WHOLESOME EDUCATION FOR THE GIRL CHILD IN KENYA: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING SPACES IN SELECTED COUNTIES

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DECLARATION

This thesis is entirely original work and has never before been submitted to another university for an award of a degree.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to *St. Angela Merici*, a woman who promoted for girl and women's empowerment, a vision that *Ursulines* all over the world have continued to uphold.

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I give thanks to the Mighty God for enabling me to complete this task, for the amazing experience, and for the dedication to learning that helped me so much in both my academic and research endeavours.

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ABSTRACT

This study looked at *Wholesome Education for the Girl Child in Kenya: An Assessment of the Teaching and Learning Spaces in Selected Counties.* The study focused on the two settings where teaching and learning occur; the family and the school, with the goal of evaluating wholesome education for the girl child in Kenya. I conducted the study in Nairobi and Taita Taveta Counties, which represent urban and rural environments. A set of objectives served as the study's direction: Identify the indicators for wholesome education, evaluate the use of teaching and learning spaces in the education of the girl child in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties, to examine the relationship between the accepted indicators for wholesome education for the girl child and the actual situation on the ground in Kenya, and finally to look at the potential solutions to obstacles to the implementation of wholesome education for the girl child in Kenya. The literature was examined to highlight various educational models, especially those that have been characterized as being suitably designed to enabled healthful educational for kids. The study adopts some diverse theories, applying functionalism by Emile Durkheim, Conflict by Basil Bernstein, Interaction by Pierre Bourch, and Empowerment by Freire. Additionally, the study makes use of a combination of research techniques, including a cross-section description survey design and a naturalistic design, as well as particularly tailored and adapted questionnaire, cognitive mapping, and focused group discussions. The study's respondents were chosen using probability and non-probability sampling; probability was presented by random sampling and non-probability sampling. The respondents were chosen using both probability, while non-probability was presented by purposive and snow-ball sampling. Data from teachers, pupils and parents, was analyzed using *Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20,* and the responses from interviews and focused group discussions were analyzed through a content analysis approach. The findings reveal the majority of the participants were concerned about the issues affecting girl children's learning spaces both in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties. These respondents were concerned about what seems to be unbalanced/dysfunctional use of space where in Nairobi County the school space appears to take over the home space, leaving no time for girls to become familiar with the activities that can only be learned in the home space, and Taita Taveta County the home space tends to overshadow the school space, leaving little time for girls' school work. Thus, both in urban and rural regions, there is a shortage of high quality and equitable use of the teaching and learning spaces

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION i
DEDICATION ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iii
ABSTRACT iv
LIST OF TABLES ix
LIST OF FIGURES x
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS xi
CHAPTER ONE 12
INTRODUCTION 12
1.0 Background to the Study 12
1.2 Statement of the Problem 18
1.3 General Objective of the Study 20
1.3.1 Specific Objectives of the Study 20
1.3.2 Research Questions 20
1.5 Justification of the Study 21
1.6 Scope and Limitations 23
1.6.1 Scope 23
1.6.2 Limitations 24
1.7 Operational Definition of Terms 24
1.9 Organization of the Study 26
1.10 Conclusion 28
CHAPTER TWO 29
LITERATURE REVIEW 29
2.1 Wholesome Education 30
2.2 The Purpose of Wholesome Education 31
2.3 Shortcomings in the Approach to Education 34
2.4 Teaching Strategies of Wholesome Education 35
2.5 Review of Previous Studies on Wholesome Education 37
2.6 Sample Educational Models 39
2.6.1 Finnish Education Model 40
2.6.2 Japanese Education Model 47
2.6.3 Don Bosco Model of Education 53
2.6.4 The Kenyan Education Model 55
2.7 Theoretical Framework 67
2.8 Conceptual Framework 74
CHAPTER THREE 78
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY 78

3.0 Introduction....78
3.1 Research Design....78
3.2 Target Population....80
3.3 Description of Samples and Sampling Procedures....80
3.3.1 Sampling Matrix of the Respondents....81
3.3.3 Sampling of Teachers....83
3.3.4 Sampling of the Pupils....83
3.3.5 Sampling of Parents....84
3.3.6 Sampling of Schools....84
3.3.7 Sampling Frame....86
3.4 Unit of Analysis and Units of Observation....86
3.5 Data Collection Methods....87
3.5.1 Data Collection through Observation....87
3.5.2 Data Collection through Interviews....88
3.5.3 Data Collection through Focused Group Discussion....89
3.5.4 Data Collection through Cognitive Mapping....90
3.5.5 Secondary Data Collection Methods....91
3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments....91
3.6.1 Observation Schedule....92
3.6.2 Questionnaires....92
3.6.3 Pupils' Focused Group Discussions Schedule....93
3.6.4 Cognitive Mapping Schedule....93
3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments....94
3.8 Description of Data Analysis Procedures....96
3.9 Ethical Considerations....99
3.10 Conclusion....100
CHAPTER FOUR....101
DATA COLLECTION AND PRESENTATION....101
4.0 Introduction....101
4.1 Findings at the Ministry of Education....102
4.2 Respondents' Demographic Characteristics....103
4.2.1 Socio –Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents....103
4.2.2 Background information on the selected counties....108
4.3 Girl Children's Experiences in the School Space....112
4.3.1 Journey to School....112
4.3.2 Teaching Staff....117
4.3.3 Learning Resources....120
4.3.4 Enrolment and Retention....123
4.3.5 Academic Performance....127

4.3.6 General Potentials and Barriers 130
4.4 Girl Children's Experiences in the Home Space 135
4.4.1 A Visit to the Home Space in Taita Taveta and Nairobi 136
4.4.2 Availability of Resources 137
4.4.3 Parenting Issues 142
4.4.4 Workloads and the Division of Labour in the Home 150
4.5 Conclusion 154
CHAPTER FIVE 156
ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS 156
5.0 Introduction 156
5.1 The Ministry of Education 156
5.2 The School as a Teaching and Learning Space 158
5.2.1 The Teaching Staff 158
5.2.2 The Working Atmosphere at School 161
5.2.3 Experiences of the Girl Child in the School Space 168
5.3 The Home as a Teaching and Learning Space 176
5.4 What is so Critically and Crucially Different? 188
5.5 Beyond Wholesome Education 194
5.6 Conclusion 201
CHAPTER SIX 203
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 203
6.0 Introduction 203
6.1 Summary 203
6.2 Summary of the Findings 205
6.2.1 Blueprint Education Models for Wholesome Education 205
6.2.2 Kenya's Education Policy verses its Implementation 206
6.2.3 Utilization of Teaching and Learning Spaces 208
6.2.4 Mitigating Strategies for the Achievement of Wholesome Education 211
6.3 Conclusion 214
6.4 Recommendations 215
6.5 Suggestions for Further Research 216
BIBLIOGRAPHY 217

APPENDICES 223
Appendix 1: Questionnaire for the Pupils 223
Appendix 2: Questionnaire for the Teachers 225
Appendix 3: Questionnaire for the Parents 227
Appendix 4: Questionnaire for Education Office 229
Appendix 5: Pupils' Focused Group Discussion 230

Appendix 6: Check List 231
Appendix 7: Observation Schedule 232
Appendix 8: Analytical Guide 233
Appendix 9: Cognitive Mapping Instrument for Pupils 234
Appendix 10: Map of Kenya 237
Appendix 11: Research Permit 238

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Primary Education in Selected Countries by Gender, 2001……51

Table 2.2: Poverty and Preschool Enrolment by Gender……..52

Table 2.3: Profile of the Early Childhood Service……53

Table 3.1: Sampling Matrix of the Respondents…….…..76

Table 3.2: Selected Sample Schools for the Study……81

Table 4.1: Socio – Demographic characteristics of the respondents…….96

Table 4.2: Responses on the level of satisfaction in the utilization of the spaces in Taita Taveta County(n=80)……..….99

Table 4.3: Responses on the level of satisfaction in the utilization of the spaces in Nairobi County (n=80)…….105

Table.4.4: Gender enrolment for standard one in public primary schools in Nairobi County for the last eight years (1997 to 2003)……116

Table 4.5: Patterns of Enrollment by Class in Kishushe, (2014)……..120

Table 4.6: Nairobi County gender disaggregated enrolment, (2014)……123

Table 4.7: K.C.P. E Performance in Taita Taveta (2008-2012)……124

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework……24

Figure 4.1 Teachers Participation Study (n=40)……..……114

Figure 4.2 The Parents Participation in the Study (n=31)……120

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CS: Cabinet Secretary

ECD: Early Childhood Development

ESD: Education for Sustainable Development

KNUT: Kenya National Union of Teachers

OAU: Organization of African Union

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Education Fund

UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WEF: World Economic Forum

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* advocates for *Education for sustainable Development* (ESD) in Goal Four, which deals with quality education. According to the *SDGs*, this type of education should guarantee inclusive and equitable quality education that encourages lifelong learning opportunities for all. *Resolution 57/254* of the *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* **(**UNESCO), which has been designated as the leading organization in the implementation of the education processes across the world, goes further to explain that education should involve wholesome training of learners so that they can develop attitudes, values and knowledge, and not just to narrow education to content learning alone, (UNESCO (2017).

This expectation is notably anchored on the UNESCO, (2002 p.iii) pillar that stipulates: "*Learning to know, to be and to do"*, which is explained as the result of "*wholesome and integrated approach to value education for human development*." UNECSO (2017 p.5), further terms this type of education as "lifelong learning that meets the needs of the time". Specifically, this is quality education that ensures a well-rounded, wholesome and balanced individual, having developed all the capacities to meet the needs of the society: cognitive, critical, creative, aesthetic, imaginative and communicative.

Unfortunately, as Stoneham (2013), points out, academic *rigour* has become today's *buzz phrase* for schools in Kenya. As a result, the system of education has become shackled by the needs of the syllabus, exams and positions on the academic league tables. It of course goes without saying that learning which emphasizes only *academic rigour* is most likely limited to content learning alone and is far from being wholesome, the concern of this study.

Writing about wholesome training of children, Mokua, 2013, recommends an approach that equally acquaints the children with all the spaces within which learning takes place. Only then can the children be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to realize their full potential. Mokua particularly identifies two spaces within which children's learning takes place: home and school. This in effect seems to suggest that for a child to develop into a well-rounded, wholesome and balanced individual, he/she is expected to be equally conversant with the knowledge and skills acquirable both at school and at home. Similarly, (Greubel and Jenny, 2013), emphasize the necessity for wholesome education as what is expected to prepare one for life, in response to the challenges that face humanity and to impart the necessary skills, values and competencies that help develop productive, healthy and globally engaged citizens.

The demand for wholesome education for children is apparently recognized internationally, regionally and locally. For instance, *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC, 1989), *African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child* (OAU, 1990) and *the Government of Kenya* (Republic of Kenya, 1998), all recognize the right of every child to a standard of living that facilitates the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. This appears to appeal to all care givers: parents, church, school and the community, to be equally involved in providing adequate and appropriate space for quality teaching and learning to children. The question is, however, what efforts are being directed towards this. Is it mere rhetoric?

This study is a step towards interrogating the very efforts, if any towards wholesome training of our learners, more so girl children. The study focuses on the teaching and learning spaces for children undergoing primary school education. These are children in their formative years. The need for

wholesome education is crucial for children in their early years of formation, since learning deficiencies that occur during this stage are difficult to reverse, (Pipes & Trahms, 1993). Primary school level of education occupies an important period in a person's growth and development. Achoka, et al (2007), observe that this is the longest time spent at one level of learning in Kenya's education system. It is also a long period of one's life span spent on learning at one level.

In his work, *Schools in Need of Education*, Bennaars (1998), expresses deep feelings about the African child. He points out that, *schools in Africa are facing a crisis*, namely, a lack of a consistent and appropriate approach to the teaching of and learning for children. This is on account of:

> …the existence of conflicting interests among the various actors and stakeholders: the school, the church, the family and the community at large. The result of this is competition that leads to inconsistencies in the development of children. As a remedy, an approach which includes not only instruction but also the social vision of education is critical. Such an approach should take care of the four elements necessary for making wholesome education possible, that is to say, education that targets understanding; focuses on the intention of the education process, provides a conducive atmosphere for learning and relates what is learned to lifelong operation in the society, Bennaars (1998:130).

Bennaars (ibid) further explains the four elements above in relation to the teaching and learning spaces for wholesome education. He suggests that effective teaching and learning should strike a balance between the school and home spaces, where home is interpreted as the family and society at large. The justification for this balance apparently derives from the fact that education should be training children for the life-long service of the individual in society. This, then demands that the education of children be able to equally acquaint them with quality use of both spaces: home and school. The crucial question is: How much time do children learners spend at school and at home? Is it equitable such that children will equally acquaint themselves with both spaces? We could conclude that the focus on academic rigour that Stoneham (ibid), above decries, only concentrates on the

school space. This realization is critical and appears to invite educators (for purposes of this study, those in Kenya), to reflect more critically on the country's utilization of the teaching and learning spaces, asking the question: Is the utilization of the teaching and learning spaces capable of facilitating wholesome education for children?

The call for the assessment of the role of the two spaces (school and home) in the education of children in primary schools in Kenya raises questions around what appears to have become the official school timetable. In many schools, school buses are on the road to pick children as early as 4.30 in the morning and often dropping them as late as 8.00 in the evening. Often children have to go to school even on weekends. This leaves one wondering if there is balance in the use of the home and school spaces. Is the time children spend at home enough to enable them learn all they need to know about life at home? Is there equitable and quality time in both school and home for children?

The need to assess the use of the home and school spaces in the education of children is even more critical in relation to girl children. It is particularly of interest to ask questions about the significance for wholesome education for the girl child for a number of reasons. To start with, in an African setup, perhaps like many other setups, mothers play a big role in the success of the home and family. In a scenario where school takes up all of the child's time, there is likely to be an imbalance in the girl child's preparation for life in the home situation. Secondly, recent World Bank reports have strongly lamented that millions of children in developing countries are still out of school, the majority of whom are girls. Meanwhile, nearly half of the girls attending school are not learning, (UNESCO, 2018). Besides:

> …despite the efforts to bring about education for all, girls still remain behind the boys in enrolment, retention and completion of basic education, (Kurtz &Prather, 1995: 30) in (Syomwene & Kindiki, 2015).

This further necessitates the need to investigate the girl child's position in the teaching and learning spaces. Indeed, the vulnerability of the girl child cannot be gainsaid. In a majority of cases where a family is unable to support two, the girl is the more likely to remain out of school, which then means that the possibility of the girl child to miss the opportunity to equitably utilize the two spaces is much reduced. Apparently this does not resonate with the common prompt which goes that educating a girl is educating a nation. But the truth of this lies in the fact that women play a big role in shaping the character of children in general and girl children in particular, due to their closeness to the children. On the other hand, they play a big role in nation building as they oversee the health and education of the nation through their commitment to a stable society. Thus, an investment in girls may be considered a great investment for the nation, which then necessitates greater interest in their education.

National statistics show narrowing disparities in school enrolment for girls and boys, especially in urban setups; however, disparities still stand high in rural setups. The situation is even graver in the rural areas of Northern, North-eastern, and Coast regions. Why, to start with, would the enrolment of girl children in school be better in the urban setups than in the rural ones? This seems to suggest that the dynamics for girl education in the rural and urban setups are different. Therefore, a more informative and wholesome picture of the state of education for the said girls is likely to occur only when both settings are covered. As Mokua (2013: 48) points out:

> …education at all levels is apparently still a gendered terrain. The national statistics indicate narrowing disparities within overall enrolment rate of 49 percent for girls in primary schools and their male counterparts at 51 percent. But this comparison only obtains in urban areas. In the rural areas big disparities exist and the situation becomes worse when one goes further to look at retention and completion levels.

Mokua's observation made it necessary for me to study two settings (urban and rural): Taita Taveta representing the rural and Nairobi representing the urban.

Still, the necessity to take special interest in the education of girl children cannot be overemphasized. Indeed, Zahidi (2009:77) argues that:

> … countries that have a wide gender disparity in their education system have ended up growing at a slower pace than those countries that have gender equilibrium. This is because countries with a gender imbalance do not draw on the best talents of women, and therefore, tend to neglect, half of their population. Secondly, educated women tend to have fewer children who are better educated and healthier.

The veracity of Zahidi's positing may perhaps not be a constant statistic. However, if these factors are to remain constant, they are important indicators for attaining vision 2030 for Kenya, and economic growth. Zahidi (ibid) further argues that:

> …the returns of educating girls include the reduction of child and maternal mortality, improved child nutrition and health, lower fertility rates, enhancement of women's domestic roles and their political participation, increase in productivity and economic growth, and prevention of child abuse and exploitation (78).

Again, what Zahidi points out may not be within the ability of this study to verify. It may be estimated, however, that:

> … until equal numbers of girls and boys are in school, it will be impossible to eradicate the vicious cycle of poverty and hunger, as well as combating disease and ignorance and ensuring environmental sustainability, Mokua, (2013:23).

Apparently, the scholars cited above all appear to agree on the necessity of, not only education, but wholesome education. They as well appear to hint at the fact that perhaps the education practice in the country is not according wholesome education to children in general and girl children in particular. This, thus, becomes a matter that calls attention to the spaces within which their teaching and learning take place.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As Stoneham (2013), has stated, academic rigour and the needs of the syllabus, exams and positions on the academic league tables have become of greatest interest in the Kenyan education system. Stoneham's revelation begins to raise questions about a well-rounded, wholesome and balanced education that *UNESCO* (2017), seems to root for. Is wholesome education for children possible when the emphasis and concentration is only on the needs of the syllabus and exams? Wholesome education obviously goes beyond the concerns of academic rigour and the needs of the syllabus and exams, which can only be achieved in certain limited and specific spaces. Mokua (2013), points out that teaching and learning for children takes place in both the school and home spaces. Bennaars (1998), on the other hand suggests that effective teaching and learning should strike a balance between the school and home spaces, where home is interpreted as the family and society at large. These views are of great significance to this study as it attempts to answer the question: How are home and school as teaching and learning spaces utilized in the Kenyan education system?

While Stoneham (ibid), posits that education is the most powerful tool for a better world, he nonetheless observes that it is imperative that such education be well rounded or wholesome for it to serve the purpose of making a better world. Indeed, as Greubel and Jenny (2013) also note, wholesome education is what is expected to prepare one for life and to respond to challenges that face humanity, because it imparts the necessary skills, values and competencies. It, thus, becomes a matter of concern, what Stoneham, p.110) ibid, points out:

A situation like the one Stoneham envisages may be fatal for society. Undoubtedly, the emphasis on academic rigour alone leaves out other factors that contribute to a person's holistic development, which can result in developmental inadequacies that are challenging to correct once they have

occurred, as Pipes & Trahms, (1993) point out. Infact, there is growing worry that students are not being effectively prepared by educational system to fulfill the needs of the society or the job market, which raises issues with how they are educated. The ability to perform properly in the society is, of course, an advantage of a good educational system; the only way to do this is through nutritious training, Kyama (2018).

The foregoing realization creates urgent need to examine the spaces within which children are trained, so that we can determine how appropriate their utilization is in nurturing a wholesome character. The need to examine the appropriateness of the spaces (home and school) for educating children is even more crucial where girl children are concerned because the stability of the home, family and nation depends to a large extent on the strength of the woman, (Muleka, 2007).

As if to underscore the dire need to take interest in how the girl child is trained, Diallo (2004), points out that,

> *"a woman is respected due to her centrality in a functioning society. That she holds the community's destiny in her hands through her innate capability of procreation and due to the role she plays in the socialization of younger members of the family/community, and that she is expected to be the role model for the future mothers – she is the centre of the family formation and continuity" (P.184).*

This is interpreted to suggest that women are viewed as the pillars of families. Consequently, deficient and unbalanced training for girl children would translate into a deficient and unbalanced society.

This study critically addresses the question of how the teaching and learning spaces (home and school) are being utilized and specifically whether the utilization is capable of nurturing a wholesome person, particularly as it concerns girl children, both in rural and urban settings. The study comes at a time when the teaching and learning spaces for children are being constrained as

Malone 2001, observes, a fact that also receives emphasis in the *Ministry of Education's Safety Standards Manual for Schools in Kenya, 2017*.

1.3 General Objective of the Study

The overall objective of this study is to assess whether the two teaching and learning spaces (home and school) are responding to the provision of wholesome education for girl children in Kenya.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following objectives:

i. To conduct a situational analysis of selected models of education serving as a blueprint for wholesome education.
ii. To assess utilization of teaching and learning spaces for the girl child in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya, vide the country's policy on wholesome education.
iii. To analyze the responsiveness of the teaching and learning spaces to the attainment of wholesome education for girl children in the rural and urban setups as represented by Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya.
iv. To explore possible strategies of ensuring wholesome education for girl children in Kenya.

1.3.2 Research Questions

The study responds to the following Research Questions:

i. What models serve as a blueprint for wholesome education?
ii. How is the utilization of teaching and learning spaces for the girl child in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya, vide the country's policy on wholesome education?

iii. What is the responsiveness of the teaching and learning spaces to the attainment of wholesome education for girl children in the rural and urban setups as represented by Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya?

iv. What are the possible strategies that ensure the implementation of wholesome education for girl children in Kenya?

1.4 Assumptions of the Study

i. There exist educational models that qualify to be blueprints for the provision of wholesome education.

ii. Disparities exist between formulated policies on wholesome education in Kenya and their implementation on the ground.

iii. Gaps exist in the utilization of teaching and learning spaces for the girl child in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya.

iv. Strategies are available that can mitigate the disparities between policy and implementation of wholesome education for girl children in Kenya.

1.5 Justification of the Study

The demands of the 21st century require a new approach to education policy and practice. As it is already pointed out, the education system in Kenya tends to emphasize academics at the expense of other vital skills that children need, in order to live a more fulfilling life – skills that can enable them to fit well in the society. This study is interested in whether the processes of teaching and learning for children in Kenya are capable of producing a well-rounded, wholesome and balanced individual, having developed all the capacities to meet the needs of the society. The study particularly looks at the utilization of the two main teaching and learning spaces: home and school, asking questions of

whether the two spaces are equitably utilized. This stems from the realization that children need to be equally conversant with the skills that are learnt in both spaces if they will end up as balanced individuals. For girl children in particular, wholesome education is crucial because of the central role they play later as mothers in guiding the family and, especially through their closeness to the growing children. As Mokua (2013) above argues, a well-rounded mother is a great pillar for a well-rounded family. This study is rooting for a wholesome education that is not limited to content learning alone but one that can train all the skills: cognitive, critical, creative, aesthetic, imaginative and communicative.

The study involves everyone: educators, families, policymakers, and community members in the push to redefine what a successful learner is and how we measure success. The study demands that girl children in both the school and home spaces are healthy, feel safe and are ready to learn. School and home as teaching and learning spaces should be environments where a child becomes an adult, developing creative thoughts and unique ideas to show off to the world once they have finished their studies. It is important that students are taught valuable lessons about life and humanity, learning to interact and co-operate with their peers in a harmonious but stimulating manner. Students should be provided with the necessary tools to become proactive and inquisitive individuals, developing into active global citizens who are engaged in 21st Century issues and activities in both home and school.

The findings of this research should benefit various stakeholders in education, including policy makers, curriculum developers, school administrators, teachers; quality assurance departments, national examination officials; church leaders and parents among others, for the findings draw attention to the critical need for wholesome education. Meanwhile the study highlights the dangers of the kind of narrow education curriculum (one only emphasizing academics), that Kenya as a country appears to be pursuing.

For the education policy makers, in particular, the findings of this study should be useful in the designing of strategic intervention policies aimed at providing wholesome education for girl children in basic education. The findings identified the challenges that exist in the implementation of quality education for girl children in Kenya. The findings further serve to add to the existing literature on what girl children experience within the spaces of their learning (home and school). Even though the study was only carried out in selected counties, the findings represent the situation in all the counties in Kenya. This was ensured by selecting spaces that are representative of all the typical teaching and learning spaces, with Taita Taveta County representing the rural settings while Nairobi County representing the urban settings. Since part of the argument of the study is that children need quality time both at school and at home if they will develop in a balanced way, the study established the gaps that exist in the Kenyan system of education that need further follow up. Hopefully the findings should also pave way for further study.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

1.6.1 Scope

This study focuses on wholesome education for girl children as affected by and effected through the conventional teaching and learning spaces: school and home. Given the different learning conditions existing in the rural settings in Kenya as compared to the urban ones, the study sampled its study areas to represent both settings: rural – Taita Taveta and urban- Nairobi counties. In particular, I focused on activities of the girl child at primary school level, to establish how the two spaces: school and home, contributed to her education. I interviewed pupils, teachers, parents, children's officers, education officers and members of the provincial administration. Besides, the study focused on the quality of teaching and learning spaces for children in both rural and urban areas. The general

assessment of the implementation of wholesome education, involved my going to schools, classrooms, and homes, and I also interviewed sampled respondents that included the teachers, pupils, parents, and other educational stakeholders.

1.6.2 Limitations

The greatest challenge during my research was the difficulty of finding parents in the homes. Of course these were a crucial part of the population in my research yet it needed a lot of effort to find one to interview. Since my visit schedules were during the day, I would often miss the parents I had targeted to interview. In one case where I thought I must meet a parent because of the sensitive information I got from one girl respondent (a case of sexual molestation by the father), I completely failed to meet the concerned parent because he was always out drinking. When I opted to meet the girl's mother, the latter declined to share what she knew about the matter. I guessed that the mother felt embarrassed about discussing the matter. So I had only to do with the version of the story from the girl victim. But all in all, I got a lot of information from the teachers and the girl children themselves. And where I succeeded in tracing a parent, I would try to get as much information as possible, sometimes using probing questions on the available responds to get a hint on how life was in the neighbouring homes.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Several terminologies are specified in order to comprehend the essential components of this study. These are listed as follows:

Assessment: It involves assessing and comprehending the degree to which predetermined objectives, actions, anticipated outcomes, and goals have been reached.

Education system: refers to the economic and social aspects of schools at various level. These components include, among others, the school's policy, financial assistance, physical infrastructure, staff, remuneration, educational perks, and teaching materials.

Wholesome education: This type of learning environment provides the necessary foundation to help students to reach their full potential in all areas of development-mental physical, social and emotional, cognitive and critical thinking, creative and intellectual expression, and artistic. That offers the required framework for to develop to their potential on all fronts - mental, physical, social, emotional, cognitive, critical, creative, intellectual, and artistic. This study looks at wholesome education as a strategy that facilities the integration of the home and school environments, permits children-especially girl- to receive an equitable education at home and at school, and promotes the growth of the full person.

Girl Child: Female person in her formative or early years. The basic level of education for this female ranges from ECDE until the completion of primary school.

Space: This area of a child's home environment aids her instruction and education. According to the study, a child's education, which includes their intellectual and vocational development as well as their social, aesthetic, physical, emotional, creative, and spiritual development, occurs in two settings; the school and the home, which are referred to as teaching and learning spaces.

Formative years: The term 'formative years" refers to the development stage in which a child's personality evolves and changes to suit a new mold. This involves the school stage of ECD and primary school years.

Disparity and gap: The difficulty and inequality that girls face in pursuing their educational goals have been highlighted using the concept of disparity. Girls' access to school is less unrestricted than that of their male counterparts due to a few drawbacks. Meanwhile, the educational systems for girls occasionally fall short of providing fundamental conditions for effective learning.

1.8 Expected Outcome of the Research

There is equitable utilization of the teaching and learning spaces (home and school) in the training of the girl child both in the rural and urban settings in Kenya

1.9 Organization of the Study

The thesis is organized into six chapters.

Chapter One presents the introduction which includes: background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, overall goal and research objectives, justification of the study, scope and limitations of the study, and operational definition of terms, research design and methodology and finally organization of the study.

Chapter Two presents the literature review: A review of wholesome education, its aims, short comings in approach, teaching methodologies, reviews of previous studies, reviews of selected samples of educational models, theoretical, and conceptual frameworks.

Chapter Three presents the research design and methodology. It describes the target population, the description of the sample and sampling procedures, the assessment tools, validity and reliability of the study and data collecting and processing procedures. It describes the advantages and disadvantages of using each setting in the way. It identifies the benefits and drawbacks of each environment's use as such. This chapter presents my experiences in the field as I travelled to collect data. The chapter presents situations as witnessed in my interaction with the respondents and in the places that I visited, giving a breakdown of the issues under observation. These in particular, were a review of the environment in which girl children develop, including the benefits and drawbacks in each environment. The chapter interrogates the adequacy of the utilization of the teaching and learning spaces (home and school) as well as assessing the challenges of implementing wholesome education for girl children in Kenya, as represented by selected schools in Nairobi and Taita Taveta Counties.

Chapter Five presents the analysis, discussion and interpretation of the findings. The study undertakes a critical analysis of the responsiveness of the teaching and learning spaces to the attainment of wholesome education for the girl child in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya. The chapter also conducts an in-depth comparison between the Kenyan education model and its implementation and that of the education models (Finnish and Japanese) which I had identified as the blueprint for wholesome education, as I attempted to answer the question: What is so critically different? Besides, the chapter also engages in the discussion of, What, after wholesome education?

Chapter Six presents a summary of the findings of the study, its implications, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

1.10 Conclusion

The introductory chapter has given an overview of the study. It specifies the context by describing the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the research questions and the theoretical framework. It also advances the value of the study and its scope. Finally, the chapter presents the plan of the whole study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

A review of relevant literature, as well as the study's theoretical and conceptual framework, is presented in this chapter. It talks about some sources that I looked into and comprehended the research problem. By analyzing its meaning, aim techniques and implementation flaws as well as reviewing related research, the chapter further contextualizes wholesome education. In order to further emphasize certain components of a well-rounded education, the chapter also expores a few other educational approaches. According to Brighouse and Mullane (2018), "*Assessing an education system requires benchmarks of the successful model of education*". The world has hailed the Finnish and Japanese educational systems in particular as models for healthy education. Thus, they are used as points of reference when the study of wholesome educational models is presented in this study. *The* Don Bosco model and the official Kenyan education model are given alongside the two additional models that are applicable in Kenya. In order to determine if an operational educational system is successful, Brighouse and Mullane (ibid) note that *"In order to know whether it is successful; we need to know not only what is happening, but what should be happening".* Determining knowledge gaps, identifying methodological flaws, creating a theoretical frame work, and refining the study problem and research objectives are the main goals of this review.

2.1 Wholesome Education

It is logical to start by defining the term what "*wholesome education*" means. Ron Miller, (2006), describes it as "*wholesome education*", and he says the following about it:

> *Is a technique called whole education that aims at educating the whole person? Wholesome educators reject educational approaches that limit learning solely to the d intellect or that train students so that they can compete in a global market. They contend that we view the student as a whole person, complete with a mystical, eternal character (e.g., the soul). Holistic educators contend that education that focuses just on preparing pupils for a global economy falls short in this area, (p. 101).*

When writing on wholesome education, Ron Miller (1992), also emphasizes on the human experience I as a whole. He asserts that good educators must understand how everything about human existence is interconnected. As he puts it,

> *Along with the traditionally valued intellectual and vocational abilities, education must be concerned with each person's physical, emotional, social, artistic, creative and spiritual traits. The current culture places an unfair amount of value on competiveness, economic growth, and inflective fulfillment of social roles. In the modern industrial society, being whole educated means being well – disciplined; it also means being cut off from one's own spontaneous, creative, and self-actualizing impulses. A new understanding of the biological, subconscious, subjective, intuitive, creative, mythological, and spiritual components of our existence is required by some educators, (p. 153).*

When writing on wholesome education, Ron Miller (1992), also emphasizes on the human experience I as a whole. He asserts that good educators must understand how everything about human existence is interconnected. As he puts it,

> *The recognition of personal discipline and interpersonal adaptability is the culmination of Miller's hypotheses. Every person discovers identity, meaning, and purpose in life through links to the community, to natural environment, and to spiritual ideas like compassion and peace, according to Miller, who is sometimes regarded as the father of the area of healthy education. This study takes into account Miller's requirements but goes further to investigate the specific environment(s) in which the abovementioned requirements manifest. In fact, healthy education is learning that should transform a child, to put Miller's hypotheses another way.*

The foundation of its philosophy is the idea that each individual discovers identity, significance, and purpose in life through connections to the said environment which includes family, school and society, and community, all of which are connected to the natural world and to ideas like compassion, love and peace. According to Miller, a comprehensive education, equips children to address issues in a complicated environment while living meaningfully, critically, morally, and creatively. They can live side by side with other people. In addition, kids must exhibit ecological awareness while acknowledging that nothing exists in isolation but rather within a context. Is all this possible?

Of course, my study concurs with Miller's assertion that education must introduce students to the outside world in a holistic fashion that fosters diversity of thought and action, and link them to their families, school and communities. However, since teaching and learning take place in specified location, interest in those locations is essential. With this revelation as my inspiration, I set out to investigate the effectiveness and use of the teaching and learning environments that are in charge of fostering the aforementioned completeness and connectively, particularly with regard to the girl child.

2.2 The Purpose of Wholesome Education

A well – rounded education (wholesome education) should equip learners to handle life's problems. It inspires in the young people an innate respect for life and a fierce love of study. This should be accomplished without using an academic "*curriculum*",

> …that reduces the world into only instructional material, but via close contact with the natural world. Helping young people develop their creativity, compassion, curiosity, moral and aesthetic sensibility, critical thinking abilities, and capacity to engage in a

> strong democracy is what it means to educate them-in other words, to help them become entire individuals, (Miller, 2000b).

Even though we applaud Miller's commitment to wholesome education, its seems that his focus is on the school space. The fact that what he says here cannot all be accomplished in the school setting alone- that the home setting is equally important-is instructive. Children need to develop their academic skills since they are needed in the current world, but they also need to go beyond this because successful education aims to teach the full person. Thus, the balance between the use of the two spaces-*schoo*l and *home*-begins to become more prominent as a result.

Of course, a balanced curriculum also needs other important components. Children can learn about themselves, relationships, and social impact through "social literacy" (seeing social influence) and "emotional literacy" (understanding one's own self in connection to others). A long with learning about aesthetic, which helps them to see and value the beauty of their surroundings, children also need to learn about resilience, which involves overcoming obstacles and facing challenges. It is obvious that such broad curriculum cannot be complete through the study of merely academic subjects.

Indeed, (Miller, ibid) notes that *Whole Education* does not exclude any important facets of the human experience in his book "*Whole Education: An Approach for 21 Century*," observes that wholeness does not exclude any significant aspects of the human experience:

> It is an eclectic way of living that encourages a more balanced development of the human approach to life that promotes a more balanced development of a human being – and cultivate a relationship based on various aspects of the individual (intellectual, physical, spiritual, emotional, social and aesthetic), as well as the individual and other people, and the individual and natural environment.

The scope of wholesome education is well expressed by Nakagava, (2001), who notes that it (wholesome education) is concerned with life experience, not with education that is specifically focused on teaching "*fundamental skills*". It is true:

> …wholesome education is not to be described as a specific method or technique; it must be viewed as a paradigm, a collection of fundamental beliefs and guidelines that may be used in various contexts, Miller (1992:77).

In contrast, wholesome education focuses on the fullest possible development of the whole person, including cognitive and emotive levels (Singh, 1996). In addition:

> It strives towards the highest level of human development, allowing a person to reach their full potential and completely develop those capacities collectively make up a human being" (Forbes, 2003: 40).

The aforementioned findings support my hypothesis in this study that wholesome education cannot be attained solely in the school space environment, but must also take place outside of it, which introduces the home environment as a symbol of the family and the community rather, within the school space as well as outside, which then brings in the home space as representing the family and the community.

Focusing on the on the connections between experience and reality as a key component of wholesome education, which implies that it will inevitably result from methods of teaching and learning that are based on a bigger picture. One that emphasizes how the parts and the whole interact. "*Isolated alienation and pain"*, (Miller, 2006). Instead, the student must be positioned as an engaged, critical, and active learner who can distinguish between what is functional and dysfunctional. It is clear that wholesome education poses a challenge to the current paradigm of education, and its fixation on standards and examination.

> … a culture that value materialism and consumerism and has reduced education to preparing people for competition and consumption in the global market. In fact, it

> could be said that the current direction abandons all endeavor to teach the entire human being. Education is reduced to vocational training that can be quickly evaluated using standardized assessments. (Ouma, 2009:88).

The four pillars of learning in the Twenty-first century according to the wholesome education, are *Learning to Learn, Learning to Do, Learning to Live together, and Learning to Be*. Each of these pillars necessitated the equal use of both the home and school environment.

2.3 Shortcomings in the Approach to Education

In their defense of healthy education versus the existing methods to education, Sirous Mahmoud et al. (2012), make the augment that wholesome education is that which challenges the current approach to education and its obsessive focus on standards and testing. This seems to be a reiteration of what many other education experts have said after understanding that academic knowledge alone is insufficient and that they observe young people in their communities struggling due to a lack of necessary education, as well as society suffering.

On their own, parents have minimal influence over the attitudes, relationships, and behavior of their kids. The latter, however, are affected by the media and marketing organizations. Of course:

> …the parents get worried about negative trends and attitudes they see developing in their children. Parents who saw their children as infants, eager to learn, now realize that this eagerness dissipated as the same children's schooling increased. Learning has become a chore, driven by rewards and punishments, and too often devoid of direct meaning in the children's lives, Sirous Mohmoud, et al (ibid).

This study specifically looks at how education is implemented, which addresses the with standards and testing. It is remarkable that families and communities seem to be devolving towards disorders, which may be a sign of an unbalanced society. Studies on wholesome education have long shown that the foundation of our contemporary issues is "*mis*"- *ducation* if not inadequate education.

Perhaps a different approach to education could address these issues. It is believed that by raising healthy children, wholesome education can help solve some of the issues.

2.4 Teaching Strategies of Wholesome Education

The purpose of educating the whole child (wholesome education) is to promote several strategies to address the question of how to teach and how people learn. As I pointed out, earlier the idea of wholeness advocates for a transformative approach to learning.

> Learning involves a change in the frames of reference that a person may have, as compared to education as a process of transmission and transaction, the change may involve and include points of view, worldviews and habits of mind. Martin (2002:90).

Students, therefore, are taught to reflect critically on how we come to know or understand information. Consequently, it is expected that they will develop critical and reflective thinking skills as well as feeling encouraged to care about the world around them. Notably, both the Ominde Education Committee of 1964 and the Koech one of 1999 have recognized critical thinking as a skill that is essential. Indeed, the aspect of critical thinking as a measure to how wholesomely a learner is being trained is not in contention. The crucial role of critical thinking in the learners' development is equally emphasized by Indangasi (2018), who advises that teaching and learning must of essence incorporate the aspect of critical thing and problem solving in the preparation of learners in schools. A learner should, for example, be able to make out, not just solutions to challenges facing them, but also be able to see alternatives to the very challenges.

Meanwhile, as further contribution to how wholesome teaching and learning ought to be approached, the idea of connections is emphasized as opposed to the fragmentation that is often seen in

mainstream education. The said fragmentation often involves the dividing of the learners according to individual subjects or dividing them into grades, among other practices. Rather, Martin (ibid) points out that:

> Wholesome approach emphasizes the integration as well as the connectedness of the various aspects of life and living. Therefore, good approaches to education should not fragment learning into several different components, (93).

Indeed, the integration and connectedness that Martin is talking about can only be as a result of the balanced utilization of all the spaces within which a child's learning takes place. This goes to emphasize that there should be a deliberate connectedness between a learner's activities at school and at home. This is illustrated further by Martin when he states that:

> Many alternative education viewpoints instead argue that who the learners are, what they know, how they know it, and how they act in the world are not separate elements, but reflect the interdependencies between our world and ourselves, (94).

Included in the idea of connections may also be the way that the classroom is structured. Wholesome school classrooms are expected to be small and consist of mixed-ability and mixed-age students. This seems to be the opposite in the Kenyan schools, whose classes are mostly large and congested, thereby jeopardizing the possibility of understanding that the individual learners are.

But of even greater importance for this study, Martin (ibid) puts emphasis on the family/community space, arguing that this is an integral aspect in wholesome education. As he observes, relationships and the aspect of learning about relationships are key to understanding ourselves. This, thus, places the aspect of family/community space as being vital in the learning process. Forbes (1996: 222), perhaps appears to tally on the foregoing views states:

> In wholesome education the classroom is often seen as a community, which is within the larger community of the school, which is within the larger community of the

> village, town, or city, and which is, by extension, within the larger community of humanity.

However, I find Forbes to want to overstretch the possibilities of the classroom. His views could be misleading as they appear to imply that it is quite enough for the learner to entirely acquire all they want, in a classroom situation. The classroom cannot really accommodate the entire community of humanity. The learner needs to interact with other spaces outside the classroom for the other realities of life. This is why this study finds it necessary to locate the learner in both the school space, as well as the home space, because both spaces are critical in the teaching and learning of a child.

2.5 Review of Previous Studies on Wholesome Education

This section examines the previous studies carried out on wholesome education. Neves, (2009) reviewed *a study on the wholesome approach to the Ontario curriculum*. The researcher wanted to find out how she, as a teacher, could work with the Ontario curriculum to render it more wholesome; the kind of strategies she could possibly develop so as to teach a more wholesome curriculum; as well as the anticipated difficulties in her attempts to implement the wholesome philosophy of education. The researcher used an interpretive form of qualitative research that is founded in educational connoisseurship and criticism, which draws on the researcher's personal experiences to connect theory and practice. Neves' inquiry anchored on the vision for education that embraces every aspect of each student's capacity for learning. My thesis seeks to articulate a methodology for developing a wholesome curriculum that may benefit from the Ontario experience and is also responsive to the multifaceted needs of the whole student. The research findings may serve to inform teachers who wish to engage in wholesome education in schools and adopt a curriculum that is transformative. It is indeed possible to borrow a leaf from Neves' study, as it looks at how to engage

a wholesome curriculum through the teacher's implementation processes, even though my study looks at how Kenya's children fit in the spaces in which the curriculum is being implemented.

Maniam Kaliannan and Suseela Devi Chandran, (2010), reviewed a study titled "*Education in Human Values (EHV): Alternative Approach for a Holistic Teaching in Malaysia"*. The research shows that the opportunity cost for development in many developed countries today is the deterioration of social values among the members of society especially the younger generation. The study argues that there are many reasons that can be stated and debated over this phenomenon but that one cannot deny the fact that the system of education plays an integral part in creating human capital in the right character and conduct. They stress that the main emphasis in education today lies in acquisition of large amounts of information, passing examinations and securing qualifications that may enable future employment. Arguing on the same line, Burrows (1997) observes that:

> … children in many parts of the world are under immense pressure to succeed academically. This has resulted in children being robbed of their childhood and forced to grow up too quickly. The treasures of childhood like imagination and creativity are being ignored. Instead of engaging in make-believe games, young children sit in front of computer screens and video venues, (91).

The realization that children may be missing crucial aspects of growing up is critical for this study. The study, therefore, attempts to identity the loopholes in the Kenyan education system, with emphasis on how children spend their time at home and at school.

Michael T. Katola, (2014) *reviewed a study on the incorporation of traditional African cultural values in the formal education system for development, peace building and good governance*. In his research he elaborates that Africa is the mother of many educated sons and daughters, some of whom are internationally recognized scientists, politicians, doctors, lawyers, economists and even scholars. In spite of this, the continent has a galaxy of problems. It has, especially after attaining

political independence, witnessed corruption, violence, violation of human rights, injustices and oppression. Katola (ibid) argues that these listed problems were minimized in traditional African society because the education system emphasized the inculcation of right values to an individual from childhood to adulthood. Katola's conclusion is that today's formal education does not help individuals to function well in the society. The foregoing observations by Katola, confirm my positing that education for children needs to be more wholesome. Only this way will they be able to function well in the society. Wholesome education could help children face challenges they may meet in life and in their academic careers. My study on the teaching and learning spaces for girl children, as a part of the youth in need of wholesome education for wholesome living, is therefore, timely.

2.6 Sample Educational Models

The model of educations sampled for this study included: Japanese. Finnish, Don Bosco and the Kenyan (8.4.4). According to Bethany (2010) and UNICEF, two of these models; Finnish and Japanese are ranked among most perfect environment for teaching and learning (2017). The other two are the Kenyan (8.4.4) and the Don Bosco models, with the former typically only being connected to measurable Don Bosco institutions. The goal of this analysis is to create the groundwork for comparison and, specifically for the Finnish and Japanese models, to highlight benchmarks for our evaluation of Kenya's compliance in the use of teaching and learning spaces. Despite the Don Bosco model's mostly constrained scope to Don Bosco institutions, it nonetheless offers a local point of reference. Meanwhile, revisiting Kenya's model of education serves to prepare us for a review of policy vis a vis practice on the ground.

2.6.1 Finnish Education Model

In according with Bethany (2010) and U*NICEF* (2017), Finland has the best educational system in the world. There is still disagreement about whether the country's very tiny population (5.5 million) can be blamed for the success of the educational system. Of fact, there are numerous nations with populations much lower than Finland's, but their standards of education are not noteworthy. Japan, which I shall cover later, is another country with a somewhat larger population that also does quite well. Offering every kid equal opportunities to get an education, regardless of age, gender, place of residence, religious affiliation, economic conditions, or ethnic background, is the main objective and guiding principle of the Finnish education system. According to Hancock (2011), Finland's teaching and learning environment contains the following highly complex characteristics, which are indicated as follows: To begin with, the fact that education if free means that many kids have access to it. While this is going on, both girls and boys must attend school. Due to the longstanding educational policy and concord in the nation, this has been enforced and is working. For instance, politics should be kept out of the management of education, while all parties involved in education-parents, teachers, education unions, locals and national administrations, business, people, and other welfare are involved in the policy for education.

Otherwise, political announcements and judgments are kept out of the management of education, an d only those who implement education make decisions based on their knowledge. In addition, educat ion is free in Kenya, which then makes it necessary to investigate whether this component has enabled all children, more so girls, to fully access education. Another relevant issue in the Finnish education is the high level of professionalism and value accorded to education handlers, including teachers and other officials. They have self- assurance and are given freedom to use their knowledge on their own. They are positioned as essential components of the educational system, which allows

them to hold the highest position in society. The minimum requirement for instructors is masters' degree, demonstrating both their high level of education and training. As a result, system, which allows them to hold the highest position in society.

The minimum requirement for instructors is a master's degree, demonstrating both their high level of education and training. As a result, they become the leading voice on education, and their opinions a re respected.Given such high caliber teachers, who also act as role models for their learners, they are trusted to teach effectively, which then ensures quality of the teaching and learning process, providing a favourable learning environment for learning. Given this situation, school inspectors are no longer necessary. The education standard for teachers in Finland appear to be odds with those in Kenya. Infact. The ministry of education pushed for teachers' candidates to be admitted with a D grade. Given that examination grading in Kenya starts at A grade as the best and comes down in order to *A*-, *B*+, *B*, *B*-, *C*+, *C*, *C*-, *D*+ *D*, *D*- with *E* as the lowest, it follows that a candidate who scores a D grade is among the poorest performers. So, admitting teacher trainees with a D grade means that the lowest performers are going to become the teachers in the country's education system. It of course goes without saying that such a decision would be an affront to quality and that a failure in the examination could still become a teacher and train learners for the very examination they themselves failed.

Few persons who have completed their education in Finland choose to pursue a career in teaching. Thus, no incidents of unskilled teachers exist in the teaching profession, and all teachers are trained. A further review of the Finnish education system also reveals that teachers use diverse teaching methods such that if one method failed, the teachers consult with colleagues to try alternatives. Many members of parliament have teaching backgrounds, possibly because the public admires

people in the teaching profession. They seem to relish the challenges. Incidentally, teachers here are known to spend fewer hours at school each day and spend less time in classrooms than seems the practice in other countries. Instead, they spend the extra time to improve curricula and assess their pupils. The teaching job in Finland is considered to be a very enjoyable career. As I observed in chapter one, learners in Kenya appear to spend relatively longer hours in school.

The Finnish educational system, meanwhile, emphasizes the learner. Children begin attending school around age seven. Teachers have the opinion that kids learn best when they are prepared. As a result, kids spend more time at home and enjoy better quality time with their parents before going to school. In addition, since their education is completely supported, both boys and girls have an equal opportunity to attend school. In addition, since their education is completely supported, both boys and girls have an equal opportunity to attend school.

In accordance with law, Finland parents are entitled to a three-year maternity leave and a government subsidy that includes a payment of roughly 150 Euros per month, per child, up until the age of 17. Children can spend adequate time with their parents thanks to the leave. In the meantime, this guarantees that children are cared for and that parents are present in the home during the early stages of the children's development. As a result, Finland ranks among the best nations in the world on the "*Save the Children Mother Index*". In order to determine how equally the two are used, this is interested in how much time kids spend at home. One notes that Finland offers a preschool model that places an emphasis on research that based on the opportunity to explore their profound scientific understanding as a way to introduce young children to the idea of school and combines children's Joyful curiosity.

In Finland, preschool is a requirement that starts when a kid is five or six years old. Preschool is typi cally held in a daycare facility, also known as kindergarten. Bertrand Russell, a philosopher who

lived in the 1930s, explained that a kid grows most effectively when, like a young plant, he or she is left undisturbed in the same soil. It is claimed that too much travel, such as that which occurs in Kenya, and exposure to a wide variety of experience harms young people and experiences harms young people and renders them incapable of enduring fruitful monotony when they grow up. Play and socialization are prioritized more at this stage of the educational process. At this age, play and outside engagement are thought to be most crucial. Only 3% of kids may attend private preschool, whereas over 97% of kids attend public preschool, where they start taking part in a few limited academic activities. The government offers students the basic amenities like counselling, food, medical attention, and taxi required. There is always a major emphasis on the learners' personal space in all of this, Hancock (2011).

Within the close association with home, the child learns the practice of the rules of the game of life and commitment to them, while also learning to internalize the society's morality as well as understanding its meaning as a part of everyday life. The children learn how to better manage themselves as they also learn to cope with everyday activities of life. It is noted that pre-school is meant to promote supportive interaction, cooperation, joint responsibility and participation with strong emphasis on the children's ability to influence their working environment. They are also involved in school activities like working in groups and assisting in the kitchen. The children also help in serving meals at school, for instance, a child fetches the lunch-catering trolley, tells others about the food offered, helps in serving the milk and in such cases the child is proud to participate in a responsible task. They normally work in turns thus ensure that each child participates, Leinonen, 2014. Of course these are obviously serious socializing activities with a strong "*home*" element. This study attempts to establish if there exists a deliberate connection between home and school in the Kenyan schools.

As a socializing formation the children also engage in various activities such as meetings that discuss some issues of interest to them and agree upon common rules that guide them. Children may also work in small groups, which encourage skills in negotiating and making decisions together. Children are encouraged at a very early age to participate in the planning of activities.

All children in Finland receive special help during their first nine years of school. Finland is reputed for its ethnic homogeneity. Apart from its own citizens, the country also hosts immigrants from Somalia, Russia, Iraq, Ethiopia, Estonia and Bangladesh, among other nations, which are assisted to fit into their system. Teachers try to identify the weak pupils and assist them. The teachers appear to aim at preparing children for life and not examinations. Over the past decade Finland has made great steps in reading, math and science literacy, (Hancock (2011).

According to Education (2009), Finland promotes independent learning, which as a result brings out independent learners. This is nurtured from an early age, for instance, children are encouraged to walk to school on their own. In this provision we may conclude that learners are encouraged to be self-reliant at an early age and less dependent on other people. This is perhaps explained by the fact that the children start compulsory school at age 7, by which age they are already sociable, confident and independent people. The children study in the local neighborhoods, a fact that minimizes the disparities that they would find between the home and the school spaces. This completely contrasts with the scenario in Kenya where children from one end of town will be attending school on the other end.

Children are allowed to call their teachers by their first names while staff and pupils take lunch together. This way, teachers are regarded as equal partners in the teaching and learning process. This

seems to suggest that there is a reduced gap between the officialdom between teachers and their pupils. They come out as friends and partners in education.

Inside the classrooms there is more opportunity and space for socialization. Classes are small, mostly with a class size of about 19 pupils, while the larger classes are about 20 pupils, which then warrant an additional teacher. As already pointed out, school is normally located within the locality, which we suppose allows children to walk to school on their own. The pupils attend school for 190 days per year, without again all the hours of the day being spent at school. Apparently, therefore, the children spend 175 days at home, an arrangement that seems to provide almost equal time at home and at school. School days start at between 8.00.a.m and 10.00.a.m. and end between 1.00.p.m and 4.00.p.m. These hours seem to give learners space at school and away from school. Pupils are supported by very qualified personnel to cater for all their special needs; for example, they have a school nurse, a doctor, a social worker and an educational psychologist among others. They also have facilities to support the special needs in education. It is of interest to establish which of these provisions obtain in schools in Kenya. This is to serve as an indicator to how close or how far the situation in Kenya is towards quality teaching and learning.

On testing of the learners, there are no mandatory standardized examinations at primary school level in Finland. Even in the cases where students do examinations at secondary school level there are no rankings, no comparisons or competition between students, schools or regions. This seems to suggest that cultures related to examination competitions are minimal, something that is obviously likely to discourage or minimize practices such as drilling for examinations or bogging learners down with numerous academic assignments.

To the country's advantage, Finland has low rates of income inequality and child poverty as indicated by the *UNICEF and UN Happiness Indices*. In terms of gender equality, the country is the second in both the *World Economic Forum* (WEF) *Global Gender Gap Index and WEF Political Empowerment of Women Indices*.

Review further reveals that schools in Finland are publicly funded and run by the government agencies from national level to local authorities. These schools are also run by educators and not business people, military leaders or career politicians. Therefore, there is no political influence in education. All schools have the same national goals and teachers are drawn from the same university-trained educators.

A Finnish child has the right to same quality education for both genders, irrespective of whether they live in the rural or urban areas. According to the most recent survey by the *Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD), Hancock (2011), the differences between the weakest and strongest student/pupil are considered to be the smallest globally. Apparently, for the Finnish Education System, the most important word is "equality". This is also supported by all political parties and the president of Finland's powerful teacher's union. Both girls and boys attend school and are equally supported. Apparently the support for learners in Kenya does not discriminate between the boys and the girls, but whether this has enabled girl children to equally access education as the boys is a matter this study has set out to establish.

> Hopkins (2013) observes that, *Finland is regularly quoted as a paragon of gender equality and one of the countries that are most progressive on women's rights; Finland has pioneered in gender equality since women were granted full political rights in 1906. Since then, women have played an active role in working life and in decision making. Finland is a world leader in the creation and maintenance of an equal society for women. It is currently reported to have 47 % of Members of Parliament being women; 12 out of 19 Ministers in the Government are women; 49 % of all employees are women and approximately one third of all entrepreneurs are women. Besides, in the Foreign Service, about 45 % of ambassadors are women, while*

> *over 50 % of the 560 diplomats are women. The country is rated best in the following areas: Third most gender-equal country in the world as per the Global* Gender Gap, (2017).

Best early childhood education in the world as per the *Global Competitiveness Report*, (2016-2017), The Second best country in the world to be a girl (*Save the Children, Girl's Opportunity Index, 2016*), in Mother's wellbeing it was rated as the second best in the world (Save the Children, 2016) and finally as The Most effective country at utilizing human talent (World Economic Forum), 2017. Considering the space given to women in Finland, one interested in the performance of girl children would find it necessary to find out what can be learnt from the country's systems, and in particular, the education system that trains the very women.

2.6.2 Japanese Education Model

The global continues to be in awe of Japan's unique educational qualities. Japanese people are reputed to be *courteous, intellectual, creative, and in good health*, a fact that has been sparked researched in what can cause such wellbeing. Many people have said that school system in this country, which has occasionally been called *extraordinary system cool*? The distinctiveness mentioned above may be further elaborated by the aspects listed below, which inspires us to discuss the Japanese Education Model in this section.

Japanese education system is structured as *6-3-3-4*, with Primary school education serving as the initial stage of the whole school system. The fact that the enrollment is almost 99%, demonstrates that primary education is the vital organization in charge of providing all Japanese individuals with fundamental education. The first nine years of education as considered compulsory by the system, the first of which are classified as primary school. On the basis of their academic performance, kids

are not allowed to skip classes or to be held back to repeat grades. Children usually return to the class that is appropriate for their age when they skip due to illness or another reason

It appears that people consider a child's age carefully. When a child turns six years old, they begin primary school. As already been mentioned, that the education system follows the age grade concept, which prohibits children from repeating grades or skipping them based only on their academic performance. In Japanese educational system, retaking a class is only permitted after an extended absence. Otherwise, in theory, students who miss a lot of school due illness or another cause usually always return to the grade that is appropriate for them. The majority of the country's primary schools are associated with the faculties of education at national institutions, and public schools are mangled by various municipalities. Japan's education system is strong and practical because it combines their work ethics and technology. The academic year for elementary schools runs from April and to March. Classes are typically held for 35 weeks a year, which equates to 175 days in the school setting and the remaining 190 days at home. The calendar is based on five day work week structure. There are three terms between each of these breaks are customized to accommodate local conditions. For example, schools in colder regions space have shorter summer breaks and longer winter breaks. The schedule can look like this:

- *8:00 - 8:30 a.m. (Reporting)*
- *12.55 p.m. (Lunch)*
- *14.20 - 14.30p.m. (End of Classes*)

Each day, there five classes, this schedule is different from the one in Kenya, where there are up to 9classes each day. From what I can see, the schedule is different from the one in Kenya, where there up to *9 classes per day*. From what L can see, the schedule is set up so that kids won't be class for many hours. Almost all elementary school students move on to lower secondary schools, the second

of the two levels of compulsory education, regardless of their academic performance. The Japanese educational system is not exam focused because students only take brief quizzes and do not sit for exams until they are 10 years old. For the first three years of school, the focus is on developing a child's character and good manners rather than assessing their knowledge or learning. Children are thus taught to respect others, to be kind to animals and environment, and to be generous, compassionate, and empathetic. Besides, the children are taught qualities like grit, self-control, and justice. The above suggests that Japanese education system is geared towards wholesome learning for children.

Work in Japan valued, and education system reflects this, children taught to clean their classrooms, cafeterias, and even restrooms by themselves after the day's lessons at a fairly young age. They are typically divided into smaller groups and given recurring tasks throughout the year. According to this educational philosophy, forcing kids to clean up after themselves teaches them cooperation and the values of assisting others. Additionally, children learn to value their own labour and the work of others when the devote their own time and effort cleaning, mopping and wiping. In Japan, meals for kids are balanced and healthful as part of the curriculum. Lunchtime at school appears to be a crucial aspect of academic life. As a result, teachers and students both eat in the classroom. This promotes camaraderie and the development of fruitful teacher-student connections.

School uniform is worn by Children in ECDE and primary schools. While certain schools may have their own uniform, the typical Japanese school uniform consists a military style for boys and a sailor outfit for girls. The choice to adapt uniforms is a strategy for lowering social barriers among pupils and putting them in a productive frame of mind. Additionally, it is thought that students who wear

uniform are more likely to feel a sense of belonging to their peers. Indeed, in Kenya nearly all levels of education, with the exception of universities wear uniforms.

It is a tradition for Japanese pupils not to miss classes and not to arrive late for school. It is noted that perhaps probably over 91% Japanese learners strictly follow what the teachers have taught them. In fact, how many nations can boast of such statistics? Secondly, Japan has a mandatory school attendance rate for the nine years which is rated at 99.98%. Thirdly, children attend school within their localities; school attendance areas are specified, allowing each geographical area to have only one school of choice. In recent years, however, some localities allow their residents to choose from multiple schools within the same municipality to enroll and study in. Some municipalities keep to the principle and forbid residents from practicing so-called cross-border enrollment, where pupils enroll and study in schools outside the designated school districts, demonstrating different levels of flexibility on the matter between regions.

Public schools get funding from the combined force of the national, municipal and prefectural governments. In the current arrangement, schools receive enrolment support funds of about $100 a month, per child. But it is expected that in case the funds are not enough, the pupils must make up the difference. However, if a child comes from a low-income household, the government provides further subsidies of up to $200 a month. In addition, textbooks are provided for free to children at compulsory school levels in both public and private schools. Textbooks are small, paperbound volumes that can easily be carried by the students and they become their property.

Private schools are not left out either in the funding agenda. They too receive a percentage of public funding through which government pays private school teachers' salaries to the tune of 50%. The government also funds new buildings and the purchase of equipment. Even though private schools

are seen as more competitive, even prestigious than public schools, the latter still account for 99% of primary schools. This means that private primary schools are very few, accounting for 1% only.

The Japanese education system puts strong emphasis on extracurricular activities as an educational value to their system. These include; sports, chess, and clubs among others. Children are involved in the extracurricular activities in the evening. It is a rule that each pupil should participate in at least one club. Emphasis on extracurricular activities should be commended because it is one way of encouraging an all-round person, while this also helps to discover talent in children.

There is a lot of respect for the teaching profession. Teachers have an average salary of *7500$.* The teachers play double roles as teachers and researchers. They have continuous service programmes for professional development just to make sure that their skills and knowledge are updated. These ensure ongoing professional development, and the system does not retain teachers who do not upgrade or renew their certifications, which appears to suggest that the main determinant of educational quality is the competence of the teacher. Thus, the high quality of Japanese education owes much to highly qualified teachers. Teaching jobs seem to attract many college graduates perhaps because teachers have higher occupational prestige, higher salaries, and generous pensions. It is one of the few occupations where people can apply what they have learned in college. Moreover, teaching is one of the few professions in which women can build lifelong careers, and simultaneously keep their family commitments. This is perhaps why teaching jobs are very competitive, and only one out of every five to eight applicants will eventually become a teacher. A majority of the teachers work for up to forty years, retiring at the age of 60. It is also believed that, in spite of the demanding work, many of the Japanese teachers enter the profession because of their

love for children. It is rather unfortunate that in Kenya, the teaching profession is seen as a lowly job, and hardly comes as a priority for learners when choosing careers.

Japanese government and educationists have taken educating of their children as a very noble exercise that they normally extend to Japanese children residing abroad, to teach in Japanese schools all over the world. The Japanese educationists abolished the inspection and supervision of teachers. Teachers are entrusted and empowered to teach well. Of course one feels curious to know what makes these teachers teach well? Researches point out that classes in Japan are small and that team-teaching is commonly used. They also have classroom aides and volunteer teachers who remain effective in the classroom and after school, without massive increases to the education budget.

Early childhood education in Japan begins in the home space, where parents are regarded as the primary educators. Parents are provided with numerous books and television shows aimed at helping mothers of preschool children to educate their children and to parent more effectively. Much of the home training space is devoted to teaching manners, proper social behavior, and structured play, although verbal and number skills are also popular themes. Parents are strongly encouraged to be committed to early education and frequently enroll their children in preschools. What does Preschool education provide? Perhaps the transition from home space to school space for most children is made to be easier. Children's life at home is characterized by indulgence, largely nonacademic preschool experiences which help children to make the adjustment to the group-oriented life of school and, in turn, to life in society itself. Preschool is predominantly staffed by young junior college graduates, who are supervised by the Ministry of Education, but are not part of the official education system. The preschools that are private accounts for 77 percent of all children enrolled. In addition to preschools, a well-developed system of government-supervised day-care centers,

supervised by the Ministry of Labor, is an important provider of preschool education. Together, these two kinds of institutions enroll well over 90 percent of all preschool age children prior to their entrance into the formal system at first grade, (Murata, and Yamaguchi, (2010). The foregoing information on Japanese educational operations show a close link between home and school as related spaces for teaching and learning for children. This knowledge greatly informs this study in its endeavour to analyze the utilization of the two spaces in the Kenyan education system and in particular how the utilization relates to girl children.

2.6.3 Don Bosco Model of Education

Don Bosco model of Education was introduced by Don Bosco, a missionary in Italy. This model of education has been spread all over the world by the Don Bosco Missionaries. The model which was based on Don Bosco's pastoral experience in his first Oratory, created a home that welcomed disadvantaged children; opened a parish that evangelized to the children; started a school that prepared them for life; and spared a playground where friends could meet and enjoy themselves. Salesians (the women equivalent of the Don Bosco Missionaries) carry out this mission today.

The Don Bosco model is not an education curriculum per se but it may be used in line with other models. For example, in the Kenyan system of education, the model is operating in the Don Bosco schools. It essentially disposes the pupils to obey not out of fear or compulsion, but from persuasion. In the system any kind of force is discouraged; in its place, charity must be the main cause of action. It is based on three pillars: Social Justice, Religion and Reason.

Don Bosco put strong emphasis on how the teacher should behave, for instance, that teachers must respect each person, even the most underprivileged or fortunate in life. He affirmed that in every person there is a point of accessible good and that the first duty of the educator is to seek and find

the sensitive heart string and makes it vibrate. He specifically pointed out the following to be important for the teacher: that the teacher must provide welcome as a strategy; and be the inseparable companion. The model considers teachers as gardeners or farmers in the vineyard of the Lord who must be with the heart of a mother, and they must remain friends forever.

On the objectives of the Don Bosco model of education, Ouma (2009) outlines the following as the main objectives: the provision of technical, moral, and full human value formation to young men and women, as well as enabling them become contributive honorable citizens. The students admitted in Don Bosco institutions are usually between *11-22 years*, and mainly from economically disadvantaged segments of the Kenyan society, (ibid).

The main co-curricular activities of the Don Bosco model of education include: Scouting for both boys and girls who occasionally engage in scout camps as well as in the training boys and girls to live a disciplined life. Another activity is "*the young journalist*" as established by Don Bosco, is a club that serves as a vehicle for developing the journalistic mind of the students. They are expected to publish regularly in the magazine called *"The Eye Opener"*. It is a magazine for articles by the students and their teachers.

There is also "Care Club" (W.C.C); the main responsibility of this club being to take care of the property of Bosco Boys. Besides, there is "*Environment club*", where the members of the club have to demonstrate love for the environment. The members of this particular club are expected to plant trees, prepare tree nurseries and also make sure that the trees and plants are watered, weeded and provided with manure.

Other activities are such as **"***Young Farmers Club*" which engages in farming and assists in looking after the animals and birds of the school project, while another highly talented acrobatic club which

trains acrobats who have won the applause of many people by their incredible performance. Finally, sports club has various sports groups. Generally, the boys and girls can choose their own game. Every year Bosco Boys organize a tournament called Jesus cup tournament, **(**Ouma, 2009).

What one witnesses in that the Don Bosco setup is a curriculum that gives the individual the opportunity to develop different abilities, thus, enabling a fairly rounded person. The ability of the Don Bosco approach to produce a rounded person relates closely with the chief objective of the current study in its concern with wholesome education.

2.6.4 The Kenyan Education Model

2.6.4.1 Background

Western Education was introduced in Kenya by Missionaries, who aimed at converting Africans into Christianity. The schools had strong emphasis on the boy child education. The curriculum tended to discriminate against the girl. The period later marked the beginning of the three-tier education system in Kenya that led to the following related schools: government, private or missionary, and *harambee* (a grass-root movement of self-help schools). The government schools were reserved for whites, but the private schools were the better equipped. Missionary schools continued to exist, although some were converted into government schools. The quality of *harambee* schools, which were geared towards increasing education for Africans, depended on the economy of the local community. This period experienced discrimination in education; schools were racially enrolled: schools for Europeans (whites), Asians, and Africans. Most of the schools that were introduced were for the boys and not girls. Thus, the girl child had very limited space for school space as compared to the home space.

The Kenya Educational model *7-4-2-3* (seven years of primary school education; four years in the lower secondary; two years of upper secondary and three years of university), dates back to 1963, the time of Kenya's independence. It was modeled on the British education system. The system responded to immediate demands for skilled workers to hold positions that had been previously held by the British. The uniqueness of the system was that the progression was based on the ability and that it was not age restricted, thus, there was varied age range in each class. Perhaps one could justify the age range as a result of many people who had not been in the formal schools and one could even start class one at the age of 16 years.

In 1985, the latter system, *8-4-4* (eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education and four years of University) was launched. This was similar to the U.S.A. education system. The 8-4-4 system also has a Pre-Primary segment. Before joining primary school, children between ages three and six are required to attend pre-primary level for one or two years. The main objective of the system is to cater for the total development of a child, including the physical, spiritual, social and mental growth, brought about through formal and informal interaction with the parents and the community. Primary education as the first phase of the *8-4-4* education system serves pupils between the ages of six and fourteen. The main purpose of primary education is to prepare learners to participate in the social, political and economic wellbeing of the country and prepare them to be global citizens, thus wholesome development.

2.6.4.2 Characteristics of Kenyan Educational System

According to EFA Global Monitoring Report, (2004), the gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education in Kenya was *40%*, superior to the median of developing countries at (*35%*), but the net

enrolment ratio in primary education stood at *70%*, lower than the weighted average of *83%* for developing countries (Figure 1), (UNESCO/OECD, 2005) as illustrated below:

Table 2.1 Primary Education in Selected Countries by Gender, 2001

Country	Male	Female
South Africa	89	90
Kenya	69	71
Zambia	66	66
Ghana	61	59
Tanzania	54	55

Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report, (2004), UNESCO

According to the EAC Secretariat Pre-Primary Education, 2014, The ECDE provision is meant to provide wholesome educational foundations that create a strong basis for the child's development in cognitive, psychosocial, moral, spiritual, emotional and psychomotor before they join primary education. The expected entry age for the pre-school is 4 years. ECDE has specific objectives as stipulated in Ibid (PP. 10-11), which includes: To provide wholesome education, that enables the child to enjoy living and learning through play; to develop self-confidence; to develop understanding and appreciation of their culture and environment; to explore skills, creativity, self-expression and discovery; to identify special needs and align with their existing services; and to build good habits and acquire acceptable values. Also, to attain behaviour for effective living as an individual and member of a group; to foster the spiritual and moral growth; to improve the health status and nutritional needs; to enrich their experiences and prepare them for primary school life, as well as develop the aesthetic and artistic skills.

Time recommended for any single activity in the preprimary education, is not more than 15 minutes due to young children's short attention span. The level of education has no prescribed assessment.

But it is important to note that certain competencies are expected to be acquired among the learners at this level. The level of enrollment for girls has been lower in most regions, apart from Nairobi, Nyanza, Central and Eastern compared to the enrollment of boys as indicated below:

Table 2.2: Poverty and Preschool Enrolment by Gender

Region	Boys	Girls
Coast	44	43
Central	58	59
Eastern	46	47
Nairobi	110	120
Rift Valley	50	49
Western	60	56
Nyanza	46	48
Northern Eastern	10	08

Source: UNESCO/OECD (2005).

Following the introduction of the *Free Primary Education Policy* (FPE) in 2003, by February 2004, it was found out that ECDE programmes had totally declined, particularly in the rural areas. A penitential question would be "why"? Perhaps the most logical explanation would be that a majority of the parents opted to send their children straight to Standard One, where no payment was required, thus, avoiding to go through ECD, which was still charging fees. This was in spite of the teachers of Standard One reporting that the children who skipped ECD performed poorly, meaning that they had difficulty coping with lessons in primary school, (Ibid). Poor parents in some areas, kept their children at home waiting for them to attain age 6+, to have them get free education without incurring extra costs. Notably preschool services tend to be disrupted or unavailable for children from disadvantaged backgrounds such as semi-arid and arid areas and urban slums. UNICEF/Government

of Kenya, (2000) and UNESCO/OECD (2005). Mualuko et al. (2011) further affirms that it won't be an overstatement to say that Kenya's implementation of the free primary education programme was a positive development. As most parents felt a relieve when the initiative was made. However, because of the way it was developed and put into action, it was weak and open to a lot of problems. These difficulties now probably put this admirable reform in jeopardy. However, it serves as a power ful reminder to politicians and anyone working on education reform that, it is important to follow the proper when creating policies with such a significant social impact.

Table 2.3: Profile of the Early Childhood Service

Item	**Nursery School**	**Pre – Unit Class**	**Kindergar Ten**	**Day Nurser y**	**Playgrou Nd**	**Madras sa**	**Home Based Care Centre**
Child Age	3+-5+	**5+**	**2+-5+**	**2+-5+**	**2+-5+**	**2+-5+**	**2+-5+**
Location	Rural & Urban	Primary Schools in Urban areas	Rich Urban	Nairobi County Only	Rich Urban	Rural &Urban	Urban slums, arid or semi-arid areas
Focus	Care & Education	Educati on	Care & Education	Care & Educati on	Care & Educatio N	Care and religious educatio n	Care
Opening Hours	4 hours daily	4 hours daily	4 or 8 hours daily	4 or 8hours daily	4 hours Daily	Usually in the evening	8 hours daily
Required educationa l level for teachers	Primary/secon dary depending on the area	Second ary educati on	Secondary Education	Second ary educati on	None	No formal educatio n required	Primary/secon dary depending on the area
Training requiremen t	2-Year dececе in service	2-Year dececе in service	2-Year dececе in Service	2-Year dececе in service	2-Year dececе in Service	Integrate d Islamic Educatio n Program me inductio n	No Requirement
Responsibi lity of the Ministry/ Authority	MOEST	MOES T	MOEST	MOES T	None	MOEST	None

Source: UNESCO/OECD, 2005.

According to UNESCO/OECD (2005), there seems to be inequalities observable in different geographical locations in Kenya. For instance, far more children are likely to be enrolled in ECD in Nairobi, than in other counties with similar poverty levels such as Rift Valley. Meanwhile, North Eastern areas experience the highest poverty levels and they record the lowest enrolment rates (Figure 2). There are also gender disparities favoring girls in, say, Nairobi, where the latter are more likely to be enrolled, whereas the reverse is true in North Eastern regions. Indeed, gender parity is an issue in primary Education.

To facilitate this study, one crucial question to ask is: What are the real objectives of primary education in Kenya? According to the EAC Secretariat, Pre-Primary Education, (2014, pp.27-28), the Kenya Primary Education should provide the learner with opportunities to: acquire literacy, numeracy, creativity and communication skills; enjoy learning and develop desire to continue learning; develop the ability for critical thinking and logical judgment; appreciate and respect the dignity of work; develop desirable social standards: moral and religious values; develop into a self-disciplined, physically fit and healthy person; develop aesthetic values and appreciate own and other peoples ,,cultures; and finally develop awareness and appreciation of the environment.

The Kenya education curriculum is guided by the principles of the Constitution of Kenya 2010; Vision 2030; the National Philosophy; Education Act 2013; Teachers Service Commission (TSC) Act 2012; Kenya National Examinations (KNEC) Act 2012; Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) Act 2013; and Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012, which places education at the centre of the countrys national development strategies. It focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and skills for lifelong living and lifelong learning, thereby, in essence demanding for wholesome education. Thus, education in Kenya has a development agenda of the individual potential in a

wholesome and integrated manner, which expects to produce individuals who are intellectually, emotionally and physically balanced. Its curriculum envisages the provision of a wholesome, quality education and training that promotes the cognitive, psychomotor, creative and affective domains of learners. For that reason, it is expected to instill values such as patriotism, equality, honesty, humility, mutual respect and high moral standards, (EAC Secretariat, Primary Education, 2014, pp.11-12). The Philosophy for education is: Education and Training for Social Cohesion as well as Human and Economic Development", (Ibid, p12).

Key concerns of the Kenya's Education System can be summarized as access, retention, equity, quality and relevance, as well as internal and external efficiencies within the education system (MOEST, 2005a, pp3).

The introduction of Free Primary Education was in recognition of its important role as a basic right of all children in Kenya. When this first started at the beginning of 2003, there was an influx of students in all the schools. The numbers doubled in some classes but at the end of the year, the patterns had started to shift for a number of reasons. One reason could have been that as much as the government had declared education free, there were many silent charges which may have discouraged those who had hoped to get entirely free education. Meanwhile, although primary school education in Kenya is universal and free, it is not compulsory as the cases of Finland and Japan, above. The goal of primary school education is to develop self-expression, self-discipline and self-reliance, while at the same time providing a rounded education experience which one could term as wholesome education.

Considering the objectives of the 8-4-4 education system, one would expect the products of the system to be well rounded because there is a clear promise of wholesome education. However, this apparently has not been the case, something that interests this study. What could have gone wrong? According to some critics, Kenya's education system seems to be too broad, expensive and burdensome for pupils, teachers and parents and that the curriculum was is overloaded that the schools fail to equip learners with the necessary and practical skills. Perhaps another criticism could also be that 8-4-4 encourages learning that is based on summative tests, examinations and competition. As a result of this the country experiences high cases of exam cheating as many of its pupils use exam cheating to demonstrate their mastery of content and academic excellence.

Other critics have argued that 8-4-4 was all about cramming, passing exams and going through schooling. The system doesn't care whether students acquired necessary knowledge and skills at the various levels as long as they performed well in written assessments. First, many pupils drop out at primary, secondary and university level for failure to meet the examination scores required to move to the next level. Many also fail to secure employment. Students graduate from secondary schools and universities without acquiring the skills necessary to pursue entrepreneurship and attain self-reliance. Moreover, instead of reducing, unemployment rates have gone higher, with many graduates failing to secure sustainable employment. Equally, employers have questioned the education system complaining that the graduates were not adequately prepared for the world of work, with many of them being forced to give them additional and industry specific training which was expensive and time intensive.

Consequently, an education system that had ambitious goals of making education relevant to the work of life, produce skilled and competent workforce able to sustain a knowledge driven economy has been seen to be failing. Perhaps this is why the government has decided to change to the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC), a system that is structured as *2-6-3-3-3,* now in force since 2017. Yet, many questions still abound. Is *2-6-3-3-3* the solution to the problems of *8-4-4*? Might we be making the same mistakes in the implementation of *2-6-3-3-3* that we made with *8-4-4*? Nevertheless, the proponents of the system argue the new system introduces a paradigm shift from 8-4-4; and that the new approach will impart the learners with the necessary competencies. This of course remains to be seen. In the next chapters I reflect on how the teaching and learning spaces were utilized in the attempt to implement what appears on the face value a very well thought out education curriculum.

Having decided to use triangulation for purposes of validity and reliability of the research data I gathered more literature through legwork by interviewing respondents familiar with the education outside perspectives in Japan, Finland and Kenya. For further information on Japan, I interviewed Dr. Masumi Odari, born and educated through the Japanese system but has also lived and worked in the Kenyan education system for a long time. I also interviewed Prof. Henry Indangasi, a Kenyan who got exposure to the Japanese education system while he stayed there. For information on Finland, I interviewed Prof. Paul Ogula, a longtime education expert in Kenya, who visited and studied the Finnish education system; Mrs. Marita Rainbird, a Finnish who has been in and out of Kenya; as well as Clara Oduke, a Finnish who lives in Ghana, an African experience.

A respondent on Japan confirmed that indeed the girl child formally grows in an enabling environment during the formative years. Both boys and girls undergo the same treatment:

> *Japanese schools don't employ workers for cleaning the school, since students and staff help with all the cleaning. Students, boys and girls, equally sweep the hall floors, clean the windows, scrub the toilets, empty the trash cans, serve the meals and clear away dishes under the supervision of student leaders. This promotes the culture of equity and hard work, (respondent).*

However, the emphasis that gender equity problem in Japan is the reason why society has stagnated, despite the initial equitable treatment. Women's' option are still contained, which is why this case. They are unable to develop into more than just mothers and wives. The respondents noted that males continue to delegate control over the home and education of their children to their wives. Instead, they disengage from domestic duties, leaving homecare sorely in the care of women. They hardly ever have any time for themselves. As they frequently rise before everyone else to breakfast and spend the entire day running about taking care of the demands of their families, which puts them in the paradox of the glass ceiling. The informant explained further:

> *Some Japanese women dress their husbands in the morning, serve them their choicest cuts of meat and special delicacies at dinner, at times even rush onto a train to grab a seat for their husband and then stand up, with arms filled with shopping bags, while the husband relaxes, sometimes reading a comic book. The women do all this but are neither appreciated, nor allowed to decide anything at home, not even on what to put in the miso soup.*

The majority of Japanese homes, according to the informants, do not have *ayahs* and *babysitters,* forcing many Japanese mothers to spend their days with their children in the park. Their interactions with parks have made the community to refer to these "women" as "park moms". According to the respondents Japan is facing a population crisis fueled by a low birthrate and an aging population. According to the respondents an aging population and low birthrate are the main causes of Japan's population crisis. She claims that the nation has one of the lowest birth rates and one of the highest life expectancy in the world, (82 years).

The rate of population decline has been accelerated despite government incentives such as financial allowances for having children. It is estimated that the Japanese population could decline from around 127 million today to 95 million by 2050. Afraid that they will most likely end up running the family alone even when they have husbands, many women are postponing marriage, thereby reducing the birth rate. They want men who can share household and child care demands and abhor the empty marriages of their parents, where men devoted their lives to their companies in exchange for a paycheck and women spent their lives devoted to child rearing.

Apparently, if women want to advance in career, it has been noted that they must choose between work and parenthood, since corporate attitudes often do not support working mothers. The treatment of the is indeed a paradox of the trouble the school curriculum takes to raise the girl child. Only when cultural attitudes change to allow men and women equality at work and home will women not have to choose between work and family.

Incidentally, as Japanese women become more educated, they find themselves in a smaller marriage pool**.** As Prof. Indangasi pointed out during an interview based on his interaction with Japanese working, women who get married reach a dead end to their career life. They have to practically stop working. This, to say the least, is an anticlimax for an individual who went through a wholesome education system. Even though it is noted that Japanese traditions were built on Confucian beliefs which fostered an obligation to marry, to care for elderly parents, and to maintain the paternal lineage through having children it appears that the Japanese are currently less Confucian and more consumeristic. As a result, there is increased number of divorce cases as the women fight to retire from housekeeping, caring for their children, husband and his aged parents. Japan for a long time has

had domestic violence encouraged by the culture of silence that has made the society to fail to notice bruises, sunglasses, and other telltale signs of domestic violence among women.

> The conspiracy of silence has encouraged women to be abused. Although the number of educated women in Japan has increased, but there has been little change in women's economic status. The dilemma Japanese women are facing regarding participation in the workforce, has made them to either to stay away from work temporarily or permanently, when they become full time wives and mothers, (Zaidi and Eda, ibid).

This perhaps confirms that in spite of the education system setting the ground for an equitable world for both genders, the Japanese family is a male dominated society, in which the man is regarded as the head of the family in line with the pre-Meiji Japan rule, which imposed a submissive role for women. My main Japanese informant explained that, according to the Confucian values, women are expected to obey three men throughout their lives: first, the father in their youth, second, the husband after marriage, and the third, the son in the old age. Despite this, education for both boys and girls is compulsory through the four or six years of schooling, a fact that appears to promise a great opportunity for girls. Nevertheless, after that their career paths diverge significantly. Boys continue on to a five-year middle school or vocational school, whereas girls' subsequent education over the following four to five years (if any at all) leans towards instructing them in home economics, otherwise translated as "how to create a happy home life". Far fewer women join university; it is commonly believed that too much education is unnecessary for a woman, whose mission should be to become "a good wife and wise mother". I find this a mockery of the initial wholesome education for both boys and girls.

All my respondents confirmed that,

> *full time motherhood was, and still is, the social norm for the Japanese society. Motherhood in particular has been considered something that cannot be accomplished on a part time basis, but full time bases. Women are expected to put all their energy in child rearing, and education. It is expected for women to pride themselves in their special relationship with their offspring, which is considered to be their greatest satisfaction and purpose in life.*

2.7 Theoretical Framework

I applied a variety of theories, Functional by Durkheim, Conflict by Karl Marx, Interaction by Basil Bernstein, and Empowerment by Freire; the approach termed as an electric approach. The study was however greatly influenced by Emile Durkheim's functionalism theory (Ballantine, 1997), in Nickerson (2022). The study notes that utilitarian elements of education are of relevance to functionalism in education. The survival and stability pf society require an educational system, in accordance with the functionalist concept of education. In his article, which were gathered in *Education and Sociology* (1965), *Moral Education* (1961), *The Evolution Thought* (1977), and *An Evaluation of the Don Bosco Programme of Education in Kenya in Ouma* (2009*).*

The functionalist view point is largely predicted on the idea that society is a network of interrelated pieces that cooperate to keep the whole in a condition of balance and social equilibrium. Ballantine, (1997) elaborates on the functional interconnectedness of institutions by stating that; the family provides a context for producing, nurturing, and socializing children; education offers a way to transit a society's skills, knowledge, and culture to its youth; politics offers a way to govern society's members; economics offers a means for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services; and religion offers moral guidance and a forum for expression (ibid).

As a result, by emphasizing how one component influences and is influenced by other component, the functionalist perspective stresses how interrelated society is. The impacts of social elements components on society are described by functionalists using the phrases functional and dysfunctional. A social component is functional if it promotes social stability and it is dysfunctional if it causes social instability. The girl child is acknowledged as essential to society's fundamental functioning for the purpose of this study. According to the functionalist perspective, the functions as a cog in the machine that is society. Therefore, it is necessary to determine the potential causes

behind why the girl child, whether they live in rural or urban areas, are less likely to receive a quality education.

Ouma (2009) asserts that functionalism in education responds to the needs of various societal groups with regard to education. These topics vary from school life to the importance of education in providing children with proper preparation for adulthood. It contends that in addition to moral and occupational education, discipline and values are also essential for society's existence. Therefore, it would seem that Kenya's educational methods are unlikely to live up to the standards set by the funct ional approach to education. This is due to the fact that in Kenya, the primary purpose of education s eems to end with the transmission of cognitive knowledge and behavior. This role of education is ins ufficient in light of functionalism. I want to pursue education because of the wholesome utilitarianism that results from comprehensive, high quality training. These lessons are learned from a variety of sources, including school and the household.

> *Since social values are acquired through interactions with others, both the family and the classroom should serve as vital training grounds for children (Ballantine, 1997, p. 8). (2009).*

The functional theory has some flaws, as some researchers have noted. The first criticism leveled against this strategy is that it ignores the multitude of opposing ideologies, interest groups, and conflicting interests that may each have their own agenda for advancing education in order to serve their own interests. Second, other critics find it challenging to examine individual interactions from this perspective, such as teacher-student or Student to student dynamics in the classroom.

Some scholars have pointed out some weaknesses in the functional theory. First, critics of this approach see that it fails to recognize the number of divergent interests, ideologies, and conflicting interest groups which may have their own agenda for education to further their own interests.

Second, other critics find it difficult to analyze individual interactions, such as the classroom dynamics of teacher-student or student-student interactions from this perspective.

Third, a related objection is that Nickerson (20220)'s functionalist process, or what is taught and how it is taught, (Karabel and Halsely, 1977, p. 11). Fourth, although it implies, the ideal that change occurs in a "*chain reaction*" does not always correspond to the reality of either stable societies or cultures that change quickly (Ballantine, 1997, p.8). Fifth, structural-functionalism is inadequate for studying contemporary industrial societies because of its focus integration, which tends to downplay its preoccupation with *social integration* tends to play down issues with social change (Floud and Halsey, 1958, p. 111).

Despite the functional theory's flaws, I believe it is the best appropriate for this study since it emphasizes the importance of producing well rounded individuals who can contribute positively to society. According my research, intellectual rigor is insufficient to meet all of life's needs, making it ineffective for the survival and stability of society.

The functional theory applies to my research since it discusses the purposes, goals and functions of education. Thus, it tackles the study's research issue as well as its goals, objectives and concerns about wholesome education.

The other theories that I used to supplement functionalist theory are conflict, empowerment, and interaction theories which separately attempt to explain how education contributes to the maintenance of the status quo in society.

The goals of education and the immediate desire for exam results, the provisions for public schools versus private schools, profit versus quality, quantity versus quality, and a variety of geographical,

economic, religious, and cultural interests are just a few of the conflicts that appear to exist in Kenya n education. Karl Marx and Max Weber introduced the concept of conflict. According to this idea, social tension is a result of conflicting individual and community interests. As seen in our society to day, the "haves" control wealth, power, material possessions, privileges, and influences, while the "*have not*" continually presents a challenge as they strive to obtain a larger portion of society's riches

(Ballantine, 1997, p. 9 in Ouma 2009).

Collins (1971, p. 1010) and Hayes (2022) claim that Weber was the one who made the connection be tween some components of conflict theory and various facets of education. He notices that:

> *... the "main activity of schools is to teach particular "status culture", both in and outside the classroom. Education produces a disciplined labor force for military, political or other areas of control and exploitation by the elite. Leaders in various fields are, for example, selected on the basis of performance in examinations*.

This is true even though our study perceives many other aspects of life as being ignored; in other, words there are other standards for performance in society that go beyond academic exams. In Pere et. al. (2000), Willard Walter refers to schools as being in a state of constant disequilibrium. Some conflict theorists today see mass education as a tool for the capitalist society to control entry in to higher levels of education by selecting and allocating functions and manipulating the public (Willower and Boyd 1989). This may assist to explain why politics have intertwined with Kenyan e ducation, why the country's educational system has been exam focused and perhaps even why there is an imbalance in the teaching and learning environment focused, and perhaps even why there is an imbalance in the teaching and learning environment.

Consequently, education has operated at the behest of individual and group interests. A good example is the way the wish to pass examinations and being ranked as top performers has led schools into committing every available minute of the learner to class work, which has led to loss of

interactive quality time for children at home. Alternatively, political expedience has also been a major determinant in the choice of curriculum to be used in schools. Conflict theory, therefore, helps us understand education as it is today, helping to answer the question why there is disequilibrium in the teaching and learning spaces. Is this, for example a matter of policy or simply individual or group interests, i.e. conflict of interests?

The functional and conflict theories are complemented by interaction theory, which was advanced by Basil Bernstein and Pierre Bourchen in 1974 as described in Moore (2013). Interaction theory is interested in how people interact with one another, including peers, instructors, parents, and administ rators, as well as in students' attitudes and accomplishments, in contrast to functional and conflict the ories, which concentrate on society. Studying classroom interactions and procedures, knowledge organization and application, and the definition of "education" are some examples of how this is done. Although the study considered Social learning theory to be a potential alternative for Interaction theory, it was discovered that the latter was more pertinent because the focus of this study was on how people interacted with one another in a teaching and learning environment. Bernstein (ibid) asserts the significance of being aware of the effect of class prejudice in teaching an d educational ideology on students' potentially subpar performance in order to aid the study's underst anding of the poor academic performance of impoverished pupils. Bernstein establishes connections between the sociocultural, institutional, and intrapsychic realms in an effort to suggest an integrated system of education:

> *If individuals are educated to function well in the society, this will affect certain areas positively: they will become role models in their interactions and they will label and exchange positive behaviors or names, (9).*

This study defines "wholesome living" as this functioning properly and completely in society, which results from wholesome education, which applies wholesome education equally to the teaching and

learning environments that constitute school and home (Komora, 2013). As a result, we can say that girl students from Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in particular primary schools are a combinatio n of their environment and their cognitive process. In this case, the girl child will constantly view herself in relation to how society sees her. If quality and worth are emphasized in the girl child's education, she will value it as well. In contrast, if a girl's education is not valued, she will not have recognized its significance in her life.

According to the notion of symbolic interactions, each person is a composite of the experiences and effects of the society in which they live and not merely a unique creation (ibid). In order to better un derstand education for girls today, functional theory, conflict theory, and interaction theory all worke d in concert. The study highlights the need for utilitarian education through functional theory, the co mpeting interests that frequently prevent the delivery of quality education through conflict theory, an d the need for harmony between the teaching and learning environment in order to create individuals who are wholly formed through interaction theory. Giving girls a high quality education can significantly improve their ability to contribute to society.

Last but not least, I discovered "Empowerment theory" to be still another persuasive dispensation in this study operating in the precincts of the wellbeing of the girl kid that may come from the prospects of her having a he althy education. To incorporate a feminist and empowerment approach into the study, this was done. One of the main elements of the larger "Emancipation theory," which was first made public by Karl Marx's concerns about the social class struggle and afterwards adopted by other researchers with a variety of interests. The hu man desire to live a full life, which arises from the human empowerment framework, is at the center of emanc ipation philosophy. The human empowerment framework's requirements are met by education that

emphasizes the student as a whole hence, my decision to engage empowerment theory as proposed by Robins and Canda (1998) and O'Byrne (2018).

In the field of education, Empowerment theory draws much from Freire (1972 &1986) in the work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* in which Freire expresses the need for disadvantaged individuals to be empowered to take control of their own learning through active participation and engagement. In this study, I engaged girl children – being the more disadvantaged group in our education system – so that they could share the challenges that they encounter in their teaching and learning spaces. This way, the girls would develop a deeper understanding of their own position within the very education setup. O'Byrne (ibid), putting Empowerment theory into context, envisages a situation where empowerment comes through:

> Organizing forums in which participants discuss how certain issues affect their lives. The spirit of empowerment resides in the participation and collaboration of individuals within an organizing structure to focus their efforts on an identified outcome, or, common goal, (p.1).

The outcomes of bringing participants together to discuss issues that affect them had earlier been hinted to by Robbins and Canda, (1998), which they summarize as:

> …so that they gain the ability to achieve their highest personal and collective aspirations and goals, (p.91).

I was particularly able to bring girl children together and engage them as individuals and as groups through focused group discussions, to capture their personal views. My engagement with Empowerment theory in the process, was in order to interrogate the competencies that girl children are able to acquire from their teaching and learning spaces as currently utilized. This was, perhaps, to echo Perkins and Zimmerman, (1995), who specify the aims of Empowerment theory in education

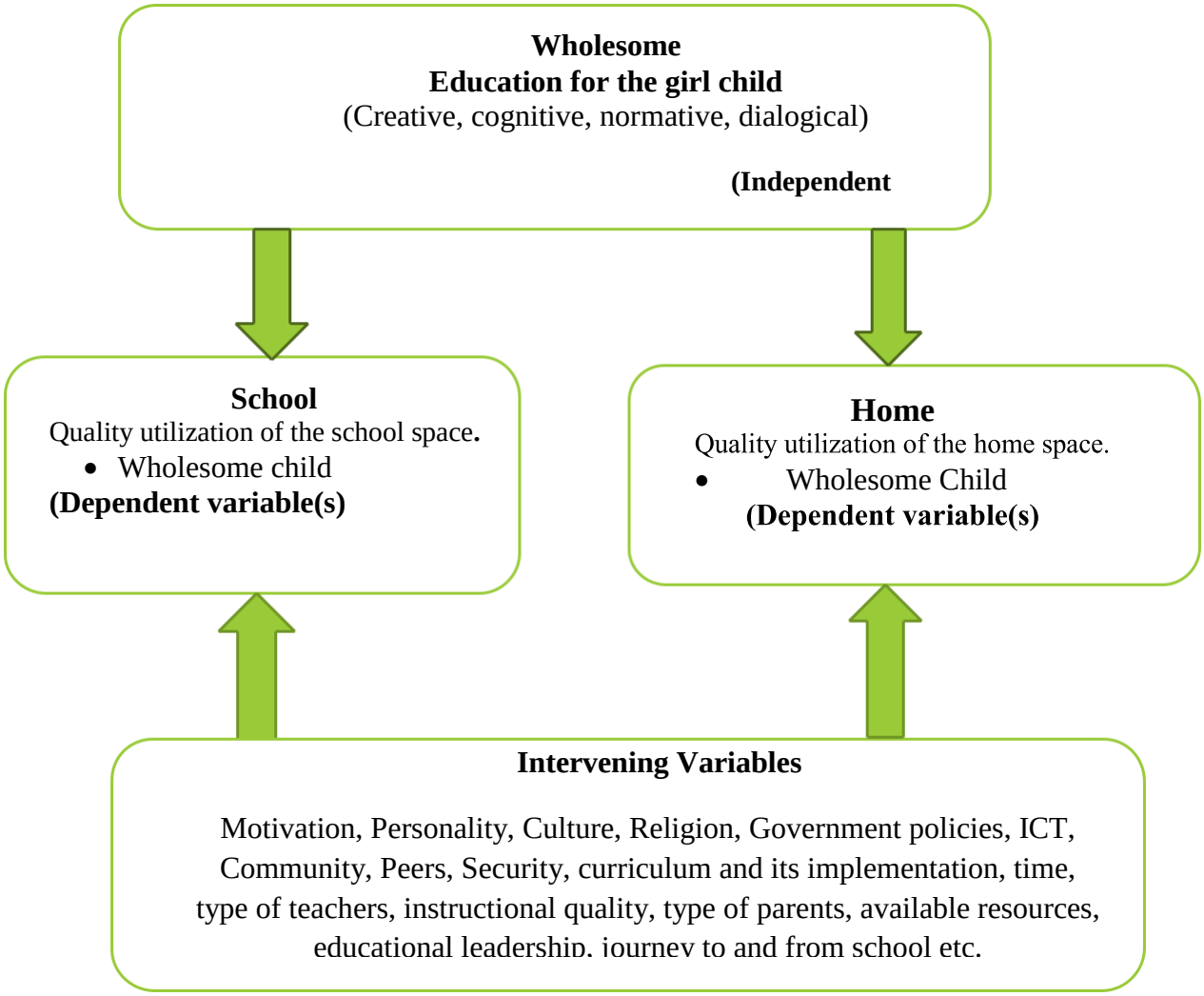
as "emphasizing an individual's strengths or competencies, and provide opportunities for participants to develop, not only knowledge, but also skills to engage", (p.795).

It is from the four theories that I developed a conceptual framework to show the relationship between inputs, outputs, processes, and effects of the wholesome education for the girl child in Kenya as far as teaching and learning spaces are concerned.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

For this study's conceptual framework was adapted from the Washington Model of Education, (Mannolia, 2013). The image of the child in the centre depicts her as being surrounded by the various aspects of life's needs, including cultural requirements, parental participation, educational requirements, relational requirements, emotional requirements, and belief systems. Different dimensions of life's need: cultural needs, parental involvement, educational needs, relational needs, emotional needs and belief systems. The needs are met by the home (family/society) and the classroom. A conceptual framework, according to Cargan (2009), gives a clear concept of the areas in which meaningful relationships are likely to exist. The conceptual framework is illustrated in the figure 1.1 below:

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework



Source: Adopted from Washington Model (2013).

The framework that puts the girl child in the spotlight depicts her as working in the two teaching and learning environments (home and school) where a healthy child will be born as the results of the Aforementioned healthy education. This suggests that raising wholesome child cannot be accomplished either at home or at school, making both settings important for wholesome education.

This is why the study examines the balanced and effective use of the two spaces, which serve as dependent variable.

Three major pillars listed below must cooperate for a child to receive this wholesome education, access to quality teachers and: parents; learning resources; and secure, encouraging learning environments. The conceptual framework mentioned above also lists the supplementary factors that could affect how well the two teaching and learning venues are used. Government policy, the content of curriculum and how it is taught, the kind of teachers, the available resources, and extra curriculum activities that take place in the classroom are a few of these. The home environment, meantime, takes into account elements like parental available and quality time spend with parents, modeling, resources, play and study time, working from home, and security, among others. Meanwhile the home space considers factors such as availability and quality of parents, quality time with parents, modeling, resources, time to study and play, work at home and security, among others. Other factors include religion, technology (ICT), peers, family members and media among others. Other elements include, among others, religion, ICT, peers, family members, and the media.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has given deeper depth analysis of what wholesome education is, and the type of dynamics that play a role in its delivery has been provided in this chapter. It also provides an analysis the Finnish, Japanese, Don Bosco and Kenyan educational systems. Reviewing the aforementioned education models was done to ascertain what wholesome education indicators each one recommends and how to accomplish them. Our analysis has shown that four models do, in fact, have a lot in common they can be achieved. Our review has confirmed that, in fact the four models do, in fact, have a lot in common. Even better than those of Finland and Japan are the wholesome education metrics that the Kenyan models by itself recommends. This encourages us to visit the

inquire posed by this study makes us to want to revisit the question that this study: why are the concerns about the quality of the Kenyan Education model arising if it is that well- designed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section presents the research methodology that I employed in this study. Research methodology is a predetermined strategy, framework, and methodical approach to a problem- solving that empirical research follows to join in order to achieve the study's objectives. It is also describing as a study of how knowledge is acquired and providing a research plan. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained and it gives the work plan for research. This chapter deals with research methodology, which comprises of the following: the research design, the study area, target population, description of sample and sampling techniques, data collection procedures, research tools, and data analysis procedures are all included in this chapter's discussion of the research methodology. The part also analyzes the reliability and validity of the research instruments before discussing the ethical concerns.

3.1 Research Design

In order to gather, analyze, and present the research findings, I used the mixed methods strategy that included both qualitative and quantitative research designs. More specifically, I used cross sectional survey research and case study research approaches drawn from both the quantitative and the qualitative research designs respectively, though with stronger emphasis on the qualitative. Cross-sectional studies are used to depict what was happening at a specified period, since they provide a picture of a specified point in time. In order to describe the experiences of the girl child at that specific time at school and at home, in both rural and urban locations, Taita Taveta and Nairobi

Counties, respectively, were utilized as the target areas. The tool was directed at a variety of groups, including, parents, and students from selected counties, schools, households, and courses. In-depth analysis of the prevalent social phenomenon was also possible due to the study's utilization of case studies (in the teaching and learning spaces for the girl child; home and school. A case study gives a more in-depth analysis of specific findings, (Zheng, 2015). I used the descriptive and the comparative study methodologies for the quantitative research design. A phenomenon that is described using statistics like percentages, average, and frequencies in a descriptive study technique. This was helpful in addressing aspects of the study such as how the girl child interacted with their teachers and parents, enrollment and the dropout rates, the amount of homework given in class, the amount of time the kids spent at home and at school, and how many of them did house chores while at home, among others.

On the other hand, the approach of comparative studies was utilized to compare with the connections between different variables. It made it easier for me to compare things like the quality of education provided to the girl child in rural and urban settings, enrollment by gender, the amount of time spent at home and at school, and the participation in the domestic tasks, among other things. On the other hand, the design and the qualitative research focused on design- effect and analysis, on the other hand was concerned with cause/effect aspects in which multiple realities may be rooted in the respondents‟ perceptions. In the qualitative research there is a focus on comprehension and meaning based on stories and observation instead of data.

Through the direct data collection of participant narratives, the study intended to understand the participant's world view. I collected data using triangulation approach to increase the reliability of

the results based on the use of the various, sampling techniques to collect data (interviews, observations, field notes, and document analysis. While the study's qualitative research allowed me to address on the issues of the girl child (how they related to their teachers, or parents, when they left school and when they returned home, how they spent their holidays, and whether they performed household chores while at home, among other items.

3.2 Target Population

The total population (total number of all girl pupils, teachers, heads of schools, and parents in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties, of the people from which the sample may be drawn for the purposes of making inferences. Thus, total number of schools: 225 public and 56 private schools in Nairobi, and 209 public, and 17 private schools in Taita Taveta Counties in Kenya. In addition, I visited the Ministry of Education offices that enabled me to find out on some of teaching and learning materials, and the status of some of the educational officials.

3.3 Description of Samples and Sampling Procedures

The convergent parallel design, in instance, was used in the mixed methods design. As a result, both probability and non-probability sampling methods were applied. The process of probability sampling must give every unit the same chance of being included in the sample (Mugenda and Mugenda 2012). On probability sampling, on the other hand, refers to a number method for choosing any unknown sample unit. Non- probability sampling hence results in samples whose outcomes cannot be generalized to the larger population. The sample is a group of individuals, objects or cases from the accessible target population. The sample in this research included two counties (one rural and one urban): Nairobi and Taita Taveta, four teachers per school two male and two female), five

schools per county, thus, making 10 schools in total and 160 pupils for both rural and urban representations.

3.3.1 Sampling Matrix of the Respondents

Table 3.1. Sampling Matrix of the Respondents

Categories	Target Population	Sample	Sampling Techniques
Counties	47 Counties In Kenya	2 Counties (1 Rural &1 Urban)	Stratified Sampling Purposive Random Sampling
Teachers	All Teachers of basic education in Nairobi And Taita Taveta Counties.	4 per school(male& female;10x4:40 Teachers	Stratified Sampling Purposive Random Sampling
Pupils	All pupils of basic education in Nairobi and Taita Taveta Counties	Primary Lower: 8 Primary Upper:8 16 x10:160 pupils	Stratified Sampling Purposive Random Sampling
Parents	All parents of basic education in Nairobi and Taita Taveta Counties.	4 per school (male or female);10x4= 40 parents	Stratified Sampling Purposive Random Sampling
Schools	All Schools from Nairobi& Taita Taveta Counties	5 schools each County Taita Taveta;5 Rural schools Nairobi:5schools; Total 10 Schools	Stratified Sampling Purposive Random Sampling

Source: Field 2019

The 2010 Kenyan Constitution states that there are 47counties in the nation, including:

Samburu, Trans-Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, Elgeyo, Marakwet, Nandi, Baringo, Laikipia, Nakuru, Narok, Kajiado, Kericho, Bomet, Kakamega, Vihiga, Bungoma, Busia, Siaya, Kisumu, Homa Bay, Migori, Kisii, Nyamira, Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi, Tana River, Lamu, Taita Taveta, Garissa, Wajir, Mandera, Marsabit, Isiolo, Meru, Tharaka, Nithi,

Embu, Kitui, Machakos, Makueni, Nyandarua, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Muranga, Kiambu, Turkana, West Pokot, and Nairobi.

Using multi-stage sampling, a more complex form of cluster sampling that includes two or more phases in sampling selection, I first selected all the counties in Kenya as indicated above, and then I sorted them into groups. Two clusters- rural and urban counties were used as the foundation for investigation. It has been highlighted that the social fabric of Kenya's counties is varied. Despite Kenya's fast urbanization, data sheets indicate that a majority 42 out 47 counties (89.4%) still have a significant rural population and only 5(10.6%) are urban counties, (Kenya Mark Sheets, 2011).

It is noted Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and Eldoret were designated as the urban counties for the purposes of this study. I randomly selected two counties (Nairobi) as an urban and Taita Taveta that presented the rural. The randomly selected sample was intended to provide an accurate representation of the entire population. For instance, the five counties' names were written on folded pieces of paper for the sampling and the same was done for the 42 rural counties. The sample that was chosen randomly was meant to not be biased in the representation of the total population.

The sampling involved writing names of the five counties and did the same for the 42 counties on pieces of paper which were then folded and randomly picked. As per this sampling procedure, the picking happened to fall on Nairobi County to represent urban counties in Kenya. The remaining counties listed above are considered as rural. The same procedure and sampling was then used to select the rural county, thus, Taita Taveta County was selected to present the rural counties. The need to select both a rural and urban county was for purposes of representation as rural alone or urban alone would not represent the Kenyan situation. Each area stood to give different educational experiences for the girl child, thus, incisive approach to education. In order to accurately depict

Kenya, it was necessary to choose both an urban and rural county. Kenya cannot be accurately being represented by either one alone of the counties. As each of the locale offers the girl child a unique educational experience; as a result, the educational strategy selection was inclusive.

3.3.3 Sampling of Teachers

To sample the teachers, I used stratified sampling technique. Stratified random sampling involved the division of a population into smaller sub-groups known as strata. The question could perhaps be: "*Why use the stratified sampling technique?"* I used stratified sampling to highlight differences between groups in a population of education space. The ability to obtain a sample population that most accurately represents the overall population being investigated while ensuring that each subgroup if interest is represented makes stratified random sampling one popular technique employed by researcher. It ensures that "*each subsection of interest is represented*". The teachers from both Counties (Taita Taveta and Nairobi) were divided into two groups/strata, namely, Lower Primary and Upper Primary levels.

The teachers were further stratified into male and female. Then I used random sampling to select a representative teacher per strata yielding two representatives, 2 males and 2 females for Upper primary and a similar number for Lower primary. Thus, 4 teachers were selected per school, 20 per county, and a total of 40 teachers were selected for the two sampled counties.

3.3.4 Sampling of the Pupils

I selected pupils using stratified, random and purposive sampling techniques. Strata were drawn based on Upper and Lower Primary levels; girls were selected of different classes. I stratified learners in this category based on class, so each level sampled two female represented. In Upper

Primary two girls were randomly selected per class representing classes 4 to 7. I stratified learners in this category based on their class. Class 8 being an examination class was left out. This totaled to eight representatives for Upper Primary. The same process was used in Lower Primary, that is, Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE), which in Kenya refers to children in nursery and pre-primary levels, then classes 1, 2 and 3. For samples representing ECDE, the researcher depended on the teacher to select girls that were capable of taking part in cognitive mapping. In total eight pupils represented Lower Primary section. I stratified learners in this category based on their class. Thus sample included 16 girls per school, 80 per county and 160 for the two counties. Focused group discussion participants were also drawn from this group, particularly those from the upper primary section.

3.3.5 Sampling of Parents

In each school sampled for the study, I purposively sampled four parents using stratified sampling that enabled me to select two parents of the selected learners in the primary upper section. This was the same case with the lower primary level. Thus the total number sampled was four parents per school. Thus, for the ten sample schools, the parents selected in the two counties were 40. I then used purposive sampling to decide on which pupils to visit at home based on the information captured from the interviewed pupils, such as availability of parents at home, the distance to school, among other considerations.

3.3.6 Sampling of Schools

In each County sampled for the study, I selected five schools. In Taita Taveta, since the settings of the schools appeared closely similar, I listed the schools in the county from which I randomly selected five schools. However, selection in Nairobi called for a different approach. Even though

generally considered an urban county l discovered that the different locations represented different dynamics. In order to have the different situations represented. I purposively selected the following schools:

i. I selected Kibera to represent slum dwellings. The choice of Kibera was based on the fact that it is known to be the oldest, biggest and poorest slum in Nairobi. The slum brings together people from different backgrounds. I then purposively selected Olympic Primary School being the largest and perhaps most cosmopolitan public school in the slum.

ii. I also selected Moi Avenue Primary School to represent the Central Business District. This is a public primary school located along Moi Avenue and represents what dynamics one would look for in a school right at the centre of town.

iii. Another distinct urban setting is estate (where majority of the middle class in the city live). Langata Estate was selected to represent middle class settings such as Nairobi West, South B, South C, Donholm and the like. Langata West Primary School became the choice because it is the most depended on school in the estate.

iv. I also selected Loreto Convert Valley Road to represent Private Institutional Schools. Loreto Convent Valley Road - Primary School is a private girl‟s primary school in Kilimani. This school is run by the religious Loreto Sisters and is the choice of relatively fairly financially endowed parents.

v. St. Nicholas School was also selected as a mixed private school owned by an individual and situated in a suburban environment.

Table 3.2: Selected Sample Schools for the Study

Nairobi County	TaitaTaveta County
1. Loreto Convent Valley Road	1. Ngolia Primary School
2. Langata West Primary School	2. Mghamboni Primary School
3. Olympic Primary School	3. Paranga Primary school
4. St. Nicholas School	4. Kishushe Primary School
5. Moi Avenue Primary School	5. Nyachea Primary School

.

Source: Field Work, 2019.

3.3.7 Sampling Frame

This is the population that the study could access which includes the realistic versions of the population that the study could possibly identify. The assessment targeted all the schools in Nairobi and TaitaTaveta counties in Kenya; school staff; pupils; parents; and administration officers as well as other education stakeholders and the location.

3.4 Unit of Analysis and Units of Observation

The unit of analysis is the major entity that is being analyzed in a study. It is the 'what' or 'who' that is being studied. In this research, the unit of analysis is wholesome education for the girl child. I looked into the challenges facing the girl child in her quest for wholesome education, as discernible in the teaching and learning spaces, which are home and school. The areas of focus were Nairobi and Taita Taveta Counties. Therefore, the unique experiences in the teaching and learning spaces that define the education of the girl child are examined.

On the other hand, the unit of observation was the girls in the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) classes to primary school. I used this unit of observation, concentrating on the experiences and views of the girls in this age and education bracket as they continue with their education. The research also benefited from the experiences of the girls who, for various reasons, have already dropped out of school while they were in the above bracket. To get concrete information about the study's unit of observation, the researcher interviewed individual respondents among them, pupils, teachers and parents. My survey sampled ten schools from Nairobi and TaitaTaveta Counties, from which I listed the following groups: 160 pupils, 40 Parents, 40 teachers, 5 checklists, and 10 records.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

The data collection methods used focused on the basic techniques listed below. For the purpose of the study I used primary and secondary data collection methods, focusing on both quantitative and qualitative approaches. As earlier noted, qualitative data sources were interviewing, field observation, focused group discussions, cognitive mapping and informal discussions, while for the quantitative data sources, the study used questionnaires based on descriptive and comparative study approaches. I go further to elaborate how the data were obtained from the primary sources in the next sections.

3.5.1 Data Collection through Observation

As it is closely related to data collecting and is based on the various sources that must be observed, such as direct observation, participant observations, documentation, archival records, and interviews, observation is viewed as an important facet of science in research. Because the researcher can typica lly gather extensive data regarding a given activity, it is believed that observational study findings

have significant validity. Along with other techniques, I employed the observation method as one to ol for information gathering. In accordance with the study's sample, I chose the regions to be observe d. In order to understand how the involvement responds to the observation schedule, I observed activities involving girl children at both home and school, seeking to understand how the involvement responds to the observation schedule 3.6.1 (Observation schedule).

3.5.2 Data Collection through Interviews

The main method for collecting primary data in research was the use of interviews where data is collected through the administered questionnaires, as further explained in 3.6.2 (Questionnaires). A researcher may select the kinds of inquiries to be made in response to the aims, as further explaine d by Saunders, 2009. In this study, the researcher personally asked the planned questions to students, instructors, parents, and education officials. Due to their effectiveness with a large number student, instructors, parents, and education officials.

Due to their effectiveness with a large number of participants, questionnaires were used. In addition, they guaranteed a return rate and produced data that was both quantitative and qualitative. The major benefit of this strategy was that the respondents were immediate, unique, and provided by the survey on the participants. The respondent in each group was asked to answer the set of questions seeking responses from different groups (pupils, teachers, parents and education officials) was to avoid the biasness that comes with one sided perspectives. Each group responded to an identical list of questions specific to that group.

For the pupils specifically, I used questionnaires to obtain the participants' expression of their attitudes and feelings about their interaction with the teaching and learning spaces (home and school). In addition, I also involved items that were formatted using the "Likert scale" for which 1 =

"*strongly dis*agree" to 5 = "*strongly ag*ree," as demonstrated in Table 4.2 in the next chapter. The responses were summarized and analyzed to produce a score for the measures.

3.5.3 Data Collection through Focused Group Discussion

Focused group discussion (FGD) is defined as a structured discussion that aims at stimulating conversation around a specific subject in research. This is an organized discussion with the goal of igniting discussion around a particular research topic. A facilitator approaches and guides a FGD. The facilitator asks questions, and the participants respond with their ideas and opinions on the topic. The discussions give the researcher the opportunity to cross check one individual's opinion with other opinions gathered to the extent of seeking clarifications. It is expected to be more than just a question and answer session. Focused group discussions created a situation where learners (who were part of the groups) were encouraged to open up and freely share their experiences both at school and at home. Managing of the group discussions involved guiding the group by: the lead person asking questions, facilitating open discussions, moderating the discussion and following up after the discussions for clarification if need arose. FGDs yielded both personal and collective information on the experiences of the girls both at school and at home thereby serving as a crucial source of qualitative data.

For the purposes of this study I mostly used 6-8 participants (girls), mostly from upper primary. This was for purposes of targeting participants who had the ability to express themselves verbally and to share their experiences in a group. My research assistants also joined in the discussions and played a big role in moderating the flow of the group discussions. I conducted one focused group discussion per school, thus, giving a total of ten (10) groups. During the discussions I took note of the responses

while recording at the same time. The recordings served as a point of reference and source of data for transcription.

3.5.4 Data Collection through Cognitive Mapping

Cognitive mapping is a data collection method in research commonly used among children. It involves the child's pattern of gradually developing cognitive abilities to their increasing ability to master skills. It is noted that children's symbolization abilities develop quite early, their ability to orient themselves spatially and to use the important concepts of scale and an external frame of reference develop more gradually, as does their manipulative ability to make accurate, detailed maps. Thus, research, uses a hierarchical sequence for map skills instruction proposed and related to existing map skills programs to indicate their interests. It involves children making drawings that represent places and scenes which are important in their lives and to them. Thus, cognitive mapping technique is a way to provide or collect information on what is really of interest and importance to the children involved.

These may include planned and controlled environments, for example, where a child lives, interacts, visits, or travels in his/her daily life. This was the approach used in this study for ECDE, class 1 and 2 pupils. Since this group could not engage in either serious discussions or written descriptions, I asked them to draw a map showing the major features of their school (such as classrooms, playgrounds, toilets) as well as the roads and paths leading to their Homes. After drawing the maps, I asked the pupils to place blue dots on places where played in the school space and red or orange dots on places where they felt unsafe. The pupils also drew the home space and indicated how they normally used it, indicating their likes and dislikes. I then asked them to give reasons for their

choices of spaces and the indication of the activities that they liked and spaces which they didn't like, whether at school or at home. This approach allowed for responses to arise spontaneously from the pupils.

3.5.5 Secondary Data Collection Methods

According to Sileyew, 2019, secondary data refers to data that was collected by someone other than the user. This data source gives insights into the research area and establishes the research gap(s) that need to be filled by the study. The secondary data sources are in two forms: internal and external. For the purpose of this study, secondary data came from the review of documents both published and unpublished, these included monographs, dissertations, theses, manuscripts, books, articles in journals and review of commentaries and anthologies related to wholesome education for the girl child. In order to achieve the study objectives, I conducted intensive review of documents and reports on wholesome education and in line with the girl child both online and offline modes.

3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments are the fact finding strategies, or tools that are used in research for data collection. The instruments used in this study included: questionnaires, observation schedules, focused group discussion schedule, cognitive mapping schedule, and document analysis schedule. The researcher should ensure that data collection instruments selected ensure validity and reliability so as to give expected results, (Annum, 2017). I used several data collection instruments (triangulation), which enabled me to avoid the deficiency that springs from using one data collection method. The instruments were designed to respond to the research objectives. Data collection instruments being fact finding strategies or tools for data collection are an essential component of the research process, as they enable the researcher to obtain relevant information or gain the experience

of others for purposes of enriching the outcomes of the research. For validity and reliability, I depended largely on the appropriateness of the instruments selected. These were designed according to the objectives of the study which called for quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches.

3.6.1 Observation Schedule

Observation is associated with collecting data through watching and listening to what people naturally do and say. To facilitate the observation process, I prepared an observation schedule which appears below as appendix 7, which involved an active acquisition of information from primary sources. Besides, I also constructed a checklist (appendix 6), to serve as the criteria of all the items that were critical to the jurisdiction of this study. The two instruments enabled me and my field assistants to gather information and make judgments. It was important to have an observation schedule to cover issues such as class size, the age of the learners, availability of teaching materials, number of teachers per school, the physical location of the school and the physical facilities is school, such as toilets and playing grounds. At home the schedule included distance from school to home, physical environment, means of travel home from school, location of the home, house size, number of people at home and activities the child got involved in while at home.

3.6.2 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a data collection instrument consisting of a series of questions that prompt a response from individuals that it is administered to. Questionnaires for this study were designed to collect data from groups and individuals through interviews. Each question was tailored to respond to either of the objectives of the study. I developed four questionnaires to be administered to the

pupils, parents, teachers and education officials, as presented in appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4, respectively.

The questionnaires had both open-ended questions (that gave the respondents the opportunity to respondent in their own words) and closed items (which allowed the respondent to choose one of the given alternatives). The latter type was particularly applicable in the case of the pupils. And since the questionnaires were administered live, this allowed probing of respondents for further clarification where necessary. Each questionnaire had the following sections: background information; opinions on the teaching and learning spaces; and challenges and suggestions on the teaching and learning spaces.

3.6.3 Pupils' Focused Group Discussions Schedule

As earlier pointed out, I conducted one focused group discussion per sampled primary school. The groups consisted of 6 to 8 participants. I moderated the discussions for the purpose of getting in-depth information on the experiences of the girls, at school and at home. The real strength of focused group discussions was to gain insight into the girls' experiences, feelings and opinions, and the reasons for those feelings and opinions about the teaching and learning spaces. I noted that once the girls had warmed up to the group dynamics, they became quite free to share their experiences. The discussions were guided by a predetermined interview schedule included in this study as appendix 5.

3.6.4 Cognitive Mapping Schedule

This was the approach for ECDE and classes 1 and 2 pupils. Since this group could not engage in either intensive discussions or written descriptions, I simply asked them to draw a map showing the major features of their school such as classrooms, playgrounds and toilets as well as the roads and

paths leading to their homes and any other areas they wanted to include. Once the maps were drawn I engaged the pupils in indicating on the maps using blue dots the places they liked to be and red dots, the places they didn't like or felt unsafe. The pupils also drew the home space and indicated how they normally used it, indicating their likes and dislikes. I then slowly and in a friendly manner inquired to get from them the reasons for their choices of spaces and the indication of the activities, that they liked and spaces which they didn't like, whether at school or at home.

This approach allowed for responses to arise spontaneously from the pupils. In some cases, I walked with the pupils from school to their homes. Such walks enabled me to understand the maps, or even to verify the points that the pupils had indicated on their maps, whether they were their favorite places or those they felt unsafe in. This way I would make conclusions on the pupils‟ encounters both at school and at home, and even on the way to or from school. Finally, I used the observation schedule to observe the ongoing activities in the home and school space either indicated in the drawings or based on the explanations.

The activities in the methodology that I used, included the need to get information about: what time they went to school and what time they came back; what they did at school and at home; how much time they spend at home or with their parents and with their teachers; homework/TV; how they spend weekends or time out of school; etc. The target here was to determine the balance between the use of school space vis a vis the home space.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

Validity and reliability are very important aspects of research as they ensure the trustworthiness of the data collected. According to Taherdoost, (2016, p.28-29), validity has been defined as:

> *The degree to which the researcher measured what he or she had set out to measure, it thus, explains how well the collected data covers the actual area of investigation, measure what is intended to be measured.*

Thus, to enhance validity, it required that I use multiple sources to establish a chain of evidence, and data from more than one side. While for reliability, there is need for consistency in results (Ibid).

The ensure content validity I conducted face to face interactions with professionals or experts in the education field and relied on conventional education research methodologies. I also applied triangulation in my methodology. Triangulation was meant:

> …to reduce bias in research, increase the rate of certainty of the research findings, to obtain a variety of information on the same issue, to overcome the deficiencies of single-method studies, viable and widely accepted it increased methodological reliability and the rate of certainty in the research findings and finally, it was used to strengthen each method so as to overcome the deficiencies of the other, to achieve a higher degree of validity and reliability, (Karim, 2007).

Triangulation included: data triangulation, theoretical triangulation, triangulation by investigation, and methodological triangulation. I sourced information from different categories of people on the same subject. I also used research assistants to help ask the same questions at different times, just to ensure that the information given was valid and consistent. The use of several data collection methods enabled me to avoid the "deficiency that springs from using only one data collection method", (ibid).

Meanwhile, I also sought confirmation on the validity and reliability of the instruments and their application by conducting a pilot study. The pilot study ensured that the research instruments were tested to correct any anomalies before they were finally administered to the sampled population for the purpose of reliability. I did my pilot study in Kajiado County. The piloting helped me in knowing

whether there were any ambiguities in any of the items of the instruments and if the information received could meaningfully respond to the analysis in relation to stated objectives. According to Rossi et al. (1983) 20 to 50 responses examined before the main study, is generally adequate to determine flaws in research instruments so as to facilitate its refinement. For the purpose of this study, I examined 30 respondents randomly selected during the piloting in Kajiado County.

The findings on wholesome education were also validated and corroborated through interviews with a number of sources considered to have insider/outsider perspectives. These were respondents who have interacted with at least two different education systems: Kenyan/African and Japanese, or Finish. Two of the respondents have had exposure to the Japanese and Kenyan education systems and the other three have been exposed to the Finnish and Kenyan, and Finnish and Ghanaian systems, respectively.

3.8 Description of Data Analysis Procedures

I approached data analysis from the perspective of Cohen et al. (2007), who see it as a process from organization of data under headings to conclusive analysis of the ways in which the data contributes to answering the research objectives. Based on this, I coded the data to come up with constituent categories and themes to organize the research findings. The first step in quantitative data analysis was to describe or summarize data using descriptive statistics (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). I used descriptive statistics to summarize the quantitative data into frequencies and percentages. *Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20* is what I used to code data and to conduct statistical analysis.

Meanwhile qualitative data analysis was an ongoing process, as the analysis in qualitative research starts from the early stages of conceptualization of the research and continues in the field during data collection. I carried out data within convergent mixed methods design by ensuring that the two databases are analyzed separately and then brought together in a process of data transformation. For this reason, I conducted separate analyses for quantitative and qualitative databases then merging the results in addressing the research objectives. After editing the documents, I had accumulated so as to isolate any that had response errors, I transcribed the data obtained from the open ended questionnaires, focused group discussion findings, observation findings, cognitive mapping and document analysis guides, and typed text. The next stage was coding and developing categories or themes. A code is a name or a phrase that is used to provide meaning to the segment (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010). I carefully read the transcribed data line by line, and then divided the data into meaningful analytical units or segments. I then quantified these segments according to their categories and processed them, by uploading them on the computer, ready to subject the data to SPSS interpretation procedures. I did this process until all the segments of the transcribed data were tabulated.

On the other hand, the responses from cognitive mapping guide, focused group discussion guide, observation schedule guide and document analysis guide were coded and written, open ended items were carefully analyzed through a content analysis approach, coded and thematized. Narratives, direct quotations, interpretive reports as well as excerpts were written down to depict the situation on the ground. I examined all entries with the same code and then merged these themes and categories into patterns by finding links and connections among the themes and categories.

For the Qualitative data analysis, I followed the following steps/process: I prepared and organized data, printed out all transcripts, gathered all my notes, documents, and other materials that were available from the field, I reviewed and explored the data, I created codes and I reviewed the codes, revised and combined them into related themes. I then did transcriptions of the presentations and embarked on analysis. The items for analysis arose from the analytical guide in appendix 8, which is a set of questions that targeted to identify and interrogate the information sought from all that the research had brought together.

According to Creswell's (2014), basic idea of convergence, mixed methods in data analysis is by the use of several approaches: a side by side, data transformation, code counting and joint display of the data. In this study I used a side by side approach because Creswell recommends that one may use it to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data by making the comparison within the discussion. The process of merging data took the following: analysis and interpretation of both data according to the research objectives, presenting the findings in descriptive statistics, merging results according to the themes of the research objectives, interpretation of data using qualitative results to explain quantitative findings and qualitative results to supplement findings through narrative reporting and written notes. Finally, the research findings were presented systematically and discussed objectively. Data were analyzed, interpreted and conclusions drawn from the findings in relation to the research objectives. Although in this study I used both qualitative and quantitative designs greater emphasis was on the qualitative. This further defined the use of the Alternative Hypothesis (H_A): as used in qualitative research, which are not tested. However, as per the findings hypotheses about social phenomena emerged from the research data. As confirmed in qualitative research, this study is rather theory building not theory testing. However, the result of a qualitative study could be a hypothesis

that could be tested using qualitative research. Thus from invalidated assumption, the validated hypotheses was based on the findings.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

I consider ethical issues an important part of research. Based on Bryman and Bell (2007), the following issues represent the most important principles related to ethical considerations in this thesis:

> … *research participants were not subjected to harm in any way whatsoever; respect for the dignity of research participants was prioritized; full consent was obtained from the participants before they could be involved in the study; the protection of the privacy of research participants was ensured; adequate level of confidentiality of the research data was ensured and the anonymity of individuals kept*, (p.67).

Besides, organizations participating in the research were well informed of what the research was all about and there wasn't any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research. Affiliations of any kind, sources of funding, as well as any possible conflicts of interests were declared. In addition, communication in relation to the research was done with honesty and transparency, misleading information and the representation of primary data findings in a biased manner was avoided.

Meanwhile, participation of respondents was based on voluntary basis;

> *…a respondent had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage if they wished to do so and throughout the study, the researcher maintained the highest level of objectivity in discussions and analyses*, in line with Bryman and Bell (2007).

The purpose, expected results and procedures of the study as well as possible risks and benefits were well explained to the participants and the researcher informed them of their right to either decline to participate, or withdraw from the research even after the study had started, as well as the anticipated consequences of doing so. The participants were promised confidentiality and privacy. They were

likewise not put in awkward situations, during the sessions of field work. Finally, the study also adhered to the procedural requirement of applying for permission from Nacosti, the body that is mandated to grant permission for research in Kenya. Before the administration of research instruments, I applied for a permit to go to the field as per the guidelines of the university and the requirement of field research in Kenya. I got the research permit from Nacosti (the government research control office in Nairobi) and thereafter I recruited two research assistants with a background in educational research management, policies and curriculum.

The fieldwork took a total of eight weeks of collecting data from Taita Taveta and Nairobi counties. This was then followed by occasional visits to some sites to verify information that was not clear. The researcher sought the permit from the Ministry of Education to conduct research in the regions.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided research design and methodology. It has described the target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments as well as data collection and data analysis procedures. The next chapter will provide a spot check on the utilization of teaching and learning Spaces in TaitaTaveta and Nairobi counties as reflected in data analysis and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION AND PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

Chapter four chronicles my experiences and observations made during my field visits. The chapter is a direct reporting on my field interaction as I went collecting the primary data that informs chapter 5 to come after. It gives the reader the opportunity to accompany me in the field through their reading. The chapter is the actual execution of the methodology described in the preceding chapter (3).

In addition to visiting the Ministry of Education for some background information, I also visited sampled schools and homes as the spaces within which children acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that define them in the society. Within the scope of wholesome education for girl children, the fieldwork targeted the different indicators that significantly contribute to the child's acquisition of skills for wholesome development. Following visits to sampled homes and schools in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties, as well as interviewing the sampled respondents; I give a report here which forms the primary data for this study. The chapter contains sections which represent the data according to the following:

- Findings at the Ministry of Education.
- The respondents‟ demographic characteristics.
- Girl Children's experiences in the school space.
- Girl Children's experiences in the home space.

4.1 Findings at the Ministry of Education

Before visiting schools and homes, I found it necessary to first visit Ministry of Education offices at Jogoo House, Nairobi, the ministry's headquarters, to ask for permission to visit schools as well as getting some background information on the country's education policy matters and management. This was necessary in order to equip myself with what would be a point of reference. The data from this visit helped me in comparing what the policy stipulated and what the situation was on the ground, thereby informing what I labeled as "policy versus implementation". The respondents from the ministry shared with me on the leadership of the ministry since Kenya's independence, as well as the country's education policy. I also got exposed to other policies that the ministry had on the shelves. These included literature on Vision 2030; Gender equity; Free primary education; Safe schools for girls; Quality assurance in education; Peace education; and Child friendly spaces, among other documents I got at the ministry.

The purpose of taking interest in the leadership at the ministry over the years was because of the recognition that the leadership has had influence on how the education policies are implemented. It was indeed notable that the ministers (now cabinet secretaries) appointed to head the education portfolio are not always experts in the area, nor, do they have education specialization. This can be a big flaw and could greatly affect the decisions that are made at both policy and implementation levels, as we shall see in the next chapter. The situation may be worsened by the fact that in some schools, as we found out in Taita Taveta County, some primary school teachers and especially for the ECDE section are not trained.

4.2 Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of interest to this study were information on respondents‟ age bracket and education level; learners‟ level of satisfaction within the teaching and learning spaces; and background information on the selected counties.

4.2.1 Socio –Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The following table represents Socio –Demographic characteristics of the respondents (parents, teachers, pupils and education officers. The findings are presented as follows in the table that follows below:

Table 4.1 Socio – Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Item	*Value Label*	*Number*	*Valid Percentage*
Age Brackets, Pupils	03-10	40	25
	11-13	70	43.75
	14- 16	30	18.75
	17-20	20	12.5
Age bracket, Teachers	21 – 30	05	12
	31 – 40	19	48
	41 – 50	10	25
	51 – Above	06	15
Age Brackets, Parents	21 – 30	03	07
	31 – 40	20	50
	41 – 50	07	18
	Missing	10	25
Education Level			
Rural teachers	P1	18	90
	P2	02	10
Education level Urban teachers	P1	12	60
	P2	02	10

	Degree	06	30
Rural Parents	Class 4-8	13	65
	Form 4	04	20
	Degree	02	10
Urban Parents	Class 4-8	01	05
	F4	04	20
	Degree	03	15
	Masters	09	45
	Ph. D	03	15
		01	05

Source: Field, 2020.

Data depicted in Table 4.1 shows that learners' age brackets ranged between 3 to 20 years, with a majority 110(68.75%) aged between 03 – 13 years, and 50(31.25%) ranging within the age bracket of 14- 20 years. The observations in the field, revealed that Nairobi County was the one with a majority of the age 3 learners, meaning that children in urban areas started schooling at a relatively earlier age, thus, allowing girl children as young as 3 years to be in school. Meanwhile, Taita Taveta County had some girls at age 20 still in primary school. This is because some started school at an advanced age, even as late as 10years, the reason for this scenario being security. Often parents whose homes were far from the schools where their children went delayed to take their girl children to school fearing for their security. Consequently, a girl starting at ten or above was likely to reach nineteen or twenty before clearing Standard 8. If not on issues of security, some parents may sometimes keep their daughters at home to help in the household chores like baby-sitting, as the former worked in the farms.

For the teachers, a majority 34(85%) were aged between 21-50, with only 6(15%) being above 50. The teachers, therefore, were mature enough to give views on the experiences of the girl child in

both Nairobi and Taita Taveta Counties. Meanwhile, the teachers of 50 and above were quite instrumental as a memory on education matters in the days passed because they had experiences of the 8:4:4 system of education and others before it.

For the parents, I was able to get 30(75%) all of whom were between the age bracket of 21 –50 years. A significant number 10(25) of those I hoped to meet were missing. This notwithstanding, I was able to get most if not all the information I wanted.

On the level of education of the teachers that I interacted with, all were trained at the following grades: 18(90%) of the rural teachers had P1 certificate, while 2(10%) had P2. In the urban, a significant number 6(30%) were degree holders, with 12(60%) being P1 and 2(10%) P2 certificate holders, respectively. The teachers in both setups appeared competent and enthusiastic on matters dealing with children in general and girl children in particular.

The information on parents shows that majority of those in the rural, 13(65 %) are not highly educated, their education level being between class 4 to 8, another number 4(20%) reached Form 4, while *2(10%)* had a degree. In Nairobi County a good number of parents were well educated. There was at least 1(5%) with a PhD, 3(15%) with a Master's degree 9(45%) with a first degree and only 7(35%) had Form 4 education and below. The education level of the parents may be said to contribute to the parents‟ understanding of the value of education for the girl child at the formative years, going by the views from parents in Taita Taveta and those from Nairobi County.

4.2.1.2 An assessment on learners' satisfaction in utilization of the teaching and learning spaces

This section represents responses by girl children on their experiences both at school and at home. The responses serve as a measure of their satisfaction with the conditions they confront, or

lack of it. For each item the learners were required to '*strongly agree (SA); agree (A); be undecided (U); disagree (D); or strongly disagree (SD)'*. For each item, a tick (□) was to be placed to indicate the level that best represented the respondent's opinion. **Key:** '*Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Undecided (U) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD').* The respondents are as follows:

Table 4.2 Responses on the level of satisfaction in the utilization of the spaces in Taita Taveta County (n=80)

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
School Activities (Space)					
I do assignments every day	60(75)	10(13)	1(1)	4(5)	5(6)
ave some time to play at school	5(6)	5(6)	-	10(13)	60(75)
I find challenges on my way to and from school.	62(77)	10(13)	1(1)	2(3)	5(6)
Both girls and boys have equal opportunities to be in school.	40(50)	20(25)	1(1)	9(11)	10(13)
Home Activities(Space)					
I carry home school assignments every day.	78(97)	2(3)	-	-	-
I am able to complete my school assignments from home every day.	40(50)	20(25)	-	9(11)	11(14)
Both boys and girls do household chores.	-	-	-	60(75)	20(25)
I get enough time with my parents every day.	20(25)	20(25)	1(1.25)	20(25)	19(23.75)

Source: Field, 2020.

The items capturing the experiences of girl children at school in TaitaTaveta included their experiences on the journey to or from school, their experiences at school, their interaction with their peers and with their teachers and the availability of facilities for use. Meanwhile, the girls‟ experiences in the home space measured their participation in household chores while at home, how much school assignments they carried home, how much time they spent at home and with their parents and issues of violence they may experience while at home. The findings on their level of satisfaction were then presented as shown in the table 4.3 above.

Table 4.3 Responses on the level of satisfaction in the utilization of the spaces in Nairobi County (n=80)

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
School Activities (Space)					
I do assignments every day	70(87.5)	5(6.25)	1(1.25)	2(2.5)	2(2.5)
I have some time to play at school	18(22.5)	18(22.5)	1(1.25)	22(27.5)	21(26.25)
I find challenges on my way to and from school.	40(50)	30(37)	3(4)	3(4)	4(5)
Both girls and boys have equal opportunities to be in school.	40(50)	30(37)	3(4)	3(4)	4(5)
Home Activities(Space)					
I carry home school assignments every day.	30(37)	40(50)	3(4)	4(5)	3(4)
I am able to complete my school assignments from home every day.	40(50)	30(37)	3(4)	4(5)	3(4)
Both boys and girls do household chores.	6(7.5)	5(6.25)	1(1.25)	62(77.5)	6(7.5)

I get enough time with my parents every day.	8(10)	10(13)	2(3)	30(37)	30(37)

Source: Field, 2020.

The items capturing the experiences of girl children at school in Nairobi County, like TaitaTaveta, included their challenges on the journey to or from school, their experiences at school, their interaction with their peers and with their teachers and the availability of facilities for use. Meanwhile, the girls‟ experiences in the home space measured their participation in household chores while at home, how much school assignments they carried home, how much time they spent at home and with their parents and issues of violence they may experience while at home. The findings on their level of satisfaction were then presented as shown in the table 4.4 above.

What appears to come through in the study in terms of measuring attitudes through a Likert scale is that the learners carry, do and complete school assignment at home. While the respondents reveal that both boys and girls do not do household chores and neither do they have enough time with their parents. These responses are later displayed in the context in more in-depth through more probing into certain issues by the focused group discussions, observation and cognitive mapping discussions with the various respondents as will be discussed later.

4.2.2 Background information on the selected counties

The two counties Taita Taveta and Nairobi were selected to represent the rural and urban settings respectively. The two settings represent different scenarios as teaching and learning spaces for girl children.

4.2.2.1 Taita Taveta County

Taita Taveta is one of the 47 counties in Kenya: it is situated in the coastal region, lying to the South West. It is composed of the following sub-regions: *Voi, Mwatate, Wundanyi, Tausa, Taveta and Mwambirwa.* The county has 275 primary schools, with a total enrolment of 88% for boys and 12% for girls, with a dropout rate for boys at 2.6% while for girls is at 1.2%. The following primary schools were randomly selected; *Ngolia, Mghamboni, Paranga, Kishushe and Nyachea*.

According to the TaitaTaveta County Government's 2015 annual development plan for 2016-2017, county is divided into four sub- county units known as *Voi, Mwatate, Taveta* and Taita. It is one of the six counties of the Coastal regions of Kenya, around 200 kilometers Northwest of Mombasa and 360 kilometers Southern, Nairobi, Kitui and Makueni Counties are to the east, Kwale and Kilifi Counties are to the north Tana River is to the North, Kajiado County is to the south, and the Republic of Tanzania is the South West. The country has a total of 17, 084 km2, of the Tsavo National Parks make up 62%. The Tsavo has unique characteristics

The county encounters frequent periods of drought, which causes loss and suffering, thus, placing heavy strain on the county's economy. Frequent failures of rains have resulted into need for relief supplies. As a result, human wildlife conflicts are on the increase due to wildlife invading the farming areas in search of water. The effect is crop destruction and predation of livestock. Other challenges experienced in the county include poor road network, inadequate health facilities, insufficient drugs in the hospitals and the absence of diagnostic equipment. As a result, people incur high costs seeking health services either in private hospitals in or outside the country with the most popular destination being Moshi in Tanzania. Unemployment has led to alcoholism and other types of drug abuse, insecurity, restlessness amongst the youth and other anti-social behavior. This

environment has effects on the girl child. Girl education is given little attention. School enrollment and retention of girls lag behind that of boys.

The communities found in the county are four separate but closely-related tribes:

> Wadawida (Taita), Wasaghala (Sagalla), Kasighau and Wataveta (Taveta). The Taita and Taveta dialects include; the Mbololo, Bura, Wusi, Kidaya, Mghange, Chawia, Mwanda, Kishamba, Werugha, Wumingu, and Wundanyi. While the Kisaghalla and Kasighau stand on their own as self-sustaining dialects.

Observably, whether among the Taita, Taveta, Kisaghalla, or Kasighau, no environment appears to offer a conducive environment for the education of girl children.

4.2.2.2 Nairobi County

Nairobi is a cosmopolitan county which I used to represent urban teaching and learning spaces for girl children. Relatively very small in area, compared to Taita Taveta, Nairobi's population is huge, estimated at six million, with the bigger portion of this population residing in slums and informal settlements. Nairobi also differs from Taita Taveta in a very significant way. In terms of schools, the ratio of privately owned schools to public schools is about five to one. Indeed, while a whole vast estate may have one public primary school, there is a likelihood of coming across several other schools, either run by individuals or by the church. And, perhaps given the preferences that parents may have for certain schools (particularly private schools), there is a complex crisscrossing of school buses as the buses ferry learners from estate A to a school in estate B, or vice-versa, sometimes more than an hour's drive away, and further slowed down by traffic jams that almost always occur at every next corner or street.

Nairobi as a metropolis and capital city of Kenya is perhaps the largest city in the region. It is a major communication hub that serves as the headquarters of many regional and international bodies.

This makes it a melting pot where many people of various backgrounds meet and interact. It is among the most populated counties in the country. The 2009 national census seems to indicate that Nairobi has nearly all Kenyan communities represented. It has the following constituencies:

> Makadara, Kamukunji, Starehe, Langata, Dagoretti North and Dagoretti South, Kibra, Westlands, Kasarani, Embakasi East and Embakasi West.

Nairobi like all other third world cities, experiences the unique socio-economic problems associated with such cities. First, since a majority of its population commutes, and due to unreliable public transport, many opt for personal cars, resulting in crippling traffic jams. One could conclude that perhaps Nairobi operates nearly 50% of the vehicles in Kenya. A study done recently, across the world on the top ten congested major cities revealed that Russia's capital city, Moscow was the top most congested city, with Beijing at number two, Brussels at number eight, with Nairobi closely behind Brussels. This congestion has resulted into loss of hours on the road.

Cases of insecurity are many, perhaps as a result of rapid urbanization that has placed high demands that essential security services cannot cope with. There is, thus, a high rate of crime in various suburbs of the city which leads one to conclude that no place is safe in Nairobi. It is, however, expanding fast and promising to become a national and regional economy for the region and the world at large, particularly given its technology and both road and air transport.

Nairobi, though, has a dark side. It is a city of stark inequalities with serious infrastructural challenges that may yet stall its rise to the top and it faces the fatigue of infrastructure. It has been noted that millions of people from the rural areas who come to Nairobi end up in slums such as Majengo, Mlolongo, Kibera, Huruma, Gikomba, Kawangware, Kangemi, Mukuru, Korogocho and Mathare. Thus, Nairobi is still a divided city with a big gap between the very rich and the poor living below the poverty line.

4.3 Girl Children's Experiences in the School Space

This section assesses utilization of school as a teaching and learning space for girl children in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya. I noted that there are marked differences between the situation obtaining in Taita Taveta as a rural setting and Nairobi as an urban setting of remarkable cosmopolitanism, as far as the school environment is concerned. The section focuses on selected parameters that I set out to investigate. These included: journey to school; learning experiences observable at school; teaching and learning resources; and enrolment and retention and academic performance.

4.3.1 Journey to School

This section starts by describing the journey to school for girl children in Taita Taveta before discussing the same in Nairobi. Eileen, (2004; p.8) argues that:

> …if schools are located far from communities or students must travel on unsafe or nonexistent roads, creative solutions to these problems must be found for child friendly spaces.

Children in Taita Taveta County schools experience risky and long distances to school from home, as well having to deal with the danger of roaming elephants. In Kenya just like other parts of the developing world, the nearest primary school to a particular community might be an hour long walk away or even more. As a result of long distances to school girls are confronted with dangers, including violence on the way to or from school. Some common forms of violence include verbal insults, sexual harassment and being beaten on the way to and from school, by their boy counterparts or men along the way, including *boda boda* motorcycle riders. As a result, some parents opt to keep their daughters at home for safety purposes out of harm's way. Those who manage the long distance

often arrive late and tired, thus, affecting their concentration in class and other school activities. One girl narrates her experiences below:

> *I normally wake up at about 5:00.a.m, when still dark. I struggle out of bed and fetch water for my family. I sometimes have to milk the cow if I want breakfast, and then embark on the five kilometre walk to school on rough terrain. I cross the river, jumping from rock to rock as there is no bridge, then walk uphill and downhill through forests, my greatest fear being the wild animals that one often meets on the way, particularly elephants and dangerous snakes. If there is a drizzle that morning, or evening when coming back, I sometimes have to seek shelter in strangers" houses. After a trip of more than an hour, I arrive at school wet, tired and already hungry. I must then make effort to concentrate for a full day's schooling before making the return journey home.*

Another 14-year-old girl had this to say:

> *The way to and from school, it is very insecure as there are many bushes since this is wildlife reserve area. Sometimes people are attached by wild animals such as snakes. We have also heard of girls being raped on their way to and from school. To make sure that we get some assistance to reach school and to come back home in the evening some of my friends have befriended "boda boda" men who sometimes carry then on their motorbikes and even give them some money. (FGD with school girls aged 12-14 years)*

It goes without saying that the two scenarios above cannot facilitate a conducive environment for learning for the girl children involved. One concludes that even when they are school, their minds remain occupied by the threats on the way home, besides lacking the requisite energy to run through the school programme. Meanwhile, the journey to school in Nairobi County too has its challenges. As I pointed out, the county has a total of 191 public primary schools distributed in its eight divisions. These are supplemented by private schools that are estimated to be more than triple this number of public schools. And with majority of learners in these schools using one or the other means of transport to reach school, one can easily guess the kind of congestion that is likely to be found in the city. School children in Nairobi County, particularly those learning in private schools, are mostly picked and taken to school by either the school buses or parents' private vehicles.

Some, however, use public transport while others walk to school. From my general observation children who go to school in vehicles continue to experience traffic jams that sometimes run into hours. To reduce the number of hours in the traffic, some school transport opt to start early in order to be in time. For some, the day begins as early as 4:00 am. Below, an 11-year-old girl in class five, learning in a private school narrates her daily experience:

> *My mother normally wakes me up daily during the school days at 4:00 am, and by 4:30 am, we are at the bus stop waiting for our school bus. When am picked by the bus, l sleep with my bag at the back, until the driver wakes me up when we reach our school. The journey may take two hours when our classes start at around 6.30 a.m.*

Meanwhile the evening extends as children are also caught up in the evening traffic jam. They may arrive home as late as 8.00 to 9.00 pm. The worst experience is when it rains and some roads flood. Arriving this late poses serious safety questions for the children, more so the girls. Children in public schools have a different narrative. A majority tend to use public transport, popularly referred to as *matatus*, while some walk to school. This category of children are exposed to greater risks in the process of going to or coming back from school. Of course the *matatus* don't take them directly to their schools. Sometimes the *matatus* drop them at risky stages and no one seems to take responsibility for their safety.

From observations I noticed the children enter the *matatus* with bags on their backs and they are not given space to sit. Instead they are made to stand, squeezing amidst other passengers, who unwillingly squeeze to create space them. Often, some fall and get hurt in their hurry to board or to alight. Going to school, therefore, can be such a hassle, which being a daily undertaking, can actually create negative feelings towards school. Indeed, girl children towards their teen age find such type of squeezing quite uncomfortable.

The discomfort linked to the travel to school in Nairobi could perhaps be the cause of poor performance and lack of concentration in class that some of the teachers we talked to complained about. Indeed, for the past few years, the performance of Nairobi County in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) has met criticism from various stakeholders. Even though traffic congestion is not the only major cause of the poor performance, it could highly contribute to it. Apparently, by the time the children arrive in school many of them are already tired and sleepy, so they find it difficult to concentrate in class. Many of the pupils do not finish up their homework properly, as many of them do it without the supervision of their parents. Some of the children actually do their homework on the bus since they arrived home the previous night, late and tired. As a parent, mother of three daughters and a teacher in one of the schools I visited narrates:

> *I don't come home early to spend enough time with my three children. Their dad works with UN and he is in Tunisia. My girls also come at home very late and with tons of homework in at least four subjects every day.*

The delay on the road in the jam eventually affects the children in a big way. The teacher and mother quoted above, for instance, notes that the girls lack playing time, which of course could be important for their physical growth. Apparently, the Physical Education (P.E.) and Games lessons have in many schools been reduced or even cancelled to cover for the time lost sitting in the traffic.

A teacher recounted one day during the rainy season:

> *I was the one accompanying the children that rainy day when the school bus stalled near South C Mosque at 8pm. I was with 18 children on board when we were blocked by flash floods and remained stranded for the better part of the night. It wasn't until 3am in the morning, that we were rescued.*

Another incident as narrated by a teacher in a different school was that sometime in 2017, thieves attacked their school bus at around 5:30 am on Mombasa Road, near Villa Franca Estate. The bus had set out to start picking the pupils at 4 am. According to the teacher the thieves managed to get

access to the bus and attached the driver as the pupils watched. Such incidents again begin to raise questions about the safety of the children even on school transport.

During my observation schedule, I got rather curious at the culture of bags on the children's backs. No single child walked without a bag and the majority seemed to struggle under the weight of their bags. I noted that a significant number of very young children carried bags that were nearly 50 per cent of their own body weight. This I thought may risk back pain and other related disorders. I went an extra mile to find out what was carried in the bags. One girl who opened her bag for me was carrying a toy watch, two lunch boxes, a spare pullover, a bottle of water, and a number of text and exercise books. When asked if she uses all the items stuffed in her school bag, I realized that in fact some of the stuff in the bag could be disposed of, or left at home since they were not needed on daily basis. One of my research assistants jokingly remarked that perhaps the heavy bags were necessary to symbolize the work load that these children have in their school life.

I observed children as young as three years who were waiting to be picked by school buses at wee hours in order to beat Nairobi's crazy traffic. This is an issue that has split the people into two. Some say the early hours are a necessary evil that ensures children get the very best out of education while others say it is the surest way of killing our children. Why this early? Yet the school rule has defined that classes should start 8 am. Some of the respondents said that children need up to eight hours of sleep and anything less than that is taking their childhood away, which may turn them into rebellious adults. They argued that sleep is very important for children. However, majority of the schools are far away and considering Nairobi's traffic, the institutions normally opt to pick the pupils very early in the morning before the jam. Thus, they start at four.

Incidentally the rule of the school bus is that those who are dropped home last, which as already noted, could be at any time between 8pm and 9pm will be picked up first. And those who are picked up first have to go round a number of estates as other pupils board the bus. By the time the day breaks and most of the vehicles are on the road, scenes of pupils sleeping in buses in the morning traffic gridlocks are the order of the day. Most schools don't see a change from this in the near future, especially for upper primary children who need more time for study. As one teacher opined, "pick the kid later then they reach school very late". Incidentally, these very early hours are contrary to the Traffic Amendment Act passed by Parliament in 2016, which requires that all school buses operate between 6am and 6pm.

4.3.2 Teaching Staff

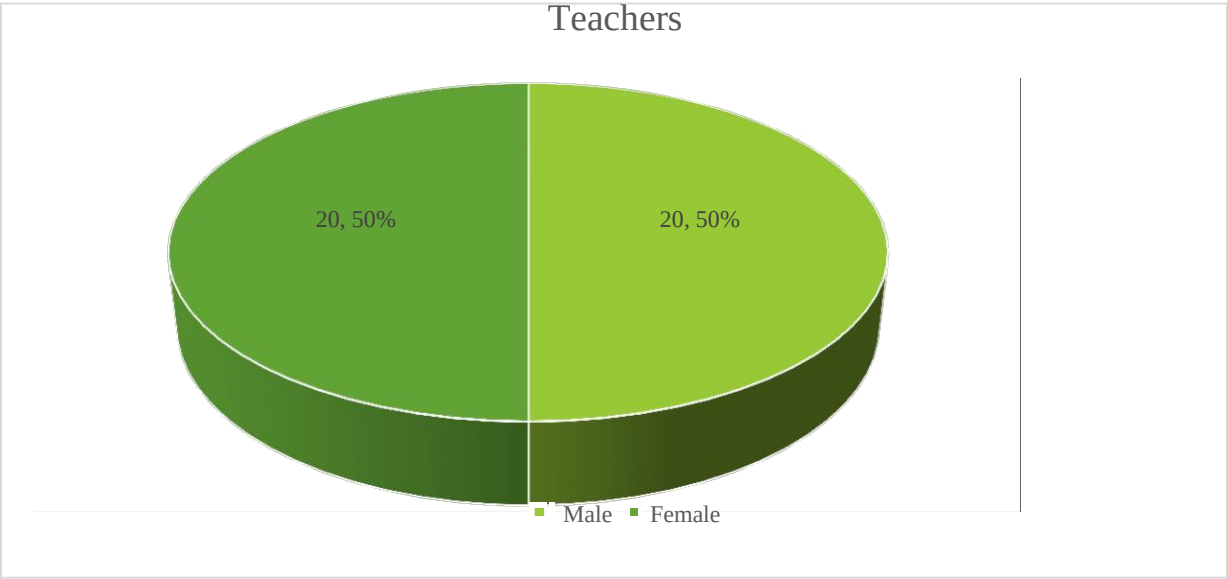


Figure 4. 1 Gender based on the Teachers participation in the study (n=40)

Source: Field, 2020

The Fig 4.2 above shows the total number of teacher respondents who participated in the study, half 20(50%) were male and an equal number were female. It was important to involve teachers in the

study because they are key drivers in the school as a teaching and learning space for children's education.

In my investigation on the state of staffing in Taita Taveta. I found out that in most schools the population ratio of students was high as compared to the number of teachers available. Averagely, teacher/pupil ratio was approximately 1:70 as noted in most schools. This is against the recommended maximum rate of 1:40 according to Kwacha& George, 1997. One respondent, in line with the challenges experienced by teachers lamented thus:

> *I am a class teacher of class three, I don't follow the procedure of teaching as defined by the lesson plan, and I cannot even manage to take the roll call of the class to know who is present because of the number in my class. Roll call could take all the time of the lesson.*

A majority of teachers during our interviews lamented that they were unable to pay attention to all the learners, especially the slow ones; and that they found it impossible to give adequate assignments to the pupils, as they could not cope with the marking and teaching workload. They could not achieve their set objectives. Elsewhere, some schools were really understaffed. An extreme case was Mghamboni Primary School with a total of three teachers against six classes.

Another notable observation was that female teachers are very few in the region, thereby posing a challenge on role modeling for the girls. For example, Ngolia Primary School had only two female teachers while Paranga had none, leaving it mostly to male teachers to deal with girl learners. According to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST, 2010; p. 3), the girl child seems to lack role models (p. 76). Statistics from the ministry show that female teachers account for only about 30 per cent of the teaching staff. Most of these are to be found in the urban areas, leaving very few teachers in the rural areas. I confirmed this to be the case in Taita Taveta County.

Nairobi County does not appear to be better off either, when it comes to learning resources and staffing. Observably the implementation of *Free Primary Education* (FPE) ran into logistical problems as I observed in public schools such as Olympic and Langata Primary Schools. Classrooms were full but the number of teachers appears to have remained the same, as I learnt during the interview with one head teacher. Parents in Nairobi made matters worse. They took advantage of FPE and withdrew their children from rural schools to seek admission in Nairobi schools where levies had initially made it hard for them to enroll. The parents mostly targeted good government schools like Olympic Primary School in Kibera as revealed by some respondents. In city primary schools in Nairobi, the enrolment in standard one almost doubled following the launch of the FPE programme as revealed by some head teachers. Enrolment in Standard One rose from 17,687 pupils in 2002 to 32,001 pupils in 2003 as indicated in table 1.1. as follows:

Table.4.4 Gender enrolment for standard one in public primary schools in Nairobi County for the last eight years (1997 to 2003).

YEAR	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
1996	10738	10225	20963
1997	9740	9741	19481
1998	7231	6481	13712
1999	9657	9257	18914
2000	8346	8191	16537
2001	8777	8709	17486
2002	9055	8632	17687
2003	16111	15890	32001
2017	10234	11086	21320

Source: Koskei, 2004

The table above shows the changes by gender in school in the Nairobi County (1996 to 2002). However, with the introduction of free primary education, there was rapid change in the number of children in school; boys increased by 7056 boys (from 9055 to 16111). While girls were increased by 14,314(from 17,687 to 32,001). During my interviews at Olympic Primary School, the teachers

narrated their experience on the introduction of *Free Primary Education in Kenya*. They revealed that parents would storm the school with their children demanding to have them admitted and be provided with free learning materials including school uniforms. When the school could not contain the situation it forced the head teacher to call in the police, as also supported by (Koskei, 2004).

My conclusions on the state of staffing were that apparently, with the introduction of Free Primary Education the pupil teacher ratio went far below the recommended ratio in most schools both in Nairobi and Taita Taveta Counties. Based on this observation most government schools face a big shortage of teachers, which is a key obstacle to the provision of FPE in both counties (Interview with the head teachers).

4.3.3 Learning Resources

Learning in school requires certain facilities that are crucial. I noted during my visits to the selected schools in Taita Taveta that there were inadequate physical facilities. As observed, most public primary schools did not have adequate classrooms to accommodate the large number of pupils enrolled as a result of the *Free Primary Education* (FPE) programme. I observed that classrooms were generally congested; teachers could not make any free movement during lessons. In some schools, some classrooms were particularly in a very bad state. The classrooms were dusty and poorly lighted. In addition, the classrooms in some cases had insufficient desks. At Ngolia Primary School, they had introduced mats for children to sit on since they did not have enough desks. But the teachers complained saying that the sitting on the mats affected the children‟s writing skills and the general physical development.

The following comment from a teacher in Kishushe Primary School briefly captures the state of teaching and learning facilities in majority of schools:

> *The FPE programme spells out that every pupil is entitled to some free school materials for example pencils, pens and exercise books. But the actual reality is that we have very few text books which are being shared among the learners, for instance, in my class the ratio is of one textbook to ten pupils. The Sharing of textbooks affects the learners" accessibility to the text books while at home, which does not allow them to do assignments at home. They are normally forced to do it very early in the morning of the next day when in school. The issue has defined the amount of homework to be given to the pupils. Furthermore, the shortage affects supplementary reading books too.*

The condition of school toilets also interested me. Where the schools I visited had toilets, the toilets were not clean. In other cases, the toilets were not enough and they were to be used by both boys and girls. In such cases, the girls were sometimes shy and unable to go pushing with the boys for turns to use the toilets. In one school, there was only one toilet which was used by both the teachers and the learners. The extreme was the school that did not have toilets and the pupils and teachers were to find their own way of answering to the call of nature. A girl who was a school prefect at Nyachea Primary School made the following observation:

> *We have a problem, as we do not have drinking water, and even worse we have few toilets in the school. l have watched many young girls urinating in their underwear during break times due to the long queues. After such experiences some end up dropping out of school for fear of being laughed at by the others. It is sad but it happens.*

The same prefect, teenager then shared the girls' experiences on menstruation:

> *During menstruation period, many of us lack sanitary pads and thus we are forced to use rags and even pieces of mattresses instead. We are normally humiliated by boys and young girls who normally laugh at us. Periods tend to be painful and we have no money to buy drugs. These issues force us to skip school and even some of us drop out of school.*

Eileen, (2004; p.8) notes that conducive learning conditions depend on an infrastructure that supports quality education. The requirement is that the learners should be accessed to gender-sensitive schooling that goes beyond the physical structure of a building or he classroom content. Otherwise children, especially girls have sometimes stayed away from school in certain situations, perhaps to avoid embarrassment.

The teachers I interviewed further confided that the new policy was not well planned as it had required to first adding classrooms, desks and other learning materials. The head teacher wished that schools could provide budgets upon which the government would provide funds. She argued that different schools had different budget lines as some had to pay bills for water electricity and support staff whereas other schools did not need that. This was also suggested by East African Standard, 7th January 2003.

According to some respondents, the government apparently implemented the plan of FPE without carrying out a cost analysis to determine how much each child and each primary school needed. The decision to award KES 1020 per child in primary school is, therefore, not logical. Furthermore, it does not compensate those schools that charged more than this to meet their operational expenses. The government funding for that matter falls short of the individual budgets for primary schools, the respondents lamented.

At the end of my visits to the selected schools in Nairobi County I made a number of conclusions. To start with, for lack of reliable public transport a majority of Nairobi's commuting population opts for personal cars, a decision that leads to heavy congestion on the roads and a major reason for children to get to school late in the morning, or to reach home late in the evening. Also observed was that for many Nairobi residents, life revolves around their children. They, thus, spend much time

dropping or picking their children. In fact, I learnt as I talked to some of the girls who study in Nairobi County that many do not live in Nairobi County. Instead there are those who come from the neighbouring *Machakos, Kajiado and Kiambu* Counties among others. What was, however, disturbing was the knowledge that children spent all their waking hours in school. So while one would complain that girls in the previous county (TaitaTaveta) didn't get enough time at school, those in Nairobi hardly got any time to stay at home or to learn any activities to do with home. For majority of them, therefore, home space has been reduced to a destination akin to a lodging where they visit for a few hours to take supper, bathe, do school assignments and go to steal some sleep with their school bags on the ready.

4.3.4 Enrolment and Retention

I found the enrolment of girls as compared to boys, quite encouraging. Apparently the parents in Taita Taveta have no problem with having their girl children start school; perhaps the challenge may seem to arise from the factors that ensure retention. My observations show that the bigger disparity in enrolment happens at the very beginning, but once enrolled the patterns stabilizes in class two. From class three to eight, boys may be more than girls in the enrolment but the disparities remain consistent. The level of enrolment continues to be stable throughout all the classes as illustrated in the table that follows:

Table 4.5 Patterns of Enrollment by Class in Kishushe, 2014

Enrollment Level	Girls	Boys
ECDE	180	240
STD 1	130	235
STD 2	236	237
STD 3	200	240
STD 4	170	190
STD 5	239	250
STD 6	180	230
STD 7	170	240
STD 8	230	180

Source: Action Aid, 2014

According to some of my respondents, teaching and learning starts in the home space. It is in the same space that the barriers against girls' education occur: this is defined by the community values, customs and traditions that influence the acceptable and favourable options for girls, either empowering or limiting girls' opportunities and life chances in education. This becomes even more important when a girl is in the formative years of her growth – the point where physical, social and educational transition usually happens. I, however, found out that while parents in Taita Taveta wanted their daughters to be able to read and write, they saw little benefit in any further academic ambitions. But one organization in the county known as Girl Child Hope Organization is trying to raise awareness of girls' increased attendance.

Interviews also revealed that there is great improvement in the enrolment due to the government free education empowerment of the children that has enabled children to come to school. There is

also educational improvement through provision of bursaries to needy students, the feeding programme, the provision of the sanitary towels and the door to door campaign by some identified organizations. As one of the respondents said:

> *Enrolment and retention have improved though there is still some form of dropout in a few cases. But the performance of the girl child is still very low.*

However, as some respondents confided to me the main reason for the parents allowing their daughters to join school was perhaps simply in order to escape legal sanctions while others saw that the support for study time at home demonstrated a real change in attitude. Parents in Taita Taveta seem not to hate education per se but in a tough balancing act for instance where marriage agreement has been made often outweighs the more distant and uncertain benefits of having an educated daughter. The situation is made by the constraining issue is the harsh socio – economic conditions.

Some of the teachers interviewed also mentioned cultural factors as a hindrance to girl child education. The practice of early marriages was particularly cited. Some parents – teachers informed me – see that educating the girl child is not a priority in the family. "Girls will be married off and thus, there is no need to waste resources on them. Furthermore, a girl belongs at home, why waste money on such a person", a parent once remarked. Indeed, as Eshiwani (1984; p.3, 4) observes, factors such as customs and beliefs influence decisions to withdraw girls from school. Instead, the girls are encouraged to get married, one, because she will bring wealth to the family through bride wealth and two, because of the community's high value for motherhood. Apparently there exists fear that if a girl is highly educated, she may find it difficult to find a husband and/or she might not make a good wife. And as (Offorma, 2009; p. 6) notes, "Girls are regularly taken out of school to care for ailing family members or forced to work to replace lost income." The other responsibilities given to

girls by parents are such as fetching water, cooking, taking care of their siblings and going to the market. All these impact on the girl's ability to attend school. The situation could be complicated by early pregnancies.

A major difference between Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in terms of enrolment and retention is that the number of girls enrolled is sometimes higher than that of boys as demonstrated by Table 4.6 below:

Table 4.6: Nairobi County gender disaggregated enrolment, 2014

Item	Boys	Girls	Total
Enrolment	229,810	238,944	468,754
Dropout	60,889	63,182	124,072
Percentage dropout	24.4	26.4	26.4

Source: UNICEF (Ministry of Education Science and Technology).

According to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology statistics 2014, the number of boys enrolled was 229,810 against 238,944 girls raising a difference of 9,134 more girls than boys. This would obviously be a strange phenomenon in Taita Taveta where the enrolment for girls is way below that of the boys as already seen. Meanwhile, the percentage dropout is about 26.6 for the girls, again another stack contrast with Taita Taveta which sometimes experiences more than half of the number that will have been enrolled at the beginning, dropping out.

4.3.5 Academic Performance

Taita Taveta as a county does not generally perform highly in the national examinations. According to the document analysis on the Primary schools in Taita Taveta County competing with other Primary schools in the 47 counties in the Republic of Kenya took position 41 out of 47 counties in the 2012 KCPE examination and none of the schools appeared in the top 100 schools nationally. Below is a five-year record of performance in the national examinations:

Table 4.7: K.C.P. E Performance in Taita Taveta (2008-2012)

Year	Average	Percentage
2012	219.0	43.80
2011	222.5	44.50
2010	229.10	45.82
2009	230.20	46.04
2008	237.70	47.54

Source: Taita Taveta County Education Task Force.

With these averages as the record for the county, one must expect quite poor performance by the girls who already face some of the challenges highlighted above. Due to such low performance, the culture of repeating classes is common in Taita Taveta County, as observed in the sampled schools. And with the girls performing much lower than the boys, the former become the bigger victims of repeating classes. This as I learnt often negatively impacted on the girl child. This is because girls are very conscious of themselves and being in the company of their juniors makes them to withdraw or even to drop out of school.

In Nairobi County, I observed that some schools had reading materials that helped learners to sharpen reading skills and improved literacy. Reading culture nurtures skills such as creative imagination, critical thinking, and most importantly, literacy. Unfortunately, majority of the schools face a shortage of reading material which perhaps be the reason for poorly written compositions as noted in most schools, in Nairobi and elsewhere.

l found out that there were less challenges faced by teachers of English in Nairobi than what I had witnessed in Taita Taveta. While the learners in the latter county seemed to have less opportunity to practice English speaking – the official language in school – those in Nairobi tried to speak the language without necessarily being prompted by the teachers. Even though some learners tended to want to switch to Kiswahili during conversations, the temptation to use mother tongue was minimal. In Taita Taveta, one at times finds entire groups, say, during a game and sometimes in class, using mother tongue. Notably, even in the upper primary the learners‟ use of English language was sometimes only limited to their daily English lesson that of 35minutes. Many times even the teachers themselves are tempted to switch to Kiswahili or mother because they are incompetent in the English language or in order to have the learners understand the subject matter. Such scenarios were rare in Nairobi.

What however, looked like a universal problem was that some English text seemed to refer to contexts that the learners could not directly relate to. A good example was noted in an English text book for class three which has expressions such as "*as white as snow*." As l observed in class, this expression was very difficult for learners to relate to because they, including the teacher, I guessed, had no experience of snow in the Kenyan context. I recall, one learner asking for clarification on what was meant by "snow". I left before the teacher responded to the question, but I was sure that she would perhaps only fumble about the answer. I concluded that such learning was not useful to

the learners because it disregarded the learners contextual experience which more often than not inhibits learning.

When I looked at various past KCPE papers, I noted that question papers have multiple choice questions approach that are composed of one question (stem) which has a multiple possible answers (choices), normally one is correct with several answers which are not correct, termed as distracters. The learners select the correct answer (by circling the associated number or letter, or filling in the associated circle on the machine-readable response sheet). Such questions tend to test the memory (mental capability) of the learners only. This type of examination does not require the application part, as noted by Indangasi (2018), who argues that this type of education encourages rote learning and missing out on critical thinking and problem solving. The view is that a good lesson and examination should have elements of creativity. A blend of creativity with curriculum supports learners to be innovative, which can transform the way the learner acquires knowledge and how to connect it to their real life. If teaching includes creative expression, it plays a key role in a learner's development. Besides the learner will be able to learn with fun, have freedom of expression, experience emotional development, enhance thinking capability, reduce stress and anxiety, boost problem solving skills, improve focus and attention, better communication, follow passion, benefit from opportunities, have innovative mindset, and finally it facilitates lifelong learning.

Sir Ken Robinson during a *TED Talk* said that the importance of education is creativity and noted that, *"Every child has some inbuilt creativity in them and proper guidance from the teacher coaxes and cultivates it to help them grow up as a creative individual".* Robinson encourages countries to reflect or rethink their school system in order to cultivate and acknowledge multiplicity of types of

intelligence. Only the creative approach to learning cultivated through wholesome education can bring out the said intelligences.

4.3.6 General Potentials and Barriers

According to the documents I analyzed on the Kenya Free Primary Education, the programme which was officially launched in 2003, saw the abolition of fees and levies for tuition in primary schools. The government and development partners met the cost of basic teaching and learning materials, wages for critical non-teaching staff and co-curricular activities. The government paid Ksh 1020 per child with an additional Ksh 2000 for the disabled children (Republic of Kenya, 2003).

Apparently, these provisions were meant to take care of everything that a learner required for his or her education. The government has since maintained this provision. However, the provision appears to fall short of what a learner needs for wholesome education. During one of the FGDs in Taita Taveta, one Standard Seven pupil commented thus:

> *We lack basic needs like uniforms and writing materials. In such cases we just decide to leave school and stay at home. While girls with children are usually not supported psychologically, materially and with child care by the parents, who feel that they are now women and not young girls to go back to school (FGD with school girls).*

Lack of learning materials only escalates the challenges girl children face in their pursuit of education. As I had already pointed out, girl children already experience different types of challenges such as lack of sanitary pads; violence including sexual harassment, for example, rape, sodomy, incest, exploitative sexual relationships and corporal punishment. The discovery that corporal punishment still persisted in schools was rather shocking because it has been known for a long time that Kenya's education policy prohibits the practice. Of course the teachers in the schools do not admit but the practice sometimes comes out when incidents of injury on pupils are

discovered. There was, for instance, a case I came to learn about in one of the schools I visited, where a pupil after having been canned died of some other complications. Still in the same school, a pupil had recently been mercilessly canned and her father was still following up the case.

As I have pointed out, during the interview all teachers said that there was no caning in the sampled schools of study. However, I could in fact see some teachers walking around with sticks in their hands. When asked why, they replied that they only meant to scare the pupils, but many girls complained of having been caned at school by their teachers, either for coming to school late, or for failing to do assignments. What also came out was that despite the fact that corporal punishment in schools is prohibited by the Kenya legislation, there is no law against corporal punishment at home. Corporal punishment in the home is varied and includes caning and slapping among others.

Other types of violence were psychological and they included verbal insults, degrading/humiliating remarks, threatening and name-calling. The perpetrators of the psychological violence were identified as the older school boys, boys out of school as well as adult members of the local community. Teachers were also frequently cited as perpetrators of verbal and sexual abuse. During FGDs, girls expressed how teachers mocked and insulted them in class, often using abusive language and making sexual comments, targeting them. A few head teachers admitted that some teachers – both male and female, insulted pupils, but made no specific mention of sexual comments directed at girls. Male teachers were cited as perpetrators of sexual molestation (grabbing girls' breasts or touching girls inappropriately during class or at other times). A teacher was also quoted for making remarks such as: "*Just leave school and get married, you will be better married than being in school".*

The teenager girls also shared their experiences on menstruation:

> *During menstruation period, many of us lack sanitary pads and thus we are forced to use rags and even pieces of mattresses instead. We are normally humiliated by boys and young girls who normally laugh at us. Periods tend to be painful and we have no money to buy drugs. These issues force some of us to skip school and some even decide to drop out.*

Further frustrations for the girl were voiced by a girl who was obviously big for her class but who appeared set to go on with school her age notwithstanding. At 16 years in class Five, the girl appeared to face the challenge of being expected to do every work that adults did at home. She remarked:

> *As girls we are given much work to do at home, and this does not give us space or time to study at home. Girls are normally exploited, as compared to our brothers who just roam around. Our mothers are very tough on us. They force us to do a lot of work; like washing dishes, child care, fetching water, collecting firewood and water and even when we have assignments, our mothers don't listen to us. We are assigned a lot of work; of which we are expected to do after school time.*

However, all these issues notwithstanding, Kenya as a country has made remarkable efforts to ensure that every child gets access to some basic education, and Taita Taveta County has not been left behind. I concluded my field visit to Taita Taveta with the view that obstacles, big and small, have continued to thwart efforts to get girls into primary school in Taita Taveta County. These ranges from intractable poverty, insidious gender roles and cultural traditions, *HIV/AIDS*, insecurity, early marriages, a lack of basic infrastructure and other catastrophic emergencies all of which combine to deprive girls of their rightful place in the classroom.

While the findings on the condition of learning appeared similar in all the regions of Taita Taveta, I found Nairobi County to be a place of contrasts. With the discrepancy between the social classes emerging: a business county on one side with sky scrapers, fancy shopping malls, luxurious MTV-cribs villas and high-end estates, there is a struggling community on the other, represented by setups

such as *Kawangware, Gorokocho, Mukurukwa Njenga, Mathare, Kariobangi and Kibera*, which is said to be the biggest urban slum in Africa, and perhaps in the world, among others. This discrepancy in the living standards of the people of Nairobi causes great differences in the way learning is handled in the various sections of the same county.

What, however, I found as universal was the fact that all schools engage in cognitive activities at the expense of other activities that are required to develop a more rounded individual, such as normative, creative and psychomotor skills. This observation may be corroborated by one teacher at Olympic Primary School, who nostalgically recounted her own experiences in school those days:

> *All the girls met in one school under a tree and if fortunate enough, in a mud-walled and earthen floored classes. There was no existence of private schools commonly known as academies. Girls had books to read for vocabulary and carried to school half-cut 32-page exercise books. Thus, they walked to school light.*

The teacher was then to share more her experiences: "In the home space an African girl child was raised by and belonged to a community much wider than immediate family – an entire village. But the hustles and individualistic tendencies of modern life have thrust the care of the child entirely on their parents, who also seem to be absent. This becomes a major challenge when, for one reason or another, parents are incapable of providing a suitable and holistic environment for nurturing children.

The curriculum was dominated by singing. Singing was everything for us in the class. As we girls entered class we sang a song to welcome our teacher, to end class and finally before going home. Classes started at 8.a.m., ending by noon. The end of the class was marked by our favorite song:

Nasikia sauti, Nasikia sauti,
Sauti ya mama, Sauti ya mama,
Sasa ni saa sita, Sasa ni sa saa sita
Mwalimu kwaheri! Watoto kwaheri!" (She sings in Kiswahili)

I hear a voice, Mama is calling
It's noon, Goodbye teacher! Goodbye children!

"The song marked the close of the teaching and learning space at school for the day and the beginning of the teaching and learning space at home. The school and home space for the child was defined".

The musings of the teacher above gave me great insight into what has changed in school as a teaching and learning space. This left me wondering what happened to such practical approaches to learning! The song indeed seemed to suggest the importance and the presence of the mother in the girl child's life. It challenges the current state where parents hardly feature in the school life of their children. On the other hand, children today spend most of their time at school, perhaps bribed by the school feeding programme. Apparently the death of songs such as: *Nasikiasauti*, *Nasikiasauti: I hear a voice, Mama is calling,* marked the end of wholesome education in terms of the teaching and learning spaces as home and school. The death of the song perhaps marked the beginning of the school takeover of the home space, as it has remained the case especially in the urban settings.

Indeed, when I followed some girls to their homes, they seemed to be disconnected with anything that is not school-like. This is what some respondents termed, 'a coup d'état' where the school has totally overturned or taken over the home space. One teacher at Langata Primary School who admitted that the current school system has loopholes remarked: "Academic rigour is the order of the day for the girl child: long hours, tests, tuition; this thing is draining imagination and inquiry out of our children". He then added: "It is drilling out creative imagination and playful discovery from our children". Immoderate emphasis on standardized national testing has led to grade or test score inflation and numerous exam-cheating scandals. Precious resources are diverted to preparatory testing and learning time is lost as students spend weeks preparing for the tests, while the teachers

spend all their time preparing tests and scoring them, thereby consuming valuable teaching time. Awiti, 2012, observes that apparently exams are the driving force in schools at the expense of any other skills necessary for developing children wholesomely. Until schools rediscover the necessity of creativity, innovation and critical thinking in the process of learning, the products of Kenya's education system will remain dysfunctional in society.

4.4 Girl Children's Experiences in the Home Space

Girls are first socialized in the home space since parents are the primary educators of children. This implies that education starts at home and so do the barriers against girls‟ education. The African belief system is revealed in values, customs and traditions that influence what communities think as acceptable and favorable options for girls. This has great significance if either to empower or limit the girls' opportunities and life chances, for instance, in educational space. In other words, the home space has implications for their learning. In the homes the researcher made direct observations, conducted interviews, administered questionnaires and organized focused group discussions about home space in order to identify issues within the home space that affect the girls‟ learning. For the purposes of this study, I investigated how income essential for schooling was distributed between boys' and girls' needs, how labour in the home spaces was divided and how this affected the teaching and learning for the girl child, in relation to the boy child. I also investigated what implications the cultural practices and values within the home space had on the girl child's schooling. This was with the view that home space reinforces what children learn at school.

At the homes, I investigated issues to do with resource access and distribution, the sleeping arrangements, cultural issues and how these could affect the progress of the girl child both at home

and at school. There were several constraining factors as shared below, separately for Taita Taveta and for Nairobi: that affect the teaching and learning at home; which will be shared shortly supported by voices.

4.4.1 A Visit to the Home Space in Taita Taveta and Nairobi

In the homes in Taita Taveta, I made direct observations, conducted interviews, administered questionnaires and organized focused group discussions about home space in order to identify issues within the home space that affect the girls‟ learning. My interaction with the children at home revealed that girl children across most parts of the neighbourhoods in Taita Taveta experienced fear, violence, and discrimination in different ways as expressed by the girls themselves. I investigated how income essential for schooling was distributed between boys and girls, how labour in the home spaces was divided and how the girls went about it. I also investigated what implications the cultural practices and values within the home space had on the children's schooling. This was with the view that what happens in the home space can reinforce what children learn at school. Meanwhile, I also took interest in finding out what the parents felt about girl child education.

Meanwhile, visiting homes in Nairobi County, just as in Taita Taveta I made direct observations, conducted interviews, administered questionnaires and organized focused group discussions about the home space in order to identify issues within the home space that affect the girls‟ wholesome learning. My interaction with the children at home made me to direct some attention to issues, among them parenting; holiday sessions; house helps and the use of home spaces.

4.4.2 Availability of Resources

4.4.2.1 Allocation of Resources

A majority of the households that I visited in Taita Taveta would by average fall in the category that I labeled as poor. By all means, poverty is a barrier to the hope of going to school for children in Taita Taveta County. And as one would expect, the girls appear to be more affected than the boys are. The reason for this is that majority of the families whose impoverished state cannot allow them take all their children to school, are prepared to sacrifice the little they may get and take the boy to school as the girl stays at home. I sought to find out why children would fail to go to school when education in Kenya is free. I, however, came to learn that while education was said to be free, there were heavy hidden costs that still placed a heavy burden on the parents. The need to cater for books, uniform, food, repairs, or even construction, and sometimes fare to school often appeared prohibitive. What some families decided to do was to enroll the girl in paid labour so as to improve the family earnings. This way, the girl would also be participating in the education of her siblings. As I came to learn, girls are traditionally expected to be responsible for taking care of their younger siblings and doing the household duties.

In the extreme, poverty in the home has been a cause of unprecedented poor morals. Even without necessarily going to school the girl needs certain supplies that the family often appears blind to or simply unable to supply. The girl, for example, needs soap, sanitary pads, clothes to change into, and a score other essential facilities. Realizing that the family cannot afford, some girls allow themselves to be lured into sexual acts in exchange for money or material support from both boys and men in the community. One of the girl respondents, for instance, lamented thus:

> *Some girls end up sleeping with several men to get money…The men cheat you with ten shillings and sleep with you, and when you become pregnant, they leave you. As*

> *a result, some girls have ended up aborting and even some have died in the process. Some girls cannot even tell the father of the child, since they had so many sexual partners. Some have dropped out of school (FGD with school girls).*

As illustrated by this girl's narrative, unwanted pregnancies have been a major outcome of the sexual activities of some of her friends. Many times the pregnancy may be from an encounter with an elderly man who got the girl involved in sex after providing gifts and money to assist the girl. What came out of some interviews with the girls was that some girls viewed sexual favours as their only source which would enable them buy books, clothes, and at times fare to school. As already seen, this often comes with heavy repercussions. Other than unwanted pregnancies, the girls risk contracting sex related diseases including *HIV/AIDS*, health risks associated with abortions, hemorrhage, and the obvious result of dropping out of school, to which majority do not return after giving birth.

I learnt of cases where some of the girls looking for financial support got involved with men and became pregnant at tender ages of thirteen or even twelve. Caught in such a scenario the girls opted to get married, perhaps due to the awareness that their families would not support them plus their babies. Apparently early marriages are a common trend in the county. Even where a girl may not necessarily get pregnant, the general trend is for the girls to look towards getting husbands, with the need to go to school coming second. Often, some continue going to school only as long as they have not yet got a serious marriage proposal. It came out that in fact many parents keep living on the hope that their daughters will sooner than later find men to marry them. As one parent, a retired teacher explained:

> *For many parents, early marriage for their daughters serves three reasons: first, they have got rid of the burden of carrying a dependant; two, they hope to get some economic boost through the tokens given by the son-in-law; and three, they are sure*

> *that their daughter will not miss a husband like it has become a trend with girls today. In fact, many parents try to discourage their daughters from going to school, partly because this makes them delay to get husbands, but majorly because majority believe that school educated girls do not make good wives.*

Indeed, one girl who impressed me very much with her maturity of thought revealed the contrasted view of life on the part of the girls and on the part of their parents. She remarked:

> *We girls sometimes view marriage as a business whereby we are sold as commodities, while our parents view our education as a barrier to the quick material gain from bride wealth.*

The girl's remark throws important light on the parents' attitude towards their daughters' education, particularly as appearing to be more influenced by their perception of daughters as family wealth. The marriage trade-off tends to become more pronounced as the girl approaches the age when she would traditionally be expected to marry. Otherwise, according to my observations, boys stood a higher chance of accessing the little that the family had as opposed to the girls. The reason for this as I came to learn was partly due to the cultural values which attach more value on boys than girls, for instance, in one household I observed that boys used a table for, studying while the girls studied on the floor. Secondly, the girls seemed to have heavy workloads in their home spaces which deprived them of the opportunity to study. Besides, the environment in some households was not friendly to individual growth. I observed that in some cases too many children slept in one miniature room that did not even have enough space, light and freshness of air to breathe.

Resource allocation in Nairobi appeared not to display obvious favoritism for a particular gender. Apparently the parents in Nairobi have the enthusiasm to have all the children in school, their gender notwithstanding. Even for those who live in impoverished neighbourhoods such as the slums, one finds out that, other than what they will eat, a parent‟s main concern is school for their children.

4.4.2.2 Living spaces: Gated and un-gated homes

In terms of the living environment in Nairobi, my research observed three distinct home settings which children grow in, with other types of settings lying in between. I categorized the three settings as: "*open space*", "*open gated space*" and "*closed gated space*". These spaces appeared mostly defined by the family status: the low class; the middle class and the upper class, ordinarily put as the poor, the average/middle and the rich.

Starting with the latter, girl children who come from rich families most likely live in "*gated closed spaces"* meaning the child lives in a closed gated home, school and church. Atkinson and Flint 2003 define gated spaces as:

> *Gated communities are residential areas or a development that is fenced or walled-off from its surroundings, either prohibiting or controlling access to these areas by means of gates or booms. The concept can refer to a residential area with restricted access so that use is restricted (security villages, fortress neighborhoods, exclusive developments etc, (p.3).*

I observed that the residents of gated communities try to keep their distance from intruders. The „intruders" perhaps are people who have different lifestyles and agendas that are considered to interfere with their privacy. In gated communities, I observed that these spaces had walls and fences that preclude public access to streets, sidewalks, parks, and playgrounds. I learnt through interviews that gated life style has resulted from socioeconomic changes in Kenya, for instance, urbanization, population increase, and changes in women occupation, among others.

As noted, life in gated closed homes is exclusive as well as exclusionary. The children from this kind of environment hardly interact with their neighbourhood, because they usually leave the house to school in their parents'" cars, driven by the parent or the family driver. The children are mostly driven straight to school, dropped, and later picked back to the closed gates. In the ideal situation, these hardly play with other children out there. My projected image of a girl from this kind of

environment is that she may tend to grow up in an artificial environment, sheltered from the realities of economic differences and diversity. As one respondent remarked, such children hardly understood their immediate environments since her life style itself seems to be "gated" – home, school bus, school, school bus again and home. Her entire life system too, is closed gated.

On the operation of the closed gated homes, most of those I visited, I found out that both girls and boys were treated equally, with much emphasis on education. That at home they seemed not to participate in any other duty, but rather, most of the time they were occupied with studies and books. Their parents seemed to stress on passing examination which targeted 400 marks and above to enable them join good national schools. Their free time was then spent on watching TV and playing games on mobile phones. These activities were not monitored by an adult.

The open gated space is different from the previous space. In this kind of space, the child's home may be gated but the child sometimes gets out on her own to go to school. Sometimes the children in a particular neighbourhood congregate at a given point, perhaps to board the school bus. The girls in this setup enjoy the safety of the gated home but also interact albeit to a limited degree; she enjoys some degree of freedom of association. The girl here is more exposed and has a better grasp of her environment, compared to the one from the closed gated environment. The fear, as I learnt, was the possibility of the girl coming across negative influences in the short time she is able to enjoy the said freedom of association.

Meanwhile, the antithesis of the closed gated space is the "open space". This is the type of space that I mostly came across in Kibera, a slum area. Open space is one that is open in the true sense of the word. The child's home, schools, church, among others, are open and accessed by anyone who cares to visit. Since there are no physical barriers, the children are in open spaces, free to interact with

everyone since the space allows such interactions. They interact with all kinds of people. They walk to school since the school is part of the community, they may come home during break and lunch breaks. They are free to walk or use public vehicles to school and leave in the evening by themselves. Their development is not defined since it tends to be influenced by the community dynamics. For a girl in this setup, her fears on security resemble those of the one in Taita Taveta, and her consistency to go to sometimes depends on strong will.

4.4.3 Parenting Issues

I start this section with acknowledging the participation of parents as represented by fig 4.2 below.

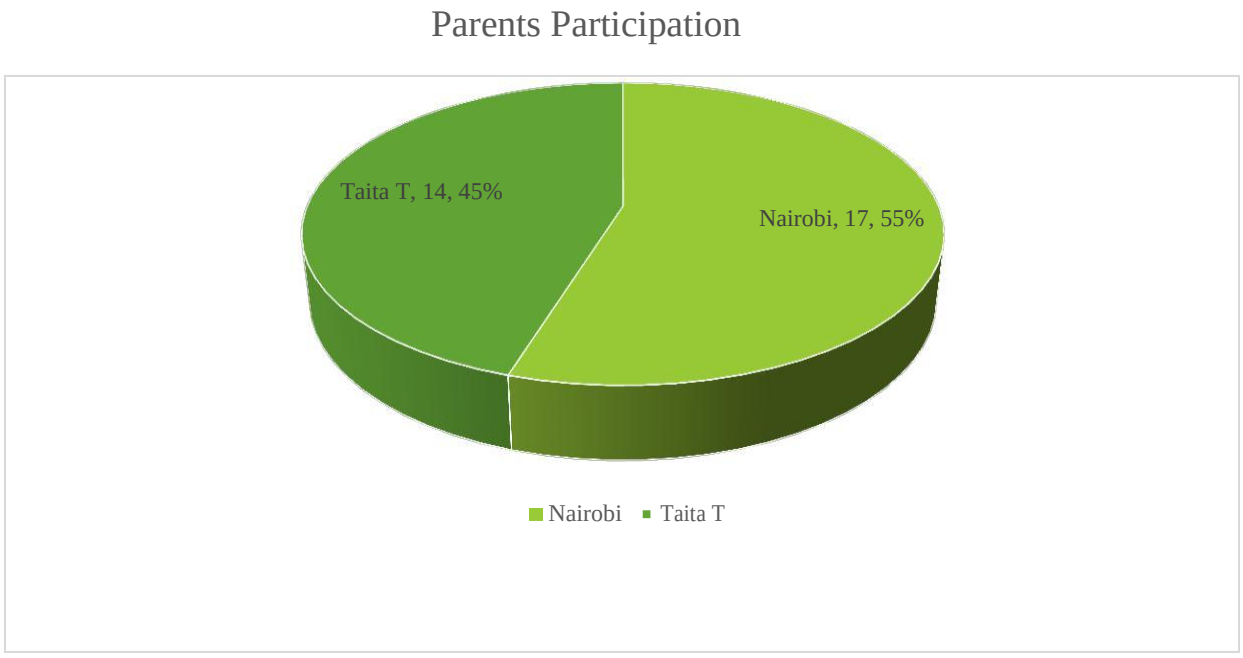


Figure 4.2: Parents Participation
Source: Field, 2019

Fig 4.2. Shows the percentage of the total number of parent respondents who participated in the study. More than half 17(55%) of the respondents were from Nairobi County with a significant number 14(45%) from Taita Taveta. The involvement of parents in the study of the girl child was

based on the recognition that parents are key stakeholders in their children's education. They are actually the main actors in the home as a teaching and learning space.

I also observed that a majority of the parents in Taita Taveta had not gone to school and a significant number; particularly the women got married after dropping out of school, mostly without even having completed class eight**.** Some even got married as early as13 years old. The statistics I came across made me to conclude that the **c**hildren whose mothers had not been to school were more likely to be out of school as compared to the children whose mothers had some education. This seemed to reflect UNICEF (2005), which put it that 75% of the children in developing countries, Kenya included, who are not in school are from uneducated mothers. Indeed, one is able to guess that with so many children out of school. The unfortunate thing is that even with the introduction of free primary education in Kenya, access to education in Taita Taveta still remains a pipe dream to many children and especially to the girls.

According to the respondents the major factor is the harsh socio-economic conditions, with an estimated 80% of the local population living below the poverty line. This has limited the impact of free primary schooling on enrolment, retention and attainment since many families use their children's labour, especially girls, in farms or at home instead of sending them to school. In addition, there is the disadvantage of the community's attitude which frowns upon girls or women leaving the home or working away. This perhaps partly explains why most parents wanted their daughters to stay at home rather than go to school. Some tried to justify this by arguing that it was because parents were concerned about the safety of their girls in and on their way to school.

However, some respondents confided to me about a hushed practice that poses even a bigger concern about the safety of the girls in the home space: incest. While this was at first hard for me to believe,

a good number of adult respondents confirmed that incest was rampant in Taita Taveta County, and that the perpetrators were mainly close male relatives who lived with or near the young girls. Incidentally, cases of incest involve some of the fathers who turn against their own daughters. As I learnt, such cases have been on the rise in the recent times. I actually confirmed this from the girls themselves, for instance, during the interview with one respondent, a girl of 15 years, she confirmed that she had been defiled by her father who robbed her of her innocence. Mary (not her really name) from Kishushe area, Wundanyi Sub-county, was incensed with her father for defiling her. She strongly lamented amid tears:

> *If I had the slightest opportunity, I would slash my father into pieces without blinking. He destroyed my life, plus that of my siblings.*

The girl confided to me that she lost her mother in 2008 after a short illness and since she was the eldest girl in the family she had to become a mother to her younger brothers and sisters. On several occasions she had to miss school as she had to go out to look for food and take care of the family. Meanwhile her father immersed himself completely into dinking, to a point of becoming a nuisance and creating disturbance in the family and neighborhood. Later her life radically changed when her father started seeing her as a "*woman in the house*" instead of a daughter. The worst experience according to the girl was in 2016 when, while sleeping in her room, her father came to her and defiled her, stealing her innocence. To make sure that his shameful act remained a secret, he warned the girl against reporting the matter to anyone or she would risk being chased away from home or even killed. In a low tone she lamented:

> *I have suffered in silence but never dared to talk to anyone about the suffering that l went through at home. Sometime later my father struck again, it now became a daily occurrence, but with more threats of killing me, if l dared share with anyone. When it became too much for me I decided to talk to my class teacher, whose reaction made me regret opening up. My teacher said that she was also afraid of my father. It broke my heart that the person whom I thought was going to protect and assist me*

turned me down. I felt like dying but I remembered I had siblings to take care of. I am a wounded girl.

Fed up of being a sex slave to her own father, she reported the matter to the police station and filed a complaint against her father. But the father bribed the police and instead of the latter arresting him, the officer in charge called him and informed him of the charges that the girl had lodged against him. This made her father to beat her up badly that evening. As a result, she was unwell for three days. But the worst was yet to come. When rumours about the incident reached her village, her schoolmates laughed at her, making fun of the fact that she was no longer a virgin and that she should be ashamed of herself for sleeping with her father. After all this, her father did not stop, until one police officer finally intervened and arrested him. The girl confirmed that her father was currently serving a jail sentence after successful prosecution. Another incident narrated to me was from an adult respondent, a mother who lamented saying that she was yet to come to terms with the fact that her husband of nine years turned against the daughter who had grown up calling him, father. The woman reported that her daughter was 12 years old and slept in her bedroom with her siblings, and that one night the father sneaked into their room. The father warned the girl against screaming for help and even blocked her mouth with his hand. However, the mother heard some commotion from the girl's room. On checking, she caught her husband ready handed having sex with her daughter. The woman narrated her story in disbelief:

How could a man sleep with a mother and then later turn to his daughter? After the incident my husband was arrested. My husband's family distanced itself and l have been forced to endure insults as long as my three daughters are safe. My husband was sentenced to a jail term; l will never forgive him. When I stood at the witness dock testifying against him, I wished I had a panga. I would just have walked up to him and expressed how angry he made me. I hate him and will never forgive him.

Meanwhile as I was going on with my visits to homes in Taita Taveta, a 12-year-old girl was having difficulties in delivering her child. This was in the same region at the Voi District Hospital. The born

baby was the evidence of sexual abuse by a father who was said to have continuously defiled her daughter until he impregnated her. A defilement test done on the girl confirmed that she had been defiled, and the DNA test proved that the baby belonged to the girl's father. The girl's sister revealed:

> *My father has sexually assaulted my younger sister on several occasions but she could not report the matter to the police. She has on several occasions been warned not to do so, as reporting to the police would see her thrown out of the family*

According to a number of respondents many more girls experienced incest by their own fathers, though only few cases seem to be reported. Some cases are mostly resolved by the elders to prevent the neighbours from knowing, while some of the mothers or even the girls themselves are silenced with money.

When I probed to know why incest was a common phenomenon in the region, some respondents cited a number of reasons. One major reason cited for this irresponsible behaviour was drug abuse such as alcohol consumption. This I learnt was very high particularly among the men. Even the rampant violence in the communities was attributed to alcohol consumption and other forms of drug abuse. While in Kishushe, one respondent cited a case where the whole family was involved in alcohol consumption. Even the very young were not spared. A class two pupil from the home once went to school drunk. Everyone thought that he was sick, only to be confirmed later that he was not sick but drunk. This was a pointer to irresponsible parenting.

Other instances of incest were also blamed on the fact that, perhaps due to poverty, whole families shared single spaces or tiny houses in which everyone squeezed without leaving any space for personal privacy, and that often, fathers had to jump over their daughters sleeping on the floor, as

they weaved their way to where they themselves slept. As one respondent observed, the tiny spaces within which entire families operated encouraged too much mingling and body contact.

Meanwhile, the habit of mothers being frequently out of the house, allowed too much time and space between the fathers and their daughters. The chief of Kishushe Sub-county attributed the frequent absence of the mothers to early marriages. Curious to know how early marriages contributed to the mothers‟ love to go out, the chief explained as follows:

> *By the time the girls get married at age eleven, twelve or thirteen, they have not exhausted their desire to live with their parents. So, even when they are married, they will always look for every excuse to go back to their parents. Meanwhile, since some of them at such an age are not really prepared to get married, they never come to fully develop commitment to their husbands and the homes to which they go with a child"s mentality. Soon, some perhaps get bored and they then want to taste a different life, this at a time they already have got children who are growing up. Sometimes when the fathers come back to an empty house, they get tempted to turn to their daughters for fulfillment of their conjugal desires.*

Indeed, the chief's observations seemed to make sense. As I learnt, a majority of incest cases occurred in the absence of the girl's mother. The father, thus, turns to his daughter for emotional and sexual sustenance while the children turn to one another to meet their own emotional or other needs, and sometimes the relationship becomes sexual. When and if incest in this family is discovered by an outsider, it is denied or treated as an insignificant matter. Ironically, some mothers were said to shield their husbands when cases of defilement came up. The chief I was interviewing guessed that mothers do this to hide the shame that comes with such happenings. Sometimes they know that if the husband is prosecuted, the family will have no support, but sometimes it could be about protecting the daughter from stigma.

The chief also blamed these cases on the community's backward belief in witchcraft which encouraged the father to sleep with his daughter to fulfill certain requirements as part of a procedure. It was, for instance, believed that if the father had sex with his daughter then the daughter would be blessed. However, as the chief pointed out, the greatest impediment to addressing the issue of incest was the "family kangaroo courts" where such matters were decided, solved and hushed.

On parenting in Nairobi, a major observation about parenting in homes in Nairobi revealed that parents tend to be absent. Some would claim that they are with their children but they are not. For instance, there was one girl that l had planned to visit but could not do so until Sunday, since all the other days her parents left home very early and came back very late when the girl was already asleep. Before setting off to visit the homes, one teacher had actually made us aware of the possibility of missing the parents of the children. Knowledgeable about the effect of absent parenting the teacher had remarked as follows:

> *In fact, the economic pressure has made many families to go overdrive to fend for the family. But it is not enough to just give a child shelter, sustenance, warmth, food and a place in a school. Children's mental and neurological development needs parental support for emotional needs that must be satisfied. Such children internalize rejection and emotional pain that may leave a mark on their lives.*

The teacher called children of absent parents as "children of the house". That no one comforts their fears, laughs at what happens to them or gives wings to their dreams. According to the teacher, such children tend to gradually fall into the sad abyss of "parenting aloneness". I, however, also came to learn that some parents may be absent even when they are physically present. Such parents, though at home with the children, they are too preoccupied with activities such as phone, outings, TV, soccer, newspapers, betting and many other engagements that they don't have time to engage with their children. The parents and the children, thus, remain strangers to each other.

Holidays for children are what one could term as trauma for parents. Many of the parents that I interacted with during our field engagement in Nairobi sounded scared of their own children. They lamented about the experience of their children at home during the school holiday periods. Nearly all of them condemned Sossion, the Executive Secretary, *Kenya National Union of Teachers* (KNUT) for the teachers‟ strikes. While majority think that the teachers have justifiable reasons to go on strike, they disapprove of the strikes simply because they make children come back home, yet homes don't know completely what to do with the children. For lack of what to do with the children when they are at home, many parents arrange for private tuition for the children even if they are just coming home for three days.

When I sought to know why exactly the parents didn't want their children at home, reasons were varied. These ranged from the fear of the children staying at home unsupervised, to the dangers of being recruited into crime, engaging in illicit sex, drug abuse, and many other vices. Another fear was apparently the financial implications. Coming and staying at home of the children meant inflated bills in terms of electricity, water and food. Besides, the county security team has also often raised concern that children were watching unrated videos in some video dens.

It was shocking to learn that in fact a majority of the parents were happy with the children leaving for school at 5am and coming back home at 8pm. Actually the whole system appears to stipulate only one space for the children – school. Indeed, the practice in some schools appeared to operate from Monday to Sunday and from January to December every year, thus, reducing the home space completely. Consequently, the learners‟ life without books rendered them useless, as they had nothing else to do. In other words, home can only make sense if it is designed to be a kind of extension of school.

This perhaps explains why some parents abhorred Dr. Matiang'i's reign as the Cabinet Secretary (CS) for education. The latter, apart from banning holiday tuition for the learners, also introduced a two-month vacation at the end of the year, i.e. November and December, thus, exacerbating the parents' pain of living with their children. A parent lamented, thus:

> *I used all my income to take my children to school. If they close for two months as planned by the Education Cabinet Secretary, it means that l will have to look for money to sustain my children at home. Yet l had already paid for that period for children to be in school. Furthermore, what are the children coming to do at home? What are we going to do with the children?*

This appeared to be the view of most parents who lamented that their children are too idle when they are at home.

4.4.4 Workloads and the Division of Labour in the Home

4.4.4.1 Workload for Girls

As already hinted to in the preceding sections, when the economic situation in the homes tightens, the girls are the most vulnerable to exploitation as cheap and docile labour. In Taita Taveta region, poverty has apparently driven many family members to seek ways of augmenting their meagre resources. Here, hiring out girl children to work is perhaps the easiest option. The girls are conscripted to work as house helps in well off homes and in the urban areas just to boost the family's income levels.

Taita Taveta like a majority of communities in Kenya holds the man as the head of the family, thus, the "ideal family" model is where by women are assumed naturally inclined towards serving the man and performing the household chores. Apparently, women's domestic roles in the home

automatically become the identity of the girl child. On the workloads and divisions of labour in the home spaces in Taita Taveta, children seem to be an important source of labour within the majority of households. For most poor families sending children to school, as my respondents said, was a major loss because of the loss of labour. This was especially so for the girl child. The opportunity costs of sending girls to school are said to be even higher primarily because of the gendered separation of labour that exists within homes which seems to leave the bulk of household chores to the girls.

All the respondents I interviewed seemed to strongly support and confirm the view that the claim for child labour in the home space was very high in Taita Taveta County and that the division of such labour within the homes is gendered in nature. The following were some of chores performed by girls in the home space according to a community work that I interviewed:

> *Domestic chores include such duties as preparation and processing of food, fetching water and firewood, cleaning and washing, weeding and caring for others among others.*

Meanwhile the boys are tasked with:

> *Farming, herding animals and running errands.*

The allocation of duties and the impact it has is easily summarized by one girl respondent below:

> *As a girl my parents expect me to contribute to domestic tasks and sometimes even to earn income. My assistance is more crucial since my parents are very poor. I am normally given more responsibilities than my brothers. I am given different kinds of tasks. I work within the home while my brother works outside. I spend most of the time doing the house hold duties at home like fetching water, collecting fire wood among others. The work is often a burden, and very heavy. At home l cannot even do my assignments (interview with school – girl aged 14years).*

Since farming and herding are not regular activities in majority of the households in Taita Taveta, it means that the boys nearly have nothing do when at home while the girl does everything. Due to the

gendered division of labour it means that older boys can't assist in some duties due to the cultural beliefs and values about which activities are suitable for men and which for women. A narrative from a 14-year-old girl, Miriam seems to add to the narrative on the burden of the household chores:

> *I am the only girl in the family who goes to school and am in Standard 7. I am the eldest and the other two school going children are boys, 12 and 11. My younger sister has not yet enrolled in school, though she is 7 years old. Before going to school l normally fetch water, sweep the house, prepare breakfast for the family – this takes me about 2 hours. So l always goes to school very late. My school is about 5 km away. After school l do all the cooking and washing (as my mother is pregnant and sickly) for about 3hours. I also prepare supper for the family. After dinner I wash the utensils. At times l sneak out to go and to play night dances especially on the eve of releasing the initiates. I love attending the celebrations.*

The experiences of a girl like Miriam appear to nearly rule out the possibility of attending school properly. From the narratives I got from the girls, I concluded that the girl child in Taita Taveta seems to spend less time on school related activities in the home space particularly because they are pre-occupied with carrying out the bulk of the household chores before and after school.

4.4.4.2 The Forgotten Girl

The question of workload and the division of labour in Nairobi was totally different from what I witnessed in Taita Taveta. Having acquainted myself with the way things tended to work in many homes in Nairobi, that is, parents away and children who do nothing other than schoolwork, one question that remained to be answered was, "Who did the work at home?" Apparently the answer lay in house helps, ayahs and *shamba* boys. I observed that nearly all well up homes had female workers who did all the work in the house ranging from cleaning to cooking and serving meals. The children of the house did not participate in any of these activities. The houses that had very young children had ayahs who babysat the children. In many cases they were the same house helps that were tasked

with escorting the children to school, or/and to board the school buses as well as picking them when they were dropped from school.

A matter, however, that would draw the interest of child rights crusaders was the age of some of the girls working in these households. Many of these were obviously within school going age and those that looked older had obviously dropped out of school. The paradox of all this is the enthusiasm with which many of the employers of these girls considered matters of education, not just for boys but for girls as well. I had already noted that the parents in Nairobi had no gender preferences for who went to school. Boys and girls both were given equal opportunities. My question then was, were these people aware that they were using for employment girls who should in fact be in school?

Incidentally, one parent who spoke really strongly for the education of the girl child when I interviewed her, had a girl ayah babysitting for her, who, my investigation revealed was about thirteen. One of my research assistants jokingly introduced the term "the forgotten girl" to describe this type of girl. I actually found the label making sense because; here is this lady, for example, strongly advocating for education for the girl child, but perhaps completely unaware that she is keeping a girl as an employee, who should in fact be in school. Apparently, the house help, the ayah, or the house maid of school going age, who is out of school is not noticed as a girl out of school. She is indeed the forgotten girl.

Something else I observed about these domestic workers – commonly referred to as housemaids or house girls even where some were already mothers – was that they seemed to face unreported myriad of challenges in their day to day lives. These workers, as I noted are often subjected to abuse and exploitation by their employers. Some experience varied forms of abuse: emotional, financial, physical and even sexual. In some of the households, domestic workers are not given food by their

employers, yet they work from the wee hours of the morning till late at night. Besides, the majority is underpaid and also risk having their pay docked or denied over the tiniest mistakes.

I observed that some very young girls have in some way or another taken the place of house wives, with full responsibilities of the house: from cooking, cleaning of the children, to taking care of the man of the house. Besides, the young girl employed in a house helps facilitate the other children going to school, helping wash them, dress them, feed them and escort them to the stages or to school while they themselves remain in the house to do house chores. However, there is something worth noting about "the forgotten girl" as expressed by a mother who perhaps seemed to see what many others may not see:

> *Sometimes these girls (the house helps) end up benefitting in life more than our school going "robots". The latter, with their book knowledge learn nothing about home yet here is where they are supposed to come back and live after school. The house help may not be equipped with book knowledge but she is sure to make a better mother and wife, who can look after herself and manage her own life, therefore, a better person, than these "bookworms" without the tiniest basics of life.*

These were indeed strong sentiments that could be interpreted to mean that if a girl missed the wholesome training of both spaces (school and home), perhaps one who is trained in the latter space alone is somehow better than one who is trained in the former (school) space alone.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has captured the experiences in the field as I travelled to collect data. My visit started at the Ministry of education where I was able to get information on policy issues as well the demographic information on the leadership at the helm of the ministry. This information was to assist me in determining the expertise that has influenced policy at this level. I also made visits to Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties. The visits took me to the schools of the respective counties to

observe the goings on at school as a teaching and learning space. School would also help me determine the children that I would later visit in their homes to determine the balance in the use of the two spaces: home and school as teaching and learning spaces. My observations noted that the home space in Taita Taveta tends to overshadow the school space while the opposite is true in Nairobi County. The findings of my field visits are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the study undertakes a critical analysis of the responsiveness of the teaching and learning spaces to the attainment of wholesome education for the girl child in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya. The study compares and contrasts the policy provisions in the Kenyan Model of Education with the actual situation on the ground as established in the previous chapter (4). While the chapter acknowledges that indeed the provisions of the Kenyan model of education are structured towards wholesome education for girl children, questions arise on whether the implementation of these provisions meets the expectations. Having adopted the knowledge triangle approach in my fieldwork, this chapter posits that gaps exist between the very existence of the education policy as formulated by the experts and its implementation, as over sighted by the Ministry of Education, a fact that determines the quality of graduates of the education system.

Besides, the chapter analyzes and compares the sampled education models (Finnish and Japanese), in the literature review with the Kenyan education model so as to determine the level of conformity with, or deviation from what has generally been viewed as good standards for wholesome training of children.

5.1 The Ministry of Education

As established in the previous chapter blunders sometimes start at the top. Unlike the Finnish system of education that ensures that the appointees to head the education sector are professional and expert educationists, in the Kenyan system the prerogative lies with the appointing authority. Indeed, as

revealed in the previous chapter, the ministry has been headed by lawyers, zoologists, surgeons, economists and even diplomats. Where an educationist has by chance been appointed as Cabinet Secretary (CS) for Education, the latter may not have the full understanding of the expectations of the different levels of education, i.e. early childhood ((ECDE), primary, secondary and tertiary. Once in this position, the CS often issues directives that are sometimes not in tandem with the provisions of the official policy. One case in point is when a CS during his tenure wanted to put the management of ECDE, primary and secondary under single management. This was a clear indication that the CS did not understand the intricacies of the different levels of education. The demands of the management of ECDE, for example, are very different from those of High School. This perhaps also reminds one of one education minister, who, on several occasions during his tenure questioned the relevancy of the humanities and social sciences in the country's university curriculum. For the minister, it was only necessary for the universities to teach science and technical subjects – which in the view of the minister – were the only ones relevant for the country's Vision 2030.

While an attempt exists at the ministry to translate the country's education policy, many of the attempts appear to remain on paper. As I established, the ministry shelves carry interesting literature on Vision 2030, gender equity, free primary education, safe schools for girls, quality assurance in education, peace education and, in fact very elaborately written manuals on "*child friendly spaces*", but apparently, it is not clear how these efforts are to be realized in the teaching and learning spaces.

It is a matter of concern when leading educationists point out that the utilization of the teaching and learning spaces for children in Kenya displays gaps which are likely to have great significance for their wholesome training. The teaching and learning spaces for children are badly constrained, (Malone, 2001). And as Pipes & Trahms, (1993), pointed out earlier, there is a rising concern that

education systems do not adequately prepare pupils to meet the demands of either the society or the labour market. This realization seems to indict both the way the processes of teaching and learning take place and the very stakeholders trusted with implementing the education programmes themselves, which as I already acknowledged, are very well spelt out. Then why shouldn't the products of the Kenyan education system fit well in society and the labour market? This can only come to one thing: discordance between policy and practice.

5.2 The School as a Teaching and Learning Space

5.2.1 The Teaching Staff

My first visit of the teaching and learning spaces started in schools. Although the home space and the family unit are considered to be the primary starting point for wholesome education, the reason to start with schools, was obvious. To start with, school is where children from the different locations congregate most of the day. School, therefore, gave me the opportunity to meet all the categories of children from whom I sampled those I was to track up to the second teaching and learning space: home. I also got the chance to interview the teachers and to generally interact with and interrogate the environment within which girl children learn, away from home. The school environment in the rural setting was found to offer a significantly contrasting scenario from that of the urban setting. I will be comparing and contrasting the scenarios as we go along.

Naturally the visits to the schools connected me to the teachers as my first official informants in the field. These were later to become my link and guide in my interaction with the children. Majority of the teachers I interacted with were trained teachers, many of them with vast experience in the profession. Many, however, had a litany of complaints, a fact that immediately told me that the

school space would not effectively and efficiently contribute to its fraction of wholesome education for the learners. The complaints ranged from personal satisfaction on the job for individual teachers to the general inhibitions. At personal level, the teachers complained of poor remuneration that could hardly sustain a decent livelihood. Indeed, there were teachers who tried to supplement their income by engaging in what some jokingly called "side hustles". These, I learnt were engagements that would earn the "side hustlers" some extra income. Some listed were such as making food items for their colleagues, selling second-hand clothes to fellow colleagues and many other different types of stuff that would be secretly carried to school and privately displayed to those interested. Such engagements, as I concluded, obviously distract the teachers‟ commitment to their cardinal duty of taking care of the children's welfare.

Engaging in "*side hustles*" by the teachers can go to extremes. I got informed on two occasions, of teachers who privately operated motor cycle business of ferrying travelers, popularly known as *boda boda*. Even if the teacher operators would excuse their involvement because they engaged after school and at times during lunchtime, or when they had no lesson on the timetable, I would immediately guess the negative impacts on the teachers‟ concentration on their work, leave alone their integrity as role-models to their learners. One can imagine of a teacher who spends his lunchtime transporting travelers only to dash to class for an afternoon lesson, perhaps without adequate preparation. In the Finnish and Japanese education models that are highlighted in chapter two, teachers are some of the most highly paid workers, perhaps, which explains their greater commitment to their work and their more positive contribution to the education process.

Unlike in Finland where teachers' academic standards are emphasized: a master's degree being recommended as the minimum qualification for a teacher, this is not the case in the Kenyan schools.

To start with, a majority of the ECDE teachers are not trained. In fact, many of those who join to teach as ECDE teachers are those who didn't perform well in school, and who, therefore, cannot find accommodation in the other fields. Their morale is, thus, low and their ability of self-expression is at the least wanting. Incidentally, some of the teachers who have tried to upgrade their competence by studying for higher qualifications express frustrations too. Some – I learnt have done university degrees in education, with some even doing masters degrees, yet as they said, they have remained to serve at the same level as before they did further studies. As they explained, their employer, the Teachers Service Commission was not keen on promoting them even after they had upgraded themselves academically. This, I concluded, had the potential of killing the teachers‟ morale and lowering their enthusiasm for their work, a fact that may see them want to give half-hearted service to their learners. Indeed, a frustrated teacher is likely to produce a frustrated learner.

On the average, the teachers in private schools appeared less likely to engage in activities that would divert their attention from their job. This is not because they are better paid than those in the public schools. As a matter of fact, they are less well paid and their security on the job is not guaranteed. The proprietors of the schools can dismiss them any time without prior warning. The teachers in private schools nonetheless appeared more committed to serving their learners. It was my view that this was, perhaps, due to the need to impress the owners of the schools. I indeed learnt that the learners in the private schools had a say on who they wanted retained as their teacher, something again that is likely to make the teachers to feel inferior before the very learners they are expected to mould and role model.

While the teachers in the public schools were at greater liberty and some took this advantage to skip their duties, cases of non-attendance to the learners were more prevalent in the rural schools. One

head teacher in an urban school attempted to explain why the teachers in the urban areas are likely to be more regular on duty than those in the far rural areas. One reason she gave was that urban schools being in easier access of education officers, could be visited at any time, which kept the teachers on the alert most of the time. The other reason was that the parents in the urban schools, especially those who were elected in-charge of classes took close interest in how the classes ran, thereby being able to regulate class attendance. Of course she also jokingly opined that urban school heads were keener managers. This she justified by arguing that urban schools on the average scored higher in exams than most rural schools. I could not really refute or confirm the accuracy of her observation, particularly about urban school heads being better managers. I of course was aware that performance in exams sometimes involved more than simply what the head teacher was suggesting. One fact, though, was that the teachers in the urban schools appeared more vibrant and to some extent more and better self-expressed – even neater, one could say.

5.2.2 The Working Atmosphere at School

Before engaging the target learners, I sought to first understand the school environment as a teaching and learning space and its attendant logistics. From the discussions with teachers in different schools it came to my realization that most activities obtaining in the school environment prioritized syllabus coverage and the passing of exams, indeed confirming my earlier reference to Stoneham's, (2013) observation that today's school agenda is driven by academic rigour, the needs of the syllabus, exams and the wish for positions on the academic league tables. To this end, thus, the method of teaching and learning in schools is mainly focused on drilling for passing examinations, with a near exaggerated emphasis on tests and past papers.

Apparently, the concern of every teacher is to cover the syllabus. The pressure on syllabus coverage becomes more intense as the learners move closer to exams, whether internal or external, and end of course final exams. Teachers then try to device all ways of getting as much time with the learners as possible. They arrange for remedial classes to occupy any available time that appears to relieve the learners from classroom taught allocations. This takes over the slots for physical education (PE), games, private library reading, debating and incidentally, even lunchtime, when the learners are allowed a couple of minutes to have a hurried bite before running back to class. This means that all through the day it is work, work and more work inside the classroom.

More time for class work is created by starting classes very early. By the time the official start of classes reaches, learners are already one and half hours, or more, into class work. Weekends, school holidays and national holidays are also all targeted for class work. Of course this type of working only means one thing: the learner in the system is exposed to cognition alone. The other necessary dimensions of development cited by Bennaars (198), i.e. creative, psychomotor, normative and dialogical, are missing as there is no time for these. Needless to say, the product of such a system will obviously not be wholesomely developed.

As observed earlier, the intention and decision to spend all the time for the learner in the classroom is in contravention of the provisions of Kenya's model of education, which itself was for all purposes designed to offer learners wholesome learning. It is perhaps because of this that the ministry of education has every now and then declared weekend and holiday remedial classes banned. This, however, has not always deterred schools from carrying out the classes. School heads, teachers, and parents – of course with the cooperation of the learners themselves – have always devised methods to ensure that these sessions go on. On the part of the learners, the pressure on them to perform and their own fear of failing coupled with a lack of confidence in their ability to work

away from their teachers will have them commit any time suggested to them for coaching. Meanwhile, on the part of the teachers, there is the push to avoid vilification that may come in case the learners fail in exams. I, however, noted that there is also an economic interest attached. Perhaps as a way of boosting their meager earnings, the teachers enthusiastically encourage remedial classes, which are normally paid for by the parents. So, remedial classes are a double sword that keeps the teachers on the academic league tables on one hand, while lining up their pockets on the other.

My analysis, even though, raises some misgivings about this remedial classes mania. For the teachers, it appears to have compromised their professionalism because some begin to see their learners as cash cows from which to get milk. Indeed, as one teacher who termed himself "anti-remedial teaching" commented: "Some of my colleagues no longer go to class at the designated time and instead push the teaching to remedial time where they know they'll earn a coin for the supposed extra work. The teacher also gave further insights:

> *Besides, the practice of remedial teaching has enslaved us. We no longer have the time for our duties at home. Some of us have become absentee parents to our children and strangers to our spouses.*

It was also revealed that the remedial programmes have often placed an extra financial burden on the parents. In one urban school which is known to perform well in exams, the following financial requirements were carried by the parents in an education system that is known officially to be offering "Free education": a payment for remedial lessons (the amounts are different, for morning, evening, weekends and holidays); books; uniform; lunch; desks; watchman; school bus; electricity; water, games and swimming lessons; educational trips and salaries for the cooks and teachers employed by the school board to address staffing deficit, both in ECDE and primary school. In fact, the calculation for the above items makes the government's remission towards free education, laughable. Consequently, many children drop out of school in spite of what is touted as free

education. In particular, a school in Taita Taveta which had only ten Teachers Service Commission teachers has had to hire eight extra teachers; three for the ECDE classes and the remaining for the primary section. The ECDE teachers are further called upon to teach some classes in the primary section once their learners go away. The result of this is a huge bill for the parents to meet, when the amount itself, distributed among the teachers is in fact peanuts for those involved. Meanwhile, another school with eight classes, not including ECDE streams, each overflowing with learners, had only five teachers. This meant that some classes remained without teachers for a good part of the day.

Apparently, the ministry is aware of the demand on the learners to facilitate remedial classes. The ministry has, therefore, on several occasions declared remedial classes and holiday coaching banned. The bans have, however, not eliminated the culture. The practice has always mutated and reappeared. I asked some teachers how they managed to flout the ministry's directives banning this practice. The teacher explained how they have managed to evade the ministry's watch: "We sometimes have the learners sneak into school at dawn to avoid being seen on the roads. We then teach them behind closed doors. So the ministry won't really know. Besides, we may advise our learners to come to school in home clothes. So, no one will ever suspect that they are in fact coming to school." The teacher then went on to reveal an emerging trend:

> *When the ministry becomes too smart, we resort to home schools where five or more children congregate in the house of a volunteering parent, and then we go in turns to teach them from there. This too, pays, at times even better. And we also get more time with our learners, whom we can now attend to as individual*s.

For the learners, I concluded that the above culture of class work after class work of course has obvious bad sides to it. One is that this fulltime engagement of learners in the classroom does not allow them to learn other aspects of life. They are always likely to end up as classroom robots that

cannot apply themselves outside the classroom. Besides, the conspiracy between the learners and their teachers and parents to cheat the ministry has the potential of training dishonesty where one then thinks that the end justifies the means. It is perhaps, therefore, no wonder that the exam process in the country is, year in year out grappling with cases of cheating in the exams. It is true that so much is spent on trying to curb the exam cheating vice. It may be debatable, but our view is that a learner who earns an A grade, having cheated and having gotten away with it is likely to want to do the same in the next stages of their schooling. On the other hand, the knowledge that the A grade one holds is fake, could erode one's confidence and trust in their own abilities.

It is notable that the two leading education models: Finnish and Japanese cited in chapter two above, do not put extreme emphasis on exams. This has perceivable good sides. First of all, a learner knowing that it is not only exams that determine their success will spare time for learning other areas of life. When exams are not a „do or die" affair, learners spare time to participate in other activities that eventually help them develop into more rounded people.

Ironically, while on one hand one may complain that classroom teaching, or learner possession by the teachers is extreme, this appears to only apply to examination classes and those nearing national examinations. The lower classes, on the other hand, see little of their teachers. This is because the ratio of teachers to learners in some schools is very bad, which then necessitates employing private teachers by the school boards as cited above. In many of the schools I visited, I learnt that the recommended ratio of 1:50, i.e. one teacher to every fifty learners is hardly tenable. One school, for example, had a Standard One enrolment of 170 with only one teacher officially available for the class. The teachers who volunteered to assist this particular teacher equally had plenty on their

hands. It is then immediately clear that this scenario presents a dilemma that rules out effective teaching and learning.

There were two options for addressing the dilemma referred to above: one was to divide the class into two streams of 85, so as to make the classes more manageable and to enable the teacher get closer to individual learners. However, this meant that one stream would remain unattended whenever the teacher went to teach the other stream. Alternatively, the teacher would keep the learners together so as to attend to them all, which again made teacher/individual learner contact impossible. Evidently, whichever option was applied, not much effective teaching would go on. Indeed, the scenario is a big contrast to the requirement of the Japanese education model that stipulates a ratio of 1:19, that is, one teacher for nineteen learners.

While staffing in the urban schools appeared fairer compared to the rural schools, the enrolment in the urban schools was found to be relatively higher. Therefore, even when staffing appeared to improve by the numbers, these were again swallowed up by increased enrolment, thereby keeping the teacher/learner ratio non-commensurate. Consequently, classes often went unattended, something that would go to suggest that little teaching really happened in schools. This perhaps explains the UNESCO, 2002 report that revealed cases of learners in Standard Eight (the final class of primary education), being unable to read and write.

It is noteworthy that school takes up most of the active daily time of the children. Many of the schools I visited, particularly in the urban areas, open their gates as early as six in the morning. This is because, those schools that use school buses to ferry children to school must have their buses on the road as early as four-thirty or latest five in the morning if they will escape the traffic jams that

begin to pile up and don't ease until as late as ten or eleven. Even those children that use private means have to be dropped early, either to avoid the traffic jam, or so as to allow their employed parents go to work. Similarly, those who use public transport must also time the earliest vehicles for the same reason of avoiding jam.

While the rural schools do not face the challenge of traffic jams, many nonetheless start early, either because of the distance to school, or because the teachers‟ have designed to effect morning remedial classes aimed at covering the syllabus. And, since the teachers want to utilize games time and after, children are often still at school as late as six in the evening, which brings us to the same conclusion: children spend most of their time at school.

Owing to the fact that children spend most of their time at school, it will be expected that they maximize the time for learning all they need in life. However, as I have already pointed out, the school environment is not totally up to this task, either because the teachers meant to effectively mould the children are not enough, or they spend most of the time preparing them to cover the syllabus and to pass exams. This could be worrying because the amount of time society has left for schools to stay with children, in effect suggests that the former has surrendered all training to the latter. Incidentally, school is evidently incapable of performing the task as would be expected, which then brings one to the conclusion that really, children in the country are not receiving wholesome education.

What is more, the findings here have confirmed that the way schools run is so much left to the whims of the head teachers and the teachers in the different schools, who design individual methods of teaching and covering the syllabus. I particularly noted that even ECDE programmes are not standardized such that it would be predictable what type of graduate is expected from the ECDE

programme. This is perhaps what explains the reason why an ECDE graduate moving to join Standard One will be subjected to extensive interviewing. It may further explain why even at ECDE level, schools want to subject such young learners to remedial classes that sometimes require then to go to school at odd hours and on non-school days. Such emphasis on school work at such an early age can, in my view, bring about abhorrence towards school. It is notable that in the Japanese education system, serious school demands on children do not start until they are seven.

Incidentally, the country's education system stipulates the age at which children should join ECDE classes and how long they are expected to stay in readiness for joining Standard One. However, schools have introduced programmes such as "Baby Class" which apparently have no official syllabus and which see children as young as two years admitted. The result of this is that each school conducts its programme in the way suitable to the individual school, thus, not embracing standardization. Meanwhile, admitting children at such an early age means a child is not allowed to learn, understand and fully familiarize with the primary environment, which is home, before being introduced to a secondary environment that is school. This in my view could be detrimental to the child's appreciation of the home space, thereby causing an imbalance.

5.2.3 Experiences of the Girl Child in the School Space

Wholesome education is one of the most critical areas of empowerment for women. It impacts not only on the future socio-cultural fabric of the country, but is also crucial in evolving, shaping and molding the attitudes and behaviour of the future generations of the country. Kenya needs to evaluate the costs and benefits of wholesome education for the girl child, (Wanyama and Chang'ach, 2013). This unfortunately is not the case for girl children in Kenya.

Many girls are still out of school, or have dropped out due to the following factors; early marriage, negative/adverse cultural practices and cultural values, attitudes and practices that foster teenage pregnancy, sexual harassment, excessive domestic chores, the need to earn money, and the general disregard for the importance of girls‟ education, (Mokua, 2013). Mokua, further points out the lack of gender responsiveness among the teachers, the curriculum, teaching methodology, teaching and learning materials, school management systems, financial difficulties (causing particularly girls from poor households to be engaged in exploitative child labour), family responsibilities, lack of gender appropriate facilities in schools (such as latrines and sanitary towels), low self-esteem, gender-based violence and harassment, the unsafe and long distances to school, HIV/AIDS orphan-hood, conflicts affecting the education of girls, and the overall school environment. All these are believed to affect girl children's education. To end up the cycle of gender imbalance in education in Kenya, Mokua (ibid), suggests that conditions must be set to improve the environment in which girl children study so as to make them remain in school until they complete the school cycle. Mokua concludes that,

> *Until all vestiges of these inequities are eliminated, gender equality in education and in the larger development paradigm remains but a pipe dream.*

As I established, the greatest culprit of girl child dropout is poverty. Apparently, most families particularly in the rural areas that find themselves in financial difficulties think of trading off their girls as the first solution. As the teachers informed me, girl children from age ten to twelve may drop out either to be married off or to go and play the ayah to family with money so as to support their own families. A case was narrated of one girl who agreed to be married off so that her bride price would pay school requirements for her brother. Meanwhile, the family also needed money for food. The efforts by one-woman teacher to intervene failed because she herself was not in a position to provide what that family needed.

Poverty as the culprit of girl child dropout from school begins to reveal girls' vulnerability from points that are not always immediately recognizable. From a good number of responses, many girls are victims of low self-esteem, a fact that makes them feel uncomfortable at school and out of place among peers. When they get overwhelmed by the sense of low self-esteem, many opt to leave school.

A common factor that majority of the girls cited as a cause of low self-esteem is the occurrence of the menstrual cycle. Due to poverty, not many of the girls are able to afford menstrual pads that would enable them go through their periods in a hygienic and dignified manner. Some revealed that they use leaves while others tear pages from their exercise books to clean themselves, with those in a better financial state using the cheaper toilet paper, all of which often end up in embarrassing outcomes. Found in this situation, the girls stay out of school rather than risk embarrassment. In the worst case scenario, some do not feel like going back to school after a particularly embarrassing experience. Apparently, those who fund education for girls do not always remember this aspect of a girl's life. School, therefore, fails to offer a real safe and friendly atmosphere for the girls faced with such challenges. And, as it further came out, girls who join school a little late and who find themselves among classmates that are much younger, feel really out of place. Therefore, an unforeseen experience as an embarrassing menstrual handling could very likely exacerbate an already uncomfortable situation, thereby necessitating dropping out of school as the better option.

During focused group discussions, some girls revealed that the boys made fun of them when their school dresses appeared torn, particularly if the tear was around the breast, or at the buttocks, which incidentally are the more likely positions of tear. And, as some confined, a torn school dress, or one with a patch served to announce to everyone how poor one's home was. "It's so embarrassing when

everyone can see that you're from a poor home," one girl lamented. "Then some people offer to assist, but later begin making demands. When you refuse, they demand that you refund the assistance they gave you, and you don't have it," she lamented.

Found in a dilemma like that of accepting assistance that they cannot pay back, some of the victims offer to pay back in kind. In some cases, the men they offer themselves to are way older than them. Still, even if the beneficiaries of the sex acts are young people like themselves, the temptation to engage in sex as a way of working towards one's pressing needs often result in consequences that have a lasting effect on the girl for life. Often, this results in some of the risks that Mokua (2013), above, has hinted to. These include, teenage pregnancies, HIV/AIDS infections (and of course other sexually transmitted infections – STIs), subsequent sexual harassment, stalking and/or early marriages, among others. All these risks at different levels are always likely to lead to dropping out of school.

Other woes of girl children that still had a strong relationship with their families" economic status, which came to the fore, included the distance from home to school and the girls" activities while at school. The distance to school, particularly, was an issue because some girls lived a number of kilometers away from school. Since the economic situation made the families in question unable to arrange for convenient means of transport to and from school the girls involved usually walked the distances. This, as the girls explained, had several challenges. Since most schools, in their effort to cover the syllabus and to record impressive performance in exams, insisted on starting school business early, the learners were expected at school by 7 a.m. latest. Consequently, a learner living more than five kilometers away from school needed to leave home before, or by five. By then, it is still unsafe for a girl walking alone through the forested paths of Taita Taveta, due to wild animals

and unfriendly people. One then comes to understand the meaning of a manual we saw at the ministry offices, published by one non-governmental organization known as Action Aid, and titled: "Safe Schools for Girl Children". Apparently, the Japanese system of education has forestalled such challenges by ensuring that every community had a school within.

The same girl faced similar dangers back from school, from where she may be released as late as 6 p.m. By the time the girl reaches home, it is approaching eight in the evening. Aware of the expectations and challenges, sometimes the girls are tempted to accept lifts, particularly from the motor cyclist operators *(boda boda).* And as I established, such lifts have many times ended in unhealthy acquaintances. On occasions, the *boda boda* operators, in addition to offering lifts also give small tokens of money and other goodies. When asked why they don't decline the offers, one girl replied – to the amusement of the others: "Sometimes situation "*hu*" - force, mazee," meaning that sometimes the situation one finds herself in, forces her to accept the offers. "*Pengine ume-kaukiwa, pengine umechelewa na hutaki kuchapwa shuleni, au pengine jioni giza limekupata*," she added. This was a Kiswahili justification as to why one accepts the offers. "*Sometimes you are so broke, sometimes you are late and you fear being caned at school, or sometimes you are caught up in darkness*." Of course a majority of the girls wished their families were able to meet their needs so that they wouldn't get tempted to accept favours, which sometimes come from total strangers.

Meanwhile, while at school, girl children find themselves working under conditions that would at the very least be seen as non-conducive for a girl's own self-esteem. In one school I visited, all the pupils, male and female share pit latrines. I noted that whenever it comes to using the latrines, mostly at break and lunch times, the boys get to the toilets ahead of the girls, and the latter have to wait until the places are cleared of the boys before they themselves can use the places. In another

school, the latrines were separate; however, the rooms had no shutters, thereby making it undignified for use. One would imagine how a girl who wanted to change her menstrual nappies would do that. Of course this kind of school conditions reflected the low status of the community within which the school was located. I could argue that such school conditions, in fact, contradict the ministry's manifesto defined in their "Child Friendly Schools Manual" that I found at the ministry offices. The manuals which touch on the welfare of the child at school and the minimum requirements for what a learner friendly school should provide, are, however, only displayed on the shelves in the ministry offices without any clear timetable for their rollout.

As mentioned earlier, the school programme is so packed that it hardly allows children to be themselves; not even giving ample time for them to look for something to eat, even though many hardly carry lunch to school, anyway. This is, however, a clear indicator that the school as a teaching and learning space could sometimes be too hostile for the proper development of a child, and in particular a girl child.

Observably, the condition obtaining for girl children in urban schools is different to some extent. To start with, the enrolment for girls is higher than that of the boys, as demonstrated by table 2, in chapter 3, contrary to the situation in the rural areas where the enrolment for the boys is far higher than that of the girls. Besides, the dropout rate for the girls is also lower than what appears to be the trend in rural schools. This means that girls in the urban areas stand a good chance of finishing school. Of course this does not in any way suggest that the girls in urban schools receive wholesome education. On the contrary, there appears to be an exaggerated concentration on school business for the girls in the urban schools.

Notably, a big percentage of learners in urban settings go to privately run schools whose primary aim is to record a performance in the national exams that will help attract greater enrolment. The learners who go to these schools, therefore, are subjected to extensive schoolwork. This leaves them with very little time to learn anything else other than cognitive and to some extent dialogical skills. It also means that they do not spend time at home. As a result, they do not have much exposure to skills that could purely be learnt in the home space. These are the skills associated with normal home operations such as: the basics of living together as a family; individual responsibilities as a member of the family; home crafts; family structures and interrelationships; community structures and general social dynamics. Without a grasp of these aspects of life, the children are at a loss of what to do if they were to stay at home. One then sees the sense in the Finnish and Japanese education timetables that designate only a fraction of the day's hours for the learners to attend school, with the rest of the time being spent at home.

As pointed out earlier, there is much social expectation on girl children since they are largely considered as homemakers upon whom society depends for the stability of the family. Such an expectation would perhaps, therefore, place a big premium on the ability of the girl child to develop greater sensibilities in family, home and society's operations. Of course gender parity proponents may want to take issue with this kind of expectation, arguing that it tends to incline girl children towards domesticity while placing lighter domestic expectations on boy children. This – they may want to argue – leaves greater space for boy children in school while limiting the girls‟ school space. This may not really be the case. Actually both boys and girls should properly and equally understand the workings at school and at home because in the long run, both sexes will have to play important roles in the family when they become fathers and mothers. But the truth is, a family could more likely survive with a lopsided father than with a lopsided mother. It is not in doubt that a mother is

closer to the children in the family than the father. Right from conception to the time a child is weaned off, the mother is naturally more likely to be present with the child than the father is. Therefore, greater knowledge about child upbringing might be more crucial for the mother. In other words, a family is better off if it is the mother who is better equipped on the basics of family living and parenting than if it is the father instead.

Nonetheless, as I have already pointed out, this research found out that children spend most of their time at school. A typical school day normally starts at 4 in the morning when a child should start getting ready to travel to school. The case is the same whether a child is travelling to school using public means, private means, school transport or any other means. As seen earlier, there is need to start early is in order to avoid traffic snarl-ups that are more-or-less a normal feature in town. Meanwhile, unlike the Japanese system where learners are encouraged to attend schools within their locality, many learners in Nairobi attend schools that are across the estates. It is common to find a learner from one end of the city going to school on the other end of the city, or from some distant suburban district to another district on the other end. Often, a learner may put in four hours per day of travel to and from school. And given the time a learner is released from school, it may not be until 7.30, at times 8.00 in the evening that a learner arrives home. School, thus, is some kind of torture.

Incidentally, despite the less serene learning atmosphere, mostly rendered non-conducive because of the chaotic nature of overpopulated urban setups, learners in Nairobi as I pointed out earlier, may be said to have an advantage over their counterparts in the rural setups. First of all, the schools are better staffed and the teachers appear more informed if not better trained. Consequently, the learners in Nairobi appear more informed than those I interacted with in the rural schools. Indeed, many of the learners in Nairobi have greater access to information sources such as television, internet, phones and even print media. The learners, therefore, are better expressed and record a higher mean grade in

exams. However, I found the majority of them to be less conversant with the basics of home operations and home crafts than what was the case in the rural schools.

5.3 The Home as a Teaching and Learning Space

Experiences of the Girl Child in the Home Space

I argue that it is necessary for children to be well acquainted with the home space as with the school space. Home space essentially represents the family, community and the general society in which they will live and work for the rest of their lives after formal education in school. Yet in a sense, the school as a learning space may be said to have invaded the home space. On top of having spent most of their time at school, learners carry home school assignments, conveniently termed 'homework' – perhaps to justify the carry-over – which occupies them till bedtime. One realizes that the said 'homework' is, in fact simply a transfer of school to home. Home for these children, therefore, appears to be simply a place to lodge just for a few hours, before going back to school, which raises the question of the contribution of home as a teaching and learning space in the endeavor of wholesome education for children. This seems to suggest that the school as a learning space has invaded the home space.

The invasion of the home space by the school, even though, may be said to be the scenario in majorly urban areas. Rural areas appear to paint a different scenario. Evans (1997), observes that the girl/boy child (in rural homes) is over-engaged in household chores, farm activities and family businesses. Girl children in particular, are at home level, engaged in excessive domestic chores (collecting water and firewood, taking care of siblings, assisting in the cooking, cleaning and washing, and taking care of the family, among the myriad activities that they take part in).

Listening to what girl children do when they get home, it appears that the girl child in the rural areas spends time on home engagements at the expense of their schoolwork. By the time they are through with the home chores; it is already late in the night. As most narrated, they often go back to school the following day with either unfinished or just undone homework. “Then the teacher punishes you for not doing your homework,” one girl in TaitaTaveta lamented. It, thus, happens that while the school space has invaded the home space in the urban areas, the home seems to invade the school space in the rural areas. Both scenarios are likely to deny children wholesome education.

Nsamenang and Tchomber (2011), conclude that it takes a village to raise a child. It is necessary to be sure that the school and home are part of that village. This again is, perhaps, why in the Finnish and Japanese systems of education, the schools which children attend are situated within their localities. In the Japanese system in particular, children are encouraged to attend schools that are within their walking distance. Children are in fact encouraged to walk to school at the earliest age possible. This is perhaps, to enable the child to learn to be self-reliant at an early age. Meanwhile encouraging children to attend schools within their localities and community accords the children the opportunity to learn and master their immediate environment before venturing further afield. In Kenya, children as early as three or four years, are already being driven across the city to attend schools of their parents‟ choice: schools that are often many kilometers from where the child lives. The argument here is that the child has hardly mastered the first environment which in this case is the home space. And since where they go to school is a restricted environment (school compound), they do not learn much beyond the school. The result is that the learners end up not knowing anything outside school. They remain strangers once outside the school compound: not understanding their home environment as well that within which the school is situated.

As already noted, the urban home environment for the girl child learner is remarkably different from that of the rural learner. To start with, the training for the learner in the urban setting tends to be more inclined towards career while that for the rural girl learner appears to incline more towards knowing how to manage the home, if this is to be expressed in euphemistic terms. Otherwise, if more directly expressed, the emphasis for the girl in the rural setting appears to be teaching her to be a good woman. This perhaps explains why girls in this setting are seen more as part of the home workers. As Chege and Sifuna (2006) observe:

> It seems that the opportunity costs are usually much higher for girls to stay home than for boys. Sending a girl to school is normally seen either as bringing no gain at all, or, worse, as an actual waste of resources while educating a boy is generally seen as a sound investment for the family, (P.22).

Perhaps based on the foregoing perception about girl children, families ensure that the girls have attended to their household chores before anything else. The result then is that the girl children in the rural setting have little time for schoolwork, which explains why they often go back to school with unfinished or hurriedly done homework. This may also explain why the girls in the rural settings tend to perform poorer in exams than their urban counterparts. Consequently, the girls in the rural settings end up being well conversant with the affairs in the home space while they lag behind in the achievements related to the school space. Indeed, cases of learners who finish class eight (the topmost class in the primary school system), without being fluent in reading and writing have been recorded, majority of them in the rural schools. Such learners, one may argue, have a lopsided development. They may perform well in household chores, but since they are barely literate, they may not be able to support their families intellectually and economically. They may also not comprehend the intricate issues of maternal health and childcare, thereby resulting in poor living.

The very antithesis of the foregoing imbalance in the development of the girl child is that in the urban setting. As already pointed out, I observed that the training in the urban setups for children in general and girl children in particular, is for them to excel in their studies and perhaps secure paid up jobs, i.e. career development. This is indeed the focus in majority of homes that I visited in Nairobi County. There was an exception to this of course, particularly for the learners from slums and informal settlements. At Olympic Primary School in Kibera, for example, I found children from mixed backgrounds. Though the school is situated right in the midst of Kibera slum, it has attracted children from the middle and to quite some extent, upper classes, because of its good academic performance. Indeed, the school afforded me interaction with both groups: the well-to-do and those who are barely managing.

In my interaction with the girl children from Olympic Primary School as one of the key selected observation environments, I came to the conclusion that the level of balanced training for the different children is varied, inasmuch as they belong to an urban setting and even attending same schools. I actually came to realize that the children from the poor households come closer to developing a more balanced lifestyle than those from the more well-to-do households. This is because there appears to be a greater demand on girl children from the poorer households to contribute at home in terms of household chores and other domestic expectations, an endeavour they have to fulfill even as they pursue their school demands. The difference between this group and the one I interacted with in the rural settings is that there is a slightly lighter demand on them as far as domestic duties are concerned. This, as I came to learn, allows them to do their homework. And as some reported, sometimes they may be exempted from home duties when there is pressing schoolwork. This group, therefore, experiences some degree of balance between home and school commitments.

The same may not be said about majority of the girl children from well-to-do households. There appears to be greater emphasis on school performance by the children from this latter category. For many of them good performance in school is about everything. The children, thus, divorce themselves from every aspect of life that does not directly relate to school and exams. For some, home is only a place to find ready prepared meals, sit at the table to finish homework and sleep with an alarm on to wake them up at 4 a.m. so that the school routine can start all over again. For this group, there is very little concern about anything else around them if it does not have to do with school, exceptions only being when they want to watch television or play games on the mobile phone. Needless to say, this is obviously a lopsided group in terms of wholesome development. I would argue that this type of upbringing of children makes them experts in academic work but they remain strangers in the real world – where incidentally they expect to live once through with formal schooling. This category of children can then be said to have not been wholesomely brought up.

All the different categories of children and child upbringing cited above notwithstanding, one factor appeared constant in all the observations: parents are not there for their children. The absence of parents from home and, therefore, their lack of participation in role-modeling of the children, appears to cut across all categories of households. Of course the excuse for the said absence is categorical: "we are out trying to put food on the table." In salaried households, the parents leave early to go to work. In non-salaried households, the parents still leave early for odd jobs here and there that will occupy them all through the day. In majority cases for the salaried households in the urban areas, the parents who quite often have to crawl through the traffic jams, arrive home late. They, therefore, hardly have any meaningful interaction with their children, who themselves are tired

and sleeping, or they are glued at the table trying to finish their homework. Where parents come home early, they are also tired and hardly have the energy to attend to the children.

This study, thus, noted that parents are not really actively involved in the training of their children. There seems to exist a big gap between the parents and their children. Many parents in fact admitted that they do not understand their children. Some do not know what to talk to their children about, left alone with them. One mother of two daughters appeared worried that schools were closing for a week to allow national exams to take place. "What am I supposed to do with those girls here at home for that whole week?" This kind of worry on the part of parents implies that homes have not left space for children. Apparently, children have been both physically and mentally been evicted from their homes and surrendered to schools, into the hands of teachers. But again as I already pointed out, the teachers themselves are already overwhelmed by the numbers of children they are dealing with in schools. Therefore, expecting them to parent the children may be untenable. However, what comes out from this scenario is that children miss out on what they would learn from the home spaces because the home space itself has no place for them. Consequently, children miss out on wholesome training, something that may have a lasting effect on girl children specifically, because they may never learn to understand the home environment where they are hoped to bring up their own children. The concern for girl children in such a scenario, is based on what I already mentioned: that society looks up to mothers if the family will remain stable. Mothers have more time with the children, so the former's stability may be critical if they will effectively and constructively spend that time with the children.

The children in the rural settings are perhaps luckier for they see their parents more often, particularly the mothers. In a good number of homes in Taita Taveta that I visited, I didn't meet the

fathers of the children but I did the mothers. The fathers were said to be out on business, but sometimes the truth was that majority spent time in beer places. One male respondent I met tried to justify the men's decision to go drinking: "Sometimes the demands at home, coupled with the nagging of our wives make staying at home a nightmare." Apparently, some of the men stay out late to avoid the responsibilities that go with being the head of the family.

I say girl children in the rural are luckier because at least they have their mothers to emulate. But as I also pointed out, the mothers seem to take their daughters as part of the hands at home. They, therefore, engage them in domestic work to the extent that the girls" schooling suffers. And as one-woman respondent argued, it would be better to overburden the daughters with housework than leave them to grow not knowing how to work, because society cannot imagine, leave alone condoning a woman who cannot manage her home.

At some point I found myself debating over which girl was better of: the urban girl who had all the time for her schoolwork but lacked the basics of home stay, or the rural girl who mastered the skills of home stay but ended up compromising her performance in school. I concluded that neither of the two girls should celebrate her position. A woman intellectual who had no clue on how to manage her life at home was as disadvantaged as an illiterate woman who understood all the crafts of family, home and community. Both would obviously suffer a lopsidedness that would make their lives incomplete. This then brings one back to the argument that both aspects of life (what is learnt in the school space and in the home space), are crucial for wholesome living and that both can be offered in adequate measures without one eclipsing the other.

Indeed, this study would also like to draw attention to one category of girl children for whom one learning space (home) appears to completely eclipse the other (school). These are the girls who offer

services as ayahs or housemaids/house girls. Indeed, some of those I met had dropped out of school to work as house helps. Those working in the urban areas were particularly fetched from upcountry to help keep the house or to nurse babies as the mothers went to work. At a tender age (sometimes as early as 11), these young girls are forced to master all the skills of house management. I noted that some of them are, in fact depended on to take care of the children of the house: wake them up, wash them, dress them, feed them and even escort them to the road (for those using school transport). They will then come back to the house and begin the routine of keeping the house, which as I noted includes every piece of work needed in the house: washing clothes, cleaning the house, washing utensils, cooking and doing all sorts of things that keep the house going. Needless to say, this category of girls has no chance to go to, or continue with school. They, therefore, end up remaining illiterate in a thoroughly literate environment which then makes her a misfit of sorts. Ironically, she is often depended on, as I have already pointed out, to more or less nurture and train the children of the house, some older than herself.

The house girl, in spite of her age, or schooling ends up occupying a central position in the family. I noted that for a number of learners that I requested to list their family members, the house help (often referred to as auntie), was one of the first names to appear. Asked with whom the children spent time while at home, most of them replied: "Auntie". The disturbing observation was that even the house owners who seemed very particular about children getting a school education appeared not to realize that they had among them a child who was being denied a school education. Apparently, their interest in children getting a school education was something only meant for their biological children and other children such as the ayah were perhaps not children, or should not be included.

It was also notable that the children in homes that had house helps did nothing to help in the house and apparently didn't bother to engage in anything away from their books. Consequently, I wish to argue, such children do not develop a sense of dignity of work. Work, whether in the house or outside the house is considered something for maids, or servants. Two categories of girl children then came to be found in such an environment: one clever wise in the home space (the house girl) and the other clever wise in the school space (the girl of the house). Of course each ends up being lopsided without a balanced and wholesome development. Ironically, some of the parents are aware that their daughters are not complete without training on other engagements away from schoolwork, but they are not doing anything about it. In fact, one mother jokingly commented that their daughters are not able to get husbands even after they have earned university degrees. And that the men come and marry the housemaids instead. Perhaps the men prefer the housemaids because they are looking for someone who is utilitarian in real life, not one who is only clever wise in numbers and letters.

Meanwhile, I also noted that the type of home spaces that the children come from may themselves not be conducive teaching or learning environments. Slum environments, for example, such as some of those I visited in the urban areas, may be said to be polluted spaces that may not allow constructive development of children. In Kibera community, in Nairobi, I observed acts such as rampant open display of drunkenness, open display of love scenes, use of abusive or vulgar language, violent confrontations, street children smoking or sniffing and many other shows that could be injurious to the character of a growing child whether male or female. Even the very dressing of some of the girls on the streets and their idle manner obviously lacked decorum. Indeed, the young school girls from such an environment may sometimes want to look at these bigger girls as some kind of role models to emulate. My conclusion was that such environments as a home space would not qualify to serve as a teaching and learning space as it was likely to train antisocial

behavior. One would, therefore, a child never learnt anything at home than get exposed in this manner. This means that a girl child faced with this kind of scenario is likely to miss the balanced home/school training. It may be opted that she spends all the time at school, rather than risk learning from a polluted home environment, which then brings us back to the needs of wholesome training, involving both the school and home spaces.

One wants to imagine that the children who come from the more well-to-do households enjoy a healthier home space. This appears true to some extent because such households, more often, are situated in less compromised environments. However, the children from such settings also find themselves unable to fully benefit from their home spaces. As I pointed out at some point, such households put a lot of emphasis on the academic achievements of their children. So, the children here concentrate on schoolwork at the expense of learning any other skills in life. Since such households are likely to keep house helps, children can afford to do nothing else other than engage in schoolwork.

Besides, I found out that a majority of the children in this kind of setup leave in gated homes. I, however, noted that the children from one gated home hardly knew anybody from the neighbouring gated home. On a few occasions the children would stop at telling us that "that is the home of mama so and so." What was clear, though, was that the residents in these gated homes don't appear to live as a community where the children would benefit from the social life of a community. Once the child gets inside the gate of her home, she will again come out on her way to school. So the home space in this case fails to be a place where a child can learn much, since she does not interact. Incidentally, even some of the adults do not know their immediate neighbours. Life for the children in such environments becomes so restrictive that they manage to learn little from their surroundings.

The children appear like prisoners: at home they are locked behind the home gate, to school they are locked in their parents‟ cars or school buses, and at school they are locked within the fenced school compound. They then end up being completely dependent since they never explore and master their surroundings, which always remain unfamiliar. This is perhaps why some children, left on their own, become unable to trace their way to school even after they have been attending the same school for years. When I tried to track how the children from such settings fair later on, I learnt that many are unable to do most things for themselves. I, for instance, learnt of girls who joined secondary schools but who were totally unable to take care of themselves because they had never learnt to even wash their own handkerchiefs.

Meanwhile, the rural setups as I found in Taita Taveta are freer and more communal. The children often meet as friends in their neighbours' homes and they clearly benefit from communal living. This environment, though, has its shortcomings as I already pointed out. One drawback that immediately catches the eye is the dilapidation of some of the homes in which the children live. Many of the compounds lack the basic amenities that would make living in the homes a joy. For instance, a good number of the homes I visited had no toilets. The residents, therefore, either eased themselves in the bushes or simply buried their waste in shallow holes dug for the instant purpose. The girls in particular found even a simple call of nature such as a short call a cumbersome experience. While the boys simply rushed and stood next to a bush, or a tree, or a wall, the girls had to make a trip further into the bush to hide, even for a short call.

Apart from toilets, I found a majority of the homes to lack other basic amenities such as water, electricity and dependable cooking fuel. This then means that the girls – usually entrusted with the domestic welfare – have to spend much time looking for water and firewood, thereby failing to do

their schoolwork (homework). And since the homes have no electricity, the girls can't do their homework since by the time they sit down to work it may be dark already. Alternatively, they may struggle to do the homework using poor lighting such as smoky oil lamps commonly referred to as *koroboi.*

Another notable challenge at home that I found to seriously affect girl children is accommodation space. Many homes had a single house in the compound which served to accommodate everyone in the home. Incidentally, the houses were always tiny (perhaps due to the difficulty in affording building materials). The tiny houses housed the parents, the sons, daughters and occasionally, visiting relatives. Perhaps owing to this limitation, I learnt that cases of rape and incest are quite common. This could perhaps be one of the reasons girl children get married early, thereby dropping out of school. I was informed of cases of incest, even involving the fathers and their daughters. I learnt that some of the mothers, who may themselves have got married at age 12, reach a time they get bored with their homes and begin looking for every excuse to go away on trips. This, I was told, sometimes becomes part of what opens the possibility of incestuous relationships between fathers and their daughters. What this means then is that girl children are disadvantaged even at home. Besides, the possibility of getting married early means that they won't continue with school while at the same time they have to cope with a hostile home environment. The end result is mothers and parents who have no bearing in life, which raises questions of what type of families they will raise. Otherwise, it is quite accurate to conclude that there exists a disconnect between the Ministry of Education policy for primary school education and the implementation of the same on the ground. The implementers of the policy have deviated from the stipulations of an otherwise well formulated policy that initially targeted to offer wholesome education to Kenyan children. Instead the

implementers only lent themselves to the cognitive aspects of the policy thereby rendering the policy unable to offer an education that can produce well rounded children, more so girl children, who are further inhibited by the gender disadvantaging socio-cultural and economic environment that they inhabit.

5.4 What is so Critically and Crucially Different?

What is so critically and crucially different is a question that I attempt to answer following my visits to the teaching and learning spaces for girl children that I visited; comparing and contrasting the education models that I selected; and interviewing a number of respondents acquainted with at least two of the models. The question is, thus, prompted by the need to compare the teaching and learning environment for children in Kenya and in those countries that have been hailed for having excellent education systems. In particular, it makes sense to compare the Kenyan system with those of Finland and Japan, sampled in chapter two as benchmarks. This is necessary for determining the level of conformity with, or deviation from what has generally been viewed as good standards for wholesome training of children.

While there appears to be nothing radically wrong with the Kenyan education system – in fact the system in principle sounds perfect and as well thought out as those of the selected countries – the implementation of the system leaves many gaps that lead one to conclude that the learners do not get wholesome education. Four aggregated factors seem to stand out that make the implementation of the education system in Kenya radically different from those of Finland and Japan. These are: the allocation of time, the allocation of resources, the allocation of the teaching and learning spaces and the benchmarks of expected outcomes.

As I have already pointed out, much of the Kenyan children's time is allocated to schoolwork. School appears to engage the learners from as early as 4 a.m. when they wake up to begin preparing for school, as school buses will be picking them from 5 a.m. Those to be dropped by their parents or those using public vehicles will still wake up early to beat the traffic jams on the road. Incidentally, even those away from traffic jams, i.e. those in the rural areas will also wake up early because of the distance to walk from home to school. After the children will have spent all the day at school to arrive at home at 7 p.m. or later, they will still be carrying work from school as homework. This is different from the practice in the two top countries that I sampled. In Finland, for example, school starts between 8 and 10 a.m. and ends between 1 and 4 p.m. Meanwhile, in Japan, school classes operate from 8 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. The practice in the two countries appears to leave much time for children to spend at home and to engage in other activities away from school.

Meanwhile, learners in Finland spend 190 days at school and 175 days at home every year. In Japan, it is 175 days at school and 190 days at home. On the contrary, the three vacations in Kenya, occurring in April, August and December when children are meant to stay at home, total up to about 100 days. These are the same days that are again committed to remedial teaching, popularly referred to as holiday coaching, a practice that one could interpret as meant to ensure that children do not spend any time in their homes. Indeed, as I observed earlier, some parents wonder what the children will do at home if they were to stay a day away from school, meaning that there is no place for the children in the home space. This is further confirmed by the fact that a child will have started going to school as early as 3 or 4 years of age, meaning that there is not much connection between the child and his/her home. In Finland, children join school at age 7, perhaps when they have developed reasonable understanding of what goes on in their home spaces. In Japan children join school when they can walk to school on their own.

On allocation of resources, one realizes that the Kenyan education system does not facilitate education programmes to a level that can ensure quality. While the government has declared free education for all children, the support given per child for the whole year is barely adequate for the child's needs for one month. In the past about Kenya shillings one thousand two hundred was committed per child per year. In Japan, one hundred dollars are committed for each child per month. This translates to about Kenya shillings ten thousand per month, or one hundred and twenty thousand per year. Such support will ensure quality education for all, regardless of their social or economic status. From the information I got from the head teachers the about one thousand two hundred pledged per child per year, again may not come in time, and when it comes it is not full amount.

From my findings, the amount given for free education may never even be a tenth of what a child needs to stay at school. The amount cannot cover all else that the child needs. In fact, most schools do not have enough teachers to facilitate the said free education. In some schools, the ratio of learners to one teacher is as high as one hundred and twenty to one. Schools are, therefore, forced to employ extra teachers on parents‟ account. This is in addition to a raft of requirements that are a must but which are not covered in what the government provides and have to be financed by the parents. Some crucial requirements such as health care, transport, meals, uniform, security, electricity, desks, construction of classrooms and toilets and many other essentials are left for the parents to meet. In the end, schools realize that they require well over twenty thousand shillings per child for the school to run. In view of this, what the government gives in the name of free education is simply a drop in the ocean. As a result, children from disadvantaged backgrounds who cannot raise the needed amounts drop out of school.

The situation of poorly funded schools is coupled by poorly remunerated teachers whose morale is low and who have to go on strike from time to time, thereby disrupting learning. One is forced to understand the frustration of a teacher handling classes of over hundred learners, but who isn't well remunerated. In Japan and Finland, teachers are among those employees that are most highly paid. In addition, classes are kept small to ensure that the teacher reaches every learner. In Finland, for example, classes are kept at nineteen learners with twenty as the maximum. Having good pay, ample time and a manageable number of learners to handle ensure happy teachers who are ready to commit all their time serving their learners. The teachers are also facilitated to carry out research on the best methods of teaching and the emerging changes and challenges in education.

Another major factor of comparison and contrast between the Kenyan system of education and that of the selected countries is on the allocation and utilization of the teaching and learning spaces. As I pointed out earlier in this chapter, the school space has evidently invaded the home space in the urban settings while the home space has invaded the school space in rural settings. A space invading the other means that the emphasis on the activities meant for one space eclipses those for the other space. The development of the child, therefore, is lopsided because the child develops in an imbalanced manner. This scenario as I observed, is most pronounced in the urban settings where all children appear to do is schoolwork. Even when the children are at home, they are still engaged in what has appropriately been labeled "homework" perhaps to justify the transfer of school to home. I established that nearly every subject that the children engage with at school attracts homework. In one evening, therefore, a child may be having more than seven assignments representing the different subjects attended on that particular day. This, as the teachers explained, is the only way of ensuring that the syllabus is covered and that the learners make themselves ready to pass exams.

With up to approximately two hundred and fifty days assigned to the school terms and still having holiday coaching during the remaining days of the year meant for vacation, the home space consequently plays a very minimal role in the education of the child. The situation is worsened by „cross border" enrolments where children go to schools in completely different localities, even regions from where they live. Since the children spend most of the time in that cross border school, they remain strangers in their home environment.

What Japan has done to ensure that the children remain equitably operational in both the school and home spaces; the country's education system has made sure that every locality has a good school. Where a locality depends on a private school, that school too is funded. And because every school has everything that the learners need, there arises no need to go looking for a school outside one's locality. Meanwhile, it is a more or less government policy that children learn in their local schools. It is encouraged that the children walk to school on their own. This helps the learners to master their home environments and to actively participate in the home activities while they are in school at the same time. There is, in fact a strong element of home at school. Therefore, there isn't much difference between the home environment and the school one and a child grows up benefitting from both environments in equal measure.

Before winding up this section, it may also serve to point out that the implementation of education programmes in Kenya seems to emphasize different goals from what generally Finland and Japan have. As already noted, the teachers in schools in Kenya are alarmingly particular about completing the syllabus and the passing of exams. Apparently schools will even use unorthodox means to make sure their learners pass exams. This is perhaps what has encouraged intensive class work and a readiness to cheat in exams. Since every single minute has to be directed towards preparing for

exams, important aspects of life such as learning life skills, moral education, commitment to environmental conservation and general normative issues are given no time. Indeed, even the way physical education (P.E.) classes and games hours have been turned into classroom sessions tells one that children do not engage in sport and other co-curricular activities. They, therefore, are not accorded the opportunity to explore their talents away from letters and number work.

On the contrary, in Finland and Japan, learning is not exam oriented; there is actually little emphasis on exams. Instead, the emphasis is value based education while at the same time encouraging extracurricular activities as a way of ensuring an all rounded person and discovering the children's talents. The Japanese curriculum, also insists on teaching good manners at home and character development, proper social bahaviour, structured play, in addition to verbal and number skills. Value for work is also a major focus for the curriculum. And to ensure that learning for the children starts at home, the parents of the learners are recognized as the primary educators who are in fact facilitated by the government financially and materially. This is apparently far from the Kenyan reality where parents appear to have abdicated their roles as educators but instead left everything to the teachers.

As we talk about value based education and moral training (a major emphasis in Finland and Japan), one begins to realize that even before a child goes to school, the general society has a major role to play in the moral education of that child. Children learn from what they see in the society. This is why Kenya as a society may be challenged, why, with all the ethnic animosity between tribes, political propaganda, political mudslinging and grandstanding, impunity and corruption, strikes by teachers and everyone else, exam cheating, claims of stealing the elections, rape and incest, family strife, television sex and liquor adverts, Al Shaabab terror attacks and numerous other morals

corrupting engagements, one wonders what the children who witness some of these things may grow into. In the end, however, we may all come to the conclusion that children need to be protected, in particular, girl children, for they are the ones who have usually borne the harshest effects of rape and incest and a score other abuses.

Perhaps it is important to note that despite of the quality approach to primary education for the girl child both in Japan and Finland, but there is a disconnection between the preparation of the girl face in primary level and the expected space for the adult girl.

5.5 Beyond Wholesome Education

Before I close my arguments on the necessity of wholesome education for children in general and girl children in particular, I wish to include some caveat. It would be inaccurate if my arguments have created the impression that wholesome education is equal to automatic success in later life for the beneficiaries of such an education. I am not, for example, implying that every citizen of the countries that apply education models that emphasize wholesome education for children is always successful in life. On the contrary, wholesome education could be compared to the rich whole milk from a healthy cow. Such milk could still become contaminated if the conditions of its handling and storage are not done with caution. Likewise, these laudable Japanese and Finnish education models may also still be prone to societal pitfalls – as some of the respondents I interviewed pointed out to me – which could render the efforts of the education systems ineffective. Such societal pitfalls may include some of the activities that go beyond, or exist outside the reach of the education systems, such as violence at home, divorce and other phenomena that may affect the children, in general and girl children in particular.

It, thus, does not come as a surprise the revelation that women in Japan, for example – full products of their wholesome education – experience an unbelievable degree of gender based discrimination and even violence. Studies have shown that much as the Japanese education system aspires to accord equitable education for both boys and girls, the latter when they grow up find that they cannot enjoy the same privileges as their male counterparts. The findings by Zaidi and Eda (2020), show that Japan has persistently continued to perpetuate gender discrimination against women. Japan, the study observes, is currently ranked among the worst ten performers in the gender index; with very low women presentation and political empowerment. For instance, women representation in parliament seems to be one of the lowest in the world, at just 10%. This means that it is 20% below the average share across advanced economies. Income for women in Japan is about half that of men on average and the major reason for this economic disparity is that women in Japan spend more than four times as much time as men on unpaid domestic work, which means less time to engage in paid labour. The study notes that the country's systems hold women back from career opportunities and advancements. And as revealed by The World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap, 2020, the country has to do more in order to narrow down its economic gender gap. Perhaps the advice by Zaidi and Eda (ibid), may be timely:

> Too often, unconscious biases and societal expectations of traditional gender roles can hold women back or create workplace hurdles such as harassment. Now is the time for Japan to adopt forward-thinking inclusive policies and practices that empower and enable women to thrive in the new economy. Only then can the country narrow its gender gap and realize the benefits of gender equality, (Zaidi and Eda, 2020).

These findings were further triangulated by interviews with respondents familiar with the situation inside and outside Japan and Finland. For further information on Japan, I interviewed Dr. Masumi Odari, educated through the Japanese system but has lived and worked in the Kenyan education

system for a long time and Prof. Henry Indangasi, a Kenyan who had exposure to Japanese education system while he stayed there. For information on Finland, I interviewed Prof. Paul Ogula, a longtime education expert in Kenya who visited and studied the Finnish education system; Mrs. Marita Rainbird, a Finnish who has been in and out of Kenya; as well as Clara Oduke, a Finnish who lives in Ghana.

A respondent on Japan confirmed that indeed the girl child formally grows in an enabling environment during the formative years. Both boys and girls undergo the same treatment:

> *Japanese schools don't employ workers for cleaning the school, since students and staff help with all the cleaning. Students, boys and girls, equally sweep the hall floors, clean the windows, scrub the toilets, empty the trash cans, serve the meals and clear away dishes under the supervision of student leaders. This promotes the culture of equity and hard work, (respondent).*

The respondent, however, pointed out that the initial equitable treatment notwithstanding, Japanese society is stagnant due to the gender equity dilemma. This is because women continue to be limited in their choices. They are not enabled to move beyond the role of being mothers and wives. The respondent remarked that the men continue to leave the management of the home and education of the children in the hands of their wife's hands, they instead distance themselves from home leaving homecare entirely to women. The latter hardly have any time to themselves. They encounter the paradox of glass ceiling, as they often get up early before everyone else to prepare breakfast, run around all day doing various things to take care of the needs of their children, checking their children's homework, taking care of the husband's aging parents, and they are the last ones to go to bed at night; overscheduled, sleep-deprived and permanently exhausted.

The informant explained further:

> *Some Japanese women dress their husbands in the morning, serve them their choicest cuts of meat and special delicacies at dinner, at times even rush onto a train to grab a seat for their husband and then stand up, with arms filled with shopping bags, while the husband relaxes, sometimes reading a comic book. The women do all this but are neither appreciated, nor allowed to decide anything at home, not even on what to put in the miso soup.*

According to the informants, most of Japanese homes don't have ayahs and babysitters, this forces many Japanese mothers to spend their days in their local park with their children, their common interaction with parks has made the community to commonly refer to these “women” as "park moms". According to the respondents Japan is facing a population crisis fueled by a low birthrate and an aging population. According to her, the country has one of the lowest birth rates in the world and one of the longest life expectancies (82 years). The rate of population decline has been accelerated despite government incentives such as financial allowances for having children. It is estimated that the Japanese population could decline from around 127 million today to 95 million by 2050. Afraid that they will most likely end up running the family alone even when they have husbands, many women are postponing marriage, thereby reducing the birth rate. They want men who can share household and child care demands and abhor the empty marriages of their parents, where men devoted their lives to their companies in exchange for a paycheck and women spent their lives devoted to child rearing.

Apparently, if women want to advance in career, it has been noted that they must choose between work and parenthood, since corporate attitudes often do not support working mothers. The treatment is indeed a paradox of the trouble the school curriculum takes to raise the girl child. Only when cultural attitudes change to allow men and women equality at work and home will women not have to choose between work and family. Incidentally, as Japanese women become more educated, they find themselves in a smaller marriage pool**.** As *Prof. Indangasi* pointed out during an interview based

on his interaction with Japanese working, *women who get married reach a dead end to their career life. They have to practically stop working*. This, to say the least, is an anticlimax for an individual who went through a wholesome education system.

Even though it is noted that Japanese traditions were built on Confucian beliefs which fostered an obligation to marry, to care for elderly parents, and to maintain the paternal lineage through having children it appears that the Japanese are currently less Confucian and more consumeristic. As a result, there is increased number of divorce cases as the women fight to retire from housekeeping, caring for their children, husband and his aged parents. Japan for a long time has had domestic violence encouraged by the culture of silence that has made the society to fail to notice bruises, sunglasses, and other telltale signs of domestic violence among women.

> The conspiracy of silence has encouraged women to be abused. Although the number of educated women in Japan has increased, but there has been little change in women's economic status. The dilemma Japanese women are facing regarding participation in the workforce, has made them to either to stay away from work temporarily or permanently, when they become full time wives and mothers, (Zaidi and Eda, ibid).

This perhaps confirms that in spite of the education system setting the ground for an equitable world for both genders, the Japanese family is a male dominated society, in which the man is regarded as the head of the family in line with the pre-Meiji Japan rule, which imposed a submissive role for women. My main Japanese informant explained that, according to the Confucian values, *women are expected to obey three men throughout their lives: first, the father in their youth, second, the husband after marriage, and the third, the son in the old age.* Despite this, education for both boys and girls is compulsory through the four or six years of schooling, a fact that appears to promise a great opportunity for girls. Nevertheless, after that their career paths diverge significantly. Boys continue on to a five-year middle school or vocational school, whereas girls' subsequent education over the following four to five years (if any at

all) leans towards instructing them in home economics, otherwise translated as "*how to create a happy home life*". Far fewer women join university; it is commonly believed that too much education is unnecessary for a woman, whose mission should be to become "*a good wife and wise mother*". I find this a mockery of the initial wholesome education for both boys and girls.

All my respondents confirmed that,

> *…full time motherhood was, and still is, the social norm for the Japanese society. Motherhood in particular has been considered something that cannot be accomplished on a part time basis, but full time bases. Women are expected to put all their energy in child rearing, and education. It is expected for women to pride themselves in their special relationship with their offspring, which is considered to be their greatest satisfaction and purpose in life.*

Meanwhile, the findings of a study conducted by Kantar, (2018) and Japanese Women Political Leaders, confirms what the respondents said. The study reveals that a majority (76%) of the respondents said that they would feel uncomfortable having a woman as a CEO of a major company and only as few as (24%) said they would feel comfortable. Comparatively, a majority (63%) of the respondents in the United States of America would feel comfortable having a woman as a CEO of a major company with less than (24%) saying that they would feel uncomfortable.

The woes the female gender in Japan faces, of course does not just end with economic and representational discrimination, *girl child has been reported to suffer sexual harassment* in many disheartening ways. On the other hand, *boy children are given preference over girl children* and it is said that on occasions wives have been beaten for giving birth to only girls. Meanwhile, women in society are perhaps only still seen in terms of household chores and childcare as their main responsibility, whether or not they are in paid employment. Giving birth and raising children is still considered a *woman's* main contribution to Japanese society, and to have both a successful career

and a family is rarely seen as feasible. This view is so deeply ingrained that a woman's marital status is interrogated before she could qualify to get employment. Needless to say, such revelations emerge as a shocking paradox in a country that is reputed to have one of the best education systems in the world.

Incidentally, Finland – the other country with an equally impressive education model – appears to experience similar pitfalls in its treatment of women. Like Japan, Finland too appears to display professional excellence and gender equity on one side, and domestic abuse on the other. This means that in Finland, women's rights are protected in the public sphere but not in the private one. It is paradoxical that the country has often been described as being the best place in the world to be a mother, a student, or even a female politician, but it appears that it is not necessarily always cozy for those in relationships. As it is noted by the Euro barometer, the concentration is on the labor market and *women's* ability to participate in working market, but they have not focused on equality in private life. For instance, due to the mediation practice of dealing with crimes of violence against women, the process does not offer protection equal to the criminal law and thus repeated re-victimization of women is always eminent. As a result of mediation, many cases are not reported. Perhaps only two out of ten rape cases are reported. The Euro barometer further posits that 38 percent of Finns are aware of a female friend or family member who is a victim of domestic violence. As Kevat Nouisainen, in Hopkins (2013), observes, it is perhaps not taboo to commit domestic violence in Finland, which seems to suggest that home as a teaching and learning space for the girl child does not always promise wholesome development. As one respondent observed,

> *Women and girls in Finland still face poverty, harassment, violence, and common homicide/manslaughter in which the victim is a woman and the suspect a current or former partner.*

There is still need to improve the environment for the adult woman for the sake of the girl child for whom the initial education appears so well prepared, whether in Finland or Japan. As Prof. Ogula mentioned above observes, education alone may not ensure good life. However, it beats the logic to start girl children on a promising trajectory only to make nonsense of what they been educated for, which is living a wholesome life in society.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has carried out a discursive analysis of my experiences in the field as outlined in chapter three. The chapter postulates that while the Kenyan model of education in its manifesto sets out to fulfill wholesome teaching and learning for children, the implementation of the same deviates significantly, such that the targets of wholesome training are not really achieved. In majority cases there is overconcentration on schoolwork at the expense of children learning other skills that come from spaces other than school. However, children in rural settings engage in household chores at the expense of their schoolwork. Both ways the children end up developing in a lopsided manner.

In particular, girl children bear the brunt of unbalanced development more than any other member of the society. In the rural settings, girl children are made to do home duties as if these were a full time job. This makes many of them fail to manage studies at school. Girl children are often the ones to be sacrificed when a family is not able to take all the children to school. Records show, particularly in the rural settings, that girl child, more than boy child drop out of school for reasons such as poverty, child labour, early marriages, premarital pregnancies, poor learning conditions and many other reasons. Meanwhile, those who hail from localities that emphasize education for girl children (particularly in the urban settings), also sometimes seem to forget that the children need to learn other skills. In such cases, the skills learnable in the home space are eclipsed.

An in-depth comparison between the Kenyan system with those of Finland and Japan reveals that the latter two countries have managed to effect wholesome education for their children by ensuring balanced allocation of time between the home space and the school space; balanced allocation of resources in both the public and private institutions; balanced utilization of the home and school spaces by ensuring that the two spaces are more or less in the same place; and also focusing on value based and character developing education during the basic years of the girl child.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of the study, its implications, main conclusions and recommendations based on the study questions. It also provides the possible strategies of ensuring wholesome education for the girl child in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya, besides suggesting possible areas for further research as provided at the end of the chapter.

6.1 Summary

The study set out to assess the position of wholesome education for the girl child in Kenya. Using Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties as the case study, the study particularly interrogated the training of the girl child in the teaching and learning spaces – school and home. The study, thus, was to determine if the two spaces within which the education of the girl child takes place, meet the demands of wholesome learning. The objectives of the study were, first to conduct a situational analysis of selected models of education that were to serve as benchmarks for wholesome education; secondly, to assess utilization of teaching and learning spaces for the girl child in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties; thirdly, to analyze the responsiveness of the teaching and learning spaces to the attainment of wholesome education for the girl child; and finally to explore possible strategies in achieving wholesome education for the girl child in Kenya in general and in the selected counties in particular.

The above objectives were furnished by the following four assumptions: that there exist education models that may qualify to serve as a blueprint for the provision of whole education; that gaps exist in the utilization of teaching and learning spaces for the girl child in Taita Taveta and Nairobi Counties in Kenya: that disparities exist between formulated policies on wholesome education and its implementation in Kenya; and that strategies are available that can mitigate the disparities between policy and implementation of wholesome education for girl children in Kenya.

The study operated on the premise that education is the most powerful tool for a better world, but that its greatest purpose is to produce a rounded or wholesome person and not only one who can pass school examinations. Education that serves the purpose of making a better world should supersede what appears to be the Kenyan situation which seems to prepare people for jobs, rather than to be responsible citizens of tomorrow.

The attention to education of the girl child was informed by the realization that a woman plays a central role in a functioning society. She holds the community‟s destiny in her hands through her innate capability of procreation and due to the role she plays in the socialization of younger members of the family/community. In majority social setups, the woman is viewed as the pillar of the family. She is in this respect expected to be the role model for girl children as future mothers. She is, therefore, in the centre of the family formation and continuity, thereby, putting great need on her being wholesomely formatted.

The study focused on the teaching and learning spaces for girl children both in the rural setup, represented by Taita Taveta County and the urban represented by Nairobi County. The two counties were randomly sampled and in which the researcher interviewed pupils, teachers, parents, education

officers and some members of the provincial administration. Both qualitative and quantitative designs were employed in putting together the data from the interviews.

Literature review to the study explains wholesome education as that which aims at training the whole person, able to fit well in society and capable of competing in a global economy. Wholesome education rejects such learning as emphasizes only the intellect. Rather, it should be the kind of education that prepares young people to live purposefully, creatively, critically, morally and be equipped with problem solving abilities in a complex world. They should be able to co-exist with others and to possess contextual and ecological consciousness.

6.2 Summary of the Findings

The findings of this study are based on four assumptions that I formulated to guide me through my research. Below is a summary of the findings of the study, which have received detailed analysis in the previous chapter, and here presented as per each individual assumption.

6.2.1 Blueprint Education Models for Wholesome Education

Having analyzed what, the different scholars posit as to what could facilitate wholesome education I hypothesized that there exist educational models that may serve as blueprints for the provision of wholesome education. In this connection, the study literature review identified the Finnish, Japanese and Don Bosco models but also went ahead to undertake a detailed review of the Kenyan education model. The Finnish and Japanese models have been hailed the world over as perhaps being among the most ideal settings for wholesome teaching and learning, thus, worthy emulating. The purpose for this review was to highlight education models with which we could compare and contrast the Kenyan education model, so as to determine its compliance with other preferred education models.

Besides, revisiting the Kenyan education model served to prepare the study for a review of policy vis a vis practice on the ground.

It is notable that the Kenyan education model as currently formulated very much reflects what exists in the Finnish and Japanese models, as all appear to underscore the need for wholesome education. However, I found out that the latter two education models put greater premium on the character development of children while the Kenyan model appears to necessarily want to overemphasize the cognitive element.

6.2.2 Kenya's Education Policy verses its Implementation

My second assumption posited that disparities exist between formulated policies on wholesome education in Kenya and their implementation on the ground. Indeed, as this study found out, notable disparities seem to occur in the manner in which the stipulations of Kenyan model of education are implemented on the ground. As already pointed out, the formulation of Kenya's education policy appears to reflect many of the stipulations one finds in the renowned Finnish and Japanese education systems. However, the findings of this study show that, while the emphasis in the Finnish and Japanese systems are on character formation, academic rigour takes the upper hand in the Kenyan education system. As a result, the Kenyan system of education has become shackled by the needs of the syllabus, exams and being celebrated as top on the academic league tables. This has led to emphasis on tests, past papers and drilling for passing examinations.

Observably, the entire purpose of education in Kenya has been reduced to a mere mastery of the reading, writing and mathematical skills. The latent wholesome training of the young children appears to be neglected, and yet if it is not nurtured is bound to affect their lives as relates to their

ability to fit in the society. There is indeed, a rising concern that education systems do not adequately prepare pupils to meet the demands of either the society or the labour market, which then begins to raise questions about how they are trained. Needless to say, the benefit of an effective education system is to enable one to function well in the society as it is stipulated by the functionalist theory of education. This is expected to come through wholesome training.

Further attempt to interrogate why Kenya's education policies as stipulated on paper may not always receive the expected interpretation and translation on the ground brought me to the issue of oversight and administration of the very implementation of the policies. Apparently, blunders sometimes start right at the top when those mandated to lead in matters education in the country, themselves do not understand what to do. Unlike the Finnish system of education which ensures that the appointees to head the education sector are professional and expert educationists, in the Kenyan system the prerogative of who heads education is a political decision dependent on the appointing authority. Indeed, as revealed in this study the education ministry has been headed by lawyers, zoologists, surgeons, economists and even diplomats. Where an educationist has by chance been appointed, the latter sometimes never takes time to fully understand the expectations of the different levels of education, i.e. early childhood ((ECDE), primary, secondary and tertiary. Once in this position, the minister often issues directives that may not be in tandem with the provisions of the official policy.

Notably, an attempt exists at the ministry to translate the country's education policy, but many of the attempts appear to remain on paper. As established, the ministry shelves carry interesting literature on Vision 2030, gender equity, free primary education, safe schools for girls, quality assurance in education, peace education and, in fact very elaborately written manuals on "child friendly spaces", but apparently, it is not clear how these efforts are to be realized in the teaching and learning spaces

for children. One actually realizes that policy does not exactly meet practice, a matter that has to be addressed for the purpose of ensuring wholesome education for the Kenyan child.

6.2.3 Utilization of Teaching and Learning Spaces

The third assumption of this study posits that t gaps exist in the utilization of teaching and learning spaces for the girl child, both in the rural and urban areas. Rural areas were represented by Taita Taveta County while the urban by Nairobi County. As I have already observed, leading educationists point out that the teaching and learning spaces for children in Kenya display gaps which are likely to have great significance for their wholesome education. Indeed, this study's findings from the field reveal different experiences for the girl child in Nairobi and Taita Taveta Counties as sampled from schools and the homes. In the rural Taita Taveta, parental attitude, poverty, early marriage, absence of appropriate institutional support and social-cultural factors militate against the education of the girl child. The widespread idea among the families in the county of viewing girls‟ education as ending in the kitchen has led to the neglect of the education of the girl-child. As a result, most parents' scale of preference of education is skewed towards the male-child.

As I found out, a decision to have girls stay at home is far easier to make than for boys. Sending a girl to school is normally seen either as bringing no gain at all, or, worse, as an actual waste of resources, while educating a boy is generally seen as sound investment for the family. This study recognizes the need for avoidance of discrimination of girl child education, as well as emphasizing balanced education that prepares her for a productive life. The study observes that girls have tended to be victims of gender violence, unfortunately majority of abuses committed against them are tolerated in the society.

Many girls, particularly in rural areas are out of school or have dropped out due to the following factors; early marriage, negative /adverse cultural practices and cultural values, attitudes and practices that foster teenage pregnancy, sexual harassment, excessive domestic chores (collecting water and firewood, taking care of siblings, assisting in household chores, and taking take care of the family). They are also sometimes needed at home and/or expected to earn money for the family, in total disregard to the importance of their going to school. What then comes out is that in the rural setups the activities in the home space dominate the engagement of girl children**.** The opportunity for them to adequately learn from the school space is quite reduced, thereby failing to achieve the wholesomeness that would come from balanced use of the two spaces (home and school).

Meanwhile the reverse is true for the girl children in urban settings such as Nairobi. Even though the study findings show that girl children in the urban setups such as Nairobi, also face tough experiences as they grow up, their chances of going to school are far better, sometimes even surpassing the boys. This is, for example, confirmed by the 2014 Nairobi County Standard One enrolment as shown in Table 4.4, on page 111, presenting an enrolment of 238,944 girls compared to 229,810 boys. Even though the table shows a higher dropout rate for girls at 26.4 percent, against the boys‟ 24.4 percent, the representation for the girls may not necessarily raise any serious complaints.

This study, however, noted some of the challenges that girl children in the urban setups face. These are mainly associated with absent parenting issues, many hours on the road to and from school, overwhelming school assignments and the opportunities and limitations that come with the urban life. Of course the challenges faced by girl children in urban setups are not of uniform nature. The greatest cause of disparities faced by girl children in urban areas is particularly, the circumstances under which they live, often determined by where they live. I in particular identified three distinct

categories of home situations which I categorized as closed gated spaces, open gated spaces and open spaces. The three spaces could roughly be associated with the three distinct localities that one finds in Nairobi: the high end or affluent living places; the middle class estates and the low end establishments which include slums. Indeed, while the children in closed gated homes may be thought to enjoy comfortable living, they sometimes face isolation and exclusion from their neighbours at home due to the solitary nature of their isolated, closed-in homes, most likely fenced off and securely gated. These children - I realized – do not come to understand their environments because they are virtually locked in: from the house inside the fenced, gated compound to the family car (another lock in), straight to fenced, gated school compound, to be picked later from school again.

The children from what I categorized as open gated spaces live in closed homes but often have opportunity to interact within the estate because they are not strictly locked in. In fact, some walk to estate schools or depend on school buses, thus, giving the children a higher chance of interacting with their home environment and with other children in the estate. Meanwhile, the children living in open spaced homes, particularly those from the slums occupy what one could call "*everyone's space"*. They live in houses that are open to everyone's access, go to school through or past public arenas, to schools that may not strictly keep them within the school gate, because after all the children will walk out every other time, whether during or after school. These children are more independent and ironically more self-rounded. They are more exposed and because their families may not afford house helps, the children sometimes have to help with house chores, which acquaints them with activities in both the home and school spaces. This contrasts them with their closed gated counterparts who – as I noted – hardly do household chores. These are mostly done by the house helps, allowing the children to concentrate on schoolwork. I must, however, admit that the children

from the open spaced homes are again too exposed. The latter are open to all manner of abuse, including witnessing all manner of behavior attendant to the carefree, often obscene life of town people.

All in all, however, what is most notable in the urban setups is the emphasis put on school education. In addition to staying long hours at school, further worsened by the time spent on the road in traffic jams, the children are further loaded with carryover assignments that take the better part of their time at home. This means that school and school activities leave little or no time for girl children – like all other children in urban setups – to engage in activities that can solely be learnt at home. They, thus, end up being experts in academic work but strangers to anything else outside the school setup. One is, therefore, justified to argue that while the home space invades the children's school space as we observed in the rural setups, the opposite is true in urban setups where school and school activities more or less take most if not all girl children's attention leaving them little or no time for activities that need to be trained at home.

6.2.4 Mitigating Strategies for the Achievement of Wholesome Education

This sub-section deals with the study's fourth and final assumption. The assumption posits that strategies are available that can mitigate the disparities between policy and implementation of wholesome education for girl children in Kenya. It is here discussed as part of study recommendations. In this sub-section, I draw comparisons between how the education process is dealt with in Kenya and its counterparts: Finland and Japan, the two countries whose education models I selected for comparison. Though there are many points we could base on to conduct our comparison, I here sample out only four: the allocation of resources, allocation of time, allocation of the teaching and learning spaces and the benchmarks of expected outcomes. By noting the differences in

the implementation of the education models, I by extension make some recommendation that may help in improving the quality of education for girl children, thereby, ensuring that they are able to develop wholesomely. To start with, there is need to borrow a leaf from the Finnish and Japanese systems of education which give a lot of priority to matters education. The said systems ensure free and accessible education. Incidentally, the Kenyan education system also professes free education to all; however, an in-depth observation reveals that what is touted as free education is not really free. Parents have remained loaded with numerous payments because what the government provides cannot possibly sustain the academic programmes, leave alone if one is to talk about quality education. Schools further burden the parents as they budget for school buses, food, construction of classrooms, electricity, security, internal exams, uniform, extra books and many other items that are not covered in the government provision. Ironically, what a child is required to pay to be part of 'free' education is several times more than what the government pays for the child.

Starting with the allocation of resources, it is notable that all the requirements to make provision of education possible as given above far surpasses the efforts the Kenyan government puts in to facilitate free education. I learnt that a paltry one thousand, two hundred Kenya shillings (1200) is allocated a child every year. This as may be compared to the allocation in Japan of 100 dollars per child, per month, which translates to the Kenyan equivalent of 120,000 per child per year. With such an allocation, one should conclude that Japan can actually sufficiently provide for a child's education. What makes the allocation in Kenya even much less useful is – as some head teachers revealed to me – the amount often comes late and not in full amounts. It, thus, goes without saying that the resources made available for education falls far below what can ensure quality education.

Besides, the Finnish and Japanese education systems try to ensure the comfort of teachers by paying them well. In Kenya, teachers are every now and then on the streets singing "*Solidarity forever*…" as they strike for better terms of service, during which time children lose much class time. When the teachers eventually go back to class, they have to work under intense pressure to recover the lost time. This ends up putting the learners under a lot of pressure as the syllabus has to be covered. Meanwhile, the teachers in the Finnish system are allowed a free hand to research and come up with discoveries that are meant to improve the quality of education. For Kenya to ensure this kind of atmosphere, the Government has to ensure that those tasked with running the education sector are all professionals and experts.

On allocation of time, I noted that there is a near equitable allocation between school and home. For example, Finland allocates children 190 day in a year at school and 175 at home; Japan has 175 days at school and 190 at home. This, as compared to Kenya which for a long time has normally kept children at school for close to 250 days and about 100 at home. This shows a lopsided allocation of time in favour of school. Incidentally, much of the 100 days at home are often given to "holiday coaching" which ensures that children spend little or no time at home. The sum total of all this is that majority of the children have no time to learn anything else away from school. Of course as I already pointed out, the conditions in the rural areas reverses the trend in favour of home activities at the expense of the training that has to take place at school.

Meanwhile, it is apparent that Finland and Japan have discovered the need to encourage self-reliance in children. To achieve this, children need to be well acquainted with their surroundings. Therefore, as opposed to the common practice in Kenya where children crisscross localities in vehicles, going too far flung schools, children particularly in Japan are encouraged to go to schools within their

localities, and where they can go on their own. This has a twofold benefit: children learn to be self-reliant but they also master their surroundings. And having so much time to spend at home, the children find themselves equitably belonging to both spaces, especially since the home environment and the school one are more or less the same.

Further still, the emphasis in education in the two countries (Finland and Japan) is value-based education targeting the development of character. This study learnt that greater emphasis in Kenya is on schoolwork and examinations. This perhaps needs to be checked and the time spent at school reduced so that children can gain time to familiarize themselves properly with those activities that are important in the lives of girl children, but which can only be learnt outside school and the classroom. Girl children should experience quality teaching and learning both at home and at school, through knowledge triangle approach which connects education, research and industry. This way the children will develop in a more balanced way. Meanwhile, parents have to spare quality time to work with their children while at home.

6.3 Conclusion

While girl children, like all other children in their formative years, are expected to attend school, it is necessary for them to be well acquainted with the home space too, as this in essence represents the society in which they will live and work for the rest of their lives after formal education. In a sense, the school as a learning space could be said to have invaded the home space in urban settings, while in the rural settings, the home space appears to overshadow school attendance by girl children. The sum total of this takeover by either space is unbalanced development of the children, with girl children either being successes at school but failures at home or vice versa. Either way the children fail to get wholesome training.

6.4 Recommendations

This study has reached the conclusion that children in Kenya in general and girl children in particular do not receive wholesome education. The reasons for this are many, but the biggest culprit is the lopsided and unbalanced utilization of the teaching and learning spaces: home and school. While recommendations for the achievement of wholesome education for girl children have obviously been outlined in the foregoing discussions in the chapters, it may be necessary to draw a nominal list for purposes of quick reference. Education stakeholders must ensure that children in general and girl children in particular spend equitable time both at school and at home, and ensure that the latter have opportunity to equally learn the activities that happen in both spaces.

1. Education in Kenya needs to emphasize value based education that targets character formation as opposed to concentration on cognitive development. Learning also needs to emphasize critical thinking that comes with creative teaching and learning to do as opposed to drilling and revising for exams.
2. The government needs to be more committed to quality education that comes with availability of what it entails to achieve such education, this by allocating enough resources to cover the needs of quality standards in education. This needs to come with the acknowledgement that the mere declaration of „free education" is not enough.
3. Education stakeholders need to work towards a gender disaggregated approach to the provision of education to children. This has to realize that girl children have needs that are special to them, such as sanitary towels, decent toilets, among other things which may cost a girl child her education and even self-esteem.

4. Special training and necessary sensitization should be made possible for the personalities charged with the training of children, whether at school or at home. This calls for support and adequate remuneration of the teachers and support for the parents at home.
5. Those charged with the oversight of education matters such the Ministry officials need to be professionals in the field so as to be able to make informed decisions that will ensure quality in education.
6. The appointment of, for example, the Cabinet Secretary should base on expertise and not political expediency.
7. Finally, it is recommended that the education system puts into practice the pillars of wholesome, namely: learning to know; to do; to live together and to emphasize the skills achievable by every individual.

6.5 Suggestions for Further Research

A study is recommended on wholesome education for the boy child, who, a number of recent studies have singled out as an endangered group. Similarly, another study is recommended to conduct a formative evaluation of the newly launched education curriculum in Kenya for purposes of assessing its responsiveness to wholesome education.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for the Pupils

SECTION A: SCHOOL AND HOME EXPERIENCES FOR GIRL CHILDREN

1. At what time do you leave home for school? ……
2. What time do you usually get home from school? …….
3. Do you attend remedial tuition classes on the following days:
   - Week days ( )
   - Weekends ( )
   - Holidays ( )
4. What means do you use to and from school?

SECTION B: AN ASSESSMENT ON LEARNERS SATISFACTION

Mark as: strongly agree (SA); agree (A); undecided (U); disagree (D); and strongly disagree (SD)

Item	**SA (%)**	**A (%)**	**U (%)**	**D (%)**	**SD (%)**
School Activities (Space)					
I have some time to play at school					
School has enough toilets for girls.					
Both girls and boys have equal opportunities to be in school.					
I am always punctual at school.					
Home Activities					
I carry home school assignments every day.					
I am able to complete my school assignments from home every day.					
I do household chores.					

Both boys and girls do not do house hold chores.					
My parents are always at home.					

SECTION C: CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

15). a. What challenges does the girl child face at school/home to and from school?

_____

_____

_____

b. What can be done to address these challenges?

_____

_____

_____

16). What suggestions do you make to that could improve the learning environment for girl children?

Thank you for responding to the questionnaire.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for the Teachers

SECTION A: INFORMATION ON TEACHING

1 a. When do school activities begin daily? (*Probe specific activities and time.)*

_____
_____
_____

b. Do you conduct remedial tuition classes? Yes ( ) No ( ) Explain your answer. If yes, explain your answer (when & where?).

_____
_____
_____

2. Do you give your pupils assignments to carry home? Yes ( ) No ( ) Explain your answer. If yes, is, how often?

_____
_____
_____

Does your teaching career interfere with your family duties? Yes ( ) No ( )

If yes explain how.

_____
_____
_____

B: CHALLENGES & RECOMMENDATION

1. a) What challenges does the girl child face at school/home/ to and from school?

_____
_____
_____
_____

b. What can the challenges above be solved?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. a) What suggestions do you make to the / school/parents that could improve the learning environment for learners in general and the girl child in particular?

_____
_____
_____

Thank you for responding to the questionnaire.

Appendix 3: Questionnaire for the Parents

SECTION A: PARENTS' INTERACTION WITH THEIR CHILDREN

1. At what time does your child wake up in the morning?
2. At what time does your child leave home for school?
3. At what time does your child arrival at home from school?
4. Does your daughter come home with school assignments? Yes ( ) No ( ) if yes, when and where does she do the assignments?

_____
_____
_____

5. Does your child ask you to assist her with the assignments? Yes ( ) No ( ) Why or why not?

_____
_____
_____

6. Is there holiday tuition arrangement for your child? Yes () No ( ) Explain your answer.

_____
_____
_____

7. If working. At what time do you leave home for work?

_____
_____
_____

8. Do you work? If yes, at what time do you come back from work?

_____
_____
_____

9. Explain how your child spends the evening after school.

_____
_____
_____
_____

10. How does your child spend her weekend/holidays at home?

_____
_____
_____

SECTION B: CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. What challenges does the girl child face at home/school/to and from school?

_____
_____
_____

2. What would you so much wish for your daughter when she is at home?

_____
_____
_____

3. What would the school/parent/government to ensure that the girl child gets quality education?

_____
_____
_____

Thank you for responding to the questionnaire.

Appendix 4: Questionnaire for Education Office

SECTION A: GOVERNMENT POLICIES FOR WHOLESOME PRIMARY EDUCATION

1. What has the government put in place to ensure that the girl child receives wholesome education in primary schools?
2. What are the educational policies that guide the education of the girl child in primary schools?
3. How are policies of education in primary education implemented in Kenya (probe, who monitors, how are they monitored are they successful)?

SECTION B: CHALLENGES RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What are challenges that face the girl child in primary schools in Kenya? (**Probe** Taita Taveta, Nairobi, Kibera etc).

_____
_____
_____

2. What should be done to strengthen the experiences of the girl child in primary schools in Kenya? (**Probe** Taita Taveta, Nairobi, Kibera etc.?

_____
_____
_____

3. What are the practical recommendation for girl child in primary education in Kenya?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for responding to the questionnaire.

Appendix 5: Pupils' Focused Group Discussion

EXPERIENCES OF GIRL CHILDREN AT SCHOOL AND AT HOME

1. What activities do you do at school? When in class? Out of class? [**Prompt]**: e.g. denied chance to play/play, be in class, assignments, overworked, eat food, when do you arrive at school, beginning of lessons, breaks, what do, when do you leave for home etc.
2. Do you do assignments at school, or at home?
3. Attendance: Have you been attending school regularly? (Listen to individual confessions, when do they miss school and reasons etc.).
4. The experiences from school to home (parents' involvement, play, when do they walk up at school, when they leave for school, means to school, what do they like most at home/school? What do they like least at home? etc.) to arise spontaneously from the pupils.
5. What are the challenges experienced (by learners at school, journey to and from school, and at home)?

Appendix 6: Check List

CHECKLIST FOR WHOLESOME EDUCATION FOR THE GIRL CHILD IN KENYA

Objective 1: To review documents on the policy of educational issues in Kenya

- What are the Kenya's educational goals and objectives?
- What interventions have been put in place to receive the expected outcomes?
- How effective are the model primary schools and model homes for the girl child in Kenya?

Objective 2: To assess the extent and quality of capacity development.

- How many staff have been trained on the wholesome education for the girl child in Nairobi and Taita Taveta counties in Kenya?
- Leadership in the educational ministry, related to education?

Objective 3: To establish how the basic education operate. (Organizational structure and set up).

- What are the staff capacity (gender, knowledge and skills) and their level of gender sensitivity in their programmes?
- How is the program managed to ensure integration in the development of the pupils in view of decentralization in the counties?

Objective 4: To find out the effectiveness of basic education programme.

- What is specifically basic education?
- Do they have any values?
- Is there an issue on wholesome education for the girl child?
- Do they have awareness of the whole some education for the girl child in the teaching and learning during implementation of the basic education?
- Is the programme implementation meeting the curriculum stipulations?
- Is the implementation of the progrmme according to the curriculum objectives and planning?

Appendix 7: Observation Schedule

The following set of questions guided the researcher's observation of the activities and performance of the girl children in the teaching and learning spaces as well as in the selected schools.

The County_____ school_____

Items to be observed:

School Space

1. Participation of girl children in school activities.
2. Participation of learners in co-curricular activities, i.e. P.E, games, choir, etc
3. What mainly occupies the girl children's day at school?
4. Are available resources able to facilitate the implementation of wholesome education?
5. How do teachers in school approach and handle their teaching? (Whether they give any special attention to girl children and if the pupil/teacher ratio is reasonable.
6. The number of examinations administered in any one school term.
7. Whether the physical facilities (playing grounds, toilets, classrooms, etc) are enough and in good condition.
8. The gender representation of the teachers. If there are enough female teachers to attend to girl children's special needs.
9. The level of the teachers" training.
10. The challenges the girl children face in their teaching and learning spaces (home and school)
11. Class lesson

Home Space

1. Participation of girl children in the home activities (household chores).
2. How much time the girl children have to interact with the family and how.
3. Availability of parents at home.
4. Quality time with parents (dad and mum).
5. Home space and activities (study, bedroom, sitting room etc)
6. What occupies the time of girl children at home.
7. People present at home

Appendix 8: Analytical Guide

The following set of questions guided the researcher's review and analysis of documents and the data obtained.

1. What are Kenyan's educational goals and objectives of Education in Kenya?
2. What are the expertise and preparedness of those charged with overseeing the implementation of the country's education curriculum?
3. What is the state of the teachers as mentors to the girl children in and outside school?
4. What is the state of the parents as mentors to the girl children at home?
5. How much time do the girl children spend at home and at school?
6. Where are the schools located? How far is a child's school from home?
7. How and in what are girl children engaged at home and at school?
8. Are girl children sufficiently supplied for at school and at home?
9. What unique challenges do girl children face at school and at home?
10. What is crucially different between Kenya's education model and those of the benchmark countries: Finland and Japan?

Appendix 9: Cognitive Mapping Instrument for Pupils

Perception of pupils on their school/home spaces.

The researcher or the research assistant will take the respondent through these activities:

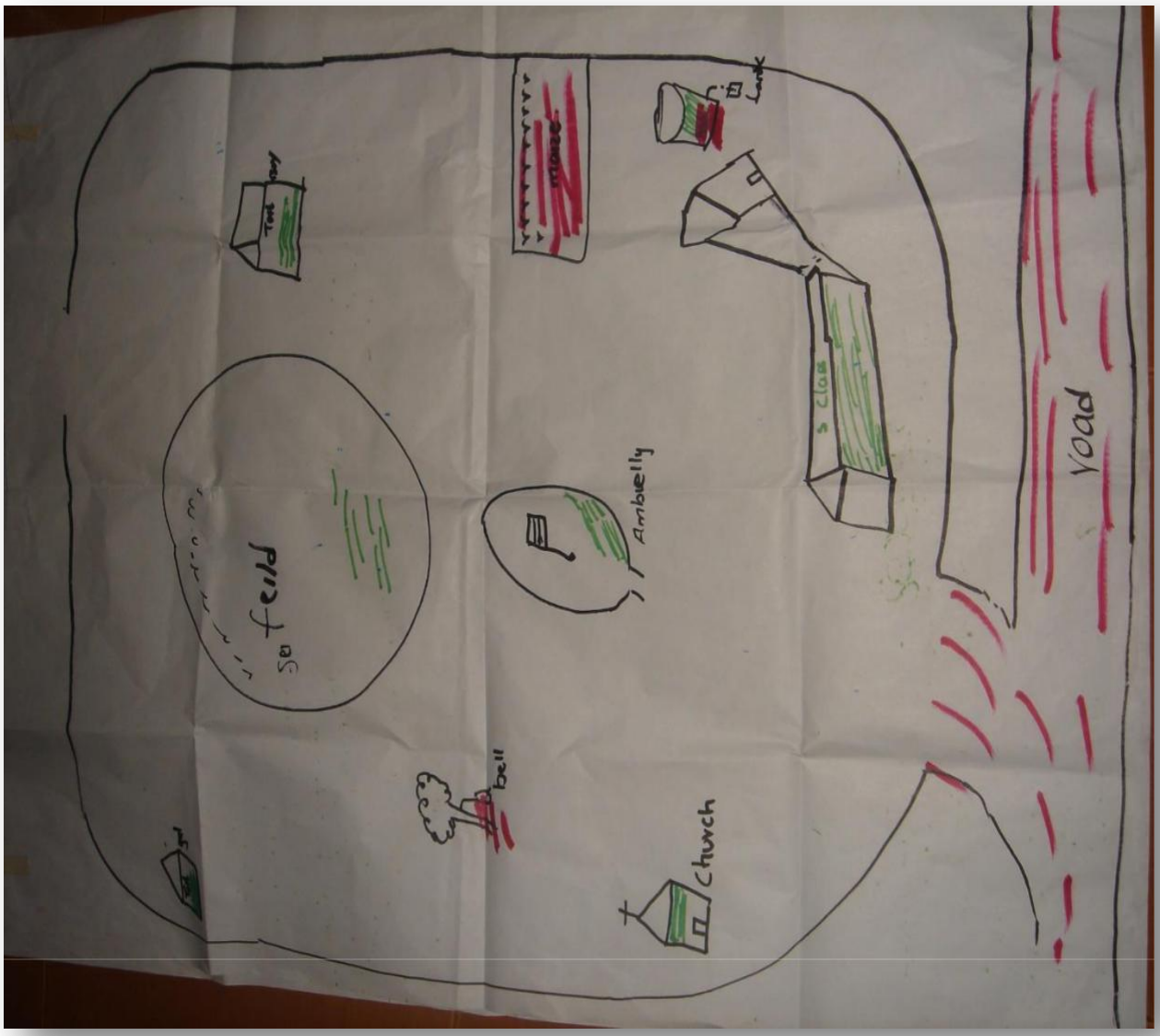
1. **School Experiences: Draw Map of your School.**
   In certain instances, a transect walk was conducted from school into the neighbourhood to confirm on the information noted on the maps. The school maps will show the activities conducted in each school and will be individually drawn by groups of girls. List the activities that you participate in at school? When in class? Out of class? [**Prompt]**: e.g. chance to play/type of plays, assignments, overworked, food, when do you arrive at school, beginning of lessons, breaks, journey to and from school etc.

2. **School Experiences: Draw Map of your home.**

   The pupils will be requested to draw a map of their home showing the major components/activities (such as house (bedroom), assignments, responsibilities, parents, other children, playgrounds areas, toilets, TV etc.) as well as the roads and paths leading to their neighbours. After drawing the maps, the pupils will be asked to place blue dots on places where they feel they are their best on places at home, as shown. Then the pupils will be asked to explain why they choose their preferred home. This method made it possible to have conversation about how people use their homes (parents' involvement, play, when do they walk up at school, when they leave for school, means to school, what do they like most at home? What do they like least at home? etc.) to arise spontaneously from the pupils.

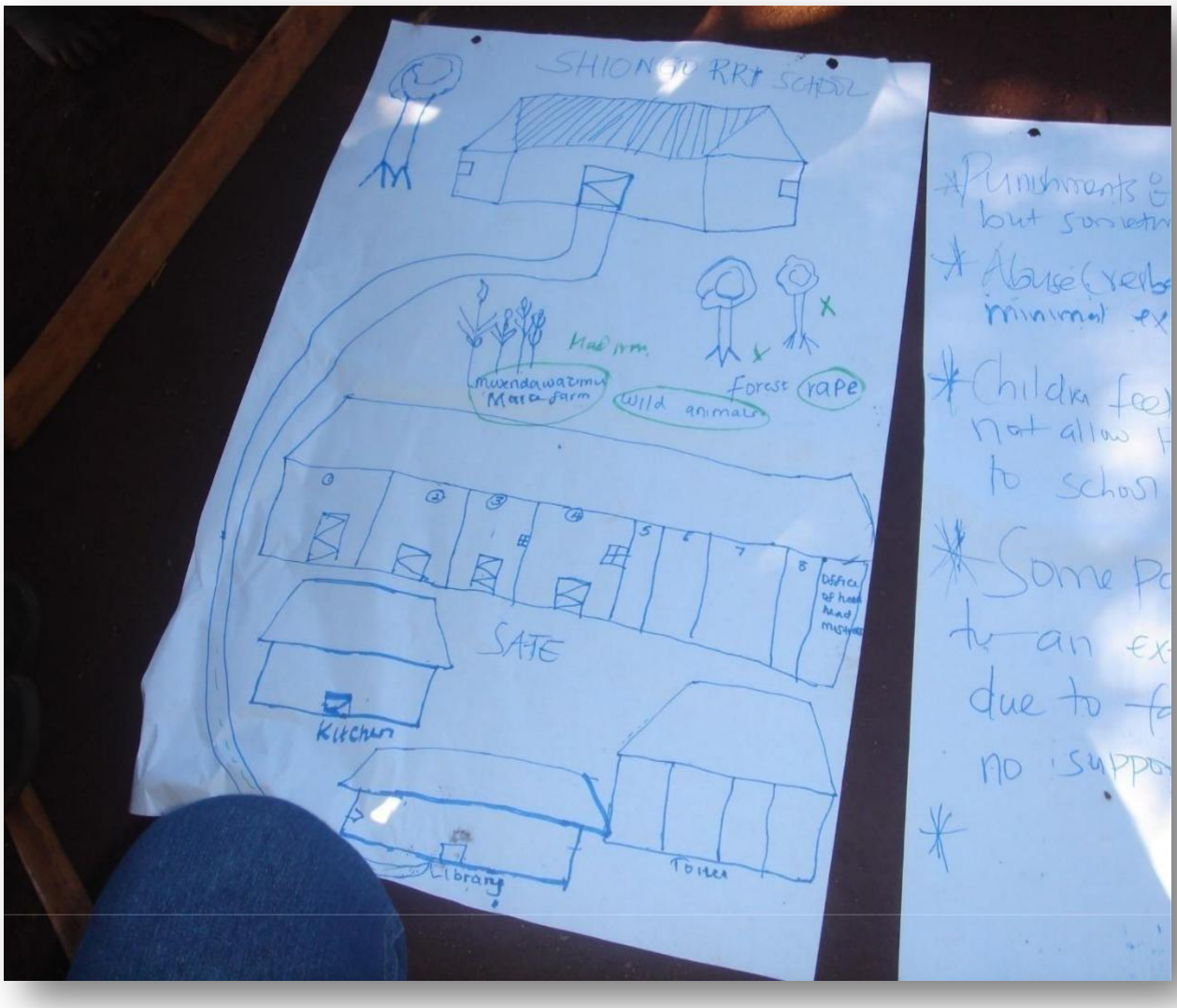
N/B However, some children may prefer not to draw, and in these cases it is fine just to talk together.

Samples of Cognitive Mapping



Source: Field, 2020

Cognitive Mapping

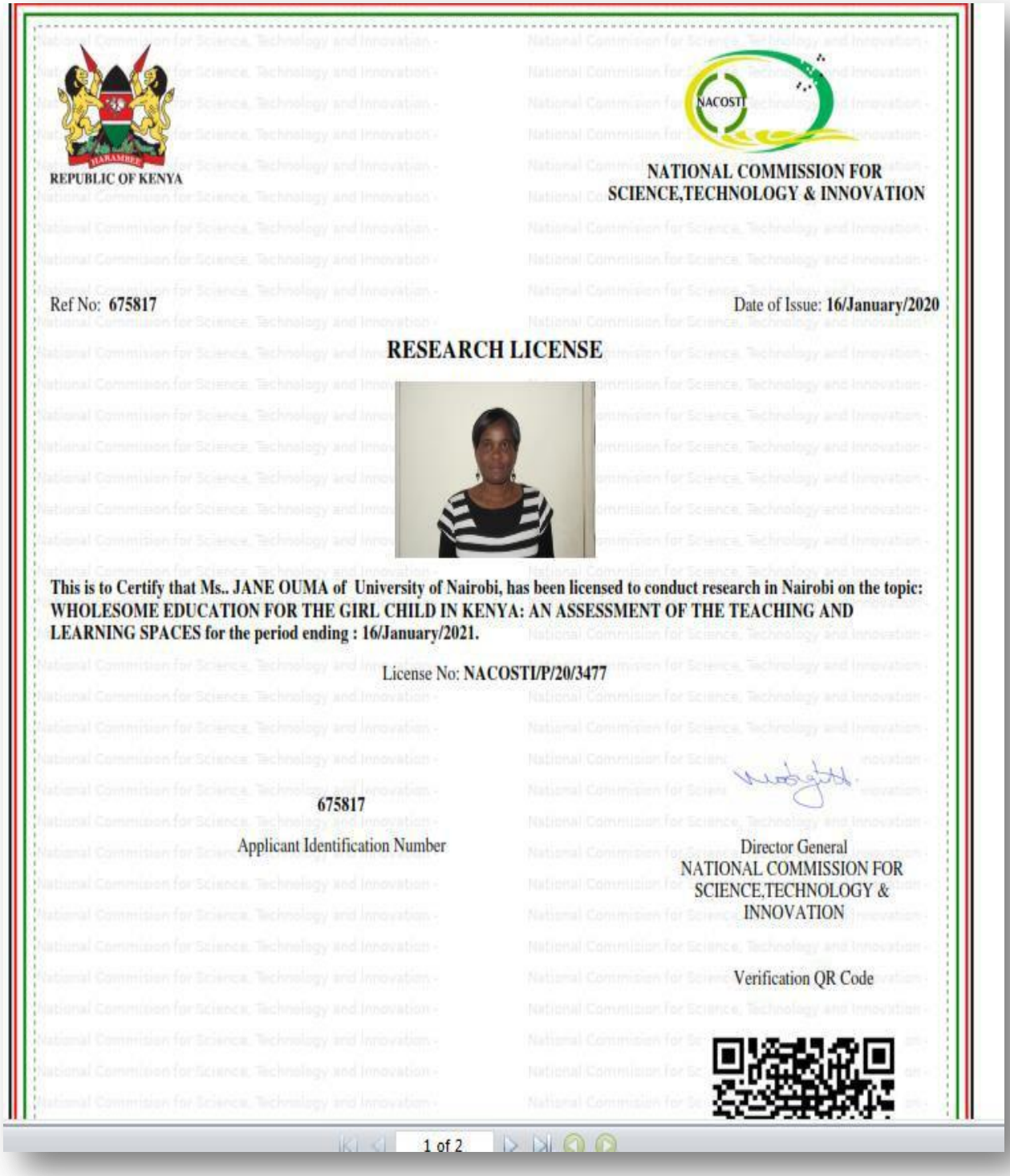


Source: Field, 2020

Appendix 10: Map of Kenya

Source: https://gisgeography.com/kenya-map/2022

Appendix 11: Research Permit



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This is to Certify that Ms.. JANE OUMA of University of Nairobi, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: WHOLESOME EDUCATION FOR THE GIRL CHILD IN KENYA: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING SPACES for the period ending : 16/January/2021.

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1 of 2