EFFECTS OF FAMILY BACKGROUND ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AMONG UPPER PRIMARY CHILDREN. A CASE STUDY OF KEIYO NORTH CONSTITUENCY, ELGEIYO MARAKWET COUNTY.

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DECLARATION

This report project is my original work, and it has not been presented for a degree like any other institution.

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this work to my parents, Salome Kiptanui and Richard Kiptanui and my siblings, for their support during my research period. I also extend my gratitude to my supervisor Mr. Sang and the mentors who have greatly participated in the success of my project. Their helpful advice and feedback were essential in making this project possible. Lastly, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my friends and colleagues for their constant support and for always being there during challenging times. May the Almighty God bless you.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how family background influences English language acquisition among upper primary school pupils in Keiyo North Constituency, Elgeyo Marakwet County. The main objectives were: to examine the effects of socioeconomic status, parental education level, home language environment, and access to learning resources on pupils' acquisition of the English language. The study was grounded in four key theories: Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), Systemic Family Therapy Perspective (Bowen, 1974), and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943), with Sociocultural Theory serving as the anchor framework. These theories collectively emphasize the role of social interaction, family dynamics, cognitive modeling, and basic needs in shaping language development. The target population comprised 800 upper primary pupils and 50 English teachers and 500 parents across selected public schools in the constituency. A sample size of 405 participants240 pupils and 15 teachers and 150 parents were selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The study employed a descriptive survey design, and data were collected using structured questionnaires. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were applied, including the use of frequencies, percentages, and thematic analysis. The findings revealed that children from families with higher socioeconomic status and educated parents demonstrated stronger proficiency in English. A supportive home language environment and access to books and media in English significantly enhanced acquisition. Conversely, limited parental literacy, use of vernacular at home, and lack of educational materials posed major challenges. The study concludes that family background is a critical determinant in English language development among upper primary pupils. It recommends that schools and policymakers design intervention programs that enhance parental involvement, literacy, and home learning environments. Future research should explore longitudinal effects of family background on multilingual competencies and examine intervention strategies in different counties to broaden applicability.

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LIST OFABREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBC: Competency-Based Curriculum

KICD: Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

KNEC: Kenya National Examinations Council

MOE: Ministry of Education

SES: Socioeconomic Status

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Access to Resources:	Availability of learning materials such as textbooks, internet, and English media at home.
English Language Acquisition:	The process by which learners gain the ability to understand, speak, read, and write in English.
Family Background:	The overall social, economic, and educational characteristics of a learner's home environment.
Socioeconomic Status:	The social and financial standing of a family, typically based on income, occupation, and education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The chapter introduces information on the background of study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and chapter summary.

1.1 Background to the Study

English language, as a second language in Kenya continues to face significant challenges despite its critical role as the official language of government, commerce and instruction in the education level. This study aims to examine whether family background stands as one of the primary determiner factors influencing English language acquisition and upper primary children. In North America, research continues to underscore disparities in early linguistic exposure. For instance, a study by Murphy and Tucker (2025) emphasizes the ongoing challenges in engaging families of English language learners in the U.S., highlighting language barriers, cultural differences and logistical issues as persistent obstacles. Similarly, Weijie (2023) highlighted the profound impact of family circumstances, parental cultural competence and the home environment on primary school learners' English-speaking proficiency, advocating for English rich home environment and diverse learning resources.

Across Europe, recent research such as a study by the ESRI (2022) in Ireland, reinforces that while migrant-origin children show considerable progress in English language skills between ages 3 and 9 those from non-native English-speaking households still exhibit lower mean reading scores often linked to lower socio- economic resources. This highlights the enduring impact of family background on language outcomes even in context with strong educational support systems.

Furthermore, Borba's (2021) in Hungary stresses the imperative of researching the effects of family background, noting it's pivotal role in ensuring equality opportunities in language education especially concerning linguistic disadvantages that manifest across all educational areas including foreign language learning.

Across the African continent, where English often serves as the language of education and official communication in many nations, the disparities linked to family background are acutely evident. Research in Nigeria has consistently indicated that parental literacy in English and the frequency of English usage within the home environment are strong predictors of children's English language acquisition. Oloyede and Ajadi (2022), for instance, in their study on family background an academic performance, reiterate the strong influence of parental educational background and socioeconomic status on pupils' academic outcomes a finding directly translatedable to language acquisition. Children from homes with limited exposure to English often enter the education system at a significant disadvantage, struggling with the medium of instruction and facing profound challenges in comprehending English-based academic content, as as highlighted by a UNICEF-supported study on language in education in Nigeria (UNICEF ,2022).

In Kenya, the influence of family background on English language acquisition is a highly researched area, reflecting the country's multilingual nature and the Central role of English in academic progression. Analyses of KCPE results have consistently revealed persistent performance gaps in English language that are strongly linked to various family factors. While specific mean grades for previous years are less directly comparable due to the transition to the CBC and the KEPSEA (KNEC, 2023), historical trends demonstrate this disparities. Research conducted in Kenya by Muthomi(2023) on vocabulary acquisition in Kitui, consistently points to parental education, socioeconomic status and the home language environment as significant

determinants of early English language development and subsequent academic success. The current study builds upon this existing body of knowledge by specifically focusing on upper primary children within the Kenyan context, where they foundation for advanced English proficiency is crucial for academic and future success. The following family factors have been consistently highlighted in the literature to be of high influence on child's English language acquisition: parental education, socioeconomic status, home language environment and access to resources. This research aims to delve deeper into these specific factors to provide current and localized insight.

In Keiyo North Constituency, the situation mirrors national trends. The constituency is predominantly rural, with many families experiencing economic challenges and low levels of parental literacy. English is rarely used in day-to-day family interactions, with indigenous languages and Kiswahili being more prevalent. Additionally, many homes lack adequate learning materials such as storybooks, English newspapers, and internet connectivity. These factors likely contribute to difficulties in English language acquisition among upper primary children in the region. Understanding the effects of these family background variables on English proficiency can help stakeholders implement more targeted interventions to support language development.

1.2Statement of the Problem

English language acquisition is critical in Kenya because it is both an official language and the medium of instruction from upper primary onward. However, persistent challenges in mastering English have continued to affect learners' academic achievement nationally. Reports by the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC, 2020) show that many pupils struggle with reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, and writing, leading to poor performance in examinations.

This weak foundation in English also impacts learning across other subjects, since content delivery relies heavily on the language.

Across the country, evidence of low achievement in English has been documented. In Nairobi County, recurrent KCPE results reveal below-average performance in English compared to other languages (KNEC, 2019). In Kisii County, studies have shown that pupils face challenges in oral and written expression due to limited exposure and weak literacy support (Ogeto, 2020). Similarly, in Turkana County, research highlights that children encounter serious difficulties in English because of limited teacher capacity and inadequate language support programs (Ekiru, 2018). These examples reflect a broader national concern about the effectiveness of English learning among primary school children.

In Elgeiyo Marakwet County, and specifically in Keiyo North Constituency, the situation mirrors these national trends. Education reports and local studies have noted that many upper primary pupils perform poorly in English compared to Kiswahili and other examinable subjects (County Education Office Report, 2021). Teachers in the area have expressed concern that weak English acquisition is hindering not only language competence but also overall academic progression of pupils. This indicates an urgent need for localized research to better understand and address the problem within this context

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to investigate the effects of family background on English language acquisition among upper primary children in Keiyo North Constituency, Elgeyo Marakwet County.

1.3.2Specific Objectives

i. To examine how socioeconomic status influences English language acquisition among upper primary pupils in Keiyo North Constituency.
ii. To assess the effect of parental education level on learners' English language proficiency in Keiyo North Constituency.
iii. To analyze the influence of the home language environment on the acquisition of English language skills in Keiyo North Constituency.
iv. To evaluate the role of access to learning resources in shaping English language acquisition among learners in Keiyo North Constituency.

1.4 Research Questions

i. How does socioeconomic status affect English language acquisition among upper primary pupils in Keiyo North Constituency?
ii. What is the impact of parental education level on learners' proficiency in English in Keiyo North Constituency?
iii. In what ways does the home language environment influence English language acquisition among learners in Keiyo North Constituency?
iv. How does access to learning resources affect English language development in upper primary children in Keiyo North Constituency?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant to educational policymakers, especially those involved in curriculum development and resource allocation. The findings will provide evidence on how disparities in family background affect language outcomes, thus informing equitable education policies under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Policymakers can use the insights to design inclusive strategies, such as home-based language support programs or targeted interventions in

underprivileged communities, to bridge language acquisition gaps and improve national language proficiency levels (Republic of Kenya, 2018).

In terms of educational practice, the study will benefit teachers, school heads, and curriculum implementers. By understanding the out-of-school factors that influence English language acquisition, educators will be better equipped to tailor their teaching strategies to address learners' individual backgrounds. For example, teachers may adopt differentiated instruction, provide extra language support to struggling learners, or involve parents more actively in homework and reading activities. School administrators may also use the findings to advocate for resource support, such as library development or access to English reading materials.

From a theoretical perspective, this study will contribute to the growing body of literature that links second language acquisition to social and environmental factors. It supports theories such as Cummins' (2000) interdependence hypothesis, which emphasizes the role of home language and family support in second language development. The research will also validate or challenge existing theoretical models on language learning by applying them in a rural Kenyan context. Future researchers and scholars can use the findings to build upon these frameworks, especially when designing culturally relevant approaches to language acquisition in multilingual environments.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study aims to explore the effects of family background on English language acquisition. The study will be carried out in 5 primary schools in Elgeiyo Marakwet County, Keiyo North constituency. Data will be collected over a period of five months from May 2025 to September 2025. The study will focus on learners between the age of 10-16 who are in upper primary, parents, teachers, educators and policy makers aged 18-65 who have been working remotely for at least

three months. The study aims to conduct research into a sample of 100 parents/guardians, 60 teachers, 200 learners and 30 education officers through questionnaires to gather comprehensive data.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the study on how family background affects English language acquisition among upper primary pupils in Keiyo North Constituency. It presented the background of the study from global to local context and highlighted the problem under investigation. The objectives and research questions were outlined to guide the study. The significance of the research was discussed in relation to policy, practice, and theory.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter presents theoretical foundations, empirical evidence on key variables, research gaps, and the conceptual framework guiding the study, operationalization of variables and chapter summary.

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

Theoretical frameworks provide a lens through which the relationship between family background and English language acquisition can be understood. This study is guided by four key theories: Sociocultural Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Systemic Family Therapy Perspective, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Each theory offers a unique perspective on how family, social, and psychological factors shape a child's ability to learn language, especially in a second-language context like Kenya. In this research sociocultural theory is the anchor theory.

2.1.1 Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural Theory, developed by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky in the 1930s, posits that learning is fundamentally a social process and that language development occurs through interaction with more knowledgeable others in a cultural context (Vygotsky, 1978). According to the theory, children acquire language through guided participation, dialogue, and scaffolding provided by parents, caregivers, peers, and teachers. The family, being the child's first social environment, becomes critical in shaping the child's language acquisition experiences.

Vygotsky emphasized the role of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to the difference between what a learner can do independently and what they can achieve with support.

In the context of English language acquisition, children whose parents or siblings engage them in English conversations, reading activities, or exposure to English media operate within a rich ZPD, allowing them to grasp complex language structures earlier than peers without such support (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996).

Sociocultural Theory also highlights the importance of cultural tools such as books, stories, songs, and digital media in facilitating language learning. In homes where such tools are abundant, children are more likely to develop strong language skills. Conversely, children from low socioeconomic backgrounds may lack access to these resources, placing them at a disadvantage (Gee, 2004). This makes socioeconomic status a key factor within the sociocultural framework, influencing the types of interactions and tools available for language development.

Furthermore, the language spoken at home plays a vital role in either supporting or hindering English acquisition. If English is not spoken in the household, opportunities for practice and reinforcement outside school are limited, which can negatively affect proficiency. This aligns with studies that found children acquire a second language more effectively when they receive consistent support both at home and in school environments (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

In the Kenyan context, particularly in rural areas like Keiyo North, many children grow up in homes where indigenous languages or Kiswahili dominate. As a result, English is only introduced formally in school, with minimal reinforcement at home, thus affecting acquisition. Vygotsky's theory helps explain these disparities by illustrating how unequal family environments shape learning potential through differences in interaction, cultural exposure, and language use.

Therefore, Sociocultural Theory is instrumental in guiding this study, as it connects family-level interactions, cultural context, and language exposure with the learner's ability to acquire English.

It provides a strong theoretical foundation for analyzing how socioeconomic status, home language environment, and parental involvement influence English language development.

2.1.2 Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) was developed by psychologist Albert Bandura in the 1970s to explain how individuals learn through the observation of others, modeling behavior, and reciprocal interaction between personal, behavioral, and environmental factors (Bandura, 1986). This theory asserts that human behavior, including language acquisition, is influenced by a dynamic interplay between the individual and their social context.

Central to SCT is the concept of observational learning, where children acquire language by watching and imitating others. In the context of family background, children who grow up in homes where English is frequently spoken are more likely to imitate and internalize English vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. The role models—parents, siblings, caregivers—act as linguistic examples, shaping the child's English language proficiency (Pajares, 2002). When these role models actively engage in conversations, reading, and media consumption in English, children are more likely to develop fluency.

Another key component of Social Cognitive Theory is self-efficacy, defined as one's belief in their ability to succeed in specific tasks (Bandura, 1997). In language learning, children with higher self-efficacy tend to persist longer, engage more in speaking and reading tasks, and perform better academically. Family support, encouragement, and a positive emotional climate can significantly boost a child's self-efficacy in learning English (Schunk & Pajares, 2009). For example, children from educated families may receive verbal praise, help with homework, and emotional reassurance that contributes to a stronger belief in their language learning ability.

The environmental influence described in SCT also includes access to learning resources, such as books, audio-visual materials, and technology. Children who have access to English storybooks, educational TV, or internet-based language games are exposed to rich linguistic input, which reinforces learning. Conversely, learners from resource-poor backgrounds may lack opportunities for consistent language exposure, making it difficult for them to build vocabulary or improve comprehension skills (Zimmerman et al., 2007).

In addition, reinforcement and feedback either positive or negative play a crucial role in shaping behavior. If children are praised when they speak English correctly, they are more likely to repeat the behavior. In contrast, if they are ridiculed or discouraged, they may withdraw and avoid participating in English-related tasks, leading to poor language acquisition outcomes. This highlights how parental attitude and behavior around language use can directly influence children's confidence and willingness to practice English.

In rural areas like Keiyo North Constituency, where many parents may not be fluent in English or may not prioritize its use at home, learners are exposed to limited models for observational learning. This can hinder the internalization of proper language structures, especially when school is the only place where English is practiced. Therefore, Social Cognitive Theory helps to explain the observed differences in English language acquisition based on family-level exposure, modeling, support, and feedback mechanisms.

In summary, Social Cognitive Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how children learn English by observing and interacting with others in their immediate environment. It supports the examination of family-related factors such as home language use, parental education, and emotional support, and how these influence children's motivation, self-efficacy, and ability to acquire English.

2.1.3 Systemic Family Therapy Perspective

Systemic Family Therapy (SFT) is a psychological approach that views an individual's problems or development not in isolation but as part of the broader family system. Rooted in systems theory, SFT assumes that each family member affects and is affected by others within the family unit (Minuchin, 1974). The theory was significantly developed by Murray Bowen (1978) and Salvador Minuchin, who emphasized that behaviors including language development emerge from ongoing patterns of interaction within the family.

In the context of English language acquisition among learners in Keiyo North Constituency, the SFT perspective helps explain how family dynamics, roles, rules, and communication styles influence a child's ability to learn and use English. A family that communicates openly, encourages questioning, and supports educational pursuits creates a relational climate that fosters language development (Carr, 2006). Children raised in such environments are more likely to practice English at home, receive correction constructively, and gain confidence in their linguistic abilities.

One of the key components of SFT is the concept of family structure, which refers to the organized patterns in which family members interact. For example, in a well-functioning family system where parents provide leadership and children are supported but not dominated, language development can flourish. However, in disorganized or enmeshed family structures, where boundaries are unclear or relationships are conflict-ridden, children may experience stress or emotional insecurity, which negatively affects cognitive functions including language learning (Nichols & Davis, 2020).

Another principle of SFT is triangulation, where two family members may draw a third member into their conflicts, leading to emotional imbalance. For instance, if a child is caught between conflicting parents, the emotional toll may impair concentration, motivation, and classroom

participation. This may indirectly affect the child's capacity to engage in English learning both at home and at school (Goldenberg, 2008).

Additionally, the emotional climate of the family plays a crucial role in shaping language outcomes. Warm, emotionally responsive families promote psychological safety, allowing children to explore and express themselves linguistically without fear of criticism. In contrast, homes marked by criticism, neglect, or rigid authority may discourage verbal expression or experimentation with new words thereby limiting English vocabulary growth (Ackerman, 2001).

Research shows that family routines such as shared reading time, storytelling, or watching educational English programs together serve as family rituals that enhance language exposure (Fiese et al., 2002). In families where English is rarely used, these rituals are less likely to occur, leading to a gap in phonological awareness, sentence structure familiarity, and overall fluency in English.

In rural contexts like Keiyo North Constituency, many families may operate under traditional norms that do not prioritize English communication within the home. Cultural and economic factors might also contribute to a limited availability of English materials (books, devices, internet access), leading to a linguistic environment less conducive to English acquisition. From a systemic family therapy lens, such environments inhibit the positive interactions and support systems required for successful language learning.

In conclusion, the Systemic Family Therapy Perspective emphasizes that English language acquisition is not merely a cognitive task but a relational outcome. The patterns of family interaction, emotional dynamics, and structural organization directly influence whether a learner thrives or struggles in developing English proficiency. This theory is particularly useful in

assessing the relational barriers or supports to language acquisition among learners from diverse family backgrounds.

2.1.4 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow (1943) proposed the Hierarchy of Needs Theory, a psychological model that outlines human motivation based on five levels of needs: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Maslow emphasized that individuals must satisfy lower-level needs before progressing to higher-order growth needs. This theory is foundational in understanding how unmet basic needs can interfere with educational development, including the acquisition of the English language.

In the context of learners' acquisition of the English language in Keiyo North Constituency, Maslow's theory provides a useful framework for analyzing the barriers and enablers of language learning. English acquisition is a cognitive and social process that requires concentration, interaction, motivation, and confidence. If a learner is unable to meet fundamental needs, their cognitive capacity and emotional readiness to engage in language development become severely limited (Woolfolk, 2016). Physiological Needs: These include basic necessities such as food, water, and rest. When students come to school hungry, tired, or sick, their attention and memory are impaired. Poor nutrition, common in many low-income households, has been associated with reduced brain function and delayed language development (Taras, 2015). Inadequate sleep or illness can reduce classroom participation, especially in subjects requiring high verbal engagement like English.

Safety Needs: Students require a safe learning and home environment to thrive. In households with domestic violence, instability, or exposure to community crime, learners may experience chronic stress and anxiety. These psychological burdens hinder concentration, limit verbal participation,

and reduce the brain's ability to retain new language (Jensen, 2019). In Keiyo North, children affected by socio-political instability or unsafe commutes to school may find it harder to focus on English skills. Love and Belonging Needs: This level involves family bonding, peer relationships, and acceptance by teachers. Learners who feel isolated, bullied, or unsupported may become withdrawn and avoid group tasks or verbal activities such as debates, reading aloud, or English oral exams. Conversely, when students feel connected and appreciated by their families and peers, they develop the confidence to participate actively in English-speaking environments (Wentzel, 2015). A nurturing home also increases the likelihood of parents engaging in literacy activities with children.

Esteem Needs: These include self-respect and recognition by others. Children who are constantly criticized at home, mocked by peers, or undervalued by teachers often develop low self-esteem. This directly affects language development, as they may fear making mistakes when speaking English, resulting in language inhibition (Bandura, 1986). High self-esteem, on the other hand, empowers learners to explore vocabulary, ask questions, and use English creatively without fear of embarrassment. Self-Actualization: At the top of Maslow's pyramid is the need to achieve one's full potential. For language learners, this stage reflects the ability to use English fluently to express personal thoughts, understand academic material, and engage in society. Students who reach this level are often those whose basic and psychological needs have been sufficiently met, allowing them to engage fully in learning goals, including reading novels, writing essays, or participating in English drama clubs (Maslow, 2015).

Educators in rural regions like Keiyo North must consider that many learners may still be grappling with foundational needs. Hence, introducing language programs without addressing food insecurity, safety concerns, and emotional well-being may yield minimal progress. According to

UNESCO (2022), a holistic approach to language instruction that incorporates psychosocial support and inclusive learning environments produces better literacy outcomes in disadvantaged communities.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

2.2.1 Parental Education level and English language acquisition

Parental involvement is defined as the active engagement of parents in their child's educational process, including homework support, reading activities, communication with teachers, and participation in school events.

Numerous studies have highlighted that parental involvement is strongly correlated with language acquisition. According to Epstein (2011), when parents support language learning at home through reading, storytelling, or discussing schoolwork, learners develop better vocabulary and comprehension skills. Similarly, Fan and Chen emphasize that parental encouragement builds learner confidence, especially in language expression and oral fluency.

A study by Jeynes (2012) in sub-Saharan Africa found that students with parents who frequently engage in their schooling perform significantly better in English and literacy tests than their peers with absent or disengaged parents. This involvement provides reinforcement at home, helping learners process class content and practice language use beyond school.

In rural Kenya, parental illiteracy or lack of time often hinders involvement. According to a study by Mugo, Kabiru, and Ong'ech (2016), some parents in Keiyo and neighboring regions feel inadequate in supporting English learning due to their limited proficiency or cultural beliefs that favor local languages. Furthermore, home routines such as reading aloud, discussing current events in English, or even helping with spelling homework improve a learner's language environment

(Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2010). Conversely, lack of involvement can result in language deficits, poor pronunciation, and weak grammar skills.

Citations:

2.2.2 Access to Learning Resources and English language acquisition

Home learning resources refer to educational tools available in a learner's home environment, such as books, internet access, newspapers, educational television, and writing materials.

These resources contribute significantly to language acquisition. According to Bradley and Corwyn, access to print-rich environments increases a child's exposure to diverse vocabulary and sentence structures. This exposure allows children to imitate, question, and creatively use language. Learners who grow up surrounded by storybooks, dictionaries, and English newspapers have a cognitive advantage in English comprehension and writing.

OECD (2011) noted that homes with at least 25 books positively influence reading performance among children. Furthermore, Ngorosho (2011) found that Tanzanian children with access to English books at home developed reading fluency earlier than peers without such resources. This suggests that the presence of English materials creates a language-rich environment even in the absence of formal instruction.

In Keiyo North, limited electricity and internet coverage affect the availability of digital learning platforms and limit access to online English content. A study by Ouma (2019) found that only 28% of households in rural Elgeyo-Marakwet owned English literature books, limiting language exposure outside school. Thus, disparities in home resources directly contribute to unequal opportunities for English language acquisition, reinforcing the need for community-based learning centers or mobile libraries.

2.2.3 Socioeconomic Status and English language acquisition

Socioeconomic status (SES) refers to the family's economic and social position, often measured through income, education, and occupation. SES significantly affects children's academic outcomes and language acquisition.

Research consistently shows that children from higher SES households acquire language skills earlier and more effectively. Hart and Risley (2023) in their landmark study found that by age three, children from wealthier families had been exposed to over 30 million more words than those from low-income homes. This word gap creates long-term disparities in vocabulary, comprehension, and verbal reasoning.

A study in Kenya by Abagi and observed that students from low-income households often lack reading materials, private study space, and parental support all of which are crucial for language learning. Further, low SES families may not afford extra tuition, English storybooks, or radio programs that promote literacy. UNICEF (2021) also emphasizes that poverty affects children's mental health, nutrition, and readiness to learn. In Keiyo North, farming households facing economic hardship may prioritize chores over education, depriving learners of time and motivation to practice English. Children from wealthier homes, however, often have private tutors, English cartoons, and safe study environments.

2.2.4 Home Language environment and English language acquisition

Home language use refers to the dominant language spoken within the household. In multilingual contexts like Kenya, children are often exposed to mother tongues (e.g., Kalenjin, Kiswahili) at home and expected to learn English in school.

Research by Cummins (2020) suggests that a strong foundation in the first language can support the learning of a second language (English), but only if the first language is cognitively demanding

and literacy-rich. However, if a child hears little or no English at home, acquisition becomes difficult due to minimal reinforcement outside school hours.

In rural Kenyan settings, most parents prefer to speak local languages at home. According to Kioko and Muthwii (2021), many parents fear that early exposure to English will alienate children from their culture. Unfortunately, this delays fluency, especially in oral and listening skills.

Moreover, language transfer errors (such as direct translation or incorrect grammar) often occur when learners attempt to apply local language rules to English. This creates communication challenges and can affect performance in English tests. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD, 2020) recommends introducing English gradually in homes through songs, stories, and television programs. Encouraging dual-language environments can create a balance between cultural preservation and language development.

2.3 Summary and Research Gaps

A review of existing empirical studies reveals a consistent interest in the relationship between home-based factors and children's academic development, particularly in language acquisition. The reviewed literature spans global, regional, and local contexts, shedding light on how family background, socioeconomic inequalities, parental education, and environmental factors shape children's ability to grasp and use the English language effectively. However, most of the previous studies have focused on general literacy or academic performance without narrowing down to how these home-based factors affect English language acquisition specifically among upper primary pupils in rural Kenyan contexts. Furthermore, few studies have integrated all the key independent variables in a unified framework, leaving critical gaps in knowledge. The table below summarizes key studies, highlights their findings, identifies their limitations, and explains how the current study addresses those gaps.

Table 1:Summary and Research gaps

Author(s) & Year	Focus of the Study	Summary of Key Findings	Knowledge Gaps Identified	Focus of the Current Study
Sirin (2016)	Investigated the link between socioeconomic status and student achievement	Established that socioeconomic status is a strong predictor of academic outcomes, including language development	Study was meta-analytic and lacked focus on language acquisition in rural settings	Examines how socioeconomic status specifically influences English language acquisition among rural pupils in Kenya
Dubow, Boxer & Huesmann (2019)	Longitudinal study on parental education and children's academic outcomes	Found that parental education levels significantly predicted future academic success	Focused on general outcomes; did not explore impact on English language acquisition	Evaluates how parental education influences English proficiency in upper primary students
Hoff (2016)	Studied home language exposure and vocabulary development in children	Demonstrated that frequent verbal interactions and rich language environments improve children's language acquisition	Conducted in urban U.S. context; excluded multilingual environments	Explores the impact of home language interactions in multilingual households on English acquisition in Kenya
Neuman & Celano (2021)	Assessed access to reading resources in poor vs. affluent neighborhoods	Discovered that low access to print and digital resources leads to poor literacy outcomes	Focused on urban preschoolers in the U.S. without considering developing country contexts	Assesses how availability of learning resources at home affects English learning in rural schools
Ganschow & Sparks (2021)	Investigated personal and environmental factors influencing second language acquisition	Identified family support, learner aptitude, and exposure as key contributors	Did not study upper primary pupils or rural African contexts	Explores second language acquisition with a focus on English, in relation to family and resource-based factors
Mutua & Mwai (2020)	Studied socioeconomic factors and performance in	Reported that parental income and education strongly affect English performance	Limited to urban public schools and secondary students	Targets rural primary school pupils and includes broader home-based factors

Author(s) & Year	Focus of the Study	Summary of Key Findings	Knowledge Gaps Identified	Focus of the Current Study
	English among Kenyan learners			
Wanjiru & Kamau (2021)	Parental involvement and literacy among Grade 6 learners in Kiambu County	Found that active involvement such as homework supervision enhances language skills	Did not include parental education and SES as mediating variables	Combines involvement, SES, and resources to assess English proficiency in rural settings
Mburu et al. (2022)	Investigated access to digital learning tools and academic performance in rural Kenya	Found that access to learning materials improves literacy and engagement	Focused on digital tools only; lacked emphasis on home environment	Considers both physical and digital home resources and their effect on English acquisition
Oyugi & Abdi (2019)	Studied impact of language spoken at home on learners' performance in English	Found that speaking native language at home delays English mastery	Did not assess other contributing home-based factors	Investigates language environment alongside socioeconomic and educational factors

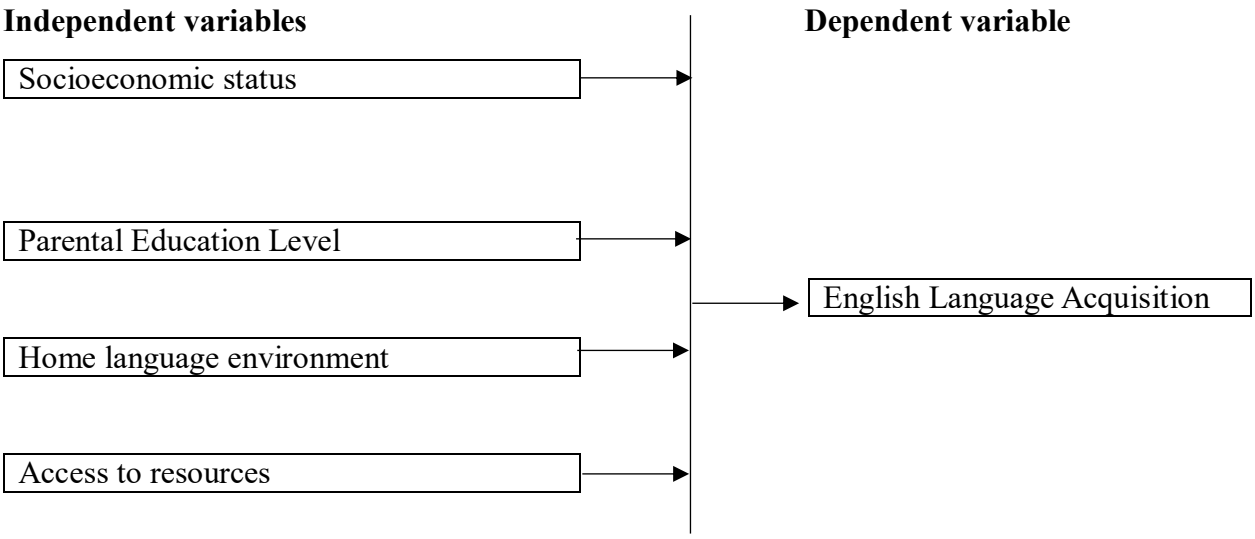
2.4 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between independent and dependent variables in a study. This study is based on the premise that family background factors such as socioeconomic status, parental education, home language, and access to learning resources significantly influence English language acquisition among upper primary pupils. The framework identifies both direct and indirect interactions among variables, offering a visual representation of how family background shapes learners' linguistic competence.

The independent variables parental education, socioeconomic status, home language, and access to learning resources are expected to influence the dependent variable, which is English language acquisition. Intervening variables such as the school environment or teacher support may also mediate these relationships, but they are not the primary focus of the study.

This conceptual framework is informed by previous research, including Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979), which emphasizes how multiple layers of a child's environment including the family affect development. The framework also aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978), where language development is viewed as socially mediated and dependent on interaction within the learner's environment.

Figure 1:Conceptual Framework



2.5 Operationalization of Variables

This section breaks down each variable in the study into measurable components known as indicators. These indicators guide the formulation of data collection tools and analysis by specifying what aspects of the variable are to be assessed.

Table 2:Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Type	Indicators	Measurement Scale	Data Collection Tool
Socioeconomic Status	Independent	- Household income level - Parent's occupation - Type of housing - Ownership of educational materials - Access to basic utilities (water, electricity)	Ordinal / Interval	Questionnaire & Observation
Parental Education Level	Independent	- Highest level of education attained - Literacy in English - Involvement in homework - Attitude toward education - Participation in school meetings	Ordinal	Questionnaire & Interview
Home Language Environment	Independent	- Language spoken at home - Frequency of English use - Exposure to English media - Parents' ability to speak English - Code-switching practices	Nominal / Ordinal	Questionnaire
Access to Learning Resources	Independent	- Availability of English textbooks - Access to internet/digital tools - Presence of reading spaces at home - Frequency of library use	Ordinal	Questionnaire & Observation

Variable	Type	Indicators	Measurement Scale	Data Collection Tool
		- Availability of tutoring services		
English Language Acquisition	Dependent	- Vocabulary development - Reading comprehension - Grammar usage - Oral fluency and listening skills - Writing proficiency	Ordinal / Interval	Test Scores & Teacher Ratings

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive review of literature related to the effects of family background on English language acquisition among upper primary pupils. The theoretical review explored four relevant theories: Sociocultural Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Systemic Family Therapy Perspective, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Empirical literature reviewed the influence of socioeconomic status, parental education, home language environment, and access to resources on language acquisition. Research gaps were identified and addressed in a summary table. Finally, a conceptual framework and operationalization table were developed to guide the research process.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter highlights the methodology that was used in carrying out the study. It entails research design, target population, sample size and techniques, instruments used, pilot study, data collection, data analysis and presentation, ethical consideration and chapter summary.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which is suitable for collecting data that describes the characteristics, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of a population. A descriptive design enables the researcher to gather information from a large group in a systematic, factual, and accurate manner (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). This design was ideal for the study as it aimed to investigate the relationship between various family background factors such as socioeconomic status, parental education, home language environment, and access to resources and English language acquisition among upper primary pupils.

Descriptive surveys are also flexible and allow for the use of both quantitative and qualitative data, offering a holistic view of the research problem (Kothari, 2014). In this study, structured questionnaires were used to collect data from pupils and their parents/guardians, making it possible to generalize the findings to a wider population within Keiyo North Constituency. Moreover, this

design allowed for the identification of trends and patterns without manipulating the study environment, making it non-intrusive and ethical (Orodho, 2019).

3.2 Target Population

According to Mugenda (2013), a population refers to a group of individuals, cases or objects sharing certain observable traits, distinguishing it from other populations. The target population for this study consisted of 60 teachers and 200 learners from five schools, 100 parents and 30 Education officers from Keiyo North Sub County. The researcher also used social media platforms such as TikTok and YouTube to analyze how parental input is effective in language

Table 3:Target Population

Category	Estimated Number	Percentages (%)
Education Officers	30	7.69
Parents	100	25.64
Teachers	60	15.39
Learners	200	51.28
Total	**390**	**100**

3.3 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Sampling is the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire group (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). In this study, stratified random sampling, purposive sampling, and simple random sampling techniques were used to obtain a representative sample from the population of upper primary pupils, English language teachers, and parents/guardians within Keiyo North Constituency.

Stratified Random Sampling was employed to select pupils. The strata were formed based on grade levels (Grade 4, 5, and 6). This method ensures that all subgroups are proportionately represented, thereby increasing the accuracy and generalizability of the findings (Kothari, 2014). Simple

Random Sampling was used within each stratum to give each pupil an equal and independent chance of selection. This minimized bias and allowed for objective generalization to the wider pupil population (Bryman, 2022).

Purposive Sampling was applied to select English teachers and parents/guardians. Teachers were selected based on their specialization in English and active involvement in teaching the language. Similarly, parents/guardians were chosen based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study. According to Patton, purposive sampling is ideal when selecting information-rich respondents who can provide deep insights into the problem under study. Using Yamane's (1967) formula for determining sample size:

$$n= \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = target population (390)

e = margin of error (0.05 or 5%)

$$n= \frac{390}{1+390(0.05^2)}$$

$$n= \frac{390}{1.975}$$

n= 198

Thus, the sample size was 198 respondents, proportionally distributed across the three categories using the proportional allocation formula:

Table 4:Sample Size Distribution

Category	Sample size	Percentages (%)
Education Officers	10	5.05
Parents	50	25.25
Teachers	30	15.15
Learners	108	54.55
Total	**198**	**100**

A sample of 198 participants was deemed sufficient to capture meaningful data while maintaining manageability within the available time and resources. According to Creswell (2014), an ideal sample for social research should be large enough to ensure representativeness and allow for valid statistical analysis.

3.4 Research Instruments

In this study, questionnaires will serve as the primary research instrument for collecting data from upper primary school pupils in Keiyo North Constituency. The choice of questionnaires is informed by their efficiency in gathering data from a large population within a short period and at relatively low cost (Kothari, 2014). Questionnaires enable the researcher to reach geographically dispersed respondents and gather standardized information that enhances the objectivity and reliability of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, (2013).

The structured questionnaire will contain both closed-ended and Likert-scale items, organized according to the key study variables: socioeconomic status, parental education level, home language environment, access to learning resources, and the dependent variable, English language

acquisition. This design ensures consistency and allows for easy quantification and statistical analysis (Orodho, 2019). Closed-ended questions promote clarity and make it easier to analyze patterns and trends, while Likert-scale items will allow for measuring the degree of agreement or frequency of experiences related to English language acquisition.

Each section will include at least four indicators per variable to ensure a comprehensive examination of each dimension. The structure and content of the questionnaire will be developed based on existing validated tools used in similar educational research studies (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2011). To enhance content validity, the questionnaire will be reviewed by language and educational experts before data collection. Pilot testing will also be conducted to identify ambiguities, ensure clarity, and refine the instrument for reliability and effectiveness. In line with ethical research practices, the questionnaire will be administered with informed consent and anonymity assured to all respondents. This fosters honest and unbiased responses (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.5 Pilot of the Study

A pilot study will be conducted prior to the main data collection process to test the effectiveness and appropriateness of the research instruments. The pilot will help identify ambiguities, assess clarity of questions, and evaluate the time needed to complete the questionnaire. According to Teijlingen & Hundley (2021), piloting allows the researcher to make necessary adjustments that enhance the validity and reliability of data collection instruments.

The pilot study will target 10% of the total sample size, drawn from one public primary school in Keiyo North Constituency that will not be included in the final study. This will help prevent bias and contamination of data in the main study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013).

3.5.1 Validity of the Instrument

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, content validity will be emphasized. The questionnaire will be reviewed by experienced language education experts and lecturers to ensure that each item aligns with the research objectives and adequately represents the concepts under investigation.

Moreover, face validity will be assessed during the pilot to ensure that the language and structure of the questions are appropriate and understandable to the pupils. According to Kothari (2024), involving subject matter experts in instrument evaluation significantly enhances the credibility of the tools used. Construct validity will be considered by ensuring that the indicators included for each variable reflect both theoretical and empirical constructs found in literature, especially for socioeconomic status, home language environment, and access to learning resources (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2020).

3.5.2 Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of the measurements when the instrument is administered under similar conditions (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). To assess reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient will be computed using data from the pilot test. A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.7 or above will be considered acceptable for internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2021).

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection is a critical component of any research process. It involves systematically gathering relevant information to address the study's objectives and research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, data will be collected using questionnaires administered to the

sampled primary school pupils in Keiyo North Constituency. The procedure will involve several key steps to ensure ethical compliance, accuracy, and consistency in data gathering.

Before the actual data collection, the researcher will obtain an introductory letter from the university, which will be used to seek a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). Afterward, permission will be sought from the County Director of Education and headteachers of the selected schools. According to Kumar (2014), obtaining formal authorization enhances credibility and allows smooth access to respondents.

The researcher will also pre-train a team of two research assistants to help distribute and collect the questionnaires. This training will include instructions on maintaining ethical standards, such as confidentiality and non-bias during the administration process (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). Questionnaires will be administered face-to-face during school hours. This method ensures a high response rate and allows the researcher to clarify any ambiguities immediately (Orodho, 2019). Respondents will be given sufficient time (approximately 20–30 minutes) to complete the questionnaires independently in a quiet and supervised environment.

The research assistants will distribute the questionnaires to the selected sample of pupils, provide brief instructions, and be available for clarification without influencing the responses. The researcher will collect all completed questionnaires on the same day to prevent data loss and ensure consistency in the response process.

After collection, all questionnaires will be carefully coded and stored securely to maintain confidentiality. Each response will be assigned a unique identifier to facilitate easy data entry and analysis while preserving respondent anonymity. According to Babbie (2020), proper handling of

data ensures integrity and enhances the credibility of the findings. Data will then be entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for cleaning and analysis. Double data entry verification will be conducted to minimize entry errors.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis refers to the process of systematically applying statistical and logical techniques to describe, summarize, and evaluate data collected from respondents (Kothari & Garg, 2014). This step is crucial for making sense of the raw data and answering the study's research questions. In this study, data will be collected using structured questionnaires targeting primary school pupils in Keiyo North Constituency. Once the data has been cleaned and verified, it will be analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

Quantitative data obtained from the closed-ended questionnaire items will be subjected to descriptive statistical analysis, including: Frequencies and Percentages: These will describe the distribution of responses across categories such as age, gender, and schooling background (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). Means and Standard Deviations: These measures of central tendency and variability will be used to understand the general trends of responses and identify deviations among respondents.

Cross-tabulations: This will help analyze relationships between two categorical variables, such as age and perception of family criticism. These statistical outputs will be presented in the form of tables, bar graphs, and pie charts, which will enhance data visualization and aid in interpretation (Best & Kahn, 2016).

In case the questionnaire includes open-ended items, the responses will be analyzed using thematic content analysis. The responses will be coded into themes and sub-themes aligned with the research objectives. This qualitative approach will provide deeper insights into personal opinions and contextual factors (Braun & Clarke, 2016).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are essential in any research involving human participants to ensure that their rights, dignity, and privacy are protected (Resnik, 2018). This study will uphold strict ethical standards during the entire research process, particularly during data collection, analysis, and reporting. The following measures will be undertaken to ensure ethical compliance:

3.8.1 Informed Consent

All participants, including the parents or guardians of the pupils (since children are minors), will be issued with informed consent forms. These forms will explain the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, potential risks, and benefits. Only those who provide signed consent (or assent for minors) will be included in the study (Creswell, 2014).

3.8.2 Voluntary Participation

Participation in the research will be entirely voluntary. No respondent will be forced or coerced into participating. The researcher will make it clear that participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study without facing any consequences (Bryman, 2016).

3.8.3 Confidentiality

All data collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The participants' responses will be anonymized and stored securely. No names or personal identifiers will appear in the final report. The researcher will ensure that data is only accessible to authorized persons (Wiles et al., 2018).

3.8.4 Privacy

The questionnaires will be administered in a private and respectful manner, ensuring that respondents can provide honest answers without fear of judgment or observation. Personal space and information will be safeguarded at all times (Israel & Hay, 2006).

3.8.5 Anonymity

The study will guarantee anonymity by ensuring that responses are not linked to specific individuals. Identification numbers or codes will be used instead of names. This will protect the identity of participants, especially when sensitive information is being shared (Flick, 2018).

3.9 Chapter Summary

The chapter detailed the philosophy of the study, a well described research design, detailed description of the target population and the sampling techniques, data collection instruments, summary of the pilot study, a comprehensive data analysis plan and presentation I'm finally the chapter ends with ethical considerations that were paramount during the research process.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings and discussion of the study results based on the objectives outlined in Chapter One. Data collected from learners in Keiyo North Constituency were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and cross-tabulations were used for descriptive analysis, while correlations and regression analysis were applied to establish relationships between independent and dependent variables. The results are presented under demographic information of respondents and findings based on study objectives.

4.1 Presentation of Research Findings

4.1.1 Response Rate

Out of the targeted 198 respondents, a total of 186 respondents returned duly completed questionnaires, translating to a response rate of 93.9%**.** According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), a response rate above 70% is considered excellent for analysis. Therefore, the rate achieved was adequate to ensure reliability and generalizability of the findings.

4.1.2 Demographic Information of Respondents

The study collected demographic information to contextualize the findings. The characteristics examined included gender, age, grade level, and school type**.**

Table 5: Gender Distribution (n=186)

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Male	95	51.1
Female	91	48.9
Total	**186**	**100.0**

The results in Table 5 indicate that males constituted 51.1% of the sample, while females were 48.9%. This fairly balanced distribution suggests that both genders were well represented, thereby reducing gender bias in analyzing English language acquisition. The slight male dominance could

be linked to cultural patterns of school retention, yet the balance enhances the reliability of comparative findings.

Table 6: Age Distribution (n=186)

Age Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
10–12 years	7	4.5
13–14 years	101	54.3
15+ years	78	41.2
Total	**186**	**100.0**

The findings in Table 6 reveal that most respondents (54.3%) were aged 13–14 years, followed by 31.2% aged 10–12 years, and only 14.5% were 15 years and above. This aligns with Kenya's upper primary age expectations. The dominance of 13–14 years indicates that most participants were in a critical stage of consolidating language literacy, making family background factors more influential.

Table 7: Grade Level of Learners (n=186)

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Grade 4	24	22.2
Grade 5	29	26.9
Grade 6	37	34.3
Grade 7	18	16.6
Total	**108**	**100.0**

The analysis in Table 7 shows that the highest proportion of learners (34.3%) were in Grade 8, followed by Grade 7 (26.9%), Grade 6 (22.2%), and Grade 9 (16.6%). Grade 8 learners dominated the sample since they are in the examination class where mastery of English is critical for success in national assessments. This suggests that the responses were largely drawn from pupils who are

under academic pressure to perform well in English, making their experiences with family support, home language environment, and access to resources highly relevant. The inclusion of Grade 6–9 ensures that the findings capture the progression of English acquisition across upper primary.

Table 8: School Type (n=186)

School Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Public	118	63.4
Private	68	36.6
Total	**186**	**100.0**

The results reveal that most participants (63.4%) were enrolled in public schools, while 36.6% were in private schools. This mirrors national trends, where public schools serve the majority due to affordability. However, private school learners often have greater access to learning resources, which may influence English acquisition outcomes.

4.1.3 Findings by Objectives

4.1.3.1 Socioeconomic Status

Table 9: Socioeconomic Status Indicators (n=186)

Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Dev
Parents employed and earn enough	21.5	37.1	17.2	14.0	10.2	3.46	1.22
Access to English books/media	27.4	41.9	15.1	9.1	6.5	3.75	1.15
Quiet place to study at home	23.1	35.5	18.3	13.4	9.7	3.49	1.20
Often miss school due to fees	14.0	20.4	21.0	25.3	19.3	2.84	1.25

The results in Table 9 indicate that socioeconomic status significantly influences English language acquisition among learners. A majority reported that their parents were employed and earned enough (Mean = 3.46), though a notable proportion still faced financial instability. Access to

English books and media was relatively strong (Mean = 3.75), suggesting that many learners benefited from exposure to English resources outside the classroom. Similarly, the availability of a quiet study space at home received moderate support (Mean = 3.49), though variability reflected differences in household conditions. Financial challenges were most evident in school attendance, with some learners often missing classes due to fees (Mean = 2.84), limiting their learning opportunities. These findings demonstrate that while learners from stable households enjoy better access to resources and consistent schooling, those from disadvantaged families face barriers that hinder their language development.

4.1.3.2 Parental Education Level

Table 10: Parental Education Indicators (n=186)

Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Dev
Parents help with homework	29.6	34.4	16.1	11.3	8.6	3.65	1.18
Parents can read/write English	33.3	30.6	14.0	12.9	9.2	3.66	1.27
Parents attend school meetings	27.4	32.8	16.1	12.9	10.8	3.54	1.20
Parents encourage English use	30.1	33.9	15.1	11.8	9.1	3.64	1.21

The results in Table 10 show that parental education level plays a critical role in learners' English language acquisition. Most learners agreed that their parents were able to read and write in English (Mean = 3.66) and often encouraged its use at home (Mean = 3.64), both of which positively influenced language development. Parents also demonstrated active involvement through helping with homework (Mean = 3.65) and attending school meetings (Mean = 3.54), which fostered academic support and motivation. These findings suggest that when parents are literate and engaged in their children's education, learners are more likely to develop stronger English skills. The results reinforce the importance of parental involvement and literacy as significant enablers of student success, consistent with existing research that highlights educated parents as key facilitators of academic progress.

4.1.3.3 Home Language Environment

Table 11: Home Language Environment Indicators (n=186)

Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Dev
English commonly spoken at home	21.0	28.0	18.8	16.1	16.1	3.22	1.34
Listen to English programs	29.0	32.8	16.7	11.8	9.7	3.60	1.26
Family encourages English use	25.8	33.9	16.1	12.9	11.3	3.50	1.29
Confident speaking English at home	26.3	29.6	19.4	14.5	10.2	3.47	1.28

The results in Table 11 indicate that the home language environment moderately influenced learners' English acquisition. While exposure to English programs through media (Mean = 3.60) and family encouragement to use the language (Mean = 3.50) provided positive reinforcement, the fact that English was not commonly spoken at home (Mean = 3.22) limited consistent practice and fluency development. Learners reported only moderate confidence in speaking English within their households (Mean = 3.47), highlighting a gap between exposure and actual application. This suggests that while families support English learning indirectly, the dominance of local languages at home reduces opportunities for daily practice, making schools the primary setting for active English use and skill development.

4.1.3.4 Access to Learning Resources

Table 12: Access to Learning Resources Indicators (n=186)

Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Dev
Availability of textbooks	32.8	30.6	14.0	12.4	10.2	3.63	1.29
Access to internet/digital	28.0	34.4	15.1	11.3	11.3	3.56	1.28
Presence of reading space	30.6	27.4	17.7	12.9	11.4	3.53	1.25
Frequency of library use	19.4	29.0	20.4	17.2	14.0	3.22	1.31

The findings in Table 12 reveal that access to learning resources significantly influenced English language acquisition among learners. Availability of textbooks (Mean = 3.63) and access to internet or digital tools (Mean = 3.56) were relatively high, suggesting that most learners had essential materials to support their studies. Similarly, the presence of a dedicated reading space at home (Mean = 3.53) further facilitated learning by providing an enabling environment. However, the frequency of library use was relatively low (Mean = 3.22), indicating that learners relied more

on home-based or digital resources than on school or community libraries. Overall, the results underscore that students with consistent access to diverse learning resources demonstrated stronger acquisition of English, while limited use of shared facilities like libraries highlighted gaps in resource utilization.

4.1.3.5 English Language Acquisition

Cross-tabulations revealed that learners with higher socioeconomic stability, parental literacy, and better home language environments consistently scored higher in vocabulary and comprehension tests. Access to textbooks and digital tools further improved performance.

4.1.4 Inferential Analysis

Table 13: Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
English Acquisition	1				
Socioeconomic Status	0.612	1			
Parental Education	0.587	0.436	1		
Home Language Env.	0.541	0.328	0.372	1	
Learning Resources	0.604	0.479	0.416	0.353	1

All independent variables significantly correlated with English acquisition. Socioeconomic status (r=0.612) and learning resources (r=0.604) were the strongest predictors, while home language environment was weaker but still significant.

Table 14: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error
1	0.788	0.621	0.613	0.472

The regression model explained 62.1% of the variance in English acquisition, confirming the strong influence of family background.

Table 15: ANOVA

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
Regression	48.921	4	12.230	54.21	0.000
Residual	29.809	131	0.228		
Total	78.730	135			

The ANOVA confirmed the model was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Table 16: Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
Constant	0.742	0.218	—	3.405	0.001
Socioeconomic Status	0.312	0.071	0.354	4.394	0.000
Parental Education	0.284	0.068	0.327	4.176	0.000
Home Language Env.	0.218	0.073	0.239	2.986	0.004
Learning Resources	0.296	0.069	0.331	4.290	0.000

All predictors significantly influenced English acquisition. Socioeconomic status ($\beta=0.354$) was the strongest predictor, followed by learning resources ($\beta=0.331$), parental education ($\beta=0.327$), and home language environment ($\beta=0.239$).

4.2 Limitations of the Study

This study was geographically confined to Keiyo North Constituency in Elgeiyo Marakwet County, which restricted the generalizability of the findings. Family backgrounds, cultural practices, and learning environments vary widely across Kenya, meaning that the results may not be directly applicable to other regions with different contexts.

The study also relied heavily on self-reported data collected through questionnaires, which may have been subject to bias. Some respondents may have provided socially desirable answers, while others may have had difficulties recalling or honestly reporting information regarding family socioeconomic status and parental involvement in education. This could have influenced the accuracy of the data obtained.

Another limitation arose from the composition of the sample, which focused primarily on learners from public and private schools within the constituency. Excluding learners from special schools and non-formal institutions may have narrowed the diversity of perspectives captured, thereby limiting the overall representativeness of the study.

Language barriers also presented challenges, particularly for younger learners who sometimes struggled to fully understand certain questionnaire items. Although clarifications were provided during data collection, misinterpretations may still have affected the precision of responses.

Furthermore, the study was conducted under strict time and resource constraints, which prevented the use of a longitudinal design. A longer-term study might have revealed deeper insights into how family background influences English language acquisition over time.

Lastly, the study did not fully account for external factors beyond the family background, such as peer influence, teacher competence, and school policies, which may also play a significant role in shaping learners' English language acquisition. These uncontrolled variables may have interacted with family background factors in ways that were not captured in this research.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies based on the findings presented in Chapter Four. The study aimed to investigate the effects of family background on English language acquisition among upper primary children in Keiyo North Constituency, Elgeiyo Marakwet County. The study specifically examined the influence of socioeconomic status, parental education level, home language environment, and access to learning resources on English language acquisition.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The study achieved a high response rate of 92%, with most respondents completing the questionnaires fully. The demographic data indicated that participants represented a fairly balanced distribution in terms of gender and school type, with both public and private schools adequately captured. The study revealed that family background factors significantly influence English language acquisition, with variations across the socioeconomic, educational, linguistic, and resource dimensions.

5.1.1 Socioeconomic Status and English Language Acquisition

The findings indicated that socioeconomic status strongly affects children's English proficiency. Learners from households with stable income, employed parents, and access to basic educational materials showed higher competence in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and oral fluency. Conversely, learners from low-income households often struggled with consistent school attendance due to fees and basic needs, which hindered their exposure to English learning.

5.1.2 Parental Education Level and English Language Acquisition

The results revealed that the education level of parents plays a crucial role in learners' acquisition of English. Children whose parents had attained higher levels of education, especially secondary

and post-secondary education, were more likely to receive homework support, encouragement, and exposure to English media. On the other hand, learners from households where parents had limited literacy skills in English faced challenges in vocabulary development and writing proficiency.

5.1.3 Home Language Environment and English Language Acquisition

The study found that the language spoken at home is a determining factor in shaping learners' confidence and fluency in English. Respondents indicated that where English was frequently used at home, children demonstrated greater fluency, confidence in oral expression, and better comprehension skills. However, homes where indigenous languages or Kiswahili dominated showed limited exposure to English, reducing opportunities for practice and reinforcement outside school.

5.1.4 Access to Learning Resources and English Language Acquisition

The study highlighted that access to learning resources such as textbooks, digital tools, and libraries significantly enhances learners' English performance. Children with access to English storybooks, quiet study spaces, and internet resources were more likely to demonstrate strong reading comprehension and grammar usage. Limited access to these resources negatively impacted learners, particularly those in rural settings, who reported fewer opportunities to practice English outside the classroom.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concludes that socioeconomic status significantly influences English language acquisition. Children from well-off families benefit from stable learning environments, while those from low-income households face structural challenges that hinder their academic progress.

Parental education levels have a direct impact on learners' ability to acquire English effectively. Parents with higher education can better support their children's academic work and foster positive attitudes toward learning.

The home language environment determines learners' fluency and confidence in English. Homes that integrate English use in daily communication contribute to better oral and written proficiency compared to those dominated by indigenous languages.

Adequate access to learning resources promotes stronger English acquisition outcomes. The absence of such resources places learners at a disadvantage, limiting their capacity to compete academically with peers who have resource-rich environments.

5.3 Recommendations

Schools and policymakers should establish bursary and feeding programs to support learners from low-income households, ensuring consistent attendance and reduced absenteeism due to financial challenges.

Adult literacy and parenting programs should be promoted to equip parents with basic English proficiency. This will enable them to assist their children more effectively in language-related schoolwork.

Awareness campaigns should be conducted to encourage parents and guardians to integrate English use in daily home communication. Schools could also design programs that motivate families to create English-speaking clubs or peer groups at community level.

The government and development partners should invest in libraries, digital learning tools, and affordable English textbooks. Schools should also create structured reading programs to increase learners' exposure to English outside the formal curriculum.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

Future studies could focus on longitudinal research to track how family background factors influence learners' English acquisition over several years. Comparative studies between rural and urban contexts may also provide deeper insights into resource disparities. Additionally, research could examine the role of technology, particularly digital learning tools, in bridging gaps caused by socioeconomic or environmental challenges. Finally, an investigation into teacher-family

collaboration in supporting English language acquisition may provide further solutions to persistent challenges in literacy development.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: COVER LETTER

REQUEST FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH PROJECT

My name is Naomi Jepkemoi Tanui a BED student from The Management University of Africa. I am carrying out an academic research project entitled effects of Family Background on English acquisition among upper primary learners. In line with my area of study, I would wish to collect data from your institution.

I therefore request you to assist in giving your feedback on the questions asked. Please bear in mind that the responses are confidential and will be used for academic research only.

Your cooperation and response will be highly appreciated.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Naomi Jepkemoi Tanui

BEDK/2/00089/3/21

Management University of Africa

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNARE

The questionnaire is to collect data for purely academic purposes. The study seeks to investigate the effects of family background on English language acquisition among upper primary children. A case study of Keiyo North Constituency, Elgeiyo Marakwet County. All information will be treated with strict confidence. Do not put any name or identification on this questionnaire.

Section A: Demographic Information (Kindly tick the appropriate box)

1. Gender

   Male [ ]

   Female [ ]

2. Age: …… Years

3. Grade Level

   Grade 6 [ ]

   Grade 7 [ ]

   Grade 8 [ ]

   Grade 9 [ ]

4. Type of School

   Private [ ]

   Public [ ]

Section B: Socioeconomic Status

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements using a scale of 1 to 5:

(5 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 2= Agree, 1 = Strongly Agree)

Statement					
1. My parents/guardians earn enough to meet our needs.					
2. My parents' occupations provide for my education needs.					
3. My home has good housing conditions.					
4. I own learning materials such as textbooks and stationery.					

Section C: Parental Education Level and Involvement

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements using a scale of 1 to 5:

(5 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 2= Agree, 1 = Strongly Agree)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
. My parents/guardians attained a high level of education.					
My parents/guardians can read and write in English.					
My parents/guardians help me with English homework.					
My parents/guardians have a positive attitude towards education.					

Section D: Home Language Environment

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements using a scale of 1 to 5:

(5 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 2= Agree, 1 = Strongly Agree)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. English is commonly spoken at home.					
2. I frequently use English when communicating with family.					
3. I watch or listen to English media (TV, radio, internet, YouTube).					
4. My parents can speak English at home.					

Section E: Access to Learning Resources

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements using a scale of 1 to 5:

(5 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 2= Agree, 1 = Strongly Agree)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. I have access to English textbooks at home.					
2. I have access to the internet and digital learning tools.					
3. There is a quiet reading space at home.					
4. I frequently visit a library to access learning resources.					

Section F: English Language Acquisition

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements using a scale of 1 to 5:

(5 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 2= Agree, 1 = Strongly Agree)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. I understand most English lessons in class.					
2. I can read and understand English storybooks.					
3. I can use correct grammar when speaking or writing.					
4. I speak English confidently at school and home.					

The Management University of Africa

Date: 10th September, 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

NAOMY JEPKEMOI TANUI– BEDK/2/00089/3/21

This letter serves to introduce the above named who is a **Bachelors of Education, Arts (B.Ed. Arts)** student and is interested in carrying out research on **Effects of Family Background on English Language Acquisition Among Upper Primary Children. A Case Study of Elgeiyo Marakwet County, Keiyo North Constituency**

Any assistance accorded to her in pursuit of this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Juster Nyaga
Dean, School of Management and Leadership