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RESEARCH PROBLEM

THE INFLUENCE OF THE FAMILY ON SCHOOL DROP-OUT AMONG THE YOUTH: THE CASE OF EAST BUNYORE LOCATION, EMUHAYA DIVISION, VIHIGA DISTRICT, KENYA.

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY.

IN THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI IN THE 1996/97 ACADEMIC YEAR.

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DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented by anybody anywhere for examination.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father, Mr. Jairus Okusi who injected in me a sense of hard work, honesty, obedience and above all discipline and respect for others.

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ABSTRACT

The problem of school drop-out is a prevailing phenomenon that has invited a lot of criticism from various quarters with academic leaders taking the front line. School heads, leaders of institutions of higher learning, academic officials and the general public have condemned such youths as an embarrassment. The more the leaders condemn the problem the more chronic it becomes.

This research involves a fairly comprehensive study of the school drop-out problem with major emphasis on reasons for dropping out of school and their linkage to the family. There is need to re-examine cultural practices within marriage and family, poverty, family instability, problems associated with school enrolment are linked to school drop-out.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND INFORMATION, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

1.0 This chapter entails to deal with the background information, problem statement and objectives of the study.

1.1 Background Information

Education is a key characteristic which determines to a great extent, one's entry into the job market. Therefore expansion of access to youths would improve their bargaining power in the labour market. Since independence, education has expanded rapidly with primary and secondary schools participation rates reaching 95% and 31% respectively. However, the rates have been declining gradually to record 82% and 27% in 1994 respectively. This is mainly due to the school drop-out problem. (UNFPA, 1995).

W In regard to education, Bunyore was among the first sections of western Kenya to have exposure to western education through the church of God missionaries. The history of missionary education is as follows:-

"In 1904 Robert Wilson travelled by ship from Johannesburg in South Africa to Mombasa in Kenya. From its inception the missionary efforts to evangelise to the people of Bunyore and the neighbouring subtribes included a commitment to teach reading and writing to ensure a lasting response to the gospel (Makokha, 1995).

So as early as 1908-1910 Johanna Bila from South Africa visited the nearby homesteads in the late afternoons to teach reading lessons to those who responded positively. The reading was accompanied with the sharing of the gospel as observed in that, Bila, Wilson and Baker shared the same notion that preaching the gospel should be accompanied with instruction on reading, writing and simple arithmetic. This was to ensure that the evangelised

nationals became literate christians capable of making financial and business transactions and informed decisions. Wilson and Bila used reading charts. Getrude Kramer and Mabel Baker built a formal educational system. The teaching of Mrs. Kramer and Miss Baker seemed to focus on the girls. The two missionaries made many visits to the villages to promote among girls sustained interest in the new form of non-traditional education. As Mabel would later put it,

"When I started teaching the girls in the afternoons schools I found that visiting them was indeed the secret of success" (Williams 1986:34).

The effort to establish missionary education in the area specifically for girls led to the development of Bunyore Girls school,(1935). The boys school popularly known as Kima Central School was established and operated side by side with the girls school. From this time onward Kima as a mission begun to position itself as an education centre poised to contribute to Church of God manpower development. As the church grew up the Africans demand for education necessitating the need for more personnel and additional housing also increased.

At present the church sponsors 160 primary schools, 35 secondary schools, 4 vocational training institutions (polytechnics), a theology school, Kima International Theology College (K.I.T.C.). The church plays a critical role in Kenya's education.

"It therefore can be appreciated that the sweeping changes that took place in the country's education since the turn of the 1960's were certainly expansive and transitional but at the same time innovative and bold" (Makokha, 1995). The unity and commitment of the Kenyan leadership exemplified in church and government partnership that recognised the primacy of God in peoples lives progressively yielded positive results. By the time the government set up schools for formal education, many men and

²
V. good background

women in Bunyore were literate. In fact the first formal schools in the division developed along centres that missionaries had started. But the major problem is that ninety years later on there is still a problem of school drop-out in an environment where education is supposed to have taken a firm stand.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to the records of 1989 Kenya population census, 4.17% and 4.26% boys and girls aged 10-14 years respectively had dropped out of school in Kakamega district of which Vihiga was a part. These figures are high when compared with the national figures of 3.9% for boys and 4.1% for girls.

Population pressure as evidenced with high density has exerted pressure on the land (most households in Bunyore have a small land acreage). The result of this is food scarcity. The high drop-out rate can be partly attributed to parental unemployment. This is because families experience poverty that force children to drop-out of school due to lack of school fees. This study aims at investigating the role of family on children education in Bunyore.

According to Kenya demographic and health survey of 1993 a woman in western province has more children on the average than other women in Kenya. The figure is 8 compared to 6 at the national level. This implies that western province (of which Bunyore is part) is highly populated.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The major objective of this study was to investigate the influence of family on school drop-out among the youth in East-Bunyore location of Vihiga district. Specifically the study attempted to:-

1. Describe socio-cultural factors within the family that contribute to school drop-out.
2. Identify economic factors within the family that contribute to school drop-out.

3. Make recommendations that can be used as guidelines by community leaders in counselling parents and strengthen youth continuation in school.

objectives are relevant to the background & problem statement

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter entails to deal with the literature review, theoretical framework, significance of the study and operational definition of major concepts used in the study. An attempt will be made to evaluate the contribution of various scholars on the research problem. In addition the theoretical framework at play on the social scene will be discussed and its relevance to the study will be shown.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior to this study of family and how it influences school drop-out among the Banyore of Western Kenya no detailed work appears to have been done on this aspect. However, some research has been done and a lot has been written by various scholars on the other aspects of this society. For instance, (Osogo, 1965) wrote the history of the Abaluhya and (Wagner, 1936), changing family among the Bantu of Kavirondo. Much of the contemporary data and interpretation regarding family relation to school drop-out problem is inadequate. However, a lot has been discussed on the factors that may generally lead to school drop-out. These include: family size, broken homes, economic factors, parental deprivation, peer group influence, single parenthood, defective discipline, parental leisure activity, commitment to careers, socio-cultural factors, traditional division of labour. Others include socialization before or during schooling, societal traditions and practices, traditional attitudes towards education for girls and patriarchy or patrilineal family structure.

Family size

Families with a large number of children contribute a great deal to the issue of school drop-out. Family size is strongly linked with other social factors notably: poverty, social class,

social status and number of siblings. According to (Goode, 1964)

"If the mother of a large family happens to be a not particularly efficient manager, the children lack proper attention".

Such like children go to school without the some essentials such as breakfast, lunch money or packed lunch and the books required at school. This may lead to school drop-out and in extreme cases truancy. (Desai, 1965) observed that,

"Family size and birth spacing encompasses a set of factors affecting child welfare with children from large families and those with closely spaced siblings suffering from greater competition for limited family resources of time and money. Such like children rarely get the fulfilment of their basic needs save for tertiary needs such as education".

Broken homes

In this study a broken home refers to a home where one or both parents are missing owing to death, desertion, separation or divorce. (Goode, 1964) notes that

"A complete family which consists of a mother, father and their children is vital for the development of a socially adjusted individual. A normal home situation is like a self contained society where each person cares for the other".

It is not a broken home as such which is related to school drop-out but certain circumstances in the home setting such as stress, inability to get food, school fees or malnutrition at home.

Overcrowding

There is a non-commitant of **poverty** as (Burt, 1925) put it "Where all ages and both sexes are huddled together within one room decency is difficult,

delicacy impossible and premature acquittance with conjugal relations unavoidable".

Here there is an early pre-occupation with sex topics. Where accommodation is limited and children and parents sleep in the same room with no screen or curtain and little sleeping places, it is hard for parents to preserve proper dignity and this injures self respect. The effects of such a situation are drastic. There is ceaseless friction and recurrent irritation. Burt adds that

"Among families bearing can hardly be prevented while a number of individuals widely in wants and pursuits according to age are kept jostling everyday in the closest personal proximity within the four narrow walls of an over-spaced apartment. As a result of lack of privacy everything is said and discussed in the presence of everybody".

This situation is typical in slum urban areas where housing is a problem. This may lead to less concentration on school work, lack of supervision by parent and lack of motivation in schooling hence derailment from academics.

Economic factors

Economic factors can be combined with residence ~~Because~~ economic circumstances in the home environment are of paramount importance for the growth and development of a child. According to (Muteti, 1994) economic factors can be looked at under 4 headings namely: poverty, low occupation, unemployment and social status.

- (i) **Poverty:** Here earnings are insufficient for the maintenance of bodily health and other basic needs, this may lead to lack of money to pay for school fees.
- (ii) **Low occupation:** This means low income and therefore hardships in meeting basic needs. This implies that money for instrumental needs is not available.

(iii) **Unemployment:** This has detrimental bearing on the families economic situation. Lack of money implies that parents will not afford to educate their children hence increasing illiteracy rates.

(iv) **Social status:** This also determines whether the children will be educated or not. Low social status in most cases indicates poverty.

(Lloyd, Blanc 1995) noted that,

"Economic factors determine the families standard of living in that better off families have more resources to invest in their own children, the particularly strong relationship between family living standards and school completion rates confirm the increasing importance of family resources for children if they are going to successfully progress from grade to grade in school".

According to (Llyod, 1965) it is the poor who lack good food, health, education, marketable skills and amenities while the "poorest of the poor" more often women than men are those who are immobile in terms of household affiliation are unable to access resources from outside the family.

Psychological factors

This factor will be discussed basing on family relations. Features of a child's early upbringing are likely to interfere with super ego formation centre upon the emotional tone of the child's earliest experiences of other persons namely his relationship first with the mother and later to a lesser extent father and then to other adults. (Bowl by, 1965) notes that;

"Given the situation where a child's material needs are adequately met the children who thrive best are likely to be those who receive consistent parental love, encouragement and discipline".

Where the relationship is close and loving this favours the process of identification where the infant comes to develop a self reference ideal based on his image of the parent. A loving relation creates a conducive environment for schooling. If the parents are overburdened, pre-occupied or neglectful, opportunity to learn and absorb rules is correspondently reduced. Erratic, neglectful and unloving parents normally fail to inspire a restraining ideal super ego in their children. Stress at home leads to less concentration at school.

Peer groups

Peer groups are essentially operational where a child is not getting enough emotional support from the family. (Erickson, 1970) observes that,

"The peer group is crucial at the adolescence stage since the adolescent may take refuge in the gang and thereby allow it with its rigid rules and intolerance of differences to provide him with an identity. If a school going child actively associates with school drop-outs with the aim of fulfilling a pressing need of recognition and acceptability which has not been fulfilled in the home setting he may eventually become a deviant".

Such like children may start smoking, drinking and this may cause them to become indisciplined hence violation of school rules o may be suspended from school and in extreme cases they are expelled. Alternatively, they may drop-out of school voluntarily so as to join their peers. Puberty is an important period in a persons' life and peer pressure plays a great role in one's life. It influences decision on education among other things. Adolescents may be pre-occupied with relations with the opposite sex rather than academics hence may finally drop out of school.

Single parenthood

This results from individual circumstances such as unmarried motherhood, fatherhood, divorce or separation. According to (Kamoga, 1963),

"Single parenthood may lead to a lack of close parental supervision, failure of adequate socialization, this is ~~because of lack of~~ close parental supervision due to lack of proper role model which leads to instability in children".

Families headed by mothers are likely to have large numbers of school drop-outs which is partly due to lack of authority or less finance. Families headed by fathers lack the female model hence someone to encourage the children's stay in school. According to (Lloyd, Desai, 1991) a child's absence from his/her mother/father is often taken as a sign of extreme vulnerability especially when the child is still very young, yet in certain settings, most notably in Sub-Saharan Africa it is not uncommon for children to live away from their mothers. Poor health and nutritional outcome for children in mother only families containing neither biological parent have been linked to be relative lack of resources in such families.

DEFECTIVE DISCIPLINE

"Home discipline may be too lenient or too strict or virtually non-existent. This is common where parents have opposite codes such that one does the spoiling and shielding whereas the other one plays the role of the stern and stringent parent. Here the result is confusion on the child's side", as observed by (Muteti, 1984).

Then the child is left in a dilemma wondering which parent is ~~Correct~~ but in most cases they will cling onto the lenient parent. The result of this for scholars may be drop-out of school. For

proper schooling the parents have to take up responsibility of actively and efficiently disciplining the child. The issue of discipline may also arise from schooling environment where students drop out of school because of the feeling that teachers hate them hence that is why they keep on punishing them. This arises in a situation where the teachers are too strict.

PARENTAL DEPRIVATION

It falls into categories: maternal and paternal deprivation. (Stoller, 1962) holds that,

"Infancy and the first three years of a child's life are the most important ones. It follows that the quality and quantity of maternal care received is vital. The importance of emotional aspects of mothering has been emphasised".

(Bowlby, 1965) has drawn attention to the effects of maternal deprivation. He argues that,

"Separation of an infant or young child from its mother for any length of time negatively affects his/her personality structure hence his future prospects inclusive of education".

If the father's play their roles defectively or reject their children (Andry, 1962) says that the personality and general development of the children are adversely affected. An incompetent, ineffectual, cold father provides an inadequate model and is a source of insecurity according to (Farmer, 1979). The process of fathering calls for the fathers to be actively participants in family life. (Kamoga, 1963) observes that,

"In a case of divorced parents the fathers may take the children to school but their mothers come and withdraw them since they think that their children are being mistreated by their fathers' family".

Alternatively the children are withdrawn from school or prevented from going there by their step mothers who try not to give them a chance to show their abilities in schooling since they may be more brighter than their biological children.

PARENTAL COMMITMENT TO CAREERS

It has become the established habit in many areas for a family with young children to rely on earnings of the breadwinner. These earnings low for the unskilled are not compatible with the increasing familial needs. In an attempt to avoid the relative financial hardships associated with children an increasing number of mothers in the 20th century have gone out to work in order to supplement their husbands earnings as observed by (Farmer, 1979). This has direct effect on the children since they have substitute parents in housemaids and in the long run might completely lose their parents to their jobs. This eventually leads to lack of parental guidance, for instance, no supervision of school work. This becomes a healthy ground for breeding school drop-outs.

PARENTAL LEISURE ACTIVITY

If the parents behaviours are destructive this affects the children, for instance, alcoholism. (Burt, 1925) asserted that, "health and discipline are neglected and the family is despised by neighbours. Money is squandered as a result of alcoholism. This creates a perpetual life of discord, irregularity and passions which are sustained. The parents abuse each other before the children and may mistreat them".

Alcoholic parents do not get enough time to be with their children and help them with their development crisis. Children may get involved in moral acts such as theft, drug abuse, which may eventually lead to drop-out of school. Where one parent is alcoholic the other one suffers emotional stress due to lack of support from the other spouse. The parent may at times break down

hence resulting into heart failure. Other destructive leisure activities include: smoking and gambling.

CULTURAL FACTORS

These include early marriage, bride wealth payment, early pregnancy and polygyny. They are also causes of discontinuation of studies especially among female students. According to (Bullerot, 1941),

"In the past years there has been a paradoxical increase in the number of female students and increase in age at marriage for males".

The main obstacle is their family life, it is not so much that women lose interest in their studies when they marry but rather difficult to be students and housewives at the same time. Forced marriages reinforce negative feelings towards schooling and leads to high drop-out rates. Girls become mothers while still in school and drop-out to get married and raise their children. Boys on the other hand are given more access since education will give them a foundation to effect bride price and maternal support at home.

TRADITIONAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

In explaining the different drop-out rates for boys and girls, traditional division of labour on basis of gender has been cited as a contributing factor. The roles of boys and girls at home determine their performance in school and their attendance of classes. According to (Llyod, Blanc, 1995),

"Even when schools are accessible and affordable families have to see a net advantage to themselves and to their children from for-going children's full time participation in domestic and economic activities if they are to willingly enroll their children in school and keep them there as they approach adolescence".

Generally, girls are over-burdened with family chores like care of young siblings, fetching water, collecting firewood. The resulting fatigue is not conducive to good performance in school. The need for more labourers at home is cited by parents as one of the reasons for failing to enrol their daughters in school. In a study by (Shieffield and Anderson, 1967), it was found out that,

"In a farming community men do the breaking of land which happens only once in a long period of time while women perform continues tasks. As a result girls are withdrawn from school when the work of planting, weeding, harvesting overwhelms their mothers hence leaving their brothers to study".

From this it is clear that division of labour leaves the girl physically and mentally exhausted making her an ineffective and sometimes a disinterested learner.

SOCIALIZATION BEFORE/DURING SCHOOLING

Girls are conditioned to believe that their naturally appropriate place is the home. They acquire self images based on motherhood, housewifery and submission to men. Such images are not likely to encourage pursuance of education as observed by (Ian, 1971). It stifles the girls initiative and independence of thought. She is content with a little education as long as she lives to her culturally appropriate role. Boys are taught that they are the aggressive sex who should be ambitious and strive to conquer the highest standards of education while girls settle for their home making vocation. Thus this self image contributes to the disparity in drop-out rates.

SOCIETAL NORMS AND CUSTOMS

(Chege, 1983) observes that,

"One of the main customs that hinders stay on in school is initiation, when a maasai girl is circumcised she is supposed to get married

immediately while the maasai morans stay on in the forests feasting for many days. They also get involved with other societal activities like pastoralism and cannot cope with the school".

Initiation thus stands as a stumbling block towards education, ethical values and attitudes. Time and again both girls and boys who withdraw from school to be circumcised do so for good. Thus for those who choose to follow tradition education is the opportunity cost. During initiation adult life is introduced in the lives of young adults. They are given knowledge about the secrets of marriage and how to be responsible adults as mothers and fathers and ready for marriage. This accounts for the early marriages and therefore school drop-outs. In some societies poor health resulting from genital mutilation account for high drop-out rates.

TRADITIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS EDUCATION

(Llyod, 1995) observes that

"parents are less likely to invest in children's education if there are no clear expectations of economic returns for the family as a whole".

In this case girls are often victims of circumstance due to connected gender stereotypes which depict women as an incapable lot. It has to do with the image of women as housekeepers. In Uganda (Ian, 1971) found out that,

"Education for girls was for immediate and practical use. It was meant to impart in them virtues of good behaviour at home and outside. Girls are also seen as vulnerable and parents fear to expose them to hazards of outside life associated with schooling".

(Lloyd and Blanc, 1995) observed that

"Drop-out rates are significantly greater for girls who have younger siblings and their attainment levels were also lower than those of boys when they have younger siblings".

The negative relation between number of siblings and education for girls suggests that they have fewer sources of support beyond their own parents than boys do.

"Family support networks where they continue to function may have a greater tendency to support the education of boys than girls because of higher returns these investments may bring to the co-operate family unit" as noted by (Llyod and Desai, 1991).

PATRIARCHY/PATRILINEAL FAMILY STRUCTURE

Overwhelming majority of Africans are patrilineal of residence patterns men are decision-makers in most aspects of life, including the choice of the children's education. According to (Anderson and Shieffield, 1967).

"Boys who are regarded as perpetuators of the genealogy/clan always get first priority as concerns investment in education".

It is assumed that a girls education will only benefit her husband's family hence more boys than girls go to higher levels of education. To worsen the situation parents do not even consider the person of both sexes in school, in most cases the girls is on the loosing end.

PARENTAL LEVEL OF EDUCATION

(Llyod and Blanc, 1995) found out that,

"The more educated the parents, the more likely the child will be attending school currently and if she/he even attended school, whether they dropped out of school or

completed schooling".

This implies that the impact of education of the head of household in which the child resides determines the child's schooling. Illiterate parents tend to repeat the same cycle on their offsprings while literate parents would like to continue the trend of literacy to their children.

The reason for associating school drop-out with family is because the family is the basic unit of socialization. Traditionally it was charged with the role of enculturating the child. Nowadays with the introduction of formal education parents have to ensure that they take their children to school, pay for their school fees and encourage them to learn. Parents and other family members play the deciding role in determining whether or not the children actually enrol in school and when. Thus the achievement of near universal primary schooling in Africa will require not only sufficient investments by governments but also the active support of families as observed by (Lloyd and Blanc, 1995).

Decisions about childrens schooling are presumably made by the family with immediate costs and long-run returns in mind. In Sub-Saharan Africa where the extended family is an important social institution, costs and returns to investments in education are more likely to be assessed from the vantage point of the larger co-operate family than from that one of parents or individual child.

A child should experience warm, intimate and continuous relationship with his/her parents. Parental deprivation affects a growing child. According to (Farmer, 1979),

"If unhappy family circumstances beset the growing child, this may lead to personal, psychological and emotional problems of adjustment for the youth".

Traditionally educating a child was a society affair but at present is strictly a nuclear family concern through the formal system of education.

This data is to provide information concerning the courses of school drop-out and make an attempt to link them to the family. This in turn is important in showing us the future of school drop-outs problem in our country. The study will provide an ethnographic understanding of the school drop-out problem.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was based on structural functionalism theory. The theory was developed by Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955). He and his followers maintained that each custom and belief of a society has a specific function that serves to perpetuate the structure (ordered arrangements of the parts so that the society's continued existence is possible) of that society. His main contribution was the anatomy of societies, he believed that there is no social institution that exists for no reason. Structural functionalists assume that each of the cultural traits has a specific function which serves to hold the social system together. These instruments function in co-operations to maintain the overall stability of the society. These cultural institutions co-exist, if one does not perform its role efficiently and effectively, then the entire system is bound to be interrupted hence disruption.

These cultural institutions include: religion, magic-science, technology, marriage, political/economic/social organisation and the family. This study is based on the family. The family is assigned various roles such as: provision of basic needs (food, shelter) and secondary needs like education, socialization function, provide emotional and psychological support, decision making unit, procreation, and is the basic unit of production, distribution and consumption. Since the family acts as a source of pressure for the individual and an agent of the larger society may not be effectively attained.

"The families widespread instability is shown not only in the facts and figures but in the public burden of payments for deserted wives, neglected children and the social cost of

young delinquents while the individual suffering involved adds upto a staggering sum of human unhappiness", as noted by (St oller, 1962).

The family as a group whose influence begins earliest and lasts longest, the only group into which the child is received without any choice on his part, is the most important with which any individual has associations during his/her lifetime. It is in the family that a child's personality development is nourished and the quality of this development depends largely on the familial climate which arises out of interaction of personalities in the group.

If the family fails to perform its roles efficiently (in this case education function) then the society is threatened with extinction. This is the main reason why this theory has been selected to be used in this study. It is also the most relevant theory to the study. The data shows that less has been done on the problem statement in the research site hence this is why the study was carried out.

v. good!

2.3 SIGNIFICANCE/JUSTIFICATION/RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Bunyore area was selected as a site of the research due to four major reasons namely:

- (1) It has the highest percentage of school drop-outs in the republic.
- (2) It is one of the most populous divisions in western Kenya.
- (3) It is partly the ground on which formal schooling in western Kenya was initiated through missionaries.
- (4) On the average women in Bunyore have given birth to more children compared to the national average.

The topic of school drop-out was chosen because the youth are leaders of tomorrow hence this calls for proper upbringing of children. One way of achieving this is by providing them with adequate education. If this is not done, then there is danger since the society needs productive individuals who can contribute

to national development.

The research focused on the youths of ages between 14-28 years. This is the period which includes those in schools as well as those that are undergoing training. The research left out youths under 14 years of age since at this age if they drop out of school they are likely to go back, but above 14 years of age the case seems irreversible and after 28 years of one is not a youth.

The reason why school drop-out is linked to the family is because the family is considered as a divine institution which is charged with the responsibility of catering for the child's basic needs. According to (Ember, 1990),

"A family is a social and economic unit minimally consisting of one or more parents and their children".

The family provides a learning environment for the children. A human infant or child is unable to take care of himself/herself at birth and for so many years afterwards. Children have to learn a repertoire of beliefs and habits in order to become functioning adults in society. The study is also of significance to researchers who are interested in the extent to which disrupted families may produce school drop-outs.

v good!

2.4 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Two major terms have been defined. These are family and school drop-out.

(I) FAMILY: The definition of the family in this study is based on three major factors. These are: social, cultural and economic.

(1) Economic Factors

These included any factors concerned with the family's economic status such as occupations, poverty, unemployment which may lead to lack of school fees and eventually drop-out of school.



(2) Social Factors

These were concerned with the organisation of and relations between the parents and their children and among the siblings themselves. These included: parental ignorance, over-crowding in the household, defective discipline and peer group influence.

(3) Cultural Factors

These are concerned with the communities (of which the family is part) way of life. The factors here included: polygyny, male dominant ideology (patriarchy), early (*forced*) marriage, insistence on bride wealth, early pregnancy, traditional division of labour, socialization process and family structure.

(II) SCHOOL DROP-OUT

In this study school drop-out is the act of withdrawing from school/college before finishing one's course. A school drop-out is anyone who left school without finishing the course of study. For easy collection and analysis of data the study came up with three categories of drop-outs.

(1) Primary level drop-outs

This refers to pupils who stopped schooling before sitting for the standard eight exam (K.C.P.E).

(2) Secondary level drop-outs

This refers to the students who left school before sitting for the form four exam (K.C.S.E).

(3) College level drop-outs

This refers to students who left college before sitting for the final exam and when the period of the course was not yet over to qualify them to be professionals.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The focuses of this chapter will be on methodology, research site, study population, sampling technique and how it was found to be appropriate in this study. In addition the research instruments will be presented.

3.1 RESEARCH SITE

The study was conducted in East Bunyore location which is situated in Emuhaya division of Vihiga district, Kenya. The people inhabiting this area are known as the 'Bunyore' which is one of seventeen sub-groups found within the larger luhya ethnic group. The word Abaluhya means fellow tribesmen. It is derived from the word 'Okhuyia' which means to burn. The Baluhya tribe consists of seventeen sub-tribes living in Kenya and four living in Uganda. All these sub-tribes are alike in that they have a common background, common culture, traditions and customs and speak the same language though dialects vary according to locality (Osogo, 1965).

Bunyore area is thickly populated. According to 1969 population census, East Bunyore had a total of 13,452 males, 16,161 females, 5,597 households which occupy 28km² that the location consists of. The population density is 106 persons/km².

Maseno, Luanda, Esibuye and Kima are the chief centres of Bunyore. Agricultural crops that are commonly grown include: maize, beans, groundnuts, cassavas and a variety of fruits such as, mangoes, papaws, avocados, guavas and passion fruits.

The Bunyore people also engage in animal husbandry hence keep animals such as goats, sheep, cattle which are a major commodity when it comes to bride price payment. The weather varies from sunny and dry in the early part of the year to wet and rainy in May to July.

The research site ~~was~~ located in Vihiga district which happens to be a newly created district which was actually carved out of Kakamega district. Therefore much of the information about it in the past has been covered under Kakamega district.

3.1.2 STUDY POPULATION

The study population consisted of the youths in the age bracket 14-28 years who had dropped out of school.

3.2 METHODOLOGY AS PART OF PROCEDURE

The field study consisted of a biographical approach which was based on a person as the unit of analysis. The researcher first contacted the key informants who were a great source of information. These included the area assistant chief/school headmaster who briefed the researcher on how to get the school drop-outs and interview them. Research was conducted in 'Lunyore' language due to the monolithic Banyore that constituted the sample. This was later on translated by the researcher into English. In some cases the respondents were well conversant in English hence there was no need for translation.

3.3 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The sampling technique used was random sampling. The sample size consisted of twelve youths who were divided into 3 categories according to age cohorts, these were as follows:

- (i) 14-18 years
- (ii) 19-23 years
- (iii) 24-28 years

From each category four respondents were interviewed, two females and two males, respectively. The study included three types of drop-outs namely:

- (i) primary level - 6 respondents
- (ii) secondary level - 4 respondents
- (iii) college level - 2 respondents

In total 6 boys and 6 girls were selected for the study. An attempt was made to link the data to the family of the respondents. However, the number of the youths talked to in each place depended on the degree of co-operation from the youth and their willingness to give out information. Other respondents were brought into the study by their fellow friends. It was difficult to have a larger sample because of the time constraint. The sample was purposeful.

Though the respondents used their names those have been changed to conceal their identity this is because some of the information given was too personal hence necessitating use of fictitious names.

3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

For the achievement of the study 2 research instruments were used namely the interview guide and direct observation. The key informant method was used to identify the school drop-outs.

3.4.1 Key Informant

Key informants usually provide a wealth of information concerning the area and study topic in general. In this study six key informants were interviewed. A schedule of an interview guide was developed (check appendix i). It consisted of a systematic set of questions which the researcher asked the respondents orally and they responded to them. The first key informant was the area chief who provided information on the current problem of school drop-outs. He further assisted the researcher in identifying school drop-outs. The school headmaster also provided information on the socio-cultural and economic reasons that contribute to school drop-out. He further tried to link them to the family and commented briefly on the attempts being carried out to solve the problem. He also assisted the researcher in identifying school drop-outs in the area since he was aware of them especially those from the school he was heading. (Esiembero primary school).

The third informant was the jua kali chairman of Vihiga county council who informed the researcher on how they inco-operated school drop-outs in their informal sector. He was assisted by his

deputy who briefed the researcher on how the school drop-outs perceive themselves and their attitude towards jua kali sector. Another key informant was the former mayor of Vihiga county council and chaplain of Kima mission stationed at the mission headquarters. Of importance was a speech quoted from the headmistress of Madira girls high school during a parents day.

3.4.2 Direct Observation

This refers to accurate watching and noting of phenomena as they occur in nature with regard to cause and effect or mutual relations. The key issues of the research were focused on the socio-cultural and economic factors within the family that lead to school drop-out. Direct observation was done alongside other methods used in the study. In addition to observing activities and other phenomena going on it was also necessary to examine the physical features of the locality. Also of importance the study observed the soil, vegetation, social amenities, infrastructure, medical facilities and housing structures. Direct observation provides information about solving some problems which the respondents might have been evasive about particularly concerning their own habits.

3.4.2 Interview guide

The interview was the major survey instrument. It was a semi structured set of questions which led to drop-outs narrating some information. The respondents were asked some questions which they were supposed to respond to. The interview guide was divided into 2 parts (the non-verbative part and the verbative part). The non-verbative part consisted of basically the background, education level, family information and parental leisure activity. The verbative part which was of utmost importance to the problem statement was more detailed (see appendix ii). It was here that probing was done in order to get all the relevant biographical information about the respondents. The responses of the research subjects were noted down by the researcher.

3.5 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED DURING THE STUDY AND THEIR SOLUTIONS

Field survey is rarely without problems or challenges. One does not approach an almost complete stranger expecting to ask personal questions about potentially sensitive issues. One problem encountered was finding the people to interview. The respondents were not pleased with the idea of being referred to as school drop-outs, hence some were not willing to co-operate. In this case the researcher attempted to convince them that this was an academic study and did not have any negative connotations. After this explanations some co-operated while a few declined hence in this case the researcher had no alternative but to look for the ones willing to co-operate.

Another problem was related to vague responses which was a way of trying to avoid disclosing the real but hurting facts especially in terms of relationships between parents and siblings. Some respondents felt that the questions were too many for them hence became impatient. Some thought that by giving information concerning drop-out of school they could be despised but the researcher explained to them that this case study was not meant to humiliate anyone but was purely academic hence changed their minds and co-operated.

Yet another problem was the short duration of time in the field, this was a major limiting factor since the study took place in only five months despite the fact that classes were going on hence time limitation for engaging in field work (thorough). In an attempt to solve this problem the researcher tried to make maximum use of the christmas vacation (13th December 1996 - 6th January 1997) and the temporary closure of the University (vacation) from 24th February - 24th March 1997.

Harsh climatic conditions prevailing at the time of study was also an obstacle to data collection since it was dry, hot and dusty, making afternoons uncomfortable for study. Here the researcher had little to do about the condition.

Surprisingly, one factor that really contributed to proper collection of data was the notion of the national youth harambee which was to be presided over by President Moi. Most youths thought that the researcher would forward their names so as to be considered eligible as beneficiaries of the funds. Hence they readily co-operated. However, I explained to them that they were mistaken.

Despite the four problems, most of the respondents were co-operative and patient to the end of the interviewing exercise. They readily gave the necessary information and some expressed deep concern on how to solve the problem.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into two sections. The 1st section provides information from key informants while the second part focuses on the information from the youth.

4.1 KEY INFORMANTS

The participants in this group included Here six people were interviewed on the school drop-out problem. This was done on the basis of the objectives of the study.

(a) Assistant Chief

The first respondent to be interviewed using this method was the area assistant chief. He noted that the school drop-out problem had reached an alarming rate in the sub-location. He noted various reasons for this phenomena. The first reason he noted was cultural and he had this to say about it,

"Here of concern are the children whose parents are divorced. The mother deserts the children while the father takes very little care of them. If the father is unemployed the problem is worsened. The children end up not going to school at all, or drop-out of school due to effects of these problems. The single parent problem is also evident where we have widows. Several men die leaving behind their wives who are left with orphans. If the deceased was working the money left in his account may not educate the children upto higher levels hence drop-out becomes common".

He commented that the drop-out rate is extremely high because the little money available is invested in basic needs at the expense of tertiary needs such as education. Another reason he gave was economic, the problem of the poorer of the poor. He

noted that this situation was very common in the area where poverty stricken families rarely take their children to school or if they do then they drop out on the way since education becomes a luxury and not a necessity. Of concern to him was the social factor - lack of parental discipline. He had this to say:

"Some parents rarely discipline their children, if they do then they are too lenient. Scholars drop out of school on this basis hence start engaging in immoral behaviour and become addicts to illicit brews, drug taking and bhang smoking".

He noted the campaign against taking 'changaa' an illegal drink and 'inzaka' an illegal drug. This is because the two had spoilt many youths in the area and created a lot of havoc in the sub-location. He noted that there are three groups of people who should be treated with extreme care and concern in matters of access to education. These are: the handicapped, the orphans and the needy. He said the following concerning the three groups:

"Physically handicapped parents lack income generating sources hence cannot take adequate care of the children. In some cases they may carter for them in lower primary then they drop out due to lack of fees. The orphans have nobody to take care of them in terms of both basic needs and education since in the current Kenyan situation no one is willing to assist the other. The needy may include the able-bodied people who do not manage to maintain their own children in school due to financial constraints".

The second respondent was the headmaster of Esiembero primary school. He noted that the school drop-out problem has been going on for several years and commented that the first factor contributing to the problem is family environment which is inclusive of social, economic and cultural factors. He had this to say:-

"Due to the high rates of poverty some families use their children to subsidize the family income. A large percentage of victims of child labour come from poor families hence have no option but to drop-out so as to maintain the family. Some may come from able families who possess large businesses and agricultural farms. If such like parents are negligent and leave their children in charge of the businesses they tend to steal money and develop the attitude that education is not the means since they are in a position of getting large amounts of money without going through the schooling system".

He also noted parental separation as a social factor that contributes to high school drop-out rate. Children of such families in most cases stay with their grandparents who are too lenient to them. They may choose to leave school and their grandparents fail to make a follow up. In some cases one parent takes the children to school while the other one withdraws them hence the children are in a dilemma. He gave himself as a victim of such circumstances and said this:-

" I am a father of 2 boys (twins) who were born out of wedlock. I could not manage to marry their mum when they were born since I was still a student. By the time I got employed I could not marry her since she was already married another person but she brought the children to me as custom requires. I took them to school but she keeps using inducements like money and material items to please the children and encourage them to join her. So the children are torn between two forces: maternal and paternal, but I am determined to educate (care for) them upto higher levels of

learning".

He also noted polygyny as another factor since it leads to reproducing many children and where there are inadequate resources the father tends to favour children of a particular wife hence educate them and not the others. He observed that at the end the year the number of students reduces especially in lower classes. Another factor he gave was parental illiteracy. Parents who have not benefitted from education system do not encourage their children to go to school - children drop out of school and parents are not bothered at all. He quoted the case of an illiterate man who is a prominent jua kali artisan who usually boasts that:-

"Education has no value, even a university professor cannot match me when it comes to wealth. In fact I cannot take my children to school. What for?"

According to the headmaster, parental spoiling leads to school drop-out. Some parents have too much love for their children. They tend to over protect them and teachers are not supposed to punish them. Parents decide to talk ill in the presence of their children. Students feel that their parents are always correct hence they become rude, despising their teachers. Discipline goes out of the way and they may end up dropping-out of school may be due to indiscipline by way of indefinite suspension or expulsion.

Yet lack of parental care is also detrimental to child education. On this issue he had this to say,

"Some parents are not much concerned with their children's education. They send them on errands even when they are supposed to be in school. On weekends when students are supposed to do their home work and relax they are on visiting trips. The children become so mobile and get a lot of social knowledge and become absentees and finally drop-out of school".

This may also occur in another form where the father is a migrant worker then the woman joins him for sometime, the children may get out of control. The daughters may decide to befriend men who give them money if the parents do not send enough remittances. They finally decide to drop-out of school due to misguidance or lack of parental guidance in general.

According to the statistics of return the total enrolment as per November 1996 for Esiembero primary school was 415 students. In the lower primary there are more girls than boys, but as time goes on the figure levels (between class four and five) and in the upper primary boys outnumber the girls. The reduction in school number can be attributed to factors such as school drop-out and transfer to other schools. The jua kali chairman, Vihiga county council was also interviewed. Here the main concern was how they inco-operate school drop-outs and leavers into their association. He had this to say:-

"In my association we offer courses such as tailoring, mechanics, welding, tinsmithing, carpentry, joinery. When school drop-outs or school leavers come we register them in our sector. The main method of learning are through observation and apprenticeship. The reasons they give for their failure to continue with schools are mainly economic, cultural and social. Generally, girls tend to go for feminine course such as tailoring while men go for masculine courses such as carpentry".

When asked about what they do to school drop-outs after training them, he gave these two options: They organise jua kali shows for them where they get a forum to exhibit their articles and sometimes they forward them to Karen in Nairobi, where they get a chance to enhance their skills. In most cases they encourage them to start their own businesses so that they can be self reliant. His advice to the public is that

"School drop-outs are not to be looked ~~down~~ upon because they are rational, conscious thinkers who can be effectively accommodated in the informal sector".

The jua kali Vice Chairman, Vihiga county council was also interviewed, of main concern was how the school drop-outs perceive their state and admission into the association. He said this:

"As concerns the attitude of learning among school drop-outs who get admitted into our association there is some kind of perseverance among some while others do not see the aim of continuing with jua kali ^{studies} hence abandon them altogether. Some regret why they left school while others just accept the situation as normal. If they are interested we forward them to do polytechnic exams".

Concerning enrolment he said that girls are fewer while men are more, for instance in 1996, they admitted 20 girls and 50 boys. When asked concerning the reason why they drop-out he said:

"The main problem lies in the families of the admittees. There is high tendency of poverty, there is a likelihood of children from poor families to drop-out of school hence their parents send them to the jua kali sector compared with well to do families who in most cases afford to pay school fees hence keeping their children in school".

Mr. Musumba, a former mayor of Vihiga county council was also interviewed. He noted that among factors that lead to school drop-out problem is misguidance. He said:

"Girls tend to be misled by their boy friends who illusion them by promising them nice things, a good house/clothing and other material gains if they only move in to stay

with them. Such like desperate young girls may conceive while still scholars hence have no otherwise but to drop-out of school. In most cases they ^{don't} go back to school after delivery".

The chaplain, kima mission (Church of God) was also interviewed. He is concerned with offering guidance and counselling services to youths and other vulnerable groups. He said these:

"Peer group influence is a great factor contributing to school drop-out especially in form (2) and (3) since this is the time when most youths are in their adolescent stage hence tend to disregard education. Here the peer group substitutes the youths creative and rational thinking. Hence the youth is ready to do what his/her friends advice her to do?.

He noted that this was a common phenomenon and he had provided a lot of guiding and counselling to students especially in the nearby girls school - Bunyore girls and Kima primary school. He noted that if such like pupils/students are not properly guided they drop out of school and become juvenile delinquents.

According to the speech given by the headmistress of Madira girls high school during a parents day held on 1st March, 1997, one factor that leads to school drop-out lies in the family structure. She said:

"The pulling between parents (step-parent families) creates an atmosphere that is not conducive for study. For example when the man wants to pay for his daughter's fees, the step mother (of the girls) starts quarrelling and claims that the husband loves the daughter dearly unlike her biological children. If the girl is given pocket money, the step-mother has to minimise it or simply does not buy for

her enough necessities and stationery if she is entrusted to such like a responsibility. Such like girls suffer in school and may finally drop-out due to frustration".

She added that in some cases men marry ^{Women} who already have children, born out of wedlock. When it comes to education they discriminate against in a way that they favour their biological children. Such like children are victims of circumstances. They may drop-out of school so as to look for alternative methods to earn their living other than schooling which is frustrating.

5. Direct observation

In connection to the study the researcher observed the case of one respondent who dropped out of school due to family conflicts. This was related to conditions at home. There was no peace between the respondent and his parents. The conditions were extremely poor. The plot subsisted on ^{by} family members is only half an acre. On the day when the researcher was interviewing the respondent, his siblings were chased from school due to lack of fees. The mother was openly blaming her spouse due to his engagement in polygyny hence rarely spent enough time with each family and he did not offer any support - if any then it was minimal. The husband on the other hand was blaming the wife for being lazy and relaxing all the time instead of doing constructive work. Generally children with such like parental settings rarely get a conducive atmosphere for study.

In addition to this it was also necessary to observe physical features of the locality. The area is plain/flat with a few valley and mountains towards the side neighbouring maragoli. The soil found in the area is loamy and is very fertile hence enabling the farmers in the area to grow a vast variety of crops. There are various primary schools and few secondary schools which serve the educational needs of the community. As concerns religion, the dominant denomination in the area is Church of God but others also exist such as pentecostal, salvation army, African divine church,

Holy spirit, Israel, Nineveh and Church of the Province of Kenya.

Three major rivers cross the research site. These are Watelo, Etsaba and Jordan. Though they do not possess fish they are a good source of sand for construction purposes and act as a source of water during extremely dry spells. There are very few hospitals and dispensaries in the area which serve the health needs of the society members. Due to this there are many private doctors who offer medical services in their homes.

Table of summary of data presentation: By use of interview guide (non-verbatim)

No. of respondent		Name (fictitious)	Age	Years of schooling	Class Rep. No. of times	Class Form Year completed	Subject ranking (best)	Least liked	No. of siblings	Parity	Mother's Occupation	Father's Occupation	Respondent's Occupation
1	SEX	Ayumba	17	7	—	Std 7	English	Maths	8	3	Small scale farmer	Small scale farmer	Business
	F												
2	F	Asiko	15	7	5 (once)	Std 6	GHC	Maths	7	2	Business	Army	Business
3	M	Olwumba	18	7		Std 7	Music	Science	15	15	Casual worker	—	Carpenter
4	M	Manoah	17	8	1 (once)	Std 7	Ar and Craft	Home Science	5	1	Potter	Farmer	Farmer
5	F	Olesi	19	13	4 (once)	Form 2	Commerce	C.R.E	10	2	Farmer	Businessman	—
6	F	Awinja	20	10	3 (once)	Form 1	GHC	Maths	11	3	Cook	Clerk	Househlp
7	M	Ongenga	21	10	3 (twice) 6 (twice)	Std 6	Kiswahili	English	8	8	Business woman	—	business
8	M	Olwamba	23	13		College first year	Maths	English	14	2	Teacher	Advocate	Business
9	F	Ongachi	24	11	1 (once) 3 (once)	Form 1	Music	Maths	7	4	Farmer	Farmer	Business
10	F	Amisi	25	7	1 (once) 4 (once)	Std 5	GHC	Science	13	8	Business	Business	Business
11	M	Apam	28	13		College first year	Biology	CRE	10	7	—	—	Business
12	M	Amuyunzu	25	11	—	Form 3	Biology	Social Ethics	3	1	Househlp	—	Farmer

Interview Guide - School Drop-outs

The first group of respondents were in the age group of 14-15 years. The sample here was 2 females and 2 males. The respondents were interviewed and their responses were noted down as follows: The first respondent was Ayumba, a female, 17 years old. She said that she had dropped out of school in standard seven and added that up to that level she had not repeated any class. She had 5 brothers and 2 sisters and she is the third born. She comes from a poverty family and her parents are small scale farmers. Concerning the reason for dropping out of school she said,

"I regret the fact that I had to end up my studies prematurely, but I blame my parents for all this because they broke up their marriage when I needed them most. My father deserted us and moved into an urban centre. He married a second wife and refused to take care of us. My mother on realizing this difficult situation packed her belongings and went back to her maiden home. We stayed without a parent hence we were in a dilemma. I lacked someone to pay for my school fees or even to encourage me to continue learning. Our father concentrated on his second wife and her children, he never turned back to us again."

She continued saying that later on (after 5 years) the mother came back again, but it was too late since she had dropped out of school to engage in business and bring up her younger siblings. She said that what worsened the situation was that her 2 elder sisters after she had dropped out of school did not want to listen to her plea. They turned a deaf ear to her complains since they were already married and settled in their homes. Her young siblings were just in a dilemma. She faced triple roles in that she had to act as: a mother, a father and elder sibling to her five young siblings. This she confesses was a real hectic task. She said that she occupied herself with business. The second respondent was Asiko,

a female, 15 years old. She said that she had dropped out of school in standard 6 and added that upto that level she had completed 7 years of schooling. This is because she repeated standard 5 once. Asked the reasons why she repeated she said:-

"My parents claimed that I was too young to proceed on. I was with my elder brother in the same class and they decided that he should proceed to the next class and leave me behind since I was younger than him".

She said that she comes from an economically average family since her mother was a prominent business woman and her father worked with the Kenya Airforce. She is the second born in a family of seven: 2 boys and four girls. GHC was her best subject in school while she liked maths least because it was difficult. As concerns the reason for leaving school she said:

"I don't like the fact that I dropped out of school but I think my parents are responsible since they over-protected me. They did not want me to be punished at school. Even when I messed they could go and quarrel the teachers in my presence. They did not discipline me even at home when I misbehaved. Due to this I became unconsciously indisciplined, I could not tolerate the idea of going to school any more. I could absent myself from school for several days. When I went back I could give no apparent reason. Frequently I would be suspended from school, my parents did not care. Finally I was expelled from school because of misconduct".

After leaving school her parents did not care at all, they did not bother themselves to search for another school which she could join. Generally they were not concerned with her education at all. Her siblings did not understand why she had to leave school in such an unceremonial way, her elder brother ridiculed her because of her

coming behaviour which had cost her, her education. She stated that the period after dropping out of school was a painful one since she had no one to run to for comfort. She expressed that she still regrets why she left school. At the time of the interview she was assisting her mother in her business and looking forward to becoming a prominent business woman in the future.

The third respondent was Olwamba, a male, 18 years old. He stated that he dropped out of school in standard 8 and at that time he had completed 7 schooling years since he left in the first year while in standard eight. At that level he had not repeated a class. He is the last born in a family of 15: 6 sisters and 8 brothers and the mother is a casual worker at a neighbour's place of high economic status, but his father passed away several years ago. When asked about subject ranking in school, he said his favourite subject was music since it is practical and liked science because it is difficult. The reason why he dropped out of school was lack of school fees.

"This is due to low level of economic status of my mother who is only but a 'househelp' she could hardly afford money to maintain me in school. She only earns 600/= which is not even enough for our daily needs. It is a pity that she could not even afford my KCPE registration fee and nobody came up to assist me. Our family was poverty stricken and we could only afford to eat from hand to mouth. The situation was very miserable".

He stated that after dropping out of school, his relationship with his mother was fine, the mother regretted why she could not afford to maintain her son in school. She understood the situation and did not avoid blaming poverty. His siblings had nothing to do as far as the situation was concerned. They were illiterate/semi-literate hence did not see any major reason as to why he should proceed on with studies hence did not see need of wasting the money

they had on his education. They preferred to do anything else with their money other than paying his fees. He concluded that this was a pity, a situation which could be saved only if a good samaritan intervened. As concerns his occupation he said that he was a carpenter and he had learnt the skill through apprenticeship.

The fourth respondent was Manoah, a male aged 17 years. He dropped out of school in standard seven and at that level he had completed 8 schooling years. This is because he repeated in standard one because of poor performance. He is the first born in a family of 5: 3 brothers and one sister. His mother was a potter (engaged in making clay articles such as pots, jugs, flower vessels, sufurias) while the father was a small scale farmer. While in school he liked Art and Craft most because it was technical and like home science least since he viewed it as feminine (due to the fact that it concerns itself with: cookery, needlework, sewing). When asked about the reason why he dropped out of school he said,

"It is painful when I remember the cause why I left school. But I am solely innocent. It all started like this. My father engaged in extravagant leisure activities. He was an alcohol addict and a terrible (chain) smoker. My mother, my siblings and I could work extremely hard on our coffee plantation but when it came to the monthly pay and annual bonus, my father could go and take all the money. Following that he could disappear from home for a whole week until the money was finished. Then he could remember to come back home only but empty handed".

However, he really appreciates the mother's role. She really struggled hard with them. The earnings she got from her pottery carted for their basic needs and hence little remained for education. He reckons that he learnt through hardship until he reached standard seven, he used to be chased out of school every now and then, due to lack of school fees. His father never used to

care at all. To him alcohol and cigarettes mattered most. He could stay home for weeks and then go to school for a few weeks until finally he had to drop out of school since the authorities could not maintain him in school, any more. He said this,

"My relationship with siblings after leaving school was fair since they were all aware of the hardships at home and were too young to offer any assistance. My relationship with my parents was poor. I maintained a state of incommunicado with my dad while my mum understood but could not help quarrelling my dad for my situation".

He keeps himself busy by engaging in small scale farming.

The second group of respondents were in the age category 19-23 years. The researcher interviewed four people here. The first one was Olesi, a female aged 19 years. She said that she dropped out of school in form two and at that level she had completed 13 years of schooling. This is because she repeated once in class four. The reason she gave for repeating was as follows:-

"Mother used to give me a lot of house work. I used to babysit my youngest sister and took care of my other siblings when mum was away gossiping or doing other house chores. I rarely had time for my school work hence poor performance in school. It was then that I was told to repeat because I was among the last in class. After this my dad intervened hence my mum lessened the work burden on me".

Her mother is a small scale farmer and her father is a small scale businessman. She is the second born in a family of ten, 3 brothers and 6 sisters. She said that she liked commerce most because it was business oriented and liked CRE least since it was full of religion teachings she did not like. As concerns the reason for leaving school - she said:-

"I dropped out of school due to pregnancy. I

conceived while in form two hence I could not continue studying. My parents were so annoyed that even after delivering nobody wanted to see my baby. Nobody wanted to take me back to school. I had to stay at home and take care of my son".

The condition at home after leaving school was terrible. Nobody wanted to understand her and referred to her as 'esituati" meaning a girl who delivers before marriage. This is a very insulting reference. She is a tailor.

Another respondent was Awinja, a female, aged 20 years. She said that she dropped out of school in form one. By then she had completed 10 years of schooling. This is because she had repeated once in class 3 because the parents claimed that she was too young to proceed on. She was the third born in a family of 6 sisters and four brothers. The father is a clerk while the mother is a cook in a nearby day school. While at school she liked English most and maths least since the teacher was too strict and used to beat her frequently after she had ^{failed} to tackle a sum correctly. As concerns the reason for dropping out of school, she said,

"Solely I blame nobody concerning my leaving school. This is because it was my own initiative. I was wrongly influenced by peers. I started absenting myself from school. I got involved in drug taking and eventually did not see any reason why I had to continue schooling".

The condition at home after leaving school was terrible. The parents wanted her to go back to school but she refused. When she found out that they had arranged to take her to a boarding school by force, she disappeared from home. She went back after a year when the story was long gone. Her elder siblings were really annoyed with her since they had finished high school and were working and wanted her to be like them but the young ones could not understand what was going on hence had little to do about the

situation. As concerns occupation she said she is a 'househelp' of a prominent madam in the village.

Another respondent was a man aged 21 years. He said that he dropped out of school in standard 6. At that level he had completed 10 years of schooling. This is due to the fact that he repeated in standard three and six (twice) due to poor performance in school. The mother was a small scale business woman and the father had passed away. While at school he liked Kiswahili most and English least. He is the last born in a family of 8; 2 brothers and 5 sisters. As concerns the main reason for leaving school, he said;

" Generally, my performance in school was poor. This was mainly due to lack of parental guidance. My mother being a widow did not make a follow up of my education. While at home I never did my school assignments and my mother never bothered. She hardly punished me since I was the last born. She always protected me and did not want anybody to punish me. To her I was like rare jewel. Another reason is due to the general schooling environment. This is because of the emphasis on examinations. I was forced to repeat some classes many times and when I was in standard six I was to repeat the third time, I lost interest and left school".

My relations with my mother after leaving school was fine. She understood the situation while my siblings did not bother at all. They minded their own problems. It was like they had not realised what had happened or simply that they were too reluctant to engage in the matter. As concerning his occupation he said that he was engaged in small scale business.

Another respondent was **Olwamba** a male aged 23 years who dropped out of college (T.T.C). At that level he had completed 13 schooling years. He is a second born in a family of 14: 3 sisters

and 10 brothers. The mother was a primary school teacher while the father is an advocate. While in school he liked mathematics most and English least. As concerns reason for leaving school he said,

"I solely blame my parents for my drop-out of college. This is due to the polygynous nature of our family. This resulted into a large family. My mother is the first wife but for reasons best known to himself, my father likes children of my step-mother more than us. I lacked college fees not because of poverty but due to parental negligence. My mother's salary could not cater for us and educate all of us since we are many".

As concerns relationships with siblings after leaving college he said that things just went on as normal, while there was no sort of communication with his parents since he could not just reconcile the idea. Life became too miserable to bear. The respondent is a small scale business man in a nearby market.

The third group of respondents were in the age category of 24-28 years. One of the respondents was Ongachi, female aged 24 years. She dropped out of school in form one. By then she had completed 11 years of schooling because she repeated in standard one and three. The reason she gave for repeating was that her parents claimed that she was too young hence should not be in the same class with her elder sister who kept on repeating classes. She is the fourth born in a family of seven, 3 sisters and 3 brothers. While she was in school she liked music most and maths least. When asked about the reason for dropping out of school she said,

"I blame my parents as the main cause for my drop-out of school. They forced me to get married to a wealthy old man in the village (neighbouring). They wanted dowry in exchange so that they could pay fees for my elder brother who was in form 4 by them. I tried to resist but they forced me out of school and

said that girls should not be educated much since they get married off and assist their husband's family".

She added that after leaving school she did not talk with her parents because she was too annoyed. She was forced to move and join her husband which she did and stayed there for 2 years but the marriage became unbearable hence she had to come back to her maiden home. After leaving school her siblings did not have any comment in the matter. They behaved as if nothing had happened. She said that she was a business woman.

Another respondent was Amisi, a female aged 25 years. She said that she dropped out of school in standard 5. She had completed 7 years in school because she repeated in class one and four. The reason given was due to poor performance. She is the eighth born in a family of 13; 10 brothers and 2 sisters. In school she used to like GHC most and Science least because it was difficult. As concerns the reason for dropping out of school, she said,

"I blame my parents for the fact that I could not go beyond standard 5. I come from a broken home. My father deserted us and decided to migrate to an urban setting where he married two more wives. My mother brought us up single handedly. She used to sell fruits, vegetables to keep us going. There was hardly any money to maintain us in school. My father on the other side concentrated on his other two wives and their children. I never saw him until I was 15 years when our grandfather passed away then he came for the funeral. TO him we did not matter at all. Because of this my siblings and I never learnt beyond primary level".

As concerns her relationship with mother she said that she understood since there was no otherwise and her elder siblings took

the matter lightly. TO them there was no problem at all, since it is the same experience they had gone through, therefore it was a family trend.

Another respondent was Apamø , a man aged 28 years. He dropped out of college (MTC). He had completed 13 years of schooling. He was the seventh born in a family of ten. He has five brothers and four sisters. Both his parents are dead. As concerns the reason for dropping out of college he said,

"I dropped out of college due to lack of parental guidance. My parents passed away when I needed them most. It was my dream that I finish college and become a medical doctor, then let them have the best in life, but God's wish was different. They perished in a terrible road accident. Their death caused me a lot of psychological trauma. I lost all hope in life including my education and thought that after all death is final. I dropped out of college due to this condition".

He said that his siblings could not understand him at all. They wondered why he had to drop out of college when he was almost through. He is the only one who could understand the situation. He was a prominent in the nearby market.

The last respondent was Amuyunzu, a man aged 26 years. He dropped out of school in form 3, and had finished 13 years of schooling. He is the first born in a family of 3; 1 sister and 1 brother. He said that in school he liked Biology most and social ethics least. He said that he had no clear idea who his father was but according to rumour mongers, he learnt that his father was a driver and he perished in a road accident when the respondent was only 2 years old. When asked about reason for his drop-out of school he said,

"The main reason is due to lack of school fees. My mother is a single parent. She gave birth to the three of us. She works in Nairobi as a

househelp of an Indian family. So she left us with out grandmother. Grandmum used to toil ~~so~~ hard to bring us up until she became so sick to carter for us. My mother brings some remittances at home but the money is too little to carter for our basic needs and grandmothers health. Leave alone education which in this cases become a luxury. Due to lack of school ^{fees} I was sent away from school".

As concerns his relation with mother, grandmother and siblings after dropping out of school, he said that everything was okay. Nobody quarrelled since they understood that what happened was not his fault. He said that he was a small scale farmer and hopes that in future he will get a bigger plot on which he can grow cash crops to enable him to earn a living and care for his siblings and aged grandmother.

CHAPTER 5

Discussions, Recommendations and Conclusions

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter the data collected will be discussed. An attempt will be made to interpret and analyse the data findings as revealed by the study. Then implications, recommendations and suggestions will be given and finally the conclusions will be derived.

5.1 Discussion and analysis

This was based on specific objectives of the study. The findings show that most of the drop out cases occur in upper primary. (six out of the 12 respondents dropped out in primary school between standard five and eight). This is because this is the stage when most pupils are vulnerable to peer influence. It is also at this period that school funds increase, pupils are required to pay activity fees, evaluation tests funds, et cetera. It is also at this stage that youths need effective discipline. If they are not properly socialized and taken care of they become delinquents and may drop-out of school ~~mostly~~ in junior classes (3) and (1) dropped out in form 3. However, very few students drop out of college, this is because at this period parents usually have struggled to educate and since they are almost at the stage of getting employed they struggle hard to finish their courses. In this study there were two college drop-outs.

When it comes to repetition of classes it was found out that the more students repeat classes the more they drop out of school. In this study (7) respondents reported that they had repeated one/more classes. Of the 7, 3 had repeated more than once. The reasons given varied from parental choice to poor performance. One respondent said that he finally decided to drop out of school to avoid repeating standard 6 for the third time. This was humiliation to him. Only 5 reported not to have repeated any class. This implies that students who do not repeat are likely to continue with schooling unless for such factors as poverty. It was also found

out that large families had a high incidence of school drop-out cases. It was amazing to note that 10 of the respondents came from families of over seven siblings. Such like a family becomes difficult to maintain if the parents are of low economic status. Provision of basic needs becomes hard and education becomes like a luxury. Only 2 respondents reported to come from small size families, one had 4 siblings and the other had 2 hence their reasons for dropping out of school were different.

Parity First borns and last borns in most cases tend to be victims of circumstances. Six of the respondents reported that they were between (1 - 4) in parity, 4 respondents were among the last borns (parity 7 and over) while only 2 were middle placed in their families (between 3-6). First borns tend to be victims of school drop-out because they are over-protected by parents hence lack of parental discipline and also due to poverty, hence in such cases lacked older siblings who could take the responsibility of educating them because their parents were unable. Last borns tend to drop-out due to over-protection by parents, the parents tend to be too lenient to them and treat them like babies even when they are mature people. In other cases the economic reason also may apply. In cases where last borns lack fees and their elder siblings are illiterate/semi-literate they tend to repeat the same trend of illiteracy hence may not see the aim of educating their younger siblings.

Parental occupation. This was an economic factor that contributed to the problem of school drop-outs. It was found out that most of the respondents came from poverty stricken families. It was interesting to note that only one respondent reported that his mother was employed in the formal sector while four said that their mothers were small scale farmers, 3 said that their mothers were business women while of the remaining three, one was a porter, househelp and one reported that his mother had passed away. It was amazing to find out that these respondents claimed that their mothers were unemployed simply because they were in the informal sector. Low employment implied low economic status hence

difficulty in paying school fees. The respondents reported this on their father's occupation. 3 said that their fathers were employed in the formal sector while 6 had their fathers employed in the informal sector. The remaining 3 reported that their fathers had passed away. As concerns the social factors most respondents noted their parental upbringing and leisure activities as a contributing factor to school drop-out. Two of the respondents reported that their fathers were extreme drunkards, who spared nothing for their education, 2 also reported parental spoiling because their parents never disciplined them while the rest reported parental family structure as a cause for drop-out of school. Of the 12 respondents 6 came from single parent families. (4 had mothers only and 2 had fathers only). 3 of the respondents had both parents and 2 were complete orphans and one reported that he stayed with a guardian who took care of him. Single parent families contribute a lot to school drop-out. This may be due to lack of discipline (social) poverty or that it is one parent who is responsible and his/her economic status is low then educating the children becomes a difficult task. Orphans are also worst hit when it comes to education, generally they lack parental guidance, discipline and in some cases school fees especially where both parents are dead and they did not leave behind any money to cater for their childrens needs. (in most cases where the deceased were not working class).

Generally as concerns the reason (major) for leaving school the majority (8) said that it lay in the family structure, 2 said that it was poverty hence lack of fees. One said that it was peer influence while the other one surprisingly said it was ~~her~~ own initiative. With specific reference to family structure, of the 8, 2 reported polygyny, 2 reported parental spoiling, 2 reported parental alcoholism (leisure activity) while the last two reported poverty as the main factor for drop-out of school.

As concern subject ranking, it was found out that the majority of students who drop out of school hate science related subjects. 5 reported that they liked least maths and 3 had low liking for science, 2 reported not to like languages while one said that he

like) least social ethics. The main reason given for this kind of attitude was because the sciences are difficult. This made the students to relax in school and hence poor performance. This could imply that most students who do not like sciences are likely to drop-out of school. Most of the students (7) claimed that they liked arts related subjects, 4 liked languages while three liked most sciences. This implies that such like students tend to concentrate more on the art subjects and ignore sciences. They have an ideology that 'arts are easy subjects'.

As concerns the condition at home after leaving school most of them (8) admitted that life went on well while 4 said that the situation was hectic and chaotic. For those that said that everything went on (as normal) as if nothing had happened, the causes for drop-out of school were connected to family, for instance, poverty, socialization, unstable family structure while for those whose life became hectic, one said that she was badly influenced by peers, another one was due to pregnancy and the remaining two got annoyed with their parents for failing to pay for them school fees yet they were very able.

Regarding the occupation of the school drop-outs, the findings showed that most of them are engaged in the informal sector - half- (6) were business people while two were farmers, one was a 'househelper', another one was a carpenter and one lady reported that she was doing nothing. She was just staying at home and assisting her mother in house chores and in her business.

5.2 Implications

There is hardly any developing country without poor people and as Kenya's population continues to grow so does the number of school drop-outs.

Many children today are products of single mothers and are being brought up adequately by mothers alone. However proper provision of basic needs is necessary. If a child is loved, well cared for and given all the necessities the child will remain settled in school. The fact that some school drop-outs come from

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broken families means that ^{the} one parent available was financially and materially unable to carter for the child's needs (both basic and instrumental).

Unless fathers are compelled, forced by a policy and advocacy to take care of their children's education . whether within or outside marriage the problem will still persist. Most men even if married will leave all child rearing practices to their wives. This calls for an urgent need to educate the population on the importance of a father's role in rearing and providing personality of the child in the socialization process. The everyday increase in the number of school drop-outs implies that there is continued poor parent-child and parental relationships, due to prevailing hardships in modern times. The fact that some drop-outs regard their condition as comfortable and life easy and enjoyable posses a great threat to the need for literacy and development. However some regret why they had to leave school and say that if only they were young and their parents could co-operate they could go back to school and learn. Surprisingly instead of the number reducing it is increasing. This is partly because some of the drop-outs encourage scholars to leave school and join them since they get access to their own money which they control the expenditure and they have nothing to bother them like academics, homework, examinations and going to school in general. Ultimately the number keeps on swelling and making the problem even more acute.

5.3 Recommendations and suggestions

The following recommendations have been formulated as a result of the information that was obtained from the study.

- (1) There is need to change our socio-cultural attitudes towards education and marriage. People should abandon the idea of despising education. The government should have an education policy that protects the education of children in polygynous marriages. Parents, community elders and churches should strengthen their campaigns on counselling the youth about the consequences of teenage pregnancy.

- (2) There is need for the government and other agencies to open vocational institutions for youths so that they can maintain themselves by doing jobs such as carpentry, masonry, tailoring, plumbing, et cetera. Surprisingly, Emuhaya division which comprised of 17 sub-locations and 4 locations has only 1 youth polytechnic(government). There is need to establish more.
- (3) The government should strengthen the policy of jua kali artisans. There should be decentralization of industries so that the rural areas should also benefit since they are productive. The government should assist young entrepreneurs to come up with beneficial projects and offer them loans to curb the problem of shortage of funds. There is need to abolish corruption in industries and institutions. There should be fair distribution of loan funds and the authorities should be efficient and effective.

5.4 Conclusions

The problem of school drop-out is a major issue at hand. The rate of drop-out is alarming despite the fact that educational facilities and the school curriculum has been adjusted to create a conducive learning atmosphere.

Ethnographic studies of drop-outs can provide police makers with the ^{emic} view perspective. The insights and understanding of the youths and their behaviours may lead to improved programmes such as accommodation into informal sector to curb the problem of unemployment.

The results of this study will be useful in many spheres of planning. For instance, family life programmes which will help us learn the weak points of the family and try to work on them. It will also be of help in assessing the state of affairs of what needs to be done.

It is also hoped that once this done, national policies will take into account the fact that custodial treatment may not be necessarily the answer. Prevention should also become a vital

spect in the policies. The programmes and policies should be multifaceted, involving the parents, the community, non-governmental organisations, central government and local authorities. They should focus on economic deprivation of some families and the current allocation of social services (e.g education) policies in the country.

Children have a right to education, good health parental care and love. How the Kenyan society will ^{go} about this task (curbing the school drop-out problem) is very important because it will determine whether talented individuals are given the rightful opportunity to develop themselves (probably through education) or if their talents will keep on going to waste.

We call upon the entire Kenyan society to adopt a united approach to tackling this pressing problem. If Kenya has to join the newly industrialized countries by the year 2000, then there is need for literacy. This can only be achieved through curbing illiteracy and semi-literacy by preventing the youth from drop-out of school. They have to learn upto higher levels.

The report of this study will be presented to the: District Commissioner - Vihiga district; District Officer (DO) - Emuhaya Division; Chief of East Bunyore location; Assistant chief - Ebubayi sub-location.

Hopefully, the recommendations can be implemented through District Development Committee (DDC) to benefit people at the grass-root level where the study was conducted.

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APPENDIX

(i) Interview guide for key informants

1. Background
 - (a) Name.....
 - (b) Occupation.....
 - (c) Residence.....
2. What do you think are the factors that contribute to school drop-out within the family.
 - (a) Socio-cultural factors.....
 - (b) Economic factors.....
3. How do you perceive the school drop-out problem.....
4. What are your recommendations/suggestions towards the solution of this problem.....

(ii) Interview guide for school drop-outs

1. Background

(a) Name.....

(b) Sex.....

(c) Age.....

2. Education

(a) Level completed

(b) Number of schooling years at that level

(c) Class repeated.....

(i) Number of times.....

(ii) Reason.....

3. Family

(a) Siblings

(i) Number of brothers.....

(ii) Number of sisters.....

(iii) Parity.....

(b) Parental occupation

(i) Mother.....

(ii) Father.....

4. Parental leisure activity

(i) Mother (Indicate Yes/No)

Smokes.....

Drinks.....

(ii) Father

Smokes.....

Drinks.....

5. Subject ranking

(i) Liked most.....

Reason.....

(ii) Liked least.....

Reason.....

6. Reason for living school

.....

(ii) Relationship with siblings after leaving school.

.....

(iii) Relationship with parents after leaving school.

.....

(iv) Current occupation

.....