

**SCHOOL RELATED FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTAL CHOICE
OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN EMBAKASI SUB-COUNTY, NAIROBI
CITY COUNTY, KENYA**

Muchiri Monicah Njoki

**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Award of the Degree of Master of Education in Curriculum Studies**

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

2017

DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

Muchiri Monicah Njoki

E55/76623/2014

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

Dr. Grace Nyagah

Senior Lecturer

Department of Educational Administration and Planning

University of Nairobi

Dr. Jeremiah M. Kalai

Senior Lecturer and Chairman

Department of Educational Administration and Planning

University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my son Ian Joe, my siblings Jennifer and Hilary and my late parents Joe and Salome Muchiri.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful completion of this research work has been through the significant contribution of several people. I give thanks to God who gave me the strength to achieve my academic goals. Sincere gratitude to my family, who have offered unwavering support since the beginning of the course. I appreciate the tireless efforts of my supervisors Dr. Grace Nyagah and Dr. Jeremiah Kalai for their guidance and support throughout the process. Their commitment, diligence and hard work made the entire experience easier. I also appreciate the primary school heads and parents in Embakasi Sub-County for their participation in the research. Without them, this project would not have been possible. My gratitude to the staff of Embakasi Sub-county Education Office for their contribution in providing valuable data for this project. I sincerely thank my colleagues with whom we have worked together throughout the course for their support and encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Content | Page |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Title page | i |
| Declaration | ii |
| Dedication | iii |
| Acknowledgements | iv |
| Table of contents | v |
| List of tables | ix |
| List of figures | xi |
| Abbreviations and acronyms | xii |
| Abstract | xiii |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

| | |
|--|---|
| 1.1 Background to the study | 1 |
| 1.2 Statement of the problem | 6 |
| 1.3 Purpose of the study | 6 |
| 1.4 Objectives of the study | 7 |
| 1.5 Research questions | 7 |
| 1.6 Significance of the study | 8 |
| 1.7 Limitations of the study | 8 |
| 1.8 Delimitations of the study | 9 |
| 1.9 Basic assumptions of the study | 9 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 1.10 Definition of significant terms | 9 |
| 1.11 Organization of the study | 10 |

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

| | |
|---|----|
| 2.1 Introduction | 12 |
| 2.2 The concept of parental choice of school | 12 |
| 2.3 Adequacy of physical facilities and parental choice of school | 13 |
| 2.4 Academic performance and parental choice of school | 14 |
| 2.5 Pupil-teacher ratio and parental choice of school | 16 |
| 2.6 Proximity to area of residence and parental choice of school | 17 |
| 2.7 Summary of literature review | 19 |
| 2.8 Theoretical framework | 19 |
| 2.9 Conceptual framework | 20 |

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

| | |
|--|----|
| 3.1 Introduction | 23 |
| 3.2 Research design | 23 |
| 3.3 Target population | 23 |
| 3.4 Sample size and sampling procedure | 24 |
| 3.5 Research Instruments | 25 |
| 3.6 Validity of instruments | 26 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| 3.7 Reliability of instruments..... | 26 |
| 3.8 Data collection procedures..... | 27 |
| 3.9 Data analysis techniques | 27 |
| 3.10 Ethical considerations | 28 |

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

| | |
|---|----|
| 4.1 Introduction..... | 29 |
| 4.2 Instrument return rate..... | 29 |
| 4.3 Demographic information..... | 30 |
| 4.4 Physical facilities and parents' choice of school | 37 |
| 4.5 Academic performance of public and private schools..... | 41 |
| 4.6 Pupil-teacher ratio and parental choice of school | 46 |
| 4.7 Proximity to area of residence | 52 |

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|--|----|
| 5.1 Introduction..... | 57 |
| 5.2 Summary of the study | 57 |
| 5.3 Summary of the study findings | 58 |
| 5.4 Conclusions of the study..... | 60 |
| 5.5 Recommendations of the study..... | 61 |
| 5.6 Suggestions for further research | 62 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| REFERENCES..... | 63 |
| Appendix I: Letter of introduction..... | 70 |
| Appendix II: Questionnaire for head teacher..... | 71 |
| Appendix III: Questionnaire for parents..... | 75 |
| Appendix IV: Observation checklist..... | 78 |
| Appendix V: Letter of authorization..... | 79 |
| Appendix VI: Research permit | 80 |
| Appendix VII: A map of the study area..... | 81 |

LIST OF TABLES

| Table | Page |
|---|-------------|
| Table 3.1 Target population | 24 |
| Table 3.2 Sample size | 25 |
| Table 4.1 Instrument return rate..... | 29 |
| Table 4.2 Respondents' distribution by school category | 31 |
| Table 4.3 Respondent' distribution by gender | 32 |
| Table 4.4 Head teachers' distribution by age bracket | 34 |
| Table 4.5 Head teachers level of education | 35 |
| Table 4.6 Head teachers' teaching experience..... | 36 |
| Table 4.7 Number of classrooms per school..... | 37 |
| Table 4.8 Availability of physical facilities in schools | 38 |
| Table 4.9 Parental choice of schools due to adequacy of physical facilities ... | 39 |
| Table 4.10 Regression analysis on physical facilities and parental choice of school | 41 |
| Table 4.11 KCPE performance | 42 |
| Table 4.12 Transition rates to form one based on secondary school categories | 43 |
| Table 4.13 Parents' responses on the influence of academic performance on school choice..... | 45 |
| Table 4.14 Average number of pupils in a single classroom | 49 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 4.15 Parents' responses on influence of pupil-teacher ratio on school choice | 51 |
| Table 4.16 Relationship between pupil-teacher ratio and parents' choice of school | 52 |
| Table 4.17 Modes of transport used by learners to and from school | 53 |
| Table 4.18 Parents' responses on influence of schools' proximity to area of residence on parental choice of school | 54 |
| Table 4.19 Coefficient on proximity to area of residence and parents' choice of primary school | 55 |
| Table 4.20 Parents' reasons for choice of schools | 56 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| Figure | Page |
|--|-------------|
| Figure 2.1 School related factors influencing parental choice of primary school..... | 21 |
| Figure 4.1 Number of schools by type..... | 33 |
| Figure 4.3 Number of pupils who did not join secondary school..... | 44 |
| Figure 4.4 Pupils' enrolment in public and private primary schools..... | 47 |
| Figure 4.5 Teachers' population in schools..... | 48 |
| Figure 4.6 Headteachers' perception on appropriateness of pupil-teacher ratio | 50 |

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------------|---|
| FPE | Free Primary Education |
| KCPE | Kenya Certificate of Primary Education |
| MoEST | Ministry of Education, Science and Technology |
| NACOSTI | National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation |
| PTR | Pupil-teacher Ratio |

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the school related factors influencing parental choice of primary schools in Embakasi Sub-county, Nairobi City County, Kenya. The objectives were to determine the influence of adequacy of physical facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio, and school's proximity to area of residence on parental choice of primary school. This study was based on the Rational Choice Theory pioneered by George Homans (1961). The study used descriptive survey design. The target population constituted 117 school heads and 60,458 parents from both public and private primary schools. To pick the study sample, the population was stratified into public schools and private schools, each with subgroups of school heads and parents. Systematic sampling was used to pick 95 school heads and 600 parents. Primary data were collected using questionnaires for head teachers and parents and an observation checklist. The questionnaires gave information on qualitative data while the observation checklist checked on the adequacy of the physical facilities. Content validity of the instruments was established through expert judgment of the supervisors. Test-retest method was used to establish instrument reliability. Data collected were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The study realized a response rate of 89.8 percent which was deemed very satisfactory. The study findings revealed that majority (73.8%) of the parents were influenced by academic performance, while 71.9 percent of the parents were influenced by availability, adequacy and appropriateness of physical facilities in their choice of school. The study findings also showed that the proximity of schools to area of residence had an influence on parental choice of school with a significance level of 0.7. Pupil-teacher ratio influenced parental choice at a significance level of 0.6. The researcher, thus, recommends that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) in conjunction with other stakeholders should ensure availability of adequate and appropriate physical facilities in public schools in order to meet the competitiveness of the private schools. The researcher also recommends that educationists should conduct forums which help them develop innovative ways of meeting both parents' expectations and children's educational needs. The researcher suggests that similar studies be conducted in other counties to allow for better generalization of findings.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Parents are the primary caregivers of their children and have the responsibility of educating their children in a school of their choice. According to Fung and Lam (2011), parents will exercise their divine right of choice and make the best interests of their children a priority. This choice is often informed by the family's socioeconomic status (Malmberg, Andersson & Bergsten, 2013; Altenhofen, Berends & White, 2016). Parents of higher occupational prestige, income and social status, and wider social networks are more likely to choose private primary schools for their children (Goldring & Rowley, 2006; Maangi, 2014) than parents of lower income status and smaller social networks. Their strong networks give them more accurate information on school quality and characteristics as opposed to less accurate information obtained by lower income families (Allen, Burgess, & McKenna, 2014).

As observed by Darmody, Smyth and McCoy (2012), parental choice of school is rarely determined by a single factor but by several interlinking factors. In Australia, Beamish and Morey (2013) found that parents give preference to schools with high academic quality and performance. They also consider proximity to home as a major factor influencing school choice. A school that is more than 30 minutes of travel is not considered a realistic choice (Beamish & Morey, 2013). There is a similarity between Australia and USA where parents choose small class sizes, which they believe provide more individual attention

and better education quality (Beavis, 2004; Goldring & Rowley, 2006; Fung & Lam, 2011).

According to Rehman, Khan, Tariq and Tasleem (2010), quality of education is determined largely by the learning environment in the school. This includes buildings and facilities in a good location, to allow for personal and social development of learners. Parents, therefore, prefer schools that provide safety, convenience and desirability (Yaacob, Osman & Bachok, 2014). In both Malaysia and Pakistan, most parents prefer private schools due to good educational facilities and a conducive learning environment (Rehman, et al., 2010; Yaacob et al., 2014).

Academic performance often determines a school's attractiveness to parents. Parents prefer a school where their children are likely to achieve high academic results. For parents who choose private schools and the general public, there is a perception that high academic standards make some schools academically superior (Goldring & Rowley, 2006; Davis, 2011; Fung & Lam, 2011). Parents are therefore, likely to choose a school based on its academic performance (Yaacob, et al., 2014). According to Yaacob, et al. (2014), parents in Malaysia prefer schools with high academic performance to ensure their children's future education. Rehman, et al. (2010) found that in Pakistan, parents prefer private school due to good examination results. They also believe that small class sizes in private schools promote overall development and self-confidence of children and avoid government schools due to overcrowding.

A low pupil-teacher ratio allows for individualised attention, closer interactions between teachers and learners, and reduced interruptions. Ferns,

Friendly and Prabhu (2009) found that “staff-child ratio is the most significant determinant of quality” (p.8). According to Nyokabi (2009), high pupil-teacher ratios imply poor quality and are likely to lower the expected gain.

In their search for suitable schools, parents often choose a school within a convenient location. Proximity usually has a threshold function, whereby there is a limit on the time that parents are willing to allow their children to travel (Beamish & Morey, 2013). Although, some parents do not choose the nearest school due to a perception of poor quality education in the school (Yaacob, et al., 2014), it is important to ensure a reachable distance between home and school.

A study in the United Kingdom by Bradley and Mandres (2000) in Maangi (2014), showed that an increase by 10 percent in a school's examination score resulted in an increase in enrolments by seven per cent. According to Goldring and Rowley (2006), parental choice of school in the United States of America (USA) is based on the schools' academic performance and emphasis. The likelihood of choosing a private elementary school is increased by lower test scores in public schools. In California, USA, Goldring and Rowley (2006) found that most schools do not provide transportation to and from school. Parents, therefore, rank location as an important factor when choosing a school.

A study by Alsuiadi (2015a), found that parents in Saudi Arabia choose public or private primary schools that have a good learning environment, library, and science and computer laboratories. They believe that modern, well equipped buildings are the key to achieving their children's educational goals. Alsuidi (2016) also found that parents ranked pupil-teacher ratio very high in

choosing either a public or private school. The assumption is that lower pupil-teacher ratios equate to better educational quality and better interactions between teachers and learners.

Parents in Nigeria prefer private schools which have better infrastructure compared to government schools that are characterized by insufficient classrooms and overcrowding (Onuka & Arowojolu, 2008; Adebayo, 2009; Tooley & Yngstrom, 2014). Private schools are rated by parents higher than government schools in terms of academic performance (Onuka & Arowojolu, 2008; Adebayo, 2009). While a majority of parents who either chose government or low-cost private schools consider proximity to home as the most important factor, parents of children in high cost private schools place greater importance on academic achievement (Tooley & Yngstrom, 2014). This implies that some parents will choose high academic performance regardless of cost.

A study by Results for Development Institute (2015) showed that parents in Ghana mainly base school choice on physical facilities and assume that private schools are better than government schools. Nantege, Mugabirwe and Moshy (2012) found that in Uganda, schools with a high number of students excelling in national examinations are usually assured of large enrollments in the subsequent academic year. In South Africa, only 46.5 per cent of parents polled by Evans and Cleghorn (2014) chose a school close to their area of residence. This shows that parents in South Africa rank proximity lower than other factors when making school choices.

Many economically able parents in Kenya prefer well designed and constructed classrooms that provide convenient learning spaces for pupils.

Others opt for private schools which they believe have better facilities such as libraries and laboratories (Oketch, Mutisya & Sagwe, 2012; Oyier, Adundo, Obat, Lilian, & Akondo, 2015). Parents also choose private schools if the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) scores of public schools decline (Nishimura & Yamano, 2008). They transfer children from low-performing public to high-performing, expensive private schools where they expect high examination scores in exchange for their financial sacrifice (Bold, Kimenyi, Mwabu, & Sandefur, 2010; Sang & Kipsoi, 2015).

Pupil-teacher ratio is another major factor in parental school choice. As Nishimura and Yamano (2008) observed, good performing public schools experienced increased enrolment and higher pupil-teacher ratios due to the Free Primary Education (FPE) programme. The perceived overcrowding and low quality resulted in many parents transferring their children to private schools. The parents seek smaller class sizes where children receive more teachers' attention (Nishimura & Yamano, 2012; Oyier et al., 2015; Sang & Kipsoi, 2015).

According to Nyokabi (2009), parents in Kenya's urban areas are more likely to send their children to private schools since there are more private schools in close proximity to their residences than in rural areas. Collins, Cojocar, and Zollman (2015) however, found that parents sometimes choose private boarding schools far away despite availability of schools within walking distance from home. The boarding schools provide an alternative environment that meets children's educational needs and parents' expectations while helping

children gain independence for post-school readiness (Mayer, Thomas & Logue, 2003; McCarthy, 2016).

Parents actively choose the schools in which to enroll their children. They base their choices on varied preferences and criteria. They rationally and logically consider a combination of several factors and make school choices informed by more than a single factor. However, the factors vary among different parents.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Studies have been conducted on parental choice of school between private and public schools in Kisii County and in Viwandani and Korogocho slums of Nairobi County in relation to FPE (Oketch, et al. 2012; Maangi, 2014). However, no study has been conducted in Embakasi Sub-county on school related factors influencing parental choice of school. The sub-county has the highest primary school enrolment (20%) in Nairobi City County (MoEST, 2017), with almost equal halves (50%) in both public and private primary schools (Embakasi Sub-county Education office, 2017). The equality in enrolment is an indication that parents choose schools based on other factors other than school category. A study in the sub-county will provide information on what parents consider important when choosing primary schools.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the school related factors influencing parental choice of primary schools in Embakasi Sub-county, Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study were:

- i). To determine the influence of adequacy of physical facilities on parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- ii). To establish the influence of academic performance on parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- iii). To examine the influence of pupil-teacher ratio on parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- iv). To assess the influence of school's proximity to area of residence on parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i). To what extent does adequacy of physical facilities influence parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya?
- ii). To what extent does academic performance influence parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya?
- iii). How does pupil-teacher ratio influence parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya?

- iv). How does school proximity to area residence influence parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings of the study may be useful in providing information to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology on what parents rank as important when choosing a school for their children. It may also provide insight on why some public schools in the sub-county record higher enrolments than others in the same area. The Ministry of Education and donors may use the information to determine effective, efficient and equitable resource allocation to public schools. The findings will also be useful in providing insights into the influence of physical facilities, schools' academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio and proximity to area of residence on the curriculum implementation process.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The first limitation in this study was the unavailability of literature specifically on parental choice of primary school. This was mitigated by use of related literature on parental choice at other levels of schooling. Another limitation was that the study was only conducted in public and private primary schools within Embakasi Sub-county. This means that the results may not be generalizable to other levels of schooling, or to primary schools in other sub-counties.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was conducted in both public and private primary schools within Embakasi Sub-county to show the similarities and differences in choice of school in both categories of schools. The study was delimited to school related factors, specifically physical facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio and proximity to area of residence, thereby excluding home based and socioeconomic factors influencing parental choice of primary school due to the limited time of study. The respondents were school heads and parents from both private and public primary schools within Embakasi Sub-county because the sub county was the study area. In addition the head teachers and parents were key stakeholders on matters related to choice and admission to schools.

1.9 Basic assumptions of the study

The study was conducted under two assumptions: i) that all the parents were of a similar socio-economic status and ii) that all the parents actively searched for relevant information before choosing a school.

1.10 Definition of significant terms

Academic performance refers to the average mean score of the school in KCPE. A good performance is a mean score of 350 marks and above while a poor score is below 250 marks out of the possible 500.

Influence refers to the ability of school related factors to have an impact on the decision making process of the parents on their preferred school.

Parental choice refers to a parent's act of decision making to pick one option from a pool of several possibilities.

Physical facilities refer to the availability, adequacy and condition of physical infrastructure such as classrooms, libraries, computer laboratories and outdoor play areas.

Private primary schools refer to formal schools under management of Non-governmental organisations, religious organisations, communities or individuals.

Proximity to area of residence refers to the geographical distance measured in kilometers and time taken between home and school. An ideal distance is where learners spend less than 30 minutes to or from school depending on the mode of transport used, on the shortest available route.

Public primary schools refer to schools operating under the Boards of Management and are fully funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

Pupil-teacher ratio refers to the number of pupils in a classroom under the supervision of a single teacher. An ideal ratio is 40:1 (UNESCO, 2014).

School related factors refer to aspects within the school environment that influence parental choice of school.

1.11 Organization of the study

The study is organized in five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction which includes background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, basic assumptions and definition of significant terms. Chapter two is literature review with subsections on physical

facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio and proximity to area of residence, summary of literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Chapter three is on research methodology, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques and ethical considerations. Chapter four is on data analysis, interpretation and discussion while chapter five is on summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides literature on the concept of parental choice of school and on how physical facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio and proximity to area of residence may influence parental choice of school. The last section includes the summary of literature review, and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

2.2 The concept of parental choice of school

Parental choice of school is the freedom accorded to parents to choose a school and an education system for their children which is consistent with their value systems (Fung & Lam, 2011). Parental choice of school and its role in education is a major issue for discourse among many educationists. There is continuing debate on whether parents should choose schools for their children, and whether it adds any value to the education system. Beamish and Morey (2013) described parental choice of school as determined by parents' aspirations and anxieties for their children's future. According to a study done by Independent Schools Council of Australia, ISCA (2008), parents who exercise school choice report higher levels of satisfaction with the school.

Anemone (2008), opines that parental choice reasons and mechanisms are similar across high, middle and low income groups. This indicates that all parents, regardless of their economic status, have a desire to make informed school choices. Initially, the argument behind school choice was that schools

would raise academic standards when they have to compete for pupils (Hansen & Vignoles, n.d.). However, literature indicates that there is no conclusive evidence that links school choice to improved academic standards.

2.3 Adequacy of physical facilities and parental choice of school

According to Longman (2000) adequacy of physical facilities entails the situation where the provision of the resources is enough for utilization in schools. Consequently, Mapaderum (2002) affirmed that adequacy of physical facilities in schools is a satisfactory measure on the condition and number of available resources. A study by Hsu and Yuan-fang (2013) found, parents' interest on learning environment means that schools need to provide well equipped learning places for children. Many parents make decisions on school choice based on attractiveness of the buildings, the size of the library and computer rooms, the condition of the walls, roofs, floors, ventilation, furniture, equipment and the aesthetic appeal of outdoor play areas (Alsuiadi, 2015a). The perception by parents that educational outcomes are dependent on school facilities increases the tendency by parents to choose schools perceived to have better facilities (Hsu & Yuan-fang, 2013).

The importance of physical facilities in parental choice of school is demonstrated in a study by Alsuiadi (2015b) in which four out of every five parents in private schools polled ranked physical facilities as one of top three reasons for their school choice. According to Awan and Zia (2015), many parents choose schools based on facilities such as electricity, water, sanitation, boundary walls and general condition of buildings. Similar observations were

made by Yaacob, et al (2014) and Oyier, et al. (2015), who found that parents preferred schools with adequate physical facilities and a conducive learning environment. Of importance to note is the classification of private schools into low, medium or high cost schools depending on resources available (Maangi, 2014).

However, while a number of parents in a study by Beamish and Morey (2013) placed physical facilities as a preference, a number of parents did not consider it a factor that influenced school choice. A similar trend was observed by Alsuiadi (2015a) who observed that physical facilities ranked slightly lower than other factors in parental choice of school.

This difference in ranking of physical facilities as a factor in school choice shows that parents consider other factors either more or less important than physical facilities. It therefore showed a need for further investigation to establish the extent to which physical facilities influence parental choice of school.

2.4 Academic performance and parental choice of school

The main reason that children are enrolled in schools is for academic purposes. During the schooling period, tests are administered to determine the level of academic achievement of the learners. The tests may either be localized to the school or standardized within a given jurisdiction. These tests are sometimes used to determine the academic future of the learners, which makes parents to consciously choose schools with favourable academic performance.

This is underscored by results from a study by Longfield (2012) which showed that academics are the most important factor considered by parents when choosing schools.

Performance in final examinations is a major consideration in parental school choice. Rehman, et al. (2010), Davis (2011) and Beamish and Morey (2013) all agree that families choose schools that offer high academic quality and good performance in standardised tests for better college and future career placement. This explains the high preference for private schools which are perceived to offer better quality education.

The preference for private schools was observed by Van Pelt, Allison and Allison (2007) who found that the superior education desired by parents for their children cannot be met by the state. A similar observation was made by Tooley and Yngstrom (2014) who noted that children were transferred from public to private schools due to poor academic performance. This view agrees with data from a study by Awan and Zia (2015) which shows that private schools post better results than public schools.

Not all parents however rank academic performance at the top of the priority list. A study by Kelly and Scafidi (2013) shows that a majority of respondents are content with average performance. A study by Independent Schools Council of Australia, ISCA (2008) found that parents in primary schools want strong educational foundations by developing essential skills in reading, writing and numeracy. The best school choice is usually determined by an understanding of a quality school, which is often shaped by culture, race and

class and less by academic quality indicators (Bancroft, 2015). This shows that there are other factors that such respondents consider more important in choosing schools. Studies by Nyokabi (2009) and Yaacob, et al. (2014) produced results that are in agreement with this view.

A different observation was made by Nantege, et al. (2012), who found that although high performing schools attract more students, some parents prefer schools of a given social status. Parents are willing to forego high academic standards in exchange for social status. This indicates that there are other factors that parents prefer over academic performance. It was therefore important to investigate the extent to which academic performance influences parental choice of school.

2.5 Pupil-teacher ratio and parental choice of school

Parents prefer schools with lower pupil-teacher ratios since they allow for more effective pupil-teacher interaction. The Association of Independent Schools in New South Wales (AISNSW) Institute (2016) found that small class sizes have some intuitive appeal to parents. According to Rehman et al. (2010), it is believed by majority of parents that private schools promote overall development of children due to their small class sizes. Nishimura and Yamano (2012), Awan and Zia (2015) and Alsaudi (2016) agree that parents measure quality by pupil-teacher ratios.

Although overcrowding in public schools is used as a reason for parents to choose private schools, Longfield (2012) and Kelly and Scafidi (2013) found

that the same criteria was used by parents to determine which private school to choose. This indicates variations in pupil-teacher ratios among the private schools. It also indicates that the choice is not purely between public and private schools but parents are willing to put more effort in choosing a school that suits their preference, even between schools of the same type.

In a study on parental choice of school, Bosetti (2004) found that parents who chose non-religious private schools ranked pupil-teacher ratios as most important. However, those who chose religious or public schools ranked pupil-teacher ratios lower. A minority of parents as observed by Alsuiadi (2015a) do not consider pupil-teacher ratio as an important factor in choice of school. This was an area that requires more investigation to establish what factors override pupil-teacher ratio in choosing a school.

2.6 Proximity to area of residence and parental choice of school

The distance between home and school plays an important role in determining choice of school, not only by school type but also the specific school. Borghans, Golsteyn and Zölitz (2014) observed a negative relationship between distance to school and probability of choice. Beamish and Morey (2013), Malmberg, et al. (2013), Vollmuth (2015), and Awan and Zia (2015) concur that proximity and transportation play a large role in choice of school. Parents enroll children in either private or public schools with greatest proximity to home. This could be due to the perception that time spent commuting could be better utilized in learning.

The preference for schools close to home may also be influenced by other factors. Longfield (2012) observed that children in low cost or government schools walked to school while those in high cost schools used vehicles. A similar observation was made by Tooley and Yngstrom (2014). Parents in lower income groups placed distance as a priority while those of middle and higher income brackets ranked other factors higher than distance. This position is also supported by Oyier, et al. (2015) who found that parents who consider the distance to school are those who are least likely to have the resources required for transportation to and from a distant school.

Yaacob, Osman and Bachok (2014) found that parents choose private schools based on strategic location and distance between home and school. According to a study by Altenhofen, Berends and White (2016), some parents rank proximity to residence higher than school and staff quality. In addition, school going siblings play a major role in choice between nearby and distant schools, due to transportation logistics. This is an indication that choice of school closest to home may be informed by other factors other than distance.

Nyokabi (2009) and Tooley and Yngstrom (2014) observed that parents choose to enroll children in private schools due to lack of nearby public schools or in public schools due to absence of private schools in close proximity to their homes. Such parents may later transfer their children to their preferred schools once the children are old enough to safely travel long distances. However, as Mainda (2001), Hsu and Yuan-fang (2013) and Evans and Cleghorn (2014) observed, some parents are willing to sacrifice convenience and financial

resources to send their children to well-resourced schools offering the best education.

2.7 Summary of literature review

Longfield (2012), Maangi (2014) and Yaacob, et al. (2014) agree that school facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio and proximity to home influence parental choice of school. However, this position is negated by Van Pelt, et al. (2007), Rehman et al. (2010), Fung and Lam (2011) and Nantege, et al. (2012) who point out that the curriculum and teacher quality rank higher on importance and have greater influence on parental choice of school. Owing to the foregoing inconsistencies in research findings, this study therefore, sought to establish the influence of physical facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio and proximity to residence on parental choice of school.

2.8 Theoretical framework

This study was based on the Rational Choice Theory pioneered by George Homans (1961) in Scott (2000). The theory postulates that individuals anticipate outcomes of alternatives and make prudent, logical decisions which provide the greatest benefit or satisfaction, in their highest self-interest. The theory has several strengths: i) generality, where one set of assumptions relating to an actor is compatible with any set of assumptions about the environmental setting of the actor; ii) parsimony, where preferences and beliefs are perceived as the only relevant variables determining action; iii) predictive, where the

theory's assumptions have produced other decisive theories whose predictions rule out what is already generally accepted as unlikely (Ogu, 2013).

The limitations of the theory include; i) the view of an individual as separate from society; ii) the theory's unrealistic cognitive and psychological assumptions; iii) the actors' lack of innovation and creativity; iv) the theory assumes absence of a moral dimension (Burns & Roszkowska, 2016). The Rational Choice Theory was applied by Bosetti (2004) in a study on *Determinants of school choice: Understanding how parents choose elementary schools in Alberta*. Bosetti's study is similar to the current study which aims at establishing the school related factors that influence parental choice of primary school. The Rational Choice Theory is applicable in this study because parents' choice of school is a result of a rational decision. The parents' perception and ranking of different factors determines their choice of school.

2.9 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is a graphic representation of the inputs, the process and the outputs. Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between school-related factors and parental choice of school.

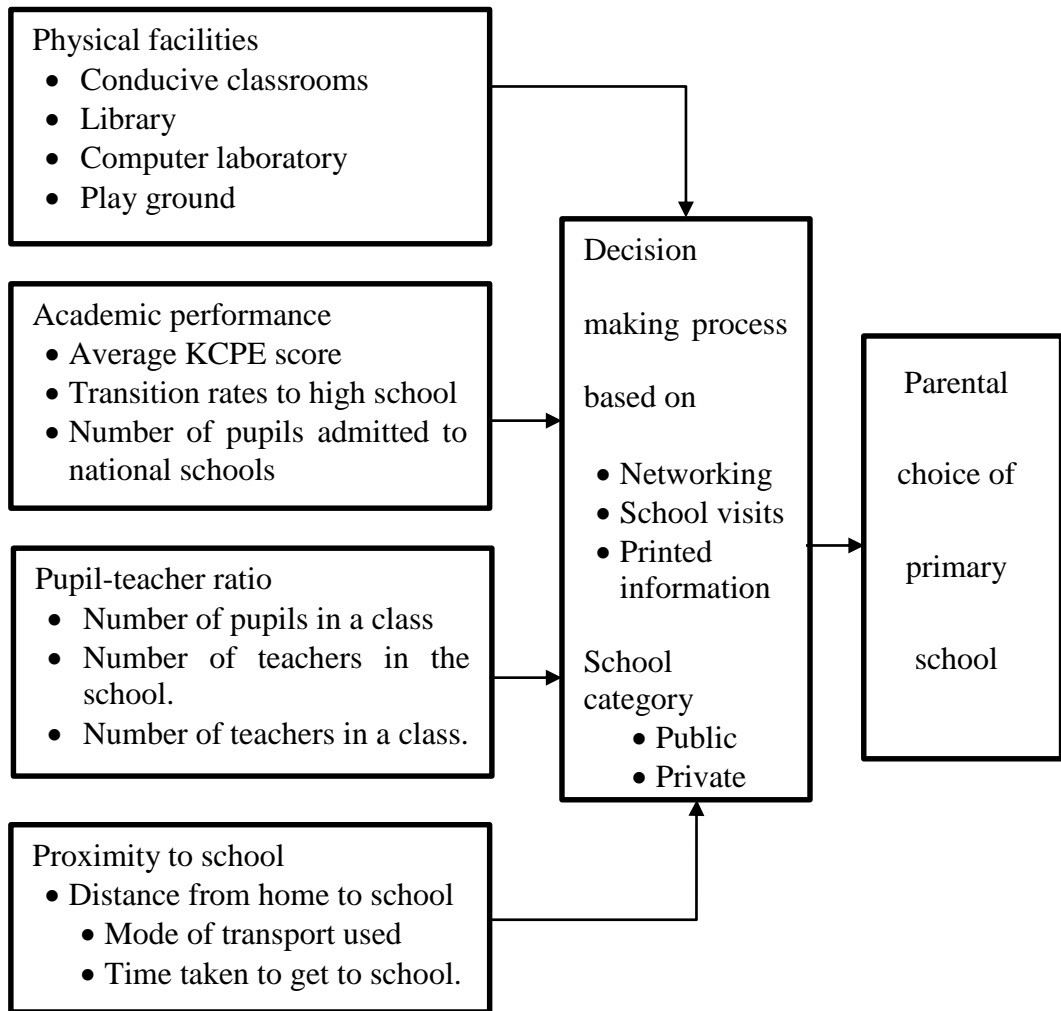


Figure 2.1 School related factors influencing parental choice of primary school.

A conducive learning environment is characterized by availability of good and well-maintained physical facilities such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories and play grounds. Good facilities are an indicator of quality. The level of academic performance is measured by the mean score in KCPE and the number of pupils that transit to secondary schools, with special focus on number of pupils admitted to national schools. Admissions to national schools is an indicator of high academic achievement.

The pupil-teacher ratio determines the amount of attention that a teacher can give each of the pupils. This level of interaction is measured by the total number of pupils in the classroom and the number of teachers supervising the pupils. Proximity to school is measured in terms of distance covered and the amount of time spent commuting. The mode of transport used also influences distance travelled and time spent. Parents will search for information about different schools through networking, school visits and printed materials based on these factors before choosing a school. The choice made is based on the level of importance that parents attach to each of these factors.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines how the research was conducted. It contains sub-sections on research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research design

The study used descriptive survey design. Descriptive surveys describe data on variables of interest and gather factual information on attitudes and preferences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Using this method, the study sought to establish how physical facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio and proximity to area of residence influence parental choice of primary school. The choice of descriptive survey as a preferred method was because it is “concerned with how what exists is related to a preceding event that has influenced a present condition” (Best, 1970 in Cohen et al. 2007) (p.205).

3.3 Target population

The target population of this study constituted school heads and parents from both public and private primary schools in Embakasi Sub-county as presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Target population

| School Category | School heads | Parents | Total |
|-----------------|--------------|---------|--------|
| Public Schools | 20 | 30,201 | 30,221 |
| Private Schools | 97 | 30,257 | 30,354 |
| Total | 117 | 60,458 | 60,575 |

Source: Embakasi Sub-county Education Office, 2017

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedure

In this study, the population was first stratified into two subgroups of public schools and private schools. Each of the subgroups was then subdivided further into subgroups of school heads and parents. Systematic sampling was used to pick respondents from each of the sub groups. To determine the sample size for a large target population, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003 p.132) suggest a formula:

$$n = \frac{z^2 p q}{d^2}$$

Where:

n = the desired sample size (if target population is greater than 10,000)

z = the standard normal deviate at the required confidence level

p = proportion of population estimated to have characteristics being measured.

q = 1 – p

d = the level of statistical significance set

In principle, the smaller the target population, the larger the sample size hence, the sample size for this study was as illustrated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Sample size

| Category | Population | Sample size |
|------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Public school heads | 20 | 19 |
| Private school heads | 97 | 76 |
| Public school parents | 30,201 | 300 |
| Private school parents | 30,257 | 300 |
| Total | 60,575 | 695 |

3.5 Research Instruments

In the study, questionnaires for head teachers, questionnaires for parents and an observation checklist were used. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), questionnaires are useful because they can be developed to gather specific information. The questionnaires were developed by the researcher with the assistance of the supervisors. Both sets of questionnaires had four sections each. They were used to gather data on adequacy of physical facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio and proximity of the school to area of residence. The observation checklist was used to establish availability, adequacy and suitability of classrooms, libraries, computer laboratories and play grounds.

3.6 Validity of instruments

Instrument validity is the ability of an instrument to measure what it was designed to measure. In this study, content validity of the questionnaires and the observation checklist was established through expert judgment of the supervisors. Further, validity was established by conducting a pilot comprising of two school heads and 10 parents. This was determined based on recommendations by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), who opine that a sample of between one and 10 per cent of the study sample is adequate for a pilot. The respondents selected for the pilot were not part of the study sample.

3.7 Reliability of instruments

In this study, test-retest method was used to establish reliability. The same instrument was administered twice at one week intervals after which a reliability coefficient computed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC).

Formula:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2][n(\sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Where:

n = number of pairs of scores $\sum x$ – sum of x scores

$\sum xy$ – sum of the products of paired scores $\sum y$ – sum of y scores

$\sum x^2$ – sum of squared x scores $\sum y^2$ – sum of squared y scores

The questionnaire for head teachers realized a coefficient of 0.86 while that of parents realized a coefficient of 0.80. The observation checklist realized a

coefficient of 0.82. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), this is an indication of very high reliability.

3.8 Data collection procedures

The researcher first obtained an introduction letter from the university. The researcher then applied for a research permit from National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher then obtained authorization from Embakasi Sub-County Education Office, after which the researcher contacted the school heads and booked appointments. On the appointed day, the researcher first did self-introduction to the school head, created a rapport then administered the questionnaire. In cases where the school head was absent, the questionnaires were dropped off and collected later. The observation checklist was ticked off on the same day or at a later date depending on the schedule given by the school heads.

3.9 Data analysis techniques

Data analysis is organising data collected into different groups based on their common characteristics (Orodho, 2009). In this study, all the data were first coded according to source. Qualitative data were organized into themes based on the research questions. Quantitative data were summarized using statistics such as means, frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics were used to check the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable (Cox, 2006). For instance, regression analysis was used to determine the extent to which adequacy of physical facilities and academic performance influence parental choice of primary school. Correlation was used to determine

how pupil-teacher ratio and proximity to residence influence parental choice of primary school. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22 was used in data analysis.

3.10 Ethical considerations

The researcher got clearance from the university and authorization from the Embakasi Sub-county Education Office prior to commencing the study. Before conducting the study in any institution, the researcher sought permission from the school head or the administrator. To ensure informed consent, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the respondents and assured them of no injury during their participation. The confidentiality of respondents' identity was guaranteed by using codes to identify the participating schools and respondents. The respondents were also not required to write their names on the questionnaires. All information collected was only used for the purposes of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the study findings based on the specific objectives. The chapter also provides the presentation, interpretation and discussion of the findings derived from the study. The study sought to investigate the influence of adequacy of physical facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio and proximity to area of residence on parental choice of primary schools in Embakasi Sub-County, Kenya. Collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

4.2 Instrument return rate

After collection of the research instruments, the researcher assessed the completeness and accuracy of the research instruments and the realized response return rate was as presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Instrument return rate

| Respondents' category | Target sample | Response frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------|
| Head teachers | 95 | 93 | 97.9 |
| Parents | 600 | 531 | 88.5 |
| Total | 695 | 624 | 89.8 |

Data in Table 4.1 shows that the head teacher respondents realized a 97.9 percent response rate while parents realised a response rate of 88.5 percent. Therefore, the study realized a total return rate of 89.8 percent. These findings indicated that the study realised satisfactory and sufficient instrument return rate. This response rates were representative and conformed to the suggestions by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) that return rates above 70 percent were excellent and representative for any social science research.

4.3 Demographic information

To gain an insight on the respondents' characteristics, the study sought to establish their distribution by school category, gender, school type, age bracket, level of education and teaching experience.

4.3.1 Respondents distribution by school category

This study focused on two categories of schools – public and private. School category influences parents' choice of school due to the convenience in terms of the parents' other commitments (Altenhofen, Berends & White, 2016). Data collected from participants in both school categories provided better insight on the school choice process. It also provided a better basis for comparison of the variables in the study based on school category. The study sought to find out the respondents representation by school category and their distribution in both private and public schools. Table 4.2 shows the study findings.

Table 4.2

Respondents' distribution by school category

| School category | Head teachers | | Parents | |
|-----------------|---------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Public | 19 | 20.4 | 285 | 53.7 |
| Private | 74 | 79.6 | 246 | 46.3 |
| Total | 93 | 100.0 | 531 | 100.0 |

The study findings presented in Table 4.2 shows that the study population constituted of 20.4 percent of head teachers from public primary schools and 79.6 percent of the head teachers from private primary schools. These findings were due to the high number of private primary schools in the study area. The study findings concurred with data collected from the Sub-County Education office that showed that Embakasi Sub-County had 20 public primary schools and 97 private primary schools. The two school heads and ten parents used in the pilot were not included in the actual study as proposed by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003).

In public primary schools 53.7 percent of the parents responded while 46.3 percent of parents were from private primary schools. The rate of response by the parents shows that the study was inclusive for parents from both school categories. It also shows that the data collected is accurate and reliable to give findings that are a reflection of the parents' opinions.

4.3.2 Gender of respondents

The study also sought to establish the gender of the respondents in order to show gender representation of respondents who participated in the study. The study findings are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Respondent' distribution by gender

| Gender | Head teachers | | Parents | |
|--------|---------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Male | 51 | 54.8 | 261 | 49.2 |
| Female | 42 | 45.2 | 270 | 50.8 |
| Total | 93 | 100.0 | 531 | 100.0 |

Table 4.3 shows that 54.8 percent of the head teachers were male while 45.2 percent were female. The study findings implied that primary school leadership had more males than females. The findings from the parent respondents showed that 49.2 percent were male while 50.8 percent were female. This showed that the study was not gender biased since both genders were represented in the study responses.

4.3.3 School type

School type determines the amount of time spent within the school. Pupils in boarding schools spend more time in school than those in day schools. Mayer, Thomas and Logue (2003) found that boarding schools adequately respond to pupils' educational needs, provide extra support and supervision and provide a better academic environment. However, the reasons that lead to choice

between a day school and a boarding school are not purely academic. To establish the school type of the primary schools that participated in the study the head teachers were asked to indicate the type of school they headed and the study findings presented in Figure 4.1

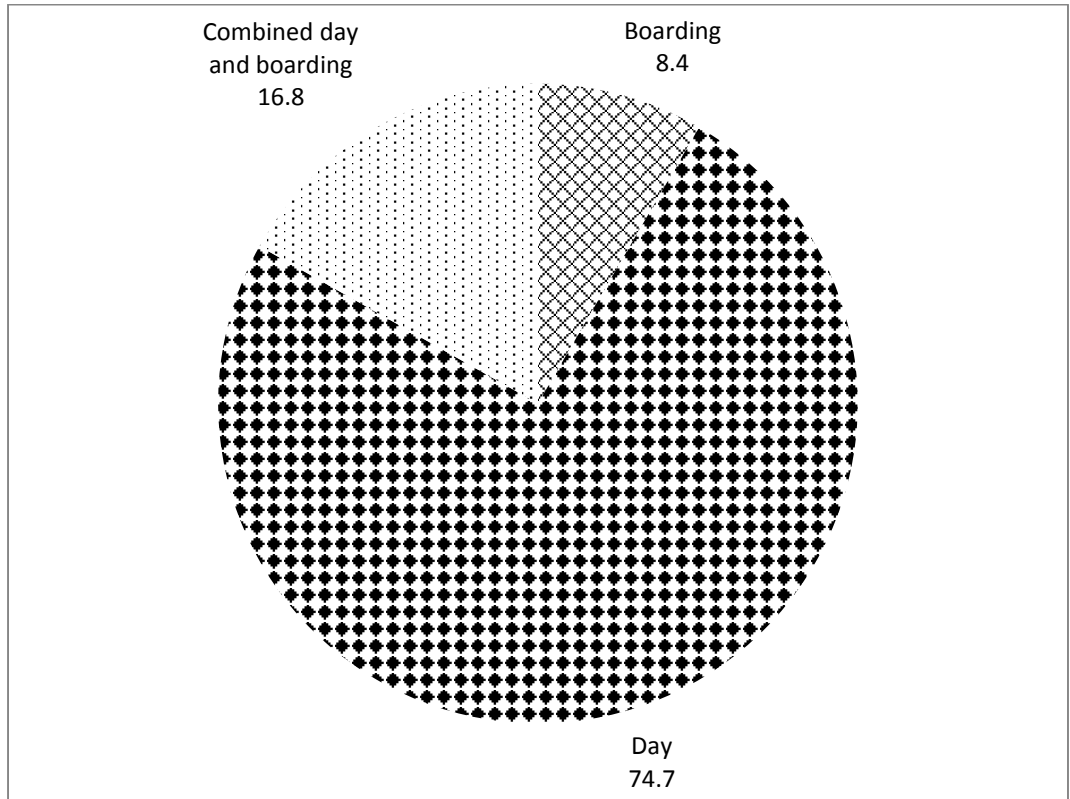


Figure 4.1. Number of schools by type

According to study findings presented in Figure 4.1 majority of the primary schools in Embakasi Sub-County (74.7%) were day schools, 16.8 percent were combined day and boarding while only 8.4 percent of the schools were boarding schools. This showed that the school type played a role in parental choice of school for their children.

4.3.4 Respondents distribution by age

The age of the head teacher is an indicator of the length of experience of the head teacher. An older head teacher is likely to have moved up the ranks over a long working period, thereby gaining valuable experience to supervise the educational process. Age of respondents was used to depict the respondents' characteristics in terms of experience. Thus, the study sought to establish head teachers' age distribution. Table 4.4 presents the study findings.

Table 4.4

Head teachers' distribution by age bracket

| Age in years | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|
| Below 30 years | 6 | 6.4 |
| 31 to 40 years | 14 | 15.1 |
| 41 to 50 | 22 | 23.7 |
| Above 50 years | 51 | 54.8 |
| Total | 93 | 100.0 |

A majority of the head teachers (54.8%) were above 50 years old. This information showed that majority of the head teachers had gained valuable experience in the teaching profession.

4.3.5 Head teachers' level of education

The level of education of the head teacher is an indicator of the value placed by school managers on teacher qualification. It is also an indicator of the

qualifications of the teachers under the supervision of the school head. The calibre of teachers determines the educational outcomes in the school. A study by Onuka and Arowojolu (2008) found that with highly qualified staff, there is a corresponding increase in the level of achievement of the learning objectives. To establish the head teachers professional experience the study sought to establish the head teachers' level of education and presented the study findings in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Head teachers level of education

| Level of education | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| Certificate | 9 | 9.7 |
| Diploma | 31 | 33.3 |
| Degree | 45 | 48.4 |
| Post graduate | 8 | 8.6 |
| Total | 93 | 100.0 |

Table 4.5 shows that head teachers had attained different levels of academic qualification. For instance, 48.4 percent of the head teachers were degree holders. These data showed that head teachers had attained relevant information to take on their role in primary school leadership. The data also implied that they were reliable to give credible information for the purpose of the study.

4.3.6 Head teachers' teaching experience

The length of the head teachers' experience is an indicator of quality. Many years of experience translate to better administrative and supervisory skills acquired over the working period. Nantege, Mugabirwe and Moshy (2012) found that experienced teaching staff play a role in motivating parents to send children to specific schools. To establish the level experience the head teachers were requested to indicate the years of teaching experience. Their responses were as presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Head teachers' teaching experience

| Years of teaching experience | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Below 10 years | 6 | 6.4 |
| 10 to 20 years | 30 | 32.3 |
| 21 to 30 years | 24 | 25.8 |
| Above 30 years | 33 | 35.5 |
| Total | 93 | 100.0 |

According to most of the head teachers (35.5%) they had been in the teaching profession for over 30 years. This showed they were in a position to give reliable information on the school related factors influencing parental choice of primary schools in the study area.

4.4 Physical facilities and parents' choice of school

The first research objective sought to determine the influence of the adequacy of physical facilities on parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Therefore, the head teachers were requested to indicate the number of classrooms in their respective schools. Table 4.7 presents the study findings.

Table 4.7

Number of classrooms per school

| No. of classrooms | Public | | Private | |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Below 10 classes | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 6.8 |
| 10 to 15 classes | 2 | 10.5 | 26 | 35.1 |
| 16 to 20 classes | 11 | 57.9 | 29 | 39.2 |
| Above 20 classes | 6 | 31.6 | 14 | 18.9 |
| Total | 19 | 100.0 | 74 | 100.0 |

Information contained in Table 4.7 shows that majority of public primary school head teachers (57.9%) indicated that their schools had 16 to 20 classrooms while most (39.2%) of their counterparts in private primary schools indicated that they had between 16 and 20 classrooms. Head teachers in 31.6 percent of the public primary schools indicated that they had over 20 classrooms compared to 18.9 percent of head teachers in private schools. This was an indication that the difference in availability of classrooms between public and

private primary schools influenced parental choice of school. This could be due to parents choosing schools based on their physical appearance.

According to Alsuiadi (2015a) many parents make decisions on school choice based on attractiveness of the buildings, the size of the library and computer rooms, the condition of the walls, roofs, floors, ventilation, furniture, equipment and the aesthetic appeal of outdoor play areas. Thus, the head teachers were also requested to indicate the availability and adequacy of other physical facilities in the schools. Table 4.8 presents the study findings.

Table 4.8

Availability of physical facilities in schools

| Responses | Public | | Private | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Well stocked library | 3 | 15.8 | 46 | 61.5 |
| Well-equipped computer laboratory | 2 | 8.7 | 40 | 54.1 |
| Adequate playground | 14 | 71.9 | 12 | 16.2 |
| Spacious classrooms | 1 | 5.1 | 33 | 44.9 |
| | N = 19 | | N = 74 | |

Table 4.8 shows that public and private primary schools in Embakasi Sub-County had distinct differences in the provision of adequate physical facilities. For instance, 71.9 percent of head teachers in public primary schools indicated that they had adequate playground compared to 16.2 percent of the head teachers in private schools. In addition, 61.5 percent of head teachers in

private schools indicated that their schools had a well-stocked library compared to 15.8 percent of head teachers in public primary schools. The findings showed that adequacy of physical facilities in public and private primary schools differed resulting in a difference in the parental choice of school.

To establish whether availability and adequacy of physical facilities influenced parental choice of primary schools, the parents were given statements to show their preference for their children's schools using the scale 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, and 4 = Strongly disagree. Table 4.9 shows the study findings.

Table 4.9

Parental choice of schools due to adequacy of physical facilities

| Response | Adequate physical facilities | | | | Inadequate physical facilities | | | |
|--|------------------------------|------|-----|------|--------------------------------|------|-----|------|
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| The school has spacious classrooms | 151 | 28.4 | 45 | 8.5 | 257 | 48.4 | 78 | 14.7 |
| The school has good furniture for learners | 210 | 39.5 | 201 | 37.9 | 39 | 7.3 | 81 | 15.3 |
| The school has permanent buildings | 365 | 68.7 | 87 | 16.4 | 26 | 4.9 | 53 | 10.0 |
| The school has a well-stocked library | 289 | 54.4 | 196 | 36.9 | 22 | 4.1 | 24 | 4.5 |
| The school has a well-equipped computer laboratory | 64 | 12.1 | 71 | 13.4 | 163 | 30.7 | 233 | 43.9 |
| The school has a spacious, well maintained playground. | 53 | 10.0 | 22 | 4.1 | 197 | 37.1 | 259 | 48.8 |

Data presented in Table 4.9 shows that most parents (48.4%) in primary schools disagreed with the statement that their schools had spacious classrooms, while more than half of the parents agreed to the statement that their schools had good furniture and permanent building. Although, majority of the parents (54.5%) strongly agreed that the schools had well stocked libraries, 57.5 percent disagreed on the existence of well-equipped computer laboratories.

These findings showed that majority of the parents' preferred good furniture and permanent buildings in the choice of primary school for their children. But, some types of physical facilities like the playground and computer laboratories were not reported to be a major determinant on the choice of school. The study findings concurred with Hsu and Yuan-fang (2013) who found that many parents make decisions on school choice based on attractiveness of the buildings, the size of the library and computer rooms, the condition of the walls, roofs, floors, ventilation, furniture, equipment and the aesthetic appeal of outdoor play areas. The findings also agree with observations by Beamish and Morey (2013) that while a number of parents placed physical facilities as a preference, a number of parents did not consider it a factor that influenced school choice.

The summary of the model is presented in Table 4.10 below. From the results shown in Table 4.10, the model shows a good fit as indicated by the coefficient of determination (r^2) with a value of 0.9066.

Table 4.10

Regression analysis on physical facilities and parental choice of school

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | .955 ^a | .9066 | .905 | .15519 |

Information contained in Table 4.10 shows the significance between physical facilities and parents' choice of school. This implies that the physical facilities explain 90.66 percent of the variations of parental choice of schools. This shows that 9.34% of the dependent variable is explained by other variables not in this model.

4.5 Academic performance of public and private schools

Objective two of the study sought to establish the influence of academic performance on parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya. To find out the relationship between the academic performance and enrolment, the head teachers were requested to indicate their schools' KCPE mean score and the number of students admitted to different categories of secondary schools. Table 4.11 presents the study findings.

Table 4.11

KCPE performance

| Public schools | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|------|---------|------|---------------|------|--|
| Year | KCPE Mean score | | | | | | |
| | Below average | | Average | | Above average | | |
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | |
| 2013 | 13 | 68.4 | 4 | 21.1 | 2 | 10.5 | |
| 2014 | 16 | 84.2 | 2 | 10.5 | 1 | 5.3 | |
| 2015 | 11 | 57.9 | 5 | 26.3 | 3 | 15.8 | |
| 2016 | 8 | 42.1 | 9 | 47.4 | 2 | 10.5 | |
| Private schools | | | | | | | |
| Year | KCPE Mean score | | | | | | |
| | Below average | | Average | | Above average | | |
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | |
| 2013 | 12 | 16.2 | 29 | 39.2 | 33 | 44.6 | |
| 2014 | 8 | 10.8 | 18 | 24.3 | 38 | 51.4 | |
| 2015 | 5 | 6.8 | 25 | 33.8 | 44 | 59.5 | |
| 2016 | 26 | 35.1 | 32 | 43.2 | 16 | 21.6 | |

From the study findings majority of the public primary schools in Embakasi Sub-County have been reporting below average performance while majority of their counterparts in private schools have registered above average mean scores. These findings showed that academic performance had an influence on parental choice of schools. The findings were in line with Rehman, et al. (2010), Davis (2011) and Beamish and Morey (2013) all agree that families choose schools that offer high academic quality and good performance

in standardized tests for better college and future career placement. To establish whether the performance of schools had a relationship with the choice of schools the head teachers were requested to indicate the form one transition rates of their students based on the category of secondary schools they transited to. Table 4.12 presents the study findings.

Table 4.12

Transition rates to form one based on secondary school categories

| Secondary school categories | Primary school categories | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Public | | Private | |
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| National schools | 1 | 5.3 | 16 | 21.6 |
| Extra-county schools | 3 | 18.3 | 28 | 37.9 |
| County schools | 6 | 30.4 | 10 | 13.5 |
| Sub-County schools | 7 | 37.2 | 6 | 8.1 |
| Private schools | 2 | 8.8 | 14 | 18.9 |
| Total | 19 | 100.0 | 74 | 100.0 |

Data presented in Table 4.12 shows that most of the pupils from private schools went to Extra-County schools while most of their counter parts in public schools transit to Sub-County school. The findings were an indication that past performances registered by different categories of schools influenced parental choice of schools for their children. Further, to establish on the transition rate

the head teachers were to indicate the number of pupils who did not join secondary schools. Figure 4.3 presents the study findings on the rate of transition to secondary schools in different categories of primary schools.

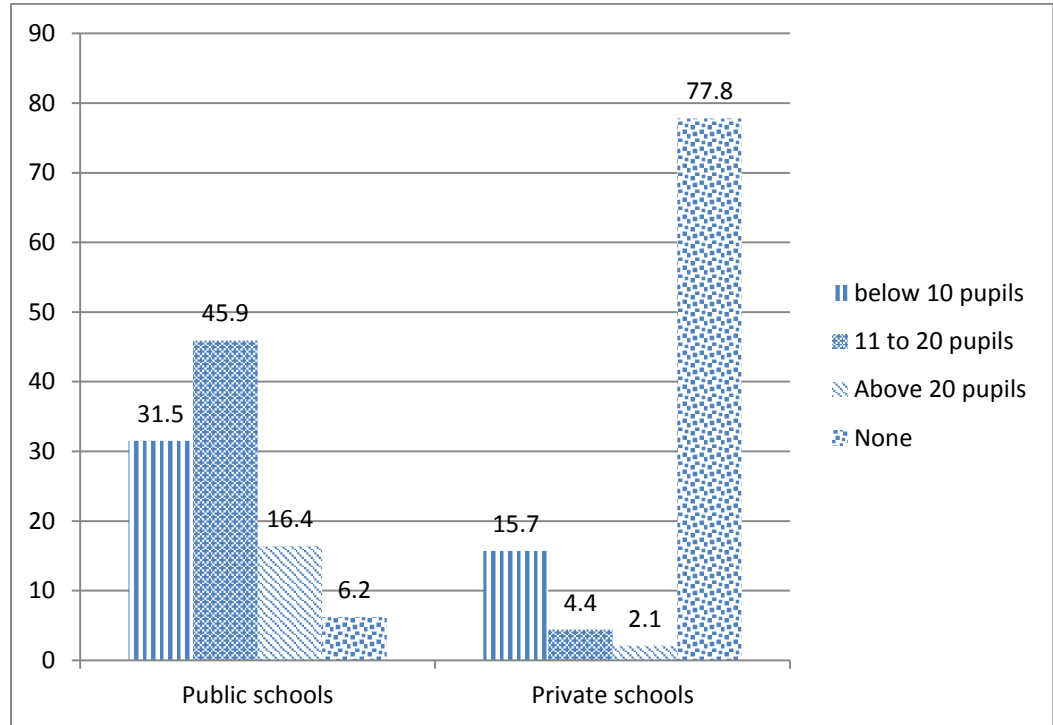


Figure 4.3 Number of pupils who did not join secondary school

According to the analysis presented in Figure 4.3 only 6.2 percent of public primary school heads had all their pupils transit to secondary schools compared to 77.8 percent in private schools. The findings were an indication that though few pupils did not transit to secondary schools, the percentage count that was from public primary schools was higher than that of private primary schools. Therefore, the findings were an indication that majority of the parents chose to enroll their children in private schools due to the probability of transiting to secondary schools.

To establish whether parents chose a school to enroll their children based on academic performance they were issued with statements to depict the relationship between school choice and past academic performance. The parent respondents were issued with statements to show their level of agreement using the scale 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, and 4 = Strongly Disagree. The study responses are as presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13

Parents' responses on the influence of academic performance on school choice

| Factors under consideration | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|--|------|-------|------|----------|------|-------------------|------|
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| | The school has a KCPE mean score above 350 | 392 | 73.8 | 110 | 20.7 | 189 | 35.6 | 132 |
| The school has a KCPE mean score of above 250 | 71 | 13.4 | 103 | 19.4 | 42 | 7.9 | 315 | 59.3 |
| Many candidates score above 400 in KCPE | 64 | 12.1 | 168 | 31.6 | 241 | 45.4 | 58 | 10.9 |
| My child has a chance of admission to a national secondary school | 158 | 29.8 | 199 | 37.5 | 91 | 17.1 | 83 | 13.6 |

Information contained in Table 4.13 shows that majority (73.8%) of the study respondents were in strong agreement with the statements that showed the relationship between KCPE mean scores and their preference of school types. The statements that predicted the strong influence of academic performance on parental choice of schools scored a mean of 5.8. The findings showed that majority of the parents were influenced by the schools' academic performance to choose schools for their children. The findings differed with observation by Kelly and Scafidi (2013) who stated that not all parents rank academic performance at the top of the priority list, while, a majority are content with average performance.

4.6 Pupil-teacher ratio and parental choice of school

The third study objective sought to examine the influence of pupil-teacher ratio on parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Pupil-teacher ratio can be an indicator of the adequacy of classrooms as well as adequacy of teachers within a single school. It can also be used by parents as a measure of educational quality (Nishimura & Yamano, 2012; Awan & Zia, 2015; Alsauidi, 2016). The head teachers were therefore requested to indicate the number of pupils enrolled in their schools. Figure 4.4 presents the pupils enrolment.

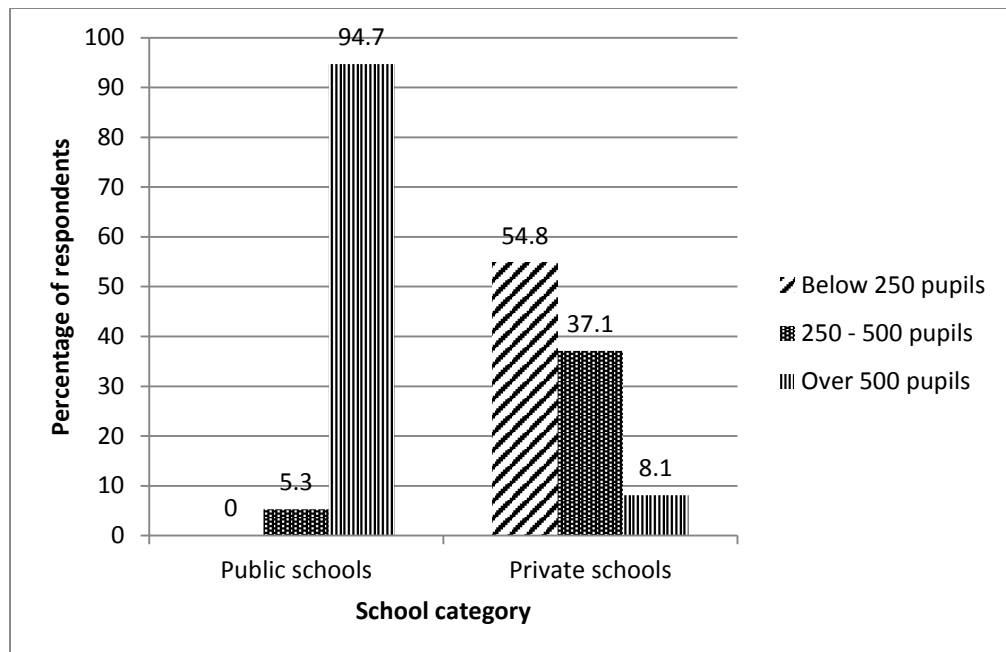


Figure 4.4 Pupils' enrolment in public and private primary schools

Information contained in Figure 4.4 shows that majority (94.7%) of the public primary schools had over 500 pupils compared to 8.1 percent of private schools. A majority (54.8%) of the private primary schools had less than 250 pupils while none of the public primary schools had below 250 pupils. The findings were an indication that pupil population in individual public schools was very high as compared to private schools. The findings were also an indication that the high number of private schools in the study area enrolled fewer pupils as compared to the public schools. This translates to a difference in the pupil-teacher ratio between the two types of schools.

To assess the teachers' population the head teachers were to indicate the total number of teachers in their schools. The study findings were as shown in Figure 4.5.

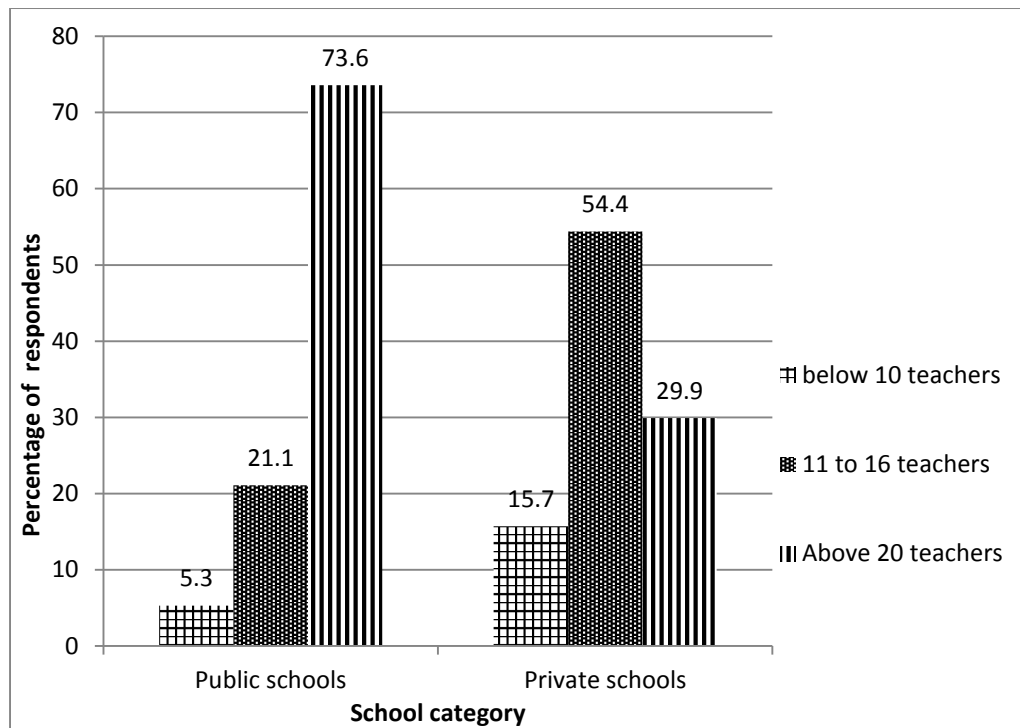


Figure 4.5 Teachers' population in schools

According to a majority (73.6 %) of the head teachers in public schools and 29.9 percent of head teachers in private schools, their schools had more than 20 teachers. The findings indicated that though both categories of schools had enough number of teachers, the pupil-teacher ratio in public schools was higher than in private schools. The head teachers were also asked to indicate the average number of pupils in a single classroom and the study findings were as presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14

Average number of pupils in a single classroom

| No. of pupils per classroom | Public | | Private | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Below 40 pupils | 0 | 0.0 | 53 | 71.6 |
| 41 – 50 pupils | 1 | 5.3 | 21 | 28.4 |
| 51 – 60 pupils | 11 | 57.9 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Above 60 pupils | 7 | 36.8 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 19 | 100.0 | 74 | 100.0 |

According to a majority (57.6%) of public primary school heads their schools have between 51 and 60 pupils per class while majority (71.6%) of private schools had less than 40 pupils per class. The findings were an indication that majority of public schools had larger than the recommended class size of 40 pupils per class. To establish the head teachers' perception of the appropriateness on the pupil-teacher ratio they were to indicate whether or not the pupil-teacher ratio was appropriate. The study findings are presented in Figure 4.6.

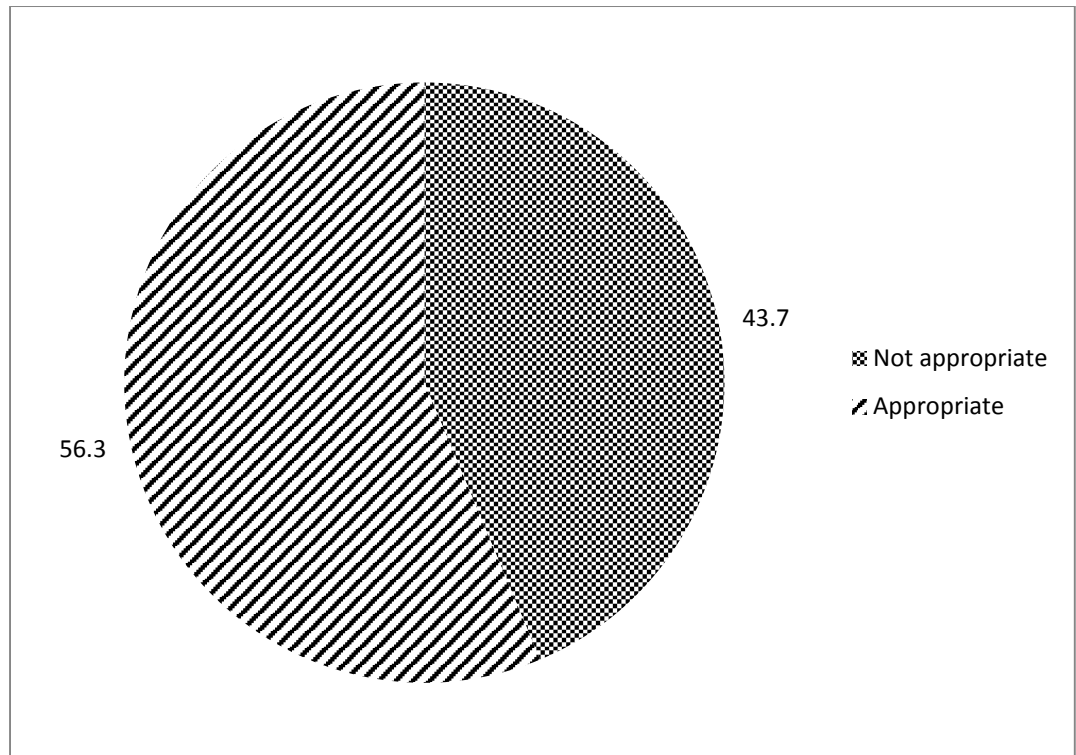


Figure 4.6. Head teachers' perception on appropriateness of pupil-teacher ratio

Data presented in Figure 4.6 shows that 56.3 percent of the head teachers indicated that the pupil-teacher ratio in their schools was appropriate. The findings showed that the schools were comfortable with the achieved class sizes. To establish the relationship between parental choice of school and pupil-teacher ratio, the parents were issued with statements to agree or disagree on the influence of their decision on their children's schools based on the pupil teacher-ratio. Table 4.15 presents the study findings.

Table 4.15

Parents' responses on influence of pupil-teacher ratio on school choice

| | Public | | | | Private | | | |
|--|--------|------|----|------|---------|-------|----|------|
| | Yes | | No | | Yes | | No | |
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| The school has enough teachers | 3 | 15.8 | 16 | 84.2 | 74 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| There are few pupils in a classroom | 2 | 10.5 | 17 | 89.7 | 59 | 79.7 | 15 | 20.3 |
| Teachers give children enough attention in class | 5 | 26.3 | 14 | 73.7 | 74 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 |

Information presented in Table 4.15 shows that majority (89.7%) of the parents from public had observed high pupil-teacher ratio than in private primary schools. Therefore the pupil-teacher ratio was reported to have a great impact on the parents' preference on the choice of school for their children. Thus, the study findings showed that the pupil-teacher ratio had a significant influence of parental choice of school. These findings are in agreement with findings by Longfield (2012) and Kelly and Scafidi (2013) who found that the pupil teacher ratio was used by parents to choose private schools over public schools and to determine which private school to choose.

To cross tabulate the relationship between pupil-teacher ratio and parents' choice of school the research correlated the variables and presented the findings in Table 4.16

Table 4.16

Relationship between pupil-teacher ratio and parents' choice of school

| | | Pupil-teacher ratio | Parents' choice of school |
|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pupil-teacher ratio | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.694 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0.084 |
| | N | 93 | 93 |
| Parents' choice of school | Pearson Correlation | 0.694 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.084 | |
| | N | 93 | 93 |

The correlation coefficient between pupil-teacher ratio and parents' choice of school is 0.694 with a significance level of 0.084. This correlation coefficient is very high implying that there is a strong positive relationship between teacher pupil ratio and parents' choice of school. This means that the number of teachers in a school influence parents' choice of schools.

4.7 Proximity to area of residence

Objective four of the study assessed the influence of school's proximity to area of residence on parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The head teachers were to indicate the mode of transport commonly used by the pupils to commute to and from school.

Table 4.17 presents the study findings.

Table 4.17

Modes of transport used by learners to and from school

| Mode | Most common | | Common | | Fairly common | | Not common | | Not applicable | |
|------------------|-------------|------|--------|------|---------------|------|------------|------|----------------|------|
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| | Walking | 37 | 39.8 | 13 | 14.0 | 24 | 25.8 | 11 | 11.8 | 8 |
| School transport | 54 | 58.1 | 22 | 23.7 | 10 | 10.8 | 7 | 7.5 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Public transport | 8 | 8.6 | 13 | 14.0 | 22 | 23.7 | 31 | 33.3 | 29 | 31.2 |
| Pick and drop | 1 | 1.1 | 3 | 3.2 | 8 | 8.6 | 26 | 28.0 | 55 | 59.1 |

Information presented in Table 4.17 shows that the most common mode of transport by pupils in Embakasi Sub-County is school transport. Other modes of transport like walking to school scored a significant response on being commonly used, public transport was fairly common while pick and drop was not very common. The findings were an indication that the proximity from schools to area of residence did not influence parents' choice of school as proposed by the head teachers. To establish the relationship between parental choice of school and the proximity of school to area of residence the parents were asked to show their level of agreement or disagreement on the influence of their decision on their children's schools based on the proximity to area of residence. Table 4.18 presents the study findings.

Table 4.18

Parents' responses on influence of schools' proximity to area of residence on parental choice of school

| | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|------|-------|------|----------|------|-------------------|------|
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| The school is nearest to my home | 45 | 8.5 | 78 | 14.7 | 151 | 28.4 | 257 | 48.4 |
| The school vehicle picks and drops my child at home | 210 | 39.5 | 201 | 37.9 | 81 | 15.3 | 39 | 7.3 |
| The school is easily accessible by public transport | 26 | 4.9 | 53 | 10.0 | 365 | 68.7 | 87 | 16.4 |
| The children take a short time to get to school. | 289 | 54.4 | 196 | 36.9 | 22 | 4.1 | 24 | 4.5 |
| My child is able to walk to school | 163 | 30.7 | 233 | 43.9 | 71 | 13.4 | 64 | 12.1 |
| There is no other school in the neighborhood | 53 | 10.0 | 22 | 4.1 | 197 | 37.1 | 259 | 48.8 |

According to a majority of the parents, they were in agreement with the head teachers as they showed that their children did not have difficulties accessing their schools. The findings were an indication that the proximity of the school from the area of residence influenced parents' choice of school to a great extent.

Further the researcher used Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to determine the relationship between proximity to area of residence and parents' choice of primary school. The results are shown in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19

Coefficient on proximity to area of residence and parents' choice of primary school

| | | Proximity to area of residence | Parents' choice of primary school |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Proximity to area of residence | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.72 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0.064 |
| | N | 93 | |
| Parents' choice of primary school | Pearson Correlation | 0.72 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.64 | |
| | N | 93 | 93 |

Table 4.19 shows that the correlation between the proximity to area of residence and parents' choice of primary school is 0.72. This shows that there is a very strong relationship between proximity to area of residence and parents' choice of primary school. It can be concluded that there is a significant influence of proximity to area of residence on the parents' choice of primary school.

The study finally sought to establish the importance of the study variables to the parents' choice of schools in Embakasi Sub-County and presented the study findings as shown in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20

Parents' reasons for choice of schools

| | Most Important | | Important | | Fairly Important | | Not Important | |
|---|----------------|------|-----------|------|------------------|------|---------------|------|
| | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| Spacious classrooms | 13 | 14.0 | 24 | 25.8 | 11 | 11.8 | 8 | 8.6 |
| Well maintained classrooms | 45 | 48.4 | 24 | 25.8 | 22 | 23.7 | 2 | 2.2 |
| Well-stocked library | 30 | 32.3 | 33 | 35.5 | 14 | 14.7 | 16 | 17.2 |
| Well-equipped computer laboratory | 37 | 39.8 | 13 | 14.0 | 24 | 25.8 | 11 | 11.8 |
| Spacious playground | 54 | 58.1 | 22 | 23.7 | 10 | 10.8 | 7 | 7.5 |
| Well-equipped play ground | 8 | 8.6 | 13 | 14.0 | 22 | 23.7 | 31 | 33.3 |
| High academic performance | 51 | 54.8 | 26 | 28.0 | 6 | 6.4 | 3 | 3.2 |
| Few pupils in the classrooms | 37 | 39.8 | 13 | 14.0 | 24 | 25.8 | 11 | 11.8 |
| Near pupils' home | 51 | 54.8 | 22 | 23.7 | 13 | 14.0 | 7 | 7.5 |
| Pupils take less than 30 minutes to get to school | 13 | 14.0 | 24 | 25.8 | 11 | 11.8 | 8 | 8.6 |

According to majority of the respondents, parental choice was influenced more by the physical facilities and academic performance than by pupil-teacher ratio and proximity of schools to area of residence. The findings showed majority of the parents felt that physical facilities and academic performance were most important to influence their choice of school than the other variables. The findings disagreed with an observation by Alsuiadi (2015a) who observed that physical facilities ranked slightly lower than other factors in parental choice of school.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study findings and the conclusions. The chapter further outlines recommendations of the study in line with the study objectives.

5.2 Summary of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the school related factors influencing parental choice of primary schools in Embakasi Sub-county, Nairobi City County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were; to determine the influence of adequacy of physical facilities, academic performance, pupil-teacher ratio, and school's proximity to area of residence on parental choice of primary school. This study was based on the Rational Choice Theory pioneered by George Homans (1961). The study used descriptive survey design. The target population of this study constituted school heads and parents from both public and private primary schools in Embakasi Sub-county.

Stratified sampling was used to divide two subgroups of public schools and private schools. Systematic sampling was used to pick respondents from each of the sub groups. Data was collected using questionnaires for head teachers, questionnaires for parents and an observation checklist. Content validity of the questionnaires and the checklist was established through expert judgment of the supervisors and conducting a pilot study, while test-retest method was used to establish reliability. Data collected were analyzed

qualitatively and quantitatively. The study realized a total response rate of 89.8 percent, which was deemed very satisfactory for the purpose of the study.

5.3 Summary of the study findings

The first research objective sought to determine the influence of the adequacy of physical facilities on parental choice of primary school. The study findings revealed that there was a significant influence of physical facilities on parental choice of school. The study showed that public and private primary schools had a distinct difference in the provision of adequate physical facilities. In the private school category, 61.5 percent had well-stocked libraries compared to 15.8 percent of public primary schools. There was a difference in availability of classrooms with 31.6 percent of public schools having more than 20 classrooms compared to 18.9 percent of private schools. In public primary schools, 71.9 percent had adequate playgrounds compared to 16.2 percent of private schools. The relationship between physical facilities and parental choice of school scored a variance of 90.7%. The findings showed that adequacy of physical facilities in public and private primary schools differed thus influencing parental choice of primary school.

Objective two of the study sought to establish the influence of academic performance on parental choice of primary school. From the study findings majority of the public primary schools have been reporting below average performance while majority of the private schools have registered above average mean scores. The findings were an indication that past performances registered by different categories of schools influenced parental choice of

schools for their children. Majority of the study respondents were in strong agreement on the statements that showed the relationship between KCPE mean scores and their preference of school types. However, the statements that predicted the strong association of academic performance with parental choice of schools scored a mean of 5.8. The findings showed that majority of the parents were influenced by the schools' academic performance in choosing schools for their children.

The third objective sought to examine the influence of pupil-teacher ratio on parental choice of primary school. Majority (94.7%) of the public primary schools had a pupil population above 500 while 54.8 percent of the private primary schools had a pupil population below 250. A majority (73.6%) of public school heads had more than 20 teachers compared to 29.9 percent of head teachers in private schools. A majority (54.4%) of the head teachers in private schools indicated that their schools had between 11 and 16 teachers. The study revealed that majority (57.9%) of the public primary school heads indicated that their schools have between 51 and 60 pupils per class, while majority (71.6%) of the private schools had less than 40 pupils per class. The findings were an indication that majority of public schools had larger than the recommended class size of 40 pupils per class. However, majority of the parents from public schools indicated high pupil-teacher ratio than those in private primary schools. Thus, the study findings showed that the pupil-teacher ratio had a significant influence of parental choice of school.

Objective four of the study assessed the influence of school's proximity to area of residence on parental choice of primary school. According to the study

findings the most common mode of transport (58.1%) used is school transport. Walking to school scored a significant response (39.8%) on being commonly used, public transport is fairly common (23.7%) while pick and drop was not very common at 7.5 percent. The study revealed that majority of the parents' responses were in agreement with the head teachers' responses as they showed that their children did not have difficulties accessing their schools. The findings showed majority of the parents felt that physical facilities and academic performance were most important in influencing their choice of school than the other variables.

5.4 Conclusions of the study

The following conclusions were drawn from the research findings based on the objectives of the study: The availability, adequacy and appropriateness of the physical facilities had a significant influence on the parental choice of primary school for their children. Parents showed a preference for schools with permanent buildings and good furniture. This is due to the association of the school learning environment with academic achievement.

Schools with past commendable track record of academic performance were believed to have higher preference among parents. Therefore, majority of the parents wanted to enroll their children in schools that had been registering good performance at KCPE. Thus, the researcher concluded that the school's academic performance had a great influence on the likelihood of parents choosing the school to enroll their children.

From the study findings, parents showed a higher preference for schools with lower pupil- teacher ratio. It was therefore established that pupil-teacher ratio had an influence on parental choice of primary schools. Finally, the study established that majority of the pupils in primary schools in Embakasi Sub-County easily accessed the schools. The pupils either walked to school or their parents made transport arrangements for them to commute to and from school. Therefore, the study findings concluded that the proximity to area of residence had a significant influence on parental choice of primary schools.

5.5 Recommendations of the study

In view of the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher would make the following recommendations in order to improve studies on the school related factors influencing parental choice of primary schools;

- i. The findings revealed that physical facilities were inadequate in public schools hence lowering the rate of parents preferring to enroll their children in this category of schools. Therefore, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) in conjunction with other stakeholders should ensure adequate and appropriate physical facilities in order to meet the competitiveness of the private schools.
- ii. The school Boards of Management and Parents Teachers Associations should ensure that they collaboratively join efforts to boost their schools' academic performance so as to ensure that the schools do not draw a history of failure hindering parental preference of the schools.

- iii. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) and the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) should work hand in hand to ensure that they deploy enough teachers in schools so as to help head teachers to implement the policy requirement on the pupil-teacher ratio in schools.
- iv. Educationists should conduct forums where parents express their views and discuss their expectations on schools. Through these forums, educationists can innovate ways of meeting both the parents' expectations the educational needs of children.

5.6 Suggestions for further research

Having explored on the school-based factors influencing paternal choice of schools in Embakasi Sub-County, the study proposed the following areas for future research;

- i. A similar study to be done in other sub-counties in the country so as to assess and compare the findings for generalization of the study findings.
- ii. A study to be conducted on the influence of household factors on parental choice of schools.
- iii. An investigation on the attitudes of parents and pupils on the preference of schools.
- iv. The impact of the parental choice of schools on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools.

REFERENCES

- Adebayo, F. A. (2009). Parents' preferences for private secondary schools in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education Sciences*, 1 (1), 1-6. Retrieved March 30, 2017 from <http://krepublishers.com/02-Journals/IJES/IJES-01-0-000-09-Web/IJES-01-1-000-09-Abst-PDF/IJES-01-01-001-09-004-Adebayo-F-A/IJES-01-01-001-09-004-Adebayo-F-A-Tt.pdf>
- Allen, R., Burgess, S. & McKenna, L. (2014). *School performance and parental choice of school: Secondary data analysis*. Retrieved from [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/275938/RR310 -
_School_performance_and_parental_choice_of_school.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/275938/RR310_-_School_performance_and_parental_choice_of_school.pdf) Accessed 17th March, 2017.
- Association of Independent Schools in New South Wales (AISNSW) Institute (2016) *Qualities parents value in choosing a school: The research*. Research Briefing. Retrieved 15th May, 2017 from <https://www.aisnsw.edu.au/Services/EducationResearch/Latest%20Research%20Documents/Qualities%20parents%20value%20in%20choosing%20a%20school%20-%20Research%20Briefing%20Aug%202016.pdf>
- Alsaudi, F. (2016). Reasons influencing selection decision making of parental choice of school. *Journal of Research in Education and Science (IJRES)*, 2 (1), 201-211. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1105167.pdf> Accessed 17th March, 2017
- Alsuiadi, F. A. (2015a). *Study of Factors Affecting Parental Choice of Private and Public School in Riyadh City, Saudi Arabia*. (Unpublished Doctorate Thesis). University of Hull, Hull. Retrieved from <https://hydra.hull.ac.uk/assets/hull:13219a/content>
- Alsuiadi, F. (2015b) Effect of the school facilities factor and sport activities factor on parents in terms of private and public school choice at Riyadh City Saudi Arabia. *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 3(12): 1054-1069. DOI: 10.13189/ujer.2015.031215 Accessed 15th March, 2017.
- Altenhofen, S., Berends, M. & White, T.G (2016). School Choice Decision Making Among Suburban, High-Income Parents. *AERA Open*, 2(1), pp. 1–14. DOI: 10.1177/2332858415624098. Accessed 22nd April, 2017

- Anemone, A. (2008). A Descriptive Study of the Factors Influencing Middle School Choice in a Diverse Magnet School District in Northern New Jersey. *Seton Hall University Dissertations and Theses (ETDs)*. Paper 78)
- Awan, A. G. & Zia, A. (2015). Comparative Analysis of Public and Private Educational Institutions: A case study of District Vehari-Pakistan. *Journal of Education and Practice* .6(16)
- Bancroft, A. (2015). *How do high status parents choose schools?* Rice University. Houston Education Research Consortium.
- Beamish, P. & Morey, P. (2013). School choice: What parents choose. *TEACH Journal of Christian Education: 7(1)*. Retrieved 21st March, 2017 from: <http://research.avondale.edu.au/teach/vol7/iss1/7>
- Beavis, A. (2004). Why parents choose public or private schools. *Research Developments, (12)3*. Retrieved 20th March, 2017 from <http://research.acer.edu.au/resdev/vol12/iss12/3>
- Bold, T., Kimenyi, M., Mwabu, G. & Sandefur, J. (2010, December). *Does abolishing fees reduce school quality? Evidence from Kenya*. (CSAE Working Paper WPS/2011-04). Retrieved from <https://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/workingpapers/pdfs/csae-wps-2011-04.pdf>
- Borghans, L., Golsteyn, B. H. & Zölitz, U. (2014). *Parental preferences for primary school characteristics (Discussion Paper No. 8371)*. Bonn: IZA.
- Bosetti, L (2004). Determinants of school choice: Understanding how parents choose elementary schools in Alberta. *Journal of Education Policy*, 19(4). DOI: 10.1080/0268093042000227465 Accessed 16th April, 2017
- Burns, T. and Roszkowska, E. (2016) Rational Choice Theory: Toward a Psychological, Social, and Material Contextualization of Human Choice Behavior. *Theoretical Economics Letters*, 6, 195-207. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/tel.2016.62022>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. (6th ed.) New York: Routledge

- Collins, D., Cojocaru, L., & Zollman, J. (2015). *Getting an Education in Rural Kenya: Findings based on the Kenya Financial Diaries*. Zurich, Switzerland: Jacobs Foundation.
- Cox, D. R. (2006). *Principles of Statistical Inference*, London: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0-521-68567-2.
- Darmody, M., Smyth, E. & McCoy, S. (2012). *School sector variation among primary schools in Ireland*. Research Report. Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Retrieved from https://www.educatetogether.ie/sites/default/files/school_sector_variation_0.pdf
- Davis, A. M. (2011). Why do parents choose to send their children to private schools? *Electronic Theses & Dissertations*. 382. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd/382>
- Embakasi Sub-County Education office, (2017). *List of School Categories*, unpublished: Sub-County report.
- Evans, R. & Cleghorn, A. (2014). Parental perceptions: a case study of school choice amidst language waves. *South African Journal of Education*; 34(2). Retrieved from <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/saje/v34n2/20.pdf>
- Ferns, C., Friendly, M & Prabhu, N. (2009). *Ratios for four and five year olds in ECEC programs: Do we know what's too big and what's too small, what's just right, and what other factors make a difference?* Childcare Resource and Research Unit. Retrieved from <http://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/Ratio%20review%202009.pdf>
- Fung, K. & Lam, C. (2011). Empowering Parents' Choice of Schools: The Rhetoric and Reality of How Hong Kong Kindergarten Parents Choose Schools under the Voucher Scheme. *Current Issues in Education*, 14(1). Retrieved 28th March, 2017 from <https://cie.asu.edu/ojs/index.php/cieatasu/article/download/635/158>
- Goldring, E. & Rowley, K. J. (2006, April). *Parent preferences & parent choices: The public-private decision about school choice*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, California. Retrieved from

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/schoolchoice/downloads/papers/goldring-rowley2006.pdf>

Hansen, K. & Vignoles, A. (n.d). *Parental choice of primary school. Millenium: Cohort Study Briefing 5*. London: University of London.

Hsu, Y. & Yuan-fang, C. (2013, February) An Analysis of Factors Affecting Parents' Choice of a Junior High School. *International Journal of Business, Humanities and Technology*. (3) 2.

Independent Schools Council of Australia, ISCA. (2008). *Factors affecting school choice*. Research Report. Retrieved from <http://www.isca.edu.au>

Kelly, J. P. & Scafidi, B. (2013). *More than scores: An analysis of why and how parents choose private schools*. Retrieved from <http://www.edchoice.org/CMSModules/EdChoice/FileLibrary/1031/More-Than-Scores.pdf>

Longfield, D. (2012). *A case study looking at aspects of parental choice in five schools in Ghana (Working Paper 9)*. Newcastle University: E. G. West Centre. Retrieved from <https://egwestcentre.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/a-case-study-looking-at-aspects-of-parental-choice-in-five-schools-in-ghana.pdf>

Longman, E. (2000). *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. England: Pearson Education Limited.

Maangi, E. N. (2014). Factors Influencing Parental Patronage of Private Primary Schools in Kenya Despite Free Primary Education (FPE) in Public Schools. *Journal of Education and Practice*. 5(26). Retrieved 11th March, 2017 from <http://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JEP/article/viewFile/15953/16289>

Mainda, P. O. (2001). *A study on selected factors influencing school choice among the Seventh - day Adventist population in Southwest Michigan*. Unpublished Doctorate *Dissertation*. Paper 552.

Malmberg, B., Andersson, E. & Bergsten, Z. (2013). *School choice motives: The effects of class and residential context (Working Paper: 11)*. Stockholm University Linnaeus Center on Social Policy and Family Dynamics in Europe, SPaDE.

- Mapaderum, O. (2002). *Teaching methods for Business, Science, Social Science and Technical Education*. Ibadan: Holyem communications.
- Mayer, S., Thomas, B. & Logue, W. (2003). *Close to Home: Community Boarding Schools and Disadvantaged Children and Youth*. Chicago: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago
- McCarthy, M. (2016). Parental choice of school by rural and remote parents. *Issues in Educational Research*, 26(1). Retrieved from <http://www.iier.org.au/iier26/mccarthy.pdf>
- Mugenda, O.M. & Mugenda, A. G. (2003). *Research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Nairobi: Acts Press
- Nairobi City County, Taskforce on the improvement of performance of public primary schools and transition rate from primary to secondary education in the Nairobi City County. (2014). *Report of the Nairobi City County taskforce on education*. Nairobi: Nairobi City County.
- Nantege, A., Mugabirwe, O. & Moshy, B. E. (2012). Privatization and Parental Choices in Primary and Secondary Education: Innovation challenges and cross boarder education in East Africa. Retrieved from [http://www.periglobal.org/sites/periglobal.org/files/11.Privatisation&Parental_Choices_in_Primary&Secondary_Education\(Nantege,Mugabirwe&Moshy\).pdf](http://www.periglobal.org/sites/periglobal.org/files/11.Privatisation&Parental_Choices_in_Primary&Secondary_Education(Nantege,Mugabirwe&Moshy).pdf)
- Nishimura, M. & Yamano, T. (2008). *School Choice between Public and Private Primary Schools under the Free Primary Education Policy in Rural Kenya*. Discussion Paper: 08-02. GRIPS Policy Information Center.
- Nishimura, M. & Yamano, T. (2012). *Emerging private education in Africa: Determinants of school choice in rural Kenya*, World Development. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2012.10.001>
- Nyokabi, J., (2009). Determinants of primary schooling in Kenya: Social sector division. (Discussion Paper No. 104). Nairobi, KIPPRA. Retrieved from http://kippra.or.ke/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=85&Itemid=
- Ogu, M. I. (2013) Rational Choice Theory: Assumptions, strengths, and greatest weaknesses in application outside the Western Milieu context. *Arabian*

Journal of Business and Management Review (Nigerian Chapter) 1 (3). Retrieved from https://www.arabianjbm.com/pdfs/NG_VOL_1_3/9.pdf

Oketch M., Mutisya M., & Sagwe J. (2012). Do poverty dynamics explain the shift to an informal private schooling system in the wake of free public primary education in Nairobi slums? *London Review of Education*, 10(1), 3–17. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14748460.2012.659056>

Onuka, A. O. & Arowojolu, A. F. (2008). An evaluation of parents' patronage of private primary schools in Abeokuta, Nigeria. *International Journal of African & African American Studies*. VII (2). Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.488.1328&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Orodho, J. A. (2009). *Elements of Education and Social Science Research Methods, Second Edition*. Maseno: Kanazja

Oyier, C. R., Odundo, P. A., Obat, R. A., Lilian, G. K., & Akondo, J. O. (2015). Parental choice and learner achievement in primary education in Rachuonyo Sub-County, Kenya: Focusing on quality of education. *World Journal of Education*. 5(5). doi:10.5430/wje.v5n5p130

Rehman, N. U., Khan, J., Tariq, M. & Tasleem, S. (2010). Determinants of parents' choice in selection of private schools for their children in District Peshawar of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. *European Journal of Scientific Research*. (44)1, pp.140-151.

Results for Development Institute. (2015). "Free" government schools and "Low-cost" private schools: What households really spend on education in Kasoa, Ghana. Retrieved from http://www.resultsfordevelopment.org/sites/resultsfordevelopment.org/files/resources/R4D_UBSOF_Kasoa_Household_Edu_Spending_2015.pdf

Sang, A. & Kipsoi, E. (2015). *Primary school performance within the public and private sectors: The Kenyan experience* <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265085216>

Scott, J. (2000). From *Understanding Contemporary Society: Theories of the present*. Edited by G. Browning, A. Halcli, and F. Webster. (Sage

Publications). Retrieved from
<https://www.scribd.com/document/47528747/Rational-Choice-Theory>

Tooley, J & Yngstrom, I. (2014, January). School choice in Lagos State. *Report submitted to DFID Nigeria*. Retrieved from
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a089b940f0b652dd000394/61517_Final_Summary_Lagos_School_Choice.pdf

UNESCO, (2014). Teaching and Learning: Achieving quality for all. *EFA global monitoring report 2013/4*. Paris: Author. Retrieved from
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225654e.pdf>

Van Pelt, D. A., Allison, P. A. & Allison, D. J. (2007). *Ontario's Private Schools: Who Chooses Them and Why?* Vancouver: The Fraser Institute. Retrieved from
http://www.fraserinstitute.org/commerce.web/product_files/OntariosPrivateSchools.pdf

Vollmuth, A. J. (2015). Parental decision making and satisfaction regarding school choice programs in suburban districts. *Education Doctoral Dissertations in Leadership*. Paper 64. Retrieved from
http://ir.stthomas.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1061&context=caps_ed_lead_docdiss

Yaacob, N.A., Osman, M.M. & Bachok, S (2014). Factors Influencing Parents' Decision in Choosing Private Schools. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 153, 242 – 253. DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.058

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Monicah Muchiri
P.O. Box. 29659
Nairobi – 00100
Tel: 0721 277 867

To: The Head teacher

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I am a post-graduate student at University of Nairobi, Department of Educational Administration and Planning. I am conducting a study on **‘School related factors influencing parental choice of primary school in Embakasi Sub-county.’** Your institution has been selected to participate in the study. I am therefore requesting for permission to conduct the research in your institution.

The information gathered will be used for the study only. It is not necessary to indicate your name or the name of the institution. All the information will be treated with total confidentiality. I will highly appreciate your assistance.

Thanking you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Monicah Muchiri

E55/76623/2014

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHER

Section A: General information:

Please tick appropriately

Gender: M____ F____ Type of school headed: Public ____ Private ____

School Type

Boarding: _____ Day: _____ Combined day and boarding: _____

Personal information: Please tick appropriately

Age: Below 30 ____ Between 30 – 40 ____ Between 41 - 50 ____ Above 50 ____

Level of education:

Certificate ____ Diploma ____ Degree ____ Post graduate ____

Years of teaching experience:

Below 10 ____ Between 10 – 20 ____ Between 21 – 30 ____ Above 30 ____

Section B: Physical facilities

1. How many classrooms does your school have? _____
2. Please tick as appropriate
3. Does the school have a well-stocked library? Yes ____ No ____
4. Does the school have a well-equipped computer laboratory? Yes__ No____
5. If yes, does the school have any technical support? Yes ____ No ____
6. Does the school have a playground? Yes ____ No ____

Section C: Academic performance

1. Please fill in the table below

| Year | KCPE Mean score | Number of students admitted to secondary schools | | | | |
|------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| | | National school | Extra- county schools | County schools | Sub- county schools | Private Schools |
| 2013 | | | | | | |
| 2014 | | | | | | |
| 2015 | | | | | | |
| 2016 | | | | | | |

2. Please indicate whether there are any pupils who did not join secondary school.

| Year | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of pupils | | | | |

Section D: Pupil-teacher ratio

- What is the total number of pupils in the school? _____
- What is the total number of teachers in the school? _____
- What is the average number of pupils in a single classroom? _____
- In your opinion, is the number pupil- teacher ratio in your school appropriate? Yes _____ No _____.
- In your opinion, how appropriate is the pupil-teacher ratio in your school?

Section E: Proximity to area of residence

8. Please indicate the following modes of transport as used by learners from the most common to the least common in your school.

| Mode | Most common | Common | Fairly Common | Not common | Not applicable |
|------------------|----------------|--------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Walking | | | | | |
| School transport | | | | | |
| Public transport | | | | | |
| Pick and drop | | | | | |

Section F: Reasons why parents choose schools

9. Please indicate your rating of the following reasons for choice of your school.

| | Most Important | Important | Fairly Important | Not Important |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------------------|------------------|
| Spacious classrooms | | | | |
| Well maintained classrooms | | | | |
| Well-stocked library | | | | |
| Well-equipped computer laboratory | | | | |
| Spacious playground | | | | |

| | Most | Important | Fairly | Not |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Important | | Important | Important |
| Well-equipped play ground | | | | |
| High academic performance | | | | |
| Few pupils in the classrooms | | | | |
| Near pupils' home | | | | |
| Pupils take less than 30 minutes to get to school | | | | |

10. In your opinion, what other reasons make parents choose your school?

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

Gender: Male _____ Female _____

Please indicate why you chose the current school for your child.

Section A: Physical facilities

1. Please tick in the appropriate box.

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|-------------------|-------|----------|----------------------|
| The school has spacious classrooms | | | | |
| The school has good furniture for learners | | | | |
| The school has permanent buildings | | | | |
| The school has a well-stocked library | | | | |
| The school has a well-equipped computer laboratory | | | | |
| The school has a spacious, well maintained playground. | | | | |

2. Please comment on the general condition of the buildings in the school.

Section B: Academic performance

3. Please tick in the correct box.

| | | | | |
|--|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| | Strongly | Agree | Disagree | Strongly |
| | agree | | | disagree |

The school has a KCPE mean score above 350

The school has a KCPE mean score of above 250

Many candidates score above 400 in KCPE

My child has a chance of admission to a national secondary school

4. What is your opinion on the academic performance of the school?

Section C: Pupil-teacher ratio

5. Please tick in the appropriate box

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|

The school has enough teachers

There are few pupils in a classroom

Teachers give children enough attention in class

Section D: Proximity to area of residence

6. Please tick appropriately.

| | Strongly | Agree | Disagree | Strongly |
|---|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| | agree | | | disagree |
| The school is nearest to my home | | | | |
| The school vehicle picks and drops my child at home | | | | |
| The school is easily accessible by public transport | | | | |
| The children take a short time to get to school. | | | | |
| My child is able to walk to school | | | | |
| There is no other school in the neighborhood | | | | |

7. Which other reasons made you consider choosing this school for your child?

APPENDIX IV: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

School Category: Public _____ Private _____

A – Available NA: Not Available AD: Adequate NAD: Not Adequate

AP: Appropriate NAP: Not Appropriate

| | Physical resources | Availability | | Adequacy | | Appropriateness | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | | A | NA | AD | NAD | AP | NAP |
| Classrooms | Spacing | | | | | | |
| | Furniture | | | | | | |
| | Roofing | | | | | | |
| | Floor | | | | | | |
| | Doors | | | | | | |
| | Windows | | | | | | |
| | Lighting | | | | | | |
| Library | Books | | | | | | |
| | Furniture | | | | | | |
| | Lighting | | | | | | |
| | Ventilation | | | | | | |
| Computer laboratory | Spacing | | | | | | |
| | Computers | | | | | | |
| | Ventilation | | | | | | |
| Playground | Space | | | | | | |
| | Equipment | | | | | | |
| | Grass cover | | | | | | |

APPENDIX V: LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 3310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/17/80017/17569**

Date: **3rd July, 2017**

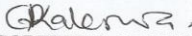
Monicah Njoki Muchiri
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*School related factors influencing parental choice of primary schools in Embakasi Sub-County, Nairobi City County, Kenya,*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **19th June, 2018.**

You are advised to report to, **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

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


GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
NAIROBI COUNTY
P. O. Box 30124-00100, NBI
TEL: 341666

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.

APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH PERMIT

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

MS. MONICAH NJOKI MUCHIRI
of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 29659-100
Nairobi, has been permitted to conduct
research in Nairobi County

on the topic: SCHOOL RELATED
FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTAL
CHOICE OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
EMBAKASI SUB-COUNTY, NAIROBI CITY
COUNTY, KENYA

for the period ending:
19th June, 2018




Applicant's Signature


Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/80017/17569
Date Of Issue : 3rd July, 2017
Fee Received : ksh1000

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.
2. Both the Licence and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.
5. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further permissions from relevant Government agencies.
6. This Licence does not give authority to transfer research materials.
7. The Licensee shall submit two (2) hard copies and upload a soft copy of their final report.
8. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of this Licence including its cancellation without prior notice.


REPUBLIC OF KENYA

National Commission for Science,
Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH CLEARANCE
PERMIT

Serial No.A 14542

CONDITIONS: see back page

APPENDIX VII: A MAP OF THE STUDY AREA

