THE FACTORS INFLUENCING HIGH DROP OUT RATES IN KENyan
SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
IGEMBE NORTH; MERU COUNTY

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OCTOBER, 2016
DECLARATION

Declaration by Student

This Research Project is my original work and has not been presented to any other examination body.

Sign……………………… Date……………………………………

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L40/72417/2014

Declaration by Supervisor

This Research Project has been submitted with my approval as the university of Nairobi supervisor

Sign……………………… Date……………………………………

SUPERVISOR: DAN OLUOCH
DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my wife and my children who have been by my side through this period that I was writing the report.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost I thank the Almighty God, for granting me the strength, health and courage to complete this arduous task. A special thank you to my supervisor Dan Oluoch for his guidance, insight and encouragement in the writing and compilation of this case study. Your invaluable support and patience throughout this journey has been unreal and is appreciated from the bottom of my heart.

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ABSTRACT

Education is an important life process that plays a vital role in forming the foundation for a student's future better being, as it equips the learner with basic knowledge, skills and altitudes that will enable her/him to cope well in life. In Igembe North most students who attend secondary schools do not complete secondary level of education. Despite Kenya Government's commitment to subsidize students’ education, their completion rate at secondary school level is not a hundred percent. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing high dropout rates in Kenyan secondary schools: a case study of secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County. The specific objectives were to determine how school based factors influence the school dropout rate in secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County, to examine the extent to which economic factors influence the school dropout rate in secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County, to establish how family based factors influence the school dropout rate in secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County. A descriptive survey research design was used for this study because it was useful in describing the characteristics even when analyzing multiple variables. The target population consisted of 8 Secondary Schools in Igembe north. The study population was therefore 8 principals, 64 teachers, 480 form four students. Simple random sampling was used to identify the students to participate in the study. The researcher used 30% of the teachers. The sample size for the teachers was therefore 19 teachers. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Questionnaires were preferred because of their ability to ensure confidentiality of responses from respondents. Data was analyzed by use of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) programmes. The raw data from the field was summarized, coded, edited and computerized through synthesizing information from the questionnaires by SPSS. majority of the respondents (students 83.3% and class teacher 86.7%) indicated that the Teachers Attitude influences whether students drop out of school or not. The study also established that households with little income are not able to retain their children in school and they prefer their children involvement in income generating activities. The study further established that Most of the teachers and the students indicated that more educated parents are more concerned of their children education and their children have high chance of being retained in school unlike less educated parents. The study concluded that Income does influence dropout among students in secondary schools. The attachment to low income is compounded by involvement in income generating activities, inability to afford basic needs, looking after young siblings and inability to pay fees. The study recommended that Poverty alleviation measures should be strengthened in the society to enable all families get higher income so as to maintain their children in school till completion.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background information

Students’ dropping out of school is a great concern of any government or society. Despite many policies and strategies developed to enhance a smooth transition rate in school, there are still students who withdraw from school prematurely. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26, for instance states categorically that everyone has the right to education (UNESCO, 1998). To achieve this, the Kenyan government laid two policies and allocated money in the National budget to provision of education to her people. Education is a very important part in developing human beings. Sharma (2004) writes that human beings need education because they are destined to be real men, not beasts, dull animals or chimps of wood. This is because education is the cornerstone of economic growth and socio-development and a principle means of improving the welfare of an individual. As a result, it increases the productive capabilities of the societies and the political, economic and scientific institutions. It also helps to reduce poverty by increasing the value and efficiency of labour offered by the poor and mitigating the population, health and nutritional consequence of poverty (Mulwa, 2008).

In fact, Liu (2004) carried out qualitative research in two rural communities in the North of China, in particular focusing on drop outs at secondary level and carrying out interviews with drop outs and the families of drop outs. Among the reasons put forward for dropping out was perceived future prospects or lack of them, school failing to provide impetus/motivation for continued study and youngsters admiring the lifestyles of
contemporaries who had already left. More specifically, parents indicated the youngsters were ‘tired of study,’ with schools being ‘no fun’; there was little hope of entering university; and if they did graduate from university, few prospects afterwards; youngsters admired those working in the city with most dropouts going to the city to work soon after they left school; and they were persuaded by parents to leave.

The processes by which households make decisions about dropout, taking account of principle-agent considerations and intra-household dynamics, appear under researched. In terms of decision-making strategies, AL Samarrai and Peasgood (2008) describe them as being determined by an interaction of social, cultural and economic factors working through power relations within the household. They describe how decision making is often a negotiated process taking place between members of the household, rather than one individual. They propose that the stronger the bargaining powers of a family member the more influence they will have on resource allocation decisions (Sen, 2000). Bargaining power will be dependent on an individual’s characteristics, and therefore the attributes of other household members, as well as the household heads, will be relevant when looking at schooling decisions.

On the other hand, in Kenya there are various factors that hinder achievement of universal literacy. Chief among them is the high rates of dropouts. The rate of dropout in our secondary schools has continued to rise despite efforts taken by various stakeholders to minimize it. The dropout problem has been drawn back in Kenyan’s education cycles, in a sense that it brings about wastage, a problem which produces citizens who are not
adequately prepared to be absorbed into the country’s labor force. This group, instead become a liability to those whom they depend on (Ngware, 2004). Despite implicit demand for continued attendance, students still dropout from the education system. It is therefore expected that knowledge of the factors influencing high dropout rates in Kenyan secondary schools.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Drop out in education is a big loss to individuals and societies in Kenya. Preliminary investigation by MOE (2007) shows that at the national levels dropout rates among students in secondary school in 2004 registered 14.5% Meru County inclusive. The government has endeavored to enhance the participation and access in education in Kenya. However, drop out in Secondary schools has continued to persist. Igembe North Sub County like many other parts of Kenya has been experiencing dropout of students in secondary schools. However, the cause of drop out from secondary school has not been investigated. Drop out of students from secondary school is therefore an issue centered in this study. Dropping out in secondary school is considered a waste of human resources International Journal of Education and Research Vol. 3 No. 3 March 2015 537 (teachers who have already employed) and student time (time taken to attend school).

Further also, the available data suggest that those who drop out without attaining a minimum of two years in secondary school are likely to suffer from functional illiteracy (Mulwa, 2008). Illiteracy, on the other hand hinders attainment of national development of the country, a factor which is one of Kenya’s educational objectives, (Eshiwani, 2004). This is because illiteracy jeopardizes the Government to build a human capital base,
which is essential for development in the country. It is therefore, necessary to minimize, or mitigate in our secondary schools, as it prevents the school system from achieving its objectives. No studies have been done on dropout rate in Igembe north sub-county. It is for this reason that the current study wants to fill the gap by investigating the factors influencing high dropout rates in Kenyan secondary schools: a case study of secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors influencing high dropout rates in Kenyan secondary schools: a case study of secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County

1.4. Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following objectives;

i. To determine how school based factors influence the school dropout rate in secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County

ii. To examine the extent to which economic factors influence the school dropout rate in secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County

iii. To establish how family based factors influence the school dropout rate in secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County

1.5. Research Questions
i. What is the influence of school based factors on the school dropout rate in secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County

ii. What extent does economic factors influence the school dropout rate in secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County

iii. How does family based factors influence the school dropout rate in secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County

1.6. Significance of the study

The findings of the study may be useful to educational planners in the Ministry of Education to devising measures that would lead to improvement of completion rates and reduction of students dropout so that the Government does not only focus on solving educational costs challenges to students but also the factors that lead to dropout of students. The findings may help the County Government of Meru to take measures that would address the effect of the school based factors, economic factors, and family based factors on dropout of students in school. Teachers may also benefit from the study in that the study findings may help them to understand the effect of school based factors, economic factors, and family based factors on student’s dropout in school, which may assist them to guide and counsel their students timely hence ensuring retention in school up to completion. Parents/guardians might be assisted in knowing their roles in ensuring internal efficiency in secondary schools is achieved so that students attend school regularly.

1.7. Limitations of the study
This study relied on school records to be able to analyze and determine dropout rates. The study also focused on few selected School Characteristics and therefore findings have to be generalized with caution to schools with similar characteristics. The study involved eighty respondents. The target was 128 respondents drawn from Principals and Guidance and Counseling teachers. Some of the respondents remained reluctant to respond to some items while others did not return their questionnaires. This may have affected the findings of the study with regard to specific items and information that would have been useful from the non-responses. However, the study still solicited information on dropout from the schools where principals were reluctant to give responses through the help of the Guidance and Counseling teachers. Statistical data were collected for years gone by and some documents like student registers were difficult to access. However, efforts were made to try to generate data from the available school documents. In addition, the location and sample size required generalization with caution where conditions of learning are different in the rest of the country and outside. These have acted as limitations to the study.

1.8. Delimitation of the study

The study was delimitated to secondary schools and carrying out a research in all schools required a lot of time and financial resources. Most roads are marrum which were impassable during rainy season and some areas are well known for wildlife human conflicts.

1.9. Basic assumption of the study
i. All Public Secondary Schools have put in place measures to control school drop-out.

ii. All respondents would give honest and genuine responses to the questionnaires.

iii. The participants will cooperate and give the required information without any reservations

1.10. Definitions of significant terms

**Dropouts** - refer to students in secondary schools who withdraw from a school at any level or grade before completing a programme of study.

**Dropout rate** - is the percentage of dropouts in a given year out of the total number of those enrolled in a programme in the same year.

**Participation** - means giving children a say in their education, listening to them and involving them as much as possible in school life. It means valuing their opinions and ideas and giving them control of their learning. Influence refers to the power to change or affect someone or something without directly forcing them to happen.

**Retention** - refers to the ability to remain and participate in school activities up to the end of the cycle without dropping out.

**Completion rate** - refers to the percentage of a cohort of students who satisfactorily finish a certain level of education eg secondary education.

**Internal efficiency** - refers to the ability of an education system to retain students until they graduate from secondary school without wastage, stagnation, dropout or repetition.
1.11 Organization of the study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one comprises of background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, basic assumptions of the study, limitations, delimitation, and definition of significant terms and organization of the study. Chapter two gives a review of the literature related to the study thematically as per the study objectives, summary of literature review, the theoretical framework and conceptual framework of the study. Chapter three consists of research methodology to be used. It consists of the following areas: The research design, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments' validity and instrument reliability, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques to be used in the study. Chapter four focuses on data analysis, presentation and interpretation while chapter five contains the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further study.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews literature which is related to the study based on secondary school dropout rate. It will look at school based factors, economic factors and environmental factors affecting school dropout rate. This chapter will also discuss the empirical review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework.

2.2 The Concept of Drop out in Schools

The United States Department of Education measurement, defines dropout rate as the percentage of 16-24 year olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential and defines a dropout as a person who has not graduated from high school and is not currently enrolled in fulltime secondary education [National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2011]. For purposes of this project, a dropout is viewed as any student who after being enrolled in public secondary school abandons school completely without sitting for Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Failure to complete a basic cycle of secondary school not only limits future opportunities for students but also represents a significant drain on the limited resources that countries have for the provision of secondary education (Sabates, Akyeampong, Westbrook and Hunt, 2010). School dropouts when compared to high school graduates are usually associated with lowered economic gains, lack of access to higher education, reduced tax revenue, poor health outcomes, increased likelihood of legal trouble (GlobalPost, 2014). Dropping out of school is the outcome of a process that begins before high school and
students exhibit identifiable warning signs at least one to three years before they dropout (Allensworth, 2005)

2.3. Influence of School Based Factors on Dropout Rate in Secondary Schools

Eisenmon (2007) in a study on wastages in secondary education reported that dropout rates in developing countries often are quite high. Besides, the study found that Boarding Schools were preferred by most stakeholders since students did better than their day schools counterparts in national examinations. Notably conspicuous in this study was that dropout rates were higher in Day schools compared to Boarding schools. According to this study, the highest rates were in the sub-Saharan African countries where each year, about 22 percent of primary schools pupils and 21 percent of secondary schools students were dropping out of school. Out of the total percentage of dropouts in secondary education, Boarding schools accounted for 8 percent while Day schools accounted for 13 percent. The North African and Middle Eastern countries averaged about 12 percent for the primary grades and 21 percent for the secondary grades. From these percentages, Single Streamed schools accounted for 7 percent while 14 percent came from schools with two streams or more.

This was because the Single Stream schools were fewer than the Double or More Streamed schools and the study established that most education stakeholders preferred Large Size schools on the grounds of the economies of large-scale production. The Latin American and Caribbean countries averaged 9 percent and 8 percent for primary and secondary schools respectively. The data from East and South-East Asia were too
sporadic to support meaningful averages, but the available number appeared comparable to those for Latin America. According to EFA (2009), Kenya has the largest percentage of her children in both primary and secondary school of which 13 percent drop out of school at any given time due to poverty, early marriages, HIV/AIDS pandemic and poor learning environment. Sessional paper No. 1 (2005) on Education, Training and Research indicates a transition rate of 70% from primary to secondary education cycle and this is an indication that approximately 30% of the pupils nationally are unable to proceed to secondary schools. A study on rural day schools by Ncube (2004) in Zimbabwe found that the number of students dropping from a level increased with the level of schooling.

2.4. Influence of Economic Factors on Students on Dropout Rate in Secondary Schools

Direct and indirect schooling costs are important factors for the education of children and some research indicate that schooling costs especially school fees, are a central reason for early dropout from schools. Schooling costs are sometimes linked to the gender of the children as parents are sometimes become unwilling to pay schooling fees for their daughters. For instance, Brown and Park (2002) investigated that in rural China, parents' incapability to pay compensate school fees was the reason for the dropout of 47% of girls while only 33% of boys dropout in elementary schools; in junior secondary high school, fees were half for the girls but only 8% for the boys. Hunter and May (2002) found that school fees were significant reason for the dropout rate of 27% of boys but 30% of girls before secondary school graduation in South Africa. From the families’ perspective, Susmita & Sengupta (2012) observe that in poor households in India, the costs of
schooling for girls are likely to be higher while the benefits more tenuous for them than the boys. The authors also observe that though direct costs are similar for boys and girls, parents are less willing to spend on girls. Lloyd et. al. (2000) also found that in Kenya, higher school fees increases the likelihood of dropping out for both boys and girls.

Household income is found to be an important economic factor in determining access to education as schooling potentially incurs a range of costs, both upfront and hidden. Upfront costs include school fees, while the more hidden costs include uniforms, travel, equipment and the opportunity costs of sending a child to school. Household income is linked to a range of factors: when children start school, how often they attend, whether they have to temporarily withdraw and also when and if they drop out (Croft, 2002). Cardoso & Verner (2007) notes that poverty is the most common primary and contributory reason for students to be out of school.

Dachi and Garrett (2003) asked a series of questions to parents/guardians about the financial circumstances surrounding children’s school enrolment in Tanzania, all households responding said the main barrier to sending children to school was financial and their inability to pay fees. Both statistical data and empirical research suggest that students from better off households are more likely to remain in school, whilst those who are poorer are more likely never to have attended, or to drop out once they have enrolled. For example, Brown and Park’s research in rural China (2002) saw poor and credit constrained children three times more likely than other children to drop out of school.
Poor households tend to have lower demand for schooling than richer households: whatever the benefits of schooling, the costs, for them, are more difficult to meet than is the case for richer households (Colclough et al, 2000). For children from poorer backgrounds in particular, the pressure on them to withdraw from school increases as they get older, particularly as the opportunity cost of their time increases. Work patterns of household members influences whether income is coming in, and the possible expenditures available. Chugh (2004) looking at patterns of access and non-access in slums in Bangalore, India indicated that the income of the father was linked to the continuity or discontinuity of the child in school; with the fathers of most drop outs not employed. If income levels are low, children may be called on to supplement the household’s income, either through wage-earning employment themselves or taking on additional tasks to free up other household members for work. This is more apparent as children get older and the opportunity cost of their time increases.

How people regard schooling and the importance placed on it at times might shape interactions between schooling, household income and dropping out. `For example, Pryor and Ampiah’s (2003) research on schooling in a Ghanaian village, talked about education being regarded as a relative luxury, with many villagers considering education not worthwhile. Research indicates link between household income and drop-out of students from school. Fuller and Laing (1999) found that there is an association between a family’s financial strength, measured by level of household expenditure and access to credit, and the likelihood a child will remain in school in South Africa. Kadzamira and
Rose (2003) indicate that when the cost of schooling is too high for households in Malawi, it is often children from poorest households who are less likely to attend, this agrees with Glick and Sahn (2000) research in Guinea which indicates that when household income increases, there is greater investment in children’s schooling.

2.5. Influence of Family Factors on Students on Dropout Rate in Secondary Schools

The type of family that a student lives in does affect the likelihood of dropping out of school. Family types include two-parents, single-parent, grandparents and stepparent families (Pong & Ju, 2000). Single-parent families can be further broken down into female-headed households as well as male-headed households. 18 Divorce, separation, and death of a spouse are all variables that define change in family type from a two-parent family to a single parent family, a grandparent family or stepparent family. Pong & Ju (2000) notes that, children from single parent or female-headed households are more likely to drop out than are children who reside in two-parent families and Children living with stepparents are also more likely to drop out of school than children in a two parent family. When a couple divorces, the incomes of both parents becomes separate and this will in turn affect the child due to the loss of a parent's income which put the child in a family of poverty (Pong & Ju, 2000).

The children who are faced with the most economic deprivation are those living in single mother headed families and they have an increased chance of dropping out of school (Pong & Ju, 2000). A child's relationship with his or her parents can affect their chances of dropping out of high school. Factors that are associated with a child's relationship that negatively affect their chances of educational attainment are, the physical absence of
adults in the household due to divorce, the limited amount of time parents and children spend together due to the rise in two earner families, and the corresponding parental inattention to children's activities such as monitoring school performance or instilling educational values (Lichter et al, 1993). A child needs the attention of a parental figure. The less time that a child spends with his or her parents creates a gap in their relationship that could lead a child's attention towards a person of less nurturing and more deviant characteristics. Children of parents who are separated or divorced may be lacking the attention that is needed especially regarding their education (Lichter et al, 1993).

Shonkoff and Garner (2012) notes that students whose families have high mobility, homelessness, hunger, food insecurity, parents who are in jail or absent, domestic violence; drug abuse are more likely to dropout in school. The changing nature of the family affects schooling access, (Edet & Ekegre, 2010).

Students whose parents monitor and regulate their activities, provide emotional support, encourage independent decision making and are generally more involved in their schooling are less likely to drop out of school (Russel, 2001). Bereavement amongst family members and in particular parents often makes students more vulnerable to dropout, non-enrolment, late enrolment, or slow progress (Nyamukapa & Gregson, 2005). Orphan-hood often exacerbates financial constraints for poorer households and increases the demands for child labour and hence dropout and this is more pronounced in the era of HIV/AIDS (Hunter & May, 2003). Case & Ardington (2004) agree that bereavement amongst family members and in particular parents, often makes children more vulnerable to drop out, non-enrolment, late enrolment and slow progress.
Family size influences children’s schooling cycle greatly. In comparison to children with fewer siblings, children with more siblings tend to enroll in school later, repeat grades more often and dropout of school earlier. Consequently, with larger family size, the financial burden is greater; children are less likely to attend school and often dropout (Enyegue, Parfait and Eloundou, 2000). In a study in India, chugh (2011) found that having a large number of siblings, children were associated with a 36 percent increase in the odds of dropping out of school, in comparison to the odds for smaller families. Theoretically, it is widely accepted that large family size in most developing countries constrain limited resources of households on child investment, health and education. However, empirical results of different studies indicate that a negative impact of large family size is neither universal nor inevitable (Enyegue et al, 2006). According to Boyle (2004), the number of children within a household is important in many cases and is a “significant determinant” of access to education.

But research differs on the impact of household size on access and dropout. Some studies indicate that with large household sizes (and in particular the number of children) the financial burden or potential workload is greater; children are less likely to attend school, and often dropout. However with more children in the household, jobs can be spread between them and siblings more likely to attend school. A child from a larger household might have a higher probability of attending school because work is spread over a large number of household members (Rose & Al-samarrai, 2001). The effect of family size is conditioned by the specific cultural, political and socioeconomic settings (sudha, 1997).

Research indicates that the educational level of household members is particularly influential in determining whether and for how long children access schooling. Ersado
(2005) notes that parental education is the most consistent determinant of student’s education. Higher parental (household head) level of education is associated with increased access to education, higher attendance rates and lower dropout rates (Ainsworth et al, 2005). A number of reasons are put forward for the link between parental education and retention in school. Some researchers indicate that non-educated parents cannot provide the support or often do not appreciate the benefits of schooling (Pryor & Ampiah, 2003). Brown (2002) research on China indicates that for each additional year of a father’s education, the probability of his child dropping out of school falls by 12-14 percent.

Al Samarrai and Peasgood’s (1998) research in Tanzania suggests that the father’s education has a greater influence on boys” secondary schooling; and the mother’s on girls. AlSamarrai and Peasgood, (1998) argues that educated mothers give preference to girls” schooling, implying that mothers have a relatively stronger preference for their daughters’ education and that their education affords them either increased household decision-making power or increased economic status. Glick and Sahn’s (2000) results taken from research in an urban poor environment in West Africa offer some similar outcome. Ersado (2005) suggests provision of adult education programmes to counter the educational deficit facing many households would be useful in bolstering sustained access to education for many students. Research indicates that the household members” place on education is an important factor in determining whether students gain access to schooling and for how long, but there is less research on how this may attribute to dropping out.

2.6. Summary of Literature Review
Literature has been reviewed on the various household factors influencing dropout of students. Among the factors identified in the literature include school based factors, economic factors, and family factors. This review was conducted in general for both boys and girls, considering that much of the available literature focuses on issues affecting the education of either the girl child or boy child alone. Studies by Ogeto (2008), Koech (2008), Wamahi (1994), Obura (1991) among others focused on issues affecting the education of the girl child. Kashu (2006) did a study on access and retention of boys in Kajiado District, Kiarie (2010) did a study on influence of school based factors on participation of the boy child in mirangaine District, Kenya and Wamalwa (2011) did a study on institutional factors affecting levels of discipline of the boys in Dagoretti District, Kenya. A study on the overall factors influencing dropout of students in public secondary schools in Igembe North Sub County has not been done. This study therefore seeks to fill the gap.

2.7. Theoretical framework

The study was guided by the systems theory developed by Bertalanffy in 1968. He defined a system as a set of interrelated elements where each element has an effect on the functioning of the whole and each is affected by at least one other element in the system. A major assumption of the theory is that all systems are purposeful and goal directed. The school system exists to achieve objectives through the collective efforts of individuals in larger community and in the institutional settings. School dropout rates are one such phenomenon that can be explained as a product of dysfunctional elements within the education system. A dropout rate is an output of the school's educational activities,
economic factors and a function of the family factors that is; the family type, household’s size, and parental level of education, which are associated with the school system. These elements do not operate in isolation but are interrelated making school dropout a process. The applicability of the theory in this study is seen in the fact that the school is a system which is often affected by other systems in the environment for example; household background of students (input) determines completion rates (output). Using the theory the study seeks to unearth the factors that affect dropout of students in secondary schools in Igembe North Sub County.

2.8. Conceptual Framework

In this study, the conceptual framework looks at the factors influencing high dropout rates in Kenyan secondary schools: a case study of secondary schools in Igembe North; Meru County. As argued in the earlier discussions, factors influencing are the independent variable while the dropout rates is the dependent variable in this study. The factors influencing high dropout rates include school based factors, economic factors, and family based factors. The relationship is shown diagrammatically in the following figure:
**Figure 2.1. Conceptual framework showing factors influencing high dropout rate in secondary schools**

**Independent Variables**

- School Based Factors
  - School distance
  - Nature of teachers

- Economic Factors
  - Parents income
  - Direct and indirect schooling costs

- Family Based Factors
  - Parents education
  - Type of family
  - Family size

**Intervening Variables**

**Dependent**

- Dropout rate
  - Low transition and enrollment rate
  - Low enrollment in classes

**Source: Researcher (2016)**
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This section outlines the methods that were used in the study to achieve its objectives. It focused on the following subheadings: research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, research instruments, instrument reliability, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques.

3.2. Research design

A research design refers to a plan or guide for data collection and interpretation. It is in line with a description of a research design as a plan, structure and strategy of investigation to obtain answers to research questions and control variance (Orodho, 2003). The study design set up the framework for study and is the blue print of the researcher. A descriptive survey research design was used for this study because it was useful in describing the characteristics even when analyzing multiple variables. Many questions can be asked about a given topic giving considerable flexibility to the analysis, the design methods of data collection like questionnaires and interview methods and it makes use of standardized questions where reliability of the items can be determined (Gay, 2002).

3.3. Target population

According to Borg and Gall (1996) target population includes all the members of real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which the researcher wishes to generalize
results of their research. In this research, the target population consisted of 8 Secondary Schools in Igembe north. The study population was therefore 8 principals, 64 teachers, 480 form four students (statistical secondary schools returns 2015, District Education Office, Igembe North)

3.4. Sample Size and Sampling procedures

According to Borg and Gall (2003) sampling is the process of selecting part of the population for study with intention that the finding from the sample accurately represents population characteristics. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a sample is a sub-group obtained from the accessible population carefully selected so as to be representative of the whole population with the relevant characteristics. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), for descriptive survey 10% is enough samples to be used. Form four students were purposively sampled to participate in the study because they had been in the school long enough to observe trends and patterns of dropout. The number of students in form four class is 480. The researcher used 48 students. Simple random sampling was used to identify the students to participate in the study. The researcher used 30% of the teachers. The sample size for the teachers was therefore 19 teachers. According to Gall and borg (2003) 30 percent of a sample is representative and therefore the researcher used 30 percent of the principals, giving a sample size of 3. Therefore, the study used 3 principals, 19 teachers, 48 form four students. In total, the sample size was 70. Table 3.1 shows the summary of the sample of the respondents.
Table 3.1. Summary of the Sample Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (form four)</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>552</strong></td>
<td><strong>70</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)

3.5. Research instruments

Data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Questionnaires were preferred because of their ability to ensure confidentiality of responses from respondents (Saunders, 2003). Two sets of questionnaires were prepared consisting of both open ended and closed ended questions and they were administered to form four students and form four class teachers.

3.6. Instrument Validity

Orodho (2004) defines validity as the degree to which the empirical measures of the concept are measured accurately. Content validity was captured in how comprehensive the questionnaire was and appropriate. Aspects were found in the demographic information of the questionnaires for instance gender, experience, level of education and
exposure to training formed the content validity. To further enhance validity of the instrument, a pilot study was carried out in one Secondary School.

3.7. Instrument Reliability

Reliability is the degree of consistency that an instrument demonstrates (Best & Kahn, 2004). Reliability is the consistency of measurement, or the degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is used under the same condition with the same subject. It is the probability of measurement. A measure is considered reliable if a person’s score on the same test given twice is similar. It is important to remember that reliability is not measured, it is estimated. The study used test-re-test reliability by administering head teachers’ questionnaires twice after an internal of two weeks to ensure consistency.

3.8. Data collection Procedures

An authorization letter was sought from the Department of Educational Administration and Planning, University of Nairobi to help obtain a permit from the National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation allowing the researcher to administer questionnaires submitting a copy of the permit to the education officer Igembe North Sub County. The teachers and the students were given at least one day to complete questionnaires and were collected and the results were computed and correlated (Gray, 2006)

3.9. Data analysis techniques
Data analysis is the process of examining what has been collected in a survey or experiment and making deductions and inferences. It involved uncovering underlying structures, extracting important variables, detecting any anomalies and testing any underlying assumptions (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This study used both raw qualitative data from the field. Data was analyzed by use of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) programmes. The raw data from the field was summarized, coded, edited and computerized through synthesizing information from the questionnaires by SPSS (Macmillan, 2008). The analyzed data was presented using frequency tables, graphs and charts since they are easy to present data and interpret. Data presented using frequency tables, graphs and charts was seen and analyzed at a glance.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

The respondents were treated with respect and with confidence. Those participating in the study were not put in a situation where they might be at risk of harm. Participants in the study first consented participation.
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study, the analysis of data collected and its interpretation in relation to the objectives and research questions of the study. It includes factors influencing high dropout rate of students in secondary schools in Igembe North, Meru County. The responses were compiled into frequencies and corrected into percentages and presented in cross tabulation.

4.2 Questionnaire response rate

The researcher administered questionnaires to the respondents so as to collect data from the study area. The respondents were the principals, class teachers and form four students in secondary schools in Igembe North, Meru County. The responses are tabulated in Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Expected response</th>
<th>Actual response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>78.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (form four)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>70</strong></td>
<td><strong>66</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)

The table 4.2 shows that all the 3 principals (100%) were actually interviewed, 15 class teachers questionnaires (78.9%) were returned and all the 48 questionnaires (100%) from
the students were all returned. The overall average response rate of the total target population was therefore 93%. This was considered appropriate for the research study.

4.3 Respondents’ Bio Data

The profile and general information of respondents was broken into two major subsections, namely teachers and principals section and a section presenting background of form four students in school. The teachers were asked to indicate their gender while the researcher was to record the gender of the principals interviewed. The Table 4.3 shows the distribution of the respondents by gender.

Table 4.3. Distribution of teachers and principals by gender

| Gender | Teachers | | | Principals | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gender | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Male | 9 | 60 | 2 | 66.7 |
| Female | 6 | 40 | 1 | 33.3 |
| Total | 15 | 100 | 3 | 100 |

Source: Researcher (2016)

From table 4.3, a majority of the teachers respondents were male (60%). On the other hand, majority of the principals were male (66.7%). This shows that there gender disparity towards women and thus could not give balanced views.
The study sought to establish the age category of the Class teachers and Principals.

Table 4.4 shows the results.

Table 4.4. Distribution of respondents by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Principals</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 years and below</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 &amp; above</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)

From the Table 4.4, most of the teachers (33.3%) were aged between 36-40 years. On the other hand, majority of the principals (66.7%) were aged between 41 years and above. This means that both the Principals and the Teachers who were used to give information were old enough to have seen trends of dropout of students.

Both the class teachers and the principals were asked to state their highest academic qualification. Table 4.5 below shows the results.
## Table 4.5. Distribution of teachers and principals by academic qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Principals</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total         | 15        | 100      | 3         | 100      | |

From the Table 4.5, most of the teachers (40%) had a Degree and masters respectively as their highest level of education, while most of the principals (66.7%) had masters as the highest level of education. This implies that both of the respondents were educated enough to understand why some of their students drop out of school.

The study also required the students to indicate their age bracket and the responses are shown in Table 4.6 below.
Table 4.6. Distribution of students by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 and below</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 and above</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)

From the Table 4.6, the majority (83.3%) of the students were aged between 16-18. This meant that they were more likely to give accurate responses since they were aged enough to have seen trends in dropouts in the school.

The researcher requested students to indicate their gender. The results are indicated as in table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7. Distribution of students by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>47.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)
From the Table 4.7, the students respondents were (52.1%) male and (47.9%) were female. This means that each gender was almost equally represented.

Further the researcher requested the class teachers and the principals to indicate their working experience. Table 4.8 shows the results.

**Table 4.8. Distribution of teachers and principals by experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Principals</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years and below</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 and above</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source: Researcher (2016)**

From the Table 4.8, most of the teachers (53.3%) had an experience of 16 years and above, while all the principals (100%) had had an experience of 16 years and above. This implies that they gave accurate reliable information because they had long enough observed dropout trends in school.

**4.4 Factors Influencing Dropout of Students**
The study was guided by the following four objectives; to determine the influence of school based factors, economic factors, and family based factors on dropout of students in secondary schools.

4.4.1 The influence of school based factors on students’ dropout

The first objective of the study was to examine whether school based factors influences dropout of students in schools. The students were expected to respond on whether school based factors has any influence on the dropout of students in schools. The Table 4.10 shows the responses.

Table 4.9. Teachers Attitude influence on the dropout of students in schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Class Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)

Table 4.9, indicates that the majority of the respondents (students 83.3% and class teacher 86.7%) indicated that the Teachers Attitude influences whether students drop out of school or not. Both the students and teachers stated that, students dropped out of school as some of the teachers had poor attitude towards students. This concurs with Dachi and Garrett (2003) who concluded that students who do not perform to the
expectation are hated by the teachers, whilst those who are performed were loved by their teachers and always given maximum concentration.

The researcher also sought to find out from teachers whether school facilities led to students dropping out of school. The results are as in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10. Teacher’s response on school facilities and its effect on student drop out

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)

Most of teachers (53.3 %) agreed that student’s dropout of school because the schools lack adequate facilities such as lockers, laboratories, classes among others. The results imply that most students drop out of school because school because the schools lack required adequate facilities and equipment’s.
The teachers were asked to indicate whether students drop out of school due to the harsh punishment on the students. The Table 4.11 shows the results.

Table 4.11. Students drop out of school due to Harsh Punishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)

Table 4.11 shows that a most of the class teachers (46.7%) strongly agreed that most students drop out of school due to the harsh punishment. This agrees with Franklin & Smith (2011), who notes that students fear punishment even when they have made mistakes. In most schools punishment is seen as a way of rectifying student’s mistakes. The punishment may be too harsh to an extent that it may make students run away from school.

4.4.2. The influence of economic factors on students’ dropout
The second objective was to establish whether economic factors affect the rate of dropout in secondary school. The findings are shown below.

The researcher also sought from the principals to know whether income influences dropout of students in school. The table below gives the responses.

**Table 4.12. Principals’ response on income influences on dropout**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source: Researcher (2016)**

From the Table 4.12, the majority of the principals (66.7%) indicated that the level of income influences dropout of students in schools. The principals were asked to give reasons as to why the level of income affects students’ dropout. The principals said that the economic background of majority of the parents in Igembe north could not afford the high cost of secondary education. This agree with Cardoso & Verner (2007) who notes that poverty is the most common primary and contributory reason for students to be out of school.
The researcher also requested the principals to give the reasons why they felt that the income affected students’ dropout rate in schools. The reasons they gave are shown in the Table 4.13

**Table 4.13. Principals’ responses on influence of income on dropout**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in income generating activities</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take care of their siblings</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to pay fees</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total                                   | 3         | 100        |

_**Source: Researcher (2016)**_

From the Table 4.13, all the principals (100%) indicated that students drop out of school due to involvement in income generating activities. This indicated that households with little income are not able to retain their children in school and they prefer their children involvement in income generating activities. The findings ascertain Hunter and May (2003) who call poverty a plausible explanation of school disruption.

**4.4.3. The influence of family based factors on students’ dropout**

The third objective was whether family based factors on affect the rate of students’ dropout in secondary schools. The findings are shown below
The researcher requested the teachers and students to respond on whether students from single family drop out of school due to being psychologically disturbed. The table below shows the responses.

**Table 4.14. Students from single parent families drop from school because mostly psychologically disturbed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class teachers</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)

Most of the teachers (60%) strongly agreed that students from single parent families are mostly psychologically disturbed and most likely are not able to concentrate in school and eventually drop out of school. This agrees with Astone & Mclanaham (2006) who notes that students from single-parent and step families are more likely to drop out of school than students from two-parent families.

Respondents were asked to respond on whether the parental level of education has any influence on the dropout of students in schools.
Table 4.15. Responses on parental level of education influence on dropout of students

| Response | Students | | | Class Teachers | | |
|----------|----------|---|---|----------------|---|
|          | Frequency | Percent | | Frequency | Percent |
| Yes      | 40        | 83.3 | | 10        | 66.7 |
| No       | 5         | 33.3 | | 3         | 20   |
| Not sure | 3         | 20   | | 2         | 13.3 |
| Total    | 48        | 100  | | 15        | 100  |

Source: Researcher (2016)

Majority of the respondents (student 83.3% and class teachers 94.6%) indicated that the parental level of education influences whether students drop out of school or not. Most of the teachers and the students indicated that more educated parents are more concerned of their children education and their children have high chance of being retained in school unlike less educated parents. This agrees with Ersado (2005) who noted that, parental level of education is the most consistent determinant of student’s education.

The researcher required the teachers to indicate whether students whose parents have low level of education lack role models and result to dropping out of school. The Table 4.14 shows the results

Table 4.16. Students drop out of school due to lack of role models from parents
### Class Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2016)

Most of the teachers (66.7%) agreed that indeed students are out of school due to lack of role models from parents which results from low parental education. The findings show that low educated parents do not act as role models to their children and as a consequence their children may not see the reason to be in school and later may dropout.

### 4.4. Summary

In summary rom the findings in this chapter, the researcher has found out that factors such as; school based factors, economic factors, and family factors influences the dropout of students in secondary schools in Igembe North in Meru County.
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter is a synthesis of the entire research project. It provides a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study and suggestions for further study.

5.2 Summary of the study

5.2.1. The Influence of School Based Factors on Students’ Dropout

The study found that majority of the respondents (students 83.3% and class teacher 86.7%) indicated that the Teachers Attitude influences whether students drop out of school or not. Both the students and teachers stated that, students dropped out of school as some of the teachers had poor attitude towards students. The study found most students drop out of school because the schools lack required adequate facilities and equipment’s. The study also established that the class teachers (46.7%) strongly agreed that most students drop out of school due to the harsh punishment.

5.2.2. The Influence of Economic Factors on Students’ Dropout

The study found that 66.7% of the principals said that the economic background of majority of the parents in Igembe north could not afford the high cost of secondary education. The study also established that households with little income are not able to retain their children in school and they prefer their children involvement in income generating activities.
5.2.3. The Influence of Family Based Factors on Students’ Dropout

The studies found that most of the teachers (60%) strongly agreed that students from single parent families are mostly psychologically disturbed, and therefore are not able to concentrate in school and eventually dropout of school. The study also established that Most of the teachers and the students indicated that more educated parents are more concerned of their children education and their children have high chance of being retained in school unlike less educated parents. Finally he study established that Most of the teachers (66.7%) agreed that indeed students are out of school due to lack of role models from parents which results from low parental education.

5.3 Conclusion of the study

The following conclusions were made from the findings of the study:

Income does influence dropout among students in secondary schools. The attachment to low income is compounded by involvement in income generating activities, inability to afford basic needs, looking after young siblings and inability to pay fees. Parental level of education influences dropout among students in secondary school. The specific items that influences dropout rates are: lack of role models, poor relationship of students and their parents, lack of understanding on motivating students, lack of academic guidance of students by parents, involvement in home activities that are not academically focused, lack of understanding of educational needs of students and parents having low value for education. Lack of required adequate facilities and equipment’s in school affect students’ ability to learn and eventually drops out of school. The study finally concluded that more
educated parents are more concerned of their children education and their children have high chance of being retained in school unlike less educated parents.

5.4 Recommendations of the study

The study came up with the following recommendations:

1. Poverty alleviation measures should be strengthened in the society to enable all families get higher income so as to maintain their children in school till completion.

2. The government should enhance, strengthen and enforce parental laws to ensure children do not fall victim to family instability.

3. The Government should conduct awareness campaigns to ensure parents and students fully understand and appreciate the importance of completion of secondary education.

4. That the government should take off the total burden of school fees from the parents so that students do not drop out of school due to lack of school fees.

5. The Government should conduct awareness and sensitization campaigns on importance of family planning to all families to ensure that parents have a number of children that they are able to take care off well.

6. Subsidized secondary education is not enough. Students from poor households should be offered total free secondary education if access to education for all is to be actualized.

5.5 Suggestions for further study
The researcher proposes further research in the following areas:

1. This study needs to be replicated in other secondary schools in Meru County in order to compare results.

2. Similar study should be undertaken in primary schools in the district in order to compare results.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

University of Nairobi,

P.O BOX 30197,

NAIROBI

Dear Respondent;

RE: RESEARCH

I am a post-graduate student pursuing a diploma in Educational at the University of Nairobi. As part of my assessment, I am conducting a research on “factors influencing high dropout rate of students in secondary schools in Igembe North, Meru County.”

The purpose of this letter is to kindly request you to spare your time and complete this questionnaire. The information obtained will be purely for this study only, and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Yours,

N TONJIRA MWINGIRWA
APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRINCIPALS

Section I: Background information

1. What is your gender? Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. What is your age?.....
   a) 25 years and below [ ] b) 26-30 Years [ ]
   b) 31-35 years [ ] c) 36-40 years [ ]
   d) 41 years and above [ ]

3. What is your working experience?
   a) 5 years and below [ ] b) 6 to 10 years [ ]
   c) 11 to 15 years [ ] d) 16 years and above [ ]

4. What is your highest education level?
   a) Certificate [ ] b) Diploma [ ]
   c) Degree [ ] d) Masters [ ]
   e) PHD [ ] f) Any others, specify

Section II: Influence of school based factors on the dropout of students in secondary school
5. Are there students in this school who dropout?

Yes……… No………

If yes, what are the reasons? ...........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................................................

6. Does the school based factors contribute to students dropout in your schools?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Explain........................................................................................................................................................................

7. Does parental level of education contribute to student’s dropout in secondary schools in this area? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Explain........................................................................................................................................................................

Does family size influence students’ dropout in your school? Explain.

Do you think family type has any influence on students’ dropout in your school? Explain.
10. What measures do you think can be put in place to reduce dropout of students in your school?

Thank you for your cooperation
APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CLASS TEACHERS

This questionnaire is designed for purposes of studying “factors influencing high dropout rate of students in secondary schools in Igembe North, Meru County”. You have been selected to take part in this study. Please respond and answer all the questions as honestly and accurately as possible. Any information that you provide will be strictly confidential and used for academic purposes only. Do not write your name in any part of this questionnaire. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Section I: Background Information

1. What is your sex? Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. What is your age?
   a) 25 years and below [ ] b) 26-30 years [ ]
   c) 31-35 years [ ] d) 36-40 Years [ ]
   e) 40 and above [ ]

3. What is your working experience?
   a) 5 years and below [ ] b) 6 to 10 years [ ]
   c) 11 to 15 years [ ] d) 16 years and above [ ]

4. What is your education level?
a) Certificate  

b) Diploma 

c) Degree  

d) Masters 

e) PHD 

f) Any others, specify

Section II: The Influence of households’ income on student's dropout in secondary school

5. Does income have any influence on the dropout of students in your school?

a) Yes  

b) No  

c) Not sure 

Explain……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………….. 

7. To what extent does households” income influence the dropout of students in your school?

a) To a greater extent  

b) To some extent 

c) Not at all  

d) Not sure 

8. Do you think the parental level of education has any influence on the dropout of students in your school?
a) Yes [ ] b) No [ ] c) Not sure [ ]
Explain……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………

9. What are some of the ways that the parental level of education influences dropout of students in your school……………………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………………………..
Explain…………………………………………………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

11. To what extent does the parental level of education factor influence the dropout of students in your school?
   a) To a greater extent [ ]  b) To some extent [ ]
   c) Not at all [ ]  d) Not sure [ ]

12. Do you think the households size has any effect on the dropout of students in your school?
a) Yes [   ]  b) No [   ]  c) Not sure [   ]

Explain…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

14. To what extent do you think the households size factor influences the dropout of students in your school?
   a) To a greater extent [   ]  b) To some extent [   ]
   c) Not at all [   ]  d) Not sure [   ]

Section V: How the type of family influences dropout of students in the school

15. Does the type of family where students come from have any influence on the dropout of students in your school?
   a) Yes [   ]  b) No [   ]  c) Not sure [   ]

Explain…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for your Cooperation
APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

This questionnaire is designed for purposes of studying “factors influencing high dropout rate of students in secondary schools in Igembe North, Meru County”. You have been selected to take part in this study. Please respond and answer all the questions as honestly and accurately as possible. Any information that you provide will be strictly confidential and used for academic purposes only. Thank you in advance for your participation. Do not write your name anywhere in this questionnaire.

Section I: Background Information

1. What is your sex?
   a) Male [ ] b) Female [ ]

2. What is your age?
   a) 15 years and below [ ] b) 16-18 years [ ] c) 19 years and above [ ]

Section II: The Influence of school based factors on Student dropout

3. Does school based factors have any influence on the dropout of student in your school?
   a) Yes [ ] b) No [ ] c) Not sure [ ]

4. Indicate whether you strongly agree (SA); Agree (A); Undecided (U); Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD) with the following in relation to the influence of school based factors on dropout of students in your school?
a. Most students drop out of school because of tough punishment

b. Most students drop out because of the teachers attitude

c. Most students drop out of school to take care of their young sibling so that household heads can go out to look for jobs

Section III: The influence of parental level of education on students’ dropout

5. Do you think the level of education of parents have any influence on the dropout of students in your school?

   a) Yes [  ]   b) No [  ]   c) Not sure [  ]

9. To what extent does the parental level of education factor influence the dropout of students in your school?

   a) To a greater extent [  ]   b) To some extent [  ]

   c) Not at all [  ]   d) Not sure [  ]

Section IV: The influence of households’ size on dropout of students

10. Do you think households” size has any effect on the dropout of students in your school?

   a) Yes [  ]   b) No [  ]   c) Not sure [  ]
11. Which of the following statements in relation to household size influence students dropout in your school? Do you agree or disagree with?

Section V: The influence of family type on students’ dropout in secondary schools

13. Does the type of family have any effect on the dropout of students in your school?

a) Yes [ ] b) No [ ] c) Not sure [ ]

Explain……………………………………………………………………………………………………

 …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

16. What measures can be put in place to reduce dropout of students in your school?

Thank You for your cooperation