

**FACTORS INFLUENCING HIGH DROP OUT RATES AMONG PUPILS  
IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BUNGOMA NORTH DISTRICT,  
KENYA**

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the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Planning,**

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## **DECLARATION**

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other University

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This research project has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University supervisors

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my loving mother Rhodah Nakhanu Namunga, my dear wife, Claire Mutsuuni Machanja and my children, Bravin Wanjala Sitati and Alicia Nasimiyu Sitati.

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I am grateful to God the Almighty from where i draw my strength, intellect and inspiration.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Monitoring Information System
EPDC	Education Policy and Data Center
FPE	Free Primary Education
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
HIV	Human Immune Virus
JICA	Japan International Co-operation Agency
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KESSP	Kenya Education Support School Programme
MDG2	Millennium Development Goal Two
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
NASMLA	National Assessment System for Monitoring Learner Achievement
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
PROBE	Public Report on Basic Education
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
RoK	Republic of Kenya
UIS	UNESCO Institute of Statistics
UNESCO	United Nation Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children Education Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education

## **ABSTRACT**

While enrolment is steadily rising in primary schools in Kenya, dropout rates continue to be high too, with over 50% of the children, both boys and girls dropping out before completing the primary school cycle. The purpose of this study therefore was to identify factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District. The study focussed on children who had dropped out of primary school at various classes. The objectives of the study were; to determine whether house hold- factors influences high dropout rates in primary schools; to establish whether student's personal factors influences high dropout rates in public primary schools, to examine whether gender influences high dropout rates in public primary schools and to determine whether the conditions within the school influences the dropout process in primary schools. The study was conducted in public primary schools in Bungoma North District using descriptive survey design. The target population was 1459 members. The sample comprised of 21 public primary schools of which, 15 head teachers, 185 classroom teachers and 95 dropouts were sampled using the stratified and the snowball sampling methods. This constituted a total of 295 respondents involved in the study. A questionnaire and two interview guides were the main tools used in data collection. The instruments were refined during the pilot study. Data was coded manually and later analysed quantitatively and qualitatively using descriptive statistics mainly percentages and content analysis. The results were presented by use of frequency tables and bar graph. Conclusions were made based on the findings. The results revealed that both external and internal factors influence high dropout rates in study area. On gender differentials, it was revealed that more girls dropout in upper primary level while boys dropout more both at middle and lower primary. It was recommended that teachers, parents, community and government should work in harmony to curb the trend of dropout.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Education is an important tool for development of an individual, the society and the nation at large. It is argued that knowledge and technology are increasingly becoming the basis of comparative advantage in the present world economy. The quality of a country's stock of human capital influences the extent to which knowledge and technology can be utilized and created to enhance productivity and improve the well-being of citizens. Basic education provides the essential building blocks for higher levels of education (Govender & Stevin, 2004).

It also lays the foundation upon which work-related skills are developed, especially for those who are not able to continue to the higher levels of the academic ladder. For this reason, nations all over the world are concerned with provision of education to their citizens. Many African countries see development as closely intertwined with education, that the more educated their citizens are, the higher their ability to deal with the problems of development (World Bank, 2005). It is in the light of this and other factors that countries all over the world are making frantic efforts at reducing the number of out-of school children (UNESCO, 2011).

Kenya has since independence made significant strides in her education system. On the same note the pledge to provide universal primary education has been a promise of every Kenyan president since independence (Sifuna, 2005; Nungu, 2010). It featured prominently in the Kenya African Nation Union's (KANU) post-independence manifestos of 1963 to 1969 and the country's first 5-year development plan (1964-69) (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). It was the rationale behind Jomo Kenyatta's abolition of fees for the first four years of primary education in 1973. It motivated Kenyatta's successor, Daniel Arap Moi to scrap building levies and introduced a free school milk program in 1979 (Amutabi 2003; Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). And it inspired the curriculum reforms that Moi introduced in 1984, which were designed to reduce dropout rates by making primary schooling more practically oriented (Nungu, 2010).

Again the Free Primary Education (FPE) was introduced in 2003 with an aim of providing quality education to all children. In view of the compulsory nature of basic education in Kenya, various governments and agencies have made concerted efforts to address educational inequality and improve quality. This has been evident in policy directives and interventions such as Sessional Paper No.1 on Education Training and Research (Republic of Kenya, 2005), Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWEC) 2003-2007; Policy on the HIV and AIDS and Gender in Education (2007); Non-Formal Education Sub-sector Policy (2010) and Kenya Vision 2030. Most importantly,

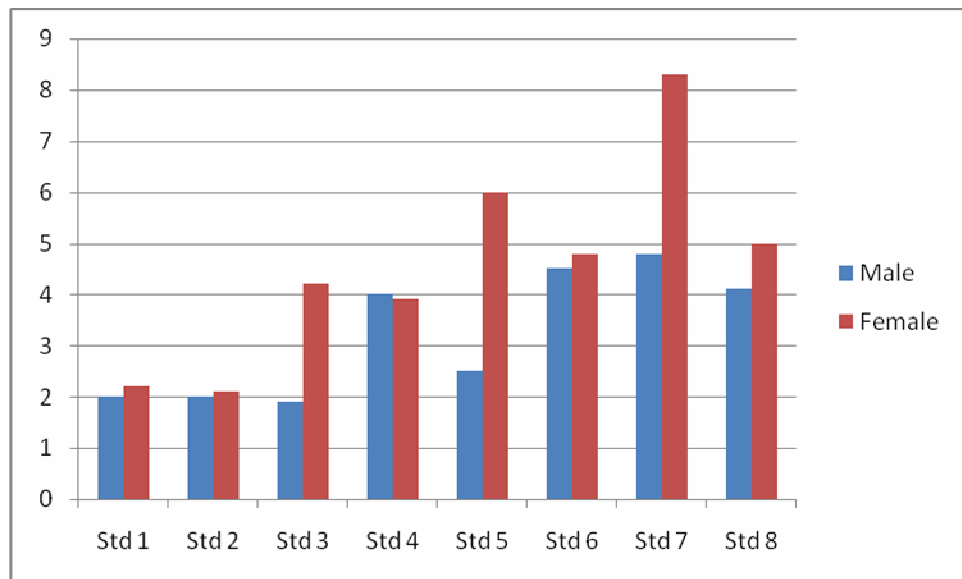
the Government of Kenya has committed itself to the achievement of universal primary education and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG2) by ensuring that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling (UNESCO, 2011).

To meet the MDG2 and national targets set in 2003-2010 Education Strategic Plan, the Government of Kenya abolished all fees charged by public primary schools. It also introduced a capitation grant scheme in public primary schools to defray school fees previously charged. In addition, the school feeding programme was introduced in some selected schools in deprived communities. All these measures were put in place to cushion the burden of parents in meeting the cost of sending their children to school and to encourage parents especially in deprived areas to send their children to school (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

In Kenya, the aforementioned strategies and efforts have attracted all categories of children who were previously not in school (Ministry of Education, 2008). For instance in 2011, the primary GER was 115% reaching highest in the past ten years and the NER was 95.7% (Republic of Kenya, 2012) marked the second highest of the 10 African countries according to the Basic Education Sector Report (JICA, 2012). Conversely in description of the details of dropout in Kenya's basic education system, Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2008 reported that dropout rates across all grades had a mean of 4.1% except for grades

7 and 8 which was 19.1% (Ministry of Education, 2008). Considering gender, males have higher dropout rates than female in almost all grades in most of the years (Ministry of Education 2005d, 2008b, 2009b). There are however, wide regional variations in dropout rates. This may be attributed to factors like poverty, ignorance, poor education quality, early marriage, outmoded customs and lack of interest in schooling. It has been argued that in much of Africa, the problem is not non-enrolment but how to ensure that once enrolled, children complete schooling (Duryea, 1998). Coincidentally, in Bungoma North District, about 50% of the children are not attending school (Republic of Kenya, 2005). According to the EPDC (2009) and Uwezo Kenya (2010), apart from the high enrolment; dropout is also high in the district especially in rural areas as indicated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Dropout Rates by Grade in Bungoma North District**



**Source:** EPDC Kenya District Profile for Bungoma Created March 2009, p.2.



Figure1 shows that pupils in Bungoma North District drop out of school across all grades but highest in grade 7. This indicates a decline in school population as pupils move up from one level to another. Factors such as the cost of education, poor quality education and other socio-economic issues are cited as causes. Most researchers attribute the reasons why pupils are unable to complete basic education in developing countries to structural factors at the household, school and societal levels (Colclough, Al Samarrai, Rose & Tembon, 2003; Hunt, 2008). Economic and socio-cultural factors seem to contribute to low enrolment and attendance rates particularly of girls in the area. For example as poor families struggle to make a living, often girls play a key role in the survival of the household by either contributing income or taking care of household chores like looking after younger siblings. In these situations girls are less likely to be sent to school. In the study area, for instance, the practice of child labour is very rampant and serves to keep children, particularly girls out of school as parents engage them in income generating activities. Some of these parents may also be too poor to pay for the education of the children (Kiveu & Mayo, 2009). As the evidence shows, non-completion is a big problem in the research area. However a number of questions relating to the problem remain unanswered.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

With the introduction of universal basic education and fee-free education in Kenya, all school children are expected to enrol and complete basic school. Yet,

currently hundreds of thousands of children of school-going age are still not in school. Even though the introduction of the capitation grant and the school feeding programme have resulted in significant increases in enrolment, some of the children who enrolled dropped out of school before completing basic education. Across all public primary levels, the annual average rate of dropout has been 4.1%. This means that 4.1% of pupils will not complete school, thereby affecting attainment of MDG2. It has also been argued that with underperforming education sectors (heavy repetition and poor quality) early dropouts might be perfectly rational, even in the absence of financial constraints. The Bungoma North District is noted for high dropout rates. According to the EPDC Kenya District Profile (2009) dropout in primary schools was put at an annual average of 4.2 % (5% girls and 3.4% boys), higher than the national average. What this means is that about 4.2% of children who could have been trained to acquire various levels of education and skills were lost. Thus, the district is losing vital categories of human resources needed to spear-head the socio-economic development of the area. Glennester et al (2011) argues that available literature on access, retention and completion in Kenya is predominantly measured quantitatively (see World Bank, 2011; Uwezo Kenya, 2010). According to Hunt (2008), researchers know that low socio-economic status, gender, geographical location, condition within the school among others influence dropout rates but less is known about the in-depth qualitative account of those involved. It was

therefore necessary to find out factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District.

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

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this study were:

- a. To determine whether house hold- factors influences high dropout rates in primary schools in Bungoma North District.
- b. To establish whether student's personal factors influences high dropout rates in public primary school in Bungoma North District.
- c. Examine whether gender influences dropout rates in Bungoma North District.
- d. To determine whether the conditions within the school influences the drop out process in primary schools.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The questions of this study were:

- a. What are the house-hold factors that influence high dropout rate in Bungoma North District?

- b. What are the student's personal factors influence them to drop out of primary school?
- c. What are gender differentials in relation to the problem of school dropout in Bungoma North District?
- d. Which conditions within the school influences the drop out process in primary schools in Bungoma North District?

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

These research findings may help the Ministry of Education develop sustainable interventions to keep pupils in school, based on various factors that affect their drop out. The findings also anticipated to help school administrators and parents to take intervention measures that would address the issues the primary school child faces in school, at home and at individual level. They may use this knowledge to develop activities and programs that enhance retention and subsequently completion rates of the primary school children. The findings may also contribute to academic debate on factors influencing high dropout rates among primary school children.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The main limitation of this study was gathering an adequate sample size of the pupils who had dropped out of school. This was because some were employed elsewhere and wanted little to do with school and research study.

### **1.8 Delimitation of the Study**

The challenge of school dropout is a national issue, especially in rural areas. The scope of the study in terms of area was Bungoma North District in Bungoma County, Kenya. However given resource scarcity and time constraint, out of the twenty one primary schools, only pupils who have dropped out were selected for the study. Children who have dropped out of school were engaged in the study. The study was only concentrated in public primary schools. This allowed for both homogeneity and uniformity of the population of the study.

### **1.9 Assumption of the Study**

The study assumed that the factors mentioned by the respondents' influences the dropout rate among pupils and that reducing dropout rates in primary schools would improve retention and ensure realisation of EFA and MDGs.

### **1.10 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Achievement** refers to performance on standardized tests or examination that measure knowledge or competence in a specific subject area.

**Challenges** refer to problems or difficulties encountered in the process of planning for education which could negatively impact on quality of education.

**Dropout** refers to early withdrawal of pupils before completing the required primary school years and the concerned pupils do not enrol back to school again.

**Dropout rates** refer to the percentage of pupils who withdraws from school eminently before completing the primary school against those who are enrolled in standard one.

**Enrolment** refers to number of pupils attending schools in a given year.

**Gender** refers to the social and cultural distinctions between men and women.

**Primary Education** refers to the institution that offers the first eight grades of schooling excluding nursery school.

**Public Schools** refer to schools which are developed, equipped and provided for by the government.

**Repetition** refers to those pupils who stay in the same grade in which they were in previously.

**Retention** refers to the process by which a student enters a program of study and remains until graduating.

**School based factors** refer to those aspects within the school environment that relate to pupils' engagement and wellbeing for example teacher attitude, teaching and learning resources.

### **1.11 Organization of the Study**

The study is organized in five chapters. Chapter one consists of the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitation of the study, delimitation of the study, assumption of the study and definition of operational terms . Chapter

two deals with the literature review while chapter three covers research methodology which is organized under the following sections: research design, target population sampling procedures and sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, data collection procedures and methods of data analysis. Chapter four consists of the data analysis, presentation and interpretation and chapter five includes the summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District. In the chapter, the researcher presents a review of the related literature based on the theoretical and empirical study. The first section discusses the concept and theories underpinning the issue under study. The second part focuses on external factors that lead to school dropout. The gendered decision that influences drop out is discussed too. Then the internal factors that lead to school dropout are discussed. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study are presented. The internal factors in this context refer to school based factors while the external factors refer to home and other related factors responsible for the phenomenon.

#### **2.2 The Concept and Theories of School Dropout**

Conceptually, one cannot discuss school dropout without first linking up with school enrolment and absenteeism, since they help make up the issue surrounding the phenomenon clearer. Galimaka (2008) opined that enrolment refers to the process of registering children into the school register. This is done at the beginning of every academic year where parents are required to take to school their children who have attained school going age. Upon registration, a track record of their physical presence and learning is monitored twice daily by a class



teacher by marking their presence. In a situation where attendance fluctuates, it amounts to absenteeism but if the child fails attending school for a period of one year and does not return to school, the child is then considered having dropped out of school in that year. School dropout is the difference between the number of pupils/students enrolled in school at the beginning of academic year and the number of those who remained at the end of the academic year (Okaja, 2007). In the Kenyan context, dropout is considered to have happened whenever student/pupil falls of the school system before completing the basic eight years which is the full primary education cycle. Both school (internal) and non-school (external) factors contribute to this scenario.

There are several concepts and theories that explain why some pupils dropout of school. Considerable evidence supports the relational nature of student's motivation and academic achievement including basic school completion (Finn, 1989; Whelage, 1989). Variables such as feeling of alienation, perception of teacher caring, feeling a sense of school belonging, academic valuing, academic identity, locus of control, future optimism, self-esteem, disengagement and participation are some factors shown to be related to the outcome of dropping out of school (Anderson, Kerr-Roubicek & Rowling,2006; Gallagher,2002).

According to Rumberger (1995), children do not participate or learn in the lessons just because they are present in school. However, psychological factors such as

emotional conflict or lack of interest can interfere with the continuous learning process of children. Lack of interest on the part of children, irrelevant subject matter and the inability of teachers to project themselves are but a few of the many contributing factors to the mass underachievement and disaffection which lead to truancy and dropout in our schools (Pridmore,2007). Research suggests that dropping out represents one aspect of three interrelated dimensions of educational achievement; first, academic achievement, as reflected in grades and test scores; second, educational stability, which reflects whether students remain in the same school (school stability) or enrolled in school at all (enrolment stability) and third, educational attainment, which is reflected by years of schooling (Rumberger & Larson, 1998; Grannis, 1992).

Several researchers have suggested that educational attainment is dependent on both educational stability and academic achievement. That is, students who either interrupt their schooling by dropping out or changing schools, or who have poor academic achievement in school, are less likely to graduate or complete that segment of schooling (Rumberger,1995). They also posit that engagement and educational achievement are influenced by student's background prior to entering school including their educational aspirations and past achievements.

Smith (2003) argues that family background is widely recognized as the most important contributor to success in school. Families at the low end of the social

scale, families where parental unemployment or irregular employment is the norm, families overcoming or experiencing marital disharmony such as parental divorce or separation or families where parents do not insist on their children attending school or take no notice of their absence and do not insist on prompt attendance to school are more likely to drop out.

Multiple theories have been related to drop out problem. Many of these theories contain strands related to system theory. According to the developmental behavioural science theory (Jessor, 1993), the school has a powerful influence on student's achievement and dropping out. The theory identifies four school factors that influence student's performance and dropout. These factors include; student's composition, school resources, structural characteristics of the school and school practices (Rumberger & Thomas, 2000; Ananga, 2011). Life course theory presents the idea that schooling outcomes are based on the paths an individual follow throughout their lives (Entwistle, Alexander & Olson, 2004). Human capital theory states that the desire for a person to contribute to enhancing the economy will increase the desire for an education (Stallman & Johnson, 1996). Academic mediation theory states that the relationships between general deviant behaviours, association with other student practising deviant behaviours, lack of social bonding in school contribute to the tendency of a student to drop out of school (Battin-Pearson et al, 2000). Deviant affiliation theory provides an explanation for the tendency to drop out of school based on bonding with

antisocial peers. Structure strains theory states that demographic indicators of dropout tendency are based on gender, socio-economic status and race (Battin-Pearson et al 2000).

Beside the school and the family, the community and peer can also influence student's withdrawal from school. Poor communities may influence child and adolescent development through lack of resources or negative peer influences (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan & Aber, 1997). In support of this assertion, Odaga & Heneveld (1995) using the logistic model analysis in Kenya on the socio-economic determinants of primary school dropout, found that factors such as communal factors, pupils' personal characteristics/background, as well as the parental or family background have various degrees of impact on the probability of a pupil dropping out of school.

On their part Wells, Bechard and Hamby (1989) as well as Asche (1993) in support of earlier theories discussed above identified four major factors that contribute to a pupil dropping out of school. These factors are school, family, community and individual. They also assert that the likelihood of a child dropping out of school increases as the combination of these factors become more multifaceted. They further stated that other factors contributing to the problem could be incorporated into the four categories mentioned above.

### **2.3 Discourses on School Dropout**

One school of thought views truancy and dropout as an expression of an innate instinctive urge. Reid (1985) as cited by Close and Solberg (2008) linked school dropout and running away from school with man's roving instincts, likening it to the migratory instincts of animals and birds. In the same vein, Reid (1984a) as cited in Grannis (1992) whose thoughts on school dropout was partly influenced by Freudian theory viewed truancy and dropout in three ways. Firstly, it saw school dropout as an attempt on the part of children to escape from real intolerable psychological situation.

Secondly, Reid (1984b) indicates that school dropout is a way children try to avoid the pressure and responsibilities which accompany maturity and adulthood. Thirdly, it is an attempt to retreat from 'normal' intellectual growth brought about by an unstable ego, possibly caused by developmental and psychological traumas. On his part, Grannis (1992) asserts that dropouts tend to be passive rather than assertive and argue that their behaviours are related to their intellectual capacity.

According to Hunt (2009), UNESCO (2005) and Akyeampong et al (2007), a dropout child is the one who starts schooling but does not complete a cycle. However, whilst Hunt limits his scope to only basic education, UNESCO (2005) extends it to all levels of education, be it primary, secondary or tertiary level. In further explanation, Akyeampong et al (2007) indicate that it is possible for a child who drops out of school to re-enter at some stage.

## **2.4 External Factors: Social-Economic Background of School Dropout**

The external factors of school dropout are interrelated processes and not isolated events. Hunt (2008) stresses that for a child to drop out of school are often a process rather than the result of one single event, and therefore has more than one proximate cause (p.52). In buttressing this, Strassburg et al (2010) and Fleisch et al (2010) has found that dropping out of schools is not a single event but is usually a combination of interrelated factors that lead up to a child eventually dropping out of school. For instance, poverty appears to influence the demand for schooling, not only it affects the inability of household to pay school fees and other costs associated with a high opportunity cost of schooling for children. As children grow older, the opportunity cost of education is even larger, hence increasing the pressure for children to work and earn income for the household as opposed to spending time in education (Ananga, 2010).

### **2.4.1 House hold level Factors that Influences Dropout Rates among Pupils**

The factors that account for school dropout are discussed into some details using empirical sources from Kenya and across the world. The first factor to be put on microscope is household income and financial circumstances. According to Mbiti and Lucas (2011) and Hunt (2008), household income is found to be an important factor in determining access to education as schooling potentially incurs a range of costs, both upfront and hidden.

In addition to the above exposition are results of some research studies which look at how house hold income interacts with dropping out of school in particular. The studies undertaken by Brown and Park (2002), Dachi and Garret (2003); Hunter and May (2003); Porteas et al (2000) highlighted the link between poverty and dropping out from school. Porteas et al (2000:10), whilst describing exclusions rather than dropout per se, paint poverty as “a plausible explanation of school disruption”. Looking at the issue from how people regard schooling and its importance, a study conducted by Pryor and Ampiah (2003) in Ghana gives a bit of insight into the relationship. The results of the study sought to explain interactions between schooling, household income and school dropout. The research reveals that in some villages in Ghana, education is regarded as “relative luxury”, with many villages considering education not worthwhile. Okumu (2009) points out that both in Bungoma and Nairobi, respondents of situational analysis survey gave poverty as the most important factor for students’ dropping out of school (50% and 64% respectively). Report by Ministry of Education (2007) indicates that 58% of the Kenyan population is living below poverty line. This consequently leads to inability of the poor to meet education cost of their children which becomes a barrier to the education of children who withdrawal from school to engage in domestic work. These findings can be corroborated by the study done by World Bank in Kenya (2004a) which found out that poverty in some areas and lack of interest in schooling are important factors of dropping out of school.

Besides the factors deliberated above, research has shown that child labour affects the schooling of children and leads to school dropout. Ananga's (2010), in Ghana reveals among others that specific work-related tasks, for example, full time child care and work in peak agricultural times often clashes with schooling times and this finally leads to school dropout if nothing is done. The PROBE Team (1999) in India found the period for agricultural activities as clashing with school times and because such activities take place in rural areas and are seasonal, they lead to seasonal withdrawals from school. Working children therefore attend school intermittently and irregular attendance predisposes pupils to dropping out (Hunt, 2008).

According to UNESCO (2004), labour participation by persons below the age of 15 Kenya is not only widespread but it is also escalating at alarming rate. In terms of region, rural areas have a higher proportion of 19.7% compared to 9% urban areas, the proportion of working children are Western (19.8%), Rift Valley (19.7%), Eastern (19.1%) and Coast (19%). As the government continues to deal with these education concerns, in some rural areas of the country, the introduction of the lucrative motorcycle business has to a greater extent affected access and retention of boys in schools. Many boys are being lured out of school to engage in the business (Republic of Kenya, 2010). In Gucha South District and Bungoma North District, there are increasing cases of child labour among children dropping



out of school to provide cheap labour at Tabaka Soapstone mines and maize plantation respectively (Education News, 2009)

Sottie and Awasi (2011) examined factors that affect school dropout at the basic level of education in Kenya. The study focussed on experiences of students, parents, teachers and welfare workers. Weak family support, poor academic performance, poor school quality and low value of education, is identified as important to children stay in school. It is observed that some children prevail against odds and remain in school while others drop out. Resilience is identified as an important factor that could enhance the capacity of at-risk student to stay in school despite adverse circumstances. The study recommends research on the underlying processes that foster personal resilience in school age children from disadvantaged backgrounds in Kenya (Sottie & Awasi, 2011).

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (2009) as cited by Paul Kenya (2011), in Kenya most of out-of school children- both those who have enrolled and those who have dropped out- come from economically deprived households. This assertion is supported by a child labour report, which found that child workers claimed to be working to raise money to go to school. This had been found to be true because, children from low socio-economic households and those that are vulnerable and prone to income shocks commonly face some form of demand to withdraw from school if their parents cannot afford the direct cost of education (Gubert & Robilliard, 2006). The payment of school related costs

therefore acts as a barrier to enrolment and retention (Colclough et al, 2000; Hunter & May, 2003; Mukudi, 2004). Thus household poverty may be regarded as affecting dropout through its interactive effects with other factors that trigger events that result in dropping out of school. In exploring the conditions outside the school that influence dropout, this study sought to highlight how poverty shapes school attendance and dropout in the study area. The next section looks at the gendered decision that influences school dropout.

### **2.5 Gender factors that influences School Dropout.**

Again, research indicates links with household income, gender and dropping out. For example, Fuller and Laing (1999) cited in Grant & Hallman (2006:6) found an association with a family's financial strength, measured by level of household expenditure and access to credit, and the likelihood that the daughter will remain in school in South Africa. Kadzamira and Rose (2003) indicate that when the cost of schooling is too high for households in Malawi, it is often girls from poorest households who are less likely to attend. There is evidence that the gender gap in Kenya is not closing. A study by Lucas and Mbiti (2011) find that more boys than girls completed primary school in response to FPE. This was amplified by Economic Survey (RoK, 2008) which indicates that factors such as household chores, parents inability to pay fees/buy uniform / books account for about 30.7% of girls dropout in rural Kenya. Gender disparities in nomadic/ pastoral areas preferring to support boys education if resources are limited and early marriage of

girls are also shown to cause dropout of girls in Kenya (Ministry of Education,2012a). Most primary GER of boys exceeded that of girls in most years and especially after 2003, the gap was enlarged (Ministry of Education 2005d, 2008b, 2009b). The possible reasons include the following; although the government of Kenya has implemented the FPE policy since 2003, households are still burdened by fees for education, which discourages girls' enrolment in poor households (World Bank, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2012a). It can be considered that among several siblings in a family, some parents tend to choose boys for schooling and may prefer to keep girls at home for house chore despite existence of FPE. Gender and disparities still exist (Mokoro, 2010; World Bank, 2004a) and the enrolments rates of boys was higher than of those of girls in most of the years (MoE, 2005, 2005b, 2009b, RoK, 2012). In the Implementation Completion and Results Report of KESSP issued by the World Bank, the results of improvement of equity in access was rated "unsatisfactory" as the target primary NER of 96% could not be achieved (as of December 2009) (World Bank,2011).

Wrigley (1995) observed that there is a simple relation between education and gender equality. Schools act as a site of pervasive gender socialization. This sometimes spurs students to think beyond ideological limits laid on them. Wanyoike (2003) concurs with Wrigley and points out that the students peer group if not guided can lead to devastating results like engaging in drug and

substance abuse, early sex and early pregnancies. This leads to students dropping out of school.

However, measures have been put in place to continuously improve gender parity in access, retention and performance. Some of the strategies adopted include mainstreaming gender in education sector policies and plans, gender sensitization of education policy makers, establishing gender learning environments in schools and creating a framework for partnership with the communities, civil society and stakeholders in support of education for girls (Republic of Kenya, 2004). The Children Act (2001) that provides for education as the right to all children has given further impetus for child education. The government is also enforcing the re-entry policy and school girls who get pregnant are allowed back after giving birth (Okumu, 2010).

## **2.6 Internal Factors: Condition within the School that Influence the Dropout Process**

Ananga (2010) accepts the fact that the school exerts a powerful influence on children's achievement, and its characteristics have an impact on the dropout rates. In studies in Kenya, UNESCO (2005 and 2011); Kiveu (2009) Oketch and Rolleston (2007) found out that a wide variety of school related cases influence school dropout. Specifically factors such as teacher attitude, grade repetition, corporal punishment, difficulty in learning and being over age for school grade

were seen to be among internal factors that affect school dropout at the basic education in Kenya. Also, other research findings point out that distance to school is an important determinant of educational access and dropout. For example, cases in which there are more primary than secondary schools in the locality, and in which the only secondary is further away (Fentiman et al,1999), the distance to the latter may be considered too far for younger children, especially girls (Murugi,2008). This is also true in the cases of older girls and those children regarded by parents as vulnerable to sexual harassment (Colclough et al., 2000; Nekatibeb, 2002; PROBE, 1999).

One internal factor that finds meaning in the theories that influence school dropout is the issue of academic performance. Regarding this, Colclough et al (2000) emphasise that poor academic results are associated with high levels of grade repetition and dropout, and the low progression ratios to higher levels of the educational system. This is reflected in the way in which the family perceived education quality in relation to its own context; which is often regarded in terms of the expectations of children, the perceived relevance of the education the children are receiving, and their ability to meet parental aspirations. Family and community expectations of education quality affect decision making around access to school and pupil retention. Abidha (1998) raised a great concern on unsatisfactory performance and achievement of girls in public primary schools in Rift Valley Province. The survey carried out in KCPE results in Kenya revealed

that girls perform poorly in almost all subjects compared to boys. This becomes even worse as they move up the ladder. This is also supported by Fatuma and Sifuna (2006). The fact the curriculum fails to adequately address the needs of girls who acts the role of mothers and are mostly absent from school is a great concern. This makes them also suffer from chronic fatigue, lack of concentration and forced repetition. Their academic performance is hence impaired and self-image lowered and eventually these girls drop out of school (UNESCO, 2002).

Moreover, with the advent of FPE, enrolment increased in the classes in the lower grades was often very large and the children arrived with wide ranging levels of preparedness. These large and heterogeneous classes can challenge pedagogy. For example at the beginning of 2005 the average first grade class in some areas of Western Province was 83 students and in 28% of the classes it was more than 100 (Glennester et al, 2011).

### **2.6.1 School Practices and Education Quality that influences School Dropout rates**

The issue of quality of education, which has to do with the process and practices, is another factor that affect school dropout. According to Akyeampong (2007) and Hunt (2008),the level of school performance, its institutional configuration, its processes and practices and relationship within the school ,between teachers and students, all influence access and completion These factors within the school have

been found to interact with other factors outside the school to cause children to dropout, although in some cases, a single positive or negative experience at school can be the main determinant of whether a child stays in school or withdraws (Boyle et al.,2002; State of World's Children,2006; Save the Children,2005; Uwezo Kenya,2010). Real and perceived educational quality has been raised by many researchers as a major factor influencing schooling access (Mukudi, 2004a; Republic of Kenya, 2005, p.3). Improved access to education as a result of EFA and UPE programmes has highlighted the importance of quality as a requirement for ensuring sustained access. It has been argued that quality has been compromised by rapid expansion and increased access (Boyle et al, 2002). FPE has increased enrolment but many students' learning remains inadequate. A recent national wide survey in Kenya found that only 33% of children in class 2 can read a paragraph at their level. The survey further found a third cannot read a word and 25% of class 5 students cannot read a class 2 paragraph (Uwezo Kenya, 2010). These poor performance and learning indicators may conspire to push children out of school. Banarjee and Duflo (2006) state that there are varying definitions of what quality actually means. There seems to be a dearth of empirical studies establishing the link between quality of education and school dropout. Such shortcoming notwithstanding, the discussion on education facilities are linked to quality in terms of human resources and in-school resources. In the view point of Brock & Cammish (1997), availability of resources such as textbooks, desks and blackboards has been found to influence school dropout. Teaching practice and

behaviour can particularly influence a pupil's decision to drop out. The prevalence of teacher absenteeism is noted in the works of Alcazar et al (2001) and Banarjee and Duflo (2006) and the global teacher absence project, reports cases of public primary school teacher absence (Chaudhury et al 2005). Although much is still unknown about how teacher absence leads to dropout, it clearly implies that pupils' education and by extension, interest in school suffers as a result.

Another body of research findings had been concerned with school practices and processes and how they impact on school dropout. This category of research report shows that teacher attitudes towards pupils impact on whether they dropout or not. In the same vein, from their research in Ethiopia and Guinea, Colclough et al (2000) found that teachers were more positive about perception, interest and intelligence of boys rather than girls. In some cases, this is because they believe that girls will drop out early, an attitude that can then become a self-prophecy (UNESCO, 2010).

In their study in Guinea, Glick and Sahn (2000) argue that school environment and classroom conditions in general seem to be less conducive to effective learning for girls than boys. Rather surprising, in other contexts, educational practices have been found to be more likely to exclude boys (Hunter & May, 2003). Although few researchers make the direct link, there are issues related to



the preservation of an appropriate teacher-student relationship and dropout. For example, the use of corporal punishment or violence is practised by teachers in many countries (Humphreys, 2006; Hunt, 2008), in which boys are mostly targeted leading them to drop out.

There are policy initiatives that have been established geared towards the improvement and access of education in Kenya. These have been introduced under Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment (ERSWE) 2003-2007. Key reforms include the development of Sessional Paper No.1 which resulted in the adoption of a Sector Wide Approach Programme Planning (SWAP) to the provision of education in the country. This approach involves different stakeholders to support education both at the primary and secondary level of education. Through the SWAP process, the government and development partners have developed the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP), the programme aimed to improve access, equity, quality, retention and completion rates both at primary and secondary school level of education (MOEST, 2005). On operationalization of KESSP in 2005, key developments have been introduced within the education sector. At primary level, these reforms involve the decentralization of functions from the national to institutional levels, a move that is aimed at bringing services closer to the people and tackle education wastages like drop out.

### **2.6.2 Pupils' Age and Enrolment Factors that Influences School Dropout rates**

In other research on the internal side of school dropout, Ananga (2010) collated some views that indicated that age of the pupil at the time of enrolment is an important determinant of retention and completion. Again, Ersado (2005) asserts that over age enrolment predisposes pupils to dropout. In instances where children start schooling later than the official entry age, they are not very likely to complete basic school (UIS & UNICEF, 2005). Late enrolment may be attributed to the child's poor health or nutritional status, gender, household conditions, or in certain cases, distances to school (Pridmore, 2007). Also, late school enrolment creates the phenomenon of over age in grade, a situation which pupils may find schooling unappealing owing to the pressure of feeling inferior to younger classmates. In addition, unfriendly classroom environment is sometimes created by teachers' attitude to overage pupils. These two conditions together with the use of a curriculum that is not designed conspire to push children out of school.

### **2.7 Summary of the Literature Review**

The reviewed literature above identified various factors influencing school dropout. Understanding why pupils drop out is difficult task because, as with other forms of educational achievement, it is influenced by an array of internal and external factors. There is no single prominent risk factor predicting drop out. Rather there are numerous factors that when in combination with each other raise

the probabilities of children leaving school early. The factors identified in the literature fall into four categories related to the individual, family, schools and communities. This review was conducted in general for both boys and girls, considering that much of the available literature focuses on issues affecting the education of the girl child. Literature on the boy and girl child alike in Bungoma North District is little compared to that of either the boy or the girl child. Wamalwa (2011) did a study on the institutional factors affecting levels of discipline of the boy child in public primary schools in Bungoma District, Kenya. A study on the factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District, Kenya, has not been done. This study therefore sought to fill this gap.

## **2.8 Theoretical Framework**

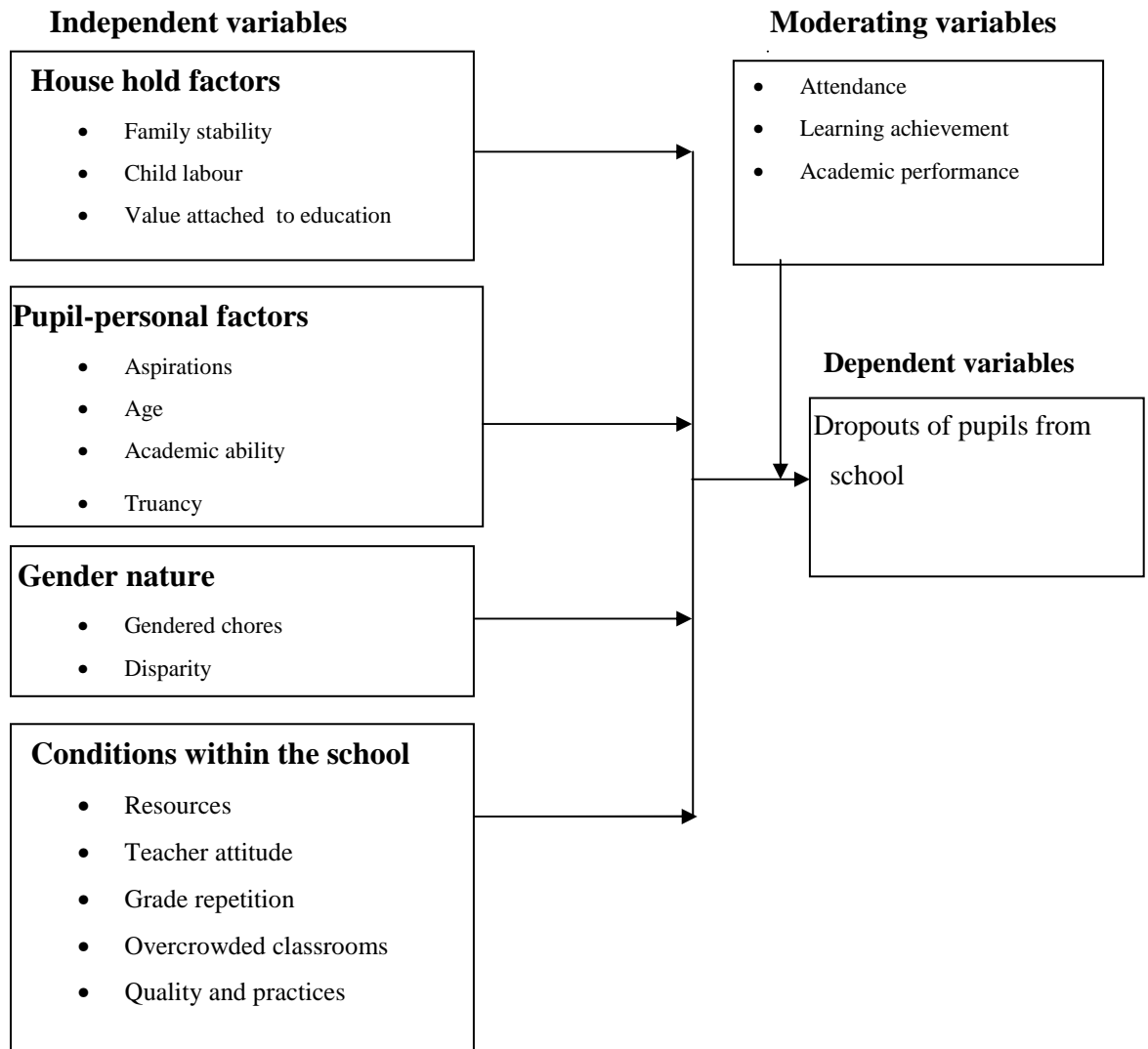
The underpinning framework of the study was Bertalanffy (1968) System Theory. He defined a system as a set of elements standing in interrelation. A major assumption of the system is that all systems are purposeful and goal directed. The school system exists to achieve objectives through the collective efforts of individuals embedded in larger community and institutional settings. School dropout rates are one such phenomenon that can be explained as a product of dysfunctional elements within the education system. Using the system theory perspective, there are three general classes of factors that affect the dropout rates in a school system. These are the characteristics of the pupils entering the system

(input factors), the characteristics, policies, and the programs of the system itself (process factors) and the economic and social conditions of the surrounding community, state and nation (environmental factors). Dropout is an output or result of the school's educational activity and function of the processes and environmental factors associated with the system. These elements do not operate in isolation but are interrelated making school dropout a process. This theory therefore shows how a school as a social system can function in dynamic equilibrium with their environments to regulate the dropout process.

## **2.9 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of this study is as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The Conceptual Framework of the Study



**Source: Author**

The conceptual framework shows that context variables such as the value attached to education by the house hold, conditions within the school, and the personal characteristics of the child serves to influence whether the child stays in school or not. The school system relies on inputs for its production purposes. Such inputs include the characteristics of the child such as age, motivation, academic ability, a

relevant curriculum and adequacy of teaching and learning resources. The interaction of these variables serves to determine if the child stays in school or drops out of school. The context variables influence the interactions both at school or classroom level. The output of this interactions, depending on the relative strength of various inputs, the processes at school and classroom level, and the relative influence of the context variables either reduce or encourage dropout.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District. This chapter describes the general approach and specific techniques adopted to address the objectives for the study. The chapter also discusses the research design, target population, the sample and sampling techniques and research instruments. Finally, the procedure that was used for the administration of research instruments for the study and the techniques of data analysis employed were also discussed.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The descriptive research design was used for this study because, in the words of Creswell (2002), it is used to answer descriptive research questions such as ‘What is happening?’, ‘How is something happening?’ and ‘Why is something happening?’. These questions were applicable to issue under investigation. The researcher investigated the factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District. The specific descriptive design for this study was the survey type because the views of head teachers, classroom teachers and dropouts were solicited on school dropout relative to causes, its effects and how to deal with the phenomenon in the area under study.

### **3.3 Target Population**

Target population is defined as all the members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which a researcher wishes to generalize the results of the research study (Borg & Gall, 1989). By the end of 2012 education year, there were sixty seven Public Primary Schools in the district with a total of 11,121 pupils. The district had a total of 925 teachers and 67 head teachers. Considering that the district has 11,121 pupils currently enrolled and with an annual dropout rate of 4.2% among pupils, the average number of dropout was estimated to be 467 pupils. The study population therefore was 67 head teachers, 925 teachers and 467 children who had dropped out of school giving a total of 1459.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size**

Gay (1992) suggests that at least 10% of the population is a good representation where the population is large and 20% where the population is small. From the 1459 members of the target population, the researcher used proportionate sampling to select 295 respondents. This formed 20.2% of the target population, which is in line with Gay's (1992) recommendation. Using proportionate sampling, there were 15 head teachers, 185 teachers and 95 dropouts. Table 1 presents the sampling matrix.



Table 1: Sampling Matrix

<b>Category</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Sample size</b>
Head teachers	67	15
Teachers	925	185
Dropouts	467	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>1459</b>	<b>295</b>

Stratified sampling technique was used to select teachers and head teachers. Some of the dropouts were identified by head teachers and teachers and the identified dropouts helped to discover other dropouts across the zones. In this effect, the snowball method was used to identify the dropouts because they knew each other and once a dropout was identified, he/she became an automatic participant in the study.

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

The main tools of data collection for this study were the questionnaire and the interview schedules.

The questionnaire was used for data collection because it offers considerable advantages in the administration. Gay (1992) maintains that questionnaires give respondents freedom to express their views or opinion and also to make suggestions. It is also anonymous. Anonymity helps to produce more candid answers than is possible in an interview. The questionnaire for head teachers had

two sections. Section A collected the background information. The remaining section collected information related to gender, internal and external causes of dropout from school.

According to Gay (1992), an interview whether structured, semi-structured or unstructured offers an insight into respondents' memories and explanation of why things have to be what they are, as well as description of current problems and aspiration. The interview guide for teachers examined school factors that contribute to high rate of school dropout in the district. The questions sought among others, information on pupils' regularity to school, gender, parental participation and availability of materials needed for academic work.

The interview guide was also used to collect data from the dropouts. The items sought for, among other things, information on their personal data and why they have to drop out of school.

### **3.5.1 Validity of Instrument**

Validity is defined as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). All assessments of validity are subjective opinions based on the judgement of the researcher (Wiersma, 1995). According to Borg and Gall (1989) content validity of an instrument is improved through expert judgement. As such, the researcher sought assistance of his supervisors, who as experts in research, helped to improve

content validity of the instrument. To further establish instrument validity, the researcher conducted a pilot study in the neighbouring Kimilili-Bungoma District among six head teachers who were not included in the final study population. From each of the six head teachers were stationed, four teachers were randomly selected for the pilot study. Therefore the pilot study participants were 6 head teachers and 24 teachers, giving a total of 30 cases, which is a minimum number of cases required for conducting statistical analysis as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003).

### **3.5.2 Reliability of the Instrument**

Reliability according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trial. In order to establish the reliability of the questionnaire of this study, the results of the pilot study were compiled to enhance the reliability of the instrument and help gauge the clarity and relevance of the instruments. Items found to be inadequate for measuring the variables were either discarded or fine-tuned to improve the quality of the instruments. As such the instrument captured all the required data. The Test-Retest reliability method was used to establish the extent to which the content of the instrument is consistent in eliciting the same response every time the instrument is administered. This involves administering the same instrument twice to the same group of subjects with a time lapse between the first and second

test. This was done using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient formula indicated below;

$$\frac{\sum xy - \frac{(\sum x)(\sum y)}{N}}{\sqrt{\left[ \sum x^2 - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{N} \right] \left[ \sum y^2 - \frac{(\sum y)^2}{N} \right]}}$$

Where:  $\sum xy$  = Sum of the gross product of the variables of each variable.

$(\sum x)(\sum y)$  = Product of the sum of x and the sum of y.

$\sum$  = Sum of the value.

The correlation coefficient of the study was 0.68. According to Kiess and Bloomquist (1985) a minimum correlation co-efficient of 0.65 is recommended as indicating that an instrument is reliable, and therefore our coefficient lies within this range.

### 3.6 Data Collection Procedure

A research permit was obtained from the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST) after approval by the university. Thereafter the offices of the District Education Officer and District Commissioner for Bungoma North were contacted before the start of the study. The selected head teachers were visited in their schools and the questionnaires administered to the respondents. The head

teachers were given about two weeks to fill in the questionnaires after which the filled in questionnaires were collected. Within the same period the researcher made appointments through the head teachers to interview teachers and dropouts.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Techniques**

After all data was collected, the researcher conducted data cleaning, which involved identification of incomplete or inaccurate responses, which were corrected to improve the quality of the responses. After data cleaning, the data was coded and categorized according to the items in the questionnaire and interview guides. This research yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was analysed qualitatively using content analysis based on analysis of meanings and implications emanating from respondents' information and documented data. As observed by Gray (2004) qualitative data provides rich descriptions and explanations that demonstrate the chronological flow of events as well as often leading to serendipitous (chance) findings. On the other hand, quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics. The selected data were analysed using mainly percentages. Percentages were easy to calculate and understand. Above all, percentages have the advantage of making findings known to a variety of people who need to be informed. Frequency tables and bar graph were used to enhance the presentation of data.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District. The chapter presents the results that emerged from data collection.

#### **4.2 Questionnaire Return Rate**

All the 15 questionnaires dispersed to the head teachers were returned translating to 100% response rate. Therefore the data collected was very reliable and acceptable as Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) notes that a response rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% or more is even better for social research. The demographic characteristics of the study were first presented then the presentation of results was done according to section dedicated to each of the four objectives that guided the study.

#### **4.3 Background Characteristics of School Dropouts**

Preceding the main research result is the background information on the dropouts. The background characteristic of dropout which was considered relevant to causes

of the school dropout was their age distribution, class at which they dropped out of school and their gender. The three issues are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Background Characteristic of School Dropouts

Age of participants		Class level at which they Dropped out		Gender of dropout	
Age in years	No.of pupils (%)	Class level	No. of pupils (%)	Gender	No.of pupils (%)
Below 8	–	–	–	–	–
08-11	19(20.0)	Lower primary	15(15.8)	Boys/Girls	10/5
12-13	36(37.5)	Middle primary	35(36.8)	Boys/Girls	23/12
14-18	40(42.5)	Upper primary	45(47.4)	Boys/Girls	16/29
Above18	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>95(100)</b>		<b>95(100)</b>		<b>95(100)</b>

From Table 4.1, the age distribution of dropout is displayed. It is seen that 20% of the dropouts fell between the ages of 08-11, 37.5% were within the age of 12-13 while 42.5 % of them were within the age of 14 -18. However none of the dropout was below 8years or above 18years. What possibly accounts for none of them being below eight years is that children below this age are not physically strong enough to support the family in the house or in farming activities. Again dropout was high among ages of 14-18 followed by those in 12-13. The reason for

the high dropout at these ages can be attributed to the fact that they are physically strong enough to engage in economic activities to support the family and also help and take care of younger sibling most especially the girls.

Also dropouts who were 18 years or above would have gone beyond primary school before dropping out. In the literature, the issue of age is not a significant factor in pupils dropping out of school because there are immediate causes such as poor family background, among others that would influence the child to dropout to help the family's income generating activities which would be considered more important than going to school.

The second background characteristic that was of concern to this study was the level at which pupils dropped out of school. The table shows that 47.4% of the pupils dropped out at the upper primary level, 36.8% at the middle primary level and 15.8% at the lower primary level. Once again, it must be noted that the level at which pupils drop out of school is not an independent factor, rather it is dependent on factors as weak family support, poor academic performance, poor school quality and low value of education (Glennester, Kremer, Mbiti and Takavarasha, 2011 ). Table 4.1 again shows that, 10% of boys dropped out at ages 8 and 11 while 5% girls' dropped out between the same ages. Again, between 12 and 13 years 23% boys and 12% girls dropped out respectively. At ages 14 and 18, 16% boys and 29% girls' dropped out from school.



On the average, more girls dropped out of school at the upper primary level than boys but at the middle and the low level boys dominated. The reason for the high girls' dropout rate at the upper primary level could be that at the upper primary level the girls had come of age and could be pregnant which is possible during the teen age years. Another reason is the value society puts on female education as opposed to males so if the family is to choose between boys and girls, they would opt for the boy and the girl would have to stop schooling because the family cannot afford to pay the school expenses. These suppositions are largely given credence by Kane (2004) and ActionAid International Kenya (2011) whose research findings alluded to those factors.

#### **4.4 Demographic Data of Head teachers and Teachers**

The study sought demographic data of the respondents including gender, level of education and work experience. The study was conducted among 15 head teachers and 185 teachers. There were 123 male and 62 female teachers who participated in the study representing 66.5% and 33.5% respectively. As for the head teachers, there were 66.7% males and 33.3% females who participated. This indicates a slight gender balance in school management which meets the Kenyan Constitutional (Republic of Kenya, 2010) requirement of at least 30% of either gender in public appointments. This finding also indicates a slight improvement to

NASMLA (2008) National Survey, which found male head teachers were 85.4% while 14.6% were female.

The study sought to find out the education levels of head teachers and teachers in the study. Table 4.2 shows the respondents level of education.

Table 4.2 Education level of the Head teachers and Teachers

<b>Educational level</b>	<b>Head teachers</b>		<b>Teachers</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Master's Degree	0	0.0	1	0.5
Bachelor's Degree	4	26.7	30	16.2
Diploma	11	73.3	63	34.2
P1 Certificate	0	0.0	90	48.6
Others	0	0.0	1	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4.2 shows that the majority of the head teachers 73.3% had Diploma in education while 26.7% had Bachelors' Degrees. Majority of the teachers 48.6% had P1 certificate, followed by 34.2% who had a Diploma in education 16.2% of the teachers had Bachelors' Degrees. Only 0.5% had a master degree and other qualification each. Confronting factors influencing high dropout rates in primary schools requires adequate skills especially for management. Such skills can be

attained through formal trainings and it is encouraging to note that all headteachers had a minimum of a diploma in education. Robbins (2003) notes the skills needed for effective management can be grouped into three broad categories, namely; technical skills ,human skills and conceptual skills .Technical skills refers to the categories of skills which enable the manager to use resources and scientific knowledge and to apply techniques in order to accomplish the objectives of the system. Human skills refer to the ability to work well with other people and achieve results through them. Conceptual skills refer to the cognitive capacity to perceive the system in its totality and the relationship between parts thereof. These skills manifest themselves in educational administrators being able to analyse and diagnose relatively complicated situations in the system whilst at the same time being able to visualize the inter-relationships of various units of system (Robbins, 2003). Training of school administrators and teachers is essential in enabling them acquire these skills and thereby implement educational programmes competently.

The head teachers and teachers were asked to indicate their work experience in the school, to which they responded as shown in Figure 4.1

Figure 4.1 Work experience for Head teachers and Teachers

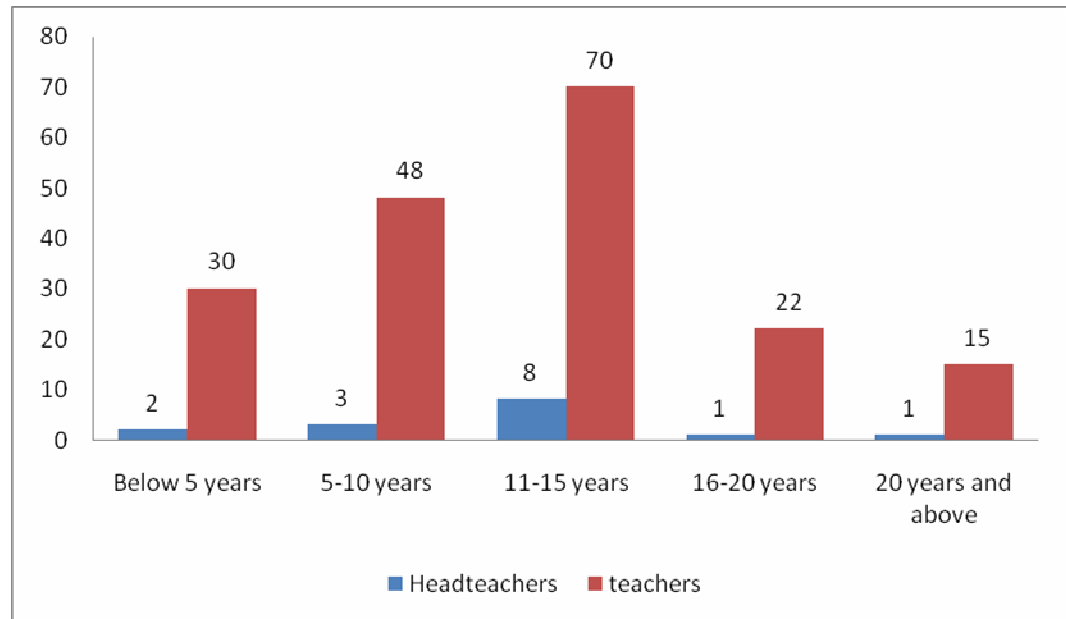


Figure 4.1 shows that there were 13.3% of head teachers who had worked less than five years, 20.0% who had worked 5-10 years, 53.3% who had worked 11-15 years and 6.7% each who had worked 16-20 years and 20 years and above. As for teachers, 16.3% had worked for 0-5 years, 25.9% had worked 5-10 years, 37.8% had worked 11-15 years, 11.9% had worked 16-20 years and 8.1% had worked 20 years and above. Based on these results, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents had worked for a long time, so they had enough experience to do their jobs accordingly, and were in a position to give insights into the factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools.

#### 4.5 The house-hold factors which influences high dropout rate in schools

The first research question sought to find out some of the major house-hold factors that influence high dropout rates in the area. The responses to this question are discussed under one main heading – external factors. Basically, external factors are the home related issues that influence school dropout. In other words, external factors are concerned with the socio-economic background of dropouts. The views of head teachers, teachers and dropouts are presented in the same table to ensure concise presentation of ideas. Consequently, the responses elicited from respondents on the external factors are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Responses on the external factors that influence the Dropout Process

Factors	Responses		
	Head teachers	Teachers	Dropouts
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Poor family background	15 (100)	157(85.0)	95 (100)
Parental attitude	15 (100)	150 (81.1)	60(32.4)
Weak family support	13 (86.7)	–	72 (75.8)
Low value put on schooling	10 (66.7)	111(60.0)	–
Child labour	14 (93.3)	167 (90.3)	85 (89.5)
Truancy	11(65.6)	130 (69.7)	24 (25.3)

From Table 4.3, the most prominent external factor that influences the school dropout is poor family background of drop outs. It was seen that 85% of teachers

and all head teachers and the dropouts indicated that the drop out situation in the district is influenced largely by the fact that the dropout had come from poor family background. This finding is situated within the poor family socialisation and structural strains theories which suggest that the most prominent and consistent effect from the family of the child academic success has been the parents' own educational levels (Janosz, 1996).

Again, the poor family socialisation theory according to Hymes et al. (1996) points out that academic, family, school and social variables may all play a role in the decision for child from poor family background to leave school early. Similarly, Rumberger (1993) notes that studies that focus on the demographic factors have indicated that dropouts are more likely to be boys than girls and that they are more likely to come from families of low socio- economic status.

One would argue that in Kenya these days, poverty cannot be used as plausible explanation for school dropout because the government takes over a chunk of school related costs at the basic level. But respondents explained that in spite of the capitation grant there are some hidden costs which families are expected to bear which most of the families can hardly afford. Issues of school uniform, PTA dues and other recurrent expenditures prevent most children from regularly attending school. This eventually leads to termination.

It seems that all the other factors that come under the external factors are interrelated with poor family background. For instance, Hunt (2008) stressed that dropping out of school is a process and not one single event. Ananga (2010) buttressed Hunt's point further indicating that as children grow older, the opportunity cost of educating them becomes larger, hence increasing the pressure on the children to work and earn income for the household as opposed to spending time in education.

On the issue of child labour, 167 teachers representing 90.3%, 14 head teachers representing 93.3% and 85 dropouts representing 89.5% agreed that it was a factor that influences school dropout in Bungoma North District. Respondents explained that, sometimes children have to help their parents on the farm to enable them raise money to pay for one school item or another. When they fail to get the money, the child remains on the farm and does not return to school because the school would not accept him/her unless he/she produced the item required. In some circumstances too, the children would assist their parents in trading business especially on market days or better sell milk in the morning before going to school. Sometimes, after trading in the morning, the children get tired and late for school, and because they will be punished for coming to school late, they refuse to attend.

From Table 4.3, it is evident that 111 teachers representing 60.0% and 10 (66.7%) of the head teachers shared this view. No dropout agreed to this suggestion. The dropouts insisted that it was poverty and not that they put low value on education. Teachers, on their part insisted that parents in spite of their poor state can prioritize so that their children can come to school on time and not skip school because the children went out selling milk in the morning. Moreover, the children can help parents in the evening when they have closed from school and not to be working on the farm during school hours. This is further given credence by Ananga's (2010) study in Ghana and Dachi and Garret (2003) in Tanzania. Ananga found that in Ghana, specific work - related tasks, for example, full time child care and work in peak agricultural times often clash with schooling times. In Tanzania, child labour is described as the main reason behind absenteeism, repetition and dropout cases.

Closely linked to the low value put on education is the factor of parental attitude towards school. On this issue 32.4% of dropouts agreed with all (100%) of the head teachers and 81.1% of teachers that poor parental attitude can be blamed for the incidences of school dropout in the district. The children had explained that whenever they asked their parents for money to buy school inputs, the parents would insult them and turn them off, saying they do not have anybody to help them so they can come and stay at home. When this persists the children drop out. The teachers pointed out that parents in spite of the poverty, manage to spend



over Kshs.20, 000 per boy child during circumcision ceremony while neglecting their children school welfare. For them, this is poor parental attitude that smacks of misplaced priority.

Another related issue to poor parental attitude towards the children's schooling is weak family support as confirmed by Wamalwa (2011). Weak family support amounts to helping one's children in doing their homework, directing them to prepare for school; reading over their notes and giving the needed financial assistance instead of loading them with house chores which tend to weigh them down. The girls are the most affected when it comes to house chores, especially, cooking and babysitting which eventually affect their academic performance. Of this issue, 86.7% of the head teachers and 75.8% of the dropout held the views that weak family support was a factor in the school dropout situation of the district.

The question of one's family background is relevant to the dropout process. In their study, Rumberger and Thomas (2000) stated that family background is widely recognized as the single most important contributor to success in the school. Again, a family where parental unemployment or irregular employment is the norm, it contributes to the possibility of dropping out (Farrington, 1980). Moreover, families overcoming or experiencing marital disharmony such as parental divorce or separation or families where parents do not insist on their

children attending school or take no notice of their absence and do not insist on prompt attendance to school as manifested by their children oversleeping, being late and dislike school journeys are more likely to drop out of school (Glewwe & Moulin, 2009). On the other hand children have the needed support to succeed in school (Govender & Stevin, 2004).

The last external factor, which respondents considered as one of the causes of school dropout was children playing truancy. On this factor, 69.75% of teachers, 65.6% of the head teachers and 25.3% of dropouts subscribe to it. Teachers and head teachers pointed out some of the dropouts nowadays are uncontrollable because no matter the punishment is meted out on them, they would still not conform to the acceptable standards of behaviour and would drop out of school. What has become common these days is that these stubborn pupils would be seen at video centres and pool game joints, of course operated by some members of the communities. Such children steal and use the money to patronize film watching during school hours. The pupils who agreed with the truancy factor also gave similar explanations but hastened to state that they dropped out of school not because they were truant but for factors beyond their control.

The truancy factor is explained by the general system theory. Using the general system theory to explain school dropout situations, Boulding (as quoted in Von Bertalanffy, 1968) state that there is a relationship between dysfunctional system and dropouts and these have consistently been reported in educational

literature. On their part, McGee and Newcomb (1992) emphasise that delinquent attitudes and behaviour are shown to be associated with low academic orientation. Lastly, it has been observed that early sexual activity leads to academic failure (Action Aid International, Kenya, 2011) Teenagers who are not doing well in school and have lower educational aspirations are more likely to have sex during adolescence than those faring better in school (ActionAid International Kenya, 2011) All the scenarios cited are possible in the district because watching of pornographic and violent films are not good for growing children who tend to exhibit violent attitude towards teachers if they are punished and eventually drop out from school . Besides, engaging in early sexual activity leading to pregnancy will result in school dropout among the girls who may not be able to return because of the high level of poverty.

With regards to the deviant affiliation theory, the possibility that a child whose friend is a deviant would turn up to become a deviant himself and dropout of school in the long run is high. This is because, as Gilmore, (1992) points out, it is an undeniable fact that peers tend to influence their friends' behaviour and development. More instructively Battin-Pearson and Newcomb (2002) hypothesize that low academic achievement would partially mediate the expected association between deviant affiliation and dropout. The results of the prediction proved to be true in the end; it was found that deviant affiliation had direct effect

on school dropout over and above the mediating influence of low academic achievement.

#### 4.6 Students' Personal factors which influence Dropout rates

The main concern of research question two was the possible characteristics school dropouts showed prior to dropping out from school completely.

To this end the views that were collated from respondents have been edited and are presented in Table 4.4

Table 4.4 Students' Personal Factors Influencing Dropout Rates

Personal factors of School Dropout	Responses		
	Head teachers N (%)	Teachers N (%)	Dropouts N (%)
Irregular school attendance	13 (86.7)	180 (97.3)	36 (37.9)
Continuous exhibition of truancy	12 (80.0)	148 (80.0)	28 (29.5)
Lateness to school	9 (60.0)	158 (85.5)	48 (50.5)
Continuous poor academic performance /grade repetition	14 (93.3)	133 (71.9)	71 (74.7)
Non-payment of school levies	12 (80.0)	10 (66.7)	67 (70.5)
Continuous engagement of children in trading activities	15 (100.0)	185 (100.0)	35 (36.8)
Continuous engagement of children in farming activities	15 (100.0)	18 (98.4)	43 (45.3)
Children selling after school	8 (53.3)	110 (59.5)	33 (34.7)

From the table above, eight signs (characteristics) are listed but it should be noted that most of them are interrelated. For instance, children selling before attending school everyday results in lateness to school. In the same vein, engaging children in trading and farming activities also result in absence from school. Also, continuous absence from school could result in poor academic performance and grade repetition and all these could result in school dropout.

Table 4.4 shows that 86.7% of head teachers, 97.3% of teachers as well as 37.9% of the dropouts are of the view that irregular school attendance is one of the foremost precursors to school dropout. They explained that when a pupil is about to drop out he/she rarely attends school. Besides, several results had pointed out that one of the causes of school dropout is irregular attendance or continuous absenteeism. In giving credence to this issue Sarker (2004:12), indicated that students who are not at school cannot receive instruction. This is because academic achievement scores are correlated with school attendance. Therefore excessive school attendance and very low achievement are other characteristics of school dropout. Roseblum (2008:569) even considers 'irregular school attendance' a hidden dropout and contents that "hidden dropout or irregular school attendance may be the first stage of school dropout"

Other personal characteristics to school dropout is continuous exhibition of truancy by pupils. On this score 80% of head teachers and teachers as well as

29.5% of dropout agreed that continuous display of truancy in the school or in the house is a sign that a pupil would drop out from school if care was not taken. Battin – Pearson and Newcomb (2002) hypothesized that general deviance or specific aspects of deviant behaviour would have direct effects on school dropout. Some of the deviant behaviours that are likely to affect the child's academic performance and eventual school dropout are early sex, early pregnancy, stealing, gambling, fighting, drug use and patronage of video centres during school hours. If a pupil consistently comes to school late, he/she may be truant or not. This is because the clear display of truancy begins with coming to school late and when the culprit is punished he/she decides to skip school altogether and would come to school as and when he/she wishes. Another angle of coming to school late can be seen from a point where the pupil stays with extended family relatives like aunt, grandparents or a step mother and he/she is required to do other house chores that cuts into school reporting time. Such pupils are at risk of dropping out through no fault of theirs.

From Table 4.4, 36.8% of the pupils drop out of school because they engage in trading activities. The issue of a child selling before going to school is another factor that contributes to school dropout in Bungoma North District. This factor is situated within the context whereby the child has to help the parents fend for the family. It is a normal practice to see children selling in the mornings before they go to school with such children often coming to school late. In some instances, for

fear of being punished for coming to school late, some of the children will not come at all and will eventually become deviants and drop out altogether. It is clear then that such activities conflict with the child's school times, hence the argument that child labour impacts negatively on education, as noted by Duryea (2003).

From Table 4.4 it was seen that all head teachers, 98.4% of teachers and 45.3% of dropouts concurred on the fact that continuous engagement of children in farming activities during school time is a recipe school dropout. The question is what motivates parents to engage children in trading or farming? The answer may be that the children have to help their family to fend for the family.

The last factor that respondents agreed that acted as a factor to school dropout in Bungoma North District is non-payment of school levies. Table 4.4 shows that 80% of head teachers, 66.7% of teachers and 70.5% of dropouts think that children's inability to pay school levies is a factor to school dropout. As a result of the Government of Kenya's policy on the capitation grant, pupils do not pay school fees but each school charges parents with the view of mobilizing funds to complement government efforts. The consensus among respondents is that children's inability to pay the levies a school charges leads to absenteeism and eventual dropping out. This issue can be linked with family income and economic background of families. Highlighting on the issue, Hunt (2008), Lucas and Mbiti

(2010) found that household income is an important factor in determining access to education as schooling potentially incurs a range of costs, both upfront and hidden.

#### **4.7 The gender influence on School Dropout rates in primary schools**

The third research question sought to find out if there was any gender differential in relation to school dropout cases in Bungoma North District. From the responses collated the answer to that question was ‘Yes’. In line with this response, Table 4.5 presents the gendered nature of school dropout in the district as at the time of data collection.

Table 4.5 Gender influence on School Dropout rates in primary schools

<b>Level at which a pupil dropped out</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
Lower primary	10	5	15
Middle primary	23	12	35
Upper primary	16	29	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>95</b>

It is clear from Table 4.5 that out of 95 dropouts who were contacted, 49(51.6%) of them were boys and 46 (48.4%) were girls. The significant thing to note is that at the upper primary level the proportion of girls as opposed to boys is high. The reasons that were given for this high rate were that most of the girls became



pregnant. They were made to take care of younger siblings, help their parents or guardians in trading activities while a few of them worked on the farm. Regarding the boys, they were mostly truants who did not do well academically and so were made to repeat class and that led to drop out. The reasons given by respondents are in tandem with research findings.

In different studies, Kane (2004) Njau and Wamahiu (1994) and Coulomb (1997) established the fact that there is gender differential in school dropout due to some reasons. On their part Njau and Wamahiu (1994) found that girls drop out of school to look after younger siblings, which is a fact in Kenya. According to Kane (2004) many a times girls are engaged in duties are likely to affect their schooling compared to boys. This affects their academic performance which may lead to grade repetition.

Similarly, Kashu (2006:47) found that in many contexts, girls take on a heavier work load including domestic/ household chores, whereas boys are more likely to be involved in agricultural duties and formal labour market, “it can also be the case that girls are employed in traditional agriculture”.

One pertinent reason why more girls seemed to have dropped out at the upper primary level than boys is the value that society places on girl’s formal education. Teachers respondents’ and a section of the girls who dropped out indicated that

because of the family’s inability to provide for their school needs, it was decided that boys should continue schooling whilst the girls helped in the house chores, which is likely to boost the family’s income. The ultimate reason, is that, the girls will be married off by someone or may become pregnant and drop out. It is also true that some of the girls become pregnant and could not continue because by the time they delivered, they felt shy to go back to the same class where their peers had moved on.

#### **4.8 The conditions within the school that influence the School Dropout Process in primary schools**

The fourth research question sought to find the school-based factors that influences the school dropout process in Bungoma North District.

Table 4.6 Responses on the internal factors that influence the Dropout Process in primary schools

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Responses</b>		
	<b>Head teachers N (%)</b>	<b>Teachers N (%)</b>	<b>Dropouts N (%)</b>
Poor academic performance	15 (100.0)	185 (100.0)	90 (94.7)
Teacher attitude	8 (53.3)	100.0 (54.1)	63 (66.3)
Corporal punishment	–	–	70 (73.7)
Distance to school	7 (46.7)	80 (43.2)	42 (44.2)
Poor school quality	5 (33.3)	–	92 (96.8)
Lack of teaching and learning resources	12 (80.0)	140 (75.7)	72 (75.8)

First and foremost, it is evident from Table 4.6 that poor academic performance is a major school related cause of school dropout in the Bungoma North District. This is because all the head teachers and teachers' respondents' agreed that poor academic performance has been a major contributing factor to basic school dropout in the district. In the same vein, 94.7% of the dropouts accepted that it was because of their poor academic performance that they dropped out from school. The same information was amplified by the D.E.O Bungoma North District who alleged that the District has been performing dismally over a longer period as shown by K.C.P.E results where the District was ranked last (2012) in the Bungoma County as reported by head teachers. Research clearly shows a correlation between poor academic performance and school dropout. For instance, Rumberger and Larson (1998) found in a study that academic achievement, as reflected in grades and test scores is a factor in pupil's retention in school. Similarly, it had been found that pupils, who have poor academic achievement in school, are less likely to graduate or complete that segment of schooling (Farrington, 1980).

Again, Table 4.6 shows that teachers' attitude is one of the internal factors that could contribute to school dropout in the Bungoma North District. Truly so, it was seen that 53.3% of head teachers, 54.1% of teachers and 66.3% of dropouts agreed that teacher attitude contributed somehow to some of the pupils dropping out from school. Research conducted in Kenya and elsewhere affirms that teacher

attitude is a contributing factor to school dropout. For example, Oketch et al (2010) found in a study that some school-related factors influenced school dropout and these included teacher attitudes. Giving a more detail report about teacher attitude, Smith (2003) found that in some schools in Zimbabwe's Southern province, teachers did not prepare lessons, had no schemes of work, and left pupil's assignments unmarked. He went on to state that such classroom practices and implicit lack of in-service teacher development has serious implications for pupils' retention in the school. However, other research conducted in Ethiopia and Guinea found that teachers were more positive about the participation, interest and intelligence of boys rather than girls (Colclough et al, 2000). This state of affair in the estimation of Ames (2004) is that cases where it is believed girls will drop out from school early becomes an attitude of self-fulfilling prophecy when the girls eventually drop out of school.

Also, respondents (33.3% head teachers and 96.8% dropouts) believed that children had dropped out from school because of the poor quality of schools in the area. In the same light, the table shows that 80% of head teachers, 75.7% of teachers and 75.8% of dropouts think that lack of teaching and learning resources are also responsible. In both cases, earlier research indicates their contribution to the problem, for example, in the case of Bungoma North District, Wamalwa (2011) found that parents did not consider the education available in the community to be worthwhile because the quality of the village schools was not

high enough to warrant the investment of time, energy and economic resources at their disposal.

In the view of Glewwe, Kremer and Moulin (2009), availability of school resources such as textbooks, desks and blackboards has been found to influence school dropout since for the teaching and learning process to be effective, resources have to be in adequate supply. The indication is that in the absence of the badly needed teaching and learning materials such as text books, libraries, reference materials and audio visual aids for use by teachers and students, those who cannot afford to procure them on their own drop out from that school and find alternative or leave school altogether. The issue of trained teachers cannot be ruled out since most of the teachers in deprived communities are untrained hence the high dropout rate in those areas.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District. This chapter of the research project covers the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

#### **5.2 Summary of Study**

The study sought to establish the factors that influence high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District. The study was guided by four objectives that focused on the house-hold factors, students' personal factors, gender factors and school based factors that influence high dropout rates among pupils.

The results of the study show that there are two main causal factors which influence high dropout rates, which are internal and external factors. The external factors emanated from the dropouts' home and family background and the society where the dropout lived. The most pre-eminent of the external factors are poor family background, child labour and truancy. Other external factors are parental

attitude, weak family support and low value put on education by the community where the dropout hailed from. The predominant external factors is poverty in which 100% head teachers and dropouts and 85% of teachers agreed to it. The internal factors are attributed to the school environment and educational policy. These factors include poor academic performance; distance to school, teachers' attitude and lack of teaching and learning resources were the most potent as far as the causes of school dropout was concerned.

There are frequent precursors to dropping out, where children could be seen to be at risk or vulnerable to early withdraw. The study elicits responses on the student's personal factors to the school dropout challenge in Bungoma North District. From the results, there emerge eight signs that are very obvious in the conduct of the school dropout. The factors include; irregular school attendance, continuous exhibition of truancy, poor academic performance /grade repetition, non- payment of school levies, engagement in work before going to school, continuous engagement of children in farming and trading activities and late attendance at school.

On gender differentials in the school dropout case the results show that the overall school dropout rate was 51.6% boys and 48.4% girls. The significant different is that at the upper primary level, more girls dropout while at both lower and middle primary level more boys drop out than girls. The reason for more girls dropping out at the upper primary level are that most of the girls became pregnant, were

made to take care of young sibling, help their parents or guardians in trading activities as a few of them work on the farm. The reason common to boys and girls are poor academic performance leading to grade repetition. Besides, truancy is a major factor in the case of boys dropping out.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

This study has shown that dropping out of school cannot be attributed to one single event. Rather school dropout is influenced by arrange of interacting factors, some of which are specific to the individual child. These factors include parental irresponsibility and socio-economic background of the family. Apart from these general factors, there were other external factors that could be blamed on society and the individual dropout themselves. Additionally, the internal factors that emanate from the school environment and educational policies accounted for the incidence of school dropout in Bungoma North District.

In particular previous research indicates that poverty in its various guises often influences high dropout rates. This appears to influence both school demand (e.g. inability to pay fees and other costs, pressure for children to work) and school supply (school serving poorer communities often have lower quality indicators, fewer resources). Thus households from poor backgrounds who struggle to send their children to school often find the educational provision they receive lacking increasing the pressure on children to withdraw.



Certainly, incidence of school dropout has some negative consequences for the individual, the family, the society and entire nation. Thus, the consequences of school dropout to the individual, the family and the nation are enormous. In the view of these, it is imperative for stakeholders in the education delivery process to put efforts on the ground and come out with pragmatic measures to deal with the issues once and for all.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

To ensure the reduction in dropout rates, the following recommendation are made:

- i. Make pre-school free and compulsory to help alleviate learning pressure in primary one.
- ii. Schools and community members need to work closely with the government towards enforcing a ban on child labour.
- iii. There is need for improving monitoring, accountability mechanisms and incentives in schools to help improve confidence of all stakeholders.
- iv. Provide gender friendly facilities like sanitary pads to girls to improve enrolment and participation of students in schools.

- v. Policy on compulsory universal basic education should be localized, thus empowering county government to ensure that children are enrolled and attend school regularly.

### **5.5 Suggestions for future Research.**

In the light of the finding of this project, it is recommended that the following areas must be considered for future research.

- i. Dropping into school: while the focus is on dropping out, there is less known about how children can be retained in school, the difficulties they face and how schools encourage/ discourage this.
- ii. Retention: why some children stay and others leave school.
- iii. The role of teachers and head teachers in facilitating and encouraging the retention of students within the school system and/ or pushing students out of schools.

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APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The University of Nairobi,  
College of Education and External Studies,  
School of education,  
P. O. Box 30197,  
Nairobi.

The head teacher

\_\_\_\_\_ Primary school

Dear Sir/Madam,

**REF: PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA IN YOUR SCHOOL**

I am a student at the University of Nairobi currently pursuing a Masters' degree in Educational Planning. As part of my assessment, i am required to carry out research on "**Factors influencing high dropout rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District, Kenya**". Your school has been selected for the study. The purpose of this letter is to request you to kindly allow me to carry out the study in your school. Your identity will remain confidential. Please try to be as honest as possible in your responses and ensure that you attempt all questions.

Yours faithfully,

Namunga James Sitati

E55/78912/2009

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADTEACHERS

**TOPIC: FACTORS INFLUENCING HIGH DROPOUT RATES AMONG PUPILS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BUNGOMA NORTH DISTRICT, KENYA.**

**Please this research is solely for an academic purpose and would therefore be treated with the necessary confidentiality. Kindly respond to the following questions in a free and frank manner.**

**Section A**

1. What is your gender? Male [ ] female [ ]
2. What is your highest academic qualification?  
Med [ ] Bed [ ] Dip [ ] P1 [ ] others (specify) .....
3. What is your experience in headship? .....(Years)
4. How many members of staff (teachers) are there in your school? Male[ ]  
Female [ ]
5. Indicate the academic qualifications of the teachers in your school.  
P1 [ ] Dip/Ed. [ ] Degree [ ] others (specify).....

**Section B: Causes of School Dropout**

6. Indicate the current number of pupils in your school?  
Boys [ ] Girls [ ] Total [ ]
7. How is dropout a problem in your school?  
.....

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

8. Were the pupils officially enrolled in this school?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

9. If yes, do you still have their records?.....

10. Would you please state how the factors listed below lead to pupil dropout in  
your school.

School factors

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

Home factors

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

Individual factors

.....

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

11. Are there cases of dropout due to overage or underage in your school?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

12. If the answer in number 11 is yes, what do you plan to do to check this in your school?

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

13. What school policy on age at admission does your school practice in grade one?

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

14. Is there gender differential in dropout?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

15. If the answer in number 14 is yes, what do you think is the explanation?

.....  
.....

.....

16. Do dropouts show any sign when they want to drop out?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

17. If the answer in number 16 is yes, kindly give some of the signs they exhibit to indicate that they want to dropout?

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

18. What does your school do when you identify such children?

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

19. What become of children who drop out?

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

20. In your opinion what must be done to minimize the problem?

.....  
.....

**Thank you for your co-operation.**



APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

**TOPIC: FACTORS INFLUENCING HIGH DROPOUT RATES AMONG PUPILS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BUNGOMA NORTH DISTRICT**

**Please this interview is solely for an academic purpose and would therefore be treated with the necessary confidentiality. Kindly respond to the following questions in a free and frank manner**

Name of school .....

Number of years taught in this school.....

Gender: .....

1. Once pupils are enrolled, do they all stay till they complete school?
2. If no please explain what happens?
3. Those who dropout do they have peculiar characteristics they exhibit?
4. If yes share with me some of those identified characteristics?
5. In your opinion how do these factors cause pupils to dropout out of school?
  - School factors
  - Home factors
  - Individual factors
6. Percentage wise, which pupils have shown high dropout out rate: boys or girls
7. Does your class have overage and underage pupils? Yes [ ] No [ ]

8. If yes, how do you treat overage pupils in the class?
9. What becomes of those who drop out of school?
10. What has been the attitude of parents towards their children's education?  
Any relationship with dropout?
11. What are the academic achievements and occupations of parents whose children drop out of school?
12. In your opinion what do you think must be done to minimize the problem?

**Thank you for your co-operation.**

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PUPILS

**TOPIC: FACTORS INFLUENCING HIGH DROPOUT RATES AMONG PUPILS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BUNGOMA NORTH DISTRICT**

**Please this interview is solely for an academic purpose and would therefore be treated with the necessary confidentiality. Kindly respond to the following questions in a free and frank manner.**

NAME:..... AGE:..... CLASS..... SEX M/F.....

1. Tell me the story from the beginning till now.
2. Why did you decide to drop out of school?
3. Whom are you staying with?
4. What work do they do?
5. Who takes care of you?
6. How many siblings do you have?
7. If you have to pay something at school, who pays?
8. What challenges do you face outside school that affects your decision about schooling?
9. How do the challenges facing you outside school make you feel about schooling?
10. How was your academic performance good/bad/average?
11. Did that contribute to you dropping out of school?
12. Do you have other friends who have dropped out of school?

13. What reasons have they given to their decisions to drop out of school?
14. Other critical issues that influence pupil's aspirations towards schooling.
15. Did you talk to somebody? What advice did the person give?
16. How did it help you?
17. When not in school what do you do?
18. Have you thought of going back to school? If yes give reasons if no give reasons.
19. Who ensures that you go back to school?
20. Has anyone in your household ever contacted with a school about you dropping out of school and to help you get back to school?
21. How did you see the school and the classroom environment?
22. Explain the kind of relationship that existed between pupils and teachers?
23. How were they treating you when teaching?
24. Did that kind of relationship contribute to you dropping out of school?

**Thank you for your co-operation**

APPENDIX V: LETTER OF AUTHORITY

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



**NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349, 254-020-2673550  
Mobile: 0713 788 787 , 0735 404 245  
Fax: 254-020-2213215  
When replying please quote  
secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA  
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref:

**NCST/RCD/14/013/891**

Date:

**3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2013**

James Sitati Namunga  
University of Nairobi  
P.O.Box 92-0902  
Kikuyu.

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application dated *23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2013* for authority to carry out research on *“Factors influencing high drop out rates among pupils in public primary schools in Bungoma North District, Kenya,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Bungoma North District** for a period ending **31<sup>st</sup> December, 2013.**

You are advised to report to **the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Bungoma North District** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

**DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.**  
**DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY**

Copy to:

The District Commissioner  
The District Education Officer  
Bungoma North District.



APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH PERMIT

PAGE 2 PAGE 3

Research Permit No. **NCST/RCD/14/013/891**

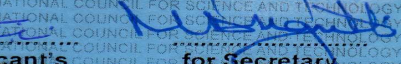
Date of issue **3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2013**

Fee received **KSH. 1,000**


**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**  
**Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution**  
**James Sitati Namunga**  
**of (Address) University of Nairobi**  
**P.O.Box 92-0902, Kikuyu**  
**has been permitted to conduct research in**

**Location**  
**Bungoma North District**  
**Western Province**

**on the topic: Factors influencing high drop out**  
**rates among pupils in public primary schools in**  
**Bungoma North District, Kenya.**


  
**Applicant's Signature for Secretary**  
**National Council for Science & Technology**

**for a period ending: 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2013.**



**CONDITIONS**

- 1. You must report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit**
- 2. Government Officers will not be interviewed with-out prior appointment.**
- 3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.**
- 4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.**
- 5. You are required to submit at least two(2)/four(4) bound copies of your final report for Kenyans and non-Kenyans respectively.**
- 6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice**

  
**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**  
**RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT**

**GPK60553mt10/2011 (CONDITIONS—see back page)**