

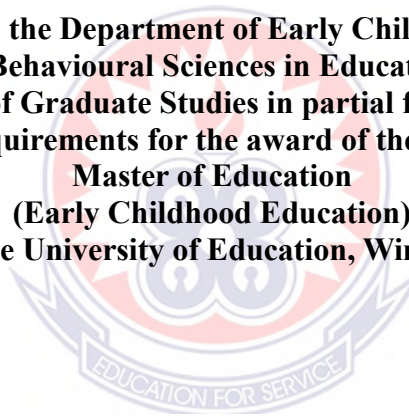
**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF TEACHING WRITING SKILLS  
AT EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES IN THE ASUNAFO NORTH**

**JAMILATU ALI**

**(7251900020)**

**A Dissertation in the Department of Early Childhood Education,  
Faculty of Applied Behavioural Sciences in Education, submitted to the  
School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
Master of Education  
(Early Childhood Education)  
in the University of Education, Winneba**



**JULY, 2025**

## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

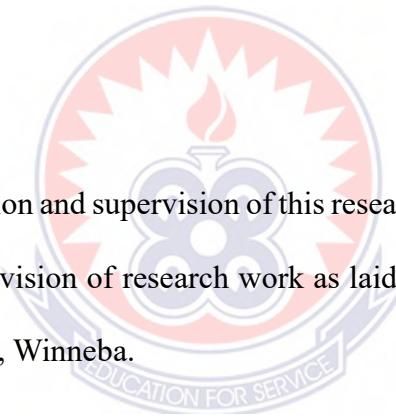
I, **JAMILATU ALI**, declare that this thesis is a result of my original research except for references to other people's work which have been duly acknowledged and it has neither in whole nor in part been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

**Candidate's Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and supervision of this research work were done in accordance with the guidelines for the supervision of research work as laid down by the School of Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba.



**Name of Supervisor:** Professor Clement Ali

**Supervisor's Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

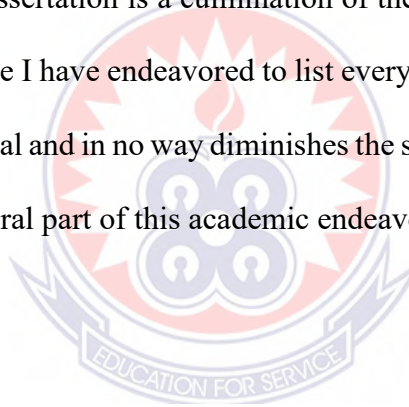
**DEDICATION**

To my lovely Family



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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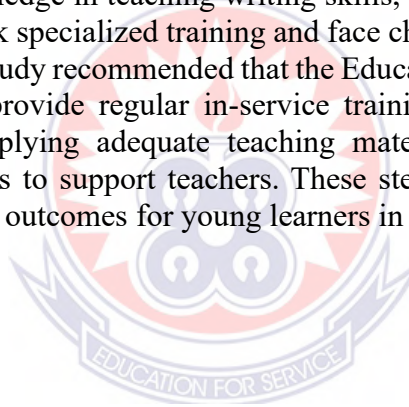
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore kindergarten teachers' knowledge of teaching writing skills at early childhood centres within the Asunafo North District. The researcher adopted the pragmatist paradigm. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach. Explanatory sequential design was used. A total of one hundred and ten (110) respondents were sampled for the study using Census and purposive technique. Structured questionnaire and interview Guide were used to gather data for the study, data was analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The study found out that, most kindergarten teachers in Asunafo North District have moderate knowledge of teaching writing skills, showing strengths in basic concepts but lacking depth in areas like emergent writing and inclusive strategies. Teachers often used practical methods like tracing, labeling, and storytelling, though implementation lacked consistency. Limited formal training in early writing instruction was reported, with most teachers lacking targeted professional development. Additionally, major challenges included large class sizes, inadequate resources, limited space, and minimal parental support. These findings highlight the need for structured training, better resources, and collaboration among stakeholders to improve writing instruction in early childhood education. The study concluded that kindergarten teachers in Asunafo North District possess moderate knowledge in teaching writing skills, using basic strategies like tracing and copying. However, they lack specialized training and face challenges such as large class sizes and inadequate resources. The study recommended that the Education Directorate, in collaboration with Asunafo North District, provide regular in-service training focused on effective writing strategies. It also advised supplying adequate teaching materials, reducing class sizes, and introducing mentoring programs to support teachers. These steps aim to enhance early writing instruction and improve literacy outcomes for young learners in early childhood classrooms.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

The ability to write is an essential skill that lays the foundation for future academic success and effective communication. Early childhood education plays a crucial role in developing children's writing skills, with kindergarten serving as a critical stage for literacy development. Writing skills enable learners to express their thoughts, enhance cognitive development, and build confidence in communication (Graham et al., 2020). However, the effectiveness of writing instruction in early childhood education largely depends on the knowledge and competence of teachers in teaching writing skills.

Kindergarten teachers require adequate knowledge of writing development stages, instructional strategies, and appropriate interventions to support children's learning (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017). Effective writing skills teaching involves integrating activities such as drawing, storytelling, letter formation, and fine motor exercises to enhance children's ability to express themselves in written form (Hall et al., 2015). Despite the importance of teaching writing skills at an early stage, many teachers face challenges related to inadequate training, limited resources, and lack of professional development opportunities (Neumann, 2018).

In the Asunafo North, the effectiveness of kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills is influenced by their level of knowledge, available training programs, and instructional strategies. Investigating teachers' knowledge of writing instruction is essential to identify gaps in their skills and develop appropriate interventions for improving writing instruction at early childhood centers.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Developing writing skills in early childhood is a critical foundation for children's overall literacy development and long-term academic success. Writing is not only a means of communication but also a tool for thinking, learning, and expressing ideas. In early childhood education, especially at the kindergarten level, writing skills include activities such as scribbling, drawing, letter formation, name writing, and early sentence construction. These early experiences prepare children for more formal writing tasks in later years of schooling (Graham & Santangelo, 2012).

Research has shown that children who develop strong writing skills at an early age tend to perform better in reading, spelling, and other academic subjects as they progress through school. Writing supports the development of fine motor skills, language development, vocabulary growth, and cognitive abilities. When children are given opportunities to practice writing in meaningful and playful ways, they become more confident and motivated learners (Puranik & Lonigan, 2014). For this reason, early childhood educators play a very important role in supporting children's writing development.

Despite the importance of early writing instruction, concerns have been raised globally about kindergarten teachers' knowledge and skills in teaching writing. Many early childhood teachers receive limited training specifically focused on how to teach writing to young children. As a result, writing instruction is sometimes neglected or poorly implemented in kindergarten classrooms. Studies indicate that teachers' lack of adequate preparation, limited understanding of developmental writing stages, and insufficient instructional strategies negatively affect the quality of writing instruction provided to young learners (Gerde, Skibbe, Wright, & Douglas, 2015).

In addition to limited pre-service training, lack of continuous professional development opportunities also affects teachers' ability to teach writing effectively. Professional development

programs help teachers update their knowledge, learn new teaching strategies, and respond to the diverse needs of learners. However, many teachers, particularly those in rural and semi-urban areas, have limited access to such opportunities. Research suggests that teachers who do not receive regular training often rely on traditional teaching methods that may not support young children's writing development effectively (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017).

In Ghana, early childhood education has been recognized as an important stage in the education system. The Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service emphasize the use of play-based and child-centered approaches in kindergarten classrooms. The Kindergarten Curriculum Framework encourages teachers to integrate writing activities into daily classroom routines through drawing, storytelling, role play, and guided writing activities (MoE, 2019). However, the successful implementation of these approaches depends largely on teachers' knowledge, skills, and confidence in teaching writing.

Several studies conducted in Ghana have identified challenges faced by kindergarten teachers in delivering quality literacy instruction. These challenges include inadequate training in early literacy, lack of teaching and learning materials, large class sizes, and limited instructional support. Some teachers also have difficulties understanding how to scaffold children's writing development according to their developmental levels. As a result, writing activities in many kindergarten classrooms are limited to copying letters or words, rather than engaging children in meaningful writing experiences (Amua-Sekyi & Nti, 2015).

In the Asunafo North District, early childhood education plays a key role in preparing children for basic education. However, the extent of kindergarten teachers' knowledge in teaching writing skills in the district remains unclear. There is limited empirical evidence on how well teachers understand early writing development, the instructional strategies they use, and the challenges they face in

teaching writing. This lack of information raises important questions about teachers' preparedness to support young learners' writing development effectively.

Teachers' knowledge of writing instruction includes understanding the stages of writing development, appropriate teaching methods, assessment techniques, and ways to support children with different learning needs. Without adequate knowledge in these areas, teachers may struggle to plan effective writing lessons and provide appropriate feedback to learners. This can negatively affect children's motivation and progress in writing. Therefore, it is important to examine kindergarten teachers' level of knowledge in teaching writing skills within the Asunafo North District.

Furthermore, training opportunities available to kindergarten teachers in the district need to be explored. Pre-service training alone may not be sufficient to equip teachers with the practical skills required for effective writing instruction. In-service training, workshops, seminars, and mentoring programs are essential for strengthening teachers' instructional practices. Identifying the availability and effectiveness of such training programs will help determine whether teachers are receiving adequate professional support (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Another important issue is the challenges teachers encounter in teaching writing skills. These challenges may include lack of instructional materials such as writing tools, charts, and storybooks; large class sizes that limit individual support; time constraints within the school timetable; and limited parental support at home. Teachers' attitudes and confidence levels may also influence how writing is taught in the classroom. Understanding these challenges is necessary for developing practical solutions that can improve writing instruction in early childhood settings.

Without a strong foundation in writing, young learners may struggle with literacy development in later years. Poor writing skills can affect children's ability to express ideas, perform well in assessments, and engage effectively in learning activities. Early writing difficulties can also lead to low self-esteem and reduced interest in school. Therefore, addressing issues related to teachers' knowledge and challenges in teaching writing is critical for improving early literacy outcomes (Graham, 2019).

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore kindergarten teachers' knowledge of teaching writing skills at early childhood centres within the Asunafo North District.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The following research objectives guided the study;

1. To assess the level of knowledge kindergarten teachers, have about teaching writing skills in early childhood centers within Asunafo North District.
2. To identify the teaching strategies used by kindergarten teachers to develop writing skills in early childhood learners within Asunafo North District.
3. To explore the training available for kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills within Asunafo North District.
4. To examine the challenges kindergarten teachers face in teaching writing skills at early childhood centers within Asunafo North District

### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of knowledge kindergarten teachers have about teaching writing skills in early childhood centers within Asunafo North District?
2. What teaching strategies do kindergarten teachers use to develop writing skills in early childhood learners within Asunafo North District?
3. What training opportunities are available for kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills within Asunafo North District?
4. What challenges do kindergarten teachers face in teaching writing skills at early childhood centers within Asunafo North District?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in several ways. First, it will provide insights into the level of knowledge that kindergarten teachers possess in teaching writing skills, helping educational stakeholders to identify gaps and areas for improvement. Second, the study will highlight the teaching strategies employed by kindergarten teachers, offering guidance on best practices that can enhance writing instruction in early childhood centers. Third, findings from this study will inform policymakers and educational authorities about the need for professional development programs to improve teachers' competencies in writing instruction. Lastly, the study will serve as a valuable resource for future research on literacy development in early childhood education.

### **1.7 Delimitations of the Study**

This study focuses on kindergarten teachers in early childhood centers within the Asunafo North District. It examines their knowledge of teaching writing skills, the instructional strategies they employ, the training available to them, and the challenges they face. The study does not cover other

literacy aspects such as reading and oral language development but is limited to the teaching of writing skills in early childhood education.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The study faced certain limitations. Data collection depends on teachers' self-reported responses, which are subject to bias. Time and resource constraints affected the depth of the study; however, efforts were made to ensure comprehensive data collection and analysis.

### **1.9 Definition of Key Terms**

**Writing Skills:** The ability to form letters, words, and sentences to communicate thoughts and ideas in written form.

**Early Childhood Centers:** Educational institutions that provide foundational learning experiences for children in kindergarten.

**Kindergarten Teachers:** Educators responsible for teaching children at the kindergarten level in early childhood education settings.

**Teaching Strategies:** Methods and approaches used by teachers to facilitate learning and skill development in students.

**Professional Development:** Training programs and educational opportunities designed to enhance teachers' knowledge and instructional skills.

### **1.10 Organisation of the Study**

The study was organized into five (5) chapters. The first chapter dealt with the introduction which gives an insight into the background of the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, and the research questions which serve as a guide to the study. It also dealt with the significance of the study and the delimitation, limitations, and organization of the study concludes the chapter.

Chapter Two focused on the review of related literature on the topic. It comprises the theoretical framework, the conceptual review, and the empirical review. Chapter Three comprised of methodology. It highlighted the research paradigm, research approach, research design, population, sample, and sampling techniques used in the study. It again described the research design as well as the instruments and methods used for the study. The analysis of the data collected for the study opens in Chapter Four. It also contains the analysis of the interview about the research questions. Chapter Five, dealt with the summary, conclusion, recommendations, and suggestions made on the topic for future research.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Overview

This chapter presents the literature review for the study. The review first covered the theoretical framework and conceptual framework followed by a review of the key themes raised in the research questions that guided the study. This chapter also focuses on three main areas of literature, thus, theoretical underpinnings, empirical literature

- ✓ Theoretical Framework
- ✓ Conceptual Framework
- ✓ Kindergarten Teachers' Knowledge of Teaching Writing Skills
- ✓ Teaching Strategies for Developing Writing Skills
- ✓ Training Opportunities for Teaching Writing Skills
- ✓ Challenges in Teaching Writing Skills in Early Childhood Centers

#### 2.1 Theoretical framework

##### **Emergent Literacy Theory by Marie Clay (1993)**

Marie Clay's (1993) Emergent Literacy Theory emphasizes that literacy development begins at birth and progresses through meaningful interactions with language in various forms. She asserts that young children acquire literacy skills naturally through exposure to print, storytelling, and everyday conversations. Clay's theory highlights the importance of early writing experiences, recognizing that scribbling and drawing are fundamental stages in the literacy process. She argues that children develop literacy through observation, imitation, and engagement with their environment, which supports their ability to understand and use written language effectively.

The theory underscores the role of teachers and caregivers in creating print-rich environments that foster literacy growth. In the context of kindergarten teachers' knowledge of teaching writing skills at early childhood centers in the Asunafo North District, Clay's theory provides a strong foundation for understanding how children develop early literacy skills. For example, teachers who integrate storytelling, shared reading, and guided writing activities in their classrooms provide children with meaningful literacy experiences that support their writing development (Graham et al., 2020). These activities help children recognize letter-sound relationships, develop fine motor skills, and gain confidence in expressing themselves through writing.

To assess the level of knowledge kindergarten teachers, have about teaching writing skills in early childhood centers in the Asunafo North District, it is essential to examine their understanding of emergent literacy concepts. Teachers who are well-versed in Clay's theory recognize the importance of allowing children to experiment with writing in a risk-free environment. For instance, a kindergarten teacher might encourage learners to write their names using letter cards or create simple stories through dictation and illustrations. Such practices demonstrate an awareness of the different stages of writing development and the need to support children's literacy growth through engaging and interactive methods (Neumann, 2018).

Identifying the teaching strategies used by kindergarten teachers to develop writing skills is another crucial objective of this study. Effective teaching strategies include activities such as interactive writing, where teachers and children compose text together, and using environmental print, such as labeling classroom objects, to help children connect written words with real-world contexts. In a practical example, a teacher might use a morning message board where children take turns contributing to a daily sentence. This hands-on experience allows children to see writing

modeled in a meaningful way and encourages them to participate actively in the writing process (Hall et al., 2015).

Exploring the training available for kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills is vital for understanding their preparedness to implement effective writing instruction. Professional development programs that focus on emergent literacy principles, phonemic awareness, and writing workshop approaches can enhance teachers' skills and confidence. In the Asunafo North District, access to training opportunities may vary, influencing how teachers incorporate writing instruction in their classrooms. Teachers who receive ongoing professional development are more likely to implement research-based strategies, such as scaffolded writing activities and multisensory approaches, which cater to diverse learning needs (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017).

Examining the challenges kindergarten teachers face in teaching writing skills at early childhood centers in the Asunafo North District is crucial for developing targeted interventions. Common challenges include large class sizes, inadequate teaching resources, and limited access to professional development. For example, a teacher in a resource-limited classroom may struggle to provide sufficient writing materials, such as notebooks, pencils, and alphabet charts, which are essential for supporting early writing development. Additionally, teachers may face difficulties in differentiating instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners, particularly those with limited exposure to literacy-rich environments at home (Neumann, 2018).

Clay's concept of reading recovery also aligns with addressing these challenges by providing individualized support for struggling writers. Teachers who implement one-on-one writing conferences, where they guide children through the writing process, help bridge literacy gaps and promote skill development. For instance, a teacher working with a child who struggles with letter

formation might provide targeted exercises, such as tracing letters in sand or using playdough to shape letters, to strengthen fine motor skills and enhance writing fluency (Graham et al., 2020).

In conclusion, Marie Clay's Emergent Literacy Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how kindergarten teachers' knowledge influences writing instruction in early childhood centers in the Asunafo North District. By assessing teachers' knowledge levels, identifying effective teaching strategies, exploring available training opportunities, and examining the challenges they face, this study contributes to improving early literacy education. Practical classroom examples demonstrate how emergent literacy principles can be applied to support children's writing development, emphasizing the need for well-trained teachers, resourceful teaching methods, and ongoing professional development. Addressing these factors will ultimately enhance writing instruction and foster literacy growth among young learners.

## **2.2 Kindergarten Teachers' Knowledge of Teaching Writing Skills**

The knowledge of kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills is crucial in shaping early literacy development. Writing is a complex process that requires phonemic awareness, letter recognition, fine motor skills, and cognitive understanding (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017). Teachers' understanding of these foundational skills plays a key role in structuring lessons that effectively guide young learners toward writing proficiency. Research highlights that early writing instruction involves more than letter formation; it includes pre-writing activities such as drawing, scribbling, and storytelling, which serve as precursors to conventional writing (Gerde, Bingham, & Wasik, 2012). Kindergarten teachers must be knowledgeable about the various stages of writing development and how to scaffold instruction appropriately.

Marie Clay's (1993) Emergent Literacy Theory emphasizes that literacy development begins at birth and is shaped by meaningful interactions with print and spoken language. According

to Clay, young learners acquire literacy skills through observation, imitation, and engagement in writing activities. This suggests that teachers should create a print-rich environment where children are exposed to diverse literacy materials that encourage early writing attempts. Teachers' knowledge of emergent literacy principles directly impacts their ability to support children's writing development effectively.

### **2.3 Teaching Strategies for Developing Writing Skills**

Effective writing instruction in early childhood classrooms incorporates multiple teaching strategies that cater to children's developmental stages. Writing is a fundamental skill that supports literacy development, and early childhood educators play a crucial role in helping young learners acquire this skill. Kindergarten teachers use various methods to introduce writing, considering children's cognitive, motor, and linguistic abilities (Hall, Toland, & Guo, 2019). Teaching writing in early childhood centers requires a well-structured approach that ensures children gradually develop their abilities to express thoughts and ideas in written form.

One effective strategy used by kindergarten teachers is guided writing, where learners receive direct teacher support in constructing sentences or simple stories. Guided writing sessions provide opportunities for children to observe and participate in the writing process with the teacher's assistance. This strategy helps build children's confidence as they gradually learn to form letters, words, and sentences. Teachers may start with simple word-building activities and gradually move to sentence construction as children develop more advanced writing skills. Interactive writing, another essential strategy, allows children to contribute letters, words, or ideas with teacher assistance (Gerde et al., 2012). This approach fosters engagement and encourages young learners to take an active role in developing their writing skills.

Multisensory techniques are also widely used in early childhood education to support writing development. Activities such as letter tracing, sand writing, and using manipulatives help children strengthen their fine motor skills, which are essential for proper letter formation. For example, tracing letters in sand or forming letters with playdough enhances children's ability to recognize and write letters accurately. These activities provide sensory experiences that make learning more enjoyable and meaningful for young learners. Research indicates that multisensory approaches are effective in improving letter recognition and handwriting skills among kindergarten children (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017). By incorporating such techniques, teachers create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that supports writing development.

Storytelling and drawing are additional strategies that encourage children to express their thoughts before transitioning to formal writing. Many young learners find it easier to communicate their ideas through pictures and oral narratives before putting them into written words. Clay's (1993) Emergent Literacy Theory emphasizes the significance of early literacy experiences, including storytelling, as a foundation for writing development. Kindergarten teachers often use storytelling sessions to introduce new vocabulary, sentence structures, and narrative sequences, which later help children construct their own written stories. Drawing also allows children to visualize their ideas before attempting to write, bridging the gap between oral language and written expression.

Furthermore, play-based writing activities are instrumental in fostering a love for writing among young learners. Activities such as writing letters to friends, labeling classroom objects, and making simple lists encourage children to practice writing in meaningful contexts. Play-based writing aligns with children's natural curiosity and creativity, making the learning process more enjoyable. Research shows that children who engage in play-based writing activities demonstrate higher levels of motivation and confidence in writing (Neumann, 2018). By integrating writing into play,

teachers provide learners with opportunities to practice and refine their writing skills in an interactive and stress-free environment.

Another critical aspect of teaching writing in early childhood centers is ensuring that teachers receive proper training and professional development. Teachers' knowledge of writing instruction significantly influences their effectiveness in helping children develop literacy skills. Studies indicate that many early childhood educators lack sufficient training in writing instruction, which affects their ability to implement effective teaching strategies (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017). Training programs should focus on equipping teachers with knowledge of writing development stages, instructional strategies, and assessment techniques. Workshops and continuous professional development sessions can help teachers improve their teaching methods and stay updated with best practices in early childhood literacy instruction.

Despite the effectiveness of various writing instruction strategies, kindergarten teachers face several challenges in teaching writing skills. One major challenge is the lack of adequate resources, such as age-appropriate writing materials, books, and teaching aids. Limited access to these resources hinders teachers' ability to create engaging and meaningful writing experiences for young learners. Additionally, large class sizes in some early childhood centers make it difficult for teachers to provide individualized support to each child. Writing instruction requires close monitoring and guidance, which can be challenging in overcrowded classrooms.

Another challenge is the varying levels of readiness among kindergarten learners. Some children enter early childhood centers with prior exposure to literacy activities, while others have minimal experience with writing. Teachers must adapt their instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners, which requires significant effort and flexibility. Differentiated instruction, where teachers modify activities based on children's skill levels, is an effective approach to addressing this challenge.

However, implementing differentiated instruction requires additional training and support for teachers (Hall, Toland, & Guo, 2019).

Furthermore, the lack of parental involvement in children's writing development poses a challenge for teachers. Writing skills develop through consistent practice, and children benefit greatly when parents reinforce writing activities at home. However, some parents may not have the knowledge or time to support their children's writing development. Educators can address this issue by providing parents with simple strategies to encourage writing at home, such as engaging in shared writing activities, encouraging children to write shopping lists, or keeping a simple journal. Strengthening the home-school connection can significantly enhance children's writing skills and overall literacy development.

In conclusion, effective writing instruction in early childhood centers involves a combination of strategies that support children's developmental stages and individual learning needs. Guided writing, interactive writing, multisensory techniques, storytelling, drawing, and play-based writing activities all contribute to building a strong foundation for literacy development. However, the success of these strategies depends on the knowledge and training of kindergarten teachers, as well as the availability of resources and support systems. Addressing challenges such as inadequate training, limited resources, large class sizes, and parental involvement can further enhance writing instruction in early childhood centers. By investing in teacher training and implementing best practices, early childhood educators can ensure that young learners develop essential writing skills that will support their academic success.

#### **2.4 Training Opportunities for Teaching Writing Skills**

Professional development and training opportunities are essential for equipping kindergarten teachers with the necessary skills to teach writing effectively. Pre-service training programs

typically provide foundational knowledge in literacy instruction, but continuous in-service training enhances teachers' pedagogical approaches (Neumann, 2018). Workshops, coaching sessions, and collaborative learning programs enable teachers to refine their instructional methods, integrate new strategies, and adapt to emerging literacy trends.

Effective writing instruction in early childhood education requires teachers to understand the developmental stages of writing, the role of play in literacy, and the integration of multimodal approaches to support young learners. Kindergarten teachers must be skilled in using activities such as scribbling, drawing, and letter formation exercises to nurture children's early writing abilities (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017). Without adequate professional development, teachers may struggle to implement these practices effectively, which can hinder children's writing development.

Governments and educational institutions play a significant role in providing training opportunities. Structured teacher training programs are often designed to enhance knowledge in phonemic awareness, print concepts, and writing strategies that align with children's cognitive development (Graham et al., 2020). However, in many developing regions, limited access to specialized training programs poses a challenge (Kim, 2020). Teachers in underserved areas often lack opportunities to participate in workshops or receive mentorship, affecting their ability to implement best practices in literacy instruction.

In the Asunafo North District, it is important to explore the availability and effectiveness of teacher training initiatives to ensure that kindergarten educators are well-prepared to support early writing development. The effectiveness of these training programs can be measured by assessing teachers' confidence in their instructional abilities, their use of diverse teaching strategies, and their ability to adapt to individual student needs. Training programs that include hands-on learning experiences,

classroom observations, and collaborative discussions tend to be more effective in improving instructional practices (Hall et al., 2015).

One of the key components of professional development is ongoing mentorship and peer collaboration. When teachers are given opportunities to share experiences, discuss challenges, and exchange strategies, they develop a deeper understanding of effective writing instruction (Piasta et al., 2018). In some early childhood centers, peer coaching has been introduced to help teachers refine their writing instruction techniques. This approach allows teachers to observe and learn from each other, leading to a more consistent and effective implementation of writing strategies.

Another significant aspect of teacher training is the use of research-based instructional methods. Kindergarten teachers benefit from training that introduces evidence-based practices, such as interactive writing, guided writing, and the use of literacy centers (Gerde et al., 2012). These methods help children engage with writing in meaningful ways, allowing them to develop early literacy skills through structured and playful experiences. For example, interactive writing encourages children to co-construct written texts with their teachers, which supports their understanding of letter-sound relationships and sentence structure.

Technology also plays an important role in modern teacher training programs. Online courses, virtual workshops, and digital literacy resources provide teachers with flexible learning options to enhance their writing instruction skills (Tondeur et al., 2016). In regions with limited access to traditional training programs, digital platforms can serve as valuable tools for professional development. Teachers can access instructional videos, participate in webinars, and engage in virtual communities where they can learn from experts and peers.

Despite the benefits of professional development, several challenges hinder the effective training of kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills. One of the main challenges is the lack of funding and resources allocated to teacher training programs (Neumann, 2018). Many early childhood centers, especially those in rural areas, do not have the financial capacity to sponsor teachers for further training. As a result, teachers may rely on outdated instructional methods that do not align with current literacy research.

Another challenge is the limited availability of trainers who specialize in early writing instruction. Many professional development programs focus broadly on literacy education without emphasizing the specific needs of young learners (Kim, 2020). Kindergarten teachers require specialized training that addresses the unique ways in which young children acquire writing skills. Programs that do not cater to these specific needs may fail to equip teachers with the necessary tools for effective instruction.

Time constraints also pose a challenge for kindergarten teachers who wish to participate in professional development programs. Many teachers have demanding workloads, making it difficult for them to attend training sessions regularly (Gerde et al., 2012). School administrators and policymakers must consider flexible training schedules, including weekend workshops and online modules, to accommodate teachers' busy schedules.

In the Asunafo North, addressing these challenges requires a collaborative effort between government agencies, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations. Investing in teacher training programs, providing access to educational resources, and creating support networks for kindergarten teachers can improve writing instruction in early childhood centers. It is essential to conduct needs assessments to identify specific areas where teachers require additional support and tailor training programs accordingly (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017).

A practical example of an effective training initiative is the implementation of literacy-focused professional learning communities (PLCs) in early childhood centers. In PLCs, teachers meet regularly to discuss teaching strategies, analyze student writing samples, and explore new instructional techniques. This collaborative approach has been shown to improve teacher confidence and effectiveness in literacy instruction (Piasta et al., 2018). Kindergarten teachers in the Asunafo North District could benefit from similar initiatives that encourage knowledge sharing and continuous learning.

Furthermore, incorporating classroom-based coaching can enhance the impact of professional development programs. In-class coaching allows experienced educators to provide direct feedback and model effective teaching practices for less experienced teachers (Graham et al., 2020). By observing and practicing research-based writing strategies in real classroom settings, teachers can develop practical skills that improve student learning outcomes.

In conclusion, professional development and training opportunities are essential for equipping kindergarten teachers with the necessary skills to teach writing effectively. While pre-service training provides foundational knowledge, continuous in-service training enhances teachers' instructional approaches and ensures that they remain up to date with emerging literacy trends. In the Asunafo North District, assessing the availability and effectiveness of teacher training programs is crucial to improving early writing instruction. Governments, educational institutions, and stakeholders must collaborate to address challenges such as limited resources, inadequate specialized training, and time constraints. Practical solutions, such as peer coaching, online training, and literacy-focused professional learning communities, can support kindergarten teachers in developing effective writing instruction practices. By investing in high-quality

professional development, educators can create engaging and supportive learning environments that foster early writing development in young learners.

## **2.5 Challenges in Teaching Writing Skills in Early Childhood Centers**

Despite the importance of early writing instruction, kindergarten teachers encounter various challenges that hinder effective teaching. One of the most common difficulties is the lack of adequate resources, such as age-appropriate writing materials, charts, and technology to facilitate engaging lessons (Hall et al., 2019). Writing instruction in early childhood requires a variety of materials, including paper, pencils, letter cards, and interactive writing tools, to support children's fine motor development and early literacy skills. However, many early childhood centers, particularly in rural areas like the Asunafo North District, struggle with insufficient materials, which limits the ability of teachers to create an engaging and stimulating writing environment (Neumann, 2018). Without the necessary tools, children may lack motivation and struggle to develop foundational writing skills.

Additionally, large class sizes often limit the level of individualized attention teachers can provide to students, making it difficult to address diverse learning needs. Research suggests that smaller class sizes allow for more effective literacy instruction, enabling teachers to give personalized feedback and tailored support to each child (Graham et al., 2020). In many kindergarten classrooms, teachers manage a high number of students with limited support, making it challenging to implement differentiated writing instruction. As a result, children who require additional assistance may fall behind in their literacy development, affecting their ability to progress in later academic years.

Another significant challenge is the varying literacy backgrounds of children entering kindergarten. Some children have prior exposure to writing activities at home, while others

may have little to no interaction with print (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017). Children from literacy-rich homes, where parents or caregivers read books, encourage drawing, and engage in storytelling, often demonstrate advanced writing skills compared to their peers who lack such exposure (Clay, 1993). This disparity means that teachers must implement differentiated instruction to accommodate learners with varying levels of literacy readiness. However, differentiation requires extensive knowledge and training, which some teachers may lack due to insufficient professional development opportunities.

The lack of ongoing professional development for kindergarten teachers is another critical barrier to effective writing instruction. Writing is a complex skill that requires systematic teaching approaches, yet many teachers do not receive adequate training in early writing pedagogy (Gerde et al., 2019). Professional development workshops, peer learning programs, and instructional coaching are essential for equipping teachers with innovative strategies to teach writing. However, in many districts, including the Asunafo North District, these opportunities are limited, leaving teachers without the necessary skills to support young writers effectively. Without continuous training, teachers may rely on outdated or ineffective methods that do not fully address children's developmental needs.

In addition to training, the curriculum and assessment methods used in early childhood education can present further challenges. In some cases, the curriculum may not adequately emphasize writing instruction, instead focusing more on oral language and reading skills (Neumann et al., 2020). When writing is not given equal priority, children may not receive sufficient practice in letter formation, sentence construction, and creative expression. Furthermore, assessment tools used in early childhood education often focus on reading readiness rather than writing progress, making it difficult for teachers to track children's writing

development accurately. Formative assessments, such as observational checklists, student writing samples, and interactive writing activities, should be integrated into teaching practices to monitor progress and provide targeted support (Hall et al., 2019).

Classroom management also plays a crucial role in writing instruction. Young children often have short attention spans and require engaging and interactive lessons to maintain interest in writing activities. However, managing a classroom while facilitating hands-on writing experiences can be challenging for teachers, particularly when working with children at different developmental levels (Graham et al., 2020). Strategies such as using writing centers, incorporating storytelling, and providing peer-assisted writing activities can help create a more dynamic and supportive writing environment.

Furthermore, language barriers can affect writing instruction in multilingual settings. In the Asunafo North District, children may speak different home languages, which can influence their ability to understand and use written language effectively (Puranik & Lonigan, 2017). Teachers must employ strategies that support language development alongside writing instruction, such as using visual aids, bilingual books, and phonics-based approaches to bridge the gap between spoken and written language. This requires additional training and resources, which are often lacking in many early childhood centers.

To address these challenges, several recommendations can be made. First, increasing access to teaching materials and writing resources in kindergarten classrooms is essential. Schools and educational stakeholders should invest in age-appropriate writing tools, technology, and structured writing programs to support early literacy development (Neumann, 2018). Providing teachers with hands-on materials, such as alphabet manipulative, tracing boards, and digital writing applications, can enhance students' writing experiences.

Second, reducing class sizes or providing additional teaching support can help improve individualized instruction. Teacher assistants or literacy coaches can support writing activities, allowing teachers to work more closely with children who need extra help. Implementing small-group writing sessions can also ensure that every child receives the necessary guidance to develop writing skills effectively (Hall et al., 2019).

Third, enhancing professional development opportunities for kindergarten teachers is crucial. Organizing regular workshops, collaborative learning sessions, and in-service training programs can equip teachers with evidence-based strategies for teaching writing (Gerde et al., 2019). Training should focus on key areas such as emergent literacy, scaffolding techniques, and the integration of writing with other literacy components.

Additionally, revising the curriculum to place greater emphasis on writing instruction can help ensure that children receive balanced literacy education. Early childhood curricula should include structured writing activities, daily writing practice, and formative assessment tools to track progress. Incorporating play-based writing activities, such as journaling, labeling classroom objects, and composing short stories, can make writing more meaningful and enjoyable for children (Neumann et al., 2020).

Lastly, fostering parental involvement in early writing development can help bridge the gap between home and school literacy practices. Educators should encourage parents to engage in writing-related activities at home, such as letter tracing, storytelling, and writing simple messages. Providing workshops for parents on the importance of early writing skills and how to support their children's literacy development can enhance children's overall learning experiences (Rowe & Casillas, 2021).

In conclusion, while kindergarten teachers play a vital role in developing children's writing skills, they face numerous challenges that affect the effectiveness of writing instruction. Limited resources, large class sizes, diverse literacy backgrounds, lack of professional development, curriculum constraints, and language barriers all contribute to these difficulties. Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative effort from educators, policymakers, and parents to ensure that all children receive quality writing instruction in their early years. By providing teachers with the necessary resources, training, and support, early childhood education can be strengthened, enabling young learners to build a strong foundation for future literacy success.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Overview**

This chapter provides the methodology of the study. It includes the research approach, paradigm and design, study population, sampling technique and sample size, sources of data, data collection instrument, reliability and validity of the instrument, ethical consideration and data analysis procedure used.

#### **3.1 Research Paradigm**

The researcher adopted the pragmatist paradigm as the foundation for this study. Pragmatism provides a flexible approach to research by integrating different methods of data collection and analysis throughout the study process (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). This paradigm is based on the idea that research should focus on practical solutions rather than rigid definitions of truth and reality. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003, p. 713), pragmatism challenges traditional views of truth and instead emphasizes "what works" as the best way to answer research questions. In other words, pragmatists believe that knowledge is gained through experience and practical application rather than through a fixed set of principles.

Pragmatism serves as a bridge between qualitative and quantitative research methods, allowing researchers to use multiple approaches to gain a more comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. It recognizes the value of both objective and subjective knowledge and encourages the use of diverse methodologies to explore research questions (Cherryholmes, as cited in Creswell, 2008). This means that researchers do not have to strictly follow either a qualitative or quantitative approach but can instead use a combination of both, depending on what is most

effective for the study. This flexibility makes pragmatism particularly useful in educational research, where both statistical data and personal experiences provide valuable insights.

In the context of this study, the pragmatist paradigm was appropriate because the research took place in real classroom settings where kindergarten teachers and young learners interacted naturally. The classroom environment is dynamic, with teachers and children engaging in both structured and unstructured learning activities. Since the study aimed to understand these interactions and their impact on early writing instruction, it was necessary to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The combination of these two approaches allowed for a deeper understanding of the strategies teachers use, their level of knowledge, and the challenges they face in teaching writing skills to kindergarten learners.

By adopting the pragmatist paradigm, the researcher was able to explore how teachers apply different teaching methods in real classroom situations and how learners respond to these methods. This approach provided a well-rounded perspective on the research topic. Rather than relying solely on numerical data or personal observations, the study combined both forms of evidence to present a clearer and more complete picture of the teaching and learning process. In educational research, this approach is particularly beneficial because it helps to capture the complexity of classroom interactions, which cannot always be fully understood through a single research method.

Additionally, using pragmatism allowed the researcher to focus on practical solutions that could improve teaching practices. Since pragmatism is concerned with "what works" in real-life situations, the study aimed not only to analyze existing teaching methods but also to provide recommendations for enhancing early writing instruction in kindergarten classrooms. This aligns with the overall goal of the study, which is to improve the teaching and learning of writing skills among young learners in early childhood centers.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach to provide a detailed understanding of the research problem while aligning with the philosophical perspective of the study. Mixed-methods research involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating them, and using different designs that incorporate theoretical frameworks and philosophical assumptions (Creswell, 2002). This approach is based on the idea that combining both methods provides a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem than using either method alone.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) argue that mixed-methods research draws on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches while acknowledging the importance of human experience and the natural world. This means that by using different research methods together, researchers can gain a broader and more insightful explanation of the topic being studied.

One major advantage of the mixed-methods approach is its ability to compensate for the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative research, as each method has its limitations (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Another advantage is that it allows researchers to address a wider range of research questions more effectively (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). By using both methods, researchers gain deeper insights into the data that might otherwise be missed if only one method were used. Additionally, mixed-methods research can enhance the generalizability of findings, making the results more applicable to different contexts (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). However, this approach requires researchers to be skilled in collecting and analyzing both types of data (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007).

In mixed-methods research, both quantitative and qualitative data are gathered, analyzed, and integrated. This combination helps to provide a more complete understanding of the research problem than relying solely on either quantitative or qualitative methods (Creswell, 2008).

Quantitative data consists of numerical information that is often collected through surveys, checklists, or standardized tests. For example, when investigating teachers' attitudes, researchers may use structured questionnaires with Likert scales to measure their perceptions numerically. The scores obtained from these instruments are analyzed statistically to answer research questions or test hypotheses (Creswell, 2002). According to Gay and Airasian (2000), quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of numerical data and is used to describe current conditions, explore relationships, and study cause-and-effect situations. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) emphasize that sound quantitative research design includes careful selection of subjects, clear data collection methods, well-defined procedures, and structured treatment implementation to ensure high-quality results.

On the other hand, qualitative data consists of open-ended information gathered through interviews, focus groups, and observations. Unlike quantitative data, which focuses on numbers, qualitative research emphasizes understanding people's experiences, thoughts, and behaviors. After collecting the data, researchers organize it into categories and analyze patterns to capture the diversity of ideas (Creswell, 2002). This method allows for a deeper exploration of participants' perspectives, which may not be possible through structured surveys alone.

### 3.3 Research Design

The study used an explanatory sequential design to examine the scope of inclusive assessment methods. According to Clark (2011), a sequential explanatory design involves first gathering quantitative data, which will be used to explain or further develop the quantitative results, and then gathering qualitative data.

Because the steps are separated into distinct phases, sequential explanatory design has the advantage of being simple to apply. A further benefit of the sequential explanatory design is that it is simple to describe and publish the results (Creswell, 2015).

This strategy was chosen because, while quantitative data and findings give a broad image of the study problem, further analysis, particularly through the gathering of qualitative data, is required to clarify, extend, or explain the overall picture (Creswell, 2015).

Sequential explanatory design has many flaws as well, including the fact that it takes a long time to finish all data collection due to the method's two distinct phases. Building from the qualitative analysis to the subsequent data gathering may be challenging (Creswell, 2015). Because qualitative data would complement and enrich the findings as well as contribute to the creation of new knowledge, the study utilized a research design (Stange, 2006).

Additionally, it is suggested that policies should concentrate on adopting reasonable, context-sensitive techniques to successfully establish inclusive educational environments (Selvaraj, 2015). Selvaraj (2015) argues that it is important to evaluate the conception and application of inclusion policies and principles. Beyond well-intentioned government regulations, the successful

implementation of inclusive education necessitates giving mainstream schools the right resources and assistance to improve their ability to manage diversity (Selvaraj, 2015).

Shevlin, Kenny and Loxley (2008) also pointed out how a lot of parents of learners with special educational needs (SEN) must lobby to secure resources for schools and that schools can act defensively to empower parents. Lack of leadership from schools in identifying and responding to the educational and social needs of learners has also been reported (Shevlin et al., 2008). It is further argued that what appears to be extremely variable is the in-depth knowledge in schools about special educational needs (Shevlin et al., 2008). Hence, the serious repercussion on the enrolment process and subsequent curricular inclusion is a result of this lack of knowledge. A negative impact on a school's willingness to include students with special educational needs is also observed to be as a result of inadequate knowledge about the educational implications of particular special educational needs (Shevlin et al., 2008).

Challenges to the implementation of inclusive education included cultural beliefs, inadequately trained teachers, and a lack of political goodwill in investing in inclusive education

### **3.4 Population**

According to Agyedu, Donkor, and Obeng (2013, p. 89), "the complete set of individuals (subjects), objects, or events having common observable characteristics in which the researcher is interested in studying" is referred to as the population. The population might either be finite or limitless, according to the authors. A study population is a sizable, precisely defined group of people with comparable characteristics (Castillo, 2009). Castillo makes a distinction between the target population and the accessible population. The target population is the total group of subjects to which a researcher would like to generalize the results of a study and the accessible population

is the group of subjects that is accessible to the researcher for a study from which the study sample can be drawn (Castillo, 2009). "The accessible population refers to the subset of the target population that is available for the researcher to study based on practical considerations such as geographic location, time, and resources." (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014, p. 146). It is a practical sampling frame from which the researcher selects a sample to represent the larger target population in the study. It is important to ensure that the accessible population is a representative subset of the target population to enhance the external validity of the research findings. The target population for this study consisted of all early childhood teachers in inclusive schools in the Effutu District, with a Population of 505 Early Childhood teachers. However, the accessible population for this research consisted of all kindergarten teachers in the District, with a population of 201 teachers

### **3.6 Sample and sampling technique**

The number of individuals or objects chosen from a target group is known as the sample size (Nwana, 1982). Generally speaking, a high sample size is preferable to get generalizable results. The results are more trustworthy and valid the larger the sample, the more representative it is of the population. The period, resources, and study population all have a role in choosing the sample size. A total of one hundred and ten (110) respondents were sampled for the study. This specific method greatly aided in the selection of respondents who were sufficiently knowledgeable about inclusive education and teacher attitudes toward inclusive assessment. The power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information for in-depth analysis related to the central issues being studied (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). These respondents have been in the inclusive schools for several years. The respondents therefore represent the characteristics. This particular technique helped in selecting respondents who have enough and distinctive information on inclusive education and how teachers behave towards inclusive assessment

The census technique was used to sample all the One hundred and ten (110) kindergarten teachers in the district. The basis for the choice of census was that they could be quickly evaluated and identified. The researcher used all of the kindergarten teachers at the inclusive schools in the district. According to U.N. (2008), the census is the procedure of systematically acquiring and recording information about all the members of a given population. According to Umar (2013), census sampling method refers to the complete enumeration of a universe and may be a place, a group of people or a specific locality through which data is collected. This method is indispensable in some cases like this due to the population but very hefty in some other cases because it is believed to be costly and time-consuming (Umar, 2013).

### **3.7 Instruments for Data Collection**

The study used a questionnaire and a structured interview guide. A set of questions were administered to teachers to give their varying experiences and information geared towards answering the research questions.

The study employed a questionnaire to gather the data for the investigation by looking at the technical review and thinking about the different parts that were included in the research questions. From there, questions formed that were believed to be relevant for the study objectives. A four-point Likert-scale was used in most problems, except the open-ended ones. Efforts were made to avoid being ambiguous, using slang, asking leading questions and so on to create a high-quality questionnaire that helped in providing as accurate information as possible. The inquiry began with a small introduction and explanation of how to answer the questions. The open-ended questions were included to pick up on information that might have been overlooked or might otherwise be important for the organisation.

Concerning the qualitative data, in-depth interviews were considered suitable qualitative research data collection instruments Lincoln (2010) and deemed appropriate for this study as it sought to investigate the experiences of teachers and other officials in inclusive education in the selected districts.

The use of interviews also permitted the research to attain reality by being immersed with the teachers and other respondents to comprehend the environment and its participants. According to Yin (2009), key informant interview supplements the research information since the questionnaire sample is often of small size and to enables participation. The semi-structured interviews were adapted for this study to allow questions that suit the diversity of the respondents to be asked. During the interviews, a digital voice recorder was used to record after seeking consent from respondents.

### **3.8 Questionnaire Administration**

Before administering the instrument, the researcher visited the participating schools in the District where I doubled as a tutor, with a letter of introduction from the Head of the Department of Early Childhood, University of Education, Winneba. Before the commencement of the administration of the research instruments, permission was sought from the school headteachers to conduct the study with the teachers. Although the respondents were implored to respond to all the questions in the survey, their preference not to answer particular questions was also considered their right. The study ensured that the names of respondents were withheld as part of the initial rapport processes for confidentiality purposes. The questionnaire was administered personally. The advantage of this is summarized by Osuala (1982) as the researcher has the opportunity to brief respondents to understand exactly what the items mean to obtain the right responses.

It is ethical in research to assure respondents of their confidentiality and anonymity; hence the questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter to this effect and to crave the respondents' maximum co-operation. The letter also indicated a one-week period within which respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire. After one week, the researcher went back to the respondents to collect the completed questionnaire. Three respondents whose questionnaires were not ready at that time, owing to their absence from school were given an extra one week to fill them out. There were some follow-ups to remind respondents to get the questionnaire ready. The questionnaires recorded 100% return rate as all 110 questionnaires were returned eventually.

### **3.9 Analysis of Quantitative Data**

Inferential statistics was used to analyze the quantitative data. The items on the questionnaire were coded and fed into the statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) version 23 and analysed using inferential statistics

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyze the quantitative data. The data was cleaned, coded, and entered into the software for analysis. The results were presented in tables, graphs, and charts to make it easy to understand and interpret. The findings from the quantitative analysis were used to answer the research questions and objectives of the study.

### **3.10 Validation of Quantitative Data**

Whitson (2012), defines validity as obtaining data that is appropriate for the intended use of the measuring instrument. I guarantee the validity of the quantitative research instrument, there was face and content validity

### **3.10.1. Face validity**

The instrument was given to colleague, master of Education, early childhood education students to scrutinize the instrument's structure grammar, alignment and configuration concerning the research question.

### **3.10.2 Content Validity**

Content validity is the extent to which all the consideration questions related to the content can be answered by the instrument questions and their corresponding scores (Creswell, 2012). The supervisor checked out the instruments to see if he had all the contents on the variables they were created to measure. The content validity was to ensure that the instrument's contents were valid enough to help the researcher attain the needed information from respondents.

### **3.11 Reliability of the Quantitative**

Reliability refers to how consistent a research tool is when used to measure something repeatedly. It shows whether the items or questions in the tool give the same results under similar conditions. It also indicates if the items in the tool relate well with each other and are free from errors. In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire that examined kindergarten teachers' knowledge in teaching writing skills was checked. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the internal consistency of the instrument. This method is preferred by many researchers because it is a trusted way of measuring how well the questions in a questionnaire fit together. The questionnaire was divided into four main sections, and the reliability of each section was checked separately. The first section, which focused on the types of writing strategies used by teachers, had a reliability score of 0.789. The second section, which looked at teachers' views on how writing should be taught to young children, had a reliability score of 0.756. The third section, which focused on teachers' knowledge

of writing instruction, had a score of 0.779. The fourth section, which examined the challenges teachers face when teaching writing skills, recorded a reliability score of 0.821. When all four sections were combined, the overall reliability score for the questionnaire was 0.786. According to research standards, a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.7 or higher means the instrument is considered reliable. This means the tool used in this study was consistent and dependable for gathering information about teachers' knowledge of writing instruction. The results show that the questionnaire was strong enough to be used in similar studies involving early childhood teachers. A reliable instrument ensures that the findings of the study can be trusted and used to guide decisions in teaching practices. High internal consistency also means that the questions were well-designed and measured what they were supposed to measure. This makes the tool suitable for collecting accurate data on how teachers support children's writing development. The use of a reliable tool in research also improves the overall quality of the study and helps in making recommendations that are based on strong evidence. This gives researchers, school leaders, and teacher trainers the confidence to rely on the data for improving teaching methods in early writing. In summary, the questionnaire used in this study proved to be a consistent and trustworthy instrument for assessing kindergarten teachers' knowledge and practices in teaching writing skills in early childhood centres.

### **3.9 Interview Guide**

The second method used to collect data in the study was conducting interviews with kindergarten teachers, after completing and analyzing the responses from all 110 questionnaires. These interviews were aimed at understanding the teachers' views on how they assess and apply their knowledge when teaching writing skills in early childhood classrooms. According to Maiklad (2001, p. 96), interviews are one of the most commonly used techniques in qualitative research. In

studies related to teachers' beliefs and classroom practices, interviews often play a key role, either as the main method or as a follow-up tool. The purpose of using interviews in this context was to give teachers the opportunity to think back and reflect on their teaching practices and what they had previously said about their approach to writing instruction in the classroom.

### **3.10 Procedure for the Interviews**

Interviews are the “most prominent” data collection tool in qualitative research (Punch, 2009, p. 144). Interviews may vary in their degree of structure and formality (King, 2004). I adopted an interview schedule approach (Refer to Appendix B).

The advantage of an interview schedule is that an interviewer has predetermined questions and that the order of those questions can be modified. The researcher decided the sequence and wording of questions during the interview. Based upon my perception of what seemed most appropriate, the question wording was changed and explanations given; particular questions which seemed inappropriate with a particular interviewee were omitted or additional ones included (Robson, 2002). Patton (1990, 2002) argued that the interview schedule is a guided interview approach. The characteristics of this approach are that the topics and issues covered were specified in advance in an outline. This outline increases the comprehensiveness of the data and makes data collection somewhat systematic for each respondent. Moreover, the interview-style with a planned focus in advance allowed the researcher to efficiently use the time as an interviewer.

However, before conducting the interviews, the researcher gave each person a detailed description of the study, and all those approached signed the ethics consent form (Refer to Appendix D). 9 head teachers in the District fully cooperated and showed interest in contributing to the study. Each signed a consent form and they were informed that they could withdraw at any point during the

data collection phase. The researcher also explained to the teachers that participation was optional and that they could withdraw before the interview took place. These interviews were all conducted separately. The interviews lasted for about 30-40 minutes and took place at the teachers' place of work, either before the school day began or at the end of the school day, according to the teachers' preferences. Questions in the interview protocol were used to gather more in-depth information regarding the early years' teachers' views about their role in assessment practices in the classroom.

These interviews included additional questions for follow-up if clarification was needed. Thus, the interview was most helpful in stimulating teacher recollection of the assessment practices in the interactive phase during their interaction with the young learners. In short, interviewing the teacher allowed the researcher to gather descriptive data in their own words (Freeboby, 2003), thus to investigate teachers' views on their assessment practices. The interviews were MP3 digitally recorded. They were transcribed using the 'clean transcript' approach described by Elliot (2005) where unnecessary words or sounds are not included. Finally, the transcripts were returned to the interviewees for them to check the meaning. This process is for *member checking* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **3.10.2 Trustworthiness Criteria**

The researcher used the Trustworthiness Criteria in validating the reliability and validity of the research instrument. Trustworthiness criteria were established for the semi-structured interview guide. One major aim of research is to put the knowledge created into practice. As a result, it is critical that researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and the general public understand and accept the findings as legitimate. Trustworthiness criteria are one-way researchers can convince themselves and readers that their study findings are worthy of attention (Nowell, Norris, White,

& Moules, 2017). The criteria established were confirmability, dependability, transferability and credibility.

### **3.10.2.1 Confirmability**

"In qualitative research, confirmability is a crucial criterion for establishing the trustworthiness of the study. It refers to the degree to which the researcher's biases are minimized and the findings accurately reflect the participants' perspectives and experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Techniques such as member checking and maintaining an audit trail are commonly used to enhance confirmability (Creswell, 2013)." The researcher guaranteed confirmability by preventing his knowledge, values and conclusions from impacting the study's findings. Each phase of the data analysis was included in the study, including the conclusions that were derived as suggested by Charmaz in Kusi (2012)

### **3.10.2.2 Dependability**

"Dependability is a critical aspect of qualitative research, emphasizing the need for consistency and traceability in the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By maintaining an audit trail and providing clear documentation of research procedures, researchers enhance the dependability of their study (Creswell, 2013)." To increase dependability of the study findings, the researcher asked clear questions throughout the data collection, minimized bias and controlled objectivity.

### **3.10.2.3 Transferability**

Transferability is a key consideration in qualitative research, focusing on the applicability of the study's findings to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By providing rich and detailed descriptions of the research context and participants, researchers enhance the transferability of their findings, enabling readers to assess the relevance to their own situations (Creswell, 2013)."

#### **3.10.2.4 Credibility**

Credibility is a cornerstone of ensuring the trustworthiness of the study. It focuses on demonstrating the rigor of the research process and the soundness of the interpretations drawn from the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Techniques such as prolonged engagement, triangulation, and member checking contribute to enhancing the credibility of the study's findings (Creswell, 2013)."

#### **3.11 Analysis of Qualitative Data**

For the qualitative data analysis, the researcher played all the audio's records during the interview session one after the other to transcribe all respondents' responses. The researcher employed number check by handing over the transcribe notes to participants to check the accuracy of what has been transcribed. Once participants confirmed that what have been transcribe are true reflection of what they communicated, the researcher analyzed them in themes. The qualitative analysis came after quantitative analysis to confirm responses and provide broader perspectives to responses provided in the questionnaire. Each response was identified by alphanumeric names given by the researcher to participants. The researcher detected the audios and shredded the transcribe notes to ensure anonymity and confidentiality

#### **3.12 Ethical considerations**

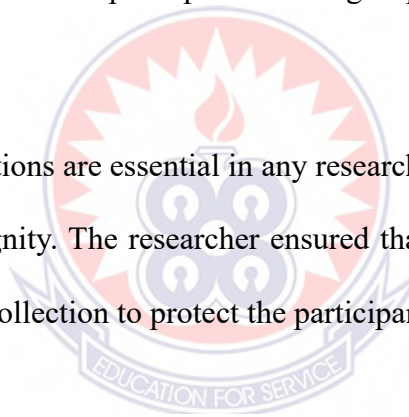
Ethical considerations are critical in any research study to ensure that the participants are treated with respect, dignity, and confidentiality.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, including the parents of the learners, before any data was collected. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their roles in the study, the expected duration of the study, and the benefits of participation. They were also

informed that participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

Confidentiality was also ensured throughout the study. The names of the participants and the schools were kept confidential to protect their identity. Only the researcher had access to the data, and the data collected was only used for the purposes of the study. Additionally, the researcher ensured that the study did not cause any harm to the participants. The researcher made sure that the data collection process did not interfere with the learners' learning process and that the questions asked were not sensitive or personal. Finally, the researcher ensured that the study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles including respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.

In conclusion, ethical considerations are essential in any research study to ensure that participants are treated with respect and dignity. The researcher ensured that all ethical considerations were taken into account during data collection to protect the participants' welfare and privacy.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Overview

This chapter presents data analysis, findings, presentation and interpretation of findings. The purpose of the study intends to investigate inclusive assessment practices in early childhood centres in the Asunafo North District. Data was collected through the use of distributed Questionnaires and Interviews from 110 respondents from the district. The findings of the study are presented as per research questions of the study in the following sections.

#### 4.1 Demographic Data of Respondents

This section of the analysis focuses on the demographic data of respondents which includes Sex, age, educational qualification, as well as Teaching experience.

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n=110)	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex</b>	Male	44	40%
	Female	66	60%
<b>Age Range</b>	21 – 30 years	28	25%
	31 – 40 years	44	40%
	41 – 50 years	22	20%
	51 – 60 years	16	15%
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	HND/Diploma	22	20%
	Degree	61	55%
	Masters	25	23%
	PhD	2	2%
<b>Teaching Experience</b>	Less than 1 year	6	5%
	1 – 5 years	39	35%
	6 – 10 years	33	30%
	11 years and above	33	30%

Source: Field data, 2025

The demographic data of the respondents in the study revealed important characteristics that help to understand the background and context of the teaching workforce involved. The interpretation of the results provides a clearer picture of the sex, age, educational qualifications, and teaching experience of the participants.

In terms of sex distribution, the data showed that out of 110 respondents, 66 (60%) were female while 44 (40%) were male. This indicates that females are more represented in the sample than males. This finding is consistent with earlier research in the education sector, particularly in early childhood and basic education levels, where females tend to dominate due to the nurturing and caregiving nature of the profession (UNESCO, 2021). The female dominance might suggest that educational policies and training programs should be tailored to the professional needs of women educators while ensuring inclusivity.

Regarding the age range of the respondents, the data indicated that the majority of the participants were within the 31–40-year age bracket, accounting for 44 (40%) of the sample. This was followed by those aged 21–30 years, who represented 25% (n=28), and those in the 41–50 year range, forming 20% (n=22). A smaller portion, 15% (n=16), were aged 51–60 years. This trend suggests that a significant number of the teachers are in their early and mid-career stages. The prevalence of young to middle-aged teachers can be seen as a positive development, as younger educators are more likely to adopt new instructional methods, use technology in the classroom, and show openness to professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Additionally, this age distribution indicates the potential for long-term investment in the professional development of these educators.

In terms of educational qualification, a majority of the respondents held a degree, representing 55% (n=61), followed by those with a master's degree (23%, n=25). Respondents with an

HND/Diploma made up 20% (n=22), while only a few (2%, n=2) held a PhD. The dominance of degree and master's holders implies that the teaching staff is fairly well-educated, which is critical for the delivery of quality education. According to Darling-Hammond (2006), the level of teacher education significantly influences instructional quality and student outcomes. This finding underscores the importance of continuing to provide opportunities for further education and professional development to support teaching effectiveness.

Concerning teaching experience, the data revealed that most of the respondents had between 1–5 years of experience, accounting for 35% (n=39). This was followed closely by those with 6–10 years (30%, n=33), and those with more than 11 years of teaching experience (30%, n=33). Only 5% (n=6) had less than 1 year of experience. This suggests that a large portion of the teaching workforce has a moderate to substantial amount of experience. According to Ingersoll (2007), teachers with more years of experience tend to have better classroom management skills and instructional strategies. The balanced distribution between early-career and experienced teachers may promote mentorship, peer learning, and effective collaboration among staff.

In conclusion, the demographic data provide valuable insight into the workforce characteristics of the study participants. With a predominantly female and well-educated teaching population, and a strong presence of early- to mid-career teachers, the findings suggest a promising foundation for educational development. However, the need for continuous training and professional support remains critical to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

**Research question one (1): What is the knowledge level of kindergarten teachers have about teaching writing skills in early childhood centers in the Asunafo North?**

**Table 1: Knowledge Level of Kindergarten Teachers have about Teaching Writing Skills**

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
I have a strong understanding of the stages children go through in developing writing skills.	40 (36%)	45 (41%)	15 (14%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I can confidently identify age-appropriate writing milestones for kindergarten learners.	38 (35%)	50 (45%)	12 (11%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I am familiar with various strategies used to teach writing skills in early childhood education.	35 (32%)	48 (44%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I understand the importance of fine motor skill development in early writing instruction.	42 (38%)	40 (36%)	18 (16%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I know how to use play-based activities to support the development of writing skills.	37 (34%)	46 (42%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I can assess children's writing development effectively using appropriate tools.	30 (27%)	50 (45%)	20 (18%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I regularly use letter tracing, scribbling, and drawing to build early writing skills.	36 (33%)	47 (43%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I have received adequate training on teaching writing skills to young children.	25 (23%)	45 (41%)	30 (27%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I understand how to differentiate writing instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners.	34 (31%)	43 (39%)	23 (21%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I am knowledgeable about how oral language development supports writing in young children.	39 (35%)	44 (40%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)

**Source: Field data, 2025**

The findings from the data reveal valuable insights into kindergarten teachers' understanding and practices in teaching writing skills to early childhood learners. The responses suggest that a

significant number of teachers possess a foundational understanding of writing development, although some gaps remain, particularly in areas related to training and differentiated instruction.

To begin with, the majority of respondents (36% strongly agree and 41% agree) indicated that they have a strong understanding of the stages children go through in developing writing skills. This is encouraging, as it highlights that most kindergarten teachers are aware of the progressive nature of early writing development—from scribbling to forming letters and words. Understanding these stages is essential for delivering developmentally appropriate writing instruction (Cameron & Besser, 2019). Teachers who understand writing development stages are better positioned to scaffold children's learning and provide support tailored to each child's readiness.

Similarly, 80% of the respondents (35% strongly agree and 45% agree) reported confidence in identifying age-appropriate writing milestones. This supports the assertion by Tompkins (2016) that teachers' knowledge of developmental writing benchmarks influences their instructional planning. When teachers are able to identify milestones, they can design lessons that build on what children already know and stretch their abilities gradually. This finding also aligns with the work of Saracho (2017), who emphasized that early childhood educators must be knowledgeable about typical writing behaviors at different ages to effectively support literacy development.

In addition, 76% of the teachers (32% strongly agree and 44% agree) claimed to be familiar with various strategies used to teach writing skills in early childhood education. This suggests a general awareness and use of instructional strategies such as guided writing, shared writing, and the use of writing centers. The use of multiple teaching strategies caters to diverse learner needs and enhances skill acquisition (Snow et al., 2020). However, the 15% who disagreed and the 9% who strongly disagreed point to a need for ongoing professional development in this area to ensure all teachers are equipped with up-to-date strategies.

On the importance of fine motor skill development in writing instruction, 38% of teachers strongly agreed and 36% agreed. This means that 74% of respondents recognize that early writing depends heavily on the development of motor coordination, such as hand strength and pencil grip. This awareness is important because children must first develop control over their hand movements before they can write letters and words effectively. As noted by Puranik and Lonigan (2014), the development of fine motor skills is directly linked to writing readiness and long-term literacy outcomes.

In terms of using play-based activities to support writing development, 76% of teachers (34% strongly agree and 42% agree) indicated they are familiar with such approaches. This is significant because play-based strategies—such as drawing maps, making lists during pretend play, or labeling art are effective ways to engage young learners in meaningful writing activities (Christie & Roskos, 2015). The data indicates that most teachers appreciate the role of play in promoting emergent writing skills, which is consistent with Vygotsky's social constructivist theory that emphasizes learning through social interaction and play (Vygotsky, 1978).

Regarding assessment, 27% strongly agreed and 45% agreed that they can assess children's writing effectively using appropriate tools. This 72% positive response suggests a good number of teachers are familiar with tools such as checklists, portfolios, and observational notes. Effective assessment is crucial in early childhood as it informs instruction and helps monitor progress (NAEYC, 2020). However, the 18% who disagreed and the 9% who strongly disagreed suggest a gap in assessment literacy that needs to be addressed through targeted training.

Another key finding is that 76% of respondents (33% strongly agree and 43% agree) reported that they regularly use letter tracing, scribbling, and drawing to build early writing skills. These activities are foundational in early writing as they help children develop the muscle memory and

hand-eye coordination necessary for writing (Dennis & Votteler, 2013). This result shows that a majority of teachers are implementing developmentally appropriate writing practices in their classrooms.

A notable area of concern is evident in the responses to the statement about receiving adequate training. Only 23% strongly agreed and 41% agreed, meaning 64% felt they had received adequate training, while 27% disagreed. This implies that over one-third of the teachers feel inadequately prepared, pointing to a need for more frequent and focused professional development. As Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasized, teacher preparation and continuous learning significantly influence instructional effectiveness and student outcomes.

Furthermore, 31% of respondents strongly agreed and 39% agreed that they understand how to differentiate writing instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners. While this 70% majority is positive, the remaining 30% who disagreed or strongly disagreed highlights an area requiring improvement. Differentiated instruction is essential in early childhood settings where learners enter with varying levels of readiness, abilities, and language exposure (Tomlinson, 2014). Equipping teachers with practical strategies for differentiation would help address the needs of all learners, including those with learning difficulties or language delays.

Lastly, the data shows that 35% of teachers strongly agreed and 40% agreed that they are knowledgeable about how oral language development supports writing. This indicates that a substantial number of teachers understand the connection between speaking and writing, an important insight since children often express ideas verbally before translating them into written form. As Hall and Simpson (2010) explain, strong oral language skills are foundational for writing development because they help children organize thoughts, expand vocabulary, and construct meaningful sentences.

In summary, the analysis of the responses shows that most kindergarten teachers have a solid understanding of the principles and practices related to early writing instruction. The high percentages of agreement on knowledge of developmental stages, strategies, fine motor skills, and the use of play-based learning are promising. However, the responses also indicate challenges, particularly in the areas of training, assessment, and differentiation. To address these gaps, ongoing professional development workshops should be organized by educational authorities. These workshops should be practical, focused on classroom application, and aligned with national curriculum standards for early writing instruction.

### **Qualitative analysis**

In order to validate and complement the findings obtained from the quantitative data, the researcher conducted follow-up interviews with five headteachers. These interviews focused specifically on exploring the question: What is the level of knowledge kindergarten teachers have about teaching writing skills in early childhood centers in the Asunafo North? This qualitative approach was adopted to gain deeper insight into the practical experiences, perceptions, and professional judgments of school leaders who work closely with kindergarten teachers on a daily basis. The headteachers were purposefully selected based on their administrative roles and their direct involvement in monitoring and supporting instructional practices within their schools. By engaging them in one-on-one interviews, the researcher aimed to collect rich, descriptive data that would help confirm whether the patterns identified in the survey responses were also evident in actual classroom practices and teacher competencies.

The rationale behind this triangulation was to ensure the credibility and confirmability of the study's findings by comparing the quantitative results with narrative data from experienced educational leaders. During the interviews, headteachers shared their observations regarding the

extent to which their teachers possessed both theoretical understanding and practical strategies for teaching early writing skills. This included their ability to help children recognize letters, form basic strokes, trace and copy words, and eventually develop early writing fluency. Their responses were carefully analyzed to determine whether there was alignment or contrast between what the teachers reported in the survey and what the headteachers observed in practice. This process not only added depth to the research but also allowed for the identification of recurring themes and contextual factors that may influence teachers' understanding and application of writing instruction methods in early childhood settings.

### **Theme: Basic Understanding**

#### ***One of the head teachers stated that:***

*"My kindergarten teachers have a basic understanding of how to teach writing, especially when it comes to helping children hold pencils properly and form letters. However, many of them still need more training on how to make writing lessons engaging and age-appropriate."*

#### ***Another head teacher also said that:***

*"Most of my teachers understand that writing should begin with simple strokes, patterns, and drawing before moving to actual letters. They often use tracing books and sand trays to help children build fine motor skills, which is a good foundation."*

#### ***Similarly, another also said that:***

*"My teachers have a fair understanding, but their methods are mostly traditional. They know the stages of writing development but lack innovative strategies like using stories, rhymes, or play to make writing fun and meaningful for the children."*

One of the head teachers highlighted that while teachers are knowledgeable about the physical aspects of writing, such as pencil handling and letter formation, they still require support in delivering engaging and developmentally suitable writing lessons. This response points to a partial understanding of early writing instruction. It reflects the notion that while some pedagogical content knowledge exists, the pedagogical skills to make writing interactive and meaningful are still lacking. This aligns with studies that argue that early childhood educators need not only content knowledge but also the pedagogical capacity to translate that knowledge into effective practices for young children (Puranik & Lonigan, 2014).

Another head teacher emphasized that most teachers begin writing instruction with pre-writing activities such as simple strokes, drawing, and tracing. The use of tracing books and sand trays was mentioned as a technique to enhance fine motor development, which is a necessary precursor to formal writing. This approach aligns well with established early childhood practices that advocate for a developmental progression in writing instruction—starting with gross and fine motor skill activities before introducing structured writing (Piastra et al., 2012). The sand tray, in particular, is a multisensory tool that supports tactile learning and hand–eye coordination, both of which are essential in writing readiness (Gerde et al., 2012).

Similarly, the third head teacher stated that although the teachers understand the stages of writing development, they rely mainly on traditional methods. The concern expressed was the lack of innovative instructional techniques such as using stories, rhymes, or play-based activities. These innovative methods are essential for making writing instruction not only effective but also developmentally appropriate and enjoyable. Vygotsky’s Social Constructivist Theory (1978) supports the use of play, language, and social interaction in learning processes, emphasizing that

children construct knowledge best through meaningful activities within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

The collective responses suggest that while basic knowledge of writing instruction foundations is evident, there is an urgent need for professional development focused on innovative and learner-centered strategies. This gap between theory and practice in early childhood education is well-documented. Research has shown that teachers often default to traditional, worksheet-based methods when they lack exposure to more engaging, research-based practices (Neuman & Roskos, 2007). This situation is evident in the responses where traditional strategies dominate over creative ones like storytelling, song-based learning, or writing through play.

A recurring issue from the statements is the lack of continuous professional development for teachers, which impacts their ability to integrate creativity into writing instruction. The implication here is that even though teachers have been introduced to the basics, ongoing in-service training is necessary to build upon and expand their instructional repertoire. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), effective teacher professional development is continuous, collaborative, and embedded in the teachers' real teaching contexts. When teachers are given the opportunity to learn new strategies and reflect on their practice, they are more likely to adopt innovative and child-centered approaches.

Furthermore, the concern about making writing instruction engaging and age-appropriate reflects a broader issue in early childhood education—the need to differentiate instruction based on children's developmental levels and interests. Writing lessons should ideally include visuals, songs, role-playing, and storytelling to sustain the attention of young learners and foster their expressive abilities. Research supports the idea that the integration of literacy with play promotes not only writing skills but also creativity, communication, and critical thinking (Fisher et al., 2011).

Another critical aspect that emerges from the discussion is the teachers' reliance on structured tools like tracing books, which, although useful, may limit children's opportunities to explore writing in authentic and expressive ways. When early writers are given the freedom to draw, scribble, and "write" letters in context-rich environments, they are more likely to develop print awareness, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary all foundational for literacy development (Hall et al., 2015). Therefore, the dependence on fixed materials without integration of storytelling, role play, or shared writing may hinder the full development of early writing skills.

In addition, the responses collectively highlight the need for curriculum reform and teacher support systems. Educational policymakers and district leaders should consider regular workshops and peer-learning opportunities that introduce teachers to evidence-based practices in writing instruction. When teachers are empowered with knowledge and creative tools, they can bridge the gap between rote methods and meaningful learning experiences. Research by Wasik and Hindman (2020) suggests that professional learning communities (PLCs) in early childhood settings can be a powerful platform for teachers to collaborate and innovate their teaching practices.

In conclusion, the responses from the head teachers reflect a major theme of "Basic Understanding with Limited Innovation" in writing instruction. While kindergarten teachers appear competent in the mechanics and developmental sequencing of writing instruction, there is a visible need for further training in age-appropriate, innovative teaching strategies that are responsive to the interests and developmental levels of young children. The integration of play, storytelling, songs, and multisensory activities into writing instruction not only enriches the learning experience but also aligns with best practices in early childhood education (Christie & Roskos, 2015). To address the current limitations, education directorates should invest in ongoing professional development,

supportive supervision, and curriculum enrichment aimed at transforming traditional writing instruction into an engaging, meaningful, and developmentally sound experience for all learners.

Headteachers were interviewed on the question: *"What methods do your teachers commonly use when teaching writing skills at the kindergarten level"*

**Theme: Developmentally Appropriate**

**One of the headteachers stated that,**

*"My teachers often start by teaching learners how to hold pencils properly and trace letters using dotted lines. This helps the children build their writing muscles and get used to forming letters."*

**Another headteacher also said that,**

*"We use a lot of drawing and colouring activities to help learners develop their fine motor skills before moving to actual writing. It prepares their hands for pencil control."*

**Similarly, another headteacher also said that,**

*"Most of our teachers use sand trays and finger tracing methods. Children enjoy writing letters in sand or on the board with their fingers before using books."*

**In addition, one headteacher mentioned that,**

*"Some of our teachers combine storytelling with writing. After a short story, learners are asked to draw or write the first letter of a key word from the story."*

The responses from the headteachers indicate that writing instruction in kindergarten classrooms is strategically tailored to suit the developmental needs of young learners. One headteacher shared that teachers begin by helping learners to properly hold pencils and trace letters using dotted lines. This method focuses on building the physical ability required for writing, known as fine motor development. According to Cameron et al. (2012), teaching children to grip writing tools and

control their movements is a fundamental step in early writing instruction. The use of tracing also helps children become familiar with the shapes and forms of letters in a low-pressure environment.

Another headteacher mentioned that drawing and colouring are regularly used as preparatory exercises to develop fine motor skills. This approach aligns with the views of Puranik and Lonigan (2014), who argue that fine motor skills such as colouring and drawing support the development of the small muscles in the hands and fingers, which are essential for writing. These activities serve as a bridge between general hand coordination and more specific writing movements, thereby making the transition into writing smoother for young learners.

In a similar vein, another headteacher reported that many teachers use sand trays and finger tracing to teach letter formation. Sensory-based methods like writing in sand or tracing letters with fingers not only provide enjoyable and tactile experiences for children but also enhance muscle memory and letter recognition. As noted by Dennis and Votteler (2013), incorporating multisensory strategies in early writing instruction supports young learners in understanding how letters are formed and promotes greater engagement. These playful, hands-on experiences allow learners to experiment with writing in a non-restrictive way, which fosters a positive attitude toward literacy.

Furthermore, a different headteacher indicated that storytelling is sometimes combined with writing tasks. Learners are engaged in listening to stories and are then asked to draw or write the first letter of a keyword from the story. This method demonstrates an integration of listening, speaking, and early writing skills, supporting the idea that literacy development in early childhood is interconnected. According to Hall, Simpson, Guo, and Wang (2015), using meaningful contexts such as storytelling helps children to connect oral language with written symbols, making the

writing process more purposeful and enjoyable. This approach also introduces early phonemic awareness, as children begin to identify and reproduce sounds and letters from spoken words.

The overall responses from the headteachers suggest that kindergarten teachers are intentional in employing teaching methods that align with the developmental readiness of their learners. Activities such as colouring, drawing, finger tracing, and storytelling are not just preparatory but are also instrumental in building a strong foundation for writing. These methods reflect the principles of play-based and learner-centred pedagogy, which emphasize exploration, engagement, and skill development in ways that are appropriate for young children (Wood, 2013).

Importantly, these practices also highlight the gradual progression from pre-writing to actual writing. Starting with muscle development and moving through sensory experiences to letter formation and simple writing tasks ensures that learners are not overwhelmed and are given enough support at each stage. This gradual progression is supported by Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, which posits that children learn best when instruction is scaffolded within their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). The teachers' use of developmentally appropriate strategies demonstrates their understanding of how to scaffold learning effectively in the context of early writing.

Another critical interpretation is that these instructional strategies encourage active learner participation and engagement. Young children are more likely to respond positively to tasks that involve creativity, movement, and storytelling. As a result, these teaching methods do not only develop writing skills but also promote enjoyment, motivation, and sustained attention. Research by Neuman and Roskos (2007) emphasizes that when writing is introduced through engaging and

meaningful activities, children are more likely to develop a positive attitude towards literacy, which has long-term benefits for their academic success.

Moreover, the responses suggest that early writing instruction is viewed not as a standalone activity but as part of a broader set of developmental processes. Writing is embedded within fine motor development, sensory exploration, and language experiences. This holistic view aligns with the integrated approach to early childhood education advocated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2020), which stresses that literacy should be taught in ways that are connected to children's overall development and experiences.

In conclusion, the headteachers' responses reveal a consistent use of developmentally appropriate and play-based strategies in teaching writing at the kindergarten level. The emphasis on pencil grip, drawing, colouring, sensory tracing, and storytelling points to a child-friendly and holistic approach to literacy instruction. These methods cater to the cognitive, motor, and emotional needs of young learners, ensuring that writing is introduced in a gradual, engaging, and meaningful way. The major theme, "Developmentally Appropriate Writing Strategies through Play and Pre-writing Activities," captures the essence of these instructional practices. These findings support existing research that promotes the integration of play and sensory experiences into early literacy instruction to support young children's writing development (Puranik et al., 2014; Wood, 2013; Hall et al., 2015).

Headteachers were interviewed on whether their teachers had received any training or workshops on teaching writing to early childhood learners. Below are five simple and clear responses from the headteachers:

**Theme: limited professional development**

**One of the headteachers stated that,**

*"Yes, some of my teachers have received training through workshops organized by the District Education Office. These workshops focused on helping young children develop basic writing skills like tracing and letter formation."*

**Another headteacher also said that,**

*"A few of my teachers were trained during their college days, but since then, they have not had any in-service training specifically on teaching writing in early childhood."*

**Similarly, another headteacher also said that,**

*"Most of my teachers have not had any formal training on how to teach writing to young children. They mostly rely on their experience and support from colleagues."*

**In addition, one headteacher mentioned that,**

*"My teachers attended a short workshop last year that introduced them to play-based writing strategies, and it has helped improve their classroom practices."*

One headteacher stated that some of their teachers had benefited from workshops organized by the District Education Office. These workshops focused specifically on helping children acquire foundational writing skills such as tracing and letter formation. This response highlights the role of district-level interventions in enhancing early literacy pedagogy. It also shows that there is some level of institutional support for building teacher capacity in writing instruction. According to Piasta, Connor, Fishman, and Morrison (2009), targeted professional development programs significantly improve teachers' knowledge and instructional skills in early literacy. Thus, training

in basic writing strategies like tracing and letter formation is essential because they lay the foundation for writing fluency and accuracy among young learners.

Another headteacher revealed that although some of their teachers received training during their college education, there has been no in-service training since then. This response suggests that professional development is often front-loaded and not sustained throughout a teacher's career. This lack of continuous training can result in outdated pedagogical approaches and a lack of awareness of current best practices. Research by Darling-Hammond, Hylar, and Gardner (2017) emphasized the importance of ongoing, sustained professional learning in improving teacher effectiveness. Without periodic refreshers or updated training sessions, teachers may struggle to address evolving curriculum requirements or the diverse needs of early learners in writing.

Similarly, another headteacher indicated that most of their teachers have not received any formal training in teaching writing to young children and that they mostly depend on their experience and peer support. This points to a significant gap in structured professional learning opportunities. While experience and collaboration among teachers are valuable, they cannot replace systematic and research-informed training. The reliance on informal learning can lead to inconsistencies in instructional practices and may negatively affect learner outcomes (Garet et al., 2001). Moreover, early childhood education requires specialized knowledge of child development and instructional strategies tailored to young learners' developmental stages. The absence of formal training limits the capacity of teachers to deliver writing instruction that aligns with such principles.

In contrast, one headteacher mentioned that their teachers had attended a short workshop the previous year which introduced play-based writing strategies. The headteacher observed that the training had helped improve classroom practices. This response highlights the potential impact of focused professional development, even when brief, in transforming teaching practices. Play-

based learning is widely recognized as an effective approach in early childhood education because it fosters engagement, creativity, and language development (Pyle, DeLuca, & Danniels, 2017). Introducing play-based strategies in writing instruction can make learning more meaningful and enjoyable for children, which in turn supports the development of fine motor skills and written expression.

The common theme emerging from these responses is the limited and inconsistent access to professional training in teaching early writing skills. Some teachers benefit from workshops or college training, while others rely solely on experience or peer collaboration. This disparity in training access can lead to unequal learning opportunities for children, depending on the school or the individual teacher's background.

It is important to recognize that early writing development is a critical component of emergent literacy, and it demands intentional instructional practices that are informed by child development theories and evidence-based strategies. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2020) recommends that teachers be supported with continuous professional learning that enhances their ability to scaffold children's writing through drawing, dictation, and letter formation. However, the findings from the headteachers' responses suggest that many teachers may not be receiving the necessary support to meet these expectations.

Moreover, the lack of structured professional development raises concerns about policy implementation at the district and national levels. If workshops and training sessions are not systematically offered, teachers are left to figure out methods independently, which may not align with the national curriculum goals. According to Opfer and Pedder (2011), effective professional development should be aligned with both individual teacher needs and system-wide educational

reforms. The disconnect observed in this case suggests a need for a more coordinated and strategic approach to teacher training in writing instruction.

Another implication of these findings is the need to institutionalize mentorship and peer-learning structures within schools to support teachers who lack formal training. While peer support is currently used informally, structured mentorship programs could be more effective in transferring knowledge and best practices. For example, an experienced teacher who has attended writing workshops can mentor less experienced colleagues, fostering a collaborative learning culture within the school (Avalos, 2011).

In summary, the headteachers' responses reveal a significant professional development gap in the area of writing instruction for early childhood education. Although some progress has been made through district-level workshops and play-based training, access to such opportunities is inconsistent. Teachers rely heavily on past college training or informal support networks, which may not be sufficient to meet the complex demands of early writing instruction. There is a critical need for sustained, targeted, and inclusive professional development programs that equip teachers with the tools and confidence to nurture writing skills in young children. Consistent support from educational authorities, informed policy initiatives, and school-level capacity-building efforts are essential to addressing this gap and ensuring equitable and effective early literacy outcomes for all learners.

Headteachers were interviewed on how confident their kindergarten teachers are in helping children learn to write letters and words.

**Theme: Teachers' Confidence**

***One of the headteachers stated that,***

*"Most of my kindergarten teachers are quite confident. They know how to help the children trace, copy, and even write simple words. They use a lot of practice activities in class."*

***Another teacher also said that,***

*"My teachers are confident because they have been trained in early childhood education. They understand how to guide children step-by-step when learning to write."*

***Similarly, another also said that,***

*"Some of the teachers are very confident, especially those who have been teaching for many years. They know how to use different strategies to help children write properly."*

***Another headteacher added that,***

*"My teachers feel confident when they have the right materials like letter cards and pencils. But when they lack these materials, it becomes difficult for them."*

One headteacher mentioned, "Most of my kindergarten teachers are quite confident. They know how to help the children trace, copy, and even write simple words. They use a lot of practice activities in class." This statement shows that the confidence level of the teachers is not just based on their knowledge but also their ability to translate that knowledge into practical classroom activities. This is in line with Graham et al. (2016), who observed that effective writing instruction at the early childhood level is often hands-on and activity-based. The headteacher's comment suggests that the teachers are actively engaging learners in tracing and copying, which are foundational skills in writing. These activities help children build muscle memory and letter formation, essential components of early writing development (Neuman & Wright, 2014).

Another headteacher also noted, "My teachers are confident because they have been trained in early childhood education. They understand how to guide children step-by-step when learning to write." This implies that training in early childhood pedagogy contributes significantly to teacher confidence. This observation aligns with the findings of Sheridan et al. (2009), who emphasized the importance of specialized training for early childhood educators in order to effectively facilitate early literacy skills. When teachers receive appropriate training, they are better equipped with knowledge of child development and developmentally appropriate instructional methods, which boosts their confidence in implementing writing activities.

Similarly, another headteacher highlighted, "Some of the teachers are very confident, especially those who have been teaching for many years. They know how to use different strategies to help children write properly." This points to the role of teaching experience in building confidence. Experienced teachers are more likely to have a wider repertoire of instructional strategies and classroom management skills, which enhance their ability to support diverse learners. As noted by Pianta, La Paro, and Hamre (2008), years of experience enable teachers to better understand children's writing behaviors and provide targeted support to improve their writing outcomes. Teachers with more classroom experience are also more likely to recognize and respond to students' individual needs, which enhances the quality of instruction.

However, one headteacher raised an important concern, stating, "My teachers feel confident when they have the right materials like letter cards and pencils. But when they lack these materials, it becomes difficult for them." This indicates that the availability of instructional resources directly affects teachers' confidence. Teaching writing in early childhood classrooms often requires the use of visual and tactile materials such as letter cards, sand trays, or writing tools to support children's engagement and skill acquisition (Puranik & Lonigan, 2014). Without these materials, teachers

may feel ill-equipped to deliver effective lessons, which can diminish their confidence and instructional quality. This concern reflects the importance of resourcing in early childhood education, as emphasized by UNESCO (2016), which stresses the need for adequate learning materials to support foundational literacy.

From the responses, a major theme identified is "Teachers' Confidence Is Dependent on Training, Experience, and Availability of Teaching Resources." Each of the headteachers emphasized at least one of these aspects. Training enhances teachers' theoretical understanding and instructional ability; experience sharpens their practical knowledge and adaptability in the classroom; and access to teaching materials empowers them to implement engaging and effective writing lessons.

This finding resonates with the work of Wasik and Hindman (2011), who found that teacher efficacy in early literacy instruction is multifaceted, involving knowledge, practice, and the tools available to carry out instruction. Teachers who lack training or materials may struggle, even if they have good intentions. On the other hand, even new teachers who have access to training and resources can build their confidence quickly when properly supported.

The emphasis on step-by-step guidance and diverse teaching strategies also reflects current thinking on scaffolding in early childhood education. According to Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory, children learn best when adults provide support within their zone of proximal development. The teachers described in the headteachers' responses are engaging in scaffolding by using trace-and-copy techniques, giving clear instructions, and employing different strategies based on children's individual needs. This scaffolding approach helps children become independent writers over time, while also giving teachers a sense of achievement, further boosting their confidence.

Moreover, the statements also reveal the contextual challenges that affect teacher confidence. While teachers may be knowledgeable and experienced, the lack of basic teaching resources like pencils and letter cards limits their ability to effectively engage students in writing activities. This reflects structural challenges within the educational system, particularly in low-resource settings. According to Akyeampong et al. (2018), inadequate teaching materials are a common barrier to effective early childhood education in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, including Ghana.

The insights provided by the headteachers also imply that ongoing professional development and adequate classroom resourcing must be prioritized to sustain and enhance teacher confidence. For example, regular workshops on writing instruction, peer mentoring, and provision of age-appropriate materials can help kindergarten teachers feel more prepared and capable. This also aligns with the recommendations of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2020), which advocates for continuous teacher development and adequate support systems in early childhood education settings.

In conclusion, the discussion of headteachers' responses reveals that while many kindergarten teachers feel confident in helping children write letters and words, this confidence is not uniform and is influenced by key factors such as specialized training, years of teaching experience, and the availability of instructional materials. These findings underscore the importance of strengthening teacher preparation programs, investing in classroom resources, and supporting ongoing professional learning to ensure that all teachers feel confident and capable in teaching writing at the kindergarten level. Addressing these factors holistically will not only enhance teacher confidence but also improve writing outcomes among young learners, laying a solid foundation for their future academic success.

**Research question two (2):** What teaching strategies do kindergarten teachers use to develop writing skills in early childhood learners?

**Table 2: Teaching Strategies Do Kindergarten Teachers Use To Develop Writing Skills**

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
I use drawing and coloring activities to support early writing skills.	40 (36%)	45 (41%)	15 (14%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I encourage learners to practice letter formation through tracing activities.	38 (35%)	50 (45%)	12 (11%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I use storytelling and role-play activities to support writing skill development.	35 (32%)	48 (44%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I create opportunities for children to write their names and familiar words daily.	42 (38%)	40 (36%)	18 (16%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I use songs and rhymes to help learners remember letter sounds and shapes.	37 (34%)	46 (42%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I model writing on the board and let learners copy what I write.	30 (27%)	50 (45%)	20 (18%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I provide learners with materials such as pencils, crayons, and paper to practice writing freely.	36 (33%)	47 (43%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I engage learners in group writing activities like writing simple words or labeling pictures.	25 (23%)	45 (41%)	30 (27%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I integrate phonics instruction with writing tasks to support sound-letter recognition.	34 (31%)	43 (39%)	23 (21%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I give feedback to learners on their writing to help them improve.	39 (35%)	44 (40%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)

**Source: Field data, 2025**

The data collected provides critical insight into the teaching strategies employed by kindergarten teachers to support the development of writing skills among early childhood learners. The findings indicate a general commitment to employing practical, interactive, and age-appropriate strategies, although certain areas reflect the need for deeper engagement or improvement.

A significant majority of the respondents (36% strongly agreed and 41% agreed) reported that they use drawing and coloring activities to support early writing skills. This 77% affirmative response is consistent with research emphasizing the importance of visual and fine motor activities as foundational elements for emergent writing. Drawing and coloring enhance hand control and coordination, which are critical for the formation of letters and symbols (Puranik & Lonigan, 2014). These activities also allow learners to express themselves freely, which lays the groundwork for more structured writing tasks. According to Dennis and Votteler (2013), such creative tasks promote symbolic thinking and prepare young learners to transition from marks and scribbles to meaningful writing.

Similarly, a high number of respondents (35% strongly agree and 45% agree) indicated that they encourage learners to practice letter formation through tracing activities. This totals 80% in support of tracing as a strategy. Tracing is often the first structured form of writing instruction that learners encounter. It helps them internalize letter shapes and improve fine motor skills. Tompkins (2016) notes that letter tracing allows children to become familiar with writing mechanics in a low-pressure, guided context, building confidence and muscle memory required for independent writing.

In the context of using storytelling and role-play to support writing, 32% strongly agreed and 44% agreed, making up a total of 76%. These strategies are widely acknowledged in the literature as effective tools for building narrative skills and developing the structure of written language (Hall & Simpson, 2010). Through storytelling and role-play, children build vocabulary and sentence structure, which are foundational for writing. These activities also offer learners authentic contexts for using language, which enhances both their expressive skills and their motivation to write (Christie & Roskos, 2015).

When asked whether they create opportunities for children to write their names and familiar words daily, 38% of teachers strongly agreed and 36% agreed. This 74% affirmation suggests that name-writing is a common and valued classroom practice. Learning to write one's name is often a child's first purposeful writing task and serves as a bridge between emergent and conventional writing (Snow et al., 2020). According to Saracho (2017), frequent opportunities to write familiar words, such as the names of peers or classroom items, help learners gain automaticity and confidence in their writing.

Songs and rhymes were also recognized by 76% of teachers (34% strongly agree and 42% agree) as useful tools for helping children remember letter sounds and shapes. Music and rhythm are highly engaging for young children and help solidify phonemic awareness, which is closely tied to early writing skills (Gunning, 2013). Phonological awareness developed through rhymes supports learners in understanding sound-letter relationships, which are essential in early spelling and word formation (Puranik & Lonigan, 2014).

In terms of teacher modeling, 27% of respondents strongly agreed and 45% agreed that they model writing on the board for learners to copy. This 72% overall agreement reflects an understanding of the importance of demonstration in early writing instruction. According to Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development, children learn best when adults or more capable peers model tasks that are slightly above the child's current level. Modeling writing allows learners to observe how ideas are transformed into written symbols and sentences, and copying helps them practice form and structure.

Providing access to materials such as pencils, crayons, and paper is another important strategy, with 76% of respondents (33% strongly agree and 43% agree) indicating they do this regularly. The availability of writing tools is essential for fostering learner engagement and exploration

(Tomlinson, 2014). Learners must have consistent opportunities to interact with materials in order to develop control, creativity, and fluency in writing.

However, some gaps emerged in areas where active writing engagement and instructional support are needed. For example, only 23% of respondents strongly agreed and 41% agreed (64% total) that they engage learners in group writing activities such as writing simple words or labeling pictures. This relatively lower figure suggests that collaborative writing activities may not be as widely used. Group writing supports peer learning, dialogue, and the co-construction of meaning, all of which are beneficial in early childhood settings (Cameron & Besser, 2019). A lack of emphasis on group work might reflect limited resources, time constraints, or large class sizes, which can inhibit collaborative learning opportunities.

Similarly, responses to integrating phonics instruction with writing tasks showed 31% strongly agree and 39% agree, totaling 70%. While this is a majority, the 21% who disagreed and 9% who strongly disagreed are noteworthy. Phonics-based writing helps children understand the relationship between letters and sounds, which is fundamental for encoding words in writing (Snow et al., 2020). The relatively lower rate of agreement may reflect a gap in teacher training or a need for curriculum resources that better integrate phonics and writing tasks.

Finally, 35% of respondents strongly agreed and 40% agreed (75% total) that they give feedback to learners on their writing. Giving feedback is essential for writing development, as it helps learners recognize their strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback also promotes metacognitive awareness, allowing children to monitor their progress and take ownership of their learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). The remaining 24% who disagreed or strongly disagreed may either lack time or skills to provide individual feedback, especially in crowded classrooms.

In summary, the data indicates that most kindergarten teachers are applying a variety of effective strategies to support writing development. High levels of agreement on practices such as drawing, tracing, storytelling, modeling, and the use of songs and rhymes confirm that these approaches are widely adopted and understood. These strategies align well with best practices outlined in early literacy research and educational theory. However, areas such as collaborative writing, integrated phonics instruction, and individualized feedback present opportunities for further professional development and instructional support. Addressing these gaps would help strengthen the writing foundation of all early learners and promote more inclusive, differentiated classroom practices.

### **Qualitative analysis**

Headteachers were interviewed on the writing activities teachers in their schools commonly use to help young children learn how to write.

#### **Theme: Common Writing Activities Used in Kindergarten**

One of the headteachers stated that,

*"Teachers in my school mostly use tracing activities. The children trace letters and simple words. This helps them to practice how to hold pencils and form letters correctly."*

Another headteacher also said that,

*"Copying from the board is common here. The teachers write simple words or short sentences, and the children copy them into their books. It helps them learn spelling and sentence writing."*

Similarly, another also said that,

*"Our teachers use storytelling and drawing. After telling a story, they let the children draw what they heard and write one or two sentences. This builds both their writing and thinking skills."*

Another headteacher added that,

*"Writing alphabets and names is done every day. Children are encouraged to write their names, their friends' names, and letters of the alphabet repeatedly to improve their writing."*

Finally, another headteacher mentioned that,

*"Teachers use activities like matching words to pictures and filling in blanks. These activities help children learn new words and how to form correct sentences."*

Based on the responses gathered from five headteachers regarding the writing activities used in their early childhood classrooms, it is evident that a variety of child-centered strategies are employed to support the development of foundational writing skills. These methods include tracing activities, copying from the board, storytelling with drawing, name writing, and word-picture matching. These findings reflect current best practices in early childhood education, as supported by research and literature.

One of the headteachers shared that teachers in their school mostly use tracing activities, where children trace letters and simple words. This method serves as an essential pre-writing skill, helping children build fine motor skills, understand letter shapes, and learn pencil control (Tompkins, 2014). Tracing supports muscle memory development and enhances children's ability to form letters correctly. According to Puranik and Lonigan (2014), such activities are particularly useful for children who are just beginning to write, as they allow for guided practice in a structured way. Furthermore, research by Dennis and Votteler (2013) also supports the use of tracing as an effective method for introducing handwriting skills in early childhood education.

Another headteacher pointed out that copying from the board is a common activity in their classrooms. In this activity, teachers write simple words or short sentences on the board, and children are asked to copy them into their books. This traditional approach not only supports handwriting but also helps children learn spelling and sentence structure. According to Graham et al. (2012), copying is a valuable technique for improving spelling and reinforcing letter recognition. While it may seem repetitive, copying can support the development of both motor and cognitive skills in young learners, especially when it is complemented by other interactive approaches. Furthermore, this method builds familiarity with sight words, supports sentence construction, and enhances attention to detail (Berninger & Wolf, 2016).

Another significant method mentioned was the integration of storytelling and drawing. After teachers tell a story, children are encouraged to draw what they heard and write one or two sentences about it. This activity combines listening, visual expression, and early writing, which supports children's language development, comprehension, and creative thinking. According to Dyson (2001), children make meaning through multiple modes, and storytelling with drawing allows them to express their ideas visually and textually. This method reflects Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory, which emphasizes the role of interaction and creativity in children's learning. It also strengthens narrative skills, vocabulary development, and the ability to connect oral language to written symbols (Neuman & Roskos, 2005).

Daily alphabet and name writing was another activity highlighted. The headteacher explained that children are regularly encouraged to write their own names, their friends' names, and letters of the alphabet. Name writing is a meaningful and motivating way for young children to begin learning about letters and sounds (Cabell et al., 2009). It provides a sense of ownership and identity while supporting early literacy development. Frequent writing of alphabets and names helps children

with letter recognition, phonological awareness, and memory retention. According to Piasta, Petscher, and Justice (2012), repeated practice in writing names and letters contributes significantly to children's emergent writing and reading development.

The final method mentioned involved matching words to pictures and filling in blanks, which serves as an interactive literacy activity. This approach encourages children to associate words with visual images, enhancing vocabulary development and comprehension. Picture-word matching builds word recognition skills and helps learners form meaningful connections between text and imagery. Additionally, fill-in-the-blank exercises support sentence construction and grammar understanding. According to Justice and Ezell (2001), engaging children with print through matching and filling activities improves print awareness and encourages purposeful writing. These types of scaffolded tasks are beneficial for learners with varying skill levels, as they provide structured support while allowing for individual expression.

Taken together, these diverse strategies reflect a multimodal approach to early writing instruction, which aligns with developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education. Multimodal instruction supports the idea that young children learn best through a combination of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities (Edwards, 2013). The use of tracing, copying, drawing, storytelling, and matching activities collectively contribute to children's handwriting, comprehension, vocabulary, and sentence construction skills.

Furthermore, these findings highlight the importance of contextual and culturally responsive teaching in early writing development. Headteachers adapt instructional methods based on the needs, interests, and backgrounds of their learners. For example, activities such as name writing and drawing allow for personal expression and relevance, which increases learner engagement and

motivation (Gay, 2010). Integrating everyday experiences and familiar words into writing tasks makes literacy more accessible and meaningful for young children.

However, it is also important to recognize the need for ongoing teacher training and resource support. While the activities mentioned by headteachers are effective, their implementation and impact greatly depend on the teachers' knowledge of how to scaffold learning and differentiate instruction for children with varying abilities. As highlighted by Neuman and Wright (2010), early literacy instruction must be intentional and informed by research-based practices to produce lasting outcomes. Therefore, continuous professional development for early childhood educators is essential for sustaining high-quality writing instruction.

Moreover, these writing activities align with Ghana's Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) framework, which emphasizes the development of literacy skills through play, creativity, and guided instruction. According to the Ghana Education Service (GES, 2012), early childhood teachers are encouraged to use a variety of materials and methods to promote holistic learning. The insights provided by the headteachers show practical application of these policy guidelines in real classroom settings.

In conclusion, the responses from the headteachers indicate that teachers in early childhood classrooms use a variety of effective and developmentally appropriate strategies to teach writing. From tracing and copying to storytelling, drawing, name writing, and word-picture activities, these methods support both the motor and cognitive aspects of writing development. Research affirms the effectiveness of these strategies in promoting foundational writing skills, especially when combined with rich oral language experiences and visual stimuli. For optimal results, there is a need for consistent teacher training, access to materials, and instructional guidance to ensure these methods are implemented effectively. By adopting a child-centered and multimodal approach to

writing instruction, early childhood educators can create a strong foundation for children's lifelong literacy development.

Headteachers were interviewed on how often teachers give learners opportunities to practice writing in class

### **Theme: Frequency and Consistency of Writing Practice**

**One headteacher said that,**

*"In our school, writing is practiced about three times a week. Teachers usually focus on handwriting lessons and guided writing during English lessons. We encourage them to let the children express their thoughts in simple sentences."*

**Similarly, another also said that,**

*"Some teachers give writing tasks regularly, especially in the lower classes, but others do it only when there is extra time. I think we need to improve consistency and support teachers more in this area."*

### **Theme: Writing Teaching Tools**

Headteachers were interviewed on the special materials or tools that teachers in their schools commonly used to help young children learn how to write.

One of the headteachers stated that,

*"Teachers in my school use letter cards a lot. The children use them to match letters and practice forming them. This makes it easier for them to recognize and write the letters correctly."*

Another headteacher also said that,

*"Tracing books are very useful here. Teachers give children tracing books where they trace letters, numbers, and even simple words. It helps them learn how to hold pencils and write neatly."*

Similarly, another also said that,

*"We use mini whiteboards in our classrooms. Each child gets a small whiteboard and marker to practice writing letters and words. It allows them to easily erase and try again when they make mistakes."*

Another headteacher added that,

*"Teachers in my school use sand trays and chalkboards. Children write letters in the sand with their fingers or on small chalkboards with chalk. This helps develop their motor skills and letter formation."*

Finally, another headteacher mentioned that,

*"Some of our teachers use flashcards and word walls. The flashcards help children recognize common words, and the word wall in the classroom helps them copy and use these words in their writing."*

One of the headteachers indicated that teachers in their school often make use of letter cards. According to the headteacher, "Teachers in my school use letter cards a lot. The children use them to match letters and practice forming them. This makes it easier for them to recognize and write the letters correctly." This view is supported by Dinehart and Manfra (2013), who note that visual materials such as letter cards can help children in letter recognition and phonemic awareness, which are essential for early writing. Letter cards are considered effective because they offer both visual and tactile learning opportunities, allowing children to touch, hold, and arrange letters in meaningful ways.

Another headteacher shared that tracing books are widely used in their school. According to this headteacher, "Tracing books are very useful here. Teachers give children tracing books where they trace letters, numbers, and even simple words. It helps them learn how to hold pencils and write neatly." Tracing books provide structured practice and are especially useful in helping children develop proper pencil grip and control (Puranik & Lonigan, 2012). This tool also assists children

in learning the correct directionality and shape of letters, which is critical in early handwriting development.

Similarly, another headteacher reported that mini whiteboards are used in their classrooms to support early writing activities. The headteacher said, “We use mini whiteboards in our classrooms. Each child gets a small whiteboard and marker to practice writing letters and words. It allows them to easily erase and try again when they make mistakes.” Mini whiteboards are particularly beneficial in early childhood settings as they provide a reusable surface for practice, reduce the pressure of making mistakes, and promote active participation (Gerde, Bingham & Pendergast, 2015). Children are more willing to experiment and take risks in writing when they know they can quickly erase and try again.

Another headteacher added that in their school, teachers regularly use sand trays and small chalkboards. The headteacher explained, “Teachers in my school use sand trays and chalkboards. Children write letters in the sand with their fingers or on small chalkboards with chalk. This helps develop their motor skills and letter formation.” These sensory-rich materials support kinesthetic learning and allow children to explore letter formation in a tactile way. According to Christie and Roskos (2015), such sensory tools are highly effective for young learners, especially in strengthening their hand muscles and improving fine motor control necessary for writing.

Lastly, another headteacher mentioned that flashcards and word walls are essential resources used by some teachers in their school. The headteacher said, “Some of our teachers use flashcards and word walls. The flashcards help children recognize common words, and the word wall in the classroom helps them copy and use these words in their writing.” Flashcards serve as a visual memory aid, while word walls expose learners to a rich environment of vocabulary that they can refer to during independent or group writing activities. This practice aligns with the findings of

Neuman and Roskos (2012), who emphasize the importance of print-rich environments in promoting early literacy and writing development.

The insights from the headteachers clearly show that a range of materials—both traditional and modern—are used to promote writing development among young learners. These tools are chosen for their ability to provide repeated practice, stimulate sensory experiences, and make writing engaging and less stressful for children. In fact, the use of multisensory materials such as sand trays, whiteboards, and chalkboards aligns with the developmental needs of early learners, who benefit most when learning is hands-on and interactive (Tompkins, 2010).

Moreover, the frequent use of visual aids like flashcards, letter cards, and word walls suggests that teachers aim to make the print environment visible and accessible to learners at all times. This exposure helps children develop print awareness and word recognition, which are foundational skills for early writing and reading (Justice & Ezell, 2001). By integrating these tools into daily classroom routines, teachers create a supportive learning environment that encourages exploration, experimentation, and gradual mastery of writing skills.

In conclusion, the headteachers' responses confirm that early childhood teachers are making use of a variety of special materials and tools to help learners develop essential writing skills. The use of letter cards, tracing books, whiteboards, sand trays, flashcards, and word walls reflects a well-rounded approach to writing instruction that emphasizes both skill development and learner engagement. These materials support different aspects of writing, including letter formation, fine motor development, word recognition, and sentence construction. As suggested by contemporary researchers and educators, providing young learners with rich, hands-on writing experiences is critical in setting the foundation for lifelong literacy success (Gerde et al., 2015; Neuman &

Roskos, 2012; Puranik & Lonigan, 2012). Continued investment in such classroom tools and training for teachers on their effective use is essential for strengthening early writing instruction.

### **Theme: Teaching Writing through Small Group and One-on-One Support**

Headteachers were interviewed on whether teachers in their schools work with learners in small groups or one-on-one when teaching writing.

One of the headteachers stated that

*“Yes, teachers in my school often teach writing in small groups. They group learners based on their writing levels so that each group gets the right support. For example, some groups work on tracing letters while others learn how to write short sentences.”*

Another headteacher also said that

*“Our teachers sometimes sit with one child at a time, especially those who struggle with writing. This one-on-one support helps the child get personal attention and improve faster.”*

Similarly, another also said that

*“We use small groups during writing time. The teacher moves around and guides each group. This makes it easier for learners to ask questions and get quick help when they don't understand.”*

Another headteacher added that

*“One-on-one teaching is very common here. Teachers work closely with learners who are behind in writing. They give them extra time and help them to form letters properly and build confidence.”*

Headteachers interviewed on whether teachers in their schools use small group or one-on-one strategies when teaching writing to learners consistently emphasized the importance of these personalized teaching methods in early childhood classrooms. These approaches, according to their responses, have been widely adopted because they cater to individual learner needs and provide focused support, especially for those who face difficulties in developing writing skills.

One of the headteachers explained that teachers in their school often group learners based on their writing abilities. Learners with similar skill levels are placed together, allowing teachers to tailor instruction to the needs of each group. For example, some groups work on tracing letters, while others learn how to construct and write short sentences. Grouping learners by ability level aligns with research findings that emphasize differentiated instruction as a key strategy in early writing development. According to Tompkins (2014), small group instruction helps meet children at their level of readiness and allows teachers to scaffold instruction more effectively, gradually guiding learners toward writing independence.

Another headteacher highlighted the use of one-on-one instruction, particularly for learners who struggle with writing tasks. Teachers are reported to sit individually with children to give them personal attention, which helps them grasp writing concepts faster and more confidently. This practice is consistent with the assertions of Graves (2013), who noted that individualized writing support fosters a trusting teacher-learner relationship and enhances children's motivation to write. By focusing on the specific difficulties faced by a learner, teachers can model writing techniques, offer encouragement, and reinforce concepts in a way that group instruction may not always allow.

In addition to ability-based groupings, another headteacher mentioned that small groups are used routinely during writing lessons, and that the teacher actively moves around the classroom to assist each group. This approach provides a flexible structure where the teacher can monitor progress, answer questions, and provide immediate feedback. Real-time support during writing activities is crucial in early childhood education because it ensures that learners do not become discouraged or confused. As Graham and Harris (2013) pointed out, feedback that is timely and specific significantly improves young children's writing performance.

Moreover, another headteacher emphasized the effectiveness of one-on-one instruction for learners who are behind in writing. Teachers are reported to work closely with these children, providing extra time and assistance to help them form letters correctly and develop writing confidence. This approach mirrors the research of Neuman and Roskos (2005), who observed that personal interaction between teacher and learner in early literacy activities builds a secure environment in which children feel safe to experiment with writing. By reducing the fear of making mistakes and offering targeted support, teachers can boost learner self-esteem and achievement in writing.

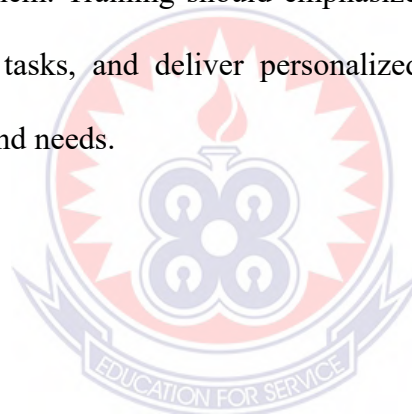
Overall, the feedback from headteachers underscores the dual importance of small group and one-on-one teaching strategies in early writing instruction. Small groups facilitate collaborative learning, peer modeling, and differentiated instruction, while one-on-one support allows for personalized attention and remediation. Both methods contribute to a more inclusive learning environment where children of varying writing abilities are given equitable opportunities to succeed.

The use of small groups is also supported by Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory (1978), which posits that learning occurs most effectively in a social context where more knowledgeable others such as teachers or peers can support the learner within their zone of proximal development. Through small groups, teachers are able to facilitate peer interactions and collaborative writing tasks, which enhance learning through social engagement and shared experiences.

Furthermore, research has shown that one-on-one interactions in early childhood classrooms promote not only academic growth but also social and emotional development. According to Puranik and Lonigan (2014), when children receive individualized attention during literacy instruction, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward learning and to persist in the

face of challenges. This highlights the broader developmental benefits of one-on-one writing support, beyond academic skill acquisition.

In summary, the responses from headteachers confirm that both small group instruction and one-on-one teaching are integral to writing instruction in early childhood settings. These strategies enable teachers to respond effectively to learners' diverse needs, support struggling writers, and enhance engagement and confidence. The consistent use of such methods across schools demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusive and effective early writing instruction. However, for these strategies to be fully effective, it is important that teachers receive appropriate training and support in implementing them. Training should emphasize how to plan and manage small groups, provide differentiated tasks, and deliver personalized support that aligns with each learner's developmental stage and needs.



**Research question three (3): What training opportunities are available for kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills?**

**Table 3: Training Opportunities Available**

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
I have attended training workshops specifically focused on teaching writing skills in early childhood.	30 (27%)	50 (45%)	20 (18%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
In-service training programs on writing instruction are regularly organized by the education directorate.	28 (25%)	47 (43%)	25 (23%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I have access to professional development programs that enhance my skills in teaching writing.	32 (29%)	45 (41%)	23 (21%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
The training programs I attend include practical strategies for teaching early writing.	34 (31%)	44 (40%)	22 (20%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I feel confident to teach writing skills because of the training I have received.	36 (33%)	42 (38%)	22 (20%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I am encouraged by school leaders to attend writing-focused training and workshops.	33 (30%)	46 (42%)	21 (19%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
The training I received was relevant to the writing challenges I face in the classroom.	29 (26%)	48 (44%)	23 (21%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I can access teaching and learning materials after attending writing training workshops.	31 (28%)	46 (42%)	23 (21%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
Peer learning and teacher collaboration are promoted as part of writing instruction training.	35 (32%)	43 (39%)	22 (20%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I would like more regular and focused training on how to teach writing to young children.	39 (35%)	44 (40%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)

**Source: Field data, 2025**

The analysis of the data provides a comprehensive understanding of the extent to which kindergarten teachers in early childhood settings have access to, and benefit from, training opportunities related to writing instruction. The findings suggest that while many teachers

acknowledge participating in relevant professional development programs, there remain noticeable gaps in consistency, access to materials, and the practicality of training content.

A strong foundation for effective writing instruction begins with teacher preparedness, and the data indicates that 72% of the respondents (27% strongly agree and 45% agree) have attended workshops specifically focused on teaching writing skills. This finding is encouraging, as it shows a majority of teachers have engaged in formal training designed to equip them with essential strategies and techniques. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), professional development that is content-specific, ongoing, and aligned with classroom needs enhances teacher effectiveness and student achievement. However, the 27% who either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this item suggests that access to such workshops is not yet universal.

Regarding the organization of in-service training programs by the education directorate, 25% strongly agreed and 43% agreed, indicating a 68% overall approval. This shows that efforts are being made at the district or institutional level to support continuous teacher learning. Nevertheless, a significant minority (32%) expressed disagreement, raising questions about how regularly such programs are organized and whether all teachers are included. In-service training, when inconsistently offered, limits its impact on teaching quality (Villegas-Reimers, 2003).

The availability of professional development programs that enhance teachers' skills also received a majority positive response, with 29% strongly agreeing and 41% agreeing (70% total). This affirms the value that teachers place on continuous learning. As asserted by Opfer and Pedder (2011), teachers' professional learning must be seen as an ongoing process shaped by experience and reflection. The remaining 30% who either disagreed or strongly disagreed likely reflect disparities in access, particularly in rural or underserved areas where professional development opportunities are less frequent or less resourced.

In examining whether training programs include practical strategies for teaching writing, 31% of teachers strongly agreed and 40% agreed, totaling 71%. This indicates that many teachers find the training useful and applicable. Practical strategies, such as modeling writing, using writing centers, or integrating phonics with writing, are crucial for early literacy development (Tompkins, 2016). However, the 29% who disagreed or strongly disagreed may feel that training remains theoretical or lacks contextual relevance, underscoring the importance of connecting professional development to classroom realities.

The statement “I feel confident to teach writing skills because of the training I have received” received a 71% positive response (33% strongly agree and 38% agree). Confidence is a critical aspect of teacher self-efficacy, which directly affects classroom practice and learner outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Teachers who feel well-prepared are more likely to implement innovative practices and persist through instructional challenges. However, 29% of respondents indicated a lack of confidence, suggesting that the depth and quality of training may still need strengthening for some.

Encouragement from school leaders also plays a crucial role in motivating teachers to pursue professional development. In this regard, 72% of the respondents (30% strongly agree and 42% agree) reported that their school leaders support their participation in writing-focused training and workshops. Leadership support has been identified as a key factor in sustaining professional growth and fostering a culture of learning within schools (Fullan, 2007). However, the 28% who disagreed or strongly disagreed suggest that in some contexts, leadership commitment may be limited or prioritized.

The relevance of training content to real classroom challenges was confirmed by 70% of teachers (26% strongly agree and 44% agree). This is a vital indicator of training effectiveness. Professional

development is only impactful when it addresses teachers' day-to-day instructional needs and supports them in overcoming practical difficulties (Desimone, 2009). Still, with 30% of teachers feeling that the training is not directly applicable, there is a need for more responsive and contextualized training designs.

Accessibility to teaching and learning materials following training is another area where responses were mixed. While 70% of respondents (28% strongly agree and 42% agree) affirmed access, a significant 30% reported otherwise. This suggests that even when training is delivered, the necessary instructional materials—such as writing worksheets, guided practice templates, or phonics cards—are not always provided. According to UNESCO (2016), the availability of appropriate materials significantly enhances the implementation of training and improves teaching quality.

One encouraging finding is that peer learning and teacher collaboration are being promoted as part of writing instruction training. A total of 71% of respondents (32% strongly agree and 39% agree) supported this view. Collaborative learning among teachers fosters the sharing of best practices and builds a community of support (Vescio et al., 2008). It also allows less experienced teachers to learn from their peers in a non-threatening and practical way. However, 29% of teachers not experiencing this form of collaboration may be teaching in isolated environments where collegial exchange is limited.

Finally, the desire for more regular and focused training on how to teach writing to young children is clear, with 35% strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing—a combined 75%. This demonstrates that teachers recognize the evolving nature of literacy instruction and are eager to upgrade their skills continually. According to Garet et al. (2001), ongoing and intensive professional development is more likely to lead to lasting changes in teaching practices than one-off workshops. The 25% who

disagreed or were indifferent may either feel adequately trained or lack opportunities to express their need for further development.

In conclusion, the data shows that while a majority of kindergarten teachers have participated in training programs on writing instruction and generally find them relevant and practical, there remain notable areas for improvement. These include ensuring universal access to training opportunities, aligning content more closely with teachers' daily instructional challenges, improving access to teaching and learning materials, and increasing collaboration among teachers. Moreover, the strong desire among teachers for more frequent and targeted training signals a readiness for capacity building that should be leveraged by school leaders and policymakers.

To maximize the impact of professional development on early writing instruction, it is recommended that educational authorities adopt a more systematic approach to training delivery. This includes periodic needs assessments to tailor training content, distribution of supportive teaching materials, ongoing follow-up mentoring, and strengthening school leadership support. By addressing these areas, the quality of writing instruction in early childhood settings will improve, leading to better learning outcomes for children in their formative years.

## **Qualitative analysis**

### **Theme: Teaching Writing Skills to Young Children**

Headteachers were interviewed to find out whether their kindergarten teachers have received any training in teaching writing skills to young children.

One of the headteachers stated that,

*“Yes, some of our teachers have gone through in-service training organized by the district. The training focused on early writing strategies like tracing, name writing, and how to use teaching aids.”*

Another headteacher also said that,

*“A few of them have received training through workshops organized by NGOs. These workshops mostly teach how to support children in developing fine motor skills needed for writing.”*

Similarly, another also said that,

*“Not all of them have formal training, but some have attended short courses where they were taught how to teach writing through play and drawing. It has helped improve how they teach writing.”*

Another headteacher added that,

*“Most of the teachers have not had specific training in teaching writing. They mostly rely on their college knowledge and experience. We really need more training opportunities for them.”*

Finally, another headteacher mentioned that,

*“Only one or two of our teachers have received special training in writing instruction. The rest are doing their best with guidance from more experienced teachers.”*

Based on the interviews conducted with headteachers, it was revealed that the extent of training received by kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills to young children varies significantly across schools. Some teachers have benefited from in-service training and workshops, while others have not had access to formal training opportunities. The responses suggest that although there are efforts to build teachers' capacity, there is still a substantial gap that needs to be addressed to ensure consistent and effective writing instruction in early childhood classrooms.

One headteacher confirmed that some of their teachers had undergone in-service training organized by the district education office. This training focused on basic early writing strategies such as tracing letters, writing children's names, and effectively using teaching aids. These strategies align with the developmental nature of early writing, where children begin with pre-writing activities before progressing to structured writing tasks. According to Graves (2013), tracing and name writing are fundamental activities that help children develop letter knowledge, an essential skill for writing. Teaching aids also play a vital role in scaffolding young learners' writing experiences by providing visual and tactile support (Tompkins, 2014).

Another headteacher reported that a few of their teachers had received training through workshops facilitated by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These workshops mainly emphasized the development of fine motor skills, which are crucial for writing. The importance of fine motor development in early writing is well-documented. According to Puranik and Lonigan (2014), fine motor control enables children to hold writing tools properly and produce legible marks, which are essential steps in writing acquisition. NGO-led interventions thus contribute meaningfully to building the physical readiness of children for writing.

Similarly, another headteacher stated that while not all teachers have received formal training, some have attended short courses that introduced them to teaching writing through play and drawing. These approaches are effective in nurturing children's interest and engagement in writing. As noted by Neuman and Roskos (2005), play-based learning in writing allows children to express their thoughts freely, while drawing serves as a prelude to writing by helping them convey ideas pictorially before they can do so with words. Teachers trained in these methods are better equipped to integrate creativity and child-centered practices into writing instruction.

In contrast, one headteacher expressed concern that most of their teachers have not received any specific training in teaching writing. These teachers rely primarily on their college education and classroom experience to deliver instruction. While experience and general teacher training offer some foundation, targeted professional development in writing instruction is critical for equipping teachers with current and effective pedagogical strategies. According to Graham and Harris (2013), systematic training in writing instruction leads to better student writing outcomes, as teachers learn to implement evidence-based practices tailored to early learners.

Another headteacher added that only one or two teachers in their school had received specialized training in writing instruction. The rest of the teaching staff depended on peer support from more experienced colleagues. While mentoring and collaborative teaching can offer valuable informal learning opportunities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017), it is not a substitute for structured training. This situation underscores the need for more comprehensive and accessible professional development programs that reach all early childhood educators.

Overall, the insights from the headteachers highlight both strengths and gaps in the current training landscape. It is clear that some schools have had access to valuable training opportunities through district support and NGO initiatives. However, many teachers still lack specialized training in writing instruction, relying on self-learning or peer guidance. This uneven distribution of training opportunities poses a challenge to the consistent implementation of effective writing practices across early childhood classrooms.

To address this issue, there is a need for ongoing, inclusive, and context-specific professional development that empowers all kindergarten teachers with the knowledge and tools necessary to support young learners' writing development. Training should cover foundational skills such as letter formation and phonemic awareness, as well as creative strategies like play, storytelling, and drawing. In doing so, schools can ensure that every child receives high-quality writing instruction from a well-prepared teacher.

### **Theme: Improve Teachers' Writing Instruction**

Headteachers were interviewed on the types of training or workshops that have been offered to help teachers improve their writing instruction.

One of the headteachers stated that,  
*"Our teachers attended a district-level workshop on early writing skills. The training focused on*

*how to help children move from scribbling to writing simple sentences using phonics-based methods."*

Another headteacher also said that,

*"We had a training session on the use of letter formation charts and how to introduce writing through play. The teachers learned how to create fun writing corners in the classroom."*

Similarly, another also said that,

*"There was a GES-organized workshop on improving handwriting. Teachers were taught how to help children hold pencils correctly and how to guide them in writing neatly."*

Another headteacher added that,

*"Our teachers took part in an in-service training on creative writing. They were shown how to use storytelling, drama, and drawing as tools to develop children's writing skills."*

The responses from the interviewed headteachers provide valuable insights into the types of training and workshops that have been offered to support kindergarten teachers in improving writing instruction. These training programs, largely organized by district education offices or the Ghana Education Service (GES), focus on equipping teachers with practical strategies tailored to the developmental stages of young learners. The emphasis on phonics, handwriting, play-based learning, and creative expression highlights a holistic approach to early writing development, which is essential in building strong literacy foundations.

One headteacher explained that their teachers attended a district-level workshop focused on early writing skills, particularly guiding children from scribbling to writing simple sentences using phonics-based methods. This approach aligns with research by Justice and Ezell (2010), who emphasize that phonics instruction supports young learners in connecting letters to sounds, a fundamental skill in learning to write. Phonics-based methods help children understand sound-symbol relationships, enabling them to construct words and sentences with increased confidence.

Another headteacher shared that their school benefited from a training session that centered on letter formation charts and writing through play. The training emphasized the creation of writing

corners in classrooms, allowing children to explore writing in a relaxed and playful environment. This practice resonates with the findings of Puranik and Lonigan (2014), who advocate for the integration of structured and unstructured play in literacy instruction. Writing corners filled with stimulating materials such as letter blocks, markers, and charts provide opportunities for spontaneous writing, which is key to developing early literacy skills.

Similarly, one headteacher mentioned a GES-organized workshop on improving handwriting. During this training, teachers were taught how to guide children in holding pencils correctly and writing neatly. Fine motor skills are critical at this stage, and according to Berninger and Richards (2010), proper handwriting instruction supports brain development and literacy acquisition. The training's focus on pencil grip and letter formation ensures that children develop the physical skills necessary for legible and fluent writing.

In another school, teachers participated in in-service training on creative writing, which included strategies like storytelling, drama, and drawing. These techniques make writing more engaging and personal for children. According to Tompkins (2014), creative activities such as storytelling and drawing stimulate imagination and help children organize their thoughts before expressing them in writing. By using drama and narratives, teachers can provide a context that encourages children to experiment with language and expand their vocabulary.

The collective feedback from these headteachers suggests that the training programs offered are not only practical but also tailored to the unique needs of early childhood learners. They blend developmental appropriateness with creativity, ensuring that teachers are well-prepared to nurture writing skills in their students. Moreover, these workshops promote the use of diverse strategies

ranging from phonics and handwriting to play and creative expression which are all recognized in current research as effective in early writing instruction (Neuman & Roskos, 2015).

In conclusion, the professional development opportunities described by the headteachers have significantly enhanced the writing instruction strategies of teachers in their respective schools. These trainings have empowered educators to approach writing in ways that are both developmentally appropriate and engaging for young learners. The variety of workshops—from phonics to creative writing demonstrate a comprehensive effort to improve early literacy outcomes in line with best practices and educational research. Continued investment in such targeted training is essential to further strengthen the teaching of writing in early childhood classrooms.

### **Theme: Programs on the Teaching of Writing**

One of the headteachers stated that,

*"Yes, the training programs are very helpful. After attending workshops, my teachers come back with new ways to help the children write better, like using songs and games during writing lessons."*

Another headteacher also said that,

*"The training helps a lot. Teachers learn new strategies to guide the children, especially those who struggle. They learn how to use simple tools like flashcards and writing patterns."*

Similarly, another also said that,

*"I believe the training is useful. It refreshes the teachers' skills and introduces them to modern methods. For example, they now use group work and peer writing, which the children enjoy."*

Another headteacher added that,

*"Yes, the training programs make a difference. Teachers become more confident and creative. They get ideas on how to make writing fun, like through drawing and labeling activities."*

Finally, another headteacher mentioned that,

*"The training is important because it helps teachers understand the stages of writing development. They now plan better writing lessons that match the children's levels."*

The interviews conducted with headteachers clearly demonstrate that training programs for kindergarten teachers are seen as highly beneficial and impactful in improving the teaching of writing to young children. All the headteachers shared positive feedback, highlighting how these professional development opportunities equip teachers with new strategies, refresh their teaching methods, and boost their confidence and creativity in the classroom. This aligns with the findings of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who emphasize that effective professional development enhances teacher knowledge and practice, ultimately leading to better learning outcomes for students.

One headteacher observed that after attending workshops, teachers return with innovative ideas such as using songs and games to teach writing. This approach reflects the principles of play-based learning, which are essential in early childhood education. According to Whitebread and Bingham (2014), integrating play into writing instruction makes learning more engaging and developmentally appropriate for young children. Songs and games, in particular, help reinforce phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, and fine motor skills in enjoyable and memorable ways.

Another headteacher mentioned that training programs introduce teachers to practical tools like flashcards and writing patterns, which are particularly useful for children who struggle with writing. This observation is consistent with Saracho and Spodek (2014), who argue that early literacy instruction should incorporate varied visual and tactile aids to support different learning styles. The use of flashcards and writing patterns helps children connect sounds with symbols and

improves their ability to form letters and words, especially when guided through structured and scaffolded learning.

A third headteacher noted that the training sessions help to refresh teachers' skills and introduce them to modern teaching methods such as group work and peer writing. These strategies align with the social constructivist theory of learning, as proposed by Vygotsky (1978), which emphasizes the importance of interaction and collaboration in cognitive development. Group writing and peer interactions provide opportunities for children to learn from one another, share ideas, and develop communication and writing skills in meaningful contexts.

Another headteacher highlighted that the training programs enhance teachers' creativity and confidence. They return to the classroom with ideas for activities such as drawing and labeling, which are effective in developing writing skills in early learners. This reflects the findings of Grainger, Gooch, and Lambirth (2016), who emphasized the importance of creative expression in literacy development. Drawing and labeling allow children to visually represent their thoughts and connect spoken language with written text, laying a strong foundation for independent writing.

Finally, a headteacher emphasized that training helps teachers understand the stages of writing development, enabling them to plan lessons that are appropriate to the developmental levels of their learners. This understanding is crucial in early childhood education, where learners progress through different stages of emergent writing. According to Christie and Roskos (2015), recognizing these stages allows teachers to provide targeted support and design writing activities that match children's cognitive and motor development, from scribbling and letter-like forms to word and sentence construction.

In conclusion, the responses from headteachers clearly indicate that training programs are vital in enhancing the teaching of writing in kindergarten classrooms. These programs not only provide teachers with new instructional strategies but also improve their understanding of child development and literacy acquisition. By introducing interactive, creative, and child-centered methods, training empowers teachers to make writing instruction more engaging and effective. As supported by research (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Vygotsky, 1978; Saracho & Spodek, 2014), well-designed and regular professional development is a key factor in improving teaching quality and promoting foundational literacy skills in early childhood education.

### **Theme: Training Opportunities for Kindergarten Teachers**

Headteachers were interviewed on whether there are any challenges in accessing training opportunities for kindergarten teachers in their schools.

One of the headteachers stated that,  
*“Yes, there are challenges. Sometimes we don’t even hear about the training programmes early enough. By the time we know, it is too late to register our teachers.”*

Another headteacher also said that,  
*“The main problem is lack of funds. Even when training is available, we don’t have money to pay for transportation and feeding of the teachers.”*

Similarly, another also said that,  
*“There are not many training opportunities for kindergarten teachers. Most workshops are for primary or junior high teachers, so our KG teachers are often left out.”*

Another headteacher added that,  
*“Some of my teachers are willing to attend training, but the programmes are often held far away. Travelling becomes difficult, especially for teachers who have young children or other family responsibilities.”*

Finally, another headteacher mentioned that,  
*“The challenge we face is that the number of slots for each school is limited. So even when training is available, only one or two teachers can attend, and that is not enough.”*

The interviews with headteachers revealed multiple challenges in accessing training opportunities for kindergarten (KG) teachers in their schools. These challenges, as expressed across all

responses, reflect broader systemic, financial, and logistical issues that hinder the professional development of early childhood educators. The headteachers' views confirm concerns raised in literature regarding the limited access and unequal distribution of continuous professional development opportunities for teachers in early childhood education, particularly in developing contexts such as Ghana.

One headteacher noted that sometimes they do not receive timely information about available training opportunities. As a result, by the time schools learn of these workshops, registration is already closed, making it impossible for their teachers to participate. This situation reflects poor communication and coordination mechanisms between education directorates and schools. According to Ametepee and Anastasiou (2015), effective teacher development systems must ensure timely dissemination of information and inclusive planning to allow all schools to benefit from training initiatives. When schools are left out due to lack of information, it leads to unequal access to professional development and deepens the skill gap among teachers.

Another headteacher pointed out that lack of funding is a significant barrier to training access. Even when training programs are offered, schools often lack the resources to cover costs related to transportation and feeding for their teachers. This challenge is particularly severe in rural and underserved areas. Ampadu and Wilson (2019) similarly observed that underfunding remains one of the primary obstacles to teacher capacity-building efforts in Ghanaian basic schools. In the absence of financial support from the district or central government, many schools struggle to support teacher participation in external workshops. This ultimately reduces the number of trained and qualified KG teachers capable of implementing effective and engaging writing instruction.

The third headteacher stated that there are limited training opportunities specifically designed for kindergarten teachers. Most professional development programs are geared toward primary and junior high school educators, leaving KG teachers neglected. This concern aligns with the findings of Saracho and Spodek (2014), who argue that early childhood educators are often excluded from mainstream training programs despite their crucial role in foundational learning. Without targeted training focused on the needs of early learners, KG teachers are left without adequate preparation in teaching early literacy skills such as writing, which requires specialized pedagogical strategies.

The interviews also revealed logistical barriers related to the location of training sessions. One headteacher mentioned that although some teachers are eager to attend workshops, they are often held in distant towns or cities, making it difficult for teachers with young children or family responsibilities to participate. This echoes Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who emphasize that professional development must be accessible and context-sensitive. When training programs are held far from participants' locations without proper logistical planning, it limits participation and discourages teachers from attending. Additionally, when teachers are unable to attend due to distance or personal obligations, schools miss the opportunity to benefit from improved teaching practices.

Lastly, another headteacher pointed out that when training is available, the number of available slots for each school is very limited. Often, only one or two teachers can attend, which is not sufficient for ensuring widespread improvement in teaching quality. This issue supports the argument made by Borko (2016), who notes that professional development is most effective when implemented at scale and with a collaborative approach. When only a few teachers are trained, the

impact is diluted unless those teachers are able to effectively share knowledge with their colleagues, which is not always guaranteed in practice.

In summary, the findings from the interviews reveal that KG teachers face multiple challenges in accessing professional development opportunities. These include poor communication, lack of funding, limited training programs targeted at early childhood education, logistical constraints due to location, and restricted training slots. These challenges limit the capacity of KG teachers to gain new knowledge and skills necessary for effective literacy instruction, particularly in the teaching of writing. To improve early writing outcomes, there must be deliberate and inclusive planning by educational authorities to ensure that kindergarten teachers are not left behind in professional development initiatives.

Policies and practices should aim to make training more accessible by decentralizing workshops to local areas, providing financial support for transportation and feeding, and increasing the number of training sessions specifically for early childhood educators. As supported by research (Ametepee & Anastasiou, 2015; Saracho & Spodek, 2014; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017), enhancing teacher capacity through relevant and accessible professional development is key to improving the quality of instruction and fostering better literacy outcomes for young learners.

**Research Question four 4:** What challenges do kindergarten teachers face in teaching writing skills at early childhood centers in the Asunafo North?

Table 4: Challenges Do Kindergarten Teachers Face in Teaching Writing Skills

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
I do not have enough teaching and learning materials to teach writing effectively.	38 (35%)	45 (41%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
Large class sizes make it difficult for me to support each child's writing development.	40 (36%)	42 (38%)	18 (16%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
Lack of in-service training makes it challenging to improve my writing instruction skills.	36 (33%)	46 (42%)	18 (16%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
Some pupils lack the basic motor skills required to begin writing activities.	37 (34%)	44 (40%)	19 (17%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
Time allocated for writing instruction is not enough to meet learners' needs.	34 (31%)	47 (43%)	19 (17%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
There is limited support from school leaders regarding early writing instruction.	32 (29%)	45 (41%)	23 (21%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
Teaching writing is difficult due to the lack of appropriate textbooks and guides.	35 (32%)	43 (39%)	22 (20%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
The home environment of some children does not support early writing development.	39 (35%)	44 (40%)	17 (15%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I find it difficult to assess writing progress due to lack of clear benchmarks or tools.	33 (30%)	46 (42%)	21 (19%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)
I face difficulties in managing learners during writing activities.	31 (28%)	45 (41%)	24 (22%)	10 (9%)	110 (100%)

**Source: Field data, 2025**

The data provides a detailed understanding of the challenges kindergarten teachers face in teaching writing skills to early childhood learners. Based on the responses of 110 teachers, it is clear that a combination of limited resources, large class sizes, inadequate training, and lack of

support from both home and school environments significantly hinder effective writing instruction. These challenges reflect systemic issues within early childhood education that must be addressed to improve literacy outcomes.

To begin with, a significant majority of teachers (35% strongly agreed and 41% agreed) indicated that they do not have enough teaching and learning materials to teach writing effectively. This totals 76% of the respondents, revealing a major constraint in classroom delivery. Teaching writing at the early childhood level requires a variety of materials such as crayons, pencils, writing worksheets, letter cards, and storybooks. The absence of these tools not only limits children's writing practice but also affects teachers' ability to implement engaging and hands-on activities. According to UNESCO (2016), adequate access to teaching and learning materials is essential for improving educational quality and learner performance, especially in early childhood settings.

Another key issue is large class sizes, which 74% of respondents (36% strongly agreed and 38% agreed) identified as a challenge. Large classrooms make it difficult for teachers to give individual attention to each child, particularly when teaching a skill as personalized as writing. Writing instruction requires close monitoring, feedback, and differentiation, which becomes impractical in overcrowded classrooms. As noted by Blatchford et al. (2011), large class sizes negatively affect instructional quality, especially in foundational skills development such as literacy and numeracy.

Furthermore, 75% of teachers (33% strongly agreed and 42% agreed) acknowledged that lack of in-service training is a barrier to improving their writing instruction. This suggests that a substantial number of teachers feel underprepared or unsupported in enhancing their instructional skills. Effective professional development is critical to updating teachers on modern teaching strategies, integrating phonics into writing, and using assessment tools effectively (Darling-

Hammond et al., 2017). The absence of such support contributes to low teacher confidence and limits the adoption of innovative instructional practices.

Another significant challenge reported by 74% of teachers (34% strongly agreed and 40% agreed) is that some pupils lack the basic motor skills required to begin writing activities. Fine motor development, such as pencil grip and hand coordination, forms the foundation of early writing. When learners are not developmentally ready, it places additional pressure on teachers who must balance both literacy instruction and motor skills development. According to Puranik and Lonigan (2014), children's motor skill proficiency strongly influences their ability to engage in writing tasks successfully.

Time constraints also emerged as a major concern, with 74% of respondents (31% strongly agreed and 43% agreed) believing that the time allocated for writing instruction is insufficient. Writing is a complex skill that requires time for practice, reflection, and feedback. Short instructional periods do not allow for adequate skill development or differentiation to meet individual learning needs. As noted by Tompkins (2016), regular and extended writing opportunities are essential for building fluency and writing confidence in young learners.

Leadership support is another area where challenges are evident. A total of 70% of the respondents (29% strongly agreed and 41% agreed) indicated that there is limited support from school leaders regarding writing instruction. This lack of support may manifest in various ways, including inadequate provision of teaching materials, lack of instructional supervision, or failure to prioritize writing in the school's literacy program. Effective school leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping teacher motivation, access to professional development, and instructional quality (Fullan, 2007).

The shortage of textbooks and teacher guides was also reported as a challenge by 71% of the teachers (32% strongly agreed and 39% agreed). Without structured guidance, teachers may struggle to deliver sequential, age-appropriate writing lessons. Instructional materials serve as a roadmap for teaching and learning, especially when it comes to scaffolding writing skills from simple to complex. The absence of such materials may lead to inconsistent instruction and unmet learning objectives (Gunning, 2013).

Moreover, 75% of respondents (35% strongly agreed and 40% agreed) agreed that the home environment of some children does not support writing development. Home literacy environments play a critical role in shaping children's attitudes and exposure to reading and writing. Children who are not encouraged to scribble, read books, or listen to stories at home may start school at a disadvantage. As Hall and Simpson (2010) emphasize, parental involvement and home learning resources are vital in supporting children's emergent literacy development.

Assessment challenges were also identified, with 72% of respondents (30% strongly agreed and 42% agreed) stating that they find it difficult to assess writing progress due to the lack of clear benchmarks or tools. In early childhood education, formative assessment tools such as writing checklists, portfolios, and observational notes are essential for tracking learner development. Without these, teachers may find it difficult to tailor instruction or provide timely feedback. According to NAEYC (2020), effective assessment in early literacy should be ongoing, developmentally appropriate, and used to inform instruction.

Lastly, difficulties in managing learners during writing activities were reported by 69% of respondents (28% strongly agreed and 41% agreed). Writing tasks require focus, structure, and calm environments—conditions that are often hard to maintain with young learners, especially in overcrowded or under-resourced classrooms. Classroom management issues can disrupt writing

sessions and reduce their effectiveness. Saracho (2017) notes that successful writing instruction in early childhood requires not just instructional skills but also strong classroom management techniques that support children's engagement and behavior.

In summary, the data clearly indicates that kindergarten teachers face numerous challenges in teaching writing skills effectively. These include inadequate teaching materials, large class sizes, lack of training, developmental delays in learners, time constraints, insufficient leadership support, lack of instructional resources, poor home support, unclear assessment tools, and classroom management difficulties. Together, these challenges present significant barriers to delivering high-quality writing instruction.

To address these issues, educational stakeholders should prioritize the following interventions: provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, reduction of class sizes through teacher recruitment, regular in-service training focused on practical classroom strategies, support for fine motor skill development through play-based activities, structured time allocation for writing, leadership involvement in instructional supervision, and engagement of parents in supporting home literacy activities. Furthermore, developing clear writing assessment benchmarks and providing tools for managing classrooms effectively will significantly enhance instructional outcomes.

Addressing these challenges will not only empower teachers to deliver better instruction but also ensure that young learners develop strong writing foundations that are essential for future academic success.

## Qualitative analysis

### Theme: Challenges Teachers Face When Teaching Writing to Young Children

Headteachers were interviewed on the main challenges their teachers face when teaching writing to young children in their schools.

One of the headteachers stated that,

*“One major challenge is that many children come to school without any pre-writing skills. They don’t know how to hold pencils properly or even recognize letters, so teachers have to start from the very basics.”*

Another headteacher also said that,

*“Most of the children speak local languages at home, so when teachers introduce English writing, the children struggle to understand and express themselves. This slows down the learning process.”*

Similarly, another also said that,

*“Teachers find it hard to manage large class sizes. They are unable to give enough attention to each child, especially those who need extra help with writing.”*

Another headteacher added that,

*“There are not enough teaching and learning materials like writing books, alphabet charts, or pencils. Teachers have to improvise a lot, which makes the teaching of writing more difficult.”*

The interviews conducted with headteachers revealed several key challenges that hinder effective teaching of writing to young children in their schools. These challenges are both instructional and contextual, affecting how teachers deliver writing lessons and how learners acquire foundational writing skills. The headteachers’ observations reflect broader issues in early childhood education, particularly in under-resourced and multilingual learning environments.

One headteacher pointed out that a major difficulty teachers face is the lack of pre-writing skills among children entering kindergarten. Many children begin school without knowing how to properly hold pencils or recognize letters. This concern aligns with the findings of Whitebread and Coltman (2015), who emphasized that early fine motor development is essential for writing readiness. When children enter school without these basic skills, teachers must spend considerable

time teaching motor coordination and letter identification before formal writing instruction can begin. This delay affects curriculum progression and places additional strain on teachers, especially those with large classes.

Language barriers also emerged as a significant challenge. One headteacher explained that most children speak local languages at home, and this linguistic gap makes it difficult for them to understand and engage in English writing lessons. According to Owu-Ewie (2006), Ghana's language-in-education policy creates challenges for learners when instruction is not aligned with their home language. The early introduction of English in writing without adequate transitional language support can result in low comprehension, poor vocabulary development, and limited ability to express ideas in writing. Teachers must therefore bridge this gap by incorporating bilingual strategies or relying on translation, which can slow down the teaching process and affect learner confidence.

Another pressing challenge highlighted by the headteachers is the issue of large class sizes. Overcrowded classrooms limit a teacher's ability to provide individualized attention, especially to learners who struggle with writing. Research by Blatchford et al. (2011) confirms that class size has a direct impact on the quality of instruction and student outcomes. In early childhood settings, where learners require close supervision and differentiated instruction, large classes reduce the teacher's capacity to monitor each child's progress or offer tailored support. As a result, some children may fall behind in developing writing skills, particularly those who need additional practice and reinforcement.

Resource constraints were also mentioned as a major barrier. One headteacher stated that there are not enough teaching and learning materials such as writing books, alphabet charts, or even basic

writing tools like pencils. This scarcity forces teachers to improvise using local or handmade materials, which, although resourceful, are not always adequate for structured writing instruction. This observation supports the work of Owusu-Acheampong and Amedahe (2016), who reported that lack of instructional resources is a major contributor to poor literacy outcomes in Ghanaian basic schools. Without adequate tools, teachers are limited in their ability to engage learners, implement varied teaching methods, or assess writing progress effectively.

Furthermore, the combination of these challenges—low pre-writing skills, language barriers, large class sizes, and lack of materials—creates a difficult teaching environment. Teachers must constantly adjust their strategies to address multiple learner needs with limited resources and time. This leads to teacher burnout and reduces instructional quality. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), improving early literacy outcomes requires both systemic support and strong classroom-level interventions. Addressing these challenges demands a multi-level response involving teacher training, improved resource allocation, class size reduction, and language-inclusive pedagogy.

In conclusion, the insights shared by headteachers provide a clear picture of the challenges teachers face when teaching writing to young children. These challenges—ranging from children’s lack of foundational skills to systemic resource and language issues—significantly hinder effective writing instruction. To improve early writing outcomes, it is essential for policymakers, district education offices, and school administrators to provide targeted support in teacher training, classroom resources, and language-sensitive instruction. As the research literature affirms (Whitebread & Coltman, 2015; Owu-Ewie, 2006; Blatchford et al., 2011), addressing these foundational challenges is critical for laying the groundwork for literacy development in early childhood education.

## **Theme: Availability of Teaching and Learning Materials**

Headteachers were interviewed to find out whether teachers in their schools have enough teaching and learning materials to support writing lessons.

One of the headteachers stated that,

*"In my school, teachers do not have enough materials. They mostly rely on chalkboards and a few exercise books. We really need more charts, flashcards, and writing tools to support writing activities."*

Another headteacher also said that,

*"Teachers are trying their best, but the materials are not enough. Sometimes, they improvise by drawing on cardboard or using local materials, but we still lack printed resources like alphabet charts and storybooks."*

Similarly, another also said that,

*"The materials we have are very limited. Most of the time, the teachers have to share a few pencils and crayons among many children. It affects how well writing can be taught."*

Finally, another headteacher mentioned that,

*"The school receives some basic supplies, but not regularly. Teachers often borrow materials from each other or create their own teaching aids. More support from the district office would help improve writing lessons."*

Based on the responses from headteachers, it is evident that the availability of teaching and learning materials for writing instruction at the kindergarten level is insufficient and inconsistent across schools. All the headteachers interviewed expressed concern about the lack of adequate resources to effectively support early writing development. This finding aligns with research by Owusu-Acheampong and Amedahe (2016), who emphasized that the availability of instructional materials plays a crucial role in supporting early literacy development, particularly in resource-limited educational settings.

The first headteacher highlighted that teachers in their school mainly rely on chalkboards and a limited number of exercise books, lacking essential materials such as charts, flashcards, and writing tools. This situation reflects a broader challenge in Ghana's public early childhood classrooms where basic learning materials are often scarce. According to Ametepee and Anastasiou

(2015), inadequate resources severely hinder the implementation of developmentally appropriate practices, especially in early writing lessons that require varied visual and tactile aids to support emergent literacy skills.

Another headteacher acknowledged the teachers' efforts to improvise using local materials such as cardboard drawings due to the lack of printed resources like alphabet charts and storybooks. While such improvisation is commendable and demonstrates teacher initiative, it also signals a systemic issue in the provision of quality, standardized materials. As noted by Akyeampong et al. (2013), while improvisation is a valuable skill in under-resourced contexts, it is not a substitute for well-produced instructional materials, which are necessary for maintaining curriculum quality and equity.

A third headteacher reported that teachers often have to share a small number of writing tools such as pencils and crayons among many children. This shortage not only limits student engagement but also affects the quality of instruction, as learners do not receive adequate opportunities to practice fine motor skills critical to writing. This issue supports the argument by Vygotsky (1978), who emphasized that learning is best facilitated through interaction with appropriate tools and materials within the learner's zone of proximal development. Without access to these tools, children are less likely to master writing skills effectively.

In addition, another headteacher explained that while the school occasionally receives some supplies, they are not provided regularly. As a result, teachers resort to borrowing materials or making their own instructional aids. This inconsistency in resource provision points to challenges in educational supply chain management and support from district education offices. According to

Ampadu and Wilson (2019), lack of consistent resource allocation undermines teacher morale and compromises lesson planning and delivery, especially in foundational subjects like literacy.

All headteachers unanimously agreed that the shortage of teaching and learning materials negatively impacts writing instruction. Despite their creativity and improvisation efforts, teachers are unable to fully implement engaging and developmentally appropriate writing activities. As noted by Saracho and Spodek (2014), quality early writing instruction requires rich print environments and a variety of materials such as letter blocks, tracing cards, word walls, and interactive storybooks. Without these, young learners are denied opportunities to explore and develop essential writing skills.

Furthermore, the headteachers' responses underline the importance of systemic support from educational authorities. They called for increased provision of teaching resources through district-level interventions. This recommendation aligns with the findings of Anamuah-Mensah and Towse (2018), who stressed the importance of educational decentralization in Ghana, urging that local district offices be empowered and resourced to address school-specific needs, especially in early grade literacy.

### **Theme: Skills in Teaching Writing**

Headteachers were interviewed to find out whether they believe teachers in their schools have enough knowledge and skills to teach writing effectively at the kindergarten level.

One of the headteachers stated that,

*“Not all teachers have the needed skills. Some of them struggle with using the right methods for small children. They need more training on how to make writing fun and age-appropriate.”*

Another headteacher also said that,

*“Some teachers are good, especially those who have early childhood education training. But others just use basic methods like copying, which is not enough to develop good writing skills in children.”*

Similarly, another also said that,

*“Teachers have some knowledge, but it is not enough. Most of them depend on traditional methods. We need more workshops and support for them to improve their writing lessons.”*

Another headteacher added that,

*“Only a few teachers truly understand how to teach writing to young learners. Many just follow the syllabus without adding creative methods. So, more training is needed to improve their skills.”*

Finally, another headteacher mentioned that,

*“I think the knowledge level is mixed. Some teachers are doing well, while others need help. If we provide regular in-service training, all teachers can gain the right skills to teach writing better.”*

The interviews conducted with five headteachers revealed significant insights into the preparedness of teachers to effectively teach writing skills to kindergarten learners. Across all responses, a central theme emerged: while some teachers possess foundational knowledge and appropriate training in early childhood education, many still struggle with using child-centered and age-appropriate strategies. This aligns with earlier research by Grainger, Gouch, and Lambirth (2016), who noted that writing instruction at the early childhood level requires a combination of pedagogical creativity, understanding of child development, and flexibility in instructional strategies. The findings from the interviews confirm that these qualities are not consistently observed across all classrooms, highlighting a critical need for targeted professional development.

The first headteacher pointed out that not all teachers have the necessary skills to teach writing effectively to young children. According to the headteacher, some teachers struggle with selecting the right methods that suit the developmental stages of young learners. This observation supports the position of Whitebread and Bingham (2014), who emphasized that teaching writing to early learners must consider their motor development, language acquisition, and emotional readiness. When teachers lack training in these areas, their ability to deliver effective instruction is limited.

As such, the call for additional training to make writing instruction more enjoyable and developmentally appropriate is both valid and urgent.

Another headteacher observed that teachers with formal training in early childhood education seem to perform better in delivering writing lessons. In contrast, those without such training tend to rely heavily on basic and repetitive methods, such as copying from the board. This observation is consistent with the argument by Mphahlele and Condy (2013), who reported that untrained teachers often depend on rote learning strategies due to a lack of exposure to alternative, evidence-based instructional methods. Copying as a writing technique does not foster creativity or deeper understanding of written language among young children. It limits their ability to express themselves and hinders the development of independent writing skills. Therefore, this gap in teacher preparedness must be addressed through consistent and structured in-service training.

A third headteacher expressed concern that most teachers resort to traditional instructional approaches when teaching writing. Although these teachers may have some general knowledge of writing instruction, they often fail to apply interactive or play-based strategies that are more suitable for kindergarten learners. This issue has been widely documented in early childhood education research. According to Christie and Roskos (2015), effective writing instruction in early years must be embedded in meaningful contexts, supported by engaging materials, and facilitated through play and exploration. Relying solely on traditional strategies does not accommodate the learning needs of all children and may widen achievement gaps, especially for learners who require more support.

Moreover, one of the interviewed headteachers lamented that only a few teachers truly understand how to make writing lessons engaging and creative. Many simply follow the prescribed syllabus

without making efforts to adapt it to the needs of young children. This concern supports the findings of Neuman and Roskos (2013), who argued that curriculum delivery must be adapted to fit the real-life experiences and cognitive levels of learners. A rigid focus on the syllabus often leads to missed opportunities for spontaneous learning, which is especially vital in early childhood education. Therefore, enhancing teachers' capacity to be flexible and innovative in lesson delivery is critical for improving writing outcomes in kindergartens.

The final headteacher highlighted a mixed level of teacher knowledge regarding writing instruction. While some teachers demonstrate competency and creativity, others are less confident and rely heavily on outdated methods. This disparity points to an uneven distribution of skills among teaching staff and reflects broader systemic issues in teacher preparation and ongoing professional development. Research by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasizes that teacher quality is one of the most influential factors affecting student achievement, especially in the foundational years. The inconsistency in teacher performance observed by the headteachers suggests a need for more equitable and continuous professional learning opportunities for all teachers, regardless of their experience or background.

Another important issue emerging from the interviews is the consensus among all five headteachers on the need for regular in-service training. They believe that such training would enhance teachers' abilities to use age-appropriate methods, integrate playful learning strategies, and create meaningful writing experiences for children. This recommendation is supported by the work of Borko (2016), who noted that effective professional development should be ongoing, collaborative, and connected to teachers' daily practices. In-service training, when properly

designed and delivered, can empower teachers with the skills, confidence, and motivation to improve their instructional approaches, particularly in key learning areas like writing.

Additionally, the importance of early childhood-specific training was reiterated in the interviews. Teachers who received formal training in early childhood pedagogy were consistently described as more capable and innovative in their teaching methods. This finding supports literature from Piasta, Petscher, and Justice (2012), who highlighted the direct correlation between specialized teacher preparation and improved literacy outcomes in early learners. Investing in early childhood teacher education ensures that teachers understand the developmental characteristics of young learners and can design learning experiences that align with their needs.

In conclusion, the interviews reveal that while some teachers have the requisite knowledge and skills to teach writing effectively at the kindergarten level, many do not. The predominant use of traditional and basic methods, such as copying, limits the potential for meaningful writing development among young children. There is a clear and urgent need for regular in-service training, capacity-building workshops, and ongoing professional support to bridge the gaps in teacher preparedness. Teachers must be equipped with practical, creative, and child-centered strategies that foster early writing skills in ways that are both engaging and developmentally appropriate. As noted by Graham et al. (2016), effective writing instruction in early childhood must be intentional, informed by research, and adaptable to the diverse needs of learners. By addressing the gaps identified through the headteachers' responses, educational stakeholders can ensure improved writing outcomes and foundational literacy development among kindergarten learners.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Overview

The purpose of this final chapter therefore, was to review the research process in relation to the research objectives and questions, in order to present a summary of the research findings, and draw conclusions, followed by recommendations which will be based on the findings of the study.

#### 5.1 Summary of Finding

The major findings of the study were based on the study research questions.

1. The study revealed that most kindergarten teachers in early childhood centers within Asunafo North District have a moderate level of knowledge about teaching writing skills. Many of the teachers demonstrated an understanding of basic writing development concepts such as letter formation, pencil grip, and the importance of phonemic awareness in writing.
2. The study revealed that teachers commonly use practical and engaging strategies to develop writing skills in kindergarten learners. These strategies include tracing letters, copying from the board, writing names and simple words, drawing and labeling, storytelling, and matching pictures to words.
3. The study revealed that formal training opportunities for kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills are limited within the Asunafo North District.
4. The study revealed that kindergarten teachers face multiple challenges in teaching writing skills in early childhood centers. Key challenges include large class sizes, inadequate teaching and learning materials (such as writing tools and storybooks), limited classroom space, and lack of ongoing support from educational authorities.

## 5.2 Conclusions

The study concludes that kindergarten teachers in the Asunafo North District possess a moderate level of knowledge regarding the teaching of writing skills in early childhood education. While many teachers understand the basic concepts of writing instruction, their practices are often limited to traditional approaches without the integration of more innovative or research-based strategies.

It was also concluded that the teaching strategies commonly used by kindergarten teachers include tracing, copying from the board, storytelling, drawing, and word-matching activities. These strategies are helpful in supporting foundational writing skills but may not cater to the diverse learning needs of all young learners, especially those who require differentiated support.

Furthermore, the study concludes that there is a noticeable gap in continuous professional development opportunities for kindergarten teachers specifically in the area of teaching writing skills. Most of the teachers rely on general training programs that do not focus in-depth on early writing development, which limits their capacity to use varied and effective instructional techniques.

Finally, the study found that teachers face a range of challenges in teaching writing skills at the kindergarten level. These include large class sizes, insufficient teaching and learning materials, limited instructional time, and a lack of pedagogical support. Such barriers negatively impact the effectiveness of writing instruction and hinder children's progress in developing early writing skills

### 5.3 Recommendations

1. The study recommended that the Education Directorate, in collaboration with the Asunafo North District, should organize regular in-service training and professional development workshops specifically focused on effective strategies for teaching writing skills in early childhood education. These training sessions should emphasize practical, age-appropriate methods that promote handwriting development, sentence construction, and creative expression in young learners.
2. It was further recommended that the Education Directorate, in collaboration with the Asunafo North District, should ensure that all early childhood classrooms are adequately supplied with relevant teaching and learning materials such as tracing books, mini whiteboards, letter cards, flashcards, and writing toolkits. These materials will help teachers implement a variety of engaging and hands-on writing activities that support learners' fine motor development and letter formation.
3. The study also recommended that the Education Directorate, in partnership with the Asunafo North District, should work with school leadership to reduce class sizes in kindergarten classrooms. Managing large groups makes it difficult for teachers to give individual support to learners who are struggling with writing. Smaller class sizes would enhance teacher-learner interaction and improve the quality of writing instruction.
4. Lastly, the study recommended that the Education Directorate, together with the Asunafo North District, should institute periodic monitoring and mentoring programs to support teachers in implementing writing instruction effectively. Through classroom visits and coaching, supervisors can help identify gaps in instruction, share new techniques, and

encourage the adoption of best practices in early writing development. These initiatives will contribute to improved learner outcomes in writing and overall literacy development.



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## APPENDIX A

### INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA  
FACULTY OF APPLIED BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES IN EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Questionnaire on kindergarten teachers' knowledge of teaching writing skills at early childhood centres within the Asunafo North District.

#### **Introduction**

Dear Participants, I am very grateful to you for your acceptance to participate in this study. The study is to investigate kindergarten teachers' knowledge of teaching writing skills at early childhood centres within the Asunafo North District. It is expected that the results of this study will be beneficial to you and all KG teachers. This will help you to reflect on your instructional practices. Also, to find out whether such practices will help achieve the set goals and objectives of the national KG curriculum.

Your contributions and responses will be treated very strictly and confidential. For that matter, no name is requested during this exercise.

Thank you so much.

#### **Instruction**

Kindly provide responses for these questions as sincere as you can for the purpose of this study.

#### **Section A**

##### **Personal Information: Demographics**

*Please, supply the responses as demand by the question.*

1. School ID: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender:                      Male [  ]      Female [  ]



**Research question one (1): What is the level of knowledge kindergarten teachers have about teaching writing skills in early childhood centers in the Asunafo North?**

No.	Statement	(SA)	(A)	(D)	(SD)
1	I have a strong understanding of the stages children go through in developing writing skills.				
2	I can confidently identify age-appropriate writing milestones for kindergarten learners.				
3	I am familiar with various strategies used to teach writing skills in early childhood education.				
4	I understand the importance of fine motor skill development in early writing instruction.				
5	I know how to use play-based activities to support the development of writing skills.				
6	I can assess children's writing development effectively using appropriate tools.				
7	I regularly use letter tracing, scribbling, and drawing to build early writing skills.				
8	I have received adequate training on teaching writing skills to young children.				
9	I understand how to differentiate writing instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners.				
10	I am knowledgeable about how oral language development supports writing in young children.				

**Research question two (2): What teaching strategies do kindergarten teachers use to develop writing skills in early childhood learners?**

No.	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	I use drawing and coloring activities to support early writing skills.				
2	I encourage learners to practice letter formation through tracing activities.				
3	I use storytelling and role-play activities to support writing skill development.				
4	I create opportunities for children to write their names and familiar words daily.				
5	I use songs and rhymes to help learners remember letter sounds and shapes.				
6	I model writing on the board and let learners copy what I write.				
7	I provide learners with materials such as pencils, crayons, and paper to practice writing freely.				
8	I engage learners in group writing activities like writing simple words or labeling pictures.				
9	I integrate phonics instruction with writing tasks to support sound-letter recognition.				
10	I give feedback to learners on their writing to help them improve.				

**Research question three (3): What training opportunities are available for kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills?**

No.	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	I have attended training workshops specifically focused on teaching writing skills in early childhood.				
2	In-service training programs on writing instruction are regularly organized by the education directorate.				
3	I have access to professional development programs that enhance my skills in teaching writing.				
4	The training programs I attend include practical strategies for teaching early writing.				
5	I feel confident to teach writing skills because of the training I have received.				
6	I am encouraged by school leaders to attend writing-focused training and workshops.				
7	The training I received was relevant to the writing challenges I face in the classroom.				
8	I can access teaching and learning materials after attending writing training workshops.				
9	Peer learning and teacher collaboration are promoted as part of writing instruction training.				
10	I would like more regular and focused training on how to teach writing to young children.				

**Research question four 4: What challenges do kindergarten teachers face in teaching writing skills at early childhood centers in the Asunafo North?**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	I do not have enough teaching and learning materials to teach writing effectively.				
2	Large class sizes make it difficult for me to support each child's writing development.				
3	Lack of in-service training makes it challenging to improve my writing instruction skills.				
4	Some pupils lack the basic motor skills required to begin writing activities.				
5	Time allocated for writing instruction is not enough to meet learners' needs.				
6	There is limited support from school leaders regarding early writing instruction.				
7	Teaching writing is difficult due to the lack of appropriate textbooks and guides.				
8	The home environment of some children does not support early writing development.				
9	I find it difficult to assess writing progress due to lack of clear benchmarks or tools.				
10	I face difficulties in managing learners during writing activities.				

## **APPENDIX B**

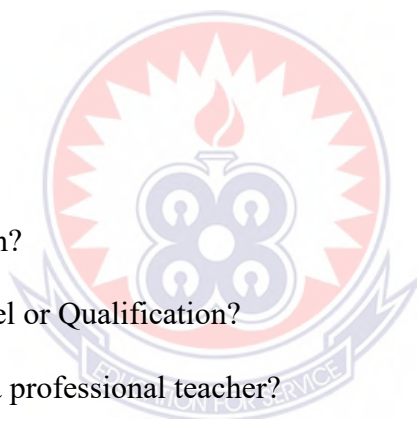
### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

I am conducting a study to investigate kindergarten teachers' knowledge of teaching writing skills at early childhood centres within the Asunafo North District. This research is carried out for an award of MED degree in Education in the University of Education, Winneba.

The information you provide will be helpful for me to understand kindergarten teacher's kindergarten teachers' knowledge of teaching writing skills at early childhood centres within the Asunafo North District. Information and responses will be strictly confidential and anonymous for academic purposes only. Thank you for your cooperation!

#### ***Part 1: Background***

1. Age
2. Gender
3. What is your Rank or Position?
4. What is your Educational level or Qualification?
5. How long have you work as a professional teacher?
6. Have you taught learners with disabilities in regular class?



#### **Research question 1:**

1. How well do your kindergarten teachers understand how to teach writing to young children?
2. What methods do your teachers commonly use when teaching writing skills at the kindergarten level?
3. Have your teachers received any training or workshops on teaching writing to early childhood learners?
4. How confident are your kindergarten teachers in helping children learn to write letters and words?
5. What challenges do your teachers face in teaching writing skills to young learners?

**Research question 2: What teaching strategies do kindergarten teachers use to develop writing skills in early childhood learners?**

1. What writing activities do teachers in your school commonly use to help young children learn how to write?
2. Do teachers use storytelling or drawing to support writing development in kindergarten? If yes, how?
3. How often do teachers give learners opportunities to practice writing in class?
4. Are there any special materials or tools (like letter cards, tracing books, or whiteboards) that teachers use to teach writing?
5. Do teachers work with learners in small groups or one-on-one when teaching writing? Please explain.

**Research question three (3): What training opportunities are available for kindergarten teachers in teaching writing skills?**

1. Have your kindergarten teachers received any training in teaching writing skills to young children?
2. What types of training or workshops have been offered to help teachers improve their writing instruction?
3. How often do your teachers attend training programs on early writing development?
4. Do you think the training programs your teachers attend are helpful in improving their teaching of writing? Please explain.
5. Are there any challenges in accessing training opportunities for your kindergarten teachers? If yes, what are they?

**Research question four 4: What challenges do kindergarten teachers face in teaching writing skills at early childhood centers in the Asunafo North?**

1. What are the main challenges your teachers face when teaching writing to young children?
2. Do teachers have enough teaching and learning materials to support writing lessons?
3. Are class sizes too large for teachers to give individual writing support to each learner?
4. Do you think all teachers have enough knowledge and skills to teach writing effectively at the kindergarten level?
5. Are parents supportive when it comes to helping their children develop writing skills at home?

