

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIALWORK

**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE RETENTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN
MAPARASHA, KAJIADO COUNTY IN KENYA**

BY

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REG: C50/63195/2010**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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DECLARATION

This research Project is my original work and has not been submitted for any award in any university.

Sign.....Date.....

Rhoda Wanjiru Njue

Reg. No.: C50/63195/2010

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

Sign..... Date.....

Professor Edward K. Mburugu

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to the children of Maparasha, children are full of hope and dreams, and yes your dreams are valid.

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I am deeply grateful to Prof Mburugu, my advisor and mentor throughout my master's studies. His commitment to imparting peace and love into education, to raising complex issues of gender, culture, and justice and his relationship to education and to nurturing the diverse interests of their students was a constant inspiration for me. He helped me to discover the scholar within and directed my project and other coursework in a way that expanded my thinking about Rural Sociology and Community Development. I always appreciated his constructive comments and personal support of my academic endeavors. Much gratitude go to the many people who spared their time to respond to my questionnaire and to give their insights that was very helpful in this project. This research and the relationships I have been privileged to develop during this work have immeasurably enriched my life and my spirit.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the factors that influence retention of primary school pupils in Maparasha, Kajiado County in Kenya. The objectives of this study were (i) to establish the socio-cultural factors that influence pupils' retention in primary schools in Maparasha; (ii) to determine the socio-economic factors that influence pupils' retention in primary schools in Maparasha; (iii) to establish the school related factors that influence primary school retention in Maparasha; and (iv) to determine the factors that affect regular schooling in primary schools in Maparasha. The key finding of this study are that, cultural practices, parent's level of education, income level of the family and how pupils are treated in school affect retention of primary school pupils in Maparasha.

The study adopted a descriptive approach the sampling methodology employed, was simple random sampling to identify schools that would participate in the study and systematic random sampling to identify sample learners for the purposes of the study. It was that cultural factors, economic factors. And school setting has a significant impact on retention of pupils in Maparasha. The study recommends that community sensitization is required to help the community change its perception of education is transformed. Also, the study recommends engaging the community in income diversification projects so as to increase household income levels and hence encourage parents and guardians to retain their children in school. It further suggests that there is need to carry out detail research involving ways to reduce school dropout rates in Kenya.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Education is a significant investment that a country can make and enhancing accessibility to educational services is significant in the development of a nation (World Bank, 1993). This is because education affects socio-economic behavior such as productivity, living standards, health and demographic characteristics of any population. Similarly, it opens unlimited possibilities for society that would otherwise be denied namely; a better chance to lead healthy and productive lives, building strong and nurturing families, participating fully in civic affairs of their communities, molding morals and value creating culture and shaping history. In addition, it is solid foundation for progress and sustainable development, an inherent human rights and critical step towards dismantling the gender discrimination that impedes all other rights catalyzing freedom and democracy within borders and extending its reach as an agent of international peace and security (UNICEF, 2000). Therefore, societal responsibilities to make the provision of education to all people according to the nature of their individual's needs and capacity (Okech, 1993).

Adam Smith in his 'Wealth of Nations' is quoted to have stated "instructed and intelligent people are always more decent and orderly than ignorant and stupid ones; they are more disposed to examine situations and capable of seeing through the complains of interested factions and sedition and they upon this account, are less apt to be misled into wanton or unnecessary opposition to the measures of government (<http://wealthoo.htm>>content/wealth.htm). Diderot in the 18th century in France in support of basic education is quoted to have written "A peasant who knows how to read and write is more difficult to oppress" , as cited by (Kaguire, 2004)

The vitality of education to society was supported more by the United Nations Declaration proclaiming the right to education for all in 1948 (UNESCO, 1961) subsequent to that, education ministers of African region met in Addis Ababa in 1961 and resolved that there should be Universal Primary Education (UPE) and the eradication of illiteracy in Africa within twenty years (UNESCO, 1961). Unfortunately, the political and economic setbacks in Africa of the time deterred the implementation of the Addis Ababa proclamation in the 1970s and 1980s and this caused deterioration of education in many Third World Countries.

In the recent past, the education discourse shifted gradually towards an understanding of education as being important to political, economical and social ends instead of merely important to achieve economical and financial ends. Amartya Sen (in: Buchert, 2002), one of the important actors in this shift, states that the course of a life can be changed and improved by human capacities. Education and health are important to generate these capacities. A lack of these capacities implies deprivation and poverty. This indicates the close link between education and poverty, which furthermore implicates the significance of diminishing the gap between the poor and the rich within education.

The fact that the gap between the haves- and the have-nots of primary education still exists, has an impact on the life situation of many people in the world, also in Kenya. Primary education provides a foundation to achieve further educational possibilities. It realizes literacy, develops personal and social skills and strengthens the competence for later erudition (Achola & Pillai, 2002). In the 2008 Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (GMR), a question was raised: "Education for all by 2015: will we make it?" While it is a very simple and straightforward enquiry, the answers are highly complex. Ensuring that children enroll in school is one thing, but whether they will complete their education is another issue wholly. It

has been argued that most children in Africa are enrolled in school, but that the real problem concerns children dropping out of school (Dumas et al., 2004; Lewin, 2007).

Free primary education was already introduced in 1974, but the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) of the nineteen eighties required the Kenyan government to abolish it and to introduce the cost-sharing programme. This meant a direct decline of enrolment rates throughout the country. Suddenly, parents not only had to pay for uniforms, textbooks and other material, but they also had to deliver a contribution to “school construction and maintenance costs” (Vos et al., 2004). To achieve the MDG ‘education for all’, the Kenyan government reintroduced free primary education for everybody on January 6th 2003.

In 2002 the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government gained power under the leadership of Mwai Kibaki. Despite the earlier failed attempts to expand education in a sustainable way, the new government, much like its predecessors, had made education a centre piece of their electoral manifesto and quickly implemented a third FPE initiative in 2003. An immediate increase in enrolment of 1.3 million students over the previous year suggested that earlier problems of overcrowding and difficulties with access to materials and to qualified teachers would recur. Indeed, Sifuna (2007) suggests that the initial implementation of FPE in 2003 was complicated by the fact that, ‘political expediency seemed to have superseded the need for a sound analysis and assessment of the needs, leading to inadequate preparation, consultation, planning, budgeting and a smooth implementation of the programme’ (Ibid).

Most researchers attribute the reasons why pupils are unable to complete basic education in developing countries to structural factors at household, school and society levels (Colclough et al., 2003; Hunt, 2008). Children’s accounts of their reasons for dropping out of school will be

analyzed in the light of such research findings. The analysis will examine the causes of retention from three points of view: first, children's accounts of their family, socio-economic and societal circumstances; second, conditions within the school; and third, accounts of dropout children who have returned to school. It will thus balance structural analyses of retention with an account emphasizing children's agency in events.

1.2 Problem statement

The issue of access of children to education has been a major concern all over the world. Policy frameworks in many Governments do not adequately address issues concerning enrolment and retention programmes, UNESCO (2000). Statistics demonstrate the dramatic expansion of school education in Kenya. In 1987, there were 12, 192 primary schools with an enrolment of 662,045 children. It was projected that 3.6 million children would require primary school education by the year 2000 (Godia, 1992). At times, factors influencing access to education are not given enough consideration. Education is a basic human right vital to personal and national development and all efforts must be made to ensure that children of school going age do not only enrol, but also are retained to benefit from quality education based on the correct approach and concepts. In an attempt to create access to Education For All (EFA) by the year 2015 as provided for in the Dakar Framework of April 2000, Kenya Government has come up with policies such as Free Primary Education (2000) and Free Secondary Education of (2008).

Anthony (2001) carried out a study on factors influencing children enrolment in primary school education in Thogoto and Karai Zones in Kikuyu Division, Kikuyu District, Kiambu County, The study revealed that professional qualifications of the parents affect the way they take their children to Primary school. He suggested that awareness seminars should be organized to sensitize the parents on the best time to enrol their children in the schools. Also Macharia (2011) carried out a study on the determinant of low access to and retention in primary schools

in Mathioya. The study revealed that the government should enforce adherence of laid down policies and procedures such as corporal punishment, repetition and the compulsory free primary education. Given that FPE is in place, one would expect high access rates, participation, retention and graduation. It is not however, known whether at Maparasha the FPE resulted in high enrolment and subsequent retention in primary education. This study seeks to establish whether there exists any correlation between pupils' retention in school and their socioeconomic, sociocultural and school based factors.

1.3 Research Questions

To establish the factors that influence retention in primary schools, the study will be guided by the following questions;

- i. What are the socio-cultural factors that influence pupils' retention in primary schools in Maparasha
- ii. What are the economic factors that influence pupils' retention in primary schools in Maparasha
- iii. What are the school related factors that influence primary school retention in Maparasha
- iv. What are the factors that affect regular schooling in primary schools in Maparasha

1.4 Objectives of the study

This section outlines the objectives that will guide this study

1.4.1 General objective

The general objective of this study is to establish the factors that influence retention of primary school pupils in Maparasha.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

- i. To establish the sociocultural factors that influence pupils' retention in primary schools in Maparasha
- ii. To examine the economic factors that influence pupils' retention in primary schools in Maparasha
- iii. To establish the school related factors that influence primary school retention in Maparasha
- iv. To identify factors that affect regular schooling in primary schools in Maparasha

1.5 Justification of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the underlying factors that have influenced retention of pupils in public primary schools. This particular research is of importance as it studies socio-economic, socio-cultural, school based factors, and measures taken to improve access and retention of pupils in public primary schools.

The findings of the study will contribute to the advancement of knowledge about the factors that influence enrolment and retention in public primary schools. The study will also sensitize primary education stakeholders on the causes of low public primary school enrollment and retention and seek possible remedial measures for curbing the problem. The findings may challenge policy makers, planners, and donors like the World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF in Kenya to give more attention to school access and retention.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted in Maparasha constituency in Kajiado central sub-county. Primary education is provided by both the private sector and the Kenya Government. The study was

limited to public sector of education. Free primary education has been in place for now ten years. The study is limited to only eight years beginning in 2005 and ending in 2014. The study will show how retention in public primary schools is influenced by factors such as political environment, socio-cultural, economic, school-based factors and pupil characteristics.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Research into the causes of school dropout focuses on the influence of a series of interrelated demand and supply factors that interact in a complex way to incite children to drop out of school (Hunt, 2008). The several causal factors of dropout are related to the family background of the child; the community in which his or her school is located; and conditions within the school environment. Supply and demand factors that cause dropout to occur are contextual, since they are variously located in the family, school and community. The influence of the child's attributes his or her values, attitude and behaviour pattern in terms of education are dictated by contextual variables. These are, on the one hand, demand factors, which include the socioeconomic conditions of the child's background; and, on the other hand, supply factors, which relate to conditions within the school setting that shape the child's decisions in terms of his or her education.

Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, (2009) notes that research into dropout has identified a number of supply and demand factors in the child's family background, the community in which the school is located, and the school itself that can be utilized as predictors of dropout. In a study of dropout in northern Ghana, the complexity of the causes of the phenomenon is illustrated by the variety of at-risk factors cited as reasons for withdrawal from school. The following section is a presentation of selected factors that may influence enrollment and retention. The first section presents school enrollment and retention trends in Kenya; followed by the influence of poverty and family factors on schooling; influence of demographic factors on child education; theoretical framework and lastly the conceptual framework.

2.1.1 School enrolment and retention trends in Kenya

Since independence 1963, like many other countries, the Kenya government sought to expand education; while the education opportunities continue to expand, internal efficiency problems in form of dropout and repetition continue to be pervasive. With the re-introduction of Free Primary Education there was an increase of over 7.2 million from 891,553 in 1963 (Theuri, 2004). At the secondary school level, enrolments rose from a mere 30,121 in 1963 to 862,907 in 2003. The presence of high dropout and repetition rates are however, detrimental to these gains. While many pupils enrol only 47% complete the primary school level (Republic of Kenya, 1998, MOEST, 2003) and that of pupils entering class one, only 55% of boys and 35% of girls enter standard eight. The current piece seeks to demystify the factors that influence enrolment and retention of primary school pupils, specifically sociocultural; socio-economic factors and school environment will be addressed.

A recent report on the education sector review showed that dropout rates at the primary and secondary level differ with regions (MOEST, 2003). In the year 1999, the highest dropout at the first level was reported in Eastern Province at 6.1 percent and lowest in Nairobi at 1.5%. Free Primary Education has not ensured total enrolment for all primary school age-going children. In Northern Eastern Province for example, where the highest index of poverty is recorded nationally, only one out of three children attends primary school (Achoka, Odebero, Maiyo and Mualuko, 2007). Attempts to reduce this problem like establishment of low-cost boarding schools has failed to alleviate the concern of low enrolment as either expansion and/or sustainability emerge as added concerns. Despite the evident low enrolment and retention of pupils in primary schools, there seems to be no studies that have been done to ascertain the factors that cause these occurrences. This study aims to establish these factors as the researcher believes that it is only when these factors are known that a solution to this situation can be found.

Participation of the girl-child continues to be a challenge in some communities in Kenya. In particular, the cultural practice of early marriage for young girls haunts many families as their young girls are withdrawn from school and married to comparatively old men. Achoka, et al (2007) conducted a survey on the inherent concerns of access to basic education in Kenya. They found that most disparities occurred in Nairobi and North Eastern provinces. Enrolment in Coast (83.6%), Nairobi (74.5%) and North Eastern provinces (23.0%) were below the mark of 100%. Gross enrolment in North Eastern Province was 69958 (23%). In spite of the fact that 18,453,583(51%) of the Kenyan population is female, the study established that girl-child access to primary school was less than that of the boy-child in most provinces except for Central and Western. North Eastern Province recorded much lower enrolment compared to other provinces. The enrolment of girls in the province is halfway that of boys. Nairobi provinces have recorded in 2003 to 2007 more boys than girls. Nationally, primary school enrolment is on the increase though some areas are still recording low enrolment. The underlying factors for the low enrolment is however not documented, the current study seeks to unearth the factors that account for the low enrolment.

2.1.2 Influence of poverty in participation in education

Njeru and Orodho, (2003) contend that the critical factors that are responsible for poor participation in education is poverty. This study seeks to establish whether high rates of poverty at household level have made poor households either not to enrol their children in primary schools or fail to sustain an uninterrupted participation of those who are enrolled due to inability to meet various requirements.

Higher poverty levels may be experienced in ASAL areas, it is the assertion of this study that education access in these areas could be lower than in high potential areas. As is held by the

UNESCO background paper which poses that poverty cannot be overcome without specific, immediate and sustained attention to enhancing access to education (UNESCO, 2002). Poverty can thus be addressed in two avenues. First, inability to meet indirect costs for schooling, such costs are school learning and teaching materials, uniforms, transport to and from school and food.

Several studies done in Malawi, Ghana, Zambia, Ethiopia and Tanzania have shown that children are hindered from effective participation in schooling due to inability to afford such costs (Kelly, 1999). In conformity with this situation, (Mingat, 2002) established that the richest households, 76 percent of their children attend school compared to 40% of the poorest households. This means that children from poor households have much lower attendance than those from richer households. Pscharapoulos (1985) cited in Chepkenei, (2004) concur with Mingat (2000) that the level of the family income is one of the most powerful influences on primary school enrolments rates in the developing countries. (Onyango, 2000), showed that parental socio-economic background influences their children's participation in education. This is especially so for the developing countries where children of the poor families are not provided with adequate educational materials and most are not apt to enrol in school. If enrolled, they are more likely to drop out of school than children who are from better-off families. Briggs, (1980) cited in Mbai (2004) contends that poor families may contemplate bearing the cost of sending their children to school but might abandon the whole exercise when more exercises are demanded. There seems to be no studies in Kenya showing that like the aforementioned countries the experience of enrolment to basic education is as in those countries, this study seeks to establish the relationship between poverty and enrolment to basic education in Kenya, Maparasha in particular.

A report carried out in contemporary economic policy magazine in January 2001 entitled “Determinants of school enrolment on performance in Bulgaria,” revealed that the role of the income among the poor and the rich is a major determinant for school access. Those poor families are constrained in their investment in education and withdraw from school prematurely.

At home, the child might not have appropriate facilities and resources to enable them carry on with school work. In some homes of the poor, there might be no table and chairs that can be used for reading, which lighting for night studies is either of very poor quality or nonexistent (Carnoy, 1971, Johnson, *et al.*, 1983). Thus the family environment is not conducive to learning. Eventually, the child becomes too frustrated to continue schooling under these hardships. No studies have been conducted in Kenya on the role family environment play in enrolment and retention of pupils in basic education, the current paper seeks to establish the role of family environment in enrolment and retention of Maparasha pupils to basic education.

Effects of child labour

According to Mutegi (2005) conversation of the rights of the child defined a child as anyone below the age of 18. Child labour is destroying a generation of children. Children who start working young never grow as they miss out on education. The Koech Commission TIQET (1999) also found that child labour is a rampant practice that continues to keep children out of school, especially in the prevailing situation of poverty at the household level. Children in different parts of the country are involved in activities such as fishing, picking of coffee, tea, miraa, hawking and petty trading. In addition many school age girls are employed as house girls and child menders in urban and rural areas. This habit contravenes the children’s rights as stated below “every child shall be protected from economic exploitation and any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with child’s education” (Children’s Bill, 2001). This

research seeks to establish whether child labour is among the factors that keep children away from school in Maparasha.

The Size of the family and effect on child education

According to West (1980) cited in Otunge (2004) large numbers of children in a family of limited income result in overcrowding in the home and this may in turn have a deleterious effect upon behaviour. West further adds that parents in overcrowded accommodation in poor tenements cannot protect or supervise their young children as they might wish. According to Ruther (1980) cited in Otunge (2004) large family size is quite strongly associated with socio-economic disadvantage. The large family size limits the parental involvement in the academic welfare of each child. Thus leads to low participation of the child in school activities and may eventually lead to dropout.

Effects of parental education

A study done by Ngau (1991) on grade repetition and school dropouts in Kenya's primary schools reveals that parent's level of education is important for children's educational support. Peasant parents who are also poorly educated are doubly or even triply disadvantaged. While these parents try to provide the best education to their children, the priority family goal is "survival" as the family does not even have proper and adequate medical care, food and shelter.

According to Onyango (2000) better educated parents appreciate the value of education more than illiterate ones. In this case, educated parents are able to assist their children progress both materially and morally. The current study while appreciating the findings by other authors on the link between parent education and enrolment seeks to add knowledge to these findings by looking at the experience in Maparasha which is considered to be an ASAL area.

2.1.3 Influence of demographic factors on child education

A study by Woodhall & Psacharopoulos in Ethiopia (1995; In Mulugeta & Amanuel, 2000) found that gender is an important determinant for school enrolment. The study suggested that when economic status was low or when the value of education was seen as less important for girls, the choice to send their sons to school was most prioritised. Further their findings also revealed that girls were not sent to school because school distance (seen as more dangerous for girls) and opportunity costs of girls' time.

The Policy for Human Resources and Development (In Mulugeta & Amanuel, 2000) confirms low economic status and school distance as being important reasons to low enrollment. The research in Ethiopia didn't consider the influences of the characteristics of the head of the household; neither did they include the educational level of the head of the household which are also thought to be significant factors on enrollment. The significance of these factors is confirmed by a study conducted by Mulugeta & Amanuel (2000) which argued that these characteristics can be the reasons behind unequal value of girls and boys education. In their findings, boys were twice as likely to be enrolled as girls. In Kenya the situation is worse, the difference in enrolment between boys and girls (51-49%) is less wide than in most other developing countries (CBS Kisumu, 2005).

Child age is equally of great importance in determining enrolment. The older a child gets, the more likely the child is to have started school (Nyamukapa et al, 2003). UNESCO (2005) report indicates that the age-variable for a major part explains enrolment or exclusion from education. Statistics in Kenya show that the crucial drop-out rate of children is between the ages of 10-14 years (8.1%, CBS, 2005) which represents the last four years of primary schooling.

There exists a difference in access to education between maternal, paternal- and double orphaned households as was found by a study conducted by Nyamukapa et al (2003). The findings of this study contradicted early studies about the relation between orphanhood and education that showed that the impact on education was not significantly different. Additionally, they reckon that the general view on this topic has shifted because of changes within the safety net. In their view this shift, especially in countries where the HIV/AIDS epidemic is more severe and advanced, has a direct negative impact on school attendance rates and causes disordered education patterns (Nyamukapa et al, 2003).

About the different types of orphanhood and their influences on child education, the maternal orphans are likely to face better social economical standards than paternal orphans. Research shows that the loss of a mother has a detrimental effect on the child's education due to great psychological distress. Subsequently the socio- economical standards of a maternal orphan might indicate that there are more possibilities to finance education. The Nyamukapa et al (2003) research indicated that paternal orphans have a higher chance to complete primary education.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study is guided by the Social Functionalism theory and Symbolic Interactionist theory

2.2.1 Structural Functionalism

The structural-functional approach is a perspective in sociology that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. It asserts that our lives are guided by social structures, which are relatively stable patterns of social behavior. Social structures give shape to our lives - for example, in families, the community, and through religious organizations. And certain rituals, such as a handshake or complex

religious ceremonies, give structure to our everyday lives. Each social structure has social functions, or consequences for the operation of society as a whole. Education, for example, has several important functions in a society, such as socialization, learning, and social placement.

Functionalist sociologists like Parsons and Durkheim have been concerned with the search for functions that institutions may have in society. However, another functionalist sociologist R. Merton has adopted a concept of dysfunction – this refers to the effects of any institution which detracts from the conservation of society. An example of a function which helps maintain society is that of the family, its function is to ensure the continuity of society by reproducing and socialising new members. Another institution which performs an important function is religion functionalist sociologists believe that it helps achieve social solidarity and shared norms and values, however it could be argued that it fails to do this as a result of increasing secularisation in recent years and therefore it creates a divide between members of society rather than binding them together (moral glue).

The functionalist perspective on education is that education has five major manifest functions within society. The first is Socialization – each level of education teaches acceptable and unacceptable behaviors; second is Transmission of culture – each generation is taught societal norms, cultural values, attitudes, and behavior; the third is Social control – teaching values such as discipline, respect, obedience, punctuality, and perseverance; the fourth is Social placement – training and identifying qualified people to fill available positions in different parts of society to keep the machine running; and the fifth is Change & innovation – schools are a place for one to grow and learn new programs and ideas that would ultimately assist in the growth of society. In addition to the manifest functions are latent functions, which are equally important in maintaining social order. Those latent functions are keeping children off the streets and out of trouble; Keeping children out of the job market; meeting life partners, and establishing social networks.

Thus, educational system should be designed so as to remove barriers of any nature such as economic, gender, cultural and geographical barriers (Sherman and Wood, 1982). Orodho (2004) cites liberal activist such as Horace Mann (1852) who termed education as “the Great equalizer” instrument which would enhance life chances.

It is the belief of structural functionalists that focusing on making academic requirements more stringent in a more uniformed manner would allow educators to implement the manifest functions that would teach students the basic training needed to enter the workforce . For example during the first Bush term in the United States (2001) a policy called the “No Child Left behind Act” was signed into law. This law was enacted in an effort to increase the federal government’s role in primary education, and by asking schools to be accountable for their student’s learning. States were responsible for creating a set of standards; testing every student’s progress towards those standards, an expectation of documented yearly progress and reports of the progress; and those who do not make adequate progress could lose funding or students (Kendall, 2010).

The theory suggests that going through education at primary and secondary level to which access would be determined on the basis of individual’s merit and not on social backgrounds.

The argument fronted by the functionalist is that every citizen should be given, through education, the social status to which he/she entitles him to inherited aptitude (organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1975). The theory observes that provision of formal equity and access to education by putting everybody on the “scratch” guarantees that the ensuring run is just one. The theory demands that opportunities be available for individuals to go through primary and secondary education and thus access should be based on individual’s merit and not social backgrounds. This way, education would at least provide equality of

economic opportunity whereby all classes, races and sexes could benefit economically from excellent academic performance (Sharman and Wood, 1982).

The theory further states that social mobility can be promoted by equal opportunity of education. The roots of this theory can be traced to writers such as Rousseau (1712 – 1778) who claimed that “natural statesmen were born equal and personal equalities should not jeopardize social equity so long as society rewards people according to this status.” (Orodho, 2004). The writer of American Declaration of Independence (1776) claimed that all people are created equal i.e. born with the same moral and political rights, thus education should in some sense attempt to treat people equally. According to Wainaina 2006, when evaluating inequalities of opportunities of education in Kenya education plays a significant role, since it is an important determinant of individuals well-being. He notes that there is considerable evidence of inequalities of opportunities in education of the developing countries in ASALs, areas of pocket of poverty and urban slums.

There are many people from poor families in Kenya who have taken advantage of education opportunities and have proceeded to obtain better jobs and higher income than they would have otherwise done without education thus education is an investment in human capital that yields economic benefits. If the Kenyan Government had not provided Free Primary Education, primary school pupils would have been denied the opportunity for advancement. There is a widespread belief that by removing economic barriers and creating more places available in primary education, the vision of equal opportunity would be implemented, where every child would have access to the kind and amount of education that suits his/her inherited capacity in developing countries where Inequalities of educational provision are severe, it may be desirable on equality and efficiency grounds, to pursue the goal of equal distribution of educational opportunities. Psacharopoulous and Woodhall (1985) notes that inequality of participation

means that the benefits of education are disproportionately enjoyed by the upper income families whose children are far more likely to complete primary and secondary cycle and enrol in higher education. The financial inability of many families leads to increased dropouts, absenteeism and repetition which lead to low access and retention in many primary schools.

In Kenya the NARC government has made primary education free and highly subsidized secondary education to create opportunities for individuals to go through primary and secondary education. Though access should be based on individuals merit and not social backgrounds, the situation in Kenya is contrary to that. Access and retention in primary level of education is influenced by such as socio-economic school based, socio-cultural factors and pupils characteristics. However, with the introduction of cost-sharing in education against the background of high poverty levels in the country. Many parents may not be able to enrol and sustain their children in primary schools given the hidden costs of education. For equity considerations, unequal participation of the poor in education can worsen the status of the poor and other vulnerable groups in the country.

Cultural practices of FGM and early marriages for young girls in some communities in Kenya bar the girls from completing primary cycle of education. Performance in Kenya National 13 examination has rendered the education system examination oriented; this has resulted to repetitions which eventually led to pupils dropping out. The classical liberal theory is relevant for the proposed study because education should be accessed by all regardless of their social, economic and cultural differences. It is against this background that this study focused on finding out factors underlying low enrolment and retention in public primary schools in Maparasha Constituency.

2.2.2 Symbolic Interactionist Theory

Symbolic interactionism is a school of thought in sociology that explains social behavior in terms of how people interact with each other through symbols; in this view, social structures are best understood in terms of such individual interactions. Symbolic interactionism was developed by thinkers such as George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer in the 20th century. Mead believed that one's self develops through social interactions.

According to symbolic interactionism, humans are distinct from infrahuman (lower animals) because infrahuman simply respond to their environment (i.e., a stimulus evokes a response or stimulus, whereas humans have the ability to interrupt that process additionally, infrahuman are unable to conceive of alternative responses to gestures. Humans, however, can. (Blumer, 1969)

This perspective is also rooted in phenomenological thought. According to symbolic interactionism, the objective world has no reality for humans; only subjectively defined objects have meaning. There is no single objective "reality"; there are only (possibly multiple, possibly conflicting) *interpretations* of a situation. Meanings are not entities that are bestowed on humans and learned by habituation; instead, meanings can be altered through the creative capabilities of humans, and individuals may influence the many meanings that form their society. Human society, therefore, is a social product.

Moreover, how people communicate and interact with each other depends on how they interpret factors such as language, actions, and statuses (potential symbols). (Meltzer et al., 1975) For example, one might interpret a handshake as either a friendly greeting or cool farewell, depending on context (the symbolism of a handshake varies). Sometimes symbols change; long hair in males once symbolized rebellion, but now does not

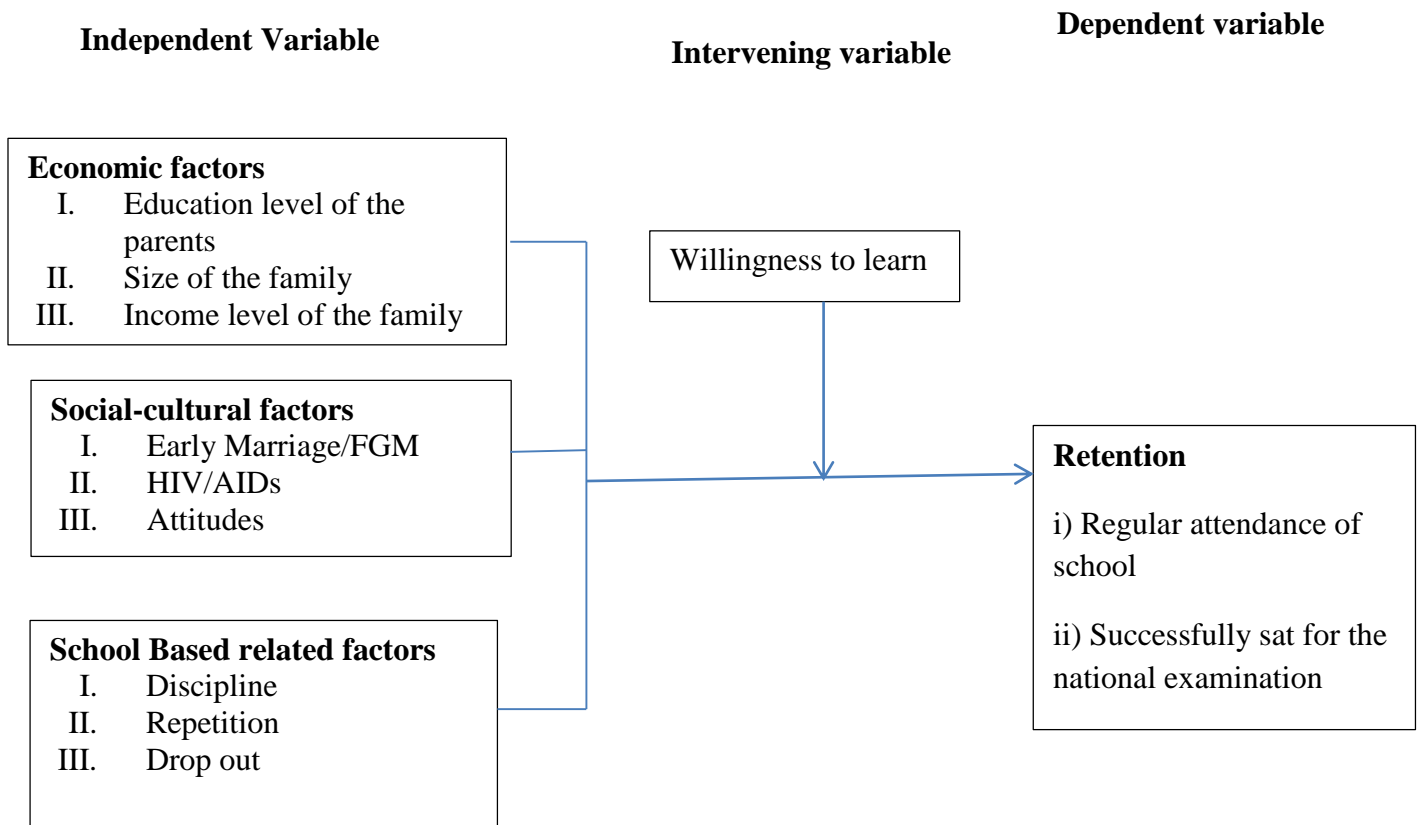
The symbolic interactionist perspective attributes problems in education to the labelling aspect within the classroom. (Stryker (1981). It is the belief of symbolic interactionists that education is an important part of the socialization process because that is when the student learns to identify him or herself through the eyes of peers and teachers. For instance, a child who is labelled as special needs and is treated as if there is something wrong with him will begin to act as if there is something wrong with him. Adding to that concept the self-fulfilling prophecy, the child will not only begin to act as if something is wrong with him but he will also begin to believe that something is wrong with him making it virtually impossible for him to receive any type of information. When the students feel low and perform poorly because of their beliefs they are likely to drop out of school.

According to the symbolic interactionist's theory, one of the ways to combat this issue is to do away with labelling and standardized testing within education. Doing away with labelling places all students on equal ground and allows them to learn at their own pace without the negative stigma of falling behind. Doing away with standardized testing will reduce the negative perception of one's own abilities and in turn improve on retention.

2.7 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework shows socio-economics, socio-cultural and school based environmental factors that influence retention of pupils in Maparasha Constituency.

Figure 1 : Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework above shows the relationship between independent and dependent variables. economic factors can influence retention of pupils in primary schools, indicators on the economic factors that the study measured includes education level of the parents, size of the family and the income level of the family. On socio-cultural factors the study measured indicators as early marriages/FGM, HIV and Attitude, on school based factors indicators like discipline, repetition and dropout will be measured. Willingness to learn is the intervening variable in this study; regardless of how the variables under study influence retention of pupils in schools, a pupil's willingness to learn will play a role.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology that was used in the study. The chapter therefore presents the research design, target population, sample size, the research tools, and data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive research design approach was adopted in this study, according to Mugenda and Mugenda, (1999) descriptive research is a systematic collection and analysis of data in order to answer questions concerning current status of a program, proposal or activity. A descriptive study is concerned with determining the frequency with which something occurs or the relationship between variables (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Thus, this approach was deemed appropriate for this study, since the researcher was able to collect detailed information through descriptions which was useful for identifying variables and hypothetical constructs related to analysis of factors that influence enrollment and retention in primary school in Maparasha. This method provided descriptions of the variables in order to answer the research questions in the study.

3.3 Site Description

The scope of the study was Maparasha zone in Kajiado central sub county in Kajiado County. It is a rural setting. According to county poverty indicators 2007 -2009, the county is one of the relatively wealthier in Kenya; the Kajiado Central Sub County comprises of relatively poor populations. Being semi-arid region, the main economic activities include livestock rearing, charcoal burning and sand harvesting. The area is sparsely populated from which the sample was carefully selected. Maparasha is located approximately 70 kilometres south of Nairobi, around 10KM off Nairobi-Namanga highway.

3.4 Unit of Analysis

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) units of analysis are units that are designed for purposes of aggregating their characteristics in order to describe some larger group or abstract phenomenon. Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) describe the units of analysis as the most elementary part of the phenomenon to be studied. To Singleton et.al (1988; 69) they are “what or whom to be analyzed”. In this study, the unit of analysis were factors influencing retention of pupils in primary schools.

3.5 Units of Observation

The unit of observation in this study were currently enrolled pupils in class 7 and 8, primary school drop outs and members of PTA in Maparasha zone

3.6 Study Population

According to Ngechu, (2004) a population is a well-defined or set of people, services, elements, events, group of things or households that are being investigated. Busha, (1980) states that "a population is any set of persons or objects that possesses at least one common characteristic." The study population constituted pupils in primary schools in Maparasha. This category of the sample helped inform the study on why the pupils never dropped out of school. The study also targeted pupils that had dropped out of school. A total of 42 school dropouts were included in the study. Teachers and parents were also targeted by the study to help in indicating factors to add onto the factors provided by the pupils of what influences retention in primary school. Maparasha has seven public schools and a total population of 442 pupils with 37% being female, in class seven and eight and 58 teachers.

3.7 Sample size

Sample is a carefully selected portion or part of the target population while sampling is a procedure where a fraction of the data is taken from a large set of data, and the inference drawn from the sample is extended to the whole group (Mark et al, 2007).

In view of this submission, the researcher adopted a statistical model initiated by Yamani in Keyton (2001). To determine the sample size of this study:

The formula $n = N \div (1 + NE^2)$ Where n = intended Sample size

N = Population size

E = degree of tolerable error

I = Constant

Therefore, applying the formula and allowing 5% error margin, we have:

In school

school dropouts

$$n = \frac{442}{1+(442 \times 0.05^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{42}{1+(42 \times 0.05^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{442}{1+1.105}$$

$$n = \frac{42}{1+0.105}$$

$$n = \frac{442}{2.105}$$

$$n = \frac{42}{1.105}$$

$$n = 209.98$$

$$n = 38$$

Hence, n = 210 pupils in school + 38 school dropouts

3.8 Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the selection of a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population, (Orodho 2002). Cooper and Schindler (2003) observe that random sampling is the process of selecting a population sample where the researcher selects a sample randomly from the target population. The researcher got a list of schools in Maparasha and design a frame from which a reasonable sample was picked. School names were noted in pieces of paper then put in a basket from which the researcher randomly picked five schools. Pupils in these schools were sampled randomly to be included in the study. The researcher used class registers of class seven and eight pupils to identify the pupils to be include in the sample. Systematic random sampling was done on the register where a starting point will be identified and every 4th pupil was included in the sample. Parents and teachers who are members of the parent teachers' association (PTA) boards were purposively sampled.

3.8 Methods of data collection

The research adopted qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection. Quantitative data was collected through the use of structured questionnaires that were administered to pupils in schools and those that have dropped out while qualitative data was collected through interviews of key informants using an interview guide. The key informants included head teachers, teacher counselors, parents and county education officers.

3.9 Pilot Study

A pilot, or feasibility study, is a small experiment designed to test logistics and gather information prior to a larger study, in order to improve the latter's quality and efficiency. A pilot study can reveal deficiencies in the design of a proposed experiment or procedure and these can then be addressed before time and resources are expended on large scale studies (Borg and Gall, 1989). A pilot study involving a number of students and drop outs was

conducted before the actual study so as to test the validity and reliability as well as to create an insight concerning the interests of the study however the results has not been included in the final report.

3.9.1 Validity of Instruments

Validity indicates the degree to which the instrument measures the constructs under investigation (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). There are three types of validity test, content, criterion and related construct validity. This study used content validity because it measured the degree to which the sample of the items represents the content that the test is designed to measure. An instrument is said to be valid to the degree that it measures what it claims to measure or the extent to which it will predict accurately such types of behavior as better service delivery (Best and Khan, 2004) validity is actually the degree to which a test or an instrument actually measures the variable it claims to measure from the selected target population.

3.9.2 Reliability of Instruments

The data collection instruments that were used are reliable because they have the ability to consistently yield the same results when repeated measurements are taken of similar individuals under the same conditions. Copies of the same questionnaires were repeatedly distributed to similar individual categories of respondents. This was repeated after three weeks as a retest for the questionnaires using the test-retest approach (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003) the response from both the testing periods to be correlated by the following sufficient of reliability, an instrument that yields a reliability coefficient of 0.70 and above (70%) and above is reasonably consistent and therefore acceptable for data collection.

3.10 Data Entry and Analysis

Descriptive statistics and content analysis was used to analyze the data collected. Data Entry was done using CS Pro Version 5.0.2 while closed questions was analyzed through the help of the statistical package for social Science (SPSS Version18) computer software.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and findings of the study. The purpose of this study was to establish the factors that influence retention of primary school pupils in Maparasha. The analysis was done using SPSS and is presented using frequency and percentage tables. Questionnaires were issued to pupils in class 7 and 8. The total sample size was 248 pupils. Out of these, 210 valid responses were received yielding a response rate of 88%.

4.1 Response rate for pupils in school and dropout pupils

The total sample size was 248 children of school going age. Out of these 210 valid responses were received yielding a response rate of 81%. Among the school going pupils, 177 valid responses were received out of the 210 questionnaires issued translating to a response rate of 84.28%. While among the children who had dropped out of school, 33 out of the 38 questionnaires issued were received, yielding a response rate of 86.84%.

4.2 General Information of the Study and Study Group

This section gives general information about the study and the study group.

4.2.1 Distribution by Gender

The study sought to establish the gender of the respondents in selection of the sample. The findings revealed that for those still in school, majority were male represented by 57.6% while for those out school only 36.4% were male. Majority of those who had dropped out of school were female, represented by 63.6%, only 42.4% of female had not dropped out of school. Table 4.1 below is a presentation of the data obtained on the respondents' gender.

Table 4.1 Distribution by gender and Status

Gender	School Status		Total	
	In school	Drop out	%	%
	%	%		
Male	89.0	11.0	100.0	114
Female	78.0	22.0	100.0	96
Total N	177	33	210	100.0

4.2.2 Distribution by School Status and Age

The study sought to establish the ages of the respondents; the findings revealed that for majority of the respondents were between 13 and 16 years, with 64% still at school while 42% had dropped out of school. Thirty six percent and fifty five percent represented pupils between 10 to 12 years in school and those out of school respectively. The findings are presented in table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Distribution by school status and age

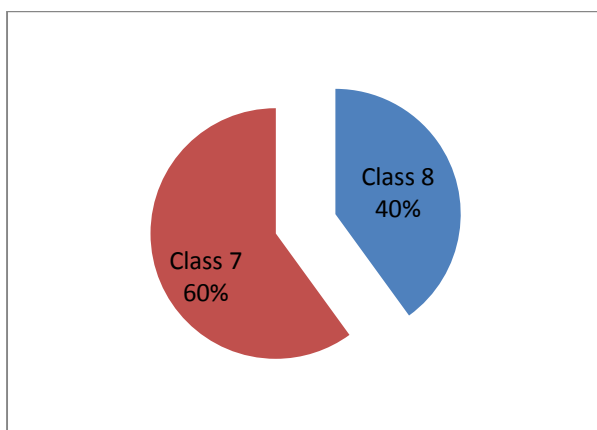
School Status	10 – 12	13 – 16	Below 9	Total	
	Years	Years	Years	%	N
In School	36.2%	63.8%	0%	100%	177
Dropout	54.6%	42.4%	3.0%	100%	33
Total (N)	82	127	1	100%	210

4.2.3 Class of pupils

The study sought to establish the level of pupils in the education system. It was established that in the sample majority (60%) were class seven pupils while the remaining 40% were class eight pupils. This meant that class eight had fewer pupils, this can be deduced to mean that the higher the level of pupils, the lesser the number of pupils. There is evidence of a great reduction in the number of pupils enrolled in class one and those now in class 7 or 8. For those that had dropped out, the study revealed that 21% and 22% dropped out in class three and four respectively,

while majority (30%) had dropped out in class seven. The findings are corroborated by those from key informant interviews; a discussant pointed out that many children dropout of school in class seven especially boys because they move with their fathers in such of pasture for their cattle. Further, the discussant indicated that many girls are married off as they are considered of age by the time they get to class six. This confirms previous research works that show that there is a high dropout rate of school going children in Kajiado County. These findings concur with statistics of Kenya's ministry of education which indicate that while many pupils enrol in class one in primary schools, only 47% complete the primary school level (Republic of Kenya, 1998, MOEST, 2003) and that of pupils entering class one, only 55% of boys and 35% of girls enter standard eight. The respondents gave multiple reasons as to why there was a difference in number between the number they were in class one and the number they currently are in class 7 or 8. A majority of the pupils said that most of their former classmates had transferred to other schools, others had repeated and a significant number reported that their former classmates had actually dropped out of school. These findings are presented in figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Class of pupils (N=177)



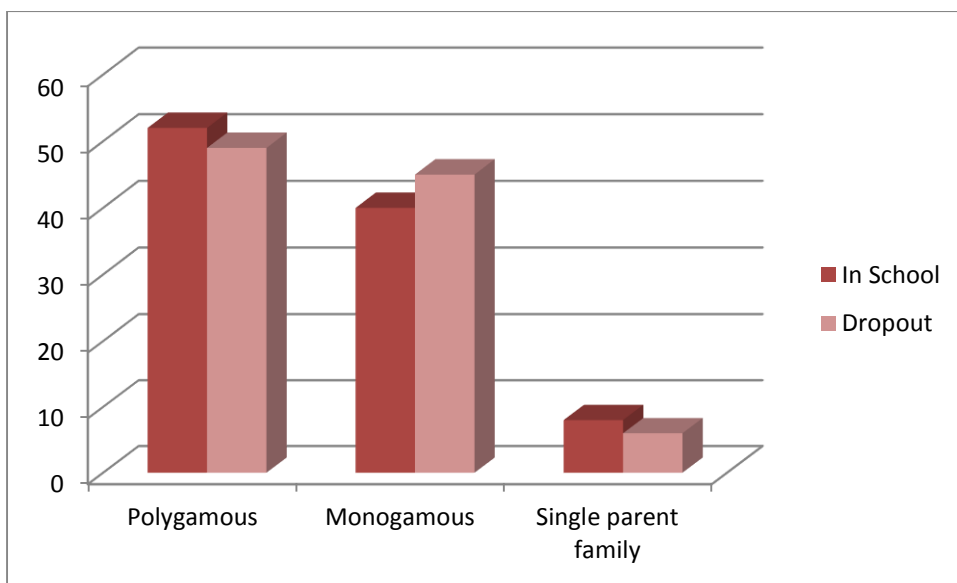
4.3 Socio-cultural Factors and retention in school

4.3.1 Type of family

The study sought to establish the types of family the respondents came from, the findings revealed that for those in school, majority (52%) of the pupils were from polygamous families,

40% were from monogamous families. Only 8% of the pupils were from single parent families. These findings were more or less similar for the respondents that had dropped out of school where 49% came from polygamous families, 45% from monogamous families while only six percent were from single parent families. These findings can be deduced to mean that type of family did not have a significant influence in school drop-out as the pupils were found to come from all types of families. The findings are presented in Figure 3 below.

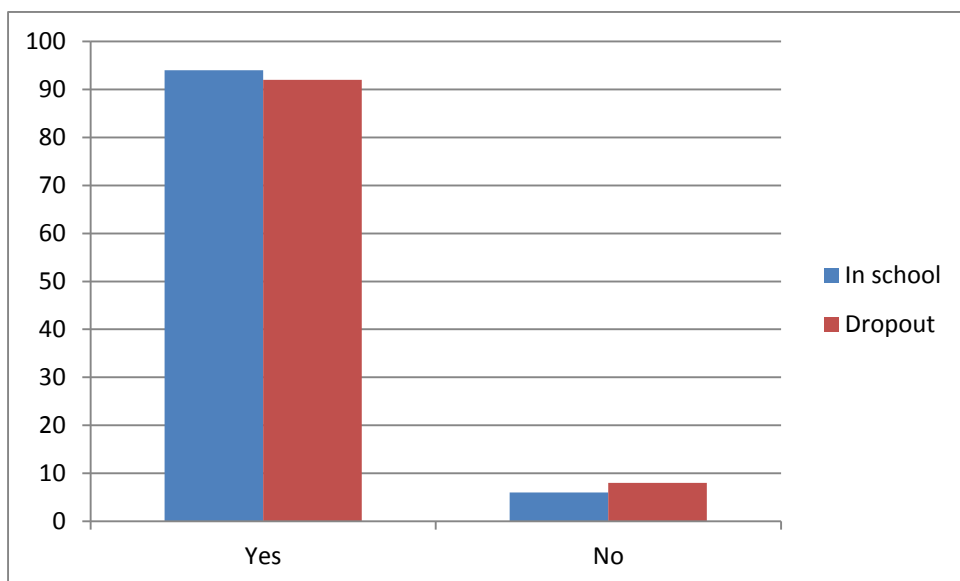
Figure 3: Type of family (N=210)



4.3.2 Siblings presence

The study sought to establish whether the respondents had sibling; the findings revealed that 94% and 92% of those in school and those that had dropped out of school respectively had siblings. The findings indicate that availability of siblings did not influence dropout and or retention of pupils in school. The findings are presented in figure 4 below:

Figure 4: Presence of siblings of children in school and out of school (N=210)



4.3.3 The number of siblings

The study sought to determine the number of siblings the respondents had, the findings reveal that for those in school, 36% of the respondents had between four and seven siblings, 34% had between eight and eleven siblings, 20% had over twelve siblings while only 10% had below three siblings. For those out of school, it was revealed that 47% had between four and seven siblings, 30% had between eight and eleven siblings 18% had over twelve siblings while only 5% had below three siblings. The findings can be deduced to mean that the number of siblings significantly influenced rate of drop out, the high number of siblings meant not all could be sent and maintained in school. Table 4.3 below represents the findings.

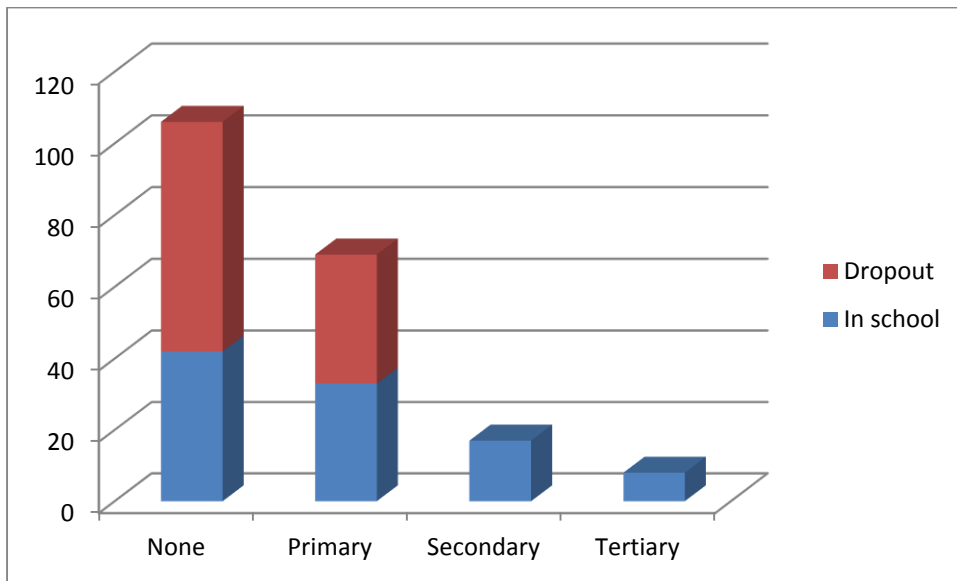
Table 4.3 Number of siblings

	Under 3 Siblings	Between 4 and 7 siblings	Between 8 and 11 siblings	Over 12 siblings	TOTAL
Pupils in School	10.0%	36.2%	33.8%	20.0%	100%
Drop-out	3.0%	48.5%	30.3%	18.2%	100%

4.3.4 Highest level of education of attainment by siblings

The study sought to establish the siblings highest level of education; the findings reveal that for those still in school, 42% of the respondents siblings had not attained any education level, 33% of the respondents reported that their siblings had completed primary school, 17% of the respondents had siblings who had completed secondary school while only 8% of the respondents had siblings who had completed tertiary level education. For those out of school, the findings revealed that 64% of their siblings had not attained any level of education, 36% had attained primary level education. The findings demonstrate that not so many people in the community had complete school and that can affect the school completion rate of pupils in Maparasha. Figure 5 below is a pictorial representation of the findings.

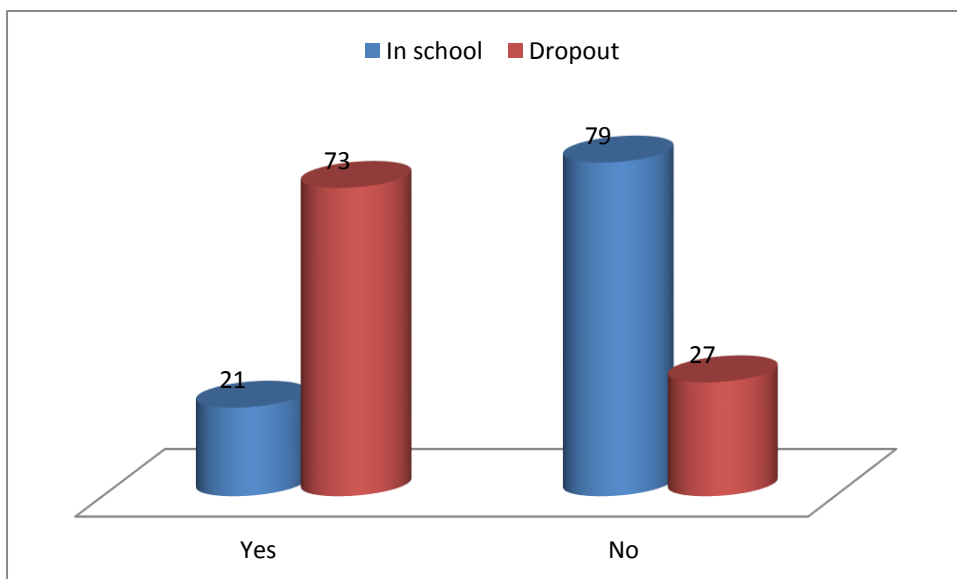
Figure 5: Siblings highest level of education (N=210)



4.3.5 Siblings that have dropped out of school

The study sought to establish if the respondents had any siblings who had started school and later dropped out of school. The findings revealed that for those that had dropped out of school, 73% had siblings that had dropped out of school. For the pupils still in school, only 21% had siblings that had dropped out of school. These findings indicate a high propensity to school dropout among those whose siblings had dropped out. Figure 6 below represents the findings.

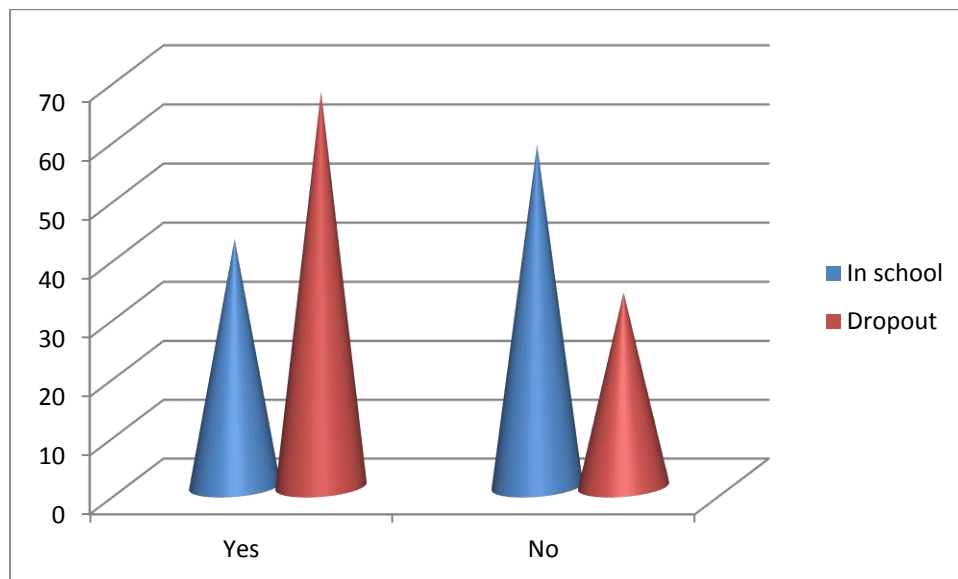
Figure 6: Siblings have dropped out of school (N=210)



4.3.6 Pupils Initiated into adulthood and in school

The study sought to establish whether the respondents had undergone rites of passage; the findings revealed that (67%) majority of those that had dropped out of school had been initiated. At the same time, it was revealed that 42% of the pupils in school had also been initiated. The findings reveal that those initiated had a higher chance of dropping out of school. The findings are revealed by figure 7 below

Figure 7: Pupils initiated and in school (N=210)

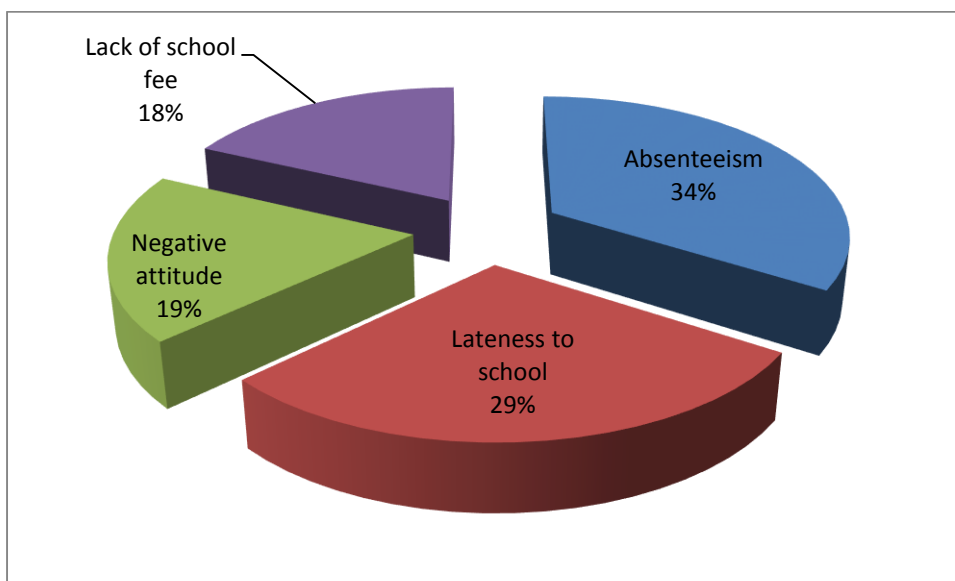


4.3.7 Challenges facing pupils

The study sought to establish the challenges pupils face; the findings revealed that 34% had classmates that were ever late to school, 29% had classmates who were ever absent, 19% indicated that some of their classmates had a negative attitude towards class work while 18% indicated that their classmates could not pay monies required by school. The findings are presented in figure 4.7 below. The findings further revealed that female students tend to face more challenges than their male counterparts, it was noted that some of the pupils had a challenge getting sanitary pads at the time of need, the female pupils further had more responsibilities at home and as such were more likely to be absent from school compared to

their male counterparts. The male pupils were not free of challenges; both male and female pupils were unable to get learning materials (books, pens among others) in good time due to strained economic factors in their families. These findings were echoed by sentiments from the teachers during FGD, *my pupils do not come to school regularly, a number of times they have been absent due to inability to get development fee, and some time due to cultural initiations. A case in point was when half of the female pupils were out of school because they had gone for female circumcision; in fact some did not come back at all.* Sentiments from parents resonates with the findings as well, one particular parent was disturbed by the schools requirement for the pupils to pay fee towards meals and development yet the government has made education free to primary pupils.

Figure 8: Challenges pupils face (N=177)

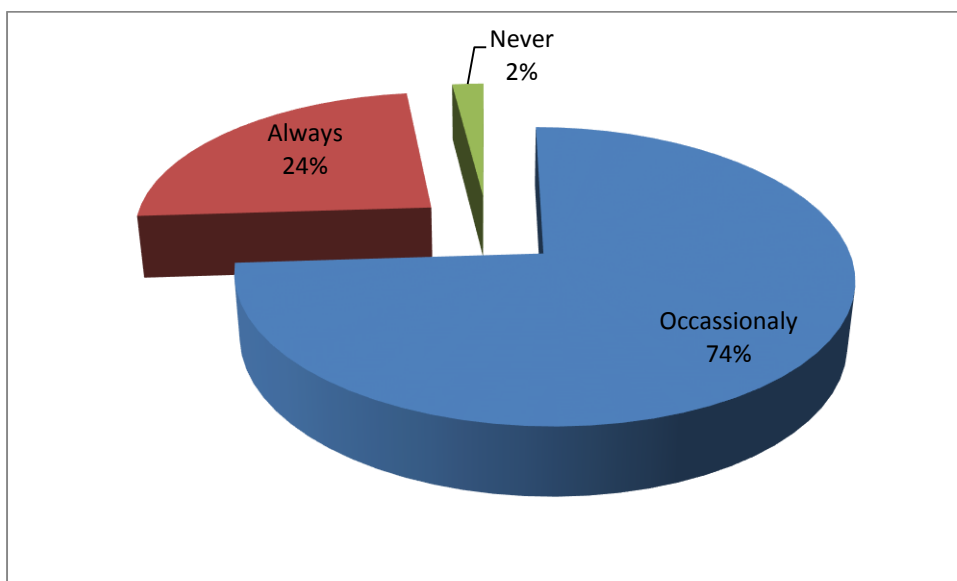


4.3.8 Frequencies of lateness to school

The study sought to establish the frequencies with which the pupils were getting late to school, the findings reveal that majority (74%) of the pupils had been late to school, 24% were always late while 2% had never been late to school. Figure 4.8 below is a presentation of the findings. The reasons for getting to school were indicated as long distance from home, need to take care

of household chores, and search of grazing fields among others. These findings were further echoed by the views shared by key informants, the informants were of the opinion that school distance contributed a lot to lateness, one informant said, *“I was once interested in finding out why one particular pupil was ever late, I found out that the issue that caused the lateness was distance, the boy stays far from school and so could not get to school in good time.”* A parent said, *“I would not wish my boy to get late to school, but sometimes the father gives him a lot of responsibilities before he gets to school, he has to ensure that the cattle are out in the field for example before he goes to school”*. The same reasons were cited as being the contributing factors to absenteeism by the pupils. All the pupils were noted to have been absent at some point during their school lifetime.

Figure 9: Frequencies of lateness in school (N=177)



4.3.9 Factors leading to school dropout

The study sought to establish the factors that led to school dropout, the findings revealed that in most cases, pupils dropped out of school to take care of cattle, early marriage and to join *Moran* group. Culture was therefore established to be the major contributor to school dropout among the residents of Maparasha. These findings were corroborated by the revelations from focus group discussions with key informants, in an interview with the chief of the village, the

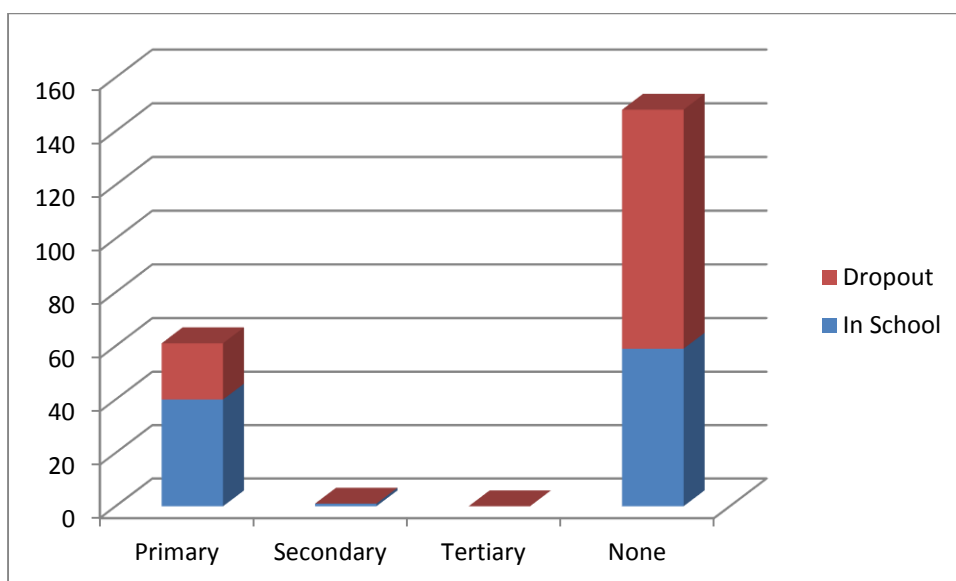
chief said; *our major issue here is that most parents do not appreciate the importance of school, the parents marry off their daughters at a tender age, some even get their sons out of school for initiation purposes, after initiation, the children believe that they are grown men and opt to drop out of school.*

4.4 Economic factors

4.4.1 Parents' level of education

The study sought to establish the level of education the respondents fathers, the findings revealed that 89% of pupils who dropped out of school had no formal education as compared to 59% of those in school. Twenty one percent of those that had dropped out of school had primary education as compared to 40% of those that were in school. Only 1% of those in school indicated that their parents had secondary level education. Mother's education was noted to be worse, only 10% of the respondents indicated that their mothers had primary school education. The findings indicate that, the more the parent is educated the higher the chance of their children enroll and be retained in school.

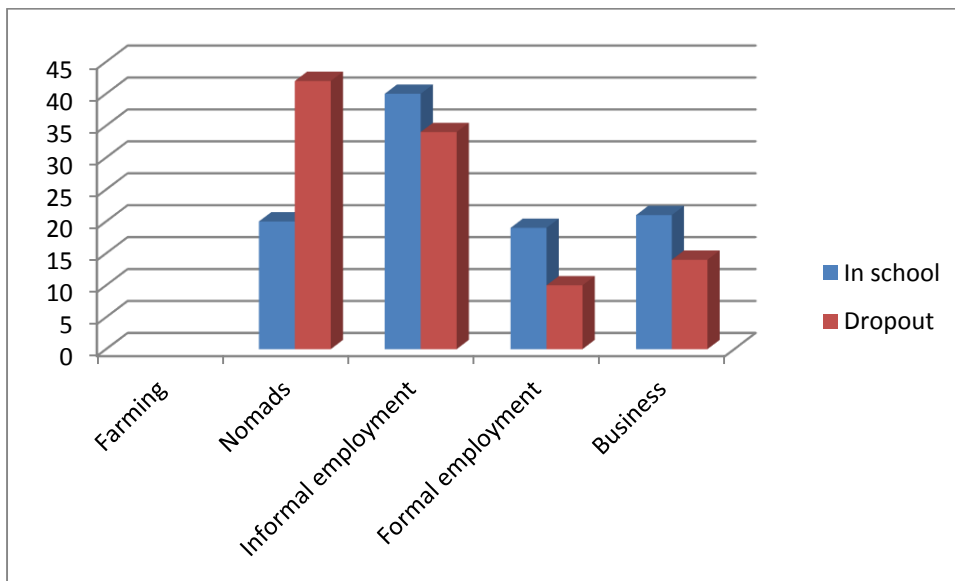
Figure 10: Parents level of education (N=210)



4.4.2 Parents economic activity

The study sought to establish the economic activities of the parents of the respondents; the findings revealed that 34% and 40% of pupils out of school and those in school respectively reported that the economic activity of their parents work in the informal employment. Nineteen percent and ten percent of the pupils in school and those out of school respectively indicated that their parents were in formal employment. Forty two percent and twenty percent of pupils out of school and those in school respectively indicated that their parents were nomads. Twenty one percent and fourteen percent of pupils in school and out of school respectively indicated that their parents were business people. These findings are presented in figure 11 below.

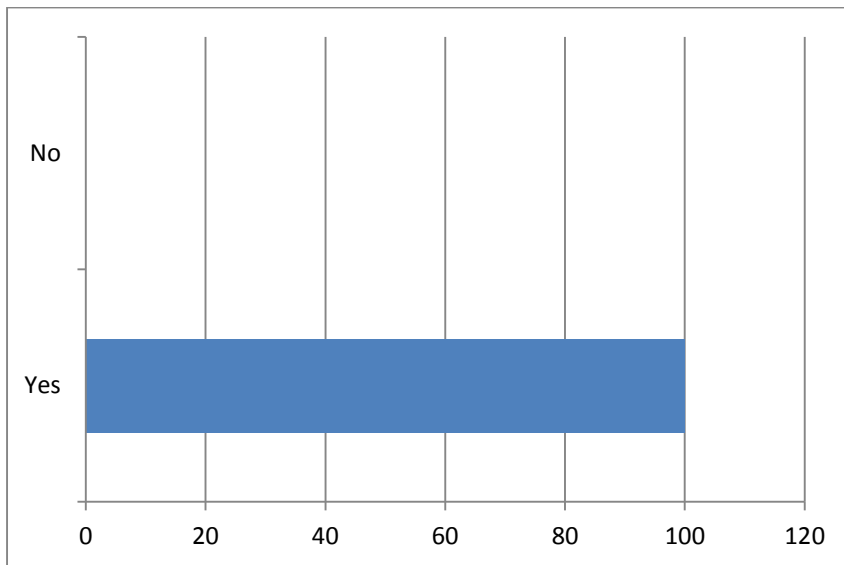
Figure 11: Parents economic activity (N=210)



4.4.3 Monies required by school

The study sought to establish if there were any monies required by school 100% of the pupils in school indicated that there were monies required by school. The findings are represented by figure 12 below.

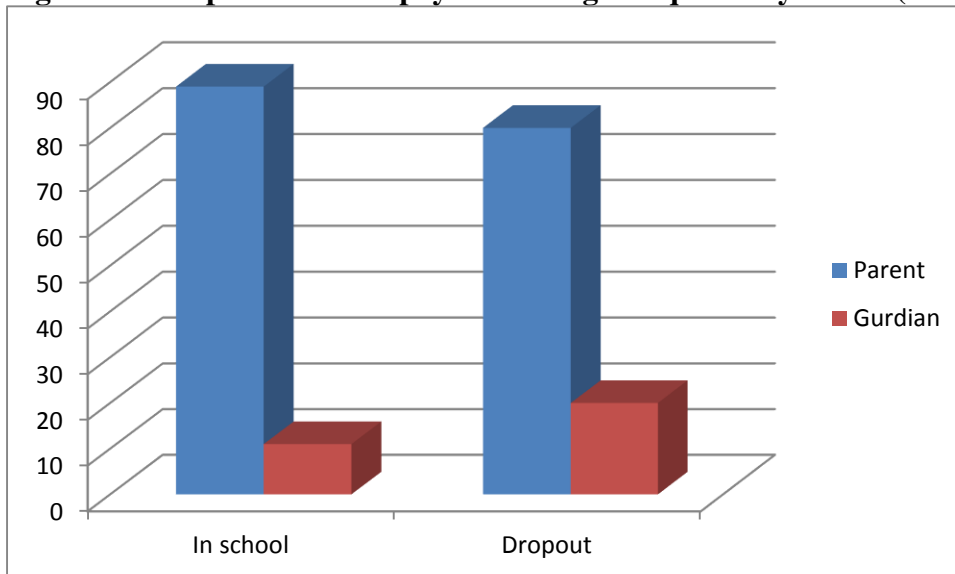
Figure 12: Response whether monies are required by school (N=177)



4.4.4 Who pays the school charges

The study sought to establish who pays the monies required in school; the findings revealed that 89% and 80% of the pupils in school and those out of school respectively indicated that the monies required in school is paid by their parents. The findings however revealed that 90% of the parents of both pupils that are still in school and those that have dropped out do not pay the monies in time.

Figure 13: Response on who pays the charges required by school (N=177)



4.5 School related factors affecting pupil's retention in primary school

4.5.1 How teacher pupil ratio influence the retention of pupils in school

The study sought to establish whether teacher-pupils ratio influenced the retention of pupils in school, the study revealed that the ratio was a significant contributor to retention of pupils in school. Pupils from schools with a ration of 1:30 said that the teachers could adequately attend to all of their needs, and that these teachers were always available to them whenever they needed them. Pupils from schools with a ratio of approximately 1:45 or bigger on the other hand said that the teachers could not attend to them comprehensively, implying that they were highly likely to drop out of school.

4.5.2 Factors interfering with studies at school

Factors that interfere with pupils learning in school were also sought by this study, the pupils reported that their schools had many factors that interfered with their learning, these factors included inadequate infrastructure, teacher's attitudes towards pupils, and lack of feeding program among others. Inadequate infrastructure was equally mentioned by teachers during the key informant interviews, one particular teacher had this to say; *"learning cannot be smooth when the pupils do not even have enough desks to sit on during classes, and by the way, how do you expect the students to enjoy being in school when the teacher pupil ratio is so poor? In my school for instance the ratio is 1:50; imagine if one teacher is to look after 50 pupils, would the teacher be effective? I leave that for you to answer, but just know that we are having it rough down here."* Parents also echoed the sentiments from the pupils, one parent narrated how her boy always complained a teacher's attitude towards him until eventually the boy stopped going to school. The symbolic interactionist theory whose perspective attributes problems in education to the labelling aspect within the classroom support these findings; the teacher's attitude towards a pupil just like labelling if negative will play a role in the retention of that particular pupil in school.

4.5.3 Analysis of the causes of the difference in number between those who joined in class one and those currently in class 7 or 8.

The respondents gave multiple reasons as to why there was a difference in number between the number they were in class one and the number they currently are in class 7 or 8. A majority (39%) of the pupils said that most of their former classmates had transferred to other schools, 24% indicated that some of their colleagues had repeated and a significant 37% reported that their former classmates had actually dropped out of school. These findings are corroborated with revelations from key informant interviews, teachers said that cases of class repetition was common and it could account for difference from one class to another, they also mention transfer of pupils from one school to another as a potential reason for that difference.

4.5.4 Potential measures to be put in place to enhance the school capacity in promoting pupil retention in public primary

The study sought to establish measures that could be put in place to enhance the school capacity in promoting retention of pupils in school. The pupils seemed not to have suggestions on how this can be achieved. However, teachers and parents had a lot to suggest: interview with teachers revealed that quality of school culture plays a critical part in engaging and retaining pupils in school, it was noted that the development of a supportive school culture that fostered connections with pupils, parents and the community, and the creation of a school climate of high expectations and accountability was vital for retention of pupils in school. In an interview with a parent, the parent said, *“in order to ensure retention of pupils in school, there is need for commitment to success for all pupils, no pupil should feel that others are favoured to pass than others, he emphasized that building a shared view that all pupils can succeed with on-going commitment to identifying the most effective teaching and learning strategies to raise the achievement of at risk pupils.”* Another parent suggested need for flexibility and responsiveness to individual needs, the schools capacity to respond to varying needs which in addition to welfare and academic might include social, personal and emotional needs can help

in pupil retention. Another teacher said, *“Schools should encourage pupil responsibility and autonomy, because building an ethos of pupils taking responsibility for their own learning and behavior so that learners accept the idea that their own efforts are important for progress and thus retention.”*

4.6 Factors that affect regular schooling in primary schools

The study sought to establish factors that affect regular schooling in primary schools in Maparasha, the study established that income level was a key determinant of regular attendance, this is because whenever school required pupils to pay some monies, only those who had paid the monies attended school, those with no income would wait till their parents got the monies. This findings are corroborated by the findings in the literature review that held that education is deemed to be a consumption good, such result imply that the income effect hold true. As the income of households increases, they will also increase their expenditures on normal goods and services including education. This findings mean that households base their decisions including whether to send their children to school on permanent income rather than transitory income. It was also established that, family size affected regular attendance of schools in Maparasha, as the family size increases, school participation declines. It was also established that the level of education of the household head greatly influenced school attendance; pupils who came from families with educated parents were highly likely to attend school regularly. Lack of food was also revealed to negatively impact regular attendance school.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, discussions, conclusions and recommendations of the study findings from the questionnaires which were administered to the women fish vendors on the role of micro enterprises in poverty reduction in the low income informal settlements. The chapter discusses the findings in relation to the literature review and the objectives identified for the study. The recommendations drawn were based on the outcomes of the study.

5.1 Summary and discussion of the findings

The findings of the study answered the research questions on the factors influencing retention of primary school pupils in Maparasha, which have been measured through the following objectives; the sociocultural factors that influence retention in primary schools in Maparasha, the socio-economic factors that influence primary school retention in Maparasha, and the school related factors that influence retention in primary schools in Maparasha. The discussion and related literature were presented for each of the three variables of the study.

5.1.1 Sociocultural factors that influence enrollment in primary schools

Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the selected sociocultural factors influence retention of pupils in primary schools. Social factors like family type was cited as a factor influencing dropout, it was noted that children from single parent families dropped out of school more compared to those with both parents. After children initiation to adulthood there was a high likelihood that they dropped out of school. The cultural practices like girls marriage for dowry were noted to be a common reason for getting girls out of school in Maparasha.

5.1.2 Economic factors that influence primary school retention

Economic reason was cited to highly influence dropout rate in Maparasha, poverty was noted to be a reason why children engage in labour activities thereby ending up dropping out of school. In ability to pay school fee was also reported to contribute to dropout among those who dropped out of school. In an interview with a PTA member, the member said, *“when the school is in need of certain funds, parents are expected to pay, those who don’t pay will have their children sent out of school, when this persists, these children eventually drop out of school.”*

5.1.3 School related factors that influence retention

The study reveals that school related factors equally contributed to the dropout rate in Maparasha. School infrastructure was cited as a factor that caused dropout of school. Another factor that was mentioned mostly in the interviews was school distance from the children’s homes, children who stay far from schools were absent from school many times and eventually dropped out of school.

5.2 Conclusion of the study

The study was carried out to establish the factors that influence retention of primary school pupils. From the findings the study concludes that socio-cultural factors in Maparasha have contributed greatly towards retention of pupils in primary school. The study concludes that cultural reasons like initiation of children to adulthood and parents for example give out their girl-child for marriage at an early age with an aim of getting dowry are some of the factors that cause pupils to drop out of school. School setting factors is also concluded to be a factor that contributed to high dropout rates. Distance from school was found to contribute to absenteeism and eventual dropout of school. Bullying in schools, curriculum and attitude to certain subjects is also a reason for high dropout rate.

5.3 Recommendations

From the summary of findings and conclusions the study makes the following recommendations;

- i. The study established that the economic factors influenced the retention of pupils in schools. The study therefore recommends that stakeholders should empower the parents by introduction of the irrigation agriculture where the households will be self-reliant in terms of food production and may reduce reliance on the donor based school feeding programme.
- ii. The study also found that cultural factors influenced the retention of children in schools in Maparasha. The study recommends that through sensitization, the community should be educated to shun such practices that undermine education such as early marriages and Female Genital cutting.
- iii. The findings of the study revealed that the geographical factors such as distance from school influenced the retention of pupils in schools in Maparasha. The study therefore recommends that the communities in Maparasha should be educated on the importance of taking their children to school and why all children are equal despite their gender differences.
- iv. The study further recommends that the government should construct more schools so that the children should access schools without traveling long distances. This may be done through the Constituency Development Fund and other donor interventions.
- v. The study also recommends that more mobile schools should be established to ease the agony of having to travel long distances to school by pupils some of them very young to cover long distances.

- vi. The study established that security negatively influenced the retention of pupils in schools in Maparasha. The study therefore recommends that the government should ensure that security in the region is beefed up such that the lives of the people of Maparasha are not threatened and learning to take place uninterrupted.
- vii. Given the fact that socio-cultural factors have been found out to contribute to high dropout rate in Maparasha, the study recommends there should be sensitization to create awareness in the community for members to change their perception on cultural beliefs that may lead to children dropping out of school
- viii. The study further recommends that there should be a government policy and enforcement of the same to discourage child labor which has been noted to cause high dropout rate of pupils from primary schools.
- ix. The study recommends that the government should initiate a policy that ensures provision of employment to the marginalized groups like Maparasha. This in turn will result in sufficient provision of food at the household level.
- x. The study revealed that majority of people in Maparasha rely on pastoralism as the main source of income for the community in Maparasha. That being the case stakeholders should work together to see to it that the community's means of livelihood is diversified.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Pupils in School

Demographic information

1. Age

10 years- 12 years []

13 years- 16 years []

Below 9 years []

2. Gender

Male [] Female []

3. Class the children dropped out of school

Class 1 [] Class 2 [] Class 3 [] Class 4 [] Class 5 [] Class 6 [] Class 7 [] Class 8 []

Socio-cultural factors

4. What is the type of family you come from?

[] Single parent family

[] Both parents present

[] Foster family

5. Do you have siblings?

[] Yes

[] No

6. What is the highest level of education your siblings have attained?

[] None

[] Primary

[] Secondary

[] Tertiary level education

7. a Have you gone through rites of passage?

[] Yes

[] No

7. b If YES did you continue with school after initiation?

[] Yes

[] No

8. What are some of the challenges that are facing pupils in your class? (You may tick more than one answer).

- a) Absenteeism
- b) Lateness to school
- c) Lateness for lessons
- d) Pupils negative attitude towards school and class work
- e) Lack of school fees
- f) Discriminated at school or home

Others specify _____

9a. How often are you late in getting to school? (Tick one appropriate box).

- (a) Always (b) Sometimes (c) Never

9b. If you were late to get to school what were the reasons for this?

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

10a. Have you ever been absent from school?

- Yes No.

11b. If yes what were the reasons for this? (You can tick more than one reason)

- a) Helping at home
- b) Helping in the school
- c) Sickness
- d) Caring for younger siblings
- e) Engaging in casual work
- f) Caring for sick relatives
- g) Others specify _____

Section B: Socio-economic factors

12. Level of education of father

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- None

13. Level of education of mother

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- None

14. What is the economic activity your parents do?

- Farming
- Pastoralism
- Informal employment
- Formal employment
- Business

15. How much money do you estimate for your family income per month? Kshs

16. Who pays monies required by school?

- Parent
- Guardian

17. Are the monies paid promptly?

- Yes
- No

18. What does the school do for pupils who do not pay the monies in time?

19. Are there reports of child labour in the community?

- Yes
- No

Section II: School related Factors Affecting Pupils' Retention in Primary Schools

20. How does teacher pupil ratio influence the retention of pupils in public primary schools in Maparasha?

21. How does teaching and learning resources influence retention of pupils in public primary schools?

22. How does availability of physical resources influence pupil retention in public primary schools?

23. How does teacher's attitude affect pupils' retention in public primary schools?

24. What are the measures that can be put in place to enhance the school capacity in promoting pupil retention in public primary?_____

25. Indicate the teacher pupil ratio in your school?

1:20 [] 1:30 [] 1:40 []

1:50 [] 1:60 [] more than 61 []

26. Indicate whether you agree with the following statements on how the availability of teachers affects pupils' retention in your school. Key: 1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree, 3-Undecided, 4-Disagree and 5-Strongly Disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher inadequacy has made our performance in the school not good hence some preferring to move to private schools					
The ratio of teachers to pupils in our school is poor and this has contributed to some pupils moving to other schools					
Some of the available teachers in our school aren't adequately trained and this contributes to the transfer of some pupils to other schools					

27. To what extent does the availability of teachers affect the retention of pupils in your school?

To a greater extent [] To some extent []

Not at all [] Not sure []

28. Indicate whether you agree with the following statements on how the teaching and learning resources affect pupils' retention in your school. Key: 1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree, 3-Undecided, 4-Disagree and 5-Strongly Disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of adequate teaching and learning resources affects the learning process as well as the concentration of pupils in class hence affecting their interest in learning					
The ratio of learning materials to pupils is poor in our school; this affects the learning process as well as retention of pupils in the school.					
Students leave school because they are not able to get the necessary learning resources in the school					
Teaching resources are not adequate in the school, hence most students leave school to get better schools					

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Pupils out of School

1. Age

10 years- 12 years

13 years- 16 years

Below 9 years

2. Gender

Male Female

3. Class the children dropped out of school

Class 1 Class 2 Class 3 Class 4 Class 5 Class 6 Class 7 Class 8

Section A: Socio-cultural factors

4. What is the type of family you come from?

Single parent family

Both parents present

Foster family

5. Do you have siblings?

Yes

No

6. What is the highest level of education your siblings have attained?

None

Primary

Secondary

Tertiary level education

7. Do you continue with school after initiation?

Yes

No

8. In a scale of 1 to 5, please indicate the extent to which the following factors contributed to your dropping out of school, where 1=strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= not sure, 4= Agree, 5= strongly agree.

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
Sickness of parents					
Family chores					
Child labour					
School far from home					
Early marriage					

9. Are there chores you are expected to do at home?

Yes

No

10. Are these chores gender specific?

Yes

No

11. Did cultural practices hinder your regular attendance to school?

Yes

No

12. If YES above, list the practices

Section B: Socio-economic factors

13. In a scale of 1 to 5, please indicate the extent to which the following factors contributed to your dropping out of school, where 1=strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= not sure, 2= Agree, 1= strongly agree.

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
Sickness of parents					
Family chores					
Child labour					
Lack of sponsor					

14. What is the economic activity your parents do?

- Farming
- Pastoralism
- Informal employment
- Formal employment
- Business

15. Were there monies you paid in school?

- Yes
- No

16. If YES above, who paid the monies required by school?

- Parent
- Guardian

17. Were the monies paid promptly?

- Yes
- No

18. What did the school do for pupils who did not pay the monies in time?

19. Are there reports of child labour in the community?

- Yes
- No

Section C: School related factors

20. What was the number of teachers in your school? _____

21. Were you free to discuss issues with your teachers?

- Yes
- No

22. What was the reaction of teachers whenever you discussed with them?

23. Indicate whether you agree with the following statements on how the teachers' attitude affects pupils' retention in your school. Key: 1-Strongly Agree, 2-A-Agree, 3-Un Decided, 4-Disagree and 5-Strongly Disagree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Some of our teachers lack commitment towards good learning and hence affecting the retention of pupils in schools.					
Lack of coherence between classroom practices and expressed educational beliefs affects negatively the retention of pupils in the class					
Some of the teachers tend to see school failure as a result of the socio-psychological deprivation due to social conditions of child and family					

24. In a scale of 1 to 5, please indicate the extent to which the following factors contributed to your dropping out of school, where 1=strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= not sure, 2= Agree, 1= strongly agree.

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
Tough curriculum					
No interest in school					
Beating by teachers					
School far from home					
Lack of sponsor					
Lack of books and study materials					
Mistreatment from other pupils					
Inadequate classrooms					

Appendix 3: Key informant interview guide: Parents

A. PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Gender (interviewer to observe and circle) Male Female
2. Occupation_____
3. Role at school/in community_____

A. ROLE OF SCHOOL

4. How important is the role of the school in this community?
5. Is the education received at primary school seen as relevant to the needs of children and their families? Explain.
6. (a) Is education seen as a priority for families in this community?
 - (i) If No, what are families' priorities?
 - (ii) If Yes, does this priority change in times of hardship? Explain.

B. ISSUES OF ATTENDANCE & RETENTION

7. (a) How would you describe pupil attendance at Maparasha primary?
 - (b) What are the main reasons for pupil absenteeism?
8. (a) Is drop out amongst pupils a problem at Maparasha primary? Explain.
 - (b) What circumstances might lead to pupils dropping out permanently from school?
9. (a) From your observations, which groups of children are most likely to:
 - (i) experience poor attendance,
 - (ii) perform poorly and repeat,
 - (iii) drop out permanently?
10. How often do you consult about children school related issue?
11. What is the most reason given for absenteeism?
12. Do the pupils go to school during/after the initiation period (morans, circumcision?)
13. How does the society value education?
14. Are schools readily available in the community?
15. Do you pay monies required by school promptly (**PTA/Development fund, Meals, remedial teachings**)?

Appendix 4: Key informant interview guide for teachers

PART A: Demographic data

1. Gender?

Male

Female

2. How many children were admitted in class one?

3. How many of the original number of children admitted in class one are currently in class eight?

4. What cause pupils dropout in your school?

5. How do you compare the drop-out of pupils from your school for the last three years? (**Probe:** Mistreatment by teachers, Family attitude and beliefs, Pregnancy, Sexual harassment, Lack of school fees and Discriminated at school and home)

6. What are some of the challenges that are facing pupils in your school? (**Probe:** Absenteeism, Lateness to school, Students negative attitude towards school and class work, Lack of school fees, and discrimination at school or home).

7. In your own opinion what measures can be taken to enhance retention of pupils in school

Appendix 5: Permit



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Date:

30th June, 2015

NACOSTI/P/15/6608/6130

Rhoda Wanjiru Njue
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on “*Factors that influence enrolment and retention of primary schools in Maparasha, Kajiado County,*” I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kajiado County** for a period ending **4th December, 2015.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Kajiado County** 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. S. K. LANGAT, OGW
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Kajiado County.

The County Director of Education
Kajiado County.

CONDITIONS

- 1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County 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 without 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) hard copies and one(1) soft copy of your final report.**
- 6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.**



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



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**RESEARCH CLEARANCE
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5536

CONDITIONS: see back page

Appendix 6: Total Teachers and Class Eight and Seven Pupils in Maparasha Location.

SCHOOL	CATEGORY	Class 7	Class 8	TEACHING STAFF
Maparasha Primary	Public	90	64	12
Lele Primary	Public	60	23	10
Olocholoibol Primary	Public	23	7	7
Mopia primary	Public	97	38	15
Letoire Primary	Public	7	None	5
Saruni Primary	Public	10	None	4
Oloserian Primary	Public	13	None	5
Total		300	132	58

Source: Bisil Division Education Officer, 2015