. For parents/guardians, the consent was sought orally. John, Eugene, and Jeanne (2009) contend that for fewer than 16 years old pupils, consent has to be sought from parents or guardians. Thus, consents

for pupils were sought from the heads of schools. Research clearance was sought from the University of Dar es Salaam (Appendix XIV), as well as from the Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) and District Administrative Secretary (DAS) (Appendix XV), and other officials related to the study.

3.11 Data Analysis

Analysis of data started right in the field and continued throughout the study. Just after data collection, the researcher read the field notes and listened to the interview audios, and wrote down some identified issues. All data from observations were typed, and the audio recorded data from interviews were transcribed. Transcription and filed notes enabled the researcher to reflect on the data and gain some preliminary ideas on the findings. Data collected from the questionnaire were processed at the end of the fieldwork.

3.11.1 Qualitative Data

Qualitative data analysis for this study was performed manually. Although the process of analyzing qualitative data manually can be a laborious process for the researcher, the ability to draw on firsthand experience with settings assisted in the deep understanding of the findings, and helped in refining interpretations. Bogdan and Biklen (2006) explain this process as being dynamic, intuitive, and creative; and involves sequences of reasoning and theorizing.

After data collection and processing, the researcher prepared two separate file folders, one with original copies for storage and the other with working copies for coding and analysis. This was done to have the freedom to work with the collected data, make notes, create codes, as well as themes while preserving the original files.

After reading and re-reading each set of data, the researcher highlighted interesting observations, contexts, verbatim interviews, or points that were relevant to the research questions at the margin. Writing a summary was a very helpful strategy for the researcher to get into the data without any specific coding categories in mind because he was interested in more open-ended and naturally emerging themes to

analyze the data. Analysis of qualitative data was based on the assumption that a better and broader understanding of the phenomenon under investigation would be informed by both research objectives/questions and emerging insights from the data. The analysis of interviews proceeded through the following three main steps: preparing and organizing data, creating categories/themes, coding, presentation, and interpretation.

3.11.1. 1 Preparing and Organizing the Data for Analysis.

Preparation and organization of the data for analysis started in the field. This involved listening to each audio-taped interview. This practice not only enabled the researcher to familiarize with the data, but also to obtain the general sense of the data. This was followed by a verbatim transcription of the interview proceedings.

3.11.1. 2 Creating Themes.

An inductive approach was employed to derive themes and allow unanticipated themes to emerge from the data set as well as help to determine whether the themes were well supported by the data from the field. The inductive phase involved reading the transcripts repeatedly.

3.11.1. 3 Coding, Presentation, and Interpretation.

After creating themes, transcripts were re-read for coding. This was done by identifying text elements – words, sentence (s), and or paragraph (s) – from each transcript and linking them into respective themes. Furthermore, all the coded data extracts for each theme were reviewed to determine whether they formed a coherent pattern. This enabled the researcher to rework and refine the themes and related extracts.

Data from the interviews are presented simply and straightforwardly with rich descriptions supported by representative verbatim quotations. The interpretation of the findings is informed by a spiral-like movement, which involves going back and forth from the data and the evolving interpretation.

Data from documentary review (pupils' subject exercise books, attendance sheets, and reports such as disciplinary and school committee reports) were analyzed by skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation. This is an iterative process that combined elements of content analysis and thematic analysis. Under content analysis, documents (mainly reports) were organized into categories related to the central questions of the study. Analysis of documents was also accompanied by pictures such as school by-laws as they were posted on the schools' notice boards. Under thematic analysis, patterns within the documents were identified, and the themes that emerged formed categories for analysis. The analysis of documents incorporated coding content into themes similar to how interview transcripts were analyzed.

Classroom observations were considered for this study as it provides a neutral environment because the data collected describe natural phenomena as they occur in their natural settings. They were also preferred due to their ability to collect data on non-verbal behaviours. An observational guide was prepared by the researcher with several components to be observed in the classroom; sitting arrangements (study groups and paired learning), reading corners, age-appropriate materials, social reinforcement by teachers to the pupils, and others. Classroom observational data were analyzed using content analysis where the information in the observational guide was coded and categorized to form themes that are related to the study questions. Data from documentary review, observation, and transcribed field notes were placed together to make it easy to compare and contrast them.

3.11.2 Quantitative Data

Quantitative analysis included data from social competence assessment for pupils, teacher's social competence knowledge, and reading skills assessment tools. The score for the reading assessment tool differed according to the skill assessed. The scores for vocabulary and comprehension were (1) for correct, and (0) for not correct. For loud reading, silent reading and word identification (0) was a score for wrong or no response, (1) for correct but slow, and (2) for correct and fast. The study went beyond to check the differences in reading and social competence skills between boys and girls as well as identifying which of the social competence skill is the largest predictor of reading skills in pupils. In particular, the researcher estimated

models that provided the best fit for the relationship between social competence skills and pupils' reading achievements.

3.11.2.1 Data Management.

Data were collected using paper-based tools (questionnaires) and entered into SPSS immediately after fieldwork. Data were then transferred from SPSS to STATA for cleaning and analysis. Since there were two data files for pupils (literacy and social competence skills), a unique identity (ID) was created in each file by combining pupils' names, wards, and schools. The unique ID was used to merge the literacy skills and social competence skills files so that the researcher could be able to link reading skills with particular social competence skills. Names were specifically preferred to be used to link the files as at least each participant had a unique name. Only two names (per pupil) were enough to differentiate one participant from another.

3.11.2.2 Analysis.

Apart from descriptive analysis for demographic variables and some visualization, Logistic Regression analysis was run to estimate the impact of social competence skills on binary outcomes, while Ordinary Least Square Regression (OLS) with multiple predictors was used to estimate outcomes of continuous variables. The term "regression analysis" describes a collection of statistical techniques which serve as the basis for drawing an inference as to whether or not a relationship exists between two or more quantities within a system, or within a population (Hayashi, 2000).

The analysis for each predictor of the six (communication, cooperation, self-control, self-management, engagement, and assertion) social competence skills was conducted against the outcomes of each reading skills tested (vocabulary, word identification, listening and reading comprehension, passage reading, and silent reading) to find out any association. Both regressions provide coefficients that estimate the number of changes in the reading skills that would be predicted by changes in social competence characteristics, holding other characteristics like age and gender of the pupils constant.

In this study, the researcher assumed that there were no significant differences in reading skills in pupils regardless of their social competence characteristics against the contention that social competence skills determined the reading skills of the pupils. In essence, the researcher proposed that the reading skill of a particular pupil was the function of her/his social competence skills, mathematically written as:

$$y_i = f(X_i) + \varepsilon_i$$

Where *y* is the reading skills for particular student *i*, *f (χ)* represent function term for social competence skills for the pupil *i*, and ε is the error term for particular the pupil *i*.

Logistic Regression: Logistic regression sometimes known as the logit model or the logistic model, analyzes the relationship between multiple independent variables and a categorical dependent variable, as well as estimating the probability of occurrence of an event by fitting data to a logistic curve. There are two models of logistic regression, binary logistic regression, and multinomial logistic regression. Binary logistic regression is typically used when the dependent variable is dichotomous and the independent variables are either continuous or categorical. When the dependent variable is not dichotomous and is comprised of more than two categories, a multinomial logistic regression can be employed (Peng & So, 2002).

Traditionally, research questions were addressed either by OLS or linear discriminant function analysis. However, these techniques were found unsatisfactory for handling binary outcomes due to their statistical assumptions of linearity, normality, and continuity. The logistic regression model was developed using log transformation of the probability of *y* dependant variables to predict its distribution as bernouli.

Thus, in logistic regression, the predicted *(y)* must be binary while the predictors *(x)* are of any type. Logistic regression is therefore the natural logarithm (ln) of odds of *y*, and the odds of *y* are the ratio of the probability of *y* happening *(p)* to the

probability of *y* not happening *(1 – p)*. Since it is hard to report in terms of odds, the marginal estimate was employed to transform the odds into coefficients or percentages.

Ordinary Least Square Regression –OLS: Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression is a statistical method of analysis that estimates the relationship between one or more independent variables and a dependent variable; the method estimates the relationship by minimizing the sum of the squares in the difference between the observed and predicted values of the dependent variable configured as a straight line (Rutherford, 2001).

This is the traditional method for predicting factors determining the outcome of interest and represents the most common form of linear regression. As a predictive model, the multiple OLS is used to explain the relationship between one continuous outcome variable *(y)* and two or more predictors *(x)*. OLS assumes that regressions residuals are normally distributed, and there is a linear relationship between *y* and *x*. Unlike other regression methods, this method calculates the best-fitting line for the observed data by minimizing the sum of the squares for the vertical deviations from each data point to the line.

Intervening variables: measures were taken to isolate or "subtract" variance in the dependent variable attributable to variables that are not the subject of the study. The technique helped to control the anticipated intervening variables which were pupils' socio-economic background, parents' education, positive attitude to school, and better mental health.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter analyses, presents and interprets data, addressing the five objectives regarding the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in primary school pupils. The documentation and interpretation process in this study aims to present the findings in an intelligible and interpretable manner to establish trends and relations in line with the objectives of the study. Note that, the process of data handling and management was conducted separately but concurrently; while the presentation of the findings is merged. The chapter is organized into six sections; the first section presents the characteristics of participants who were involved in the study, the second section analyses and presents the factors for poor acquisition of reading skills among primary school pupils, and the third section analyses and presents the findings on the extent to which teachers know the concept of social competence skills. These are the findings from interviews and teachers' social competence skills knowledge assessment scale. The fourth section is about the perceptions of teachers on the role of social competence skills in reading skills acquisition in primary school pupils from interviews. The fifth section analyses and presents the findings on the practices that teachers use in enhancing social competence skills, and the reading skills in primary school pupils captured through interviews and observations. The last section statistically establishes the association between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in pupils captured through questionnaires supplied to the pupils, and the forms filled in by the class teachers. The focus now turns to the presentation and interpretation of the findings of this study.

4.1 Participants' Characteristics

This study involved the following groups of participants: school head teachers, class teachers, subject teachers, pupils and parents/guardians.

4.1.1 Teachers

The planned sample for teachers was 51; with three teachers from each sampled school (class teacher, subject teacher and head teacher). However, a total of 42 teachers were recruited to participate in this study. This does not mean that some teachers were not met, but in nine schools, class teachers were also subject teachers i.e. they played double roles. Table 4.1 presents the background information of the studied teachers.

Table 4.1

Teachers' Background Information (N=42)

Variable		**Number (N)**	**Percentage (%)**
Sex	Male	9	21.4
	Female	33	78.6
Age	21-30	4	9.5
	31-40	16	38.1
	41-50	11	26.2
	51-60	11	26.2
Education	Grade A certificate	23	54.8
	Diploma in education	16	38.1
	Bachelor degree	2	4.8
	Master degree	1	2.4
Position	Head teacher	15	35.7
	Class teacher	8	19
	Subject teacher	8	19
	Class and subject teacher	9	21.4
	Assistant head teacher	2	4.8
Teaching experience	1-10	7	16.7
	11-20	18	42.9
	21-30	9	21.4
	31-40	6	14.3
	40+	2	4.8

Table 4.1 indicates that more than half of the sampled teachers (33) were females. Very few (4) were young teachers (21-30 years). As it was anticipated by the researcher, many teachers (23) had Grade 'A' teaching certificates. This is because a grade 'A' certificate is the minimum required qualification for a Tanzanian teacher at the primary school education level. However, one teacher had a master's degree in education. Concerning teaching experiences, many teachers (27) had from 11 to 30 years in the profession. Two teachers had more than 40 years of teaching

experience. As shown in Table 4.1, 15 (35.7%) out of 42 teachers who were involved in this study were head teachers with varying experience as heads. Figure 4.1 presents the experience of head teachers.

Figure 4.1

Head Teachers' Experience

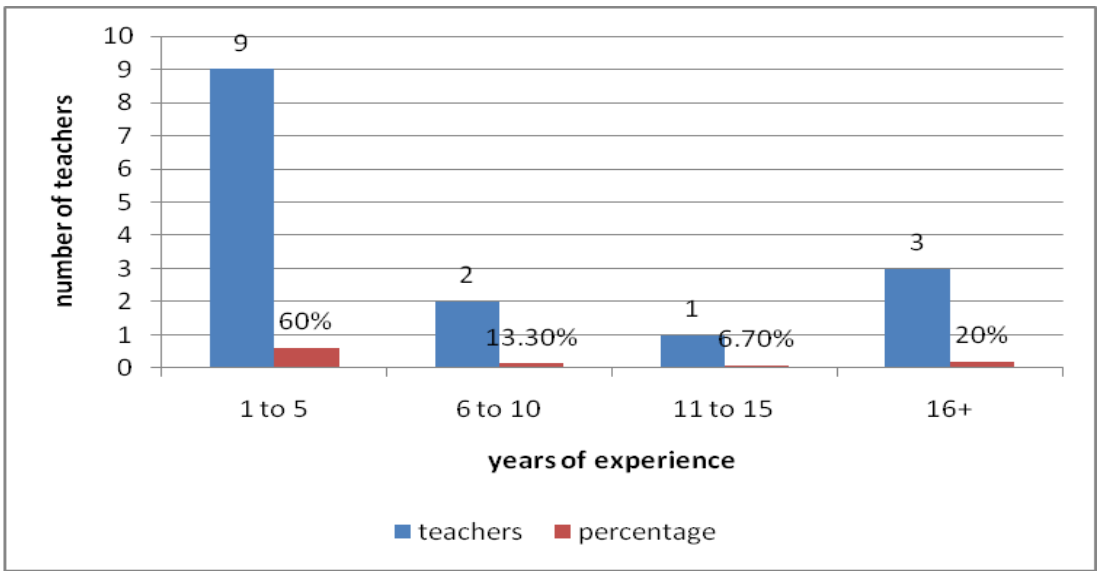


Figure 4.1 shows that many head teachers (9) had no more than five years in their positions. Only three teachers had 15 years and above as head teachers. In general, the participants under this category (teachers) were composed of 15 head teachers, 2 assistant head teachers (who stood for head teachers during data collection), 8 class teachers, 8 subject teachers, and 9 subject and class teachers.

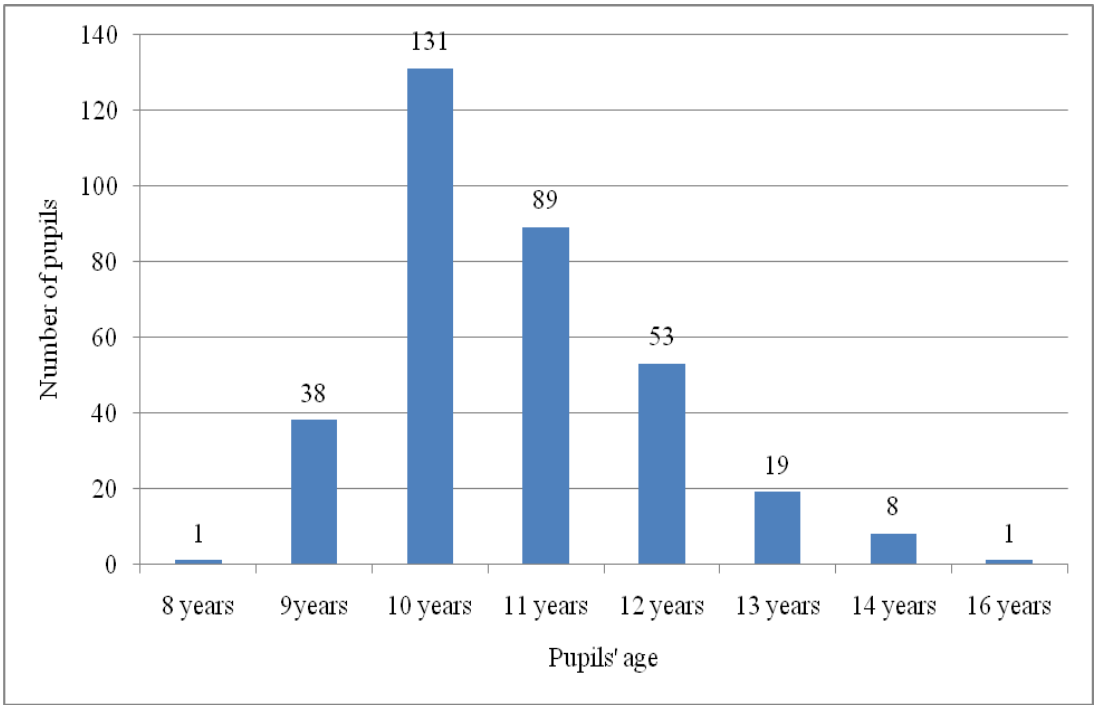
4.1.2 Pupils

A total of 340 pupils were recruited to participate in this study. However, the number of boys did not match that of girls. During sampling, boys and girls were equally recruited (170 boys and 170 girls). Yet, during data analysis, there were 163 boys (47.9%) and 177 girls. The variation in the number of boys and girls was detected during data cleaning and analysis, and the reason could be that some boys indicated 'KE' in the tool which meant 'girls', rather than 'ME' which stood for 'boys'. The

following figure summarizes the background information of the pupils who were involved in this study.

Figure 4.2

Background Information of the Sampled Pupils



It can be depicted from the figure that many standard four pupils (131-38.5%) in the studied 17 schools were of ten years age. This is in accordance with the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2014) which requires pupils to start primary education at the maximum age of seven years. Cases of starting primary education at an older age were also be observed – as several pupils were 11 years old (89%), and others were 12,13, 14 years old, while one pupil had 16 years age. According to the ETP (2014), the age for joining standard one is between four to six years, depending on the progress and ability of a child to manage the studies at a given level.

4.1.3 Parents/guardians

Parents/guardians who were involved in this study were conveniently sampled. The researcher asked the heads of schools to find one parent/guardian from all the schools

that were studied. The school heads managed to get 13 parents and four guardians. However, about seven parents and three guardians were reached. Among the reached, three parents were not ready to be interviewed, so the interview guide was administered to seven parents and three guardians, as summarised in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Parents'/Guardians Background Information (N=10)

Variable		**Number (N)**	**Percentage (%)**
Status	Parent	7	70
	Guardian	3	30
Sex	Male	6	60
	Female	4	40
Age	31-40	2	20
	41-50	7	70
	51-60	1	10
Education	Standard seven	3	30
	Secondary education	6	60
	Tertiary education	1	10
Occupation	Farmer	5	50
	Business	4	40
	Employed	1	10

The information in Table 4.2 shows that the parents dominated this group (seven), and six of all the participants were males. Seven participants were in the 41-50 age group and six were secondary school (o-level) leavers. The only participant with tertiary education was a primary school teacher (grade A certificate). Furthermore, five participants were farmers (livestock keeping and crop cultivation).

4.2 Factors that Hinder Acquisition of Reading Skills in Pupils

The researcher sought the factors that were behind the poor acquisition of reading skills in pupils in the study area, as the first objective of the study. Data for this objective were collected using the subject and head teachers' interview guide. Several factors were behind the relatively poor acquisition of reading skills. Although the new curriculum was praised for boosting the pupils' ability to read, levels of reading skills varied among the studied pupils. Participants blamed the variation on the current registration system of pupils by the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA). According to the head teacher of C Primary School,

the current registration practice requires all pupils enrolled to be registered in the NECTA registration system (PReM), and their transitions from one class to another are monitored by the system. That being the case, a standard one pupil has to finish primary education within seven years, not otherwise. According to the participant, this system is meant to control after schools which used to make pupils skip some classes, particularly the non-exams classes. This situation forces schools to let pupils transit from one level to another regardless of whether they had mastered some competencies or not, as there is no room for retaining pupils who need further assistance before moving to other levels, unless there is medical condition. *'... before this, we used to retain them in one class till we became sure that they could move to the upper classes. As for now, there is nothing like that,*' insisted the head teacher at school C.

Another factor that was closely linked to low acquisition and mastery of reading skills in pupils in the study area was truancy. The Babati town council residents, apart from Babati town itself, were farmers and pastoralists. As a result, many parents and guardians engaged their children in household activities, while the parents/guardians are away for farming activities. The children's activities ranged from assigning children *shamba* works or animal rearing, taking care of their siblings while parents/guardians are away for *shamba* works, petty trading or labour works to get some penny to buy some household stuff like food. As a result, such pupils would attend lessons irregularly – which affected their learning pace.

Analysis showed that some pupils were experiencing hard life that made them fail to attend lessons every day. Some did not come to school at all, others attended the schools irregularly, and thus, they missed many things that were being taught. When they come to school, many teachers usually do not take them through what others were taught. This means that their fellow pupils were always ahead of them in learning. Parents/ guardians used several tricks to excuse their children from attending schools. Interview with the F primary school subject teacher revealed that some parents went to school several times reporting that their children were sick, or gave other reasons for their children to stay out of school. It was however, realised

that the pupil were engaged in household activities, while others were learning. This made the truant pupils to inconsistently attend the teaching and learning processes, which in turn, affected their reading progress.

Findings from the review of attendance books also revealed that pupils, especially those from suburban schools were not consistently attending schools. A stream of 80 pupils for instance in school C was found with an average of 20 pupils missing in one week. The general passing through attendance sheets in the surveyed schools showed that pupils were not regularly attending the lessons. It was further reported that some pupils would arrive late to schools, or stay away from schools because of the long distance of schools from their homes. The head teacher of L Primary School gave an example of two pupils at her school who used to come to school at nine or ten hours; missing up to three learning sessions per day.

The community in the study area was also blamed by the teachers for contributing to low acquisition and mastery of reading skills for their children, and poor academic performance in the schools. They reported that the community lacked enthusiasm in education to the extent that they did not care much about their children's educational progress. The parents did not go through their children's exercise books to monitor their learning process. Some did not care whether their children attended schools or not; others did not respond to the summons by teachers to discuss their children's matters, and so forth.

> …let me give you one example, there are two pupils as we talk now they are not in the classroom, while their fellows are learning. If you trace them, you may find them somewhere in the nearby bushes, they usually end up there. I have been summoning their parents for the last two weeks, but they claim to be very busy, despite that such pupils are in standard five. What do you think will happen to these pupils academically? So, the community is very conservative. But even nutrition is to blame for truancy. Some pupils go hungry at home which makes them truants. We introduced a feeding programme at the school, but we failed because parents were not willing to contribute money for the programme' (Subject teacher, J).

The low enthusiasm of parents in education led to their poor participation in school matters. Parents/guardians in the study area were reported to be less involved in school affairs such as attending meetings which are crucial for the development of schools. Decisions such as establishing school feeding programmes need collective responsibility. Nonetheless, out of the 17 visited schools, only two had the school feeding programme. Poor participation of parents/guardians in school affairs also limited the schools' efforts to shape pupils. This was because whatever good was practiced at schools would not usually be replicated at homes. The success of pupils in learning is achievable mostly if parents/guardians work together with teachers. That is, a little margin between the home and school positively affects the teaching and learning processes. Issues related to truancy and misbehaviours could be easily handled by both teachers and parents. For instance, analysis from school L showed that the school was surrounded by a large number of parents and guardians who were not cooperative. Some pupils went to school without exercise books or pens. When parents and guardians were invited by the teachers to discuss and arrive to solutions, most of them did not honour the invitations. Such parents were not involved in their children's learning, and the burden was left to teachers. This affected the pupils' learning because teachers' time to deal with the pupils is limited: they have few hours with the pupils, while rest of the time they spent with their parents and guardians.

On the other side, interviews with parents/guardians showed mixed findings. Seven out of ten interviewed parents/guardians supported the teachers' assertions that parents had low enthusiasm with educational matters. The parents/guardians attributed that situation to the daily life hustles that have made them spend most of the time working to meet their basic needs. According to the parents/guardians, it was the nature of life that made them shift interest from schooling to other aspects of life. For instance, during farming seasons, farmers would assign their school children some activities like taking care of their young siblings, while the parents are involved in farming activities. One of the interviewed parents from school F had the following to say;

> Life here in Babati is so frustrating. I would like all my three children to attend school regularly, but I have so many responsibilities. I need to go to the farm, the same person goes to Babati dam to fish, and I again go to sell the fish. You see, so many things to do. So if one child can sell fish today, the other one tomorrow, and the third one the day after tomorrow; that's how life goes. So they (children) can't be good school attendants (Parent, F).

In addition to enthusiasm in education-related issues, a good number of pupils in Babati Town were reported to be raised by single parents (women) or their grandparents. This situation, plus the subsistence nature of living, according to the teachers, made it difficult for parents/guardians to take care of their children. Most parents would spend most of their time away from their homes; making it difficult for them to monitor their children's deeds, including the learning processes. The dominant bread earning activities in the area were agricultural activities and petty trading (mostly fish vending due to the Babati Dam).

School infrastructure, particularly the buildings were also mentioned as the cause for the pupils' poor acquisition and mastery of reading skills. Teachers reported that a fee-free education policy increased enrolment in primary education. This has resulted in overcrowded classrooms. The number of pupils in the studied classrooms ranged from 80 to 100 pupils (one classroom). According to the teachers, the overcrowding hampered their ability to manage pupils for smooth teaching and learning processes.

Poor and insufficient infrastructure such as fencing facilities also disrupted the teaching and learning processes; as a result, they affected the acquisition of reading skills among pupils. Observations showed that all schools in Babati town had no fences. On top of that, two of the studied schools' compounds had high level of disruptions. Observation from P primary school showed that the school environment was not friendly to both teachers and pupils. There was a path across the school compound and people were passing throughout; some of them were drunkards who shouted to pupils. There were also cars and motorcycles passing across the compound of which their noise disrupted the teaching and learning activities by interfering both pupils' and teachers' attention.

Interview with L primary school head revealed that infrastructure had more to do with girls' learning. Lack of private places for matured girls to change when in menstrual circle forced them to stay at homes during those days (menstrual). Play grounds, which are critical in the pupils' learning environment, were also missing. Out of 17 studied schools, 15 had no play grounds. Playground at schools are used for pupils to refresh after lessons, and stimulate other important skills like taking turns and cooperation.

The social-economic status of many families in the study area was another bottleneck for pupils' acquisition and mastery of reading skills. A reasonable number of families, according to the teachers were poor. Economic situations at home had a considerable negative effect on the pupils' academic success. Pupils from poor families lacked food. The teachers reported that many of such families had one meal per day (mostly dinner), leaving the children starving for the whole day. This caused some pupils to only come to school in the morning, but never returned for the noon lessons. They would remain at home sleeping, or roaming about in search of something to eat. Further analysis showed that food had a role to play in the pupils' poor acquisition and mastery of reading skills as starving pupils cannot concentrate with lessons in classrooms. Teachers reported that it was difficult for a pupil who eats dinner to dinner (no breakfast and lunch) to pay attention in lessons; the mind will be always thinking of what to eat.

About the shortage of food, parents/guardians believed that the situation was not that critical; contrary to what was reported by teachers. They admitted shortage of food, but at least one meal was manageable. Seven out of the ten interviewed parents/guardians said that shortage of food was not a critical factor for their pupils' learning difficulties. These findings show that parents/guardians were not aware of the importance of food in the learning process. The single meal reported was mostly provided at nights (dinner) when all family members were available. Thus, it is hard for a pupil to work for the next day when the body needed the energy to do different operations.

Further findings from parents/guardians also revealed that the socio-economic hardships among them to some extent affected the pupils' learning processes. Nine of the ten interviewed parents/guardians admitted that it was hard to provide for everything the children wanted in relation to education. The most-reported unfulfilled requirements were the books and school uniforms. Parents/guardians reported relying upon what is provided in schools in terms of books; there were limited materials at homes for pupils to study. Inability to supply additional reading materials for pupils to study at homes was even reported by the parent-teachers, as the following quote substantiates;

> The situation is hard, I'm a teacher in this school, and I know the importance of additional materials for our children to study. But frankly speaking, I cannot afford it. I can't imagine what happens to the parents who have no reliable sources of income. The nature of life has changed, the ways of getting money are becoming harder and harder. So, parents struggle to meet their children's basic needs only (Parent, school B).

Participants were also of the opinion that teachers were not motivated by employers. They asserted that teachers had big claims of salary increase, promotions delays, unpaid leave allowances, and others. These factors according to all the interviewed participants, demotivated teachers to perform their responsibilities, hence affecting the pupils' learning. A greater impact was reported to be in lower classes, particularly, the standard one and two; because these are classes where a good and strong academic foundation is laid down, especially reading, writing and arithmetic. According to the interviewees, if pupils cross the two classes (standard one and two) without mastering reading, writing and arithmetic, it would be difficult for them to cope up with standard three and four lessons; hence they become strugglers, especially when the classrooms are overcrowded.

On the other hand, a few participants (3 out of 17 subject teachers) blamed their fellow teachers for not being responsible for fulfilling their duties with the excuse of low motivation. According to the participants, a few teachers ignored their teaching and learning responsibilities just because they are not motivated by the employer. This was regarded as a sort of punishment to the innocent pupils. The participants

argued that teachers should not punish pupils for employers' mistakes; pupils should not be punished for something that they were less concerned about. The following quote confirms this view:

> It's true that motivation is a problem for teachers. But in my opinion, teachers should know that they are here for the pupils. So, you can't concentrate on poor motivation and punish innocent pupils by not teaching them properly. A young child has nothing to do with that situation, so, if truly you have passion for this job, you have to work. After all, teachers' achievement is when the pupil does well in academics, reading inclusively. When they fail, we start asking ourselves what went wrong. On my side, I don't like to see my pupils failing, I don't like it. Even when I sleep, I keep asking myself what was wrong; I even change teaching modalities on the following day (Subject teacher, school F).

Policy mismatch was also reported by the participants as a huddle to reading skills acquisition. The government advocates that for a pupil to be enrolled in standard one, he/she must have passed through pre-school education. Nonetheless, there are directives that no child should be left out in enrolment regardless of whether the pupil attended pre-primary education or not. This contradiction is one of the reasons for some pupils' failure to acquire and master reading skills. This is because the second directive allows over-aged children to join schools without any background in reading skills. Helping such pupils acquire reading skills is not as smooth as their counterparts (those with preschool education).

4.3 Teachers' Knowledge of Social Competence Skills

These findings address the second objective of this study, which inquired about the teachers' knowledge of social competence skills. The information was captured from subject teachers through two approaches, the *teacher's social competence skills knowledge assessment* tool, as well as the *interview guide*. First, all the subject teachers (17) were supplied with questionnaires (self-report tool) that inquired about their knowledge of social competence skills. Secondly, they were all interviewed after filling in the questionnaire. The intention of administering the questionnaire and interviews was to complement the information in order to get a comprehensive understanding of teachers' conception of the social competence skills concept.

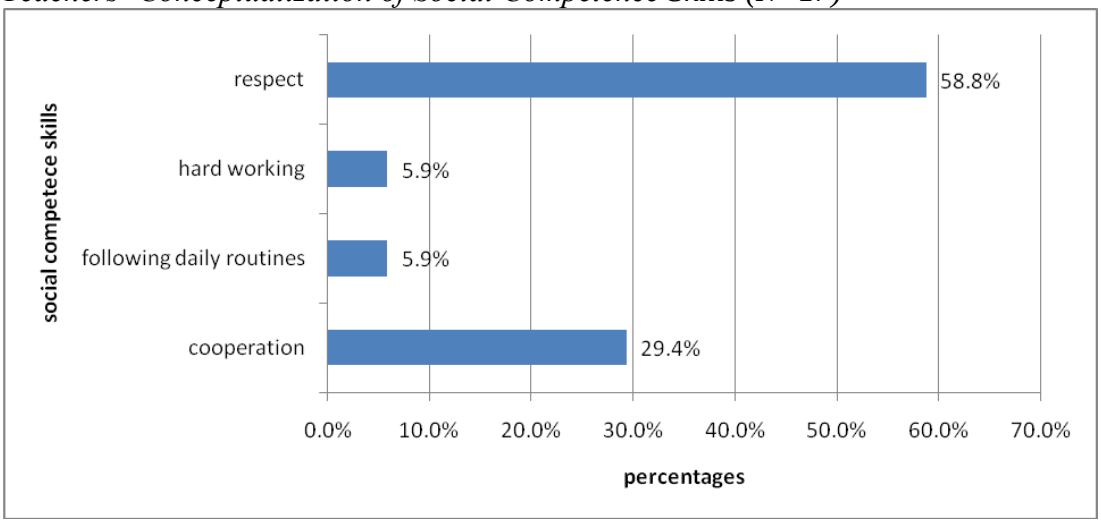
In the questionnaire, participants were asked to fill-in questions that required them to state the meaning of social competence skills. The questionnaire also inquired about the participants' sources of their social competence skills knowledge. Thereafter, they were required to mention three social competence skills they know by arranging them according to their importance in the individual's life. In the interview guide, participants were again asked to provide the meaning of social competence skills. They were further probed on how they knew that an individual was socially competent, as well as the impact of social competence skills in the individual's life.

4.3.1 Meaning of Social Competence Skills from Teachers' Perspective

It was found out of 17 subject teachers that 15 (88.2%) knew the social competence skills concept, as the behaviours that make an individual acceptable to the community were linked to an individual being socially competent. Asked about those behaviours, all 17 subject teachers were able to mention at least two. They explained social competence skills by linking them with certain behaviours in the society which were then grouped into behaviours like cooperation, following instructions, following daily routines, and respect. Figure 4.3 depicts the findings on this phenomenon.

Figure 4.3

Teachers' Conceptualization of Social Competence Skills (N=17)



Participants considered respect as the highest indicator for being socially competent (58.8%), followed by cooperative behaviour (29.4%). This showed that the participants were knowledgeable of the skills/behaviours that make one socially competent. Being acceptable to the community meant that such individuals would be likable and could interact positively with many members of their community.

During the interviews, participants also demonstrated their knowledge of social competence skills by linking them to certain individuals' traits in the communities. Individuals with traits that are perceived as good in the community were reported to be socially competent. They mostly related persons of integrity in the community with social competence skills. They considered persons of integrity as those who are likable, interesting, and pleasant to interact with. One of the participants had the following to say on one's integrity in relation to the meaning of social competence skills:

> Social competence skills can be seen in a person of integrity, the way he/she interacts with others, be it at work or in the community. When we say someone is socially competent, we look at the way s/he behaves in the community. If one behaves well: greeting others, respectably talking with others, and listening to others, then he/she has social competence skills. So, to cut the story short, integrity reflects one's social competence; through integrity, people can easily learn someone's behaviours (Subject teacher, school J).

The fact that integrity was directly linked to one being socially competent was also put forward by the participant who said that one can know whether an individual is socially competent or not by just looking at his/her behaviour. *'...one's integrity is related to his/her being socially competent in that you can look at a person just the way s/he is and be able to know his/her traits'* (Subject teacher, school J).

Some participants added that a socially competent person complies with the community's customs and traditions. For instance, a European might be socially competent in Europe due to the ways of living in his/her community, and not socially competent in Africa. Similarly, an individual might be socially competent in one ethnic group, but not in another ethnic group in the same country. Other traits that

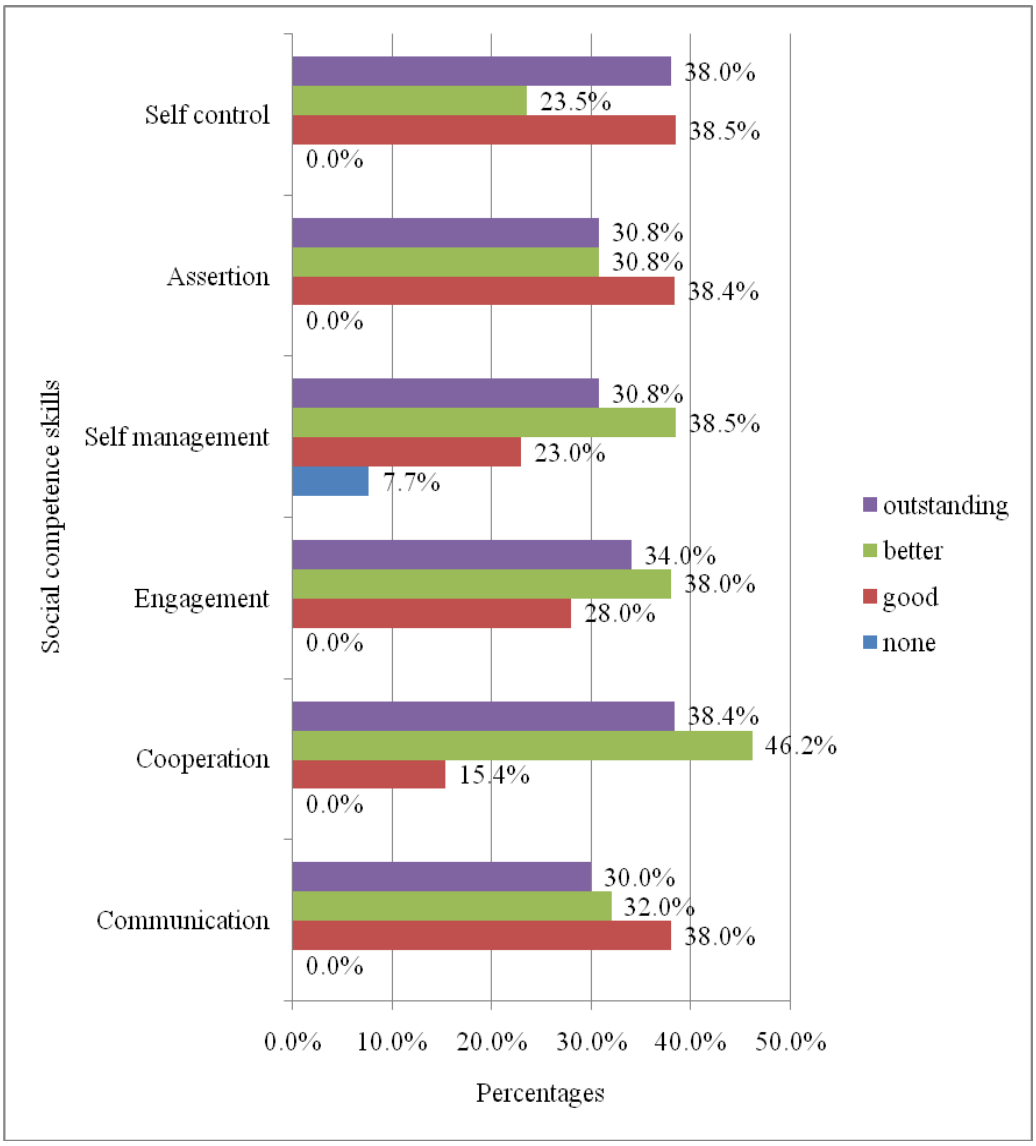
were linked to a socially competent individual ranged from appearance (including dressing); hard-working, respect, cooperative, and attentiveness.

The cooperative and attentive behaviours were more stressed by the participants in this study. Further findings revealed that a socially competent person at the community level is the one who interacts well with his/her neighbours, a person who listens and provides advises to others, and the one who understands the feelings of others. Such a person can also take and work on other persons' advice.

The questionnaire also needed the participants (subject teachers) to rate the knowledge they had on the six social competence skills of interest in this study. The test items were communication, cooperation, assertion, self-management, self-control, and engagement. Responses for the items were 'none', 'good', 'better', and 'outstanding'. Out of 17 participants, 16 responded to the items, and the responses are summarized in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4

Understanding of the Tested Social Competence Skills (N=16)



As shown in Figure 4.4, the participants were far more knowledgeable of the six skills exposed to them. They were more knowledgeable of cooperation skills (46.2%), and had a good knowledge of communication skills (38.5%). Only 7.7% of the participants showed little knowledge of self-management skills. Generally, almost all participants showed better knowledge of the six social competence skills.

As stated earlier, the researcher was interested to find out sources of the teachers' knowledge of social competence skills. In the questionnaire, participants were

provided with three options; taught in the colleges (Teachers' Colleges), attended workshops or seminars, or during professional development. They were to select the correct responses by circling them. Here again, 16 out of 17 subject teachers responded to the item, and the findings are presented in Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5

Teachers' sources of social competence skills knowledge (N=16)

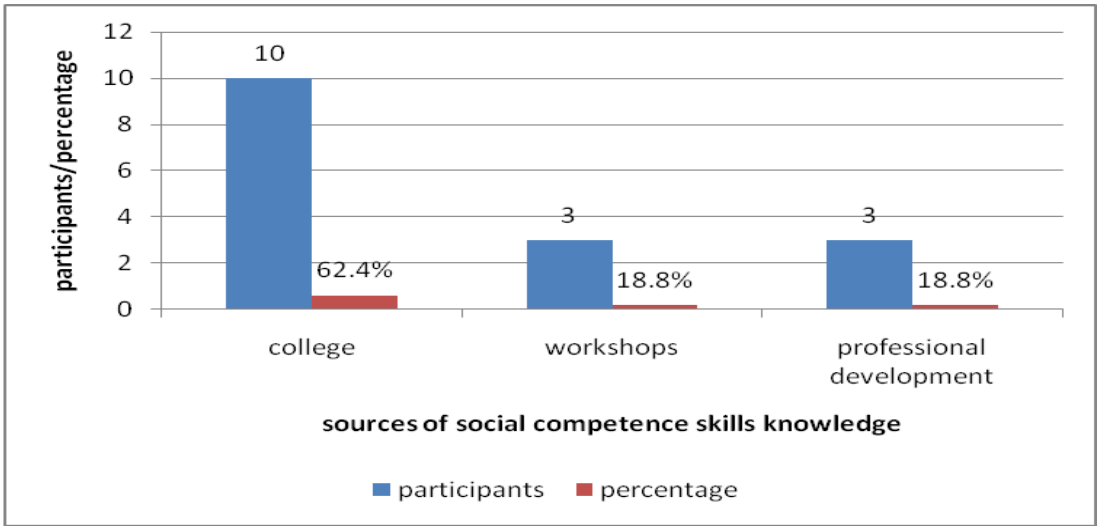


Figure 4.5 affirms that a good number of surveyed subject teachers acquired social competence skills in the colleges (62.5%). However, the Teacher Educator Curriculum and the reviewed literature do not vividly indicate that there are social competence skills teachings in teachers' colleges in Tanzania. The findings of the current study can be because the participants might have been more exposed to social relations in the colleges. In addition, there are some topics in the Teacher Educator Curriculum that direct the teachers on how to handle pupils in schools. For instance, some of the competencies in the Teacher Educator Curriculum to be achieved in the colleges include 'communicating effectively using English and Kiswahili languages', 'counseling students for their personal development, adjustment and learning', 'organizing students' activities', and 'demonstrating leadership skills'. These could have added to their social competence skills knowledge.

4.3.2 Knowledge of the impact of Social Competence Skills in Day-to-Day Life

The study further investigated the impact of social competence skills on the individuals' day-to-day life. Participants were taken through social competence skills mentioned earlier in this chapter (obedience, attentiveness, cooperation, assertiveness, confidence, and others), and were requested to relate them to the success in day-to-day life. Consequently, several views emerged; out of 17, 14 (82.4%) subject teachers reported that if one is not socially competent, it would be difficult for such an individual to live with others. Participants came up with several examples of individuals who are not cooperative; those who tend to isolate themselves from different events in the community. Those individuals were reported to experience hard times when they need support from their fellow members of the community.

A person with poor social competence skills was reported be difficult to cope with in the community. Participants mentioned events like wedding and burial ceremonies which were common in the study area, and others of the same. A person who is not cooperative in such events could also be isolated by the community members, if it happens that such a person has also an event or a problem, as there would not be other person to provide help or support. The head teacher from L primary school during the interview insisted that being socially competent is vital for one's success in general life, as persons are expected to behave well in the community to make their lives simple.

Out of 17 participants, 15 related the individual's success in life with the level of social competence skills possessed. They said that individuals who are drunkards for instance, normally go to the bar from morning to night, and consequently face difficulties in life as they are unproductive. This was referred to as the lack of discipline in life, or disregarding aspects that are crucial for individuals' survival. On the other hand, it was reported that if the individual is well mannered, even community members become fond of him/her.

The subject teacher from G primary school added that unselfish individuals demonstrate a good relationship between social competence skills and one's success in life; selfish persons do not interact well with their colleagues, and this makes it difficult for them to be successful in life. This is because human beings usually depend on each other, and one cannot live in isolation in the community. The participant gave example of people with multiple activities such as government employees who are farmers at the same time. These people need to outsource their agricultural activities to other people in the community. Thus, if a person is not interactive in the community (poor social competence skills), he/she would not get the outsourcing opportunity.

The findings generally reveal that subject teachers were knowledgeable of social competence skills for both teachers' occupational wellbeing and pupils' development. Teachers' knowledge of social competence skills is considered important, in this study, to master the social-emotional challenges inherent in their profession, and to build positive teacher-pupil relationships. Teachers can also act as the engine that drives social competence practices in schools and classrooms as their knowledge of social competence skills can influence their pupils.

4.3.3 Social Competence Skills and Education Performance

Before investigating the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition, in particular, the researcher sought the participants' (subject teachers) views on the importance of social competence skills in education as a whole. About 15 out of 17 subject teachers (88.2%) said that a socially competent person would excel in his/her studies in most cases. This was inquired during interviews where participants were asked their views on social competence skills and education. They mentioned several social competence skills that they considered as the prerequisites for better performance in studies. Figure 4.6 presents social competence skills that were considered as the determinants of a good performance in studies.

Figure 4.6

Social Competence Skills Determining Good Performance in Education

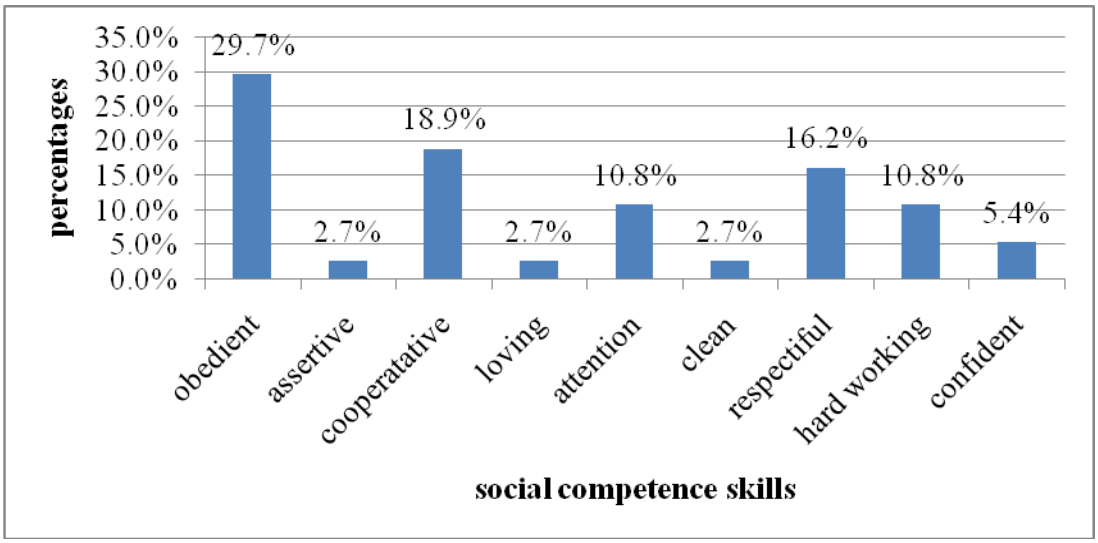


Figure 4.6 shows that "obedience to fellow pupils, teachers and the community members at large" was more mentioned (29.7%), followed by "cooperation" (18.9%), "respecting" (16.2%), as well as "attentiveness and hardworking" (10.8% each). These findings imply that obedient individuals performed better in academics than disobedient ones. Similarly, cooperative persons would be more interactive with peers and teachers on academic matters. This would in turn enhance their academic performance. Further, pupils who are attentive in classrooms follow teachers' instructions. One of the subject teachers insisted that an obedient pupil is in a good position to do well in the classroom than the disobedient one:

> Obedience and academics are twins. I mean a naughty pupil, is normally inattentive, the understanding of such a pupil in the classroom won't be good. Although some naughty pupils do better in their studies, their number is very limited. A large percentage of disobedient pupils perform poorly in academics because first of all, they don't attend lessons. When you teach, they usually stay away from the classroom, hiding in gullies (korongoni). While they hide in gullies, teachers proceed with teaching. So, because they disobey teachers, such pupils can't excel academically (Subject teacher, school R).

The implication here is that an obedient pupil trusts teachers' and elders' instructions. Hence, he/she follows and complies with instructions about reading activities

provided by teachers, attends classrooms regularly; which boosts his/her academic performance. According to the L primary school subject teachers, there is a relationship between obedience and academic performance in general. An obedient pupil is attentive both inside and outside classrooms. This makes it easier for him/her to understand what is being taught because he/she listens carefully. He/she is also in a good position to obey different instructions at home and school as well. Insisting on the relationship between social competence skills and academic performance, the participant further said that if a pupil is not obedient at home, she/he cannot obey teachers at school or his/her fellow pupils. Thus, it becomes difficult to teach such a pupil, as she/he may not take lessons seriously, something which may lead to his/her failure to follow lessons, and consequently fail exams in the end.

A pupil with good behaviour possesses various study skills such as study habits, good classroom behaviour, peer interaction, and the like, which in turn affect his or her academic performance. Such a pupil would also show positive attitudes towards learning, such as making a strong effort, a positive contribution in class, engaging in the learning, and completing homework to a high standard. Stressing on the importance of social competence skills to education, one participant provided an example of her pupils who lacked such skills:

> I have enough teaching experience from my long service in this profession. Thus, I can give you several examples of pupils who failed in schools and subsequently in life. For instance, I saw the relationship between being socially competent and good academic performance when I was working at school C, the school I worked at before coming here. I give an example of one pupil who annoyed me very much while I was there. It is unfortunate that he is now no more. The pupil was very mischievous, never listened to any teacher, didn't want to do any work provided in the classroom; and if you conner him to do something, a day would never end before he destroys something in or outside the classroom. That pupil failed his standard seven final exams and became a thief after his graduation. Lastly, he ended up being killed. This is just one example, I have many. Some pupils I taught in standard three to seven were good, they are now enjoying good lives; they are successful. So, there is a very close relationship between being socially competent and academic achievements (Subject teacher, school P).

The quote above represents the subject teachers' opinions that a pupil with bad behaviours cannot succeed academically. In order to be successful in schools, one has to behave well (listen attentively to the classroom instructions, interact positively with teachers and their peers, attend to the assigned tasks, and the like). It is also assumed that behaviour in school cannot be separated from academic achievement, safety, welfare and wellbeing, and all other aspects of learning. It is, however, hard to measure one's behaviours because what constitutes good behaviour for one person may represent poor behaviour to another.

The researcher also inquired through the questionnaire with participants (subject teachers) about what to emphasize in the classrooms between social competence and reading skills. Of the 17 surveyed participants, 15 were in favour of stressing both skills (social and academic skills) as they reported that the two complement each other. The remained one participant was in favour of social competence skills, arguing that social competence skills usually precede reading skills. The same question was asked in a different way to find out whether the responses were consistent or not. To achieve this, participants were asked whether social competence skills and reading skills were equally important to pupils. All 15 participants who were in favour of stressing both skills reported that the two sets of skills were equally important.

4.4 Teachers' Perceptions of the Role of Social Competence Skills on Reading Skills Acquisition in Pupils

The findings under this section reflect the third objective of the study. The data were collected using the interview guide administered to subject teachers and head teachers. Human beings are endowed with the abilities to hear, see, smell, touch, and taste; and they use these to sense the physical world and get aware of what happens around them. This process of sensing the physical world is completed by perception, which allows individuals to identify and recognize the presence of different kinds of stimuli, evaluate and assign meanings to them (Broadbent, 2013). A person's attitude towards a phenomenon encompasses his or her point of view about that phenomenon

(thought); how he or she feels about it (emotion), as well as the actions (e.g., behaviours) he or she engages in as a result of attitude towards that phenomenon.

4.4.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Social Competence Skills in Pupils

After exploring the class teachers' knowledge of the relationship between social competence skills, the importance of social competence skills in education and general life, the researcher inquired about the participants' perceptions of social competence skills in pupils. The 16 out of 17 subject teachers (94.1%) perceived social competence skills in pupils as the same as those found in adulthood. The traits were also similar to those of adults, though the situations differed. For instance, they perceived a socially competent pupil as punctual– a pupil who would go early to school, a pupil who would willingly engage in cleaning the school environment, a pupil who would attempt classroom assignments and make sure that they are marked, and a pupil who never misses classroom sessions unnecessarily.

It was, however, argued that some pupils tend to display good social competence skills in schools but not at their homes. A few participant teachers (seven out of 17 subject teachers) asserted that the socially competent pupil displays the same skills at home and school as well. Participants added that well-disciplined pupils, for instance, can be traced from their families, and notorious pupils in schools normally display the same behaviours in their homes. Sometimes the situation can be worse at home because some pupils tend to be calm while in schools as they fear teachers.

Interview with the F primary school subject teacher revealed that one way of identifying socially competent pupils was through the families they came from. This could be the way those pupils dress when coming to school, the way they respond to verbal interactions and instructions, and the like. Pupils who come from well-mannered families; families that protect and guide their children accordingly, such children are easily identified in and outside classrooms. They are different from those who come from the families that do not care about their children. The participant added that families differ in how they raise their children, as there are families in which parents do not care about their children. Children wake up in the morning,

dress on their own, sometimes go to school without eating, something which affects their state of learning. There is, therefore, a big discrepancy between pupils who come from these two types of families.

It was further reported that socially competent pupils are easy to teach and handle in and outside classrooms compared to their counterparts. Pupils with poor social competence skills, according to the participants, pose many challenges to teachers and fellow pupils. Pupils with poor social competence skills require teachers' attention throughout the teaching and learning process. This can lead to unfinished lessons, and in the end, it affects curriculum coverage.

The subject teachers considered pupils with poor social competence skills as those who are not cooperative, undisciplined, inattentive, disobedient, and other similar behaviours. The participants identified pupils raised by single parents as lacking social competence skills. This is due to the fact that single parents, particularly fathers, find it hard to manage time between raising the children and working to meet their basic needs. Thus, most of the time is dedicated to income-generating activities, than to raising the children. This contention is cemented by the excerpt that follows:

> Do you get me when I say that pupils come from families with hard life? Yeah, sometimes pupils come to school without eating anything at home. Sometimes they tell us that the parents are fighting all night, others come crying that their mothers have walked away as a result of the fights. It's hard to raise these pupils in such situations, that's why they learn anti-social behaviours! It's like they raise themselves, they can't be socially competent (Subject teacher, school F).

It was also found out that some pupils lived with grandparents, mostly grandmothers, in the study area; hence they lacked proper raising to make them socially competent. The subject teachers said that many youths in Manyara, especially girls had migrated to cities such as Arusha, Dodoma, and Dar es Salaam for petty businesses, or to work as barmaids. Participants further reported that because of hard lives in cities, they tended to take babies they begotten back to their poor parents to raise in rural areas.

4.4.2 Teachers' Perception of the Impacts of Social Competence Skills on Pupils' Reading Skills Acquisition

After inquiring about the influence of social competence skills on academics in general (4.3.3), the researcher investigated the teachers' perceptions of the link between pupils being socially competent and their ability to specifically read in Kiswahili. Participants were requested to provide their opinions on how they view pupils who are socially competent and their reading skills acquisition.

Generally, all the 17 subject teachers (100%) and 17 heads of schools (100%) reported that pupils with social competence skills (obedience, attentiveness, cooperation, assertiveness, confidence, communication, self-control, and others) acquired reading skills faster than their counterparts. Such pupils were reported to be easy to teach because they followed instructions properly, and would thus understand what is taught easily too. It was noted that some pupils with poor social competence skills also acquire reading skills easily. They referred to such pupils as exceptional. The following extract is concerning social competence skills and reading acquisition:

> …just by looking at them, you will notice that socially competent pupil to a greater extent master reading skills easily, because, first of all, they are not afraid of trying new things. You will find them sometimes mispronouncing written words, yet they persist until they pronounce the words correctly. Their ability to interact with confidence also favours them. They confidently face teachers whenever they face a challenge in learning to read. There are those whom we can refer to as anti-social, but who still can acquire reading skills fast. These to me are exceptional, and I remember in the college we learned about this group of pupils. But these are very few; most of the pupils with reading skills mastery are those who are socially competent (Head teacher, school K).

Additionally, socially competent pupils were reported to be eager to read different materials and would ask questions in the classroom; and even go to the staffroom in case they needed more clarifications. Teachers also reported enjoying interacting with such pupils because they easily comprehend to the classroom instructions compared to pupils with low social competence skills. This results in teachers being more supportive in developing their reading skills.

4.5 Social Competence Skills and Reading Skills Enhancing Practices by Teachers in the Schools

The fourth objective of the study inquired about the practices that are used by the teachers to enhance both reading and social competence skills. The findings for this objective were captured through the head teachers', subject teachers', and parents'/guardians' interview guide, documentary review and observational guide. The researcher inquired from the participants how they enhanced social and reading competencies. The aim was to find out whether there were specific practices for supporting pupils to acquire the two competencies. Several practices for enhancing both social competencies and reading skills in pupils were identified in this study.

4.5.1 Practices for Enhancing Reading Skills in Pupils

One of the key objectives of the study was to establish the practices used by teachers in enhancing both social competence skills and reading skills in pupils. As for the reading skills, several practices were put forward by the interviewees. One of the reported strategies by all the subject teachers (100%), and the most used practices was the participatory method *(mbinu shirikishi)*. Under this approach, teachers provided instructions on the board, flip chart, or just verbally on specific reading-related tasks of the day. Thereafter, pupils would be encouraged to participate in reading activities provided either by selecting them when they raise their hands, or by pointing at those that usually do not raise their hands, either because they do not understand or feel shy. The aim was to make sure that every pupil participated in reading tasks:

> I make them participate in my reading lessons. As I said earlier, the new curriculum itself forces teachers to employ participatory techniques in the teaching of reading skills. With this curriculum, nothing a pupil can do without reading, there must be something to read before engaging in other reading activities (Subject teacher, school N).

During classroom observation, it was also noted that pupils were encouraged to participate in lessons. Figures 4.7 and 4.8 depict the classroom observations scenes at P and N primary schools respectively.

Figure 4.7

A Teacher asking Pupils to Respond to Questions after Reading a Passage at P Primary School

Figure 4.8

A Teacher encouraging Pupils who do not Raise Hands to Participate in a Lesson at N Primary School

Apart from teachers making sure that many pupils participate in the lessons as possible, paired learning was observed in one school (D primary school) as a strategy used for instilling the reading skills. A teacher identified pupils who could fluently read, and paired them with those who had reading difficulties. When asked how that strategy works in relation to reading skills acquisition, the participant said that pairing two to four pupils (provided that one of them is a fluent reader) helped the rest in the group with reading difficulties. The fluent reader would always assist his/her fellow pupils with difficulty in reading by correcting them when they wrongly pronounce words, or fail to read a passage.

The subject teacher (D primary school) added that people in the community have different abilities; there are some who are better at doing certain things, and it is a normal practice. Thus, teachers in that school were working hard to make sure that

pupils could read effectively. In so doing, it was ideal to pair them according to their reading abilities so that they assist each other. It was however made clear that not only the reading strugglers who benefited from pairing exercise, even the good reader also benefited as the strugglers would be good in other aspects of social life.

Another strategy used by the teachers to develop reading skills in pupils was teaching during extra time. This was reported by 4 (23.5%) participants out of the 17 studied. The teaching started after the normal learning hours (usually 3:20 pm), and when the majority of pupils had gone for extra-curricular activities. The responsible teachers identify pupils with reading difficulties and take them through the lessons. The sessions used 40 minutes; from 3:20 to 4:00 pm, and in the morning before the lessons start. The researcher was eager to know the reasons for setting such extra time for teaching. The participants reported that extra time helped slow pupils to catch up with the reading skills they cannot acquire in normal classroom sessions. It also helped pupils who miss lessons due to different reasons. The following extract validates this contention:

> …as a teacher, for now, I look for extra time for my pupils. When I teach in the classroom, some slow pupils don't catch up easily. Therefore, I arrange for extra time to sit with them, usually from nine twenty (PM), and in the morning while others clean the school environment. These pupils are normally exempted from outside activities. I take them through reading lessons slowly; and with time, most of them get to read fluently. That's how we do it, it's like you saw me outside there with such pupils when you were coming (Subject teacher, school I).

Setting extra time for teachers to teach is not a normal practice in schools. This prompted the researcher to inquire from the teachers who practiced it as to whether it was their arrangement or the schools' arrangement. It was found that subject teachers were the ones responsible for the programmes, and were not accountable to anyone for not arranging extra times because they are not paid for that, *'... it falls under school arrangements, but in most cases, and the programme is under the mandate of the class and subject teachers. That's why sometimes we arrange them on Saturdays'*, added the subject teacher from I Primary School.

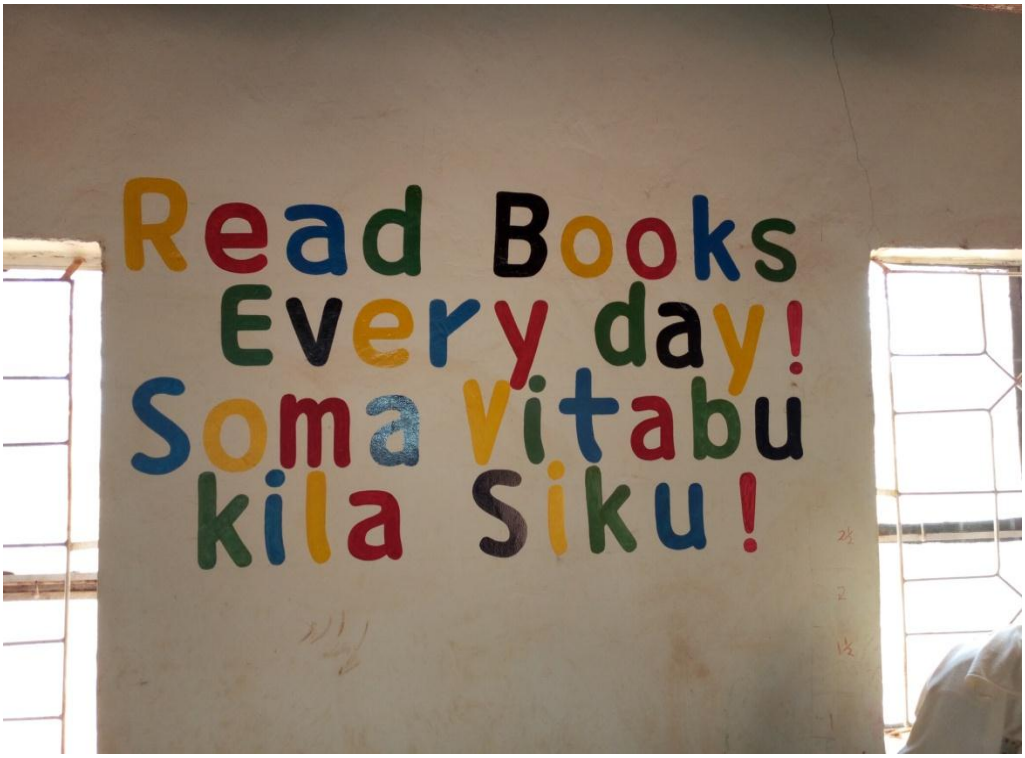
Other participants (11-64.7%) also reported working together with parents in making sure that pupils can read. They, however, reported a challenge in working with parents. They said that many parents did not turn up for meetings they would call to discuss issues such as setting extra time for slow pupils at schools. The reason for poor attendance to the meetings by parents was because of low awareness of the value of education to their children or because of the nature of their livelihood.

Interviews with parents/guardians also revealed a lack of cooperation between parents/guardians and teachers. However, the reason was not low educational awareness; rather, it was a shortage of time. Again, they casted their blames on the daily life hustles. *'...I know that education is important to my child, and my position is also important in making sure that she studies well. Yes, I get several calls from the school, but I can't manage to attend*, said the parent from school C. Therefore, all the studied parents/guardians (10) were against the notion that they had low awareness of academic matters; it was just shortage of time that made them attend less to the calls by the teachers to discuss the children's educational progress.

Another strategy employed was the use of libraries. Due to infrastructural challenges, particularly buildings, only two schools out of the 17 studied had libraries. For the schools with libraries, pupils could go and practice reading storybooks in the libraries. One of such schools with good libraries was the A Primary School. The school had a well-furnished library painted with reading slogans as depicted in Figure 4.9.

Figure 4.9

A Wall Painting Encouraging Pupils to Read Books at A Primary School



The researcher had an opportunity to observe pupils interacting in the library with minimal supervision from their class leaders who are fellow pupils. The library had several books for different ages. Some of the books were '*Tatu na Bata', 'Moto', Tembo na Mkonga Wake', Nyoka Mkubwa*' from Tanzania Institute of Education, and storybooks from other authors such as '*Mfalme Kulakula*' by John Wisse, '*Sisi ni Marafiki*' by Severine Malendeja, and '*Kisa cha Jogoo na Mbwa'* by Helena Mwenda. The researcher noted that all classes (standard one to seven) would go to the library and read at different times (see Figure 4.10 and 11). There was a fixed timetable (in both schools) for pupils in their particular classes to attend libraries. However, there was no a system for library users to register. Pupils just got in the libraries and started interacting with books. Some books acted as guides for teaching pupils to read (Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.10

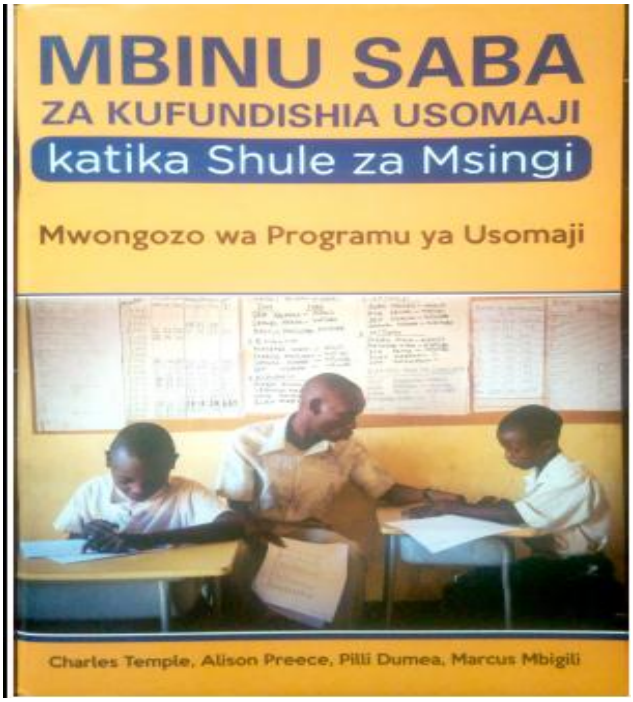
Standard Four Pupils Reading Storybooks in the Library at A primary School

Figure 4.11

Some of the Books in the Library at A Primary School

Figure 4.12

Teachers' Teaching Guide



The use of libraries was considered by subject teachers from both schools to be an effective way of developing reading skills in pupils. For instance, at A primary school, the school allotted 40 minutes in its timetable for library reading sessions for each standard. In some sessions, pupils would get into the library under the guidance of subject teachers and class leaders. They would next sit in groups of four to six pupils. One pupil would then pick a storybook of their interest and read it aloud before other members of the group. After each story, the story reader would ask a few questions to the group members to test whether they were following the story. If the story has some questions at the end, the reader would use the same questions instead of forming their questions. Pupils were not allowed to borrow books, at A Primary School. The head teacher said that they did not allow pupils to borrow books because they were careless. The head teacher admitted that storybooks were of great importance for enhancing pupils' reading abilities.

The same testimony was also given at G Primary School – which also had a library (Figure 4.13a & b). The head teacher of G Primary School reported that the school

had no enough teachers to teach the 3Rs in lower classes. Therefore, the library had been playing a significant role in developing reading skills in pupils. He even equated the library with the teacher:

> I think you know the acute shortage of qualified teachers for lower-classes in this country. We also experience the same here. We have only one teacher for the lower classes. But I thank the library; pupils enjoy being in the library than in the classroom, and their interaction with books is promising. To me, it's like I have two teachers, really (Head teacher, school G).

Figure 4.13 (a and b)

The Library at G Primary School

The importance of libraries in developing reading skills in pupils was even acknowledged by the participants from the schools with no libraries. The participants from those schools showed interest and admired the schools with libraries, insisting that teaching to read in those schools was made easier by the libraries with good books. This contention was stressed by the N Primary School head teacher who said that schools with libraries were doing much better in developing pupils' reading skills.

Apart from grouping pupils into reading groups at the school, at C Primary School, there was a programme pupils were grouped in relation to where they lived, neighbourhood; using the same idea of mixing those who are better in reading and other subjects, and those who were struggling to read. If a group is located near the teacher's house, the members of the group would then meet at the teacher's house for supervision; if not, one of the pupils becomes the leader. Meeting at the teachers' houses assisted pupils in case they encountered difficulties during the reading. Those without teachers would report their challenges to the teachers to get a solution on the following day. This only was practiced at C Primary School for three days a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday).

The researcher was convinced that the programme was fruitful because for more than the past seven years, according to the head teacher, the school had been leading regionally and district wise and in inter-school performances. The programme contributed to the school's general academic performance. Findings from documentary review showed that for the past five years (2015-2019) the school has been performing well (ranking the first) in the district out of 25 public primary schools.

However, the researcher inquired more on how the teachers were handled, as the programme looked like an additional load to the teachers. The head teacher (from C primary school) made it clear that they just requested teachers to volunteer because hosting pupils did not mean that one would be with them throughout the day, as in the classroom. Rather, the host is often on her/his duties until she/he is requested to solve a difficulty with the pupils' group leaders. In addition, the head teacher reported that she would occasionally visit such groups and see how they progress. The head teacher added that that programme was the school initiative; neither the council nor the government's directives. This is because the school wanted to continue being the best in the council, in terms of academic performance. It was found in the study area that parents and guardians were not cooperative when it comes to academic related activities. For this programme specifically, parents and

guardians were reported to allow their children to participate, as it costed them nothing; as the teachers voluntarily managed the programme.

In addition, 16 (94.1%) of the interviewed subject teachers and all heads of schools (100%) held that feeding programmes would indirectly greatly add to the mentioned practices for developing reading skills in pupils. School feeding programmes make schools attractive to pupils considering that it was reported that a good number of pupils in the study area miss lessons because of lack of food at home. Some would even go to work in neighbourhoods to secure food. School feeding programmes would also make pupils attentive in classrooms, and follow what is instructed to them by the teachers. Even in the schools with libraries, it was reported that a well-fed pupil would concentrate on reading than a poorly fed pupil.

Findings from school committees' reports of eleven schools out of the 17 surveyed showed that there were arrangements for school feeding programmes in those schools. The arrangements were that parents/guardians were to contribute cereals such as maize and beans to be stored in schools. The amount differed from school to school; ranging from 20 kilograms to 40 per term for maize and ten to fifteen kilograms for beans. There were also cash contributions for buying salt, sugar, and cooking oil. There were options in some schools that parents/guardians could contribute these commodities (salt, sugar, and cooking oil) instead of providing the cash. However, the findings show that the implementation was not to the expectations. There were only two schools out of the 17 studied schools with feeding programme.

Lastly, in a few schools (three), participants reported talking to pupils separately (counselling) on how they could improve their reading abilities. These were pupils who according to the participants had special cases, and many of them were those raised by single parents, particularly fathers. Some were pupils from relatively well-off families who had no reason for not mastering reading skills. Such pupils were subjected to counselling sessions by their class and subject teachers.

4.5.2 Practices used for Enhancing Social Competence Skills in Pupils

Regarding social competence skills, the findings revealed that practices for developing these skills in the surveyed schools were embedded in the practices for developing reading skills. There was no a standalone strategy that focused solely on developing social competence skills. Some teachers could not even recognize that the techniques they used when enhancing the reading skills were also enhancing social competence skills at the same time. Therefore, the researcher inquired how the following social competence skills were nurtured in classrooms:

Communication skills: being able to communicate effectively is perhaps the most important of all life skills. All 17 of the interviewed subject teachers (100%) admitted that communications skills are central to the development of social competence skills. A pupil who can effectively communicate with adults and peers is socially competent. The head teacher from R primary school made it clear that the current curriculum for lower classes has a topic on facilitating pupils' communications skills. According to him, communication is a topic to be taught rather than being attached to other topics; so, it starts from the standard one, *'…lets first go to the curriculum. In standard one there is a topic on communication skills where pupils are given time to introduce themselves before their colleagues; their names, fathers' and mothers' names, as well as other simple expressions'*.

One of the ways employed by the teachers to enhance communication skills was to group pupils. This information was captured from the subject teachers' interviews, as well as from classroom observations. Pupils were usually sat in groups of four to ten groups, depending on the number of pupils in a classroom. The groups were primarily meant to facilitate communication during the lessons. A group leader would be elected to ensure that everyone participates in the assigned activity. If an assignment required a presentation, the group leader would select any member randomly to present on behalf of other members. In one of the observed lessons at P Primary School, the subject teacher assigned one group to read a passage from the Standard Four Kiswahili textbook titled 'children's education rights', '*Haki ya elimu kwa mtoto'*. One group member was assigned to read the story aloud. At the end of the story, each member of the group was required to state a moral lesson emanating

from the story. Since the groups in many (14 out 17) surveyed schools were permanent, the teacher and the group leaders made sure that every group member gets an opportunity to present at different sessions.

The interview with the head teacher from P primary school revealed that grouping methods was insisted for all teaching and learning activities, not only in the reading lessons. The strategy was preferred due to the fact that it is easy to administer assignment in groups for teachers, and it was easier for the pupils to do the assignments in groups. In doing assignments, pupils must communicate with each other, and in so doing they develop communication skills. In addition, if the assignment involved a presentation, all members of the group had to contribute to the content of the presentation, and presenters were to change from time to time. Further inquiry revealed that the group activities did not end in classrooms only. When the pupils were out for other activities, arrangements were made for them to work in groups, like cleaning the school environments. Many residents in the study were reported to be Muslim where females and males rarely interact in some events. Therefore, to make the groups work better, girls and boys were mixed for such assignments, and the technique was reported to show some positive aspects.

Like in the development of reading skills where pupils with good reading ability were paired with those with poor reading skills, it was also observed under social competence skills development that pupils who were good in communication skills were paired with those who cannot communicate effectively. According to the interviewees, pupils with good communication skills are those with positive use of body language, are confident when communicating, usually think before communicating, do not interrupt others, listen attentively, keep time in giving a speech, and so forth. This approach (pairing) was reported to be effective especially in the absence of teachers in classrooms, as pupils would be free to interact, as they learn other subjects.

Another approach for developing communication skills reported by a few participants (four) was teachers' closeness to pupils. The approach was not easy to

observe, but the information was gathered during interviews with the subject teachers. The participants reported that there were pupils whom they (teachers) had to create a friendly atmosphere for them to communicate. It was further reported that some pupils feared teachers while others were shy, which made them silent in the classrooms. To help such pupils, teachers would make friends with them to make them relaxed and be able to interact. This also was reported to develop the pupils' self-esteem to the extent that even if they are being punished by the teachers for misbehaving, they do not feel as if they are being ill-treated:

> For those who are not good communicators, we keep them close to us; we make them our friends, and they become our friends. We build their capacity so that they stop fearing teachers who are teaching them in classrooms. I can determine that a certain pupil is intelligent, but doesn't respond to my questions because of fear, or shyness (Head teacher, school N).

There were also times that teachers sit with all pupils in a school (school baraza), and talk with them on different matters regarding how to survive at school, and in the community in general. The school baraza (school council) was found in all the surveyed schools. This is a one-day event at the end or the beginning of a term (according to the school timetable) where the school management sits with pupils and shares several affairs ranging from academic to disciplinary issues. It was found from the school baraza reports that pupils usually get guidance on how to live both academic and social lives smoothly; inside and outside school environments. The guidance included how to communicate effectively with both peers and adults. For those who meet at the end of the term, the baraza usually reflects on what transpired during the completed term. Pupils who did better in several aspects, including good relationship with others (which implies good communication), are congratulated and others are encouraged to improve. For those who meet at the start of the term, the baraza works as a strategic meeting; putting forward plans and approaches that guide how to go about during the term. Be it at the end or the beginning of the term, issues related to good conduct within and outside school environments are always insisted to the pupils.

***Cooperation**:* this was one of the studied social competence skills in pupils in the study area. Several approaches were employed by the teachers to enhance cooperative skills in pupils. One of the approaches was to sit their pupils in groups. Apart from the teachers' interviews, it was also observed that pupils were sat in groups and given several activities where they would work together. Such activities were such as reading passages and responding to the after passage questions. According to the participants, this approach would improve their level of cooperative skills which would, in turn, foster their reading skills. Participants added that an isolated pupil cannot know whether s/he can read or not. See figure number 4.14.

Figure 4.14

Pupils Sitting in Working Groups of Four Pupils to encourage Cooperation Skills

Unlike groupings in the development of communication skills which seemed to be permanent, in 10 out of 17 studied schools, the grouping for cooperative skills was activity-oriented, in the sense that pupils were randomly sat in groups whenever there was an activity provided by the teachers in the classrooms. According to the

participants, this built the pupils' capacity to interact with different fellows, not only friends. The following excerpt presents the comments concerning cooperative skill enhancement technique:

> … about cooperative skills, I encourage teachers to mix pupils randomly when forming workgroups. Our intention to do so is to facilitate the learning, but after listening to your explanations, I have come to realize that this is also an effective way of promoting cooperative skills. Some pupils don't like to mingle with others; these are the ones we focus on the most. After working in groups, I point to those who keep themselves isolated to present group works; this motivates them to participate fully in doing group assignments. But if you ignore them, saying that "aaaah these are not interactive let them remain isolated", they will just remain so all the time, and at the end, they won't be able to learn or read as required (Head teacher, school I).

The participants also reported that school extra-curricular activities would also be carried in groups which enhanced cooperation. The activities included gardening, cleaning the school surroundings, and playing. Similarly, the pupils would conduct activities suggested in vocational skills subject (such as good grooming, cooking, entrepreneurship and art activities) in groups. Therefore, the participants believed that such skills were also practiced at home after school hours.

The researcher also observed a team-teaching arrangement at P Primary School. Though the aim is to teach effectively, the approach also modelled cooperation to the pupils. Two to three teachers would simultaneously teach in one classroom the same lesson. Interview with the subject teachers revealed that team teaching was practiced in the classrooms with big number of pupils (100) where monitoring pupils required the cooperation of more than one teacher. This necessitated teaching in a team to make sure that at least each pupil participates in the given activity. Sometimes teachers were assisted by the pupil group leaders whom who were instructed to make sure that every pupil participated in a given assignment. In this way, many pupils learnt cooperative skills, and team teaching was reported to be helpful in ensuring that many pupils participated in classroom activities.

There were also ***subject clubs*** for all the subjects at P, G, and L primary schools. The clubs were conducted after class hours once per week, and each club focused on a particular subject chosen by the club members and club leaders. The clubs were being supervised by pupils' club leaders as well as subject teachers. Clubs were also arranged according to pupils' ages so that members can receive content that matches their level. Standard three and four, five and six, were grouped, but standard seven pupils were usually not mixed with other classes because it is an examinations class. In the clubs, the selection of subjects was left to the pupils and their club leaders.

Clubs' arrangements in L Primary School were instigated by external forces. Clubs were formed as a result of the Inclusive School-Based In-Service Teachers Training (SITT) programme which prepared training for teachers in the Northern Zone on how to form and run subject clubs. The first training was conducted at Marangu Teachers' College (Moshi Rural District-Kilimanjaro Region), and the second was in Arusha Technical College in the Arusha region. Teachers were thus, instructed to form subject clubs so that pupils can discuss different subjects of their choice. Alongside subject matters, clubs promoted a sense of cooperation in pupils and teachers.

Clubs activities were documented by the school academic teachers through subject teachers. The studied reports showed that pupils had a lot of activities in the clubs. Such activities ranged from reading (for lower classes-standard and two), doing assignments for the selected subjects (mostly maths), debates, and inter-school subject competitions. It was found from the reports that pupils who performed well in the clubs' activities were given presents like exercise books, pens, and certificates.

Both school heads and subject teachers also reported on counselling pupils who tended to isolate themselves from peers. Some pupils were found to experience hardship in their homes that made them spend most of their time alone, scrutinizing the home situations. Such situations were mainly parental conflicts, lack of food, and single parenting that resulted from parental conflicts. After analyzing the situations

that the pupils went through, the teacher would talk to them in form of counselling, involved them closely in different activities so that they can integrate with others.

In handling such pupils, the head teacher from R primary school portrayed some aspects to be considered. First is to know why the pupil was not cooperating with others; it could be because of his/her background, or she/he might have faced difficulties at the family level, which might make them feel stigmatized. Their peers may devote their time to keep close to them, but they could not see that. In such situations, teachers had created friendship with them. Though they might not tell what they faced on the same day, after two or three days, or even a week, most pupils were reported to disclose what faced them. Pupils reported family-related problems the most, and occasionally, teachers called their parents or guardians for a talk and see how the situations could be resolved.

At N Primary School, a subject teacher said that he would play with such pupils alongside other pupils, apart from talking to them. During playtime, she would interact and with time they would become friends, which make pupils open up, and finally develop cooperative skills.

Engagement: engagement in this study refers to the pupil's ability to engage others in his/her affairs. Some pupils do not want to involve others in what they are doing. This displays a lack of engagement skills because doing things on one's own does not provide an opportunity for the pupil to interact with, and learn from others. Asked on how they promote engagement skills in pupils, participants showed a little confusion between cooperation and engagement. A large number of practices they mentioned were those related to developing cooperative skills, such as group work. Thus, the pupils' engagement capacity, in the context of this study, was relatively difficult to be explained by teachers. One of the participants, however, equated lack of engagement skills in pupils with selfishness. She said:

> …what I see is that if someone has something in his or her mind, and can't share it with others; that's selfishness. So, what I do in my class is to encourage them to get into discussions, insisting that whoever has an idea has to share it during discussions. I also tell them to be free to share as no one would laugh at them when they go wrong. I tell them it is what learning requires. I tell them that if they want to learn successfully, they have to be open and share what they have. In so doing, I believe that those who don't like to engage others will gradually develop such behaviour (Subject teacher, L).

After the researcher's explanations on the meaning of 'engagement' in this study, participants from three primary schools (C, E and G) admitted that there were such pupils with poor engagement skills. They seem to have some knowledge, but sharing with others is problematic. So teachers were encouraging them to be vocal and feel free to air out whatever they had.

Self-management: self-management skills in this study mean pupils' abilities to manage their thoughts and feelings. If a pupil has strong self-management skills, s/he can set goals independently and take the initiative to achieve them. Asked on how they build capacity for self-management skills in pupils, participants reported several practices. A few participants believed that sitting in classrooms with pupils throughout the day was a good way of developing self-management skills with minimum supervision. According to this group, young pupils needed to be close to their caregivers for instructions on how to manage themselves, and that was the reason for them spending most of the school time with pupils in classrooms.

The researcher observed in two classrooms, one in F Primary School, and the other in R Primary School, where class teachers had their working tables in the classrooms. Teachers used to stay in the classes, doing their routine activities, when there were no lessons. Sitting in the classrooms was believed by the participants to enable pupils develop self-management skills. With time, pupils could manage themselves in the absence of teachers. This was primarily meant to make pupils concentrate on the lesson; yet, it was reported to facilitate self-management skills. The researcher interviewed the subject teacher from F Primary School to get her views on that practice. The following quote demonstrates her opinions:

> ….to pupils is not easy, even if you give them an exercise and leave, they will just end up making noise. Therefore, I think for the nature of our pupils, there must be someone with them to nurture self-management skills, by guiding them on how to behave well. We try to use monitors and monitress to control their peers, but it doesn't work to our expectations. For upper classes, maybe from standard five to seven, self-management skills are higher than in the lower classes, those up there can manage themselves. Sometimes even if you are in the classroom, for these lower classes, you find them not settled. So, we are sometimes forced to be a little harsh to them to contain the situation (Subject teacher, school F).

On the other hand, three out of 17 subject teachers disagreed that staying with pupils in classrooms can enhance their self-management skills. At the classroom level, these participants suggested that there was no need for teachers to sit in classrooms. They rather recommended giving pupils instructions, and leave them to practice the skills. It was reported by the subject teacher at H primary school that it was not good for two or more teachers to sit in one class, claiming that they are managing classes. This, according to the participant, limited pupils to develop other skills such as staying silent in the absence of teachers. It was reported to be important to give pupils space for them to practice teachers' instructions. The participant added that teachers' presence in the classrooms did not teach pupils important skills such as managing time, punctuality, and the like. Teachers need to monitor pupils' behaviours, but not by sitting in classrooms.

Fourteen out of seventeen studied schools used pupil-leaders to manage their fellow pupils. Teachers from these schools claimed that if fellow pupils are given authority to lead others, such leaders would be in a position to ensure that their peers can take control of their actions. According to the participants who went for this option, pupils must first be made to be obedient to their leaders. Then, teachers must be very supportive to the student-leaders. In so doing, pupils would not discriminate orders and instructions between their fellow leaders and the teachers. This strategy seemed to be working in schools that experienced shortage of teachers, thus, student-leaders played the classroom monitoring role.

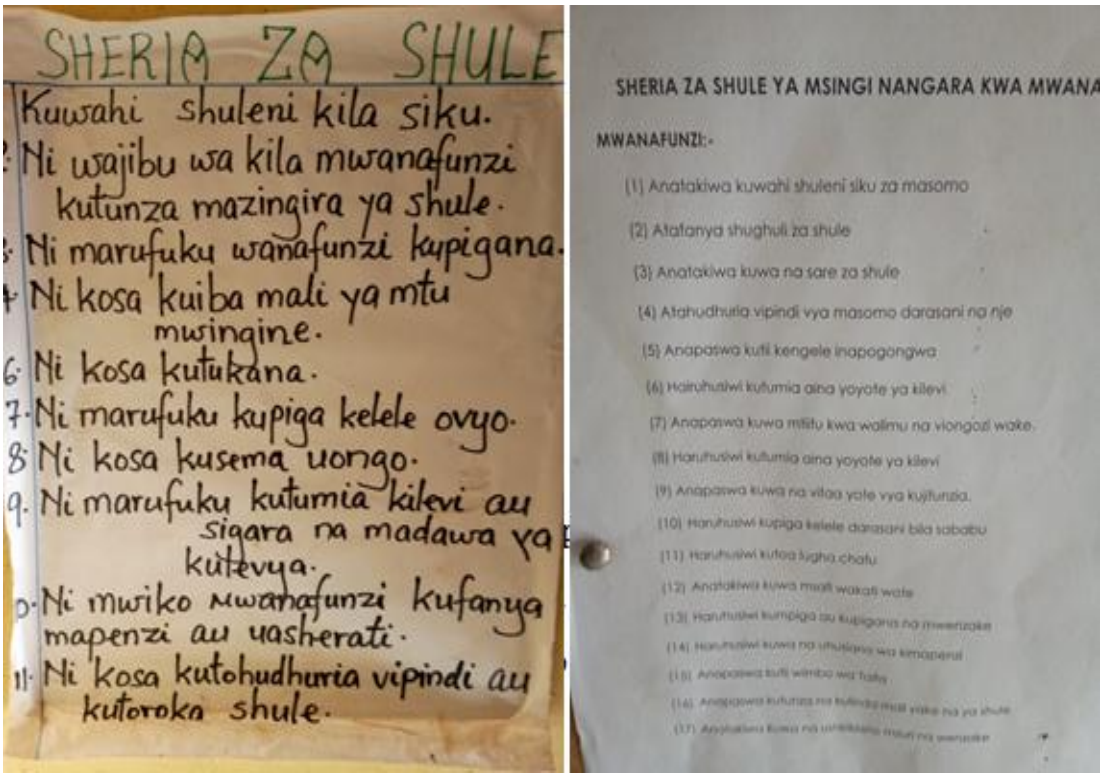
It was a matter of building the pupil-leaders' capacity in leadership through proper instructions, and make follow-ups regularly. Gradually, both pupil-leaders and other pupils would comply with the situations. This was vividly found at I primary school as the head teacher admitted shortage of teachers. As fewer teachers as they were, teachers could not be everywhere where they were required to play their roles. Thus, pupils had to get used to be guided, sometimes, by their fellow pupils in some activities such as extra curricula activities, and maintaining order in classrooms. The experience from school I showed that if this approach is well structured, pupils learn to do things on their own, or with minimum supervision.

In all the studied schools, motivation was employed as a strategy to enhance self-management skills in pupils. Motivations were given to pupils who had finished different assigned tasks on time, those who had observed school routines, those who had never missed lessons unnecessarily, those who had performed better academically, and those who were well disciplined. The motivations ranged from clapping hands to the targeted pupils, providing gifts of exercise books and pens, as well as issuing certificates of recognition. To be motivated, pupils were insisted to follow what was being instructed by their teachers. In some cases, parents or guardians worked together with teachers to make sure that their children executed their routines with minimum supervision. These practices, underway, helped pupils develop self-management skills.

In addition to all the mentioned practices that were used to develop self-management skills in pupils in the study area, there were rules or school by-laws in all the schools visited. The school by-laws traditionally are meant to shape the pupils' behaviour and make them adhere to the rules that govern the school. The content of the by-laws in most cases was the same among the surveyed schools; as portrayed in the following Figures (4.15& 4.16).

Figure 4.15 and 16

By-Laws in School I and E Respectively



According to the E primary school head teacher, the purpose of the by-laws or school procedures is to establish the organization of the school and set forth the responsibilities of the pupils while at school. The by-laws are meant to ensure the continuous improvement of pupils socially and academically through established processes. The head teacher went on to say:

> …these are educational efforts by the school to instil the spirit of cooperation between pupils and teachers to improve their achievement and performance. The bylaws also provide support for the pupils and involve them in the school decision-making, shaping them on education, moral and social issues. The bylaws endeavour to bring pupils together with teachers, to create a better understanding of and mutual respect for each other, and share ideas for continuous school improvement (Head teacher, school E).

Assertion: concerning the current study, assertion is the pupil's level of confidence in performing his/her daily routines. Literature suggests that assertion increases the pupil's ability to read and master other academic areas. Teachers were asked how

they helped pupils to develop assertion skills in their teaching. It was revealed that for pupils to be confident at school, efforts have to be made to make them fearless to teachers and peers. In the four surveyed schools in Babati town (2partly urban and 2partly semi-urban), participants reported that teachers were supposed to be close to pupils, create a friendly environment so that pupils cannot fear them. It was also reported that if a pupil likes a teacher, she/he will obviously like the teacher's subject too, hence the enhancement of her/his assertion skills. Further findings showed that creating a friendly environment helped to develop pupils' confidence to interact with teachers and fellow pupils in and outside classrooms. It however, becomes easier for such pupils to try out things that they had never tried before, such as reading before others, answering questions fearlessly, and even ask questions.

Subject teachers also said that they would sometimes engage the pupils by giving them different tasks in their lessons to raise the level of confidence. In such pupils, teachers keep pointing them to respond during their lessons. Selecting the fearful pupils to get involved in several learning activities frequently was reported to help make them more confident, and increase their level of interaction.

Figure 4.17

The Subject Teacher from N Primary School engaging a Pupil in a Time telling Activity

The following quote from N Primary School subject teacher substantiates the engagement of pupils in the learning activities to boost their levels of confidence:

> … they don't raise their hands when you ask the class to do something. We just point them straight, "Ruth, stand up and respond to this question". They respond correctly in most cases, but if you don't do that, they will keep quiet. This is not only for those that we as teachers think they know, even those whom we know can't get it right, we make them stand and try. We encourage them by telling them that doing mistakes is a component of learning. Hence, they should not hesitate to try out new things. When they work in groups, I usually select them to be group leaders; giving them group leadership helps them much, for it makes them think, "aaah, so the teacher has realized that I can be a leader eeeeh". So, a combination of these ways can help them to be confident (Subject teacher, school N).

Self-control: in this study, self-control is the thinking skill that helps pupils learn to control their feelings and emotions to make good decisions, while aiding in reducing impulsive actions and dealing effectively with frustration. For example, a pupil can use self-control skills when s/he is teased by peers. Self-control skills in this study were enhanced through directives/guidance that was given to the pupils, mainly by the discipline teachers. In other schools, the directives would be given by head teachers, class teachers, and discipline masters (C Primary School, for instance). The morning parade was used as a forum for teachers to talk to pupils before they got into classrooms. The content of the guidance insisted more on good conduct; that pupils were required to care for each other, avoid conflicts, avoid theft, avoid insults, and the related. According to the school C head teacher, the morning parade was preferred because it was the beginning of the day, and the pupils' minds were still fresh to listen to the directives.

This was also evident at school P where the head teacher revealed practising the division of labour among teachers. There was a teacher who dealt with girls' affairs, a teacher who dealt with boys' affairs; there was a game and sports teacher, as well as a discipline master. For the case of self-control skills, the discipline master used the two parades; morning and evening, to talk about discipline matters. If there were notorious pupils, the discipline master, might, with the help of the class teacher, sit with the pupils and talk with them to see how they could rectify the situations. If it

reaches a point where there were no changes, parents or guardians were involved. There were classes that teachers inquired parents/guardians to intervene because some behaviours are nurtured from home. So, trying to stop them at school alone was difficult.

There were points where teachers had to revert to punishments to enforce their directives. The participants said in the interview that there were pupils who disobeyed teachers' directives. For instance, they fight, they steal their fellows' properties, they bully and use abusive language, regardless of being told that such acts are immoral and were not allowed in schools. Participants were further aware that corporal punishments are restricted to the pupils; that only head teachers were allowed to administer corporal punishments to the pupils. So, other teachers induced lighter punishments like clearing surroundings, watering flowers, and other activities, as reported by one of the teachers:

> … for sure, this sometimes happens, where a pupil breaches school regulations regularly. When that happens, normally such a pupil is reported to teachers by fellow pupils, and teachers may give him/her some light punishments like sweeping the classroom. While administering the punishment, we, at the same time talk to them to help them to avoid the same mistake in the future. We tell them the consequences of their actions. So, every pupil monitors others; we usually tell them to report any misconduct displayed within the school and outside the school environment (Subject teacher, C).

In the circumstances where situations become worse, such pupils would be referred to head teachers for corporal punishment. Sometimes parents or guardians would be informed of their pupils' behaviour and required to work on them to supplement what is being done in schools. The schools kept emphasizing good conduct in pupils by displaying several regulations on notice boards (refer to figures 4:13 & 4:14). The participants further reported that they build pupils' capacity not to react against anything wrong done to them by anyone, instead, they should report such acts to the teachers or parents if the act is done outside the school compounds.

Findings from school discipline teachers' reports showed that there were disciplinary cases. Disciplinary cases were almost similar in all the schools visited. The most

documented cases where fighting, especially for boys, theft, and insults. Further review showed that there were several disciplinary measures taken against the reported cases. These were suspensions; though minimally documented. The commonly used measures were corporal punishments and alternative punishments like gardening, clearing the school environments, and other physical measures like push-ups.

4.6 The Association between Social Competence Skills and Reading Skills Acquisition

The core objective of the current study was to investigate the relationship between social competent skills and reading skills acquisition in pupils in the Tanzanian context. This is the fifth objective which was addressed through the reading skills tool which was administered to pupils and the social competence assessment skills tool which was filled in by the class teachers for pupils. The reviewed studies mainly from Western countries assert that the development of early social competence skills is important for effective classroom participation, and early reading skills acquisition in pupils. Studies have suggested that social competence skills are crucial for classroom learning (Arnold, Kupersmidt, Voegler-Lee, & Marshall, 2012; Halle, Hair, Wandner, & Chien, 2012), and provide a groundwork for academic accomplishment during middle childhood; a significant developmental period spanning from 6 to 11 years (Del Giudice, 2014; Speece et al., 2010).

Findings from interviews with teachers showed a positive relationship between social competence skills and acquisition of reading skills. That is a qualitative side of the study; exploring the perceptions of the participants concerning the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in primary school pupils. The researcher was eager to inquire the same from pupils themselves, through a different approach; using questionnaires. The intention was to complement the findings from interviews.

4.6.1 Level of Mastery of Reading of Skills by Standard Four Pupils

Before embarking on assessing the relationship between the two variables in the visited schools, the researcher used the Basic Education Curriculum Standard III-VI (MoESTVT, 2016) as a benchmark to the reading level attained by pupils. It is insisted in the curriculum that standard four pupils are supposed to achieve the following main competencies in reading; communicate in different contexts, comprehend and understand a written text or sounds, and use vocabulary in different contexts. The concept of 'reading' was to be defined by the participants (subject teachers) to be able to tell the reading mastery level of pupils in the respective classes.

The participants defined reading skills as the ability to understand written texts; when students comprehend or understand written text, and combine their understanding with prior knowledge. Reading skills enable a pupil to interact and gain meaning from a piece of written information. In addition, the participants said that the development of reading skills at the early age of schooling was much better for academic success of pupils. The subject teacher from school C for instance said that when pupils comprehend or understand written texts, and combine their understanding with their prior knowledge, they can perform the three reading skills well: identifying simple facts presented in the written text, making judgments about the written text's content, and connecting the text to other written text's content.

The head teacher of the N Primary School said that the development of reading skills was important for pupils' academic achievement, as a sheer volume of evidence had demonstrated a link between competence in reading and overall school achievement. In addition, they said that reading is a key to future success both in school and in life. That, parents and teachers can support pupils to read in their leisure time at every age because in doing so, they equip them with the necessary skills to succeed later in life. Several reading skills that enable pupils to become proficient readers were identified by the participants such as decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

However, developing reading skills was said to be a complex process that requires time and practice to develop fully, but inevitably reaps great rewards. Participants

added that it is no secret that reading for meaning is the ultimate goal of learning to read. However, encouraging pupils to talk about what they read is a great way to monitor how much they understand and improve their reading skills.

In relation to the level of attainment of reading skills, most of the surveyed schools (about 70%) showed that more than 80 percent of standard four pupils' ability to read was in line with the curriculum. The introduction of the new curriculum was praised by the participants; that is concentrating with the 3Rs only at lower levels helped the pupils acquire reading skills faster and easier, compared to the previous curriculum. This fact was made clear by the participant who said:

> … their level of reading is good, especially those who started with the new curriculum; they had a good foundation in reading. In standards one and two, they solely dealt with the 3Rs only. So, this laid down a good foundation for them to be able to read. But also, books that followed the new curriculum require pupils to read more. There is no question in those books that a pupil will attempt without reading a passage. Many aspects are associated with reading; "read the following passage and then explain….." So, the emphasis is on reading, that's why I'm saying most of these pupils can read well. It's almost eighty-five percent (Subject teacher, school N).

Participants from a few schools (six out 17 schools) reported that the mastery of reading skills was at an average level compared to the curriculum's need. There were pupils in standard four that were unable to read fluently, and few could not read at all. At school C for instance, the subject teacher said the reading performance was average because she had come to realize that some pupils in her class could not read fluently. Pupils were struggling to read, while at that level, they were not supposed to fail to read.

Further findings from F Primary School showed that girls were ahead of boys in reading skills acquisition. This was attributed to boys' high involvement in play and games than girls. Girls did not only outshine boys in reading, but also writing skills; girls had better handwriting than boys. They (girls) were also neater in their exercise books than boys.

4.6.2 Social Competence Skills and Reading Skills Acquisition

As stated earlier, there was a need to study the topic statistically to complement the findings that were obtained qualitatively. Under the qualitative approach, the participants were of the opinions that socially competent pupils would be in a good position to acquire reading skills. This is because social competence skills make the learning process easier than learning in the absence of social competence skills.

The tool for literacy assessment was divided into five sections namely vocabulary, word identification, listening comprehension, silent reading, and reading aloud. These were the outcomes in the analysis against the six predictors namely communication skills, cooperation, engagement, assertion, self-management, and self-control. The six predictors were run against each outcome to find out their impact. As for vocabulary, the findings showed that the predictors had no significant impact on the pupils' ability to match the vocabulary. However, there was a slight impact of self-management skills (33%) on matching the vocabulary 'laugh' at a 95% confidence level (see Appendix I).

Concerning word identification, pupils were given a table with 15 words from which they were to identify them. What was assessed was their speed and precision in identifying those words. The outcomes were grouped into 'quick and correct', 'slow but correct', and 'incorrect'. To establish the contribution of social competence skills in pupils' word identification, the social competence skills were run against the outcomes, as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Contribution of Predictors towards Word Identification

Predictors	Outcomes		
	Quick and correct	**Slow but correct**	**Not correct**
Communication: Agree	1.881**	0.353	-1.872***
	-0.779	-1.844	-0.612
Cooperation: Agree	-2.435**	-0.777	2.995***
	-1.167	-2.761	-0.917
Engagement: Agree	1.429*	0.414	-1.730***
	-0.836	-1.978	-0.657
Management: Agree	1.139*	-0.671	-0.465
	-0.668	-1.58	-0.525
Assertion: Agree	0.715	-0.00908	-0.586*
	-0.451	-1.068	-0.355
Control: Agree	2.451***	-0.289	-2.041***
	-0.598	-1.415	-0.47

It was also found in the analysis of the six predictors against word identification; that there was no statistical significance that the predictors might have any contribution towards the pupils' ability to identify words. According to the findings, pupils with communication skills (1.881), engagement skills (1.429), assertion skills (0.715), and self-control skills (2.451) identified and read the words correctly and quickly. However, the findings were not statistically significant, as the p-values are not at the level of 0.05 or less.

For listening comprehension, a story was read before the pupils by their subject teachers. Pupils were then, required to answer the questions after listening to the story. The aim was to assess their listening comprehension skills. Similarly, the outcomes (answers) were run against each predictor to find out the influence of social competence skills on listening comprehension. The findings are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Contribution of Predictors towards Listening Comprehension Skills

	Outcomes				
Predictors	Listening	Listening1	Listening2	Listening3	Listening4
(1)	1	2	3	4	5
Communication: Agree	0.253**	0.0328	0.110	-0.00846	0.266
	(0.109)	(0.124)	(0.114)	(0.0775)	(0.163)
Cooperation: Agree	0.271**	0.240	0.121	0.171	-0.214*
	(0.112)	(0.252)	(0.179)	(0.208)	(0.125)
Engagement: Agree	-0.203	0.0426	0.0441	-0.0639	0.213
	(0.177)	(0.140)	(0.0989)	(0.0551)	(0.183)
Management: Agree	-0.0764	-0.0653	0.0733	0.0964	0.0677
	(0.149)	(0.0790)	(0.0931)	(0.101)	(0.142)
Assertion: Agree	0.144*	0.119	0.0639	0.131*	-0.0685
	(0.0833)	(0.0842)	(0.0629)	(0.0731)	(0.0863)
Control: Agree	-0.0440	0.116	0.0213	0.0624	0.219*
	(0.126)	(0.117)	(0.0729)	(0.0880)	(0.126)
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1					

Table 4.4 shows mixed results about the contribution of social competence skills to listening comprehension skills. Pupils with communication skills for instance, answered correctly four questions out of the five provided, as well as pupils with self-control skills. Pupils with engagement skills also answered correctly all the five questions. All the findings were not statistically significant as the p-values were greater than significant level of 0.05.

On silent reading comprehension, pupils were supplied with a story to read silently. The story was accompanied by four questions that pupils were to answer after reading the story. Just like in the listening comprehension, the outcomes were (answers) were run against each predictor to establish the influence of social competence skills on silent reading skills, as presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Contribution 0f Predictors on Silent Reading Skills' Acquisition

Predictor	Outcomes		
	Silent reading	**Silent reading1**	**Silent reading2**
(1)	(2)	(3)	4
Communication: Agree	0.134	0.0386	0.00713
	(0.123)	(0.108)	(0.167)
Cooperation: Agree	-0.101***	-0.0817	-0.132
	(0.0342)	(0.0651)	(0.294)
Engagement: Agree	0.0466	0.0823	0.0913
	(0.102)	(0.126)	(0.171)
Management: Agree	0.197	0.389**	0.0560
	(0.129)	(0.159)	(0.138)
Assertion: Agree	0.0114	-0.0123	0.0549
	(0.0555)	(0.0581)	(0.0924)
Control: Agree	0.170	-0.0221	0.0716
	(0.107)	(0.0671)	(0.118)
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1			

The findings from Table 4.5 were not different from the previous tables (4.3 and 4.4) in the sense that pupils with communication skills and self-management skills, for instance, acquired silent reading skills. Similarly, those findings were not statistically significant. This generally shows that the studied six social competence skills (predictors) had no statistical significant contribution towards the pupils' reading skills acquisition. Other similar findings were found on reading aloud skills (see appendix II).

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Understanding dynamics that lead to reading skills acquisition is critical because reading ability is important for the academic development of pupils. Pupils with low reading proficiency are at risk of leaving school without the required skills, something which may hamper their progress in later academic endeavours. According to Osher, Bear, Sprague, and Doyel (2010), reading achievement is becoming popular in social-emotional research, adding up to societal and political interest in students' performance. Researchers assert that social competence skills build the foundation for academic achievement, including reading skills. That being the case, social competence skills and reading skills acquisitions are essential aspects of pupils' development across childhood and adolescence. The current study examined the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in public primary school pupils in the selected schools in Babati Town Council, in Manyara region. The objectives of the study were to i) explore the factors that hinder the acquisition of reading skills in pupils, ii) establish teachers' knowledge of social competence skills, iii) examine teachers' perceptions of the role of social competence skills in facilitating reading skills acquisition, iv) appraise the social competence skills and reading skills enhancing practices employed by teachers in schools, and v) analyse the association between social competence skills and readings skills achievement in early primary school pupils.

It is well established through empirical evidence that social competence skills are important for one's academic development. Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1997), for instance, assert that a convenient body of research supports the argument that social competence variables are central, rather than incidental to classroom teaching and learning for mastery of reading skills. Blair (2002) and Diamond and Lee (2011) also found that social competencies like attention skills, problem-solving, and self-regulation are important to school achievements in young pupils. This chapter, therefore, provides explanations of the findings on each research objective, including how the findings diverge from or converge with relevant literature; as well as presenting both the practical and theoretical implications of the study.

5.1 Factors that Hinder Pupils' Timely Acquisition of Reading Skills

The first objective of the current study was to explore the factors that hinder the acquisition of reading skills in pupils. The findings show that mastery of reading skills was not equally distributed among all the pupils who were involved in this study. The researcher was interested to know the factors that hindered the acquisition of reading skills in the pupils. Several factors were reported for pupils' poor acquisition and mastery of reading skills. One of the factors was the then registration system of pupils by the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA). The system required all pupils who were enrolled to be registered in the NECTA's registration system called PReM, and their transitions from one class to another were monitored by the system. As a result, schools were forced to let pupils transit from one grade to another regardless of whether they had mastered some competencies or not. According to the findings, the common practice in the past was that the pupils would not be allowed to transit from one grade to another without mastering the competencies of the former grade, mainly reading and arithmetic competencies.

Another factor was truancy. It was found during the study that many residents in the study area were farmers and pastoralists. As a result, they engaged their children in activities such as *shamba* works, animal rearing or taking care of their siblings while their parents were away for similar activities. This made pupils attend classes irregularly, hence affecting their learning pace. This factor (truancy) was also linked with long walking distances from home to school. The theoretical basis for truancy lies in Carroll's (1963) model of school learning. The model puts forward that the degree of learning at school depends on the time spent in learning days of instructions. It can be deduced from this model that if the development of reading skills is primarily determined by the instructions received in schools, the pupils' attainment of reading skills will partly be dependent on the number of days spent at school.

Furthermore, the teachers reported that the community in the study area had low enthusiasm for education matters, and this made them care less about their children's educational progress. This was, however, nullified by the parents and guardians who

counteracted that it was the nature of life that made them lose interest in educational matters, not low awareness in education. Research has repeatedly revealed that the family investment in terms of learning at home has a positive impact on the pupil's early cognitive and linguistic development, as well as school success in general (Matvichuk, 2015). It is also agreed by scholars that the rich home environment in reading stuff like books and other printed materials, as well as parental engagement in learning activities, have a positive impact on the pupil's reading development (Hartas, 2011). Similarly, Senechal (2012) found that pupils who are supported by their parents to learn at age three and four are likely to achieve higher in maths and reading at the age of 12. Colarocco (2012) also established that pupils are more likely to be successful in reading if their parents are involved in their reading-related activities. Be it low enthusiasm to education or life hardship, parents/guardians in this study were less involved in their children's academics.

According to Hartas (2011), parents' low levels of education and poor school experiences have a relationship with the pupils' reading and language development. The pupils in these families will likely have reading difficulties because their parents/guardians have low levels of literacy. The passive home reading environment has a relationship with parents'/guardians reading behaviour like reading for personal enjoyment. As a result, the pupils will likely engage in reading practices and discuss with their parents as they read to find out what the parents are reading. In so doing, the pupils acquire rich vocabulary from such interactions. In homes with an active reading environment, parents/guardians have close relationships with their pupils, which play a critical role in their language development. Parents who directly engage their pupils in age-appropriate learning avenues have a positive contribution to their pupils' reading development. Admitting that the life was hard meant that the home reading environments for most parents/guardians in the current study were passive.

Supporting the literature on the importance of the home environment on the children's reading development, Matvichuk (2015) professes that families that invest in their children's home learning build a strong basis on their children's early cognitive and linguistic attainment. This is the fact when family members,

particularly mothers are engaged in the process. Mwamwenda (2004) substantiates that the acquaintance between a mother and the child makes it easier for the mother to teach the child the meanings of words in the family before anyone else does. Mothers shape and modify their children's language, and finally their reading practices. A study conducted in the UK (Chidiebere et al., 2013) points to the high influence mothers have over their children's reading development; unlike fathers who may have limited contribution. Thus, parental awareness on educational matters in the current study would help parents and guardians engage in their children's academic affairs and boost their reading skills development in turn.

The low social-economic status (SES) of the residents in the study area was also linked to the poor acquisition of reading skills in the pupils. This was a serious problem as a large number of pupils were reported to come from poor families; families who could not at least have two meals per day. The parents/guardians also agreed that economic hardship hindered some of them to take care of their children academically. This was revealed mainly through the shortage of food at homes, and the lack of school feeding programmes. The availability of food, particularly at schools would encourage many pupils to attend the lessons, and improve their reading skills in turn.

Several studies point out that family social economic status has an impact on the reading materials of the pupils, their behaviour, and relationships at home. Ngorosho (2011) asserted that there is a strong link between childhood cognitive and academic development including reading and social-economic status. Ngorosho describes SES as measured in terms of class and position; as class tells the social groups that arise from interdependent economic, social, and legal relationships in the community. Wealth and income according to Ngoshoro (2011) are the dimensions of social-economic positions, and in developing countries like Tanzania, communities are organized based on social positions. Similarly, Gershoff et al. (2007) argue that the amount of energy, money, and time that parents use upon their children is regarded as an investment that has the likelihood to boost children's linguistic and cognitive skills.

Apart from securing food, financial capital is considered to affect reading ability as parents who are better economically have greater access to cognitively stimulating educational materials, and practices that provide reading involvement (Hartas, 2011). Hindman and Morrison (2012) admit that the reading gaps at the childhood level were greatly linked with a child's level of social-economic status. Pupils from poor families are seen as having fewer reading practices before enrolment in schools. Similar views are held by Hoff (2013) who postulates that due to less speaking and reading with parents, pupils from poor families have lower levels of linguistic skills that the schools require. Such pupils are also reported to be more direct and less conversational in speech tasks, with more limited vocabulary and range of grammatical structure. This premise resonates with Bernstein (1959) who insisted that pupils from the lower class are somehow restricted in their use of adjectives and adverbs, and they have a tendency not to finish sentences.

In their study on the relationship between culturally rich homes and pupils' reading achievement, Capel, Leask, and Turner (2005) found that well-educated, middle-class parents had a better understanding of the school system (sources of information, ways of supporting their children, and the like), and had a better opportunity to maximize the chances provided by the education markets. With these circumstances in consideration, Hoff (2013) suggests that schools have to show respect and welcome all children and offer earlier and sustainable extra support as far as the children's reading skill levels place them at risk. Therefore, it was not surprising to find out in the current study that some pupils who exhibited low reading proficiency levels could be from low social-economic backgrounds. This is because their parents/guardians might not have the means to access the available opportunities in educational markets.

Another factor that was linked to poor acquisition of reading skills in the pupils was their upbringing in some families. A good number of pupils in the study areas were reported to be raised by single parents, mothers in most cases, or their grandparents. This made it difficult for the parents and guardians to take care of their children both socially and academically, as they (parents) were busy trying to make their hands

meet. Thus, pupils had little or no supervision at home and lacked reading materials. The findings are in line with Crosby (2013) who found that supervised home reading is linked to reading development, and cognition level. Without parents or guardians to provide reading materials or models, and good reading behaviour, pupils in the current study might have been to a larger extent compromised in their reading development. It is reported that pupils whose parents read to them and model fluent reading, encourage them to continue reading (Kennedy & Trong, 2010).

At the school level, poor school infrastructure was associated with the pupils' lack of mastering the reading skills. There seems to be a close relationship between school infrastructure and reading skills acquisition in the early years of education. Shortage of buildings for instance, which was observed in several schools visited in the current study, led to overcrowded classrooms that made it hard for the teachers to manage the pupils during the teaching and learning processes. These findings are supported by Mwaura and Wanyora (2002) who argue that teaching and learning in a class of more than sixty pupils is not an easy task. Classrooms in the current study had about 80 to 100 pupils, which the teachers reported to be difficult for them to efficiently cope with the amount of work involved in checking and marking different class-related tasks. Increased school enrolment has made programmes like remedial classes less effective, though they were reported in some visited schools. As a result, the inability of such pupils to be fluent readers affected their performance in all other subjects, just because they could not even understand the notes given to them by their teachers. In the past, it was in the remedial programmes that pupils with reading difficulties could effectively be assisted individually.

Overcrowded classrooms can have effects on both instructional and social sides of the classroom atmosphere. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) assert that classrooms with well set-up corners with different learning practices where pupils could act out various plays they have read would encourage pupils to be hands-on with the reading practices. In addition, Stoller et al. (2013) suggest for the age-appropriate print materials to be made available by the teachers in the classrooms for pupils to borrow

and read for pleasure. Donald, Lazarus, and Moolla (2014) also suggest that teaching and learning materials should be readily available to pupils.

Concerning the reading materials, the major supply of materials for complementary instructional resources and voluntary reading is found in the library. Studies have shown a correlation between reading skills acquisition and the presence of a library, as pupils who have access to the library score higher in reading and other subjects than those who do not. According to Owusu-Achew (2014) pupils who lack exposure to books in their early years face difficulties in acquiring good reading behaviour later in life, and their reading performance remains lower than those who have access to libraries. The library that is well organized and well-resourced can provide teachers and pupils with sets of books, and fulfil many other functions. It was unfortunate that in the current study, only two schools out of the 17 visited had libraries. According to Wyse and Jones (2001), pupils can read on their own if they are guided on the organizational structure of the library by a trained librarian. Anina, Ogungbeni and Adigun (2011) also insist that the use of the library is linked with reading for pleasure, and that encourages pupils to develop good reading behaviour. However, in the Tanzanian context, librarians are not employed at primary school levels; instead, one of the teachers is given the responsibility to oversee library activities.

Teachers' motivation was also found to have an impact on teaching and learning practices in the studied schools. The term motivation comes from the word 'motive' which also is derived from a Latin word 'overe' implying 'move'. Thus, motives are forces that energize and direct individuals to act as they do (Amakiri, 2016). Psychologically, motivation is a critical idea that assists persons to constantly struggle to achieve their plans. Regarding low motivation, there were claims in the current study of no salary increase, promotions delays, unpaid leave allowances, and others by the teachers. Participants claimed that the teaching profession today is not given priority by the government, as compared to other professions. The findings concur with Amakiri (2016) who contends that the teaching profession in the past was desired by a good number of educated persons. The profession was respected,

honoured, and admired by many, and it was profitable. The reason behind this was that teachers in most cases lived with great dignity and comfort in their communities, looked upon with approval by the community members, commanded a lot of influence, enjoyed good accommodation, and other advantages.

Today things have changed, and the social position of teachers in the community has been negatively affected by these changes (Hanson, 2010). Teaching is regarded as a deprived job, and people look down on the teachers. In other words, the teaching profession is taken as the least financially, and teachers are not held in high esteem by the community members. Several studies show that teachers are likely to perform better if they are well motivated. According to Grumbers (2002), a satisfying or dissatisfying job depends not only on the nature of the job but also on the workers' motivation, which is the reason for picking that job. Teachers today do not prefer teaching from other jobs due to the nature of the job; rather, they prefer teaching because of the motivational strategies that are embedded in them. Insisting on the performance of motivated teachers, Tamrackitkun (2010) asserts that classroom reading is normally controlled by teachers, and not by the pupils. It is the teachers that will instruct the pupils what, when, and how to read. The teacher is the one who is mainly in control of the pupils, though home and societal environment are also vital in the pupils' learning. Thus, low motivated teachers would not perform to the expectations.

According to Vygotsky (1978), the most instrumental forms of learning take place when pupils are sustained in the zones of proximal development as often as possible; working together with more competent peers, teachers, and adults to complete their tasks. The notion is that pupils initially finish their activities together with others so that in the future they will complete similar activities without partnership. Vygotsky insists that partnership with others promotes imitation which means maturing psychological functions that are not enough for independent performance. In this case, the absence of teachers in classrooms or teachers who do not perform to the expectations due to different grievances (demotivated) may hinder the pupils' imitation and collaboration practices. Teachers' claims in the current study as they

were reported in the field seemed to put some of them under stress as they worked under tiring conditions including high workloads due to overcrowded classrooms. This could, in turn, compromise the quality of work as the teachers had to put up with such conditions.

The findings in the current study on teachers' motivating are in line with other African countries. Teachers' motivation has been reported as a big problem in Botswana. Kamper (2006) describes the teachers' appraisal system in Botswana as demoralizing. The situation is not different from Uganda, where it is reported that the lack of enough facilities, teaching, and learning materials may have compromised the teaching spirit and education quality of a substantial number of teachers. The significance of job satisfaction and motivation are very important for the sustainability of any education system. It is argued that in both developed and developing countries, the prominence of teachers has relatively declined in recent decades (Bennell, 2014).

In Africa and South Asia, there have been different views concerning teacher motivation though motivation varies in relation to the country of origin. It seems, however, that there is an unacceptable concern about the high proportion of teachers in public schools. In many developing countries, teachers are being poorly motivated due to a combination of low morale and job satisfaction, poor incentives and inadequate controls, and other behaviour sanctions. Ancha (2010), however, opines that pupils' achievements can generally be well influenced by satisfied and motivated teachers.

The evidence shows that conditions of service in the teaching job, particularly in public schools in Tanzania and Africa in general can never be compared with other professions. The handling of workers' fringe benefits, promotions, working environment, nature of administration, and opportunities for self-development available in other institutions like banks and the like, has caused dissatisfaction among teachers. Teachers in most public schools are subjected to a poor working environment such as overcrowded classrooms, dusty and noisy staffrooms,

unequipped or no libraries and labs, lack of functional facilities that would make their duties less burdensome, promotions are not paid or paid late, and so forth. In addition, the school's management atmospheres are not good for teachers in some schools. They are not involved in decision-making processes, and are not consulted before decisions on them are made, no free and transparent communication between teachers and their superiors, limited or no opportunities for teachers' self-professional developments, except for very few who can do it on their own with their little income. All these and several others have affected the schools, particularly pupils negatively, and it could also make teachers get disappointed with their job (Bennell, 2014).

Policy variation was also reported by the participants in a few schools among those visited. The government of Tanzania, through the Education and Training Policy (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2014) advocates that a child must have passed through preschool education to be enrolled in standard one. At the same time, there are directives that no child should be left out of school regardless of whether the child has a pre-primary education or not. This contradiction led to the ignoring of the role of pre-school learning which a pre-requisite for reading skills acquisition in pupils is. Helping pupils who had not undergone pre-school studies was found to be a challenging task, compared to their counterparts (those with preschool education). Gumede (2018) who studied the impact of enrolling aged pupils in primary schools' asserts that the age at which pupils are introduced to reading has been seen as a critical factor in reading development. Pupils who start reading at a younger age are likely to be fluent in reading than those who start reading at a late age.

Language-related policy issues, though minimally reported in the current study, were among the barriers to the pupils' reading development and mastery of reading skills. The minimal reports in the relation to language hindrance of acquisition and mastery of reading skills in the pupils could be due to the fact the study was conducted in Babati Town, where there was a mixture of urban and peri-urban schools. Thus, the Kiswahili language was not regarded as a big problem among the pupils. There are

studies in Africa, particularly on the language of instruction practices, indicating that the language spoken by the pupils significantly boosts learning outcomes, especially in primary schools, compared to the use of the language of instruction the pupil does not speak.

These findings are in line with Mosha's (2012) study which showed that Tanzania has more than 120 languages that are spoken in the country, yet it has long been committed to using Kiswahili as a national language, and the language of instruction in public primary schools. However, in the communities that Kiswahili is not fluently spoken, mostly in rural areas, and certainly not spoken by small children, they remain marginalized in education progress. In the same line, Wedin (2005) conducted a three-year study in the Runyambo-speaking community of Karagwe north-western Tanzania. It was found that language philosophies in schools were in favour of the small minority group of pupils who were born and raised in urban middle-class backgrounds where Kiswahili was spoken. This implied drastic changes in language use for the majority when it came to schooling:

> …the stigmatization of Runyambo becomes more evident when we see teachers' overestimation of their use of Swahili and pupils' proficiency in Swahili...However, pupils who, at least in the lower classes, do not master Swahili, do not have access to a language to express themselves at all, (Wedin, 2005, p.579).

Wedin points the language challenge to the Tanzanian official curriculum which presumes pupils' knowledge of Kiswahili as a first language. Though Kiswahili was the second language for most pupils in Karagwe, it was however observed that teachers had no guidance on how to teach the language as a second language, except for the rule of 'Swahili only' in schools.

Language-related policy issues in Tanzania extend to the controversy over which of the two languages (Kiswahili and English) is appropriate and at which grade level (Mohamed & Banda, 2008). There is a notion that the entire education system has to move to use the English language. This clashes with the strong commitment to the spread of Kiswahili, increasing the debate among the population, media, and the

government. Anangisye and Fussy (2014) noted this controversy in the existence of primary schools that use the English language for instructions for all subjects except Kiswahili. Rubagumya (2007) also observed that up to 15 percent of the Tanzanian population speaks neither English nor Kiswahili, and the percentage is higher among primary school-aged children in rural areas. Wedin (2005) saw relatively little attention on the second language debate in Tanzania as the move to effectively enhance an elite enclosure of English speakers and a lower middle class of Swahili speakers, as well as marginalizing the rest of those who speak none of the two languages.

In addition, the Creative Associates and ministries responsible for education in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar were engaged in a five-year (2009-2014) USAID supported project which aimed at improving early grade reading outcomes in Swahili, in Mtwara, and Zanzibar. It was noted that only 8% of grade two pupils managed to read with grade-level comprehension (USAID Tanzania, 2009), of which the language of instruction used was one of the factors for such findings.

5.2 Teachers' Knowledge of Social Competence Skills

Literature has consistently demonstrated that social competence skills in society can be acquired through several ways: ranging from formal to coincidental ways. The present study investigated the teachers' knowledge of social competence skills, as well as where they acquired it. Establishing the sources of social competence skills knowledge for teachers was important because teachers are central for developing the same in pupils.

5.2.1 Meaning of the Social Competence Concept

The second objective of this study sought the teachers' knowledge of the social competence skills concept. The meaning of the term *'social competence* 'lacked direct counterpart in the language that was used in the study (Swahili language). Therefore, a common ground was found during the pilot study on how to interpret and conceive the Swahili version of the social competence skills concept. The teachers had to link some behaviour in society with the concept of social competence

skills. The study found that an honest person and a well-mannered person (a person with integrity) were considered to be socially competent people.

These findings mirror those of Junttila et al. (2006) who dealt with Multisource Assessment of Social Competence Skills in Finland and found out that social competence can be defined. The general descriptions are that social competence is the ability to effectively make and maintain positive social outcomes by organizing an individual's own personal and environmental resources. Maintaining positive social outcomes is relatively the same as behaving well (well mannered), and being accepted in the community as it was referred to by the participants in the current study.

Sheridan and Walker (1999) also reported that learning to behave and acceptably relate with others is a building block for social competence skills. The findings from the current study agree with the social acceptability notion by Sheridan and Walker in the sense that if an individual behaves well, he/she will be accepted in his or her community. The other dimension of social competence (learning to behave) in other words, was conceived by the participants to be the absence of antisocial behaviours, especially the inhibition of disruptive and impulsive behaviour. The implication is that antisocial behavior which can either be unintentional or intentional; directed towards other individuals or the persons themselves has negative social outcomes.

This involves making a clear demarcation between social skills and social competence; that one may have social skills but not socially competent. This idea is supported by McFall (1982) who contends that social competence and social skills are not interchangeable concepts because competence is generally an evaluative term referring to the adequacy, or quality of an individual's overall performance in a particular task; while skills are specific abilities required to perform competently a certain task. Furthermore, Greenspan (1997), Matson and Hammer (1996) emphasize that the terms social competence and social skills should be reserved to behaviours and responses that are interpersonal; rather than skills like self-help or transportation skills which reflect personal competence skills.

The differences in the conception of social competence skills were observed not only in the study area but also in the reviewed literature as well. This can be attributed to the fact that social competence skills are based on sociocultural contexts and situations, and social interactions. Since there are different sociocultural contexts in the world, this makes it difficult to have a single common understanding of the social competence concept (a single universal definition). Another reason for the lack of a universal definition of social competence might be that the concept is the research object in different branches of social sciences like psychology, social psychology, child development, sociolinguistics, social work, and many others. However, all the definitions of social competence reflect Sociocultural Theory which has its roots in social interactions. In addition, empirical research shows that a particular set of social skills that constitute social competence skills depend on several factors; the situation in which the skills are being applied, the cultural environment, developmental stage, and the evaluator (Magelinskaite-Legkauskiene et al., 2016).

Furthermore, the researcher was interested to find out the participants' sources of social competence skills. Participants were provided with three options; taught in the colleges (Teachers' Colleges), attended workshops or seminars, or during professional development. A higher percentage of the participants showed that they had acquired the knowledge of social competence skills in the colleges. As stated in the literature review, the teacher educator syllabus for training primary school teachers in Tanzania does not directly teach social competence skills. However, few elements can be considered as empowering teachers to be socially competent in handling pupils in schools. For instance, among the objectives of the curriculum are to develop communication skills; and to develop the capacity of student teachers to understand, analyze and solve children's social, psychological, and learning problems. Among the competencies to be developed include communicating effectively in all languages; counselling students for their personal development, adjustment, and learning; and demonstrating leadership skills (TIE, 2007).The literature further shows that social competence skills are learned incidentally (informally through everyday experience) due to their subtle and implicit nature. That, students imitate what they see their friends doing, or repetitive behaviours that

elicit favourable responses. That being the case, participants might have been more exposed to social environments in the colleges than in their earlier academic situations.

The findings are slightly consistent with research that shows that social competence skills can be taught and learned in formal institutions (Devaney, 2015; Scarupa, 2014; Durlak et al., 2011). Specifically, within the learning and teaching process context, pupils acquire social competence skills through communication with teachers, interaction, and developing relationships via certain circumstances, and under specific terms and conditions. Because they represent key parts of the individual's development, social competence skills are part of the teaching and learning process, and are developed with the appropriate environmental stimuli. It is the good communicative relationship between teachers and pupils that facilitates the development of social competence skills. Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2005) insist that good relationships between teachers and pupils are associated with high levels of cooperation, social capacities, and learning skills.

There is further evidence that social competence skills can be achieved from childhood (home), and that schooling is the continuation of what starts from home. According to Kyridis (1996), social competence skills can be attained by the mutual and reciprocal relationship between the child's characteristics and his/her social environment. The social environment starts from the family through a lively responsibility in learning rules of interaction and behaviour. The groups of peers then strengthen the ways of the child's socialization during the first stage of indirect dependency of the family. Positive interactions with peers help pupils to develop interpersonal relationships, cooperative skills, communication skills, emotional understandings, and emotional control.

The two perspectives on social competence knowledge acquisition (being taught and incidental acquisition) imply that both school and other settings play important roles in the acquisition of social competence skills. Family, for example, provides the basic ground to grow social relationships as well as the child's social learning, and

the school exposes the pupil to additional interaction ground. The effective and worthwhile social competence skills training must produce skills that are socially relevant in the individuals' life (social validity), skills that are used in a variety of situations (generalization), and skills that are maintained over time (treatment adherence) (Hansen, Nangle & Meyer, 1998). To be more effective, such skills should be consistently employed in a supportive and respectful setting of each person's individuality.

Therefore, teachers' professional development and social competence skills are interdependent. This is because they are the key players in developing the pupils' competencies in schools. The organization of the creative learning process is inseparable from the ability to interact with the students. Teachers' ability to interact helps create a positive learning atmosphere where students expose good characteristics. The Sociocultural Theory argues that people learn by observing others' behavior, attitudes, and the results of that behavior. Therefore, the human behaviour of Sociocultural Theory is based on the mutual interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental impact.

5.2.2 Social Competence Skills in Education and Life in General

A body of research that highlights the importance of social competence skills in schools continues to grow. Social competence skills and academic success are key outcomes for bench marking pupils' development. There is a growing agreement that pupils' social competence and academic skills are inextricably related, although they were traditionally considered separate entities (Greenberg, 2006).

The findings from the current study portray that social competence skills lead to an individual's success in education. Interview with subject teachers showed that 15 out 17 were said that a socially competent pupil is in a good position to excel in education. Participants further reported that socially competent pupils show positive attitudes towards learning. These findings are consistent with a relatively large body of empirical literature in the place of social competence skills on education attainment. Studying the relationship between social competence skills and academic

achievements among the Hispanic and African American students in the United States of America, Salvatelli (2019) found that social competence skills increased students' achievement level, and contributed to long-term life outcomes. Salvatelli (2019) proceeds that social competence skills are comprised of skills that yield personal emotional regulation capability and positive social interactions. Such skills are crucial for academic achievement as personal emotional regulation capability has a role to play in developing resilience by which people effectively cope with school characteristics, work, and life in general.

Furthermore, research demonstrates that social competence skills lead to better classroom grades and increased performance; as well as more positive attitudes about school, among others for socially competent pupils. Greenberg (2006) provided conceptual rationales as to why social competence skills may bear positive impacts on academic achievement. Greenberg presents that social competence skills affect cognitive executive functions in the prefrontal regions of the cerebral cortex. Marchesi and Cook (2012) also assert that social competence skills improve academic success by enhancing a deeper understanding of academic content, improving the capability for learning from peers and teachers, as well as increasing academic tasks persistence.

In addition, Galloway et al. (2017) advocated for the need to develop tools that assess the social competence skills of children and youth. Their study identified specific social competence skills that contribute to academic success. Thus, the study generated empirical evidence that serves as a catalyst to narrow a group of distinct, but overlapping social competence skills; as well as extending and reinforcing levels of social competence skills using a different assessment instrument.

Apart from academic success, social competence skills were linked to successful adulthood, and life in general in the current study. These findings are consistent with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (2015) which found that teacher-rated social competence skills in young children were a regular and important sign of both positive and negative future results across all major areas namely; education,

employment, criminal justice, substance use, and mental health. This implies that young children with well-nurtured social competence skills are more likely to live healthier and successful lives in adulthood – getting better education and jobs.

According to Black and Langone (1997), proper social behaviour in community life may be even more critical than academic or job skills in deciding whether one is perceived as a competent individual. For instance, Holmes and Fillary (2000) conducted a study on the ability of adults with mild intellectual disabilities to properly take part in 'small talk' that is part of any workplace. Workers who showed competence in social skills were perceived more positively than their counterparts. The notion that competence in using social skills leads to positive perceptions of people with intellectual disabilities can be scaled up to other community settings.

Building on the existing studies on the relationship between social competence skills development and their impact in adulthood, the current study makes a strong case for recognizing pupils' social competence skills as critical building blocks for their future lives. The findings on the significance and relevance of social competence skills in education, in general, reflect the Sociocultural Theory and Social Learning Theory, which assert that learning occurs in social situations. In Sociocultural Theory for instance, Vygotsky (1978) understood that all learning is social in the sense that pupils do not end up doing most of their learning all by themselves in their heads; that they work with others, they assist one another to learn. Teachers can help pupils learn by consciously teaching within their zones of proximal development; right in that area where they are ready to learn and provide assistance or having other pupils assist in that social context.

5.3 Teachers' Perceptions of Social Competence Skills in Facilitating Reading Skills acquisition in Pupils

This study set out to find out the link between social competence skills and reading competencies acquisition in public primary school pupils. Thus, exploring the participants' (teachers) perceptions about the two competencies was very important towards answering the study's question. The question was directed to specifically

explore the influence of social competence skills in reading acquisition in the Kiswahili language. Participants were to provide their opinions on how they view pupils who are socially competent against their reading skills acquisition. The focused social competence skills were communication, cooperation, assertion, self-management, self-control, and engagement. All the interviewed participants believed that the pupil's mastery of these skills helped him/her catch up with the reading skills easily. They reported that socially competent pupils acquire reading skills faster than their peers, and therefore, succeed in other academic areas and life in general.

More or less similar characteristics of social competence skills for pupils as those of adults were put forward by the participants (teachers) in the current study. Punctuality was emphasized, in and outside the school environment, as among the important aspects that define the pupil's mastery of social competence skills. Participants additionally stressed that socially competent pupils are teachable because of their high ability to follow instructions. It was reported that a large number of pupils with poor social competence skills came from families that were faced with life hardship; where parents and guardians spent most of their time trying to make the hands meet, rather than taking care of their pupils. More interestingly, there were a considerable number of pupils in the study area who were raised by single parents and grandparents. The study area was reported to be one of the regions where a number of pupils were being raised by their grandparents because mothers usually go to towns in search of greener pastures. This had a great contribution to the poor raising of such pupils, hence failure to acquire proper social competence skills by pupils.

Both head teachers and subject teachers in the studied schools believed that the two competencies (social and reading) are closely related; in the sense that socially competent pupils are more likely to succeed in reading compared to their counterparts. Teachers' perceptions on the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition according to Rosenthal (1994) have a great impact on the type of learning environment they create for pupils, as well as their pupils' academic success and beliefs about their abilities. Pupils perform better when

their teachers perceive that they will succeed, partly because teachers handle pupils differently when they hold high expectations for them.

The findings of the current study reflect those of Bowden, Lanning, Pippin, and Tanner (2003) who reported that teachers' attitudes, perceptions, and support of social competence skills can affect pupils' adoption, sustainability and impact their reading ability. This is because teachers are the primary delivers of both social competencies and academic affairs. Pajares (1992) adds that teachers' perceptions of the relationship between social competence skills and reading success are key indicators of their beliefs and judgments, which, in turn, affect their teaching practices.

In their study on Teacher Perceptions of Students' Social Competence and School Adjustment in Elementary School in Lithunia, Magelinskaite-Legkauskiene et al. (2016) found that teacher perception of social competence skills is an important factor in teacher perceptions of school adjustment in elementary grades. Teachers perceived that learning-related social competence activities, motivational and cognitive processes help in shielding the pupils from external and internal distractions, and therefore facilitating academic prospects.

A key factor in the academic achievement of any pupil is reading. Reading according to Felton and Pepper (1995) and Francis et al. (1996) is a fundamental skill that all pupils must have attained by the third grade, or they are likely to never catch up to their peers. A body of literature presents that before the third grade, pupils should be learning to read, while after the third-grade pupils should be reading to learn. In that case, Good, Gruba, and Kaminski (2002) affirm that pupils with difficulty reading after the third grade will often fall behind in academics.

These findings on the teachers' perception of social competence skills and reading skills acquisition are in line with Wallace's (2003) finding that whether one talks of the new literacies or the longer established ones; there is a need to hold the overall view that reading is social. Wallace (2003) proceeds that reading is social because

readers and writers enact their roles as members of communities. Thus, reading unfolds in a social context, both in immediate and wider social contexts. The kind of social process Wallace (2003) argues for could be the one that posits a shifting and dynamic relationship between text producers, text receivers, and the text itself. Any individual in this interaction may assert greater power depending on several variables involved in the reading situation. In the classroom environment, for instance, reading involves teachers as mediators between text producer or author, the text, and pupils. Wallace, therefore, concludes that, whether in a public setting like the classroom or alone, reading is a three-way interaction among the writer, the text, and the reader; each of which is socially constrained and directed, if not socially constructed.

The findings of the current study also echo the affirmation put forward by Oberle and colleagues (2014) that social competence skills predict success in reading and mathematics. According to Oberle et al., teachers' reports of pupil frustration tolerance, assertive skills, task orientation, self-management, self-control, and peer interaction significantly predicted success in reading and maths. However, lack of social competence constructs was related to lower reading ability, and overall academic achievement. Such achievement may be attributed mainly to the self-management and self-control constructs that are reported to regulate behaviour. The findings from the current study revealed that all the interviewed teachers (17 subject teachers, 15 heads of schools and 2 assistant heads of schools) reported that pupils with social competence skills (obedience, attentiveness, cooperation, assertiveness, confidence, communication, and self control) acquired reading skills faster than their counterparts.

Furthermore, the two competencies (self management and self control) are reported to be important for forming positive relationships and interactions in the classroom, and enhancing the use of effective learning strategies, which in turn are believed to be important for academic attainment, including reading. Furthermore, Schonfeld, et al. (2015) studied a three-year cluster of randomized totals of 705 pupils in which one group of pupils received social competence skills instructions programme, while

the other group did not. After three years, pupils from the social competence skills group exhibited higher abilities in reading, writing, and maths.

The current study also found that self-control and self-management skills were related to pupils' reading skills acquisition, school/classroom adjustment, and even school readiness. Self-control includes the ability to control impulses, delay gratification, resist temptation and peer pressure, reflect on one's feelings, and monitor oneself (Han & Kemple, 2006). Duckworth and Seligman (2005) argue that self-control among school pupils cultivates the setting of high academic goals that yield an increase in effort resulting in higher grades. In relation to self-management skills, Davis et al. (2014) examined goal setting, academic self-efficacy, and self-management of grade three students, and came up with results that showed a positive relationship between the skills and reading development. In addition, previous research has shown that interpersonal competencies related to self-management are positively associated with reading achievement indices. For example, pupils with high self-discipline or self-management skills outperform their peers in reading ability, as well as on several other academic performance variables, earning higher GPAs and standardized achievement test scores (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005).

Cooperation was highly ranked (46.2%) by the participants among the six social competence skills studied in the current study. The finding is related to what was found by Elias and Haynes (2008) that cooperation (i.e., relationship skills) at a time was significant to academic performance (reading and maths grades). The consistency of the findings of the current study and the existing empirical evidence has the basis on the fact that social competence skills, regardless of the differences in social and cultural contexts play similar roles in different aspects of human life. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behavior have the potential to promote educational experiences, including reading. It is also the fact that teachers are the pillars of schooling and learning, and their perceptions towards the pupils' learning have an effect on every aspect of the educational process.

5.4 Social Competence and Reading Skills Enhancing Practices employed by Teachers in Schools

The study investigated how teachers in the study area promoted both reading and social competence skills. The study found that the development of these skills involved pupils, parents, teachers, and the community at large. However, the current study's focus was on how teachers enhance the said skills in classrooms.

5.4.1 Practices Used for Enhancing Reading Skills in pupils

Reading is the ability that literate people often take for granted. Imagine someone picking up a newspaper, or seeing a sign and having trouble deciphering the meaning of the words. Nonetheless, reading is a critical component for academic achievement, everyday life routines, and for becoming a productive member of society. Unfortunately, empirical evidence shows that a large number of pupils in Tanzania are struggling to read (UWEZO, 2010, 2015, 2017; Ligembe, 2014; TIE, 2013; EQUIP-T, 2015). Some pupils may show great resilience in overcoming their reading problems, but not all. Research, according to Good, Simmons, and Smith (1998) has shown that poor readers are more likely to encounter academic and conduct problems at school. They are also at risk for misbehaving, truancy, and substance abuse. Poor readers tend to drop out of schools, have poor self-concepts, and are likely to spend more time at school than proficient readers.

Investigating the reading skills teaching strategies in pupils was one of the key objectives of the study. Strategies used were participatory methods, which involved exposing pupils to different reading activities; paired learning where proficient readers were mixed (paired) with the strugglers with the expectations that proficient readers would assist the poor readers, sometimes with instructions from the teachers. Teachers also set aside extra time to help pupils with reading difficulties, particularly in the morning and after class hours (though this was not the practice for all the schools studied because it mainly depended on subject teachers' commitment).

Another strategy was to involve parents and guardians in assisting the struggling pupils to learn to read. The strategy was reported to be challenging as the

parents'/guardians' responses were minimal due to everyday life hustles that took most of their time. The interviewed parents/guardians, however, admitted to lack time for educational matters as they were fully engaged in life hustles, and they also lacked information on how to get involved in their children's educational affairs. The use of libraries was found to be very effective, but their distribution in the studied schools was not even. The good libraries found in the study area were all donor-funded by organizations like Livingstone Tanzania Trust, Leighton Park, Inspire, and others. An interesting strategy to the researcher was found in one of the studied schools where the school had made arrangements for pupils to be assisted in their residential areas. Pupils were grouped according to their neighbourhoods, and they were instructed to have academic sessions, sometimes with the help of the nearby teachers. A limited number of studied schools used to counsel the pupils with poor reading skills to improve. In addition to the mentioned practices, school feeding programmes were reported to be of great help to enhance reading attainment in pupils because they made many of them attend the lessons.

One of the key benefits of school feeding programmes is improved school attendance. Regular school attendance is an important aspect of any educational process, and is significant for students' academic and personal growth (Ginsburg, Jordan, & Chang, 2014). Attendance is critical because the classroom fragmented attendance reduces students' exposure to instructions. This can in turn escalate academic disengagement, leading to students falling farther behind academically (Elias & Haynes, 2008). Elias and Haynes (2008) further found that cooperation and self-control skills at time one related to time one attendance. Another study by Duckworth and Seligman (2005) also revealed that pupils with high self-discipline/self-management had minimal cases of school absence.

All head teachers of the visited schools admitted that the presence of school feeding programmes would greatly add to strategies that were being used for reading skills acquisition in pupils. School feeding would retain pupils in schools, as a considerable number of pupils were reported to miss lessons because of lack of food at home. Some would even go to work in the neighbourhoods to secure food. Thus, school

feeding programmes would also make the pupils attentive in classrooms, and follow what is being instructed by the teachers. Even in the schools with libraries, it was reported that a well-fed pupil would concentrate on reading than a poorly fed pupil.

In four out of seventeen schools, participants reported talking to pupils separately (counselling) on how they could improve their reading abilities. These were pupils who according to the participants had special cases, and many of them were those raised by single parents, particularly fathers and grandparents. These pupils lacked proper guidance to academic matters, including reading. There were also some pupils from relatively well-off families who had no reason for not mastering the reading skills. Such pupils were also subjected to counselling sessions with their subject teachers.

Five reading-related components were involved in the current study namely; word identification, vocabulary, reading listening comprehension, loud reading, and silent reading. Literature shows that mastery of these components provides the building blocks for fluent reading and success in other subjects as well. Snow (2002) refers to these components as the 'big ideas'. According to Snow, teaching pupils the big ideas in reading grants them the prospect to become good readers. Teachers are supposed to not only teach the pupils the big ideas, but they have also to appraise them on these skills. They need to weigh up whether pupils have acquired the skills at the right time, and if not, programmes have to be developed to teach them the reading skills.

The findings of the current study show that pupils were able to read, though at different speeds. Loud and silent reading comprehension would simply be referred to as fluency; which is the pupil's ability to easily, correctly, and quickly read. The National Reading Panel-US (2000) for instance, considers loud reading as 'guided oral reading' and silent reading as 'independent silent reading'. The finding on reading fluency in the current study adds to what the National Reading Panel-US (2000) found that loud reading results in a significant positive performance for all pupils regardless of age and ability. Concerning silent reading, the National Reading

Panel-US sets out to explore the conception that if pupils are exposed to reading more, they would be better readers. However, it was concluded that simply insisting pupils read independently led to insignificant benefits in the reading skills acquisition. It was, however, cautioned against concluding that independent reading is not significant due to limited experimental research design in this area.

The practices employed by the teachers in the current study also helped pupils comprehend to the texts. Comprehension is a critical skill to acquire as it allows the reader to make sense of printed words. It is an important aspect of becoming a fluent reader, as without effective reading comprehension, it is not easy for anyone to purely catch up with materials in any subject. Sattler (2003) defines comprehension as a complex cognitive process that involves intentional interaction between text and reader to convey meaning.

The National Reading Panel-US (2000) refers to the reading strategies used by the teachers (group work, pairing, library, counselling) in the current study as 'traditional strategies; while addressing additional strategies. Studying comprehension, NRP focused on vocabulary instruction, text comprehension instruction, teacher preparation, and comprehension strategies of instruction. It was found by National Reading Panel-US that vocabulary learning instructions aided with computers increase pupils' level of comprehending, though this poses a challenge in developing countries like Tanzania. An individual's size of vocabulary in the reading context can be directly related to his/her ability to comprehend reading materials and reading ability. Comprehension is a key aspect in the way our communities appraise one's intelligence, and a pupil's vocabulary attainment enables him/her to prosper in academics.

Vocabulary according to Snow (2002) is an individual's ability to understand (receptive) and use (expressive) words to attain and express meaning. The National Reading Panel-US (2000) insists that it is crucial to teach vocabulary indirectly through incidental learning like using more complex synonyms, instead of ordinary

simple words. Furthermore, the panel advised vocabulary instructions to be repetitive and in diverse contexts.

5.4.3 Practices Used for Enhancing Social Competence Skills in Pupils

Empirical evidence (Odom et al., 2008) shows that school is primarily a social environment and much of what pupils learn to do to be successful happens in the form of social interaction. Children interact socially when they play, learn in classrooms or eat at cafeterias. The interactions form the foundation of classroom instructions, and they are manifested in teaching and learning methods, and other academic activities teachers use to impart essential academic skills (Odom et al., 2008). Teaching social competence skills is significantly crucial not only for reading skills acquisition, but also promotes pupil's accomplishment. It also increases involvement, constructs status and peer group acceptance, promotes self-esteem and improves other qualities critical to school accomplishment in pupils.

The findings of the current study on the practices used by teachers to enhance social competence skills are the same as those by Odom, et al. (2008) that teaching social competence skills happens in the classroom as teachers intend to teach academic skills. In this study, the researcher did not capture any strategy that was solely meant to develop social competence skills in the studied schools. This could be because social competence skills are not assessed and scored like academic competencies or subjects. Head teachers specifically insisted on the acquisition and mastery of academic skills for the pupils, rather than social competence skills. This could be due to the limited time for social competence skills programmes as school schedules were overwhelmed with academia. Some teachers did not know that the methods they used were enhancing both social and academic skills.

Odom et al. (2008) maintain that social competencies demands are usually implicit, and rarely described or defined to pupils like other skill-based demands. When pupils finish an assignment for class, for instance, teachers give them explicit instructions related to the assignment like the amount of work to be done and the time limit. But the same is hardly true for social competence skills. Teachers may post explicit rules

in the classrooms for a few key aspects of social behaviour, yet, many social competence demands are implicit; they are more controlled by conventional practices than by the posted rules.

Findings from the current study concur with Odom and colleagues (2008) on the implicit nature of the acquisition of social competence skills in pupils. Consider, for example, how pupils greet one another when they get into classrooms, the topics they talk about in the absence of teachers, the body language and the tone of voices they use when asking for help or forgiveness, the ways they plan what to do after the class is finished, and similar actions. Performing these acts shows a pupil as skilled or unskilled in social competence skills, though the rules that define how to accomplish these actions are not stated anywhere; they are simply understood by pupils. Those who find it hard to be acquainted with these unwritten rules are more likely to struggle with social competence skills.

For the development of communication skills, for instance, the findings from the current study revealed that this was one among the topics in the current curriculum for lower classes (Basic Education Curriculum for Standard III-IV, 2016). The curriculum according to teachers requires pupils to be able to communicate among themselves, and with the adults as well. This fact is also supported by Schonert-Reichl (2017) who contends that communication in humans' life has a very critical and significant place. He asserts that society would have not been able to survive if people were not communicating with each other. The modern world today is characterized by a society that can live together with several nations and ethnic groups, persons and communities, who are in contact continuously with close relationships. Schonert-Reichl (2017) concludes that such kinds of relationships require mutual tolerance and communication capability among different groups of people; and it is particularly significant to develop young, evolving intercultural spirit in them, intelligence, based on wisdom through effective communication skills.

Shapiro (2004) opines that effective communication is an important precondition for acquiring social competence skills. The teacher transmits the message and adapts it

to the mental and linguistic level of the pupil (receiver), while attaching a personal touch to his message.The pupil, on the other hand, has to be able to decode the teacher's message, seek clarifications, and want to accept it. To achieve this goal, the teacher has to use activities that will help the pupils to communicate. Pupils must learn to understand and express themselves to convey their thoughts and increase self-acceptance, self-esteem, and self-confidence.

For group activities, for instance, Shapiro (2004) contends that learning in groups is crucial for the development of an individual's social competence skills. In group activities, pupils learn to listen to and understand their peers, speak one by one, stick to the topic, take care of others and notice the needs of others. These skills help the pupils live together and be useful in their social life, as well as in academic activities. About teachers being friends with the pupils, the findings are supported by Schonert-Reichl (2017) who pointed out that pupils learn well and develop socially in a well-managed learning environment, perceived safe by the pupils, supportive and caring. Furthermore, Raver, Garner, and Smith-Donald (2007) found pupils exhibiting higher reading and social competencies when they have more positive relationships with their teachers. Observations during data collection for the current study showed that teachers who are self-possessed (calm and confident, and in control of their emotions) have more positive relationships with pupils, and this enhances the pupils' development in both social competence and reading skills.

With regard to sitting arrangements (study groups and paired learning), literature shows that classroom characteristics can have a contribution to the way teachers engage in developing pupils' social competence skills. The point is that, different classroom components like classroom size, classroom management, classroom organization, and classroom atmosphere can have effects on how classroom instructions are delivered, and the dynamics of teacher-pupil interaction. There is clear evidence that sitting arrangements in classrooms play an important role in the reading acquisition and development, the academic performance that educators and policymakers might suspect (Riley & Jones, 2010). The evidence is clearer and more conclusive, however, that in groups, teachers easily influence their pupils' social

competence skills development, and they can do so directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, in positive or negative manners.

Paired learning also appeared to be effective in enhancing social competence skills in the studied pupils. Because learning is a social process, as per Sociocultural Theory, pairs provide a platform for learning in an enjoyable and relaxed setting. Pupils' social competence skills development is enhanced by more competent others, through interaction within a social context. The paired partners are in a position to provide support if pupils are matched with a peer who is more or a little bit above their level of understanding, (zone of proximal development). As a result, Mooney (2000) and Burman (2009) argue that paired learning embraces social interaction in which pupils assist each other, guide, and direct themselves through scaffolding and social construction of knowledge.

Paired learning was also used for developing cooperation because pupils come to schools with different levels of cooperative skills. Some of them are already capable of compromising, taking turns, and listening to a partner; whereas others are still developing the same skills. Others may be unwilling to talk because their expressive language is still developing. Thus, when pupils willingly support and assist one another, they engage in the cooperative activity; demonstrating and boosting other social competence skills at the same time. To provide support for pupils' social competence skills development, teachers are to give as many opportunities as possible for pupils to work and learn together. As a strategy for developing cooperative skills, paired learning assists pupils to become successful in their social interactions, and is based on the principles of Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978).

In addition, Vygotsky (1978) states that cooperative skills not only intend to support the learning process but also how cooperation is learned. It can simply be said that cooperation in the learning process is a learning-to-learn strategy. Cooperation is based on a single teacher-teacher, pupil-pupil activities based on their mutual

agreement, the way they relate, approach, and the overall goals of achieving a common understanding.

On the other side, the main challenge that faced the teachers in the current study in teaching and learning was the number of pupils in classrooms; classes were overcrowded in 14 of the 17 studied schools. This made it difficult for the teachers to enhance reading skills which would imply also enhancing social competence skills. The findings on the shortage of the methods for solely developing social competence skills in the current study mirrors what is presented by Odom et al. (2008) that though early school years are a critical period for pupils to promote social competence skills to enable them to live a successful life in the school environment, there is a disagreement about the procedures on which social competence skills develop.

The findings on the shortage of the social competence skills teaching methods are also supported by Dennis and Paul (n.d) who wrote that social competence skills are seldom taught efficiently in schools, regardless of their importance in academics; thus, pupils have to attain them through trial and error, or by incidental learning. According to Dennis and Paul, social competence skills are normally learned informally through everyday experiences because they are delicate and inherent. In that case, pupils lack the avenue to attain the skills, in the same manner, they learn reading and maths. As a result, they find themselves imitating what their peers and adults do, or repetitive behaviours that had brought forth positive responses in the past. Dennis and Paul conclude that pupils have to rely on subtle signs like facial expressions or tone of voice to judge the suitability of their behaviour, to regulate the social competence skills learning process. In other words, pupils have to be able to follow the link between the responses of others and the behaviour patterns that caused them. This results in pupils who are not capable of this demanding learning process falling behind their peers.

The findings of the current study, on the other hand, contradict with Schonert-Reichl (2017), Jones and Doolittle (2017), Taylor et al. (2017), and Marchesi and Cook’s

(2012) studies who opine that social competence skills are teachable in schools for equally positive effects across a diverse population. Research, however, shows that teachers' social competence is critical in the development of social competence skills in pupils (Roeser, Skinner, Beers & Jennings, 2012). Socially competent teachers are reported to have better relationships with pupils, and good relationships provide an opportunity for the pupils to grow socially and academically. A study conducted by Mashburn et al. (2008) on the importance of teachers' social competence to the pupils' learning found that the quality of teacher-pupil relationships was a better predictor of reading skills acquisition than teacher-pupil ratio, teacher education, and other factors.

Teacher modelling is another strategy that may impact the development of pupils' social competence skills. Pupils continually see their teachers in stressful situations, and they (teachers) model social competence skills such as self-control and persistence, among others. Roeser, Skinner, Beers, and Jennings (2012) were prompted by the impact of teachers' modelling social competence skills for pupils to emphasize the need for teachers to be aware of both social competence skills modelling dynamic; and the need for them to be intentionally and continuously developing social competence skills in-service to develop pupils' social competence skills. In addition, teachers' confidence during teaching is associated with loyalty to classroom management (Kress & Elias, 2006). Generally, teachers are reported to be more likely to continue enhancing social competence skills when they feel at ease with, and passionate about teaching them. According to Guskey (1988), teachers' confidence is associated with their attitude towards both the importance and difficulty of social competence skills teaching.

Commitment also is cited as one of the key components that teachers must have when enhancing social competence skills to pupils. Teachers need to be committed to developing their capacity to integrate social competence skills in their classrooms, as well as their professional development. Professional development according to McCormick, Steckler, and McLeroy (1995) increases considerably the likelihood of incorporating social competence skills in their teachings. Thus, teachers'

commitment to social competence skills is likely to influence their capacity to model the same skills in the pupils.

Teachers' belief about the importance of social competence skills to pupils' success also has been reported to affect their social competence skills enhancing practices. Buchanan, Gueldner, Tran, and Merrell (2009) argue that recognizing the critical role of social competence skills is among the many barriers to pupils' academic success. Teachers who acknowledge the pupils' attainment of social and emotional competencies to be as crucial as academic subjects are likely to dedicate more time to incorporate social competence skills in their daily teachings (Pajares, 1992).

The degree to which teachers feel that their school leadership encourages social competence skills development may also influence the impact of the teaching practices. School leadership is a key aspect that affects the implementation and sustainability of teachers' practices (Patti & Tobin, 2006). It is a fact that the impact of the intervention is stronger and of high quality when the school leadership supports the programme's implementation.

The implication and consistence of the mixed findings on whether social competence skills can be taught in classrooms or not have an impact on the importance of social competence skills and reading success, as well as academic achievement in general in pupils. The increased social competence skills as a result of classroom teaching or through informal learning may empower pupils to manage their emotions effectively. Teachers' practices in developing the two sets of skills reflect language-rich classrooms where all pupils are nurtured to develop both social competence and reading skills in comfortable and engaging settings. This happens on social structures, as stressed by both the Sociocultural and Social Learning theories, which is critical and valuable because all pupils need avenues to interact with each other as part of learning experiences.

5.5 Association between Social Competence Skills and Reading Skills Acquisition

Findings from the interviewed teachers showed a relationship between socially competent pupils and ability to read. Empirical research has shown that learning is an intrinsically social practice. It is a process where pupils' social competence skills guide their relations with peers and teachers that smoothens the process of learning. Birch and Ladd (1997) argue that social competence skills are expected to change over time as pupils proceed with school, and encounter different social atmospheres, including peers and teachers.

5.5.1 Level of Mastery of Reading Skills by Standard Four Pupils

The researcher explored the pupils' mastery of reading skills, before investigating the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition. The Basic Education Curriculum Standard III-VI (MoESTVT, 2016) was used as a benchmark for gauging the level of the reading skills mastery by standard four pupils. For common understanding, the meaning of reading was inquired from the participants (teachers). Reading was conceived as the ability to understand written texts; comprehending or understanding the written text and combining the pupils' understanding with prior knowledge. It was reported that developing reading skills required time and practice, though it reaps great rewards; and reading for meaning is the ultimate goal of learning to read. According to MoESTVT (2016), standard four pupils have to master the following main competencies in reading; using vocabulary in different contexts, comprehending and understanding a written text or sound, and communicating in different contexts. The findings of the current study showed that a considerable number of pupils had a good mastery of the reading skills.

Reading proficiency among primary school pupils in Tanzania has been reported by several scholars. A study conducted by Mmasa and Anney (2016) when they explored numeracy and literacy teaching in Tanzanian classrooms found that teachers had inadequate skills of teaching literacy skills. Teachers used only one teaching approach: reading aloud. With the large teacher-pupil ratio in many classrooms in Tanzania, teachers neither made follow-ups of what pupils were

reading nor evaluated individual pupils' reading. Some pupils lacked textbooks, and thus they were not able to follow the instructions appropriately. It was further found that the dominant approach used by teachers was didactic, which is essentially a teacher-pupil cantered approach. It is a bookish approach that turned pupils into inactive and passive pupils in classrooms. This is, according to Mmasa and Anney (2016), again the effect of the 2005 Competence-Based Curriculum which emphasizes teaching and learning processes based on pupil-centers approaches.

5.5.2 Social Competence Skills and Reading Skills Acquisition

The importance of social competence skills to reading and academic skills achievements, in general, is highlighted in many studies. Birch and Ladd (1997) point out that social competence skills are crucial to pupils' school readiness and adjustment as pupils with more social competence skills are better in peer interaction and reading skills. Such skills continue to be critical to pupils' academic accomplishment through their development and into adolescence. Findings from interviews in the current study were consistent with the findings from the literature on the importance of social competence skills to reading skills acquisition and academic development in general.

After exploring teachers' views on the influence of social competence skills on reading skills acquisition, the researcher involved pupils in the study to complement the information collected from interviews. This practice was guided by the quantitative side of the study where five reading skills (vocabulary, word identification, listening comprehension, silent reading, and reading aloud) were studied against six social competence skills (communication, cooperation, engagement, assertion, self-management, and self-control) to find out whether they relate. The findings from quantitative analysis contradicted those from interviews. The quantitative analysis showed that the predictors (social competence skills) had no statistical significance in the pupils' acquisition and mastery of reading skills.

Findings on the difference in the acquisition and mastery of reading skills between boys and girls through quantitative analysis also differed from findings on the same

phenomenon through interviews. It was revealed from the interviews that girls were better than boys in acquiring and mastering reading skills. However, statistical analysis showed mixed results on the significant difference between the two sides (boys and girls) in the acquisition and mastery of reading skills. This, however, does not mean that the findings are not important.

According to Hoekstra, Finch, Kiers, and Johnson (2006), interpreting non-significant tests as conclusive confirmation for the lack of the outcome in question is misleading. Hoekstra and colleagues argue that a non-significant effect can occur for two reasons; the outcome might be present with about the predicted size, but it could simply have been overlooked because the evidence in the given sample is not sufficiently strong. Two, the outcome could be smaller than expected, sometimes even closer to zero, and might therefore be thought negligible or absent.

As presented in the previous chapter, the quantitative findings of the study topic showed no significant relationship between social competence skills and the acquisition of reading skills. This discrepancy serves to set a new expectation regarding agreement between quantitative and qualitative data, and highlights the unique challenges and contributions of the mixed methods approach when faced with apparently discrepant data. The conflicting findings highlight a need to be attuned to the methodological differences that may emerge between quantitative and qualitative data collection, and the implications of those differences for the integration and interpretation of the findings.

This underscores some of the primary epistemological and methodological differences between quantitative and qualitative methods. The power to define the issue under study, and the acceptable response options is prioritized by the researcher in quantitative research, while in qualitative interviews the participant has more freedom to introduce new topics or define unexpected response options. In qualitative methods, for instance in the current study, the researcher allowed participants to explain responses or provide conditions that could be lost in a strictly quantitative assessment. Such issues were such as the strategies for enhancing social

competence skills in school where ‘subject clubs’ emerged. Qualitative responses also allowed the researcher to develop insights that might be difficult to infer quantitatively.

For example, during interviews participants (teachers) were allowed to explain the unexpected social competence skills apart from those that were intended (communication, cooperation, self-management, self-control, assertion, and engagement), and contextualize them in their descriptions of an adaptive process that was unanticipated and unmeasured in the quantitative survey with pupils. In addition, the teachers during interviews spontaneously introduced sex differences in relation to the acquisition of both social competence and reading skills.

The researcher appreciates the significance of non-significant results in the current study. Several factors could be attributed to non-significant findings. The scales (social competence and literacy assessment) were administered to pupils only. The sample size of 340 pupils might not be large enough to elicit the desired relationship between the two variables of the study. According to Frenzel (2014), a high sample size permits the researcher to increase the significance of the results. The larger the sample size, the more accurately it is expected to reflect the behaviour of the whole group. The current study had a sample of approximately 10% of the total population (standard four pupils), which was enough for the study. In that regard, on the other hand, the researcher became reluctant to increase the sample as that would likely create false-positive results.

Failure to control some participants’ characteristics can also result in non-significant findings. According to the situation in the study area, the researcher had anticipated the following intervening characteristics which were controlled; positive attitude towards school, better mental health, socio-economic background, and parents level education. Literature, however, shows that there are characteristics that are also central to the pupils’ learning. These characteristics are such as the number of family members, access to books and play materials at home, stability of home life, quality

of child care, going to preschool, exposure to stress (in the womb, as an infant, and as a child) and others (Bjork, 2011), of which they were not included in this study.

The non-significant findings provide an avenue for future researchers to study a different population or look at a different set of variables. Since the segment of the current study that came up with non-significant findings was correlational (assessing the statistical relationship between two variables), a future researcher might borrow some experimental ideas to yield significant findings, though qualitative findings in the current study must be right because they were captured from deeper human thought and experiences, instead of counting the answers to relatively superficial questions.

5.6 Implications of the Findings

Findings from the current study reveal both practical and theoretical implications. Implications for this study are the conclusions drawn from the results that explain the importance of the findings.

5.6.1 Practical Implications

The main objective of the current study was to examine the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in primary school pupils. Pupils are socially competent if they know how to behave in social situations, and understand both written and implied rules when communicating with peers and adults. A combination of interview, questionnaire, documentary review, and observation methods were employed in addressing the research questions. The findings revealed that social competence skills are developed from the family level: although schools are important in nurturing and sustaining them. Research has shown that the individual's trend of social competence skills begins at home, and extends to peers and adults at large (Wallace, 2003) in schools. The sustainability of the pupils' social competence skills in schools depends much on the relationship between teachers and the pupils. Research opines that a good relationship between the two sides is likely to foster the development of social competence skills, which would, in turn, promote the acquisition of reading skills.

From the findings, the most important social competence skills are communication skills. This is simply because the remaining skills scrutinized in the current study (self-management, assertion, cooperation, self-control, and engagement) depend on the pupil's ability to communicate his/her ideas well. Good verbal and written skills are essential for delivering and understanding information accurately. The findings imply that being able to communicate effectively is vital, not only in academics but also in life. This suggests that communication skills are fundamental to pupils' development. Such skills are the foundation of relationships and are essential for learning, playing, and interacting socially and academically.

The findings further imply that there is no specific and direct way of developing social competence skills in pupils. Social competence skills are developed during the teaching and learning activities, such as debates, group works, paired learning; and social activities like play, as schools are agents of socialization. One of the reasons for such an act could be the fact that social competence skills are not examined and scored like academic subjects; hence much emphasis is on teaching lessons that can be assessed. Teaching strategies like grouping pupils in small groups for discussion, presentation, and classroom arrangements were solely meant for academic purposes, but also served to develop social competence skills simultaneously. The role of teachers in developing social competence skills in pupils is therefore vital, as they lead and organise teaching, learning, and classroom activities. Pupils, as a result, are socially competent if they know how to behave in social situations, and understand both written and implied rules when communicating with peers and adults.

As supported by literature (Barnett, 2011; Duncan & Magnuson, 2013; Amirtha & Jebaseelan, 2014), social competence skills are crucial for the pupils' reading acquisition, academic success, and in life aspects such as the workplace. Socially competent pupils in the current study behaved well indifferent situations; they were respectful, obedient, cooperative, attentive, and other related skills. Possession of these skills would help pupils to acquire and master reading skills quickly, and thereafter, perform better in other academic subjects. The findings further imply that

a socially competent pupil would also succeed in other aspects of life as an adult. This is because the pupil who demonstrates the so-called pro-social skills at a younger age is less likely to end up in juvenile detention, be arrested, or abuse drugs later in life. Socially competent community members were reported in the current study, to be accepted by their fellow members; and could easily fit in different social situations.

Lack of parental follow-ups to their pupils' academic progress was found to be a big challenge towards pupils' acquisition of reading skills, and academic success in general. A large number of pupils struggled to read simultaneously because their families did not support the reading skills. Teachers' efforts did not suffice because their efforts must be complemented by parents'/guardians' efforts. It was evidenced that pupils whose parents or guardians did not follow up on their academic practices were lagging in the acquisition of reading skills. This suggests the importance of parental involvement in the academic affairs of school pupils.

The quantitative side of the current study does not show the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in pupils. This contrasts with the existing theories such as Social Learning and Socialcultural, as well as a body of previous research on the same topic. However, more research may be needed to reconcile these differences.

5.6.2 Theoretical Implication

Several theoretical implications can be deduced from this study. Concerning the Sociocultural Theory, the study reaffirms that learning occurs in sociocultural settings through interaction with peers and adults. This study, specifically, shows that Sociocultural Theory can be integrated into reading classrooms. The study clearly shows that pupils can be assisted to reach their ZPD levels in reading practices. Observations in the current study showed that subject teachers were able to guide pupils to reading using different approaches, such as reading in groups, reading before fellow pupils in front of the classrooms, and reading on the blackboards. Thus, researchers should study instructional strategies that can integrate

Sociocultural Theory to grant teachers with alternative methods. The theory advocates for the importance of the social environment in learning relations.

The findings that social competence skills are crucial for the pupils' reading skills acquisition are consistent with Sociocultural Theory. According to the theory, every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first on the social level (between children-interpsychological), and later, on the individual (inside the child-intrapsychological); and all this originates as actual relationships between individuals. The theory is reflected in the findings that social interactions influence people's cognitive development. The findings show that interactive pupils were socially competent, and their learning pace was reported as better than non-interactive pupils. The Sociocultural Theory stresses that learning occurs through interactions with others in communities: peers, adults, teachers, and other mentors.

The Sociocultural Theory stresses on the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which is reflected in the current study. ZPD is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by the independent problem solving, and the level of potential as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Cole, 1996). This concept is significant because teachers can use it as a guide to the child's reading development by starting with simple to complex elements of learning to read. It further allows teachers to identify what the child can do through the use of the mediator, and therefore, enables teachers to help the children achieve the next level by themselves.

The findings showed that peer interaction is the most appropriate means of developing social competence skills within pupils, which would in turn facilitate the acquisition of reading skills. The Sociocultural Theory recognizes the role of play in fostering peer interaction, and thus, teachers should provide pupils with many chances to play. Through play, a pupil's conceptual capacities are stretched, which leads to development, particularly language development. The theory opines that language is the basis of learning, and it supports other activities like reading, writing, logic, reasoning, and reflective thinking. To achieve that, teachers are encouraged to

enhance leadership in the classroom, collaborative learning, and thoughtful discussions. The teachers' goal is to facilitate learning by directing the dialogue and confirming contributions to further motivate the pupils.

In addition, Sociocultural Theory maintains that the pupil's social world is not only the interactions between peers and their teachers but also it consists of outside influences within the community. Prior knowledge like the learned behaviours at home has an impact on the learning process. The theory points out three elements that are related to cognitive development: culture is important in learning, language is the root of culture, and individuals learn and develop through their role in the community.

From a pedagogical perspective, integrating the Sociocultural Theories in the reading lessons can help in solving some of the problems of teaching and learning reading in the classroom in the Tanzanian context. Observations of the lessons in schools B and E in the current study showed subject teachers identifying vocabularies before guiding pupils to read the whole story in a book. Such structured interactions with teachers help pupils to create meanings of what they read by incorporating their skills and knowledge as they make meanings for different texts under different reading conditions. The theory also helps pupils to create positive attitudes regarding reading and positive perceptions about themselves as readers.

For the teachers, this study creates awareness of the need to have more instructional strategies that encourage pupils to support each other in the reading classes. The strategies would also let teachers support and supervise pupils in reading practices, and assess their reading performance. While selecting a reading text, teachers have to consider the pupil's background, understanding, as well as the complexity of the text. They have to let pupils read in pairs and small groups while supporting them in the process. Teachers can additionally provide other activities like pre-reading, while-reading, and after-reading activities as they are believed to be significant in developing reading in classrooms (Huwari, 2019). The theory encourages more

interactive activities to facilitate cognitive growth such as productive discussions, constructive feedback, as well as collaboration with others.

Understanding the Social Learning Theory, on the other end, can help teachers connect with pupils who are acting out or having trouble reading. The application of Social Learning Theory can directly address behavioural problems in some pupils and help them improve their learning behaviours, and make for them a world of confidence. Social modelling and examples are very powerful tools in learning. For example, if pupils see positive consequences from a reading action (such as clapping hands), they are likely to try reading activities themselves. Unique, novel, and different situations often catch a pupil's attention and can stand out to them. If pupils see others pupils paying attention, they are more likely to pay attention. So teachers can use reward systems and punishments to help pupils learn from the examples of their fellow pupils.

The Social Learning Theory also has a great root in encouraging self-efficacy by using constructive feedbacks. This is because pupils who get positive reinforcement, for instance in reading, have more confidence in themselves and their abilities. This, however, stands out in their minds and they may want to repeat the behaviour. When pupils learn from observing others, describing the consequences of such behaviours is crucial as it can effectively increase appropriate behaviours and decrease inappropriate ones. Modelling, therefore, provides an alternative to shaping for teaching new behaviours.

Social Learning Theory represents a significant change in how learning is conceptualized. It indicates that pupils are active in the learning process and that learning a behaviour, like reading, requires more than just responding to the teacher's instructions. Instead, learning requires that pupils observe their environment, become motivated to replicate a reading behaviour from their social context and learn not only from their actions but from replicating behaviours modelled for them. This approach to learning helps change approaches to teaching because it places a greater

emphasis on creating an active classroom in which pupils are increasingly hands-on with their materials and learn from models demonstrated for them.

CHAPTER SIX
SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The current study was set out to investigate the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisitions in public primary school pupils in Babati Township Council, to capture the Tanzanian context. The problem that led to this study was the persistent reports of poor reading skills in primary school pupils in several regions in Tanzania. Social competence skills that were involved in this study are communication, cooperation, assertion, self-management, engagement, and self-control; against the reading skills (vocabulary, reading comprehension, silent reading, reading aloud, and word identification). The key objectives of the study were to explore the factors that hinder the acquisition of reading skills in pupils, establish teachers' knowledge of social competence skills, examine teachers' perceptions of the role of social competence skills in facilitating reading skills acquisition, appraise the social competence skills and reading skills enhancing practices employed by teachers in schools, and analyse the association between social competence skills and readings skills achievement in early primary school pupils.

The study was guided by a mixed-method research approach and the convergent parallel design. The study was conducted in 17 selected public primary schools; where 340 pupils were studied (20 from each school), as well as 42 teachers (head teachers, class teachers, and subject teachers), and 7 parents and 3 guardians. Data were collected using observation, interview, questionnaire, and documentary review. The analysis procedures to make data reliable and valid, as well as ethical issues were observed.

6.1 Summary of the Key Findings

The chapter is organized to reflect the five objectives of the study which are to; establish factors that hinder the acquisition of reading skills in children, explore teachers' knowledge of social competence skills, examine the perceptions of teachers of the role of social competence skills in reading skills acquisition, investigate the

social competence and reading skills enhancing practices employed by teachers in schools, and establish the association between social competence and reading skills acquisition among primary school pupils

6.1.1 Factors that hinder Acquisition of Reading Skills

Several factors were put forward for low acquisition and mastery of reading skills in pupils in the study area. Teachers (subject and head teachers) blamed the current registration system of pupils by the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA). The system (PReM) monitors pupils' transitions from one standard to another, and thus, it does not allow the traditional state of retaining pupils in one standard until they master appropriate competencies. Another factor was truancy, as findings showed that pupils were assigned home-based activities by the parents and guardians. This made them attend the lessons inconsistently, and pulled them back academically. It was reported by the teachers that the parents and guardians in the study area had low enthusiasm in education resulting in poor participation in school matters. However, the interviewed parents/guardians showed mixed findings. About 70% supported the teachers' assertions that parents had low enthusiasm for educational matters, while others attributed that situation to the daily life hustles that made them spend most of the time in search of meeting the basic needs.

School infrastructure, particularly the buildings were also mentioned as the cause for the pupils' poor mastery of reading skills, as they led into overcrowded classrooms that made it hard for teachers to teach. The social-economic status of many families in the study area was another bottleneck for pupils' acquisition and mastery of reading skills. This was also supported by the 90% of the interviewed parents/guardians who admitted it was not easy to meet all their children's needs. Policy mismatch was also reported by the teachers as a huddle to reading skills acquisition. The government advocates for all pupils to go through pre-school education before being enrolled in standard one. On the other side, there are directives that no child should be left out of school regardless of whether the pupil attended pre-primary education or not. This has led to the enrolment of pupils with no background in reading skills.

6.1.2 Teachers' Knowledge of Social Competence Skills

The findings showed that all the teachers knew the meaning of the social competence skills concept. The concept was linked to such behaviours as cooperation, following instructions, following daily routines, hard work, respect, compliance, attentiveness, and respecting others. Individuals with particular perceived good traits in the community were reported to be socially competent. Some participants related individuals' integrity in the community with social competence. The participants were also aware of social competence skills under investigation (communication, cooperation, assertion, self-management, self-control, and engagement), where cooperative skills were rated higher than the rest.

In relation to social competence skills that would help the pupil in academic development; obedience was highly ranked, followed by cooperation, respect (to teachers and peers), as well as attentiveness, and hardworking. Obedience, in particular, was closely linked to academic success because an obedient pupil would also exhibit other skills such as cooperation and hard work. In addition, the participants opined that both social competence and academic skills are important for younger children, and they are to be handled concurrently in the school environment. Socially competent individuals were further reported to be good and acceptable members of the community in their adulthood. For example, participants were of the view that people who are drunkards and who misbehave in the communities.

6.1.3 Teachers' Perceptions of the Role of Social Competence Skills in Reading Skills Acquisition in Pupils

The findings on social competence skills in pupils were not different from those reported for adults, as similar traits, in different situations, were linked to a pupil being socially competent. For instance, a punctual pupil who would willingly clean the school environment, attempt classroom assignments, never miss classroom sessions unnecessarily; was regarded by the teachers as socially competent. It was added that a socially competent pupil displays the same skills (good behaviour) at home and school as well. Nonetheless, teachers hinted that some pupils would

behave well in schools than in their homes. Socially competent pupils were said to be easy to teach and handle in and outside classrooms.

Concerning reading skills, it was generally agreed that pupils with social competence skills were in a good position to acquire and master the reading skills faster than their counterparts; although a few pupils with poor social competence skills also mastered reading skills easily. In addition to being attentive and teachable in the classroom, socially competent pupils were further reported to be curious to know many things – eager to learn. They were assertive and did not fear teachers (as many primary school pupils do), and this brought teachers closer to them compared to their counterparts.

6.1.4 Social Competence and Reading Skills Enhancing Practices Employed by the Teachers in Schools

Several practices for developing reading skills were put forward during interviews, particularly by subject teachers and head teachers. The participatory method was the most reported, where teachers would provide instructions on specific reading-related tasks of the day, and allow the pupils to participate in reading activities. The pupils' participation was either voluntary (a pupil volunteer to participate), or the teacher would pick pupils randomly to participate in the activities. The aim was to make sure that every pupil participates.

Schools employed paired learning in their classroom which encouraged the acquisition of reading skills. Pupils who could read fluently were paired with those who were struggling with the assumption that the better pupils in reading would assist their struggling fellows, with the instructions from the teacher. Teachers also used the extra time to help pupils to acquire the reading skills. Extra teaching was conducted after normal learning hours (usually 3:20 PM) and in the morning, and when other pupils had gone for extra-curricular activities. This strategy focused on slow pupils who needed extra time to catch up with fast pupils. It also targeted pupils who had missed class for one reason or another. It was found that subject teachers would organize these extra classes on their own will, with minimal supervision of the school management. It was more of the subject teachers' discretions.

Parents/guardians, through meetings between them and teachers, were asked to assist their children to master reading skills, though, not all parents would do so. It was reported that many parents or guardians would not attend such meetings because of shortage of time. Many families in the study area were reported to be either farmers or pastoralists; thus, they would all the time be occupied with economic activities. Most importantly, it was found that a large number of parents had low enthusiasm for education for their children, something which was also supported by a convenient number of parents.

Two schools with libraries had set aside time for library reading practices. Libraries looked good in architecture and were rich in reading materials, including storybooks. The researcher's inquiry revealed that the libraries were the outcome of donor-funded projects. Many participants, particularly head teachers, reported the library as one of the effective ways of enhancing pupils' acquisition of reading skills. Unfortunately, most of the visited schools did not have the libraries.

School feeding programmes were also reported to have an indirect impact on pupils' acquisition of reading skills. Schools with such programmes minimized school dropouts and truancy. School feeding programmes resulted in good attendance and increased concentration of the pupils during the lessons. Furthermore, some teachers used counselling sessions to encourage pupils to read. This was done to pupils whose cases could not be dealt with in groups, and who were facing unique challenges such as parental conflicts.

As for social competence skills, the study did not find a specific strategy that was solely focused on developing social competence skills. Rather, the strategies for developing social competence skills in the surveyed schools were embedded in the strategies for developing reading skills and academic subjects. In addition, all the subject teachers who were interviewed were not aware that the techniques they used to teach enhanced both social competence and reading skills. Such techniques were; working in groups (cooperation), presentations (communication), following rules

(self-regulation), encouraging pupils to be inquisitive (assertion), and several others that were meant to make pupils learn to read better.

6.1.5 Association between Social Competence Skills and Reading Skills Acquisition

The study investigated the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in pupils. The Basic Education Curriculum Standard III-VI (Tanzania Institute of Education, 2016) was used as a benchmark to find out whether the targeted pupils (standard four) had acquired the required skills at the required level level (communicate in different contexts, comprehend and understand a written text or sounds, and use vocabulary in different contexts). The findings showed that more than 80 percent of the pupils were able to read as per the curriculum. One significant factor for such reading attainment was the (then) newly introduced curriculum that deals with the 3Rs only at lower levels. It was further reported that girls outshined boys in the acquisition and mastery of reading skills.

Findings from the qualitative approach showed that socially competent pupils were in a good position to acquire the reading skills because social competence skills make the learning process easier. Nonetheless, the six predictors (communication skills, cooperation, engagement, assertion, self-management, and self-control) which were run against each outcome (vocabulary, word identification, reading and listening comprehension, loud and silent reading) to find out their impact found that the studied six social competence skills (predictors) had no statistical significant contribution towards the pupils' reading skills acquisition.

Having more than 80% of pupils who can read did not mean that things were smooth. Several factors were reported to constrain reading competency from reaching 100%. The new registration system of pupils by the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA) was blamed for being rigid. That is, it does not provide for schools to retain pupils in the same classes till they master specific level skills. Schools would, thus, allow pupils to move to the next level regardless of whether they had mastered some competencies or not.

Babati Town Council's residents, apart from Babati town itself, were farmers and pastoralists. This was also found to be an obstacle to the reading skills in pupils in

the area. The study found out that many parents and guardians engaged their children in activities such as shamba works or animal rearing, taking care of siblings while parents are away for shamba works, petty trading, or labouring to get some pennies for buying some household stuff like food. As a result, children attended lessons irregularly – which affected their learning pace.

Truancy was also reported as one of the reasons for the acquisition of reading skills in pupils in the study area. As reported earlier, a good number of residents in the study area were farmers and pastoralists, and thus, they would engage their children in farm or other activities. Pupils themselves would sometimes choose to work on farms or animal rearing, petty trading, or seek casual employment to get something to eat at home. Truancy was directly linked with the social-economic status of many families in the study area – considering that a reasonable number of families were living the subsistence model of life (from hand to mouth). This situation had a considerable negative effect on the pupils' academic success. That is, pupils from such families lacked food, which resulted in inconsistent school attendance and thus poor learning.

Poor and insufficient buildings were also observed in several schools, and were cited as one of the causes of poor acquisition and mastery of reading skills in pupils in the study area. The classrooms were overcrowded due to the limited number of rooms to the extent that teachers reported being unable to manage classes during the teaching and learning processes. This situation was also observed by the researcher. Similarly, schools that were located in the township lacked fences that would reduce interruptions from motor vehicles and people passing across the school compounds.

Furthermore, poor teachers' motivation was reported as one of the factors that hindered the timely acquisition and mastery of reading skills in pupils. Teachers in the study area showed grievances towards the government for not fulfilling their various needs; which to a great extent demoralized them to work.

In addition to low teachers' motivation, there were cases of attrition of competent teachers. It was reported that two teachers from each school were trained to teach 3Rs using the new curriculum. Due to different circumstances, however, they died or were moved or migrated away from their schools. Six schools had thus, remained with one teacher, while the rest lacked even one of the trained teachers. This made it difficult for the remained teachers to deal with the lower classes. It was observed in three schools that older teachers (preferably females) were allocated to teach lower classes with the belief that they were more experienced, and because of their age, they would be friendly to pupils. This situation, however, hindered the effective teaching of 3Rs and reading in particular.

The issue of policy mismatch was also reported as a bottleneck to reading acquisition by pupils in the studied schools. On one hand, the government requires a child to go through pre-school education before enrolment in standard one. On the other hand, the same government has given a directive that all pupils must be enrolled in standard one irrespective of whether they attended pre-education or not. This mixture of pupils with reading backgrounds and those with none made it difficult for teachers to assure that all pupils acquire reading skills at the same pace.

Generally, the community was blamed for pupils' poor mastery of reading skills, and poor academic performance in the study area. The community was reported to have low enthusiasm for education to the extent that they did not care much about their pupils' educational progress. Parents and guardians were busy with daily economic activities; and some even engaged school-aged children in their activities, which hampered the acquisition of reading skills in children. However, parents/guardians disagreed that they had no interest with educational matters, and blames social economic hardship for their dis-involvement in educational affairs.

6.2 Conclusions

The contribution of social competence skills to academic achievement in general, and reading skills in particular has been written by scholars. However, the impact of social competence skills on reading skills acquisition differs according to the context

in which the variables exist. The current study has thus presented the relationship between the two variables in the African context, as most of the existing literature on the topic focused on Western and North American countries. Based on the findings of the current study, several conclusions can be drawn.

The first objective sought to find out factors that hindered the acquisition and mastery of reading skills in pupils in the study area. The findings revealed that several factors caused poor acquisition and mastery of reading skills in pupils. Such factors were truancy, dropout, poor school infrastructures (insufficient buildings) and learning environment (lack of teaching and learning materials), the perceived low parental educational awareness, and lack of school feeding programmes. Similarly, the lifestyle of parents and guardians in the study area denied them time to focus on their children's academic development of their pupils. This situation leads to a conclusion that the low acquisition and mastery of reading skills in the study area is a combination of different factors. Mitigating the problem may require a combination of strategies, apart from enhancing social competence skills.

In the second objective, the researcher inquired about the participants' (teachers) knowledge of social competence skills. The interviewed participants (teachers) knew the concept of social competence skills. This was because social competence skills are embedded in different activities as stipulated by the reviewed national education curricula, as no actual social competence skills were taught in the teacher colleges. It was however proved from the field that the Swahili phrase for 'social competence skills' posed a challenge among the participants. The participants also contended that social competence skills had a remarkable contribution to the pupil's reading and academic achievement, as well as success in life. A person without social competence skills is likely to encounter difficulties in different spheres of life including academia and workplaces.

Social competence skills are one of the important competencies required for the successful performance of the teaching profession. Strengthening pupils' social competence skills provide aid and support for lifelong learning and social

implementation of the teaching process. Teachers' knowledge of social competence skills implies that they can enhance the same to their pupils, if they are well guided. The study posits that social competence skills are the foundation for building pupils' academic interests and needs. The teacher education curricula should nurture encouragement of student-teachers social competence skills through content, learning outcomes, and activities.

The third objective explored the teachers' perception of the relationship between social competence skills and the acquisition of reading skills. Participants perceived social competence skills in pupils as the same as those found in adulthood. Participants argued that some pupils tend to display good social competence skills in schools but not at their homes, however, they asserted that the socially competent pupil displays the same skills at home and school as well. All the teachers (100%) reported that pupils with the studied social competence skills acquired reading skills faster than those who lacked them. Overall, the findings of the present study indicated that teachers' perception of social competence skills on reading skills acquisition is an important factor for young pupils. Teachers are the most valuable and influential resource in the school system, and their role in reading instruction is critical. These findings suggest that while social competence skills as a whole predict reading skills acquisition in pupils, more detailed analysis of the links between different other aspects of social competence, other than those studied in the current study, and reading skills indicators may be warranted to formulate more effective interventions for the promotion of academic well-being of pupils in primary schools.

Objective four inquired about the strategies that were used by the teachers to enhance both reading and social competence skills in the classroom. The findings showed that several strategies were geared towards enhancing the acquisition of reading skills in pupils. These consisted of grouping pupils into working groups, pairing fluent readers with influent readers, presentations, parental involvement in the pupils' learning process, and the school feeding programmes; though they had indirect influence. On the other side, there were no direct strategies or approaches that were solely meant for enhancing social competence skills. Unknowingly, the same

strategies used by the teachers to develop the reading skills, also developed social competence skills. However, the insistence was more on the practices for enhancing the reading skills acquisition by the schools because the reading skills were assessed and scored at the end of the term or academic year. Failure to achieve the set goals on reading acquisition would lead to responsible teachers being accountable.

These findings show a natural connection between literacy and the development of social competence skills as highlighted by the Sociocultural Theory and Social Learning Theory. The theories consider learning in all areas as a social process being facilitated by exposure to literacy-rich materials and practices. The current study portrays that it is through interactions with others, in combination with exposure to literacy materials, which pupils learn to interpret who they are in relation to others, gain an understanding of their social world, and develop social competence skills, with the support of their teachers. Furthermore, research supports the idea that opportunities to practice and develop social competence skills are inherent in literacy-based practices. According to Landry et al. (2010) for instance, exposure to literacy-rich materials and practices promotes the development of language, comprehension, and communication skills, all of which are critical aspects of social competence.

The findings for objectives one to four were from teachers and parents/guardians interviews and the social competence skills knowledge scale (administered to subject teachers. For objective five, the reading skills and social competence skills assessment tools were administered to standard four pupils to complement the findings from the teachers on the relationship between social competence skills and the acquisition of reading skills. There was no statistical significant relationship between a pupil's possession of social competence skills and the acquisition of reading skills. The study posits that the statistical insignificant findings do not mean that there was no impact of social competence skills on the acquisition of reading skills in pupils. There was a number of positive trends during data analysis (those in favour of the claim), but statistically non-significant. This situation can be described as promising. A thick description of the data from interviews, documents, and

observations informed the study that there was a positive relationship between possession of social competence skills and the acquisition of reading skills in pupils.

This study posits that social competence skills have a positive impact on pupils' acquisition and mastery of reading skills. An exploration of the two variables (social competence and reading skills) suggests that there is an existence of a positive relationship between the two. Social competence skills are more important at a younger age than in adulthood. The reviewed literature and the study findings show that the early years act as a foundation for the pupils' development. Hence, imparting social competence skills in the early years is vital for the future success of children. This study represents an important shift in the focus of research by shedding light on the pupils' social competence skills and reading skills acquisition in primary school education.

The findings from the current study imply that social competence skills for children is a critical step towards helping them develop reading skills and gain academic success at large. A curriculum using literacy-based practices and materials could be used to support the development of social competence skills across the pupils' key social contexts: home, school, and the community, and thus promote change that is likely to be effective and lasting. Exposure to stress is inevitable in life. Equipping children with strong social competence skills is a critical step toward helping children create and maintain the networks of social support that will help them to cope with, adapt to, and even thrive in school, as well as in the face of life's many challenges.

This study focused on a small group of schools in one geographical area of Manyara Region. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to all standard four pupils in Tanzania. They do not cover the whole population of pupils in the country with different sociolinguistic and cultural contexts. Nonetheless, the findings provide insights into social competence skills and reading acquisition in the African context.

6.3 Recommendations

This study focused on the relationship between social competence skills and the acquisition and mastery of reading skills in primary school pupils. The findings revealed that social competence skills are important for the pupils' acquisition and mastery of reading skills in particular, academic performance, and life success in general. However, there were no specific practices that were meant for enhancing social competence skills in schools. Social competence skills in pupils were coincidentally developed while pupils were learning to read, or other academic subjects.

Adding a new curriculum with social competence skills teachings can be a big challenge in the teaching and learning process today. This is because schools are required to have pupils maintain higher levels of academic performance, or teachers' jobs may be compromised. Although it may be challenging to have an additional curriculum that imparts pupils with social competence skills, it has a lasting positive effect on the children's lives through positive social interactions and academic achievements as well. It is therefore imperative for the government through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, through Tanzania Institute of Education to consider embedding social competence skills components in the early years curriculum of basic education.

Furthermore, this study ascertained that some parents or guardians did not lay a good foundation for the rigorous reading process in their pupils. Such parents hardly had exposure to the written language at home. This was a big obstacle to reading skills acquisition and mastery by the pupils because reading as a sociocultural practice is linked not only to how people use 'speaking' and 'reading', but also it is related to issues surrounding the quality of people's way of living generally. This was also supported by the parents and guardians who were interviewed. They attributed shortage of reading materials for their children to economic hardship; that they could not afford to buy such materials. Metaphorically, speaking then, families with relatively better socio-economic status in the current study papered their pupils for the kinds of texts they were likely to encounter at school. These were mainly civil

servants' families. It also seemed that their whole way of life was geared towards facilitating academic achievements for their pupils; with texts like posters, pictures, images on TVs, diagrams, and the like. Hence, parents need to be sensitized to expose their children to the reading environment, as this will help pupils to overcome inhibitions towards reading. A partnership between parents and teachers needs to be forged so that parents can play a role in initiating and scaffolding their children's learning.

Apart from the home environment, it was found that a large number of schools lacked materials, particularly, books that would have promoted reading culture in pupils. As cited in the previous chapters, only two schools, out of 17 studied schools, had libraries where pupils could go and read. To get rid of the shortage of books and other reading stimulating materials, local authorities and the central government should procure such materials and supply them to schools. It is imperative to introduce an education fund to which people from different sectors (employers, farmers, and businesses) can contribute towards the procurement of reading materials. The raised funds should also cater for constructing classrooms to deal with the overcrowding which was observed in classrooms during the study.

Irregular attendance of pupils to schools was observed during the study, and found that it hindered the pupils' acquisition and mastery of reading skills. The main reasons for truancy were reported as the lack of food at schools and poor parental awareness of the importance of education. Parents and guardians were reported to prefer assigning their children home-related activities, than insisting them to attend classes. Sensitizing parents and the community at large on the importance of education is recommended earlier; however, this should include arranging for school feeding programmes. Contributing for school feeding programmes should be organised at the local government levels and implemented. In the two schools that had school feeding programmes, local leaders were reported to be strictly following for food contribution by the parents/guardians.

The then-new curriculum was appreciated for being more focused on the 3Rs only, as compared to the former one which was considered overloaded for the youngsters. The challenge of the then-new curriculum was, however, the lack of teachers trained for the curriculum. By the time of this study, there was attrition of the 3Rs teaching competent teachers in the schools due to reasons like marriage, change of work stations, sickness, and even deaths. It is therefore recommended for the government through the appropriate ministry to train more teachers frequently to control the shortage of the 3Rs competent teachers in schools.

The study found that teachers faced many problems which lowered their work morale. The problems were such as poor building, overcrowded classrooms, poor housing, low salaries, lack of promotions, and the delay of personal claims. The government should therefore improve teachers' working environment as much as possible. This will raise their working morale and improve the academic standards of the pupils. The community, on the other hand, should change the negative perception towards the teaching profession; rather they should support and care for teachers. This would also make teachers find their profession motivating and rewarding. In addition, the Babati Town Council should respond to teachers' challenges at the council's level such as keeping teachers' records properly, and submitting them when required by higher authorities timely.

The new registration system of children by the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA) known as PREM is a good innovation that monitors the children from standard one to seven, and even to secondary education. The system was, however, blamed for being rigid in the sense that it does not provide for schools to retain children with reading difficulties in the same classes, as it used to be. The system allows retention on medical grounds only. Teachers were of the opinion that retaining children, especially in the lowers classes (standards one and two), was so helpful in controlling reading difficulties. Since the system allows retention on medical grounds, the National Examination Council of Tanzania can also consider providing a room for learners with reading difficulties, provided that the cases are reported and recorded kept well.

Lastly, this study was a cross-sectional study of standard four pupils. It solely focused on the relationship between social competence skills and reading skills acquisition. A longitudinal study would be interesting to further establish this assertion. This would be of great benefit to researchers because they will be able to detect developments or changes in the characteristics of the targeted pupils at both the group and individual levels.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Vocabulary outcomes

	Outcomes									
Predictors	**Rejea**	**Mbali**	**Meza**	**Ogelea**	**Toka**	**Cheka**	**Furaha**	**Simama**	**Toa**	**Anua**
(1)	(2)	(3)		(4)	(5)		(6)	7	8	9
Communication: Agree	-0.0719	-0.0181	0.118	-0.147	0.0139	-0.224*	0.00921	0.0786	-0.364***	0.0150
	(0.174)	(0.0787)	(0.158)	(0.127)	(0.0869)	(0.129)	(0.0845)	(0.147)	(0.0765)	(0.114)
Cooporation: Agree	0.209	0.111	-0.223***	-0.0153	0.170	-0.299**	0.0959	0.00441	-0.166	0.165
	(0.134)	(0.189)	(0.0745)	(0.243)	(0.248)	(0.146)	(0.170)	(0.191)	(0.208)	(0.228)
Engagement: Agree	-0.0460	0.0242	0.172	-0.00905	-0.0424	0.155	0.0458	0.00537	0.135	0.00325
	(0.178)	(0.105)	(0.177)	(0.168)	(0.0686)	(0.207)	(0.104)	(0.141)	(0.180)	(0.122)
Management: Agree	0.00496	0.0569	0.0769	-0.0760	0.000542	0.325**	-0.00146	0.0629	0.105	-0.00761
	(0.136)	(0.0978)	(0.131)	(0.122)	(0.0720)	(0.129)	(0.0668)	(0.125)	(0.146)	(0.0966)
Assertion: Agree	0.110	0.0137	0.113	0.0762	0.0840	0.0685	0.131*	0.166*	0.0348	0.159*
	(0.0804)	(0.0601)	(0.0942)	(0.0954)	(0.0728)	(0.0978)	(0.0746)	(0.0923)	(0.0976)	(0.0882)
Control: Agree	-0.0829	0.139	0.182	0.0258	0.0942	0.203	0.169	0.0441	0.0511	0.0137
	(0.127)	(0.108)	(0.127)	(0.125)	(0.100)	(0.132)	(0.111)	(0.113)	(0.129)	(0.0994)
Sex: Girls	-0.0143	0.0192	0.0833	0.0497	-0.00268	-0.0367	-0.0574	0.0534	0.0528	-0.0898**
	(0.0547)	(0.0364)	(0.0528)	(0.0554)	(0.0352)	(0.0571)	(0.0359)	(0.0507)	(0.0574)	(0.0453)
Age category: 11 to 13	-0.0771	-0.0677*	-0.0883*	-0.0725	-0.0718**	-0.0376	-0.0821**	-0.119**	-0.0709	-0.165***
	(0.0552)	(0.0367)	(0.0532)	(0.0563)	(0.0354)	(0.0580)	(0.0370)	(0.0515)	(0.0584)	(0.0458)
14 to 16	0.190	-0.0601		0.147		-0.178	-0.0380	-0.0639	0.243*	
	(0.209)	(0.134)		(0.145)		(0.207)	(0.109)	(0.175)	(0.144)	
Observations	294	294	288	294	288	294	294	294	294	288
Standard errors in parentheses										
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1										
Notes: This table is based on the results of Logistics regression testing for marginal estaimtes. Column (1) describes the predictors/determinants used in the model to make prediction in each row. Columns (2) to (9) are the outcomes of interest respectively.										

Appendix II: Loud reading outcomes

	Outcome		
Predictor	**Reading loud**	**Reading loud1**	**Reading loud2**
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Communication: Agree	10.25**	-0.846	-12.19***
	(3.982)	(1.903)	(3.652)
Cooporation: Agree	-10.35*	6.206**	13.47**
	(5.963)	(2.849)	(5.469)
Engagement: Agree	10.24**	1.296	-11.28***
	(4.272)	(2.041)	(3.918)
Management: Agree	3.887	-2.922*	-1.035
	(3.413)	(1.631)	(3.130)
Assertation: Agree	2.740	-1.495	-1.223
	(2.306)	(1.102)	(2.115)
Control: Agree	10.91***	-2.317	-7.903***
	(3.055)	(1.460)	(2.802)
Sex: Girls	1.386	-1.078	0.276
	(1.411)	(0.675)	(1.294)
Age category: 11 to 13	-3.537**	0.558	2.260*
	(1.432)	(0.685)	(1.313)
14 to 16	1.023	-0.347	-1.059
	(5.008)	(2.393)	(4.593)
Constant	39.61***	8.010***	25.97***
	(5.181)	(2.475)	(4.752)
Observations	294	293	294
R-squared	0.208	0.076	0.147
Standard errors in parentheses			
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1			
Notes: This table is based on the results of OLS regression for the mean different between different categories. Column (1) describes the predictors/determinants used in the model to make prediction in each row. Columns (2) to (4) are the outcomes of interest respectively.			

Appendix III: Semi structured interview guide

Preliminaries

Note down demographic characteristics of participants, including

- Age
- Sex
- Education level
- Teaching experience
- Period of time spent at the school
- School location (urban or peri-urban) *(for head teacher)*
- Number of pupils (girls & boys) *(for both class and head teacher)*
- Number of teachers (men & women) *(for head teacher)*

Core Questions

OBJECTIVES AND FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS
1. Explore teachers' knowledge on the concept of social competence. ✓ Ask the meaning of social competence from their perspective ✓ Probe their knowledge of someone being socially competent ✓ Probe on the social skills that lead to social competence ✓ Ask the social skills that are important in education and life generally
2. Perceptions of teachers on the role of social competence on reading skills achievement. ✓ Ask how they perceive social competence skills in young children ✓ Ask if they perceive social competence skills as important in academics ✓ Ask their perception on social competence skills on reading skills achievement
3. Social competence and reading skills enhancing strategies employed by teachers in schools. ✓ Probe for the strategies used to promote reading skills in pupils ✓ Ask if social competence is enhanced in any way ✓ Ask if there are any strategies they use to promote social competence among children (if any are they articulated in the curriculum?) ✓ Ask if the school supports promotion of social competence alongside academia ✓ Ask if there are any articulated policies for promotion of social competence skills
4. Establish the association between social competence and readingskills achievement among early primary school children.
✓ Probe on the meaning of reading skills (by mentioning them) ✓ Probe on the extent/level reading of skills that a standard four pupils is supposed to master (according to curriculum) ✓ Probe on how the reading skills are imparted to young children

✓ Probe on the current status of mastery of reading skills to the intended children ✓ Probe on the factors (if any) that hinder timely mastery of reading skills ✓ Ask whether there is any relationship between social competence and reading ✓ Probe on the position of social skills' mastery on the acquisition of reading skills or other wise
5. Opinions for further improvement of children's reading skills ✓ Probe for individual efforts (pupils) ✓ At school level ✓ At the government level (including policy level) ✓ Ask what they think could further improve reading if done

Appendix IV: Classroom Observational Guide

District.....

School.....

Number of pupils: boys..... girls.....

1	Is the classroom arranged into well-defined interest areas that can accommodate small groups of children? A. Yes B. No
2	Are there corners that can provide privacy for children like rule of "one child at a time"? A. Yes B. No C. If no, why.....
3	Are there materials that present the appropriate levels of challenge to children? (eg books) A. Yes B. No C. If no, why.....
4	Does the teacher provide spontaneous coaching and modeling within the natural context of classroom activities and routines? A. Yes B. No
5	Does the teacher provide social reinforcement to children? A. Yes B. No
6	How does the teacher handle mischievous children in the classroom? A. ..... B. ..... C. ..... D. .....
7	Are daily schedules and routines well planned and followed by both the teacher and children? A. Yes B. No

8	Are there group affection activities such as games and songs? A. Yes B. No C. If no, why.....
9	Note the presence of the following; A. Cooperative learning activities;..... B. Discussions;..... C. Puppetry; ..... D. Listening to;.....
10	Does the teacher provide opportunity for children to communicate (talk to the teacher and among themselves, listen to each other)? 1. Teachers-pupils..... 2. In pupils..... (rank 1 for the most frequent and 2 for the less)
11	Any other observations critical for promoting social skills; A. ..... B. ..... C. ..... D. ..... E. .....

Time: start..... end.....

Date.....

Please, where possible and appropriate, support all observation notes with visual images.

Appendix V: Photo taking consent form

I hereby grant permission to *Mr Innocent Messo*to use photographs and/or video of the school environment taken during data collection for the purpose of his study.

(Signature of the Head/Subject teacher)

Name _____

School _____

Phone_____

Appendix VI: Teachers' social competence knowledge assessment tool

School_____
Name _____

1. What do you understand by the concept of social competence skills?
   _____
   _____
2. How did you get to know social competence skills? (tick correct responses)
   i. Taught at the college _____
   ii. Attended workshops/seminar _____
   iii. In my professional development _____
3. What is the difference between social and academic skills?
   _____
   _____
   What three social competence skills you consider as the most important for pupils to acquire?
   i. Skill #1 _____
   ii. Skill #2 _____
   iii. Skill #3 _____
4. What are the two social competence skills you would like to strengthen most? (List two skills from those listed in question 4 above.)
   i. Skill #1 _____
   ii. Skill #2 _____
5. Why do you think the two skills in 5 above are the most important?
   _____
   _____

Is the importance of social and reading skills for learners the same?

i. Yes
ii. No
iii. Not sure

Justify your response_____
_____

6. What is your knowledge level of the following social skills? *(Rate your knowledge level on a scale of 1 (none) to 4(outstanding).*

Items		**Responses**			
		none	**good**	**better**	**outstanding**
i.	Cooperation				
ii.	Engagement				
iii.	Self-management				
iv.	Assertion				
v.	Self control				

7. Strategies for teaching social competence skills are different from those of reading skills.
    i. Yes
    ii. No
    iii. Not sure
8. How would you rank your capacity in each of these areas? (Rate your capacity on a scale of 1 (none) to 5 (outstanding).

    i. Identification of social competence skills _____

    ii. Nurturing social competence skills _____

    iii. Teaching social competence skills _____

    iv. Intervening inappropriate social competence skills _____

9. Do you believe that the acquisition of social skills influences the acquisition of academic skills including reading skills?
    i. Yes
    ii. No
    iii. Not sure
10. Why do you believe so in 11 above?

    _____
    _____
    _____

11. Do you believe that a child with poor social skills will have problems in academics and behavioural complications?
    i. Yes
    ii. No
    iii. Not sure
12. Would you invest more on academic than social skills in early primary schools pupils?
    i. Yes
    ii. No
    iii. Not sure

Justify your response_____

_____

Appendix VII: Pupils social competence skills assessment tool

A. Personal information

Division	
Ward	
School	
Name	
Sex	
Age	
Class	

B. Pupil's behaviour

Please indicate the extent that a pupil has the following behaviours (indicate by √ according to the options provided after every behaviour).

behaviour	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	**Don't know**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
S/he communicates with people					
Walks up and initiates conversation					
Works well on a team					
Involves others in activities					
Can manage him/herself					
Believes in what s/he is doing					
Able to control his/her feelings					
Asks if he/she can be of help					
Wants to get even with someone who hurts him/her					
Get along with others					
Picks out other Children's faults/mistakes					
Makes others laugh					
Is friendly to new people he/she meets					
Feels good if he/she helps others					
Shows feelings					

Appendix VIII: Story

Why Anansi Has Eight Thin Legs

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there lived a spider named Anansi. Anansi's wife was a very good cook. But always, Anansi loved to taste the food that others in the village made for themselves and for their families.

One day, he stopped by Rabbit's house. Rabbit was his good friend.

"There are greens in your pot," cried Anansi excitedly. Anansi loved greens.

"They are not quite done," said Rabbit. "But they will be soon. Stay and eat with me."

"I would love to, Rabbit, but I have some things to do," Anansi said hurriedly. If he waited at Rabbit's house, Rabbit would certainly give him jobs to do. "I know," said Anansi. "I'll spin a web. I'll tie one end around my leg and one end to your pot. When the greens are done, tug on the web, and I'll come running!"

Rabbit thought that was a great idea. And so it was done.

"I smell beans," Anansi sniffed excitedly as he ambled along. "Delicious beans, cooking in a pot."

"Come eat our beans with us," cried the monkeys. "They are almost done."

"I would love to Father Monkey," said Anansi. And again, Anansi suggested he spin a web, with one end tied around his leg, and one end tied to the big bean pot.

Father Monkey thought that was a great idea. All his children thought so, too. And so it was done.

"I smell sweet potatoes," Anansi sniffed happily as he ambled along. "Sweet potatoes and honey, I do believe!"

"Anansi," called his friend Hog. "My pot is full of sweet potatoes and honey! Come share my food with me."

"I would love to," said Anansi. And again, Anansi suggested he spin a web, with one end tied around his leg, and one end tied to the sweet potato pot.

His friend Hog thought that was a great idea. And so it was done.

By the time Anansi arrived at the river, he had one web tied to each of his eight legs.

"This was a wonderful idea," Anansi told himself proudly. "I wonder whose pot will be ready first?"

Just then, Anansi felt a tug at his leg. "Ah," said Anansi. "That is the web string tied to Rabbit's greens." He felt another. And another. Anansi was pulled three ways at once.

"Oh dear," said Anansi as he felt the fourth web string pull.

Just then, he felt the fifth web string tug. And the sixth.And the seventh.And the eighth. Anansi was pulled this way and that way, as everyone pulled on the web strings at once. His legs were pulled thinner and thinner. Anansi rolled and tugged himself into the river. When all the webs had washed away, Anansi pulled himself painfully up on shore.

"Oh my, oh my," sighed Anansi. "Perhaps that was not such a good idea after all."

To this day, Anansi the Spider has eight very thin legs. And he never got any food that day at all.

Appendix IX: Pupils reading assessment tool

Division	
Ward	
School	
Name	
Sex	
Age	
Class	

1. VOCABULARY

March the item from **group A** with the opposite word from **group B**

Group A	**Group B**			
Return	Sink	Leave	Expose to the sun	Go
Far	Near	Come	Chew	Dive
swallow	Drink	Eat	Spit out	Vomit
Swim	Sleep	Walk	Sink	Sit
Get out	Get in	Crawl	Squirm	Squat
Laugh	calm	Sink	Expose to the sun	Cry
Happiness	Sadness	Cry	Play	Expose to the sun
Stand up	Jump	Rib	Sit	Run
Remove	Give me	Get in	Robe	put
Take away from the sun	Lay	Spread out	Expose to the sun	disperse

2. WORD IDENTIFICATION

Please let the pupil read the words and tick (√) the speed and correctness as indicated after words

Word	**Fast and correct**	**Slow but correct**	**Not correct**
Flower			
Mother			
Sister			
Chicken			
Book			
Sell			
See			
Call			
Shoe			
Absorb			
Laugh			

Sin			
Suck			
Cling			
Thirty			
Total			

3. LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Let pupils listen to a story, then attempt the questions

Questions:

i. Why did Anansi decide not to wait at Rabbit's house until the greens were done cooking?.....

ii. How did Anansi save himself from being pulled into pieces?.....

……

iii. When Anansi was pulled for the first time, whose pot did he think the leg was tied to.....

iv. Which kind of food did Anansi find at his friend Hog?.....

……

v. What is the moral of this story?.....

……

4. SILENT READING

Read the following story, then answer questions that follow

One evening, mother Octopus saw two fishermen. They were fishing near her house. She became so afraid and started to tremble. She thought that fishermen would see her house. She was further afraid that fishermen would also catch her.

When the night approached, mother Octopus' fear of fishermen increased. This is because she knew that fishermen usually fish up to midnights. By that time she would be asleep and it will not be easy for her to the enemies. Also she would not be able to escape as she has small children. She knew that her children would suffer a lot if she was caught by the fishermen.

It happened that fishermen went on fishing up to midnight on that day. Mother Octopus decided not to sleep. Her eyes were directed to fishermen all the time. 'If

they go on fishing towards my house, I will flee with my children', said mother Octopus on her own.

'Mother, why are you so worried today?' children asked their mother. Mother Octopus explained about the danger ahead of them. 'Mother, will the fishermen also grab us?' children kept on interrogating their mother. Mother Octopus told the children they should be prepared to flee.

Questions

Where were fishermen fishing? a) Near Babati town b) Near mother Octopus' house c) Near Mkunga's house d) Near Arusha town	
Why mother Octpus did not sleep for the whole night? a) She was looking for friends b) Fishermen were making noise c) Mother Octopus was so happy d) Mother Octopus was so afraid	
What do you think might happen? a) Mother Octopus will be caught b) Fishermen will not see the house c) Mother Octopus will hide herself in the house d) Mother Octopus will flee	

5. READING ALOUD

	Number of words read fast and correct	**Number of words read slowly but correct**	**Number of mistaken words**
The Crow listened carefully, then, fisher bird			
And the Crow flew together.			
When they submerged in the water with speed, they both missed fish			
"don't be nervous" said the fisher bird, 'let's go again'			
This time the fisher bird caught a big fish.			
But the Crow caught nothing. 'Relax'			
Said the fisher bird. 'you so worried			
Try once again'.			
The Crow agreed. But he first			

requested			
For a piece of fish. ‘I’m hungry’, he said.			
‘Please share with me’.			
The fisher bird replied, ‘I won’t give you ng’o! I do not want you			
To be a beggar. Just carry on trying			
Tirelessly. So as to be independent			
The Crow wanted to stand on his own.			
He was tired of eating leftovers. He was also ashamed of being a beggar			
The Crow imagined, ‘I’m as stronger as others.			
I do not have any bad omen. I will work hard till I succeed.			
The Crow looked at the fisher bird flying			
up. He then speedy dipped into the water			
This time he was very careful. He came across a shoal of fish.			
Vaap! The Crow caught.			
two of them. He handled them properly with his nails			
Jumla			

Appendix X: Parents/guardians interview guide

Preliminaries

Note down demographic characteristics of participants, including

- Age
- Sex
- Education level
- Occupation

Core Questions

1. Why do you take your child to school?
    - ✓ Probe on their perception of education to their children
    - ✓ From their point of view, probe the importance of being educated
2. How are you involved in your child's education
    - ✓ Ask if they make follow ups to their children's learning
    - ✓ Ask if they collaborate with teachers for their children's learning
3. What do you do for living?
    - ✓ Ask about their income earning activities
    - ✓ Probe on the use of the earned income monthly or annually
4. What are your views in relation to the school related costs?
    - ✓ Ask on the costs related to school fees, uniforms, exercise books etc
    - ✓ Probe the extent to which those costs are manageable
5. What are your opinions for improving the quality of education in this village?

Appendix XI: Documentary review guide

S/n	Document type	Information solicited
1	Kiswahili exercise books	• Find out the way pupils comprehend to different tasks given
2	Attendance sheets	• Find out the attendance frequency of pupils • Inquire the reasons for attendance gaps
3	Academic records	• Find out performance in Kiswahili subject • Find out the most performed and poorly performed skills • Inquire the reasons for good and poor performance • Inquire subject clubs records (if any)
4	School committee records	• Find out disciplinary cases reported • Inquire types of disciplinary cases reported • Find out handling of such cases

Appendix XII: An informed consent form for Teachers

Dear teacher, you are invited to participate in a study conducted by Mr Innocent Nasson Messo, a PhD student at University of Dar es Salaam. I'm assessing the relationship between social competence and reading skills achievement among early primary school children, specifically standard four pupils. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because the District Education Office accepted your school to participate in this study. If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed for about 45 to 60 minutes.

The benefits to you and others may be a better understanding of how we can help Tanzanian children achieve academically and become socially acceptable. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with the investigator, your District Education Office or the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent, and to discontinue participation at any time without penalty. If you have any questions, please ask us.

If you have any additional questions later, Mr Innocent Messo (0784 490 389) will be happy to answer them.

YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE, HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE.

Date ……. Signature…….

Signature of Investigator……

Appendix XIII: An informed consent form for Parents (class teachers)

Dear parent, your child is invited to participate in a study conducted Mr Innocent Messo, a PhD student at University of Dar es Salaam Tanzania. I'm assessing the relationship between social competence and reading skills achievement among early primary school children, specifically standard four pupils.

Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because your school accepted to participate in this study. If you decide to allow your child to participate, after returning this signed consent form, Mr Messo (with the help of the class teacher) will come to your child's classroom and administer a study tool. If your child accepts, the researcher will take your child to a quiet place in the classroom where an interview and questions of early reading skills, such as naming letters, will be asked. These measures will be administered in Kiswahili. The whole procedure will take about 40 minutes.

The benefit to your child is he/she may enjoy demonstrating their reading skills. I cannot guarantee, however that he/she will receive any benefits from this study.

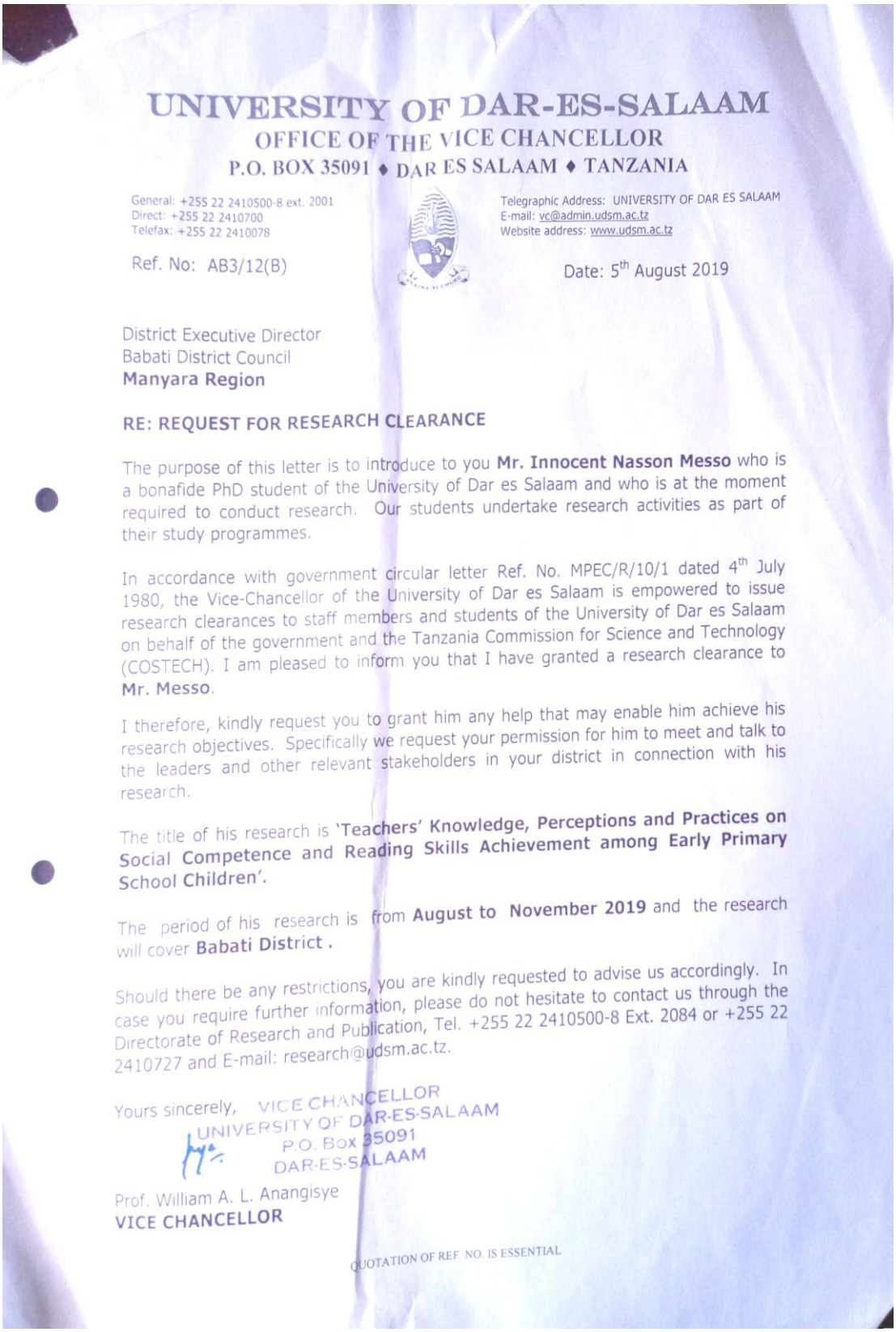
Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you or your child will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Your decision whether or not your child participates will not affect your future relations with the school he/she belongs. If you decide to participate, you and your child are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time without penalty. If you have any questions, please ask Mr Messo (0784 490 389) and he will be happy to answer them.

YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE, HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE.

Date…… Signature……..

Relationship to pupil…….

Appendix XIV: University's introduction letter



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Website address: www.udsm.ac.tz

Ref. No: AB3/12(B)

Date: 5th August 2019

District Executive Director
Babati District Council
Manyara Region

RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH CLEARANCE

The purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Mr. Innocent Nasson Messo** who is a bonafide PhD student of the University of Dar es Salaam and who is at the moment required to conduct research. Our students undertake research activities as part of their study programmes.

In accordance with government circular letter Ref. No. MPEC/R/10/1 dated 4th July 1980, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Dar es Salaam is empowered to issue research clearances to staff members and students of the University of Dar es Salaam on behalf of the government and the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH). I am pleased to inform you that I have granted a research clearance to **Mr. Messo**.

I therefore, kindly request you to grant him any help that may enable him achieve his research objectives. Specifically we request your permission for him to meet and talk to the leaders and other relevant stakeholders in your district in connection with his research.

The title of his research is **'Teachers' Knowledge, Perceptions and Practices on Social Competence and Reading Skills Achievement among Early Primary School Children'.**

The period of his research is from **August to November 2019** and the research will cover **Babati District .**

Should there be any restrictions, you are kindly requested to advise us accordingly. In case you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us through the Directorate of Research and Publication, Tel. +255 22 2410500-8 Ext. 2084 or +255 22 2410727 and E-mail: research@udsm.ac.tz.

Yours sincerely,

VICE CHANCELLOR
UNIVERSITY OF DAR-ES-SALAAM
P.O. Box 35091
DAR-ES-SALAAM

Prof. William A. L. Anangisye
VICE CHANCELLOR

QUOTATION OF REF. NO. IS ESSENTIAL

Appendix XV: Babati Township research clearance letter

JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA
OFISI YA RAIS
TAWALA ZA MIKOA NA SERIKALI ZA MITAA
MKOA WA MANYARA

HALMASHAURI YA MJI WA BABATI
(Barua zote ziandikwe kwa Mkurugenzi wa Mji)

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Tovuti: www.babatitc.go.tz,
Barua pepe:*td@babatitc.go.tz,*

Unapojibu tafadhali taja:-

Ukumbi wa Mji,
S.L.P 383,
BABATI.

Kumb. Na. BTC/A.40/16VOL.V/14

Tarehe: 08/10/2019

Walimu Wakuu,
Shule za Msingi Harambee, Babati, Oysterbay,
Hangoni, Ziwani, Gendi, Darajani, Maisaka, Sinai, Komoto,
Kwaang'w, Managha, Himiti, Bonga, Nangara, Wangbay,
Waang'waray na Kiongozi,
Halmashauri ya Mji,
BABATI.

YAH: KIBALI CHA KUFANYA UTAFITI

Tafadhali husika na mada tajwa hapo juu.

Tumepokea barua kutoka kwa Katibu Tawala Wilaya yenye Kumb. Na. AB.34/370/01/"C"/29 ya tarehe 07 Oktoba, 2019 kuhusu mada tajwa hapo juu.

Kwa barua hii ni kukutaarifu kwamba, ofisi imetoa kibali kwa mwanachuo **Bw. Innocent Nasson Messo** kutoka Chuo Kikuu cha Dar es Salaam kufanya ufatiti kuhusiana na "**Teachers Knowledge, Perceptions and Practices on Social Competence and Reading Skills Achivement Among Early Primary School Children in Babati Town Council**"

Tafadhali mpeni ushirikiano atakaohitjai ili afanikishe utafiti huo, Sheria, Kanuni na Taratibu zizingatiwe.

Nakutakia kazi njema.

Deonis B. Shemaya
K.ny: MKURUGENZI WA MJI
BABATI

Nakala: Bw. Innocent N. Messo,
MWANACHUO,
DAR ES SAALAM.

For TOWN DIRECTOR
BABATI

KEY

WARDS

1.	Maisaka	AA
2.	Nangara	BB
3.	Singe	CC
4.	Bonga	DD
5.	Bagara	EE
6.	Babati	FF
7.	Dareda	GG

SCHOOLS

1.	Sinai	A
2.	Kiongozi	B
3.	Maisaka	C
4.	Ziwani	D
5.	Nangara	E
6.	Gendi	F
7.	Managha	G
8.	Bonga	H
9.	Himiti	I
10.	Darajani	J
11.	Babati	K
12.	Harambee	L
13.	Kwaang’w	M
14.	Komoto	N
15.	Osterbey	O
16.	Hangoni	P
17.	Kwaang’aray	R
18.	Dareda Mission	S
19.	Seloto	T