

**FACTORS INFLUENCING PRIMARY SCHOOL PARTICIPATION
BY VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN MUNICIPALITY DIVISION OF
KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA.**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for any academic award to any other university for examination.

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This research project has been presented to the University with my approval as a University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Job Mugambi and sons Marvin, Martin and Myke.

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Last but not least, I thank the almighty God for the guidance and strength He accorded me during the time of study.

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to establish the factors affecting primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County. The objectives were to investigate the effect of family socio-economic background, learner characteristics and school factors on primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Data was collected from 4 head teachers, 133 vulnerable children in class 7 and the coordinator Life Skills Empowerment Association in four primary schools which were purposively sampled because, they are under Life Skills Empowerment Association.

The study found out that most of the pupils' were from single parent families. Pupils performed chores such as cooking, fetching water and caring for their younger siblings on daily basis before and after school. Factors that made children stay away from the school included poverty in terms of lack of food, lack of parental care, psychological torture by some teachers and sickness of parents.

The study recommends that, the government needs to provide the vulnerable children with school requirements, categorize the vulnerable children as children with special needs in education. School feeding programme should be set up to cater for all the vulnerable children. The study recommends that a similar study could be carried out in other counties to find out whether the same results will be obtained so as to allow for generalization of results.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CRS:	Catholic Relief Service
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
KCDN:	Komarock Community Development Network
KDHS:	Kenya Demographic Health Survey
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
UNESCO:	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF:	United Nations Children’s Education Fund
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
VC:	Vulnerable Children

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Every child requires basic needs to develop and grow to a healthy and responsible adult (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2005). A child requires parental love, care and protection in the early stages of development. The immediate family environment of a child is critical in determining how that child develops because it is in this environment that they get nurtured, thereby experiencing love and acceptance, a sense of belonging, safety and security as well as developing trust, respect and confidence. According to Bell (2006) disadvantaged groups are unappreciated, devalued or derided by the larger society. Vulnerable children (VC) fall in the category of the disadvantaged group, United Nations Children's Education Fund (UNICEF 1996). Access to education remains a key challenge for the VC. This is due to the fact that their vulnerability has greatly been aggravated by lack of supportive socio-economic factors such as quality education, income, health and demographic changes.

According to World Bank and UNICEF (2002) approximately 15 million children worldwide have lost one or both parents due to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV and AIDS). Nearly 12 million of these children live in Sub-Sahara Africa. Many more children have been made vulnerable because of family illness, family breakups, school withdrawals, stigma, poverty, property

loss, loss of their shelter, child labor, inadequate health care, loss of rights of inheritance, vulnerability to either sexual or physical abuse and children heading their households (International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2002). In most of the African countries, close to half of the children enrolled in primary schools cannot manage to access secondary education because of the inability of the caregivers to finance their education at this level (United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Catholic Relief Service (CRS), 2008).

In Kenya, VC are associated with malnutrition, sickness, lower school enrolment rates, drugs and substance abuse, lack of clothing and shelter and poor school participation compared to the less vulnerable children. Currently, Kenya has not managed to carry out a comprehensive survey but the government approximates that there are close to 2.4 million orphaned and vulnerable children in the country (UNESCO, 2005).

According to Bennell and Swainson (2002) education plays an important role in child development and vulnerability has a serious negative effect on children's education. Vulnerable children suffer emotionally, socially and economically. They lack parental care and financial resources for education (Ntozi et al, 1999). Education of VC competes with social-economic factors like: parental deaths and illnesses, poverty, lack of proper health care, lack of shelter, sexual and physical abuse as well as child labor.

Kenya being a signatory to intervention convention such as Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Education for All (EFA), the government introduced Free Primary

Education and most of the children who joined school during this period were the vulnerable. Kiambu District in Kenya ranks among the areas in Kenya with dire conditions for the vulnerable children even though it is ranked among the richest with many agricultural products such as coffee, tea, pyrethrum and flowers. Dairy farming also does well in the district considering the cool climate (Mbugua et al, 2012). Economic empowerment has been known to go hand in hand with development in education and schools in places where people are economically stable have registered very good results. However, for a number of years now, Municipality Division of Kiambu District has been registering very poor results at KCPE level as shown in the Table 1.1;

Table 1. 1: Municipality Division of Kiambu District Public Schools KCPE Results Analysis

Year	Entry	English	Kiswahili	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Mean Standard Score
2010	1777	59.39	53.66	50.47	51.07	52.63	267.22
2011	1912	58.31	57.56	51.62	50.37	51.66	269.82
2012	1935	41.01	46.82	44.25	43.65	44.63	229.36

Most of the children of the rich people in Kiambu are in private schools within Kiambu and in Nairobi. Majority of the children who go to public schools in Kiambu Municipality are the children of casual workers in the plantations. Most of the casual workers are squatters in the plantations and live below the poverty line. They hardly provide the basic requirements for themselves and their children making them very

vulnerable. In bid to strive to provide basic needs, many parents have engaged in commercial sex work leading to HIV prevalent of 75% of these workers (UNAIDS, 2010). Children are also forced by the dire circumstances to engage in commercial sex work or child labour to put food on the table. Absenteeism and dropout rate is very high among the VC partly due to sickness and/or taking care of their ailing parents. This study therefore sought to find out the factors that have an influence on primary school participation by VC in Municipality Division of Kiambu County.

1.2 Statement of the problem

After the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 in Kenya, over 1 million children joined school (Somerset, 2009). Majority of these children had been unable to access school due to various factors such as orphanage, poverty, HIV and AIDS, single parenthood and separated or divorced parents. Even after joining school, these children continue to operate under the same conditions. Many of them lack parental love, protection and care. Others are out of school to take care of their sick family members or work in the fields to feed the family or still work to get finances to pay for their school requirements. However, existing studies on VC have mainly focused on their school attendance and hardly investigated the aspect of their participation in school and their academic aspiration. This study therefore sought to investigate the factors influencing primary school participation by VC in public schools in Municipality Division of Kiambu County.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to establish the factors affecting primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives. These sought to:

- i. Investigate the effect of family socio-economic background on primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County.
- ii. Determine the effect of learner characteristics on primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County.
- iii. Establish the effect of school factors on primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

- i. What is the effect of family socio-economic background on primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County?
- ii. How do learner characteristics affect primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County?
- iii. To what extent do school factors affect primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would help the government through the ministry of education in designing relevant government policies and developing a curriculum with regard to involvement of guardians in schools. The study would also help improve the teacher – pupil relationships in primary schools since teachers would be more aware of the factors that influence primary school participation by the VC.

1.7 Limitations of the study

Expected limitations for the study included:-

- i. The respondents may be reluctant to answer the questionnaires due to the sensitivity of the information.
- ii. The targeted pupils may be absent when the questionnaires are planned to be administered.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was carried out only in public primary schools in Municipality Division of Kiambu District. The researcher targeted head teachers, vulnerable children and the coordinator of Life Skills Empowerment Association of the selected schools. Therefore, generalization of the findings to other areas not covered by the study was difficult since they was not be true reflection since learning environments and resources differ in terms of regions.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

In this study, the researcher's assumption was that the information from the respondents on factors affecting primary school participation by vulnerable children was accurate. It was assumed that the respondents provided the information that was necessary for the study.

1.10 Operational Definition of terms

1. Community: In this study, community refers to the people living in Municipality Division of Kiambu County.

2. Economic status: In this study, it refers to an individual's or family's financial position in relation to the support given to their children to enable their primary school participation.

3. Physiological needs: These are the literal requirements for vulnerable children's survival such as food, love, esteem, or safety.

4. School participation: Number of vulnerable children who are currently attending primary school, regardless of level of education and their involvement and participation in academic and non-academic school activities.

5. Vulnerability: It is a situation whereby a child is unable to cope with school due to lack of basic essentials, parental love and care and too much responsibility.

6. Vulnerable children: These are children who are unlikely to participate well in primary school due to lack of basic needs, parental care and affection.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed the literature on school participation and academic aspiration of vulnerable children under the following sub-headings; the concept of vulnerability, how family socio-economic background, learner characteristics and school factors affect primary school participation and academic aspiration of learners. The chapter also discussed the conceptual framework of the study.

2.2 Concept of Vulnerability

Vulnerable children are the children under 18 years who have lost one or both parents and lack adequate basic needs, parental care and affection (UNICEF, 1996). Vulnerable children are those with severely ill parents, children who must serve as the head of the household, or children who are at risk of abuse or exploitation and need extra care and attention. The situation of vulnerable children has greatly been aggravated by lack of supportive socio-economic factors such as quality education, health and demographic changes. This situation has led to emergence of increased numbers of VC; consequently affecting the school participation of these children in primary schools. Although the vast majority of VC can be found in family situations, some VC live in institutions, in youth-headed households or in streets. As a result VC are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and are also more likely to engage in unsafe behaviors, increasing the risk of HIV infection (UNICEF, 1996).

2.3 Family Socio-Economic Background and Participation in primary school education

2.3.1 Level of Education of Parents

The mother's education level has a 20% higher effect than the father's education level on the academic achievement of adolescents (Peters and Mullis, 1997). According to Eamon (2005) children of highly educated mothers obtain higher test scores. Children whose parents are of high educational scales have a far better statistical chance of participating in primary Education (Oloo, 2003). Important factors include parental involvement in their children education, how much children are allowed to watch television and how often students change schools. Otula (2007) supported this by stating that effective learning involves partnership of students, teachers and parents.

2.3.2 Types of family and Number of siblings

The academic achievement of pupils is affected to a greater extent by the family size and birth order in a family such that moderate families of four children and birth orders of one to four generally have higher academic achievement. Students' academic achievement is also influenced by the number of siblings who are either working or studying marketable courses at college level (Ahawo, 2009). Juma et al (2011) found out that 24% of the boys and 25.0% of the girls had one sibling, who had gone through primary education, while 16% of the boys and 10.0% of the girls who had two brothers and sisters who had completed primary school education. Only 3.0% of the girls responded that they had six siblings who had completed primary school learning. Some (58%) of the boys and 61.5%

of the girls responded that they had no sibling that had completed secondary level of education. This implies that a small proportion of the population had attained secondary education; hence the pupils lack role models to emulate.

2.3.3 Occupation of Parents

Parental occupation plays a remarkable role in students' academic achievement. According to Ndiritu (1999) socio-economic background influence school participation and children from poor families are more involved in labour. Some parents do not encourage their children to work hard in school and some families are headed by children. This is a situation which cannot inspire children to participate fully in school. In some homes, it is an established tradition that the highest education attainment is primary school. Nduku (2009) did a study of factors influencing enrolment and grade retention in public primary schools in Yatta Division Machakos District. The study found that poor academic performance attributed to lack of parental support of their children while doing assignments, failure to purchase books and failure to show up in schools to discuss their children's performance, lack of concern when their children performed poorly, financial constraints, parents little support to their children when doing assignments and about their school performance.

2.3.4 Health Status of Parents

Saifi and Mehmood (2011) observed parent's health status especially mental health and chronic diseases affect mothers' parenting and the pupil's participation in school. Schulz (2005) contended that socio-economic status (SES) is an important explanatory factor in

many different disciplines like the parent health which affect child development and learning capacity. This is because socio-economic status of the parent is associated with health, cognitive and socio-emotional outcomes. According to Oloo (2003) parent health status has been consistently found to be an important variable in explaining variance in student achievement. Problems with maternal psycho-social health (especially depression) have also a negative impact on involvement.

2.4 Learner Characteristics and Participation in primary school education.

2.4.1 Gender

Gender is another factor that has been associated with low achievement. The results are however mixed. For instance, using data from Bangladesh, Asadullah et al (2007:648) combined fixed effects and instrumental variable estimation techniques and found that girls significantly had lower test scores compared to boys, even 'after controlling for school and class room specific unobservable correlates of learning.' Nduku (2009) used a nationally representative panel data set on students from kindergarten to third grade in the US and found that white boys out-perform white girls in mathematics. But other studies have found the performance of girls to be better than that of the boys. In the UK, Cassen and Kingdon (2007) found that boys outnumbered girls as low achievers with nearly half of all such low achievers being white British males. Still in the UK, Strand (1997) finds that girls post better academic performance compared to boys.

2.4.2 Teen Pregnancy

Teenage pregnancy is a threat to the education of the girl child both in Kenya and the entire world. In Kenya, statistics issued by the Ministry of Education (2009) showed that school completion rate declined from 92.1% in 2002 to 89.6% in 2004, with boys recording a 91.5% graduation rate and girls an 87.5% rate. The ministry noted that teenage pregnancy contribute to girls having a higher chance of dropping out of schools (Ministry of Education, 2009). Teenage pregnancy makes it difficult for the girls to continue with education. The drop-out rate is therefore pretty high. Among the girls who give birth to children before they have completed 18 years of age, only 41% become high school graduates.

2.4.3 Health Status of Learners

Children who experience poor health have significantly poorer adult outcomes, such as lower educational attainment, adverse health conditions, and lower social status. A particularly strong way through which childhood health is linked to adult outcomes is education. Poor health impedes educational progress because a student with health problems is not prepared to fully engage in or take advantage of learning opportunities at school or at home (Hanson et al., 2004). Schools have long recognized the relation between student health and educational progress, and have played a role in diagnosing and treating student health conditions such as vision, hearing, and speech impairments, as well as asthma, mental disorders, and more recently obesity (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1998). Significant hearing loss among children can interfere with

phonological and speech perception abilities required for language learning, which subsequently can lead to poor academic performance, especially in reading. Children with speech impairments perform more poorly on reading tests than children in non-impaired comparison groups (Catts, 1993).

2.5 School Factors and Participation in primary school education

2.5.1 Gender of Teachers

Grossman and Kaestner (2008) observed that students (both male and female) should perform better with a female teacher in reading than with a male teacher in reading, while students (both male and female) should perform better with a male teacher in maths. This outcome is likely to be reinforced by the fact that the stereotype effect also influences teacher self-expectations, with male maths teachers feeling more confident in their teaching ability than female maths teachers, and female reading teachers feeling more confident in their teaching ability than male reading teachers

Contradicting these studies, however, a large sample-based study in the US shows that regardless of student gender, students taught by women perform better than those taught by men (Krieg 2005). In accordance with Krieg, based on findings from the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ), a recent UNESCO Education for All report notes that women teachers have a positive effect on both boys' and girls' achievement (UNESCO 2005).

2.5.2 School Facilities and School Participation by Primary Pupils

While the free primary education (FPE) program has increased access to primary education especially among poorer households, ancillary costs of primary education (such as school uniforms) continue to hinder the educational attainment of many children. In addition, the provision of quality education remains a challenge. This was highlighted by a recent study by Uwezo (2010) which found disappointing levels of learning among primary school children. The provision of safe water and sanitation benefits both learning and health. Lack of clean drinking water and waste disposal facilities make schools unsafe places where diseases are transmitted (UNICEF and IRC, 1998). Lack of sanitary facilities contributes to the drop out of girls, particularly during puberty.

2.5.3 Community factors

Home environment has a powerful effect on what children and youth learn, not only in school but outside of school as well (Aggrist and Lavy, 2004). This environment is considerably more powerful than the parents' income and education in influencing what children learn in the first six years of life and during the twelve years of primary and secondary education (Duflo, 2001). High illiteracy rates of the parents adversely affects community-school links. The low exposure of the parents to other lifestyles especially those of a literate society, may limit their knowledge on benefits of education (Rockoff, 2004). They may not be aware that the benefits of education are intergenerational and in fact accumulate over time hence the adverse consequence or function of the immediate environment of the people.

2.5.4 Prevalence of Drugs

Drug abuse amongst the youth in Kenya has become a serious problem affecting everyone in the country. Addiction has led many people, young people prominent amongst them, into downward spiral of hopelessness that in some cases ends fatally. They range from glue- sniffing and teenage ecstasy users, to hardcore heroin and cocaine addicts (NACADA, 2005). Drug peddlers and barons are known to target the youth as a lucrative market for their unethical business and for this reason primary and secondary school students are much vulnerable to this menace. In fact the root causes of most indiscipline cases in schools today is attributed to drug and substance abuse resulting in poor participation in school.

2.5.5 School Curriculum and Co-curriculum Activities

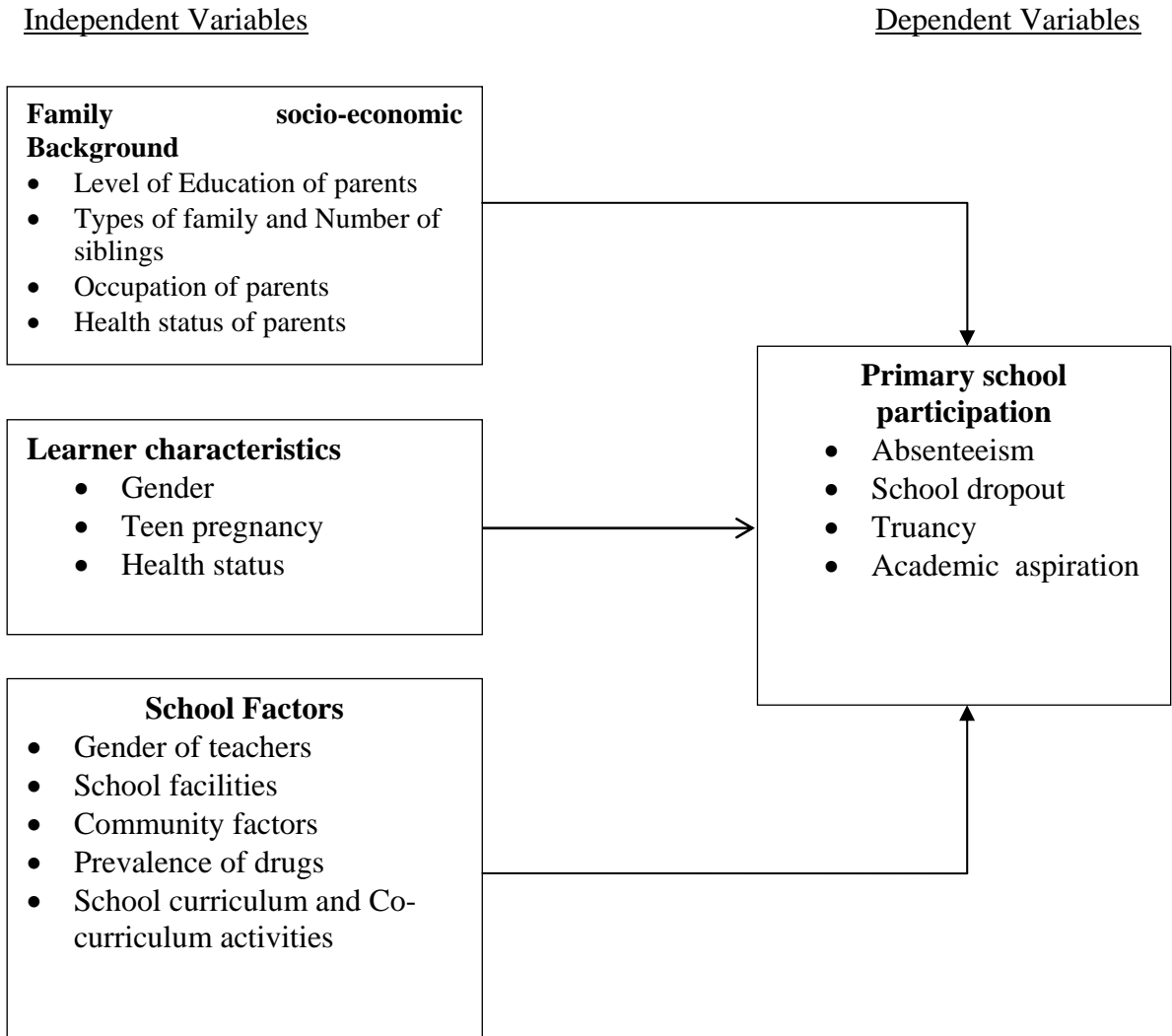
The primary role of schools everywhere is to act as places where future leaders are nurtured. Across the world, schools are usually expected to offer learners a core academic curriculum together with other co-curricular activities, where the former is the core reason whose survival is partly influenced by the latter, (Miller, 2007). In most cases, co-curricular activities are sacrificed for particularly classroom time in efforts to improve academic success. This is largely because the foci of the school curricula and after-school programs are on achievement in academics (Castelli et al. 2007). Although a substantial portion of this leisure time is dedicated to unstructured pursuits, participation in co-curricular activities has been found to be a productive use of this time, providing diverse opportunities for development and growth (Larson 2000). For example, participating in

these activities has been linked to greater school attachment and sense of belonging, better academic achievement, higher academic aspirations, and less risky behaviours such as alcohol and drug use, or dropping out of school.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is logically developed, described and elaborated network of interrelationships among variables deemed to be integral part of the dynamics of the situation being investigated (Kothari, 1990). The conceptual framework in Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between the dependent and independent variables of the study. The study examines the factors that influence primary school participation by vulnerable children. School participation and academic aspiration of the learners will largely depend on; family socio-economic background, learner characteristics and school factors.

Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework: Factors influencing school participation and academic aspirations



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter has outlined the research methodology that was applied in the achievement of the research study. Specifically, the chapter has discussed the research design, the target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design. According to Zikmund (2000) descriptive design allows the researcher to gather information, summarize, present and interpret data. Through this study design, it was easy to find answers to questions by analyzing specific variables which in this case relate to the factors affecting academic performance of vulnerable children.

3.3 Target Population

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) population refers to a complete census of all items or people in a researcher's area of study. The target population of interest in this study was 4 head teachers, 150 vulnerable children in class 7 and the coordinator, Life Skills Empowerment Association in four primary schools which are under Life Skills Empowerment Association.

Life Skills Empowerment association is an organization that caters for VC in schools by providing them with lunch, uniform and beddings for the needy children. It also assists

with school fees for some of the children joining form one. It was started in 2005. By this time, it supported only one school but currently, it supports four schools. Well wishers and donors give money and material support for the VC and their families.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

According to Gay (1992) the number of respondents acceptable for a study depends upon the type of research involved. There are 19 public primary schools in the Municipality Division of Kiambu District. Only 4 out of the 19 public schools in Municipality Division were purposively sampled for this study. This is because; the vulnerable children in these schools are supported by Life Skills Empowerment Association. Purposive sampling procedure was used to select 4 head teachers of the schools under the Life Skills empowerment Association since they are the bearers of records of VC's details. The coordinator of Life Skills Empowerment Association was also purposively sampled because of her interaction with the VCs and their parents or guardians. Class 7 pupils were targeted to represent other vulnerable children in their schools, given their ability to give informed responses to the questionnaire. Also among the 350 VCs in the sampled schools, it is the class with the highest number (150). Therefore the study used census method. Thus, all the respondents were included in this study. These are the 4 head teachers, 150 class 7 VC and the coordinator Life Skills Empowerment Association making a total of 155 respondents.

3.5 Research Instruments

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) a researcher needs to develop instruments with which to collect necessary information. For this study, the researcher developed and administered questionnaire and interview schedule to obtain the data from respondents.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

The study used both open and close ended questionnaires which were administered to the head teachers and the standard seven pupils. The questionnaires were used because they produce quick results, they can be completed at the respondents' convenience, and they offer great assurance of anonymity among other advantages. The questionnaires included closed and open ended questions. Closed ended questions was used in an effort to conserve time and money as well as to facilitate an easier analysis as they are in immediate usable form; while the open ended questions was used as they encouraged the respondent to give an in-depth and felt response without feeling held back in revealing of any information. With open ended questions, a respondent's response was expected to give an insight to his or her feelings, background, hidden motivation, interests and decisions. The questionnaires was administered to the respondents, and then collected immediately after they are filled in.

3.5.2 Interview Schedule

The interview method was used to collect information from the coordinator, Life Skills Empowerment Association. According to Kombo (2010) interviews give in-depth information particular cases of interest to the researcher, and in this case factors

influencing primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County.

3.6 Instrument Reliability

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) reliability is a measure of the degree to which research instrument yield consistent results or data after repeated trials. In this study a pilot study was conducted to ensure reliability with selected respondents from one of the primary schools which were not included in the study.

3.7 Instrument Validity

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represent the phenomena under study. The researcher measured the content validity which according to Ogula (1995) is measured by making use of professionals or experts. The researcher sought assistance from her supervisor, peers and other university lecturers, who are experts in research to ensure the validity of the instruments.

Piloting was done to check whether the questionnaire would collect the required data. Through piloting, the ambiguous questions were rectified.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Before collecting data, the researcher obtained a research permit from the National Council of Science and Technology. The researcher also sought permission from the District Education Officer, Kiambu District to proceed with the research study. The researcher booked appointments with sampled schools through the head teachers. The

researcher gave questionnaires to the respondents in person for self-administration. The researcher arranged with the head teachers the most convenient time she had the coordinator, Life Skills Empowerment Association for the interview.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

According to Orodho (2003) data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging filed notes, data and other materials obtained from the field with the aim of increasing one's own understanding and to enable one to present them to others. Before analysis, data was cleaned by checking for logical consistency and any unnecessary data was removed. Coding involved converting responses to numbers. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics where the responses from the questionnaires was tallied, tabulated and analyzed using percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) which according to Martin & Acuna, (2002) is able to handle large of amounts of data and is efficient because of its wide spectrum of statistical procedures purposively designed for social sciences. The qualitative data from the interview guide and the open-ended questions in the questionnaire was analyzed thematically using content analysis. Frequency tables, graphs and pie charts were used for purposes of comparing results.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of the data on the factors affecting primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County. The chapter also provides the major findings and results of the study and discusses those findings and results against the literature review chapter.

4.1.1 Response Rate

The study targeted a total of 4 head teachers, 150 class 7 VC and the coordinator Life Skills Empowerment Association. However, only 4 head teachers, 133 class 7 VC and the coordinator Life Skills Empowerment Association respondents responded and returned their questionnaires contributing to 88.67% response rate. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent; therefore, this response rate was adequate for analysis and reporting. The researcher made use of frequency tables, graphs and charts to present data.

4.1.2 Reliability Analysis

Prior to the actual study, the researcher carried out a pilot study to pretest the validity and reliability of data collected using the questionnaire. The pilot study allowed for pre-testing of the research instrument. The results on reliability of the research instruments are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4. 1: Reliability Coefficients

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Family socio-economic background	0.784	18
Learner characteristics	0.849	7
School factors	0.735	13

The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated through Cronbach's Alpha which measures the internal consistency. The Alpha measures internal consistency by establishing if certain item measures the same construct. Cronbach's Alpha was established for every objective in order to determine if each scale (objective) would produce consistent results should the research be done later on. The findings of the pilot study shows that all the four scales were reliable as their reliability values exceeded the prescribed threshold of 0.7 (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

4.2 Demographic data of head teachers

This section comprises of the demographic information of the respondents including the highest level of professional qualification, teaching experience and the period the head teachers had stayed in the school.

i. *Level of professional qualification of the head teachers*

The findings on the highest level of professional qualification of the head teachers are presented in Table 4. 2.

Table 4. 2: Highest level of professional qualification of the head teachers

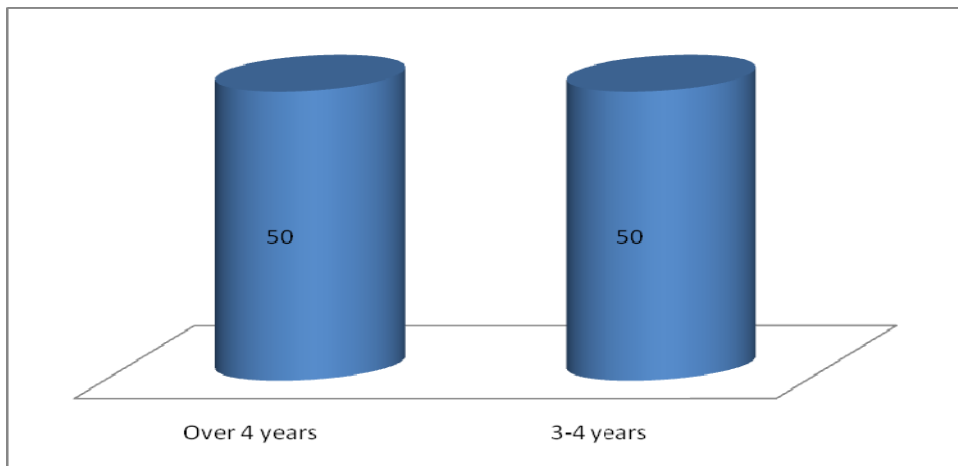
	Frequency	Percent
P1	1	25
Degree	1	25
Masters	2	50
Total	4	100

The analysis in Table 4.2 indicates that, 50% of the respondents had a master degree, 25% had a degree and 25% had a P1 certificate.

ii. *Teaching experience of the head teachers*

The study assessed the teaching experience of the head teachers. The findings are indicated in Figure 4. 2.

Figure 4. 1: Teaching experience of the head teachers



According to the findings in Figure 4.1, 50% of the respondents had a teaching experience of over 4 years and 50% of the respondents had a teaching experience of 3-4 years.

iii. Period spent by the head teachers in the targeted schools

The period the head teachers had stayed in the school is indicated in Table 4. 3.

Table 4. 3: Period the head teachers had stayed in the school

	Frequency	Percent
3-4 years	2	50
Over 4 years	1	25
Less than 2 years	1	25
Total	4	100

According to the findings, 50% of the respondents had stayed in the school for 3-4 years, 25% of the respondents had stayed in the school for over 4 years and 25% of the respondents had stayed in the school for less than 2 years.

4.3 Factors Influencing Primary School Participation

This section has focused on the factors influencing primary school participation of vulnerable children. They include the family socio-economic background, learner characteristics and school factors.

4.3.1 Data on family Socio-Economic Background of pupils

This section has given the findings on the family socio-economic background as indicated by the status of the pupils' family, person who pays for school requirements for

the pupils, siblings the pupils had, if the parents were alive, highest level of education pupils' wished to achieve, level of education of the person(s) who pay for pupils' school requirements, agreement level with statements on family background, how often pupils performed home chores before and after school, economic activities of the people who pay for pupils school requirements, if any member of the family had ever dropped from school, how often parents/guardian provide pupils with their needs, whether lack of basic items prevented children from attending school, effect of occupation /socio-economic status of parents on primary school participation, effect of types of family on primary school participation and how often the chores pupils performed at home kept them out of school.

i. Marital status of the families of targeted pupils

The findings on the marital status of the pupils' family are shown in Table 4. 4.

Table 4. 4: Marital status of the pupils' family

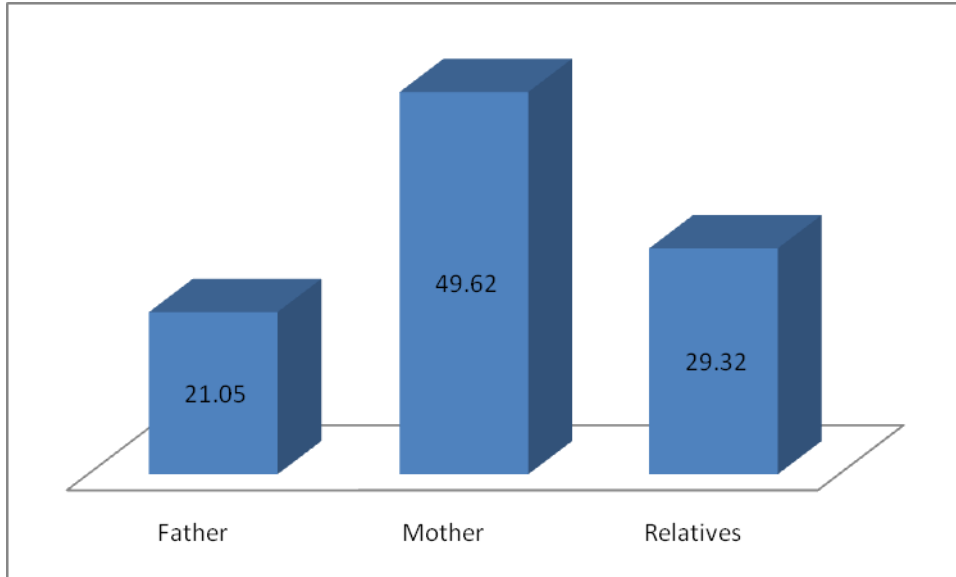
	Frequency	Percent
Single parent	52	39.10
Divorced	42	31.58
Widowed	26	19.55
Married	13	9.77
Total	133	100.00

According to the findings, 39.10% of the pupils' families were single parent, 31.58% of the pupils' families were divorced, 19.55% of the pupils' families were widowed and 9.77% of the pupils' families were married.

ii. *Pupils Responses on individuals who paid for their school Requirements*

The information on the individuals who paid for pupils school requirements is presented in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4. 2: Individuals who paid for pupils’ school requirements



From the results, 49.62% of pupils indicated that their school requirements were paid by their mothers, 29.32% of pupils indicated that their school requirements were paid by their relatives and 21.05% of pupils indicated that their school requirements were paid by their fathers.

iii. *The number of children in the families of targeted pupils*

The data in Table 4. 5 show the number of siblings that the pupils had.

Table 4. 5: Siblings the pupils had

	Brothers		Sisters	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
3-4	52	39.10	80	60.15
Over 4	68	51.13	13	9.77
1-2	13	9.77	40	30.08
Total	133	100.00	133	100.00

According to the information presented in Table 4.5, 51.13% of the pupils had over 4 siblings, 39.10% of the pupils had 3-4 siblings and 9.77% of the pupils had 1-2 siblings. In addition, 60.15% of the pupils had 3-4 sisters, 30.08% of the pupils had 1-2 sisters and 9.77% of the pupils had over 4 sisters. The academic achievement of pupils is affected to a greater extent by the family size and birth order in a family such that moderate families of four children and birth orders of one to four generally have higher academic achievement (Ahawo, 2009).

iv. Status of parents of the pupils-Living or dead

The results in Table 4. 6 show whether the pupils’ parents were alive or not.

Table 4. 6: If the pupils parents were alive or not.

	MOTHER AND FATHER		MOTHER ONLY		FATHER ONLY	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
N/A	39	29.32	94	70.68	133	100
Yes	55	41.35	26	19.55		
No	39	29.32	13	9.77		
Total	133	100.00	133	100.00	133	100

From the data summarized in Table 4.6, 41.35% of the pupils indicated that both their mothers and fathers were alive and 29.32% of the pupils indicated that both their mothers and fathers were not alive. In addition, 19.55% of the pupils indicated that only their mother was alive and 9.77% of the pupils indicated that their mother were not alive. The study examined the highest level of education pupils’ wished to achieve. According to the findings, all (100%) of the pupils indicated that they wished to achieve university

education as the highest education. This is in line with Cassen and Kingdon (2007) who observed that A learner’s level of need to achieve significantly affects his performance.

The study sought to find out why pupils would like to achieve the above level of education. According to the findings, the pupils stated that they wanted to learn more and become professionals with good goals.

v. *Education level of persons who paid for pupils requirements*

The results on the level of education of the person(s) who paid for pupils’ school requirements are indicated in Table 4. 7.

Table 4.7: Level of education of the person(s) who pay for pupils’ school requirements

	Father		Mother		guardian	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
N/A	105	78.95	54	40.60	107	80.45
Primary Education	0	0	66	49.62	0	0
Secondary Education	28	21.05	13	9.77	13	9.77
University	0	0	0	0	13	9.77
Total	133	100.00	133	100.00	133	100.00

The findings contained in Table 4.7 show that, 21.05% of the pupils indicated that their fathers had secondary education. In addition, 49.62% of the pupils indicated that their mothers had primary education and 9.77% of the pupils indicated that their mothers had secondary education. Moreover, 9.77% of the pupils indicated that their guardians had secondary education and 9.77% of the pupils indicated that their guardians had university education. According to Eamon (2005) children of highly educated mothers obtain higher

test scores. Children whose parents are of high educational scales have a far better statistical chance of participating in primary Education (Oloo, 2003).

vi. Results on pupils agreement level with statements on family socio-economic background

The information on the pupils’ agreement level with statements on family socio-economic background is contained in Table 4. 8.

Table 4. 8: Agreement level with statements on family background

Pupils responses on their family background	Mean	Std. Deviation
My parent/guardians don’t care about what I do at school	2.594	0.798
My parents/guardians are always sick	2.594	0.798
I miss school to take care of my sick parent and take care of my siblings	2.707	0.637
There is fighting/violence with the people I stay with	2.414	0.494
We have a noisy surrounding which affect my reading at home	2.504	0.67
Our house lighting affect my learning	2.391	0.661
My parent/guardian always attend PTA meetings	2.391	0.912
My parents/guardian monitor my out-of-school activities	2.782	0.98
Taking alcohol by my parents/guardians has negative impact on my school participation	2.780	0.786

A 4-point likert scale was used where 4.000-3.500 = strongly agree; 3.499-2.500 = Agree; 2.499-1.500= Disagree and 1.499 – 1.00 = strongly disagree. The analysis in Table 4.8 suggest that, the respondents agreed that parents/guardian monitored their out-of-school activities, taking alcohol by parents/guardians had negative impact on their school participation and pupils’ miss school to take care of their sick parents and siblings

as shown by a mean of 2.782, 2.780 and 2.707 respectively. In addition, the respondents agreed that parent/guardians did not care about what pupils do at school, parents/guardians are always sick and pupils' have a noisy surrounding which affects their reading at home as shown by a mean of 2.594, 2.594 and 2.504 respectively. However, the respondents disagreed that there was fighting/violence with the people they stayed with, house lighting affected their learning and parent/guardian always attended PTA meetings as shown by a mean of 2.414, 2.391 and 2.391 respectively.

vii. *Activities performed by pupils before and after school*

The findings on how often pupils performed some home chores before and after school are shown in Table 4. 9.

Table 4. 9: How often pupils performed the following activities before and after school

Activities before and after school	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fetching water	2.993	0.774
Fetching firewood	2.000	0.628
Grazing animals	1.932	0.863
Cooking	3.090	1.138
Digging	2.098	0.695
Milking	1.805	0.398
Harvesting of crops	1.902	0.298
Taking care of the younger children	2.805	0.743
Working for money	2.414	0.914

A 4-point likert scale was used where 4.000-3.500 = Always; 3.499-2.500 = Many times; 2.499-1.500= Sometimes and 1.499 – 1.00 = Never. According to the findings, the pupils were cooking, fetching water and taking care of the younger children many times before and after school. In addition, sometimes the pupils worked for money, dug and fetched

firewood before and after school. The study also showed that pupils performed grazing animals, harvesting of crops and milking sometimes before and after school.

viii. Economic activities of the people who pay for pupils school requirements

The results in Table 4. 10 show the economic activities of the people who pay for pupils’ school requirements.

Table 4.10: Economic activities of the people who pay for pupils school requirements

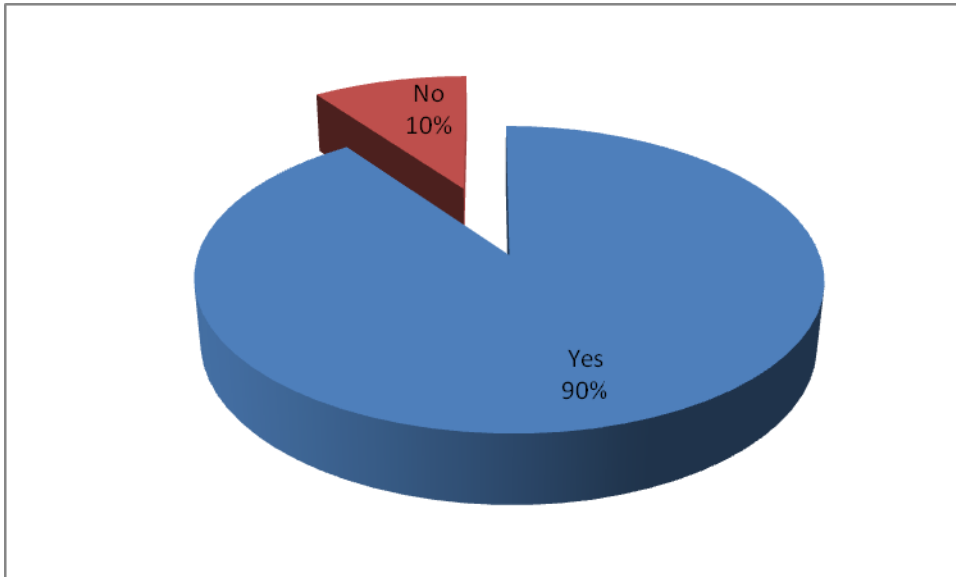
Job types for the pupils guardians/parents	Frequency	Percent
Self employed	26	19.55
Casual employee	68	51.13
Unemployed	39	29.32
Total	133	100.00

From the data, 51.13% of the pupils indicated that the people who paid for their school requirements were casual employees, 29.32% indicated that those who paid for their school requirements were unemployed and 19.55% of the pupils indicated that the people who paid for their school requirements were self employed

ix. Findings on school drop outs among pupils family members

The findings on if any member of the targeted pupils families had ever dropped from school are shown in Figure 4. 3.

Figure 4. 3: If any member of the family had ever dropped from school



According to the information presented in Figure 4.3, 90% of the respondents indicated that some members of their family had dropped from school while 10% of the respondents indicated that members of their family had not dropped from school. Some of those who had dropped out of school had done so because of lack school requirements and engaged themselves in child labour since their parents did not have money to pay for their school requirements.

x. Results on how often parents/guardian provide pupils with items necessary to enhance school participation

The results on how often parents/guardian provide pupils with the needs necessary to enhance school participation are indicated in Table 4. 11

Table 4. 11: How often parents/guardian provide pupils with the needs

Items provided in school by parents/guardian	Mean	Std. Deviation
School uniform	3.098	0.298
Writing Materials	3.211	0.409
Sanitary Pads	3.090	0.543
Washing Detergents/Soaps	2.887	0.318
Revision Books	2.211	0.409
Breakfast	3.196	0.398
Lunch	3.196	0.398
Supper	3.068	0.863

A 4-point likert scale was used where 4.000-3.500 = Regularly; 3.499-2.500 = Rarely; 2.499-1.500= Never and 1.499 – 1.00 = Not applicable. According to the findings in Table 4.11, parents/guardian rarely provided pupils with writing materials, breakfast and lunch as shown by a mean of 3.211, 3.196 and 3.196 respectively. In addition, parents/guardian rarely provide pupils with school uniform, sanitary pads, supper and washing detergents/soaps as shown by a mean of 3.098, 3.090, 3.068 and 2.887 respectively. Moreover, parents/guardian never provided pupils with revision books as shown by a mean of 2.211.

The study sought to find out whether lack of basic items prevented children from attending school. The results are shown in Table 4. 12.

Table 4.12: Whether lack of basic items prevented children from attending school

Lack of basic needs and school participation	Frequency	Percent
Yes	133	100

According to the findings in Table 4.12, 100% of the pupils indicated that lack of basic items prevented children from attending school.

xi. Effect of family background on primary school participation

The findings on the effect of family background on primary school participation are illustrated in Table 4. 13

Table 4. 13: Effect of family background on primary school participation

Characteristics of family background school participation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parental educational attainment	3.750	0.957
Number of siblings	4.500	0.577
Parents being constantly sick	4.250	0.500
Unconducive home environment	3.500	1.000

A 5-point likert scale was used where 5-4.500 = Very great extent; 4.499-3.500 = Great extent; 3.499-2.500 = Moderate extent; 2.499-1.500= Low extent and 1.499 – 1.00 = No extent at all.

According to the illustrations on Table 4.13, the number of siblings in the pupil’s families affected their primary school participation to a very great extent as shown by a mean of 4.500. In addition, parents being constantly sick, parental educational attainment and unconducive home environment affected primary school participation of VC in the school to a great extent as shown by a mean of 4.250, 3.750 and 3.500 respectively. Otula (2007) supported this by stating that effective learning involves partnership of students, teachers and parents.

xii. *Effect of Occupation/Socio-economic status of parents on primary school participation*

Further the study assessed the effect of Occupation /Socio-economic status of parents on primary school participation, A 5-point likert scale was used where 5-4.500 = Very great extent; 4.499-3.500 = Great extent; 3.499-2.500 = Moderate extent; 2.499-1.500= Low extent and 1.499 – 1.00 = No extent at all. The results are summarized in Table 4.14.

Table 4. 14: Effect of Occupation /Socio-economic status of parents on primary school participation

Occupation and school participation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Salaried	3.750	0.500
Self employed	4.500	1.000
Casual employee	4.000	0.000
Not employed	4.500	1.000

According to the findings in Table 4.14, parents and guardians who were self employed and not employed affected primary school participation of VC in the school to a very great extent as shown by a mean of 4.500. In addition, casual employees and salaried parents/guardians affected primary school participation of VC in the school to a great extent as shown by a mean of 4.000 and 3.750 respectively. According to Ndiritu (1999) socio-economic background influence school participation and children from poor families are more involved in labour.

xiii. Effect of family type and school participation

The results on the effect of type of family on primary school participation are illustrated in Table 4. 15. A 5-point likert scale was used where 5-4.500 = Very great extent; 4.499-3.500 = Great extent; 3.499-2.500 = Moderate extent; 2.499-1.500= Low extent and 1.499 – 1.00 = No extent at all.

Table 4. 15: Effect of types of family on primary school participation

Family status and school participation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Married	4.250	0.957
Single parent	4.500	0.577
Divorced	4.000	0.000
Widowed	3.000	0.817

The information indicated in Table 4.15 show that, single parent affected primary school participation of vulnerable children in the school to a very great extent as shown by a mean of 4.5000. In addition, divorced and married parents affected primary school participation of vulnerable children in the school to a great extent as shown by a mean of 4.250 and 4.000 respectively. Widowed parents affected primary school participation of vulnerable children in the school to a moderate extent as shown by a mean of 3.000.

xiv. Activities that kept children away from attending school

The results on how often the activities kept children out of school are shown in Table 4. 16. A 3-point likert scale was used where 3.000-2.500 = Many times; 2.499-1.500= Some times and 1.499 – 1.00 = Never.

Table 4. 16: How often the activities kept children out of school

Activities that kept children out of school	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fetching water	2.000	0.000
Fetching firewood	1.750	0.500
Grazing animals	2.500	0.577
Cooking	2.000	0.817
Digging	1.750	0.500
Milking	1.750	0.957

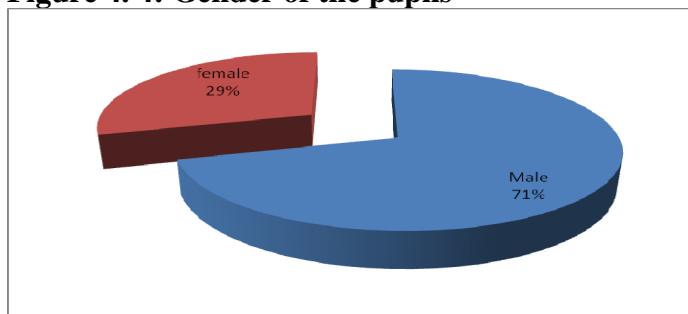
The data in Table 4.16 show that, grazing animals kept children out of school many times as shown by a mean of 2.5000. In addition, fetching water and cooking kept children out of school some times as shown by a mean of 2.000. Fetching firewood, digging and milking kept children out of school some times as shown by a mean of 1.750.

4.3.2 Learner Characteristics

This sections looks on the effect of learner characteristics on school participation. It focuses on the gender and age of the pupils, if the children had any kind of financial assistance to attend school, if the school had vulnerable/orphaned pupils, number of vulnerable/orphaned pupils in the school, problems encountered by vulnerable/orphaned pupils in the school and state of health of vulnerable pupils in the school. We begin with presentation of the gender of pupils.

The study findings on the gender of the pupils are presented in Figure 4. 4.

Figure 4. 4: Gender of the pupils

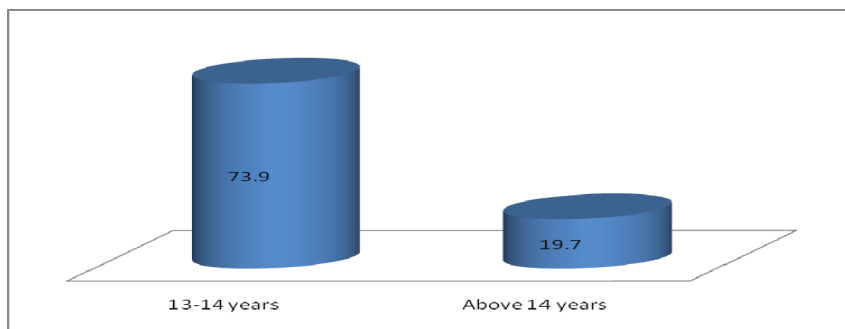


According to the information contained in Figure 4.4, 71% of the pupils were male while 29% were female. Bangladesh, Asadullah et al (2007:648) combined fixed effects and instrumental variable estimation techniques and found that girls significantly had lower test scores compared to boys, even ‘after controlling for school and class room specific unobservable correlates of learning.

i. Age of pupils

The results on the age of the pupils are presented in Figure 4. 5.

Figure 4. 5: Age of pupils



According to the findings in Figure 4.5, 73.9% of the pupils were aged 13-14 years and 19.7% were aged above 14 years.

ii. Financial assistance to pupils

The study established if the children had any kind of financial assistance to attend school.

The findings are shown in Table 4. 17.

Table 4. 17: Financial assistance given to the children

Amount of financial support released	Frequency	Percent
Very little	1	25
None	3	75
Much	0	0
Total	4	100

According to the findings in table 4.17, 75% of the head teachers indicated that the children had no financial assistance to attend school and 25% of the head teachers indicated that children had very little financial assistance to attend school.

The study found that poor academic performance attributed to lack of parental support of their children while doing assignments, failure to purchase books and failure to show up in schools to discuss their children's performance. According to Nduku (2009) lack of concern by parents when their children performed poorly, financial constraints, little concern (support) to children when doing assignments and about their school performance affect their school participation negatively.

The study assessed if vulnerability influences a child's participation in school. From the findings, all (100%) of the head teachers indicated that vulnerability influenced a child's participation in school.

The study also found out that children were constantly absent from school due to their poor health as well as that of their siblings and parents. Pupils are exposed to states which hinder them from normal life by lack of basic needs. Concentration span of pupils is normally very low. The study found out that teen pregnancy was minimal. In Kenya, statistics issued by the Ministry of Education (2009) showed that school completion rate declined from 92.1% in 2002 to 89.6% in 2004, with boys recording a 91.5% graduation rate and girls an 87.5% rate.

iii. *Vulnerable pupils in the targeted schools*

The data on whether the school had vulnerable/orphaned pupils' are shown in Table 4.18.

Table 4. 18: If the school had vulnerable/orphaned pupils in the school

Prevalence of vulnerable pupils in the targeted schools	Frequency	Percent
Yes	4	100

The findings in Table 4.18 indicate that, all the head teachers (100%) indicated that their schools had vulnerable/orphaned pupils.

The study assessed the number of vulnerable/orphaned pupils in the school and the findings are presented in Table 4. 19.

Table 4. 19: Number of vulnerable/orphaned pupils in the school

	Frequency	Percent
Over 25%	4	100

The information in Table 4.19 show that, 100% of the head teachers indicated that the number of vulnerable/orphaned pupils in the school was over 25.

iv. *Number of vulnerable children supported by Life Skills Empowerment Association*

The study sought to find out the number of vulnerable children supported by Life Skills Empowerment Association. From the findings, the organization supported over 200 vulnerable children.

The study examined the criteria used to identify the vulnerable children. The findings show that, the organization identified vulnerable children through the teachers and other children in the school. They identify the children who do not carry lunch, who are always absentminded, who have no uniform and other school requirements and are able to detect the needy cases.

The study determined how often the coordinator Life Skills Empowerment Association interacted with the VC and their parents or guardians. From the findings, she interacted with them over lunch hour during the school days. Also parents and guardians are sometimes called to assist in preparing food for the VC though most of them are not cooperative. They never went to see how the children are progressing even when they are called.

v. *Problems encountered by vulnerable children*

The study examined the problems encountered by vulnerable/orphaned pupils in the school. The findings are shown in Table 4. 20.

Table 4. 20: Problems encountered by vulnerable/orphaned pupils in the school

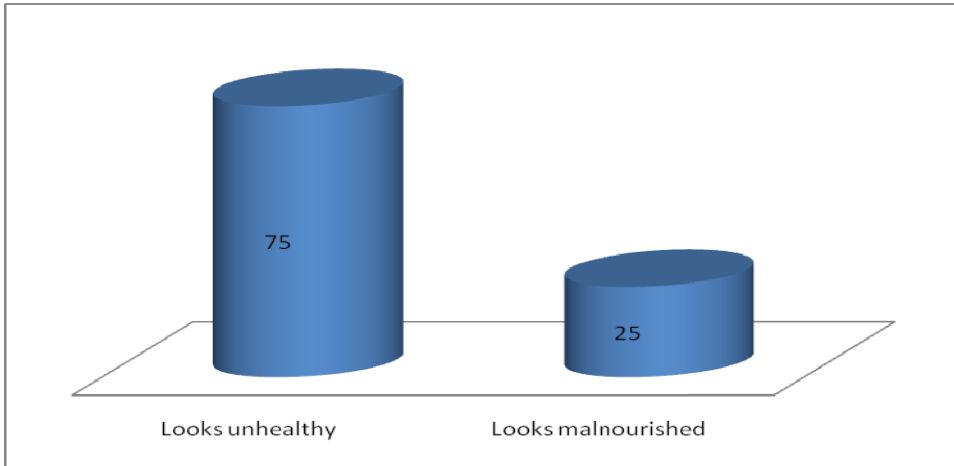
Problems encountered by vulnerable pupils	Frequency	Percent
Absenteeism	2	50
Inadequate basic needs	2	50
Total	4	100

The information summarized in Table 4.20 indicates that, 50% of the head teachers indicated that the problems encountered by VC in the school were absenteeism and 50% of the head teachers indicated inadequate basic needs.

vi. *State of health of vulnerable pupils in the school*

The data on the state of health of VC in the school is shown in Figure 4. 6.

Figure 4. 6: State of health of vulnerable pupils in the school



The findings in figure 4.6 show that, 75% of the head teachers indicated that their state of health was unhealthy and 25% of the head teachers indicated that they seemed malnourished. Poor health impedes educational progress because a student with health problems is not prepared to fully engage in or take advantage of learning opportunities at school or at home (Hanson et al., 2004).

vii. *Results on learner characteristics and school participation*

The findings on the agreement level with statements on the effect of pupil's characteristics on school participation of vulnerable children in primary schools are shown in Table 4. 21. A 4-point likert scale was used where 4.000-3.500 = strongly agree; 3.499-2.500 = Agree; 2.499-1.500= Disagree and 1.499 – 1.00 = strongly disagree.

Table 4. 21: Agreement level with statements on the effect of pupil's characteristics on school participation of vulnerable children in primary schools

Causes of low school participation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Boys have higher rates of school participation than girls	2.000	0.000
There is high rate of teen pregnancy in the school resulting in low school participation among girls	2.000	1.414
Child absenteeism due to poor health affect school participation	3.750	0.500
School participation reduces as children grow	3.250	0.500
Need for achievement increases school participation	3.500	0.577
Brighter children have higher school participation rate	4.000	0.000

According to the results in Table 4.21, the respondents strongly agreed that brighter children have higher school participation rate, child absenteeism due to poor health affect school participation and need for achievement increases school participation as shown by a mean of 4.000, 3.750 and 3.500 respectively. Cassen and Kingdon, (2007) found that boys outnumbered girls as low achievers with nearly half of all such low achievers being white British males. Still in the UK, Strand (1997) finds that girls post better academic performance compared to boys. In addition, the respondents agreed that school participation reduces as children grow as shown by a mean of 3.250. Moreover, the respondents disagreed that boys have higher rates of school participation than girls and there is high rate of teen pregnancy in the school resulting in low school participation among girls as shown by a mean of 2.000.

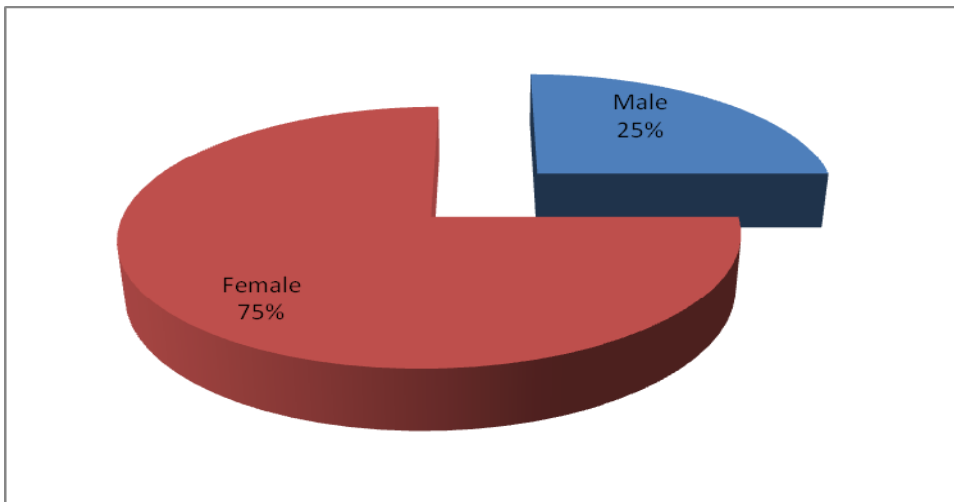
4.3.3 School Factors

This section focuses on the effect of school factors on the participation of vulnerable children in the schools including the gender of the head teachers, if feeding programme helps children to attend school, agreement level with factors that affect pupil's participation in school, level of adequacy of the facilities and learning resources on pupil's participation in school, agreement level with factors that affect school participation of vulnerable children in primary schools, if there were children abusing drugs in the school and drugs commonly abused by pupils.

i. Gender of Head Teachers

The results on the gender of the head teachers are shown in Figure 4. 7.

Figure 4. 7: Gender of the head teachers



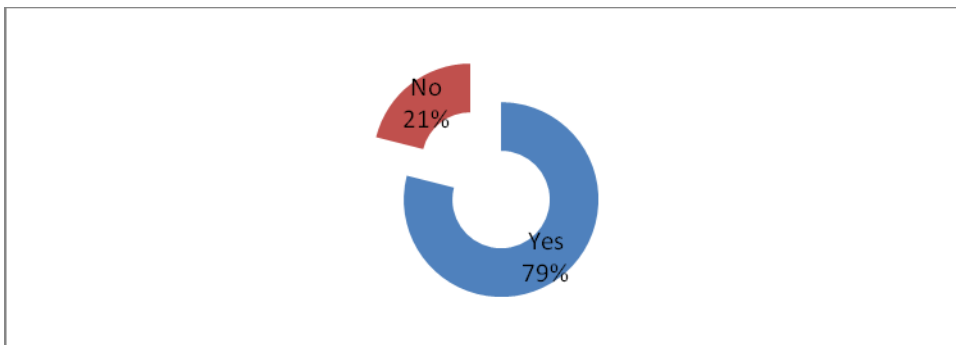
The findings in figure 4.7 indicate that, 75% of the head teachers were female while 25% were male. Grossman and Kaestner (2008) observed that students (both male and female) should perform better with a female teacher in reading than with a male teacher in reading, while students (both male and female) should perform better with a male teacher in maths.

ii. School feeding programme and school participation

The study sought to find out if the school had a feeding programme. According to the findings, all (100%) of the respondents indicated that the school had a feeding programme.

The findings on if the feeding programme helped children to attend school are shown in Figure 4. 8.

Figure 4. 8: If feeding programme helps children to attend school



According to the results summarized in Figure 4.8, 79% of the respondents indicated that feeding programme helped children to attend school while 21% indicated that feeding programme did not help children to attend school.

iii. Factors that affect pupil's participation in school

The study assessed the agreement level with factors that affect pupil's participation in school. The findings are illustrated in Table 4. 22. A 4-point likert scale was used where 4.000-3.500 = strongly agree; 3.499-2.500 = Agree; 2.499-1.500= Disagree and 1.499 – 1.00 = strongly disagree.

Table 4. 22: Agreement level with factors that affect pupil's participation in school

Factors that affect pupil's participation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our teachers give us too much homework	2.722	0.655
The teachers are never late for class	2.820	0.757
Our teachers mark our books	3.113	0.546
Our teachers are harsh	2.722	0.655
There is no sexual harassment of girls in our school	2.511	0.804
There is no sexual harassment of boys in our school	2.526	0.822
Pupils are beaten by teachers when they misbehave.	3.083	0.708

The findings summarized in Table 4.22 show that, the respondents agreed that teachers mark books, pupils are beaten by teachers when they misbehave and the teachers are never late for class as shown by a mean of 3.113, 3.083 and 2.820 respectively. In addition, the respondents agreed that teachers give pupils too much homework and teachers are harsh as shown by a mean of 2.722 and 2.722 respectively. Moreover, the respondents agreed that there is no sexual harassment of boys in school and there is no sexual harassment of girls in school as shown by a mean of 2.526 and 2.511 respectively.

iv. *School facilities and school participation*

The findings on the level of adequacy of the facilities and learning resources on pupil's participation in school are summarized in Table 4. 23. A 3-point likert scale was used where 3.000-2.500 = Very adequate; 2.499-1.500= Adequate and 1.499 – 1.00 = Not adequate.

Table 4. 23: Level of adequacy of the facilities and learning resources on pupil's participation in school

Learning resources in schools	Mean	Std. Deviation
Availability of text books	1.609	0.490
There are adequate desks in the school	1.902	0.298
The school has adequate and clean water	1.902	0.298
The school has adequate lighting	2.000	0
The school has sufficient study space	1.594	0.493
The school has a well stocked library	1.406	0.493
My school has a good playing ground	2.000	0
The school has enough toilets for boys	1.902	0.298
The school has enough toilets for girls	1.692	0.464
There is congestion in the classrooms	1.391	0.661
My school has many story books	1.000	0

The results on school facilities contained in Table 4.23 indicate that, the schools had adequate lighting, good playing ground, desks in the school and clean water as shown by a mean of 2.000, 2.000, 1.902 and 1.902 respectively. In addition, the schools had adequate toilets for boys and girls, text books and sufficient study space as shown by a mean of 1.902, 1.692, 1.609 and 1.594 respectively. Moreover, the school had no adequate well stocked library; there was congestion in the classrooms and inadequate story books as shown by a mean of 1.406, 1.391 and 1.000 respectively. Across the

world, schools are usually expected to offer learners a core academic curriculum together with other co-curricular activities, where the former is the core reason whose survival is partly influenced by the latter, (Miller, 2007).

v. *Results on factors that are perceived to affect school participation*

The study sought to find out the agreement level with factors that affect school participation of vulnerable children in primary schools. The findings shown in Table 4.24. A 4-point likert scale was used where 4.000-3.500 = strongly agree; 3.499-2.500 = Agree; 2.499-1.500= Disagree and 1.499 – 1.00 = strongly disagree.

Table 4. 24: Agreement level with factors that affect school participation of vulnerable children in primary schools

School factors affecting primary school participation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Commitment of teachers enhance pupils school participation	3.750	0.500
Female teachers encourage me to attend school more than male teacher	3.000	1.414
Noisy surrounding affect pupils school participation	3.250	0.500
Community interest in education affect pupils school participation	3.250	0.500
Prevalence of drugs in school affect pupils school participation negatively	4.000	0.000
Coverage of syllabus enhances pupils school participation	4.000	0.000
Games and clubs enhance pupils school participation	3.250	0.500
Availability of books enhance pupils school participation	4.000	0.000
Adequate physical facilities enhance pupils school participation	3.500	0.577

The analysis in Table 4.24 show that, the respondents strongly agreed that prevalence of drugs in school affect pupils' school participation negatively, coverage of syllabus enhances pupils' school participation and availability of books enhance pupils' school

participation as shown by a mean of 4.000. In addition, the respondents strongly agreed that commitment of teachers enhance pupils' school participation and adequate physical facilities enhance pupils' school participation as shown by a mean of 3.750 and 3.500 respectively. Moreover, the respondents agreed that noisy surrounding affect pupils' school participation, community interest in education affect pupils' school participation and games and clubs enhance pupils' school participation as shown by a mean of 3.250. Also, the respondents agreed that female teachers encourage them to attend school more than male teacher as shown by a mean of 3.000. This is largely because the foci of the school curricula and after-school programs are on achievement in academics (Castelli et al. 2007).

The study sought to establish the challenges faced by these vulnerable children in school. From the findings, the challenges were that most of them are orphaned and do not understand what is happening to them. They have nobody to assist them and tell them what is happening. The guardians feel these children are a burden and therefore they lack affection.

The study endeavoured to assess the challenges the organization faced. From the findings, the challenges the organization faced were people misunderstanding it. They think that it is an income generating project and therefore do not assist. The guardians of the VC feel that they are being exposed and as such desire the progress dies, that is, didn't progress.

The study sought to examine out main sources of finances. The findings show that the sources of finances were people from the community who from time to time support with

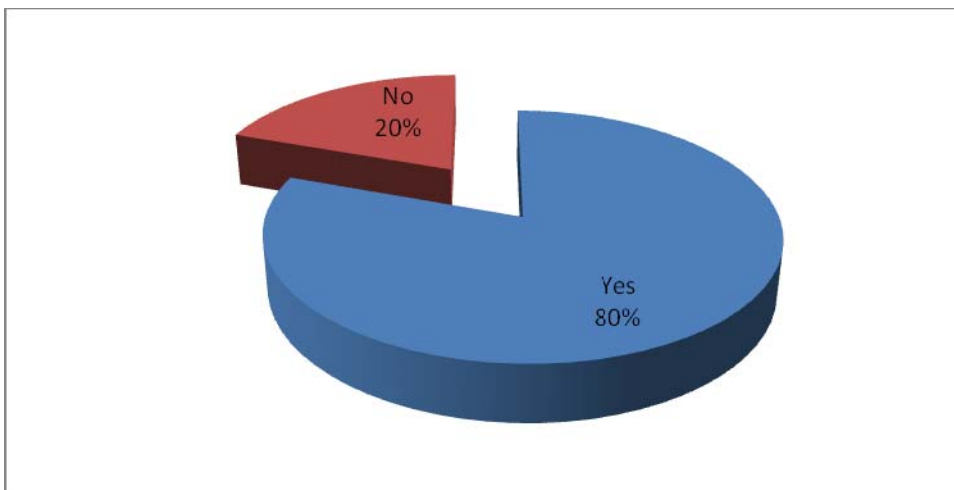
what they have so that these children can be catered for. The children are given food, clothes, shoes, books and counseling.

The study hoped to examine how vulnerability influenced primary school participation. The findings have pointed out that vulnerability influenced the participation of student in schools because when the programme which assists them fails even for a short time, these children fail to attend school.

vi. Prevalence of drug abuse among vulnerable children

The study sought to find out if there were children abusing drugs in the school. The pupils' responses are presented in figure 4.9.

Figure 4. 9: If there were children abusing drugs in the school



From the findings in Figure 4.9, 80% of the pupils indicated that there were children abusing drugs in the school while 20% indicated that there were no children abusing drugs in the school.

vii. Pupils responses on drugs commonly abused by vulnerable children

The results on the pupils responses on drugs commonly abused by vulnerable children are shown in Table 4.25.

Table 4. 25: Drugs commonly abused by pupils

Drugs commonly abused	Frequency	Percent
N/a	26	19.55
Tobacco	13	9.77
Cigarettes	26	19.55
Bhang	28	21.05
Alcohol	40	30.08
Total	133	100.00

The information summarized in Table 4.25 indicate that, 30.08% of the pupils indicated that the drugs commonly abused by pupils were alcohol, 21.05% of the pupils indicated that the drugs commonly abused by pupils were bhang, 19.55% of the pupils indicated that the drugs commonly abused by pupils were cigarettes and 9.77% of the pupils indicated that the drugs commonly abused by pupils were tobacco.

viii. Pupils reasons for drug abuse

The study examined why school children took drugs. From the findings, school children took drugs due to peer pressure and to enter into a certain class. Some think that drugs will make them cool; others think that Bhang will solve problems and they will become strong and healthy. Still others indicated that there are those children who take drugs because they have seen their parents taking. Other parents locally brew beer at home and

thus, readily available for the children. Addiction has led many people, young people prominent amongst them, into downward spiral of hopelessness that in some cases ends fatally. They range from glue- sniffing and teenage ecstasy users, to hardcore heroin and cocaine addicts (NACADA, 2005).

ix. Results on factors that make children stay away from school

According to the findings, major factors that made children stay away from the school were poverty, inadequate basic needs such as food and clothing. In addition, lack of parental care, psychological torture by some teachers, sickness of parents, pupils playing parenting roles also made children stay away from school, Again, low level of parents' education, lack of basic necessities, poor health care, child abuse and poverty affected pupils participation in primary schools.

x. Suggestions that can help vulnerable children to improve their primary school participation.

The findings suggest that vulnerable children can be helped to improve their primary school participation through provision of food, school feeding programme, creating a conducive learning environment, enhancing teacher –pupil relationship in order to raise learners' self esteem and government's provision of basic requirements such as reading and writing materials. In other words pupils should be assisted physically, emotionally and spiritually.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter provides the summary of the findings from chapter four, and it also gives the conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the objectives of the study. The objectives of this study were to establish the factors affecting primary school participation by vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu County.

5.2 Summary

The study found that most of the pupils' families (39.10%) were single parent. School requirements were paid by their mothers. Most of the pupils (51.13%) were from large families with over 4 siblings. Most pupils (41.35%) had both their mothers and fathers alive though a number of them were separated. All the pupils indicated that they wished to achieve university education as the highest education. Pupils stated that they wanted to learn more and become professionals with good goals. Most fathers of pupils in this study had secondary education while most mothers had primary education. Parents/guardian monitored pupils' out-of-school activities as shown by a mean score of 2.782. Taking alcohol by parents/guardians has negative impact on their school participation. Pupils' missed school to take care of sick parent and siblings. Parent/guardians don't care about what pupils do at school. Parents/guardians are always sick. Pupils' have a noisy surrounding which affects their reading at home. There was no fighting/violence with the

people pupils stay with. House lighting did not affect pupils learning. Parent/guardian did not always attend PTA meetings.

The pupils performed chores such as cooking, fetching water and taking care of the younger children many times before and after school. In addition, the pupils performed duties in order to get money. Such duties included digging and fetching firewood, grazing animals, harvesting crops and milking before and after school. Most of the people who paid for pupils' needs were casual labourers. The parents and guardians rarely provided the pupils with writing materials, breakfast and lunch. They also rarely provided the pupils with school uniform, sanitary pads, supper and washing detergents and soaps. The parents and guardians never provided pupils with revision books. The learners also lacked basic items that prevented them from attending school.

The number of siblings in a family affected primary school participation of vulnerable children in the school to a very great extent. Parents being constantly sick, parental educational attainment and unconducive home environment affected primary school participation of vulnerable children in the school to a great extent. Parents who are Self employed and those who are not employed had negative effect on school participation of vulnerable children to a very great extent.

Parents who were casual labourers affected primary school participation of vulnerable children in the school to a great extent. Single parenthood affected primary school participation of vulnerable children to a very great extent. Divorced and married affected primary school participation of vulnerable children in the school to a great extent.

Widowed parents affected primary school participation of vulnerable children in the school to a moderate extent.

The study found that majority of the pupils were male, and most were aged 13-14 years.. Vulnerability influenced a children's participation in school. The school had some pupils who were vulnerable and orphaned. The number of vulnerable and orphaned pupils in the schools was more than the Life Skills Empowerment Association was supporting. The problems encountered by vulnerable and orphaned pupils in the school were absenteeism and inadequate basic needs. The state of health of vulnerable pupils in the school was unhealthy. Brighter children have higher school participation rate. Child absenteeism due to poor health affected the children's school participation while need for achievement increased the pupils' school participation although this reduced as the children grew. The girls had higher rates of school participation than the boys. There was low rate of teen pregnancy in the school.

The school had a feeding programme, and this was found to help children to attend school. Teachers marked the pupils' note books. Pupils who misbehaved were punished by the teachers through caning. The teachers were never late for class. However, they gave pupils too much homework. The teachers were also harsh towards the students. There was found to be no sexual harassment of both boys and girls in the school.

The schools had adequate lighting, good playing ground, desks in the school and clean water. The school had adequate toilets for both boys and girls, and text books and study space were sufficient. The school did not have adequately stocked library. Prevalence of

drugs in school negatively affected the pupils' school participation. Coverage of syllabus and availability of books enhance pupils' school participation as well as commitment of teachers. Likewise, adequate physical facilities enhance pupils' school participation whereas noisy surrounding affects pupils' school participation. Community interest in education affects pupils' school participation. Games and clubs enhanced pupils' school participation. Female teachers encouraged pupils to attend school more than male teachers.

There were children abusing drugs in the targeted schools. The commonly abused drug was alcohol. The children took drugs due to peer pressure, and to enter into certain social classes (cliques). Some of the learners who abused drugs thought that the drugs would make them cool. Others thought that Bhang would solve their problems and that they would become strong and healthy by taking the drugs.

The major factors that made children to stay away from the school were poverty including lack of food, lack of parental care, psychological torture by some teachers and sickness of parents. Others pupils missed school because they were playing parenting roles to their siblings. Others factors that made the children miss school were low level of their parents' education, lack of basic necessities, poor health care, child abuse and poverty.

5.3 Conclusions

On basis of the findings, the following conclusions have been made:

- The mother's education intensity had a high consequence than the father's education level on the academic achievement.
- Children whose parents had higher education had a far improved statistical ability of participating in primary education.
- Valuable learning involves joint venture of students, teachers and parents.
- The educational achievement of pupils is affected to a greater extent by the family size and birth order in a family.
- The students' academic achievement was influenced by the number of siblings who were either working or drop outs. Only a small percentage of the parents had attained secondary education, hence the pupils lacked role models to emulate. Nevertheless, the pupils aspired for a university education.
- The socio-economic background of the learners influenced their school participation.
- Children from poor families were more involved in child labour.
- Poor academic performance was attributed to lack of parental support. Pupils reported that parents and guardians did not help them in doing their assignments;

they also failed to purchase books and to show up in schools to discuss their children's performance. They also lacked concern towards their children's poor performance.

- The parents' health status especially mental health and chronic diseases affected the pupils' participation in school.
- Socio-economic status was an important explanatory factor that affected the children's development and learning capacity.
- Gender affected pupils' participation since girls were observed to have significantly lower participation compared to boys. Teenage pregnancy was not a major threat to the education of the girl child.
- Children who experienced poor health and lower socio-economic status had significantly poorer educational attainment. Poor health impeded educational progress because a student with health problems was not prepared to fully engage in learning opportunities at school or at home. Feeding programme helped children to attend school.
- The study concluded that students (both male and female) performance was influenced by gender of the teachers. The schools had adequate sanitary facilities but inadequate academic facilities for example books. Female teachers encouraged pupils to attend school more than male teacher.

- Additional costs of primary education hinder the educational attainment of many children. The provision of quality education was a challenge. The provision of safe water and sanitation benefits both learning and health. Lack of clean drinking water and waste disposal facilities make schools unsafe places where diseases are transmitted. Lack of sanitary facilities contributed to the drop out of girls, particularly during puberty.
- Home environment has a powerful effect on what children learn in school. High illiteracy rates of the parents adversely affect community-school links. Commitment of teachers enhances pupils' school participation. Adequate physical facilities enhance pupils' school participation.
- Prevalence of drugs in school affected pupils' school participation negatively. Drug abuse amongst the pupils is a serious problem affecting pupils' participation in education. Most indiscipline cases in schools today are attributed to drug and substance abuse resulting in poor participation in school. Major factors that make children stay away from the school were poverty eg lack of food, lack of parental care, psychological torture by some teachers and sickness of parents, pupils playing roles of parenting, low level of parents' education, lack of basic necessities, poor health care, child abuse and poverty.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that

- Parents need to encourage pupils to participate in school. They need to be involved in their children education, and that the students, teachers and parents need to partner for effective learning.
- They also need to show up in their children's schools to discuss the children's performance. They should be concerned when their children performed poorly.
- Girls should be encouraged and supported to be in schools. be provided with sanitary pads when they reach puberty. They should not be given a lot of work at home. Child labour should be discouraged and those found practicing it should be punished.
- The feeding programme should be established in schools to cater for all the vulnerable children.
- Vulnerable children should be categorized as as children with special needs in education.
- The Government should ensure that schools have the required resources and strategies to help children perform better.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

A similar study could be carried out in other counties to find out whether the same results will be obtained so as to allow for generalization of results. The study focused on public primary school thus the same study should be carried out in public secondary schools for comparison purposes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE RESPONDENTS

Njuki Jocelyn Kanyua,
Department of Educational Foundations,
University of Nairobi,
P.O Box 30197,
Nairobi.

Dear Respondent,

RE: REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA

I am a post graduate student in the Department of Educational Foundations at the University of Nairobi. I am in the process of conducting a research on the **FACTORS AFFECTING PRIMARY SCHOOL PARTICIPATION BY VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN MUNICIPALITY DIVISION OF KIAMBU COUNTY**. I am humbly requesting for your participation and cooperation in filling in this questionnaire. All your views will remain confidential. Thanking you in advance,

Yours faithfully,

Jocelyn Kanyua Njuki.

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

INSTRUCTIONS

Kindly answer the following questions by ticking in the appropriate box or filling the space provided. Do not indicate your name anywhere on the paper.

Name of the School _____

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1) Please indicate your gender Male Female
- 2) Indicate your highest level of your professional qualification
P1 Diploma Degree Others (specify).....
- 3) Teaching experience. Tick appropriately.
Less than 2 years 3-4 years Over 4 years
- 4) For how long have you stayed in this school?
Less than 2 years 3-4 years Over 4 years

SECTION B: FACTORS INFLUENCING PRIMARY SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Family socio-economic Background

- 5) Do you have vulnerable/orphaned pupils in this school? Yes No
- 6) If yes, How many? Tick One
Less than 10 11 – 15 16 – 20 21 – 25 Over 25
- 7) What problems do they encounter? (you can tick more than one)
Absenteeism Inadequate basic needs Rejection
Discrimination Poor health Poor school participation
- 8) What is the state of health of vulnerable pupils in your school? Looks healthy
Looks unhealthy Looks malnourished
- 9) Do these children have any kind of financial assistance to attend school?
Much Very little None

10 a) Do you think vulnerability influences a child's participation in school?

Yes [] No []

b) If yes to question 10, explain.....

11) What is the extent to which the following aspects of family background affect primary school participation of vulnerable children in your school?

Effect of family background on primary school participation	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Low extent	No extent at all
Parental educational attainment					
Number of siblings					
Parents being constantly sick					
Unconducive home environment					
Occupation /Socio-economic status of parents					
Salaried					
Self employed					
Casual employee					
Not employed					
Types of family					
Married					
Single parent					
Divorced					
Widowed					

12) How often do of the following activities likely to keep children out of school?

Activities	Many times	Sometimes	Never
Fetching water			
Fetching firewood			
Grazing animals			
Cooking			
Digging			
Milking			

LEARNER CHARACTERISTICS

13) What is your level of agreement with the following statements on the effect of pupil's characteristics on school participation of vulnerable children in primary schools?

Causes of low school participation	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Boys have higher rates of school participation than girls				
There is high rate of teen pregnancy in the school resulting in low school participation among girls				
Child absenteeism due to poor health affect school participation				
School participation reduces as children grow				
Need for achievement increases school participation				
Brighter children have higher school participation rate				

SCHOOL FACTORS

14) What is the extent do you agree with the following factors that affect school participation of vulnerable children in primary schools?

School factors affecting primary school participation	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Commitment of teachers enhance pupils school participation				
Female teachers encourage me to attend school more than male teacher				
Noisy surrounding affect pupils school participation				
Community interest in education affect pupils school participation				
Prevalence of drugs in school affect pupils school participation negatively				
Coverage of syllabus enhances pupils school participation				
Games and clubs enhance pupils school participation				
Availability of books enhance pupils school participation				
Adequate physical facilities enhance pupils school participation				

15) Please write down the major factors that make children stay away from your school

i.

ii.

iii.

16) Kindly provide suggestions that can help vulnerable children to improve their primary school participation

.....

.....

Thank you for your co-operation.

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPILS

INSTRUCTIONS

Kindly fill in the following questionnaire. Information obtained will be used for academic purposes only and will therefore be handled with the highest level of confidentiality. Your assistance will be highly appreciated

Name of the School _____

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1) What is your gender?

Male

Female

2) How old are you?

Below 12 years

13-14 years

Above 14 years

FAMILY BACKGROUND

3) What is the status of the family? Tick the one who pays the most of school requirements

Single parent Divorced Widowed Married

4) Indicate the person who pays for your school requirements

Father Mother

Both father and mother Relatives

5) How many brothers and sisters do you have? Indicate the number of brothers and sisters.

Brothers: None 1-2 3-4 Over 4 brothers

Sister: None 1-2 3-4 Over 4 sisters

6) Indicate with a tick if your parents are alive.

Mother and father Yes No

Mother only Yes No

Father only Yes No

Both mother and father are not alive Yes No

7) State the highest level of education you would wish to achieve

Primary Secondary College University

8) Why would you like to achieve the above level of education?

.....

9) Indicate the level of education of the person(s) who pays for your school requirements

Level of Education	Father	Mother	Guardian
Primary Education			
Secondary Education			
College (Diploma)			
University Degree			

10) What is your level of agreement with the following statements?

Statements on family background Affecting primary school participation	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My parent/guardians don't care about what I do at school				
My parents/guardians are always sick				
I miss school to take care of my sick parent and take care of my siblings				
There is fighting/violence with the people I stay with				
We have a noisy surrounding which affect my reading at home				
Our house lighting affect my learning				
My parent/guardian always attend PTA meetings				
My parents/guardian monitor my out-of-school activities				
Taking alcohol by my parents/guardians has negative impact on my school participation				

11) How often do you perform the following activities before and after school?

Activities before and after school	Always	Many times	Sometimes	Never
Fetching water				
Fetching firewood				
Grazing animals				
Cooking				
Digging				
Milking				
Harvesting of crops				
Taking care of the younger children				
Working for money				

12) What are the economic activities of the people who pay for your school requirements?

Employed [] Self employed [] Casual employee [] Unemployed []

13) Has any member of your family ever dropped from school?

Yes [] No []

If yes, why.....

14) How often do your parents/guardians provide you with the following?

	Regularly	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
School uniform				
Writing Materials				
Sanitary Pads				
Washing Detergents/Soaps				
Revision Books				
Breakfast				
Lunch				
Supper				

15) Does lack of these items prevent children from attending school?

Yes []

No []

SCHOOL FACTORS

15) Does your school have a feeding programme? Yes [] No []

16) If yes, does it help children to attend school? Yes [] No []

17) Indicate your level of agreement with the following factors that may affect pupil's participation in school.

Factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Our teachers give us too much homework				
The teachers are never late for class				
Our teachers mark our books				
Our teachers are harsh				
There is no sexual harassment of girls in our school				
There is no sexual harassment of boys in our school				
Pupils are beaten by teachers when they misbehave.				

18) Indicate your level of adequacy of the following facilities and learning resources on pupil's participation in school.

Factors	Very adequate	Adequate	Not adequate
Availability of text books			
There are adequate desks in the school			
The school has adequate and clean water			
The school has adequate lighting			
The school has sufficient study space			
The school has a well stocked library			
My school has a good playing ground			
The school has enough toilets for boys			
The school has enough toilets for girls			
There is congestion in the classrooms			
My school has many story books			

19) Are there children abusing drugs in your school?

Yes []

No []

20) If yes, which drugs are commonly abused? Tick the most common drug used

Tobacco []

Cigarettes []

Bhang []

Miraa []

Alcohol []

21) In your opinion, why do school children take drugs?

.....

.....

.....

22) Please write down three main things/factors that make children stay away from school.

- i.
- ii.
- iii.

23) In your opinion, what can the school management do to enhance primary school participation by students?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your co-operation.

**APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE COORDINATOR, LIFE
SKILLS EMPOWERMENT ASSOCIATION**

The following questions will guide the discussion with the coordinator, Life Skills Empowerment Association. This is an organization that supports vulnerable children in Municipality Division of Kiambu District.

1. How many vulnerable children does the organization support?
2. What criteria do you use to identify the vulnerable children?
3. How often do you interact with the vulnerable children and their parents or guardians?
4. What are some of the challenges faced by these vulnerable children in school?
5. What challenges does the organization face?
6. What are your main sources of finances?
7. Do you think their vulnerability influence their primary school participation?

Thank you for your co-operation.