

**CLASS AND PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION
IN KENYA**

By

Octavian N. Gakuru

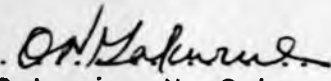
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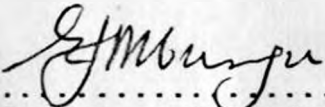


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DECLARATION

This Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.


Octavian N. Gakuru

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors.


.....
Professor Edward K. Mburugu


.....
Professor Kabiru Kinyanjui

DEDICATION:

To my parents: Nyaga Riuki and Albina Wangui for taking good care of me during my early childhood days.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have benefitted a great deal from many individuals and institutions in carrying out this study. I thank them all.

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The views expressed in this Thesis are those of the author and not of my supervisors or the University of Nairobi. Any shortcomings are entirely my responsibility

ABSTRACT

This is a study on early childhood, focussing on the development of pre-school education, the related child evaluations of the parents and the social relationships that govern the interaction between children and their caretakers. Although there are many aspects of pre-school education, the patterns of distribution of child enrolment provide the best insight into the problem. Specifically, the aim is to establish the relationships between these aspects of childhood with the social structure.

A central assumption in this study is that pre-school enrolment, the related aspects of child evaluations by the parents and the parent-child relationships are influenced by the general inequalities found among the social backgrounds of the children. Survey data from parents in pastoral, agricultural and urban backgrounds in Kenya are used to determine whether the same relationships which have been found between educational attainment and social classes in other societies also exist in Kenya.

Conceptually, the expansion of pre-school education is explained within the human development and modernization theories. The general argument is that pre-school education is part of the education system in Kenya. Consequently, its development is equally influenced by some of the strong forces of nation-building and modernization. Although the social class perspective provides a general theoretical background, determination of the composition of pre-school enrolment is explained by the sociological theories of value and socio-economic position.

✓The major findings emerging from the data show that pre-school enrolment is greatly influenced by the socio-economic factors of family income, level of education and occupation. The relationship between each of these variables with

pre-school enrolment is statistically significant. The unexpected high enrolment among the poor may be explained by the age of children, low costs and the net gain of both the children and parents from pre-school attendance. It was also found that among the poor parents, those with none or negligible exposure to schooling are more likely to enrol their children in nursery schools than those with primary or some secondary level education. Probably, the parents who are victims of early school withdrawal have either lost faith in the power of the school as a means of access to desired employment opportunities for their children or are aware of the repetition in educational content between pre-school and the early years of primary education.

The occupational status of the head of the household is equally useful in explaining enrolment. As expected, virtually all the parents in the professional category had their children enrolled while the labourer category had the lowest percentage. What was not expected however was the very high enrolment of children from the low income group among the pastoralists although the low income group as a whole had a high percentage of pre-school enrolment.

There is also strong evidence that other factors, particularly those related to various aspects of social structure such as family, ethnicity and also ecological variations equally affect child enrolment. Surprisingly one of the most important findings is that the two parent family is as influential as the income variable in explaining enrolment. In line with the theory, this could mean that the two parent family, being more integrated into the society is more responsive to the education value.

Another finding of theoretical significance is the influence ethnicity has on enrolment. However, the inter-ethnic differences in enrolment among the intra-ethnic income categories suggest that pre-school enrolment has acquired a social class dimension in some ethnic communities but not in others .

Similarly, there is strong evidence suggesting that the key attributes of the socialisation process reflect the socio-economic differences found in the family background. It was found that the values attached to children are closely related with educational attainment of the parents. For instance, the better educated parents preferred fewer children and engaged children in domestic work only. In contrast, the poorly educated parents prefer large families and have strong instrumental value of children. These differences reflect the physical environment and the class ideology of the two social groups. However, the majority of the parents were eager to assist their children with learning, irrespective of the social class background. Although the social class factors are important in understanding the development of pre-school education, this study has established the influence of other social and ecological determinants in pre-school education.

It is quite evident from the study that children are highly valued and parents are willing to do everything possible to ensure that they grow into able and responsible adults. The study also brings out clearly the growing importance of non-parental and formal child care and education which is demonstrated by the rapid expansion of formal pre-school education. Consequently, policy and research should be mainly concerned with issues of alleviation of poverty, income generation, expansion of the formal pre-school education and provision of quality early childhood education and care for all children.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

1.1 Background

In all human societies there is a period between birth and maturity which is identified with persons who have yet to acquire the attributes of adulthood. This period is differentiated into infancy and childhood (Denzin, 1973). Although the boundary between childhood and adulthood is determined by the ideology and social relations of the society, children may be defined as those persons in the community who, by virtue of their age have relatively underdeveloped mental and physical abilities (Mussen, et. al., 1963; United Nations; 1959). However, the dominance of the schooling system in contemporary societies has divided childhood into pre-school and school-age categories with corresponding institutions of care and education for each of the age groups.

Intentionally or unintentionally, child rearing practice in a society reflects the character of that society, not only in the explicit standards and demands communicated but also in the kinds of experiences chosen to convey them. Newman and Newman (1978) from historical and cross-cultural studies identified six dominant conceptualizations of childhood which have influence on the life situations of the children. They

noted that a child may be seen as a miniature adult, inherently sinful, inherently good, a blank slate, as property and as a developing person. These different conceptions of the child are not necessarily exclusive in any one particular society. Thus, the way adults interact with children, the kinds of environments that are created for them and the nature of expectations that will exist for children's behaviour is a reflection of the childhood orientations held by their caretakers. Denzin (1973) expresses similar views on the status of childhood. He presents children as social, historical, cultural, economic, political and scientific products. Therefore, child rearing practices differ a great deal and the variations are largely dependent on the material and cultural systems that include values and attitudes found in specific socialisation contexts.

The dominance of the schooling system in the contemporary societies is associated with the division of childhood between pre-school and school age categories. Accordingly, corresponding institutions of formal care and education have been developed for each of the age-groups. In this study, we will use pre-school education, and nursery school and early childhood education in terms of offering care, stimuli to learning and contributing to the development of the child before entry into primary education (UNESCO, 1981).

The provision of formal care and education for the pre-school children is an old practice in the Western societies. Starting from the days of Plato, through the industrial revolution to the contemporary times, the idea of formal pre-school education has been translated into a wide range of institutions with the common aim of meeting the welfare and developmental needs of the children (Lancaster and Grant, 1976).

The demand for formal early childhood education in some countries is clearly demonstrated by the high rates of pre-school enrollments. For example, in 1986, the Federal Republic of Germany had an enrolment of 82.2 per cent of the 3-6 years old. Similarly, in 1985/86 Italy attained 87.8 percent coverage of the same age group (Olmsted and Weikart, 1989). Although the dearth of data on pre-school enrollments prevents a comprehensive comparison of the global trends of the growth in pre-school education, Table 1.1 clearly shows that the lowest ratios are found in the developing countries of Latin America, Asia and Africa. Certainly, Kenya, which had an enrolment of 17.3 percent was slightly above the world average and probably the highest in Sub-Sahara Africa.

Table 1.1: Regional Pre-school Enrolment of 3 to 5 year age-group in 1980.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Percentage Enrolled</u>
Europe/Former USSR	73.0
North America	49.4
Oceanic	26.2
Latin America	13.9
Asia	7.0
Africa	2.1
World	17.1

Source: International Consultation on Pre-school Education, Working Document, ED-81, UNESCO, Paris 1981.

The convergence of the education for all and child survival and development initiatives (Lemma and Valkonen, (eds), 1987) is clear indication of the growing interest in the world community in the development of its children as part of the management of the human resource. For example, the World Conference on Education for All Report (United Nations, 1990) pointed out clearly that addressing the basic learning needs of all means "early childhood care and development opportunities". Therefore, it was argued that in "designing the policy for the improvement of basic education, paying attention to early childhood education is essential to the achievement of the basic education goals".

Similarly, the UNICEF strategy of child survival and development has heightened the level of awareness on the general plight of children and the need for the provision of

better and integral services to the child. Besides, the survival rate of children in the developing countries continues to improve as a result of technological and medical advances. The consequent growth in the demand for child care and education poses a major challenge to the poor nations of the Third World.

1.2 The Development of Pre-school Education in Kenya

The formal care and education mainly caters for the 3-6 years of the preschool age group and is provided in a variety of institutional settings. The most common are the day nursery, nursery school, playgroup, kindergarten and the preschool unit attached to primary schools. All these terms are being used to denote the education provided for children aged from 3 to 6 years. The earliest recorded schools were established in Nairobi in 1942. The nursery schools which were started during the colonial period were organised on a racial basis and primarily catered for the European community. Gradually, pre-school institutions were established to serve the Asian and African communities in the towns. The racial criterion of admission into the urban nursery schools was removed, just before 1963, the year that Kenya became independent, in preparation for multi-racial society. The economic criterion however, was retained.

The historical development of pre-school education is further characterized by the spread of nursery schools into the rural areas. In some districts for instance, groups of parents built nursery schools through self-help in the early 1950s as a response to the already existing nursery schools in urban areas. In others, nursery schools were started as nutrition centres where children would sing, listen to stories and play organised games while milk or soup was served. Currently, the low-cost day nurseries that belong to the local administration are housed in large halls, initially used as health and nutritional centres. This is especially the case in the large urban centres.

The expansion of the organised pre-school institutions in the towns and rural areas has been the result of the combined effort by the church, welfare organisations and the local communities through self-help. The Community Development and Social Welfare personnel in the rural areas, including the expatriates and graduates of the Jeanes' School, Kabete, now the Kenya Institute of Administration, also played a very important role in creating awareness for nursery schools in the rural communities. The school at Kabete was started in the 1920s as part of the implementation of the colonial educational and community development policies. The social extension agents served as "missionaries" of social modernisation and offered to the local communities a package

of programmes such as nutrition, home-craft and child-care, including day care centres. Indeed, today, some of the most active social welfare and nursery-school organisers in the rural areas are graduates of the former Jeanes' School, Kabete.

Entry into well paid jobs in Kenya is largely on the basis of educational attainment. The escalation of minimum job qualification, arising mainly from the greatly expanded educational systems and the failure of the economy to generate desired employment opportunities for the majority, is perceived by all social groups, including the rural communities, as a strong barrier to their intergenerational economic mobility. The support that the nursery school institution has received from the parents can further be understood in the wider context of the relationship between educational attainment and the reward structure in Kenya. The great value attached to pre-school education is clearly illustrated by the following responses obtained from parents in the rural areas who were asked the following questions; 'why do you send your child to the nursery school?' (Gakuru, 1979):

The present day world requires going to school so that the child may benefit in future. There was no education [meaning schooling] in the past except farming and herding, but these days progress means education.

To gain education so that he can aid us in future and also establish himself in life. I am very disappointed with my first child who went to school but dropped out after standard 7. I therefore sent the other child to school so that he may have a chance to prove his worth in life.

The attitudes of the parents suggest clearly that the perceived range of opportunities available to their children extends beyond the traditional boundaries. Hence the need for the schooling system, starting with the nursery school, to prepare children for the adult tasks that are now available in the wider society. Indeed the nature and diversity of the available opportunities, exemplified by material wealth that is heavily concentrated in the urban areas or the package that an individual derives from a modern-sector job, require knowledge and skills which are impossible to acquire through participating in daily life of the local community.

The other factors that affect the institutionalised patterns of child rearing are mainly based on the changes in the economic sphere. For instance, the on-going process of breaking the extended family due to new land tenure system in favour of private land holdings has reduced the importance of the family as a socialisation agent for the young child. Many

children now grow without the care of the grandmother and other relatives of the extended family. There are other factors that have affected the socialisation of the pre-school age child. These include the reduction of the livestock herds which occupied him/her and had educational functions. The other factor is the imposition of the schooling system which keeps the older siblings away from home, who would ordinary have taken care of the pre-school children. Furthermore, a large proportion of mothers spend most of the time at their places of work away from home; in the farms, market places and offices. The development of nursery schools is therefore a response to different needs. However, the most important need of nursery schools is education as found in a Report on Pre-school Education Project in Kenya (K.I.E. 1978).

Thus, while the child-care function of nursery schools cannot be ruled out altogether, the development of pre-schooling is largely a response by parents, communities, governments, welfare organisations and private enterprise to the strong demand for education.

Although formal pre-school education in Kenya had its origins in the colonial era, it is largely a post independence phenomenon. This is clearly illustrated by a very low enrolment of about 66,000 children in 1966, three years after independence as compared to the present enrolment of over 800,000 children. One of the most influential forces that

could be attributed to this expansion is the penetration of the capitalist economy which has changed the nature of production, social relations of production and the social organisation. For example, the participation of mothers in the wage economy demands that they work away from home or spend long hours on farm work and marketing of cash crops. Either way, there is a need for child care away from home (Rothschild and Mburugu, 1986).

Secondly, the changes in the labour market especially the emergence of the unemployed post primary school leavers starting from the 1970's has provided a serious challenge since educational advancement is synonymous with occupational mobility (Kinyanjui, 1974; 1977). Consequently, parents have been actively searching for ways of enhancing the competitiveness of their children. The growing popularity of pre-school education is one such mechanism as illustrated by strong demand that children be taught academic skills of literacy, numeracy; especially among the poor and the upwardly mobile social backgrounds (Herzog, 1969; Gakuru, 1979).

1.3 National Goals, Policies and Administration of Nursery Education

The goals of pre-school education are best summarised in the official documents. For instance, in the Kenya Development Plan 1979-83 (Kenya, 1983) the objectives of pre-school education were stated as follows:

These centres assist young children to develop socially, mentally, emotionally, physically and culturally. Some nursery education is introduced at this level. They also enable mothers to engage in productive work outside the home.

The government participated in the development of pre-school education through the Ministries of Housing and Social Services, Local Government, Health, Education and Home Affairs. The Ministry of Home Affairs is mainly concerned with the safety of the children, while the Ministry of Health is expected to carry out periodic medical check-ups on the nursery school children. However, the latter service to the children is fairly inadequate particularly in the rural areas owing to transport and personnel problems.

The Ministries of Housing and Social Services and Local Government have for a long time promoted pre-school education with emphasis on the custodial needs of these pre-school children. It is only in the 1970s that these ministries expressed concern in the intellectual development of the child. For example, the responsibility of day care centres in the rural areas was given to the Ministry of Housing and Social Services in the late 1960s because these centres were at first regarded as non-academic, non-teaching institutions (Government of Kenya 1969). Later, the Department of Social Services realised the need for the intellectual development of the child and produced, jointly with UNICEF materials for day

care which included child education focusing on cognitive and developmental needs of the child. (Krystal and Maleche, 1977).

Similarly, the Ministry of Local Government through some of the county, town and municipal councils, participates in the development of pre-school education in many ways such as training programmes for the teachers and maintaining the nursery centres. Some of the local authorities that were among the first to organise training programmes for nursery school teachers are Machakos, Kisumu, Kakamega, Murang'a, Kiambu and Nairobi. In 1972, the Ministry of Education initiated a Pre-school Education Project with assistance from the Van Leer Foundation, Holland. One of the main aims of the project was to provide specific guidelines and training that would help the pre-school teachers in facilitating the mental and emotional development of the Kenyan pre-school child (K.I.E., 1978).

Many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are also concerned with the development, welfare and custodial need of the pre-school child. However, most of the nursery schools, particularly those in the urban areas, are not only concerned with the educational needs of the child but also have commercial concerns.

There is no overall body to manage, and develop pre-school education. The day-care centres for instance, are

built by local communities through self-help efforts, sometimes with assistance from the Ministry of Housing and Social Services. As already shown, the majority of day-care centres are found in the rural areas. The rest serve the slum communities in the urban areas. Each pre-school is under the care of a parents' committee. The two main responsibilities of the committee are to appoint, and pay the teachers from the fees paid and to ensure continued development of the school. However, in some districts, the county councils assist some of the centres in way of paying the teachers and supplying educational materials. The councils that assist the centres have also employed district nursery supervisors.

In 1980 however, through the Presidential Circular No.1 pre-primary institutions were placed under the Ministry of Education. According to the circular the functions of the Ministry of Education are limited to the provision of professional services, curriculum development and teacher training. On the other hand, the functions of the Local Authorities and other sponsoring bodies include the management and provision of facilities.

In the urban areas, most of the nursery schools belong to the local administration, church and welfare organisations and communities. The rest are private schools run as businesses. The lack of co-ordination, control and effective supervision of nursery schools has led to spontaneity, heavy influence of parental educational aspirations and differentiated fee structure that reflect the unequal incomes among the different social classes. This has also led to differentiated nursery schools with varied curricula. Since the Ministry of Education only assists in curriculum development and teacher training, the growth and expansion of pre-school education will continue to rely on community resources through collective effort, local authorities, churches, welfare organisations, parents' committees and employers.

Nursery School buildings are not standardised. In the urban areas, all except the self-help day care centres have well-built permanent buildings with classrooms for the various age-groups. These schools are also adequately supplied with both out-door and in-door play and educational equipment. Indeed, some of the private nursery schools look like miniature supermarkets, for children's toys, games and books. Furthermore, the teacher-pupil ratio is roughly 1:20. There is however, a great contrast between the elite nursery schools and the schools that serve the urban poor. Most of the buildings of the latter are temporary with mud walls that are

full of holes. Where a playground exists, there is no outdoor equipment.

The nursery schools in the rural areas are more or less homogeneous. However, they are all self-help projects except a few private schools which served the wealthy families in the former white highlands. Although most of the buildings are partially completed or very poorly constructed and are often without windows and doors, the few available permanent and semi-permanent buildings indicate that the local community is interested in upgrading the facilities. The most valuable help that the centres have received from the Government is the training of teachers. In the Sessional Paper No. 7 of 1971 on Social Welfare Policy, day-care centres are seen as important institutions with regard to the child's needs (Government of Kenya, 1971). This emphasis encouraged the expansion of the training facilities for the teachers. Besides, there were thousands of untrained teachers in the pre-school. The first training program was conducted in 1966-68 at Kakamega and Embu Training Centres. In 1972, a nursery school teachers' course was introduced in two other training institutions. The training facilities have been expanded greatly since the mid 1980's through the introduction of an in-service program that utilises the school vacation for training.

Most of the students in the training centres are school dropouts with seven years of primary education. Only a few

had post-primary education. Although there is no evaluative research on the performance of pre-school teachers with different educational levels, some of the trainers hold the view that the graduates of the old eight-year primary education are better students. This observation is not surprising since these teachers are older and have more experience in nursery teaching than the others.

There is a wide range of training institutions for nursery school teachers, all belonging to Government and welfare organizations, except one which is private. The qualifications for entry into these training institutions vary from Standard seven to Form Four. There is, in addition, a wide range of in-service courses and workshops which are organised mostly by the Local Authorities and NGOs. These training programmes, differ a great deal in emphasis in teacher training curricula.

The Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) is also involved in the development of pre-school curriculum. There is also a private training program which is organised by the Kindergarten Headmistresses' Association (KHA).

The Pre-school Education Project at K.I.E was initially an experimental project in the development of curriculum for the pre-school child, teachers and trainers. The project worked within the urban setting from 1972 to 1976 and trained about 30 teachers with different levels of education and

teaching experience.

In 1975 at the request of some local authorities in the rural areas the project was involved in training local nursery school teachers. Six months courses were organised in 1976 and 1977 at Murang'a and Kiambu, to train teachers as well as supervisors. Later, the project moved into other areas.

The task of this project was to design a well-rounded program with emphasis on pre-academic preparation including moral, concept and language development, observation and discrimination abilities, pre-reading, pre-writing and a number of other skills. The graduates of the project have continued to disseminate the acquired skills to other teachers mainly through brief formal training programmes. The participatory approach that the project uses in teacher training and development of curriculum accounts to a large extent for the project's success in achieving the initial objectives. Recent developments in the institutionalisation of pre-school education include the establishment of a National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) and a network of District Centres for Early Childhood Education (DICECE). This is an innovative program which engages in community mobilisation in the expansion of pre-school education, teacher training, child development, research and curriculum development (Kenya, 1987). Besides, the work of the Pre-School Education Project contributed a great deal to

the establishment of the Pre-school Education Department in the Ministry of Education. Indeed, this department continues to use extensively both the educational materials and expertise of the project.

The Non-Governmental Organisations such as St. Joseph's Montessori Training Centre run pre-service and in-service training courses for nursery school teachers. This is a private, church-owned training centre. The other private training program is organised by Kindergarten Headmistresses' Association (K.H.A.) which largely caters for the elite kindergartens and nursery schools in Nairobi. The aim of the organisation is to help member schools solve mutual problems. The K.H.A. has devised a training program to train nursery school teachers. The trainees pay expensively for the six term training. Entrants to the training program are required to have higher school certificate or a good 'O' level pass with suitable personality. A maximum of 20 students are trained every 2 years. The graduates are required to teach in the private pre-schools after training.

1.4 Regional Enrolment of Pre-school Education

The total number of pre-schools, the number of children enrolled, and the number of teachers shown in various reports differ a great deal. This is mainly because the available statistics are both incomplete and unreliable. However, in 1973, from the available records, there were more children attending pre-school than in all the other years during that decade. In that year (1973) there were nearly 300,000 children enrolled in 5,800 pre-schools with a total of 6,326 teachers.

The drop in enrolment between 1973 and 1976, was caused by the abolition of fees in 1974 in the lower primary classes. The children of primary school-age who were enrolled in nursery schools because of lack of fees were able to advance to primary school. Besides, parents may have decided to wait until their children were of primary age to avoid incurring pre-school education charges. However, after 1976, the preschool enrolment has steadily increased as demonstrated in Table 1.2 below;

Table 1.2: Pre-School Enrolment by Province, 1968-86 Number of Children Enrolled

Province	1968	1976	1979	1984	1986
Central	51,184	30,656	78,213	110,345	119,071
Nyanza	27,998	13,534	43,054	90,462	74,113
Western	23,961	12,566	53,336	71,428	78,968
Rift Valley	22,609	42,230	66,901	93,058	177,874
Eastern	17,314	46,790	97,463	119,857	141,240
Coast	5,343	15,770	26,970	42,460	52,620
Nairobi	8,622	14,791	10,274	8,085	8,800
N. Eastern				2,183	9,837
Total	177,033	176,337	381,211	537,878	662,523

- Sources:
- i) The Evaluation Report of Pre-school Education Project. Kenya Institute of Education, 1982
 - ii) Ministry of Education
 - iii) Kenya: An Official Handbook, 1988.

It is quite clear from Table 1.2 above that pre-school education is more developed in some regions than in others. For instance, there are more pre-schools in Eastern, Central, Rift Valley and Western Provinces than in Coast, North Eastern and Nyanza Provinces. The uneven development of pre-school education in terms of child enrolment is also reflected in the distribution of pre-school participation ratios among the provinces. Table 1.2 further shows that the Eastern, Central and Western regions have higher participation ratios than Nyanza, Coast, Rift Valley, Nairobi and North Eastern regions. In other words, there are proportionately more children attending pre-schools in some regions than in others. The decline in enrolment in Central, Eastern and Nyanza Provinces could have been a consequence of the abolition of tuition fees in 1974 in the lower primary level. However, it is not immediately clear why the abolition of fees did not affect the other provinces.

Table 1.3: Pre-school Participation Percentages by Province (1980)

Region	Child Population 3-6 years (1979)	No. Enrolled (1980)	No. Enrolled As % of 3-6 years
Central	351,879	79,990	22.8
Coast	186,241	26,970	14.5
Eastern	401,707	95,832	23.9
North Eastern	52,253	1,031	3.1
Nyanza	397,140	48,054	12.7
Rift Valley	482,235	66,901	13.9
Western	272,854	51,336	19.5
TOTAL (Kenya)	2,213,050	382,988	17.3

Source: Kenya Population Census 1970

Kinyanjui (1979) identified unequal regional development in the provision of primary and secondary education similar to the differences in pre-school education. He argued that the regional differentiation in distribution of educational opportunities is a reflection of uneven development resulting from inequalities at the economic and political spheres.

Regional differentiation was one of the outcomes of uneven capitalist development in Kenya . . . In this process four broad economic and political regions emerged which were nevertheless integrated into the colonial economy. In independent Kenya, the process of development has been largely to consolidate the colonial structured inequalities (emphasis mine). (Kinyanjui, 1979:181).

No doubt, the total number of children involved in pre-school education has made it a mass movement. However, the number of children enrolled is only a small proportion of less than a quarter of the total population of children between the ages of 3-6. Therefore, nearly two million children of pre-school age are left on their own either to play around the homestead or engage in other activities both in the rural and

urban areas. Thus, children who attend pre-schools irrespective of the school category, are a privileged minority because at least they receive day care attention from the adults.

1.5 The Problem

Starting from a few nursery schools in the urban areas which were established during the colonial period about fifty years ago, formal pre-school education in Kenya has grown into a national institution. There are about three-quarters of a million children, which is about 25 percent who are between the ages of 3-6 years currently enrolled in the nursery schools. However, most of the development of pre-school education has taken place outside the mainstream of the schooling system. Although the government has contributed substantially at the various stages of the development of pre-school education, it is generally agreed that the key role has been played by the local communities (Gakuru, 1979; Government of Kenya, 1983). For instance in 1982, the distribution of nursery schools by the type of ownership was as follows: 56 percent parent; 31 percent, local authorities; 8 percent, private enterprise and 5 percent, voluntary and church

organizations.¹ More recent evidence seems to indicate that the local communities may have been even more active in the subsequent expansion of the pre-school education than previously. In an evaluation study of eight districts, (Government of Kenya, 1989), it was found out that 78 percent of the pre-schools were sponsored by the parents and 14 percent by the churches.

The increasing community involvement in the expansion of pre-school education is a positive indication that there is growing recognition of the importance of pre-school education in the life of the child. Similarly, it may also be a strong indication of probably more widespread change in the parents' aspirations, perceptions and evaluations of the child. Thus the practice of pre-school education in its modern forms could be viewed not only as further entrenchment of the hegemony of the schooling system but equally as the enactment of new values and perceptions of the child and its upbringing by the individual parents and collectively by the community.

Recently, the central government intensified efforts to support the development of pre-school education through training of teachers, supervision and curriculum development. For example, the Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E.) has

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The nursery school categories are based mainly on the basis of management and main source of financial and material assistance.

developed educational materials and training models for both trainers and teachers for pre-school education. However, the Ministry of Education, has found it difficult due mainly to financial constraints to distribute to the nursery schools the K.I.E. educational materials, expand training programmes and employ nursery school teachers.

Despite the high expenditure in education by the government, pre-school education has received less support than the other educational sectors. For instance, starting from 1980/81, pre-school education was allocated only 0.1% of the educational recurrent budget which was 37 percent of the total government recurrent budget (Government of Kenya, 1988). This is a significant deficiency because of the high percentage of the pre-school age children in the population and because of the importance of the early childhood experience in determining the future of the individual and society. (Dreitzel, (ed), 1973).

Thus, inspite of the transfer of pre-primary education function from the Ministry of Culture and Social Services to the Ministry of Education by the Presidential circular No. 1 of 1980, government intervention in pre-school education has been minimal relative to other educational sectors. Indeed, the existing policy makes it quite clear that the government, while recognising the need for pre-school education does not consider the development of this educational sector a

priority. According to the Development Plan 1979-83, (Republic of Kenya, 1978), the government has adopted a participatory approach which expects other partners such as county councils, communities, churches, voluntary organisations and commercial enterprise to provide more pre-school facilities in future.

In the past, therefore, the central government has only played a marginal role in the development of pre-school education. As a result, education for young children has been an area of least government involvement and virtually dependent on the material and ideological resources under the control of specific groups and regions in the country. Since the resource endowments differ among the social groups and regions (I.L.O. Report, 1972; Development Plan 1979-83; Bigsten, 1978), the reliance on the family, community and other interested groups has created a problem of inadequate provision of pre-school education facilities. As a result, only a small proportion of pre-school age child population receives care and education in the modern and formal pre-school institutions. Clearly therefore, the majority of the children have no access to pre-schools and are consequently deprived of an early entry into formal education. However, the rapid and voluntary growth of pre-school education, regardless of the generalised conditions of poverty, growing unemployment of those with reasonable levels of schooling

(Republic of Kenya, 1976) and high dropout rate in lower primary school level (Nkinyangi, 1980) requires an explanation. Although there are many aspects of pre-school education, the explanation of child enrolment would provide the best insight into the problem.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

The study is mainly justified by the need for a better understanding of the patterns of distribution of resources and opportunities among the child population and in the wider society in contemporary Kenya. The understanding of the extent and quality of provision of child related services and opportunities would be of immediate use since the government is already committed to the fulfillment of basic needs and provision of early childhood educational programmes.

It is also clear that the care and education of young children is often the subject of controversy. The participants in these controversies vary and include families, educators, social scientists, government officials, political action groups and others. Behind the controversies are such concerns as:

- (i) Characteristics of pre-school settings related to the child's developmental status and later developmental outcomes.
- (ii) The composition and social structure of the

client system of nursery schools. Equality of opportunity for every child to good quality education and full development and growth of individual potential.

(iii) The value of nursery education sometimes to justify the nature of resources committed to the development of pre-school education (Katz, L., 1983).

The need for better understanding of pre-school education in Kenya has also been expressed. In a national seminar on pre-school education and its development in Kenya (K.I.E. 1982: 16), it was observed that 'the importance of the growth and development of children cannot be over-emphasised. It was specifically noted that no systematic research has been done on the development and education of pre-school children'. Besides, most of the research which has been conducted locally is limited in theoretical framework.

In a study generally considered as a pioneer research (Gakuru, 1979), an attempt was made to classify pre-schools in Nairobi and to identify structural links between pre-schools and the stratified primary school education sector. Very little effort, however, was made to investigate the differences, if any, among the various socio-economic groupings served by the schooling sub-systems. In addition,

other attempts to understand the factors that have led to the development of pre-school education also lack a comprehensive theoretical basis (Nyonyintono, 1979; Mwaurah, 1978). The tendency in these studies is to view the development of pre-school education in isolation of its wider context of early childhood in the society. The result has been to present mono-causal and fragmented interpretation of the pre-school education phenomenon.

The framework of social stratification along which this study is conceptualised and organised should not only contribute to the understanding of the factors that determine the growing demand for early childhood but in so doing will also call for attention to their implications for official policies. Since the evaluation of childhood by the adults and the corresponding material and social investment in children is crucial to the society's long term survival, adaptability and understanding (Mbithi, 1982), it has become important to understand how the social and economic changes in Kenya may have influenced the traditional systems of caring and educating the young child. This study will generate information on causes of participation and the interaction between the early childhood educational system and the backgrounds of the participating children. Hopefully, this information will be used in the improvement of children's services and the development of a realistic early childhood

educational sector.

What is most important to note at this juncture is that the issue of formal education and care for the child has come increasingly to the fore, in both research and policy terms (Melhuish and Moss, 1991). In the developed countries the ecology of human development theory provides the main framework for contemporary research, focussing on the child-rearing conditions of early childhood education environments, which range from the very immediate context such as the pre-schools to the macro systems of ideology and organisation of social systems (Olmsted and Weikart, 1989).

Similarly, in the developing countries, research on learning environments of early childhood should equally focus on the influences of both formal and informal contexts which cater for the care and educational needs of the majority of children. As more children join the formal pre-school educational programmes, most of which are of very poor quality (Gakuru, 1983), especially those serving the poor, confining children to these impoverished centers/environments is likely to deny them the opportunity of learning from the world of nature and social settings around them. As aptly pointed out by Avalos (1986), teaching children of the poor is greatly inhibited not only by severe inadequacy of material resources but also by the practical ideologies of teachers which force children to develop negative self-concepts such as lack of the

need to achieve (McClelland, 1961).

1.7 The Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the factors which best explain the causes of enrolment in pre-schools. Specifically the aim was to establish the relationships between pre-school enrolment and background of children who attend these schools. The main focus was on understanding the socio-economic and other relevant factors which best explain the background characteristics of those enrolled and the differences between the families who had enrolled their children in the pre-schools and those with children who are not enrolled in pre-schools.

Other research concerns related to the issue of enrolment in pre-school education revolve around the question of the establishment and continued expansion of pre-schools and the effects of the societal perceptions and evaluations of the child. Certainly, one would expect a variety of competing evaluation of the child based on socio-economic background, ethnicity and regional diversity. These and other factors differentially attract and command material and non-material resources which eventually determine the type of education that communities organise for its very young.

In addition to child enrolment, there are other important aspects of childhood that affect the lives of young children.

For the purpose of this study, the other aspects of childhood that were considered as part of the criterion of the study were child evaluations of parents, the work of children and the social relationships between parents, teachers and children. The functionalist paradigm studies of the child and society (Kayongo-Male and Walji, 1984; Callan, 1980) are generally supportive of the hypothesis of the economic, social and psychological value of children to their parents. For instance, one way of looking at the economic value of children has been in terms of their contribution to the labour needs of the family. This "world of work" is also their education (Kayongo-Male and Walji, 1984; Safilios-Rothschild and Mburugu, 1986).

Altogether therefore, the dependent variables for this study are limited to particular social practices and interventions which are aimed at the developmental and care needs of the child such as enrolment in the pre-schools and the ideology of the values adults attach to children. Since the child is entirely dependent on the parent, the decision of the parent to send a child to the nursery school is indeed part of the material conditions and the value system of the parent. In this case the value of the child refers to both the negative and positive instrumental and socio-psychological benefits parents attach to children.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN KENYA

2.1 Theories of Education and Society

Education is an important basis of social life, through which mankind makes necessary adjustments to enhance survival. In functional terms, education performs innumerable tasks both for the individual and society. These include socialisation and training of the young for productive adult life and cultural integration which makes group life possible (Schwartz, 1975). However, education differs in its aim, content and approach according to the nature, character and the stage of development of any particular society. For instance, the establishment of the education systems in the western societies was a product of cumulative efforts to resolve problems that were encountered in the course of development.

On the other hand, the development of education that unfolded in the western countries was telescoped in the developing countries. In turn, the latter have evolved their distinctive characteristics after nearly a century of colonial rule and later, experimentation with independence in the post-colonial era. The process has been marked by severe conflicts with the traditional education and cultural systems (Carnoy,

1974). However, both in the developed and developing countries, schools are related in very complex ways to the economic, mobility structure and social stratification systems. Besides, educational provision has become not only formalised and functionally separated from the other institutions of the society but has also become a specialisation of the schooling system (Anderson, 1964).

Education, especially schooling, is also a major factor in human development, social change and development in the third world countries (Harbison, 1973). Furthermore, the democratic ideals of equality of opportunity at the economic level have also been incorporated in the provision and study of education (Halsey, et al, 1961; Bendix, 1964). Since education also serves as a mechanism for selection and allocation of positions within the occupational structure, it is expected that equalisation of educational opportunities would contribute to the establishment of a just society? (Kinyanjui, 1979)

Although theoretically education plays an important part in the development of human resources, there are many obstacles which make it inaccessible to many, thereby denying them the opportunity for the realisation of their personal potential and meaningful participation in the social and economic life of the society (Bowels and Gintis, et al, 1976). Besides, after many years of massive investment in the

development of educational systems, the plight of ordinary people, especially in the third world nations seems little, if at all improved. Absolute poverty is chronic and pervasive. The economic disparities between the rich and poor continue to widen while growing unemployment and hunger pose a real threat to the survival of millions of people.

The problems of development that face the third world countries can not be blamed or attributed solely to the educational system. Critical reviews of the political economy of development provide a long list of other factors which are either inherent in the societies or whose origins are in the world economic order (Rodney, 1974; Ake, 1988). At the same time however, one must recognize that many of the early claims made on the role of uncontrolled expansion of the education system in economic growth, acculturation of the diverse ethnic groups, employment creation and socio-economic transformation from poor to wealthy countries have been quite exaggerated and in many instances, simply false (Todaro, 1981). Instead, the wealth, power and status arising from the development effort is disproportionately appropriated by the national elites in collaboration with the foreign owners of capital (Leys, 1974).

While the literature on education and society is full of descriptions of the infinite roles of education, the nature of the complex relationship between education and society remains a research issue (Richardson, 1986; Halsey, et al; 1961). One

of the key aspects is the relationship between education, social structure and development. As a result, education provision which is at the core of this relationship is not only an issue of interest to policy makers and parents but has also become the focus of a wide variety of theoretical backgrounds. Furthermore, in the pre-industrial societies, education was largely informal and inseparable from the economic and cultural practices (Atta, 1984, Sifuna, 1988). In modern societies, however, education provision is not only formalised and separated from other institutions but has become a specialisation of the schooling system. (Rubinson, 1986)

There are several competing theories rooted in the equilibrium and conflict paradigms that have been advanced to explain the relationship between education and society. Kinyanjui (1979) and Fargalin and Saha (1989) have noted the dominance of the equilibrium paradigm which has been the basis of the development of the extremely influential structural-functional theories of modernisation and human capital theories. For instance, the theory of modernisation is based on the notion that there is causal link between modernisation institutions, modern values, modern behaviour, modern society and economic development (Inkeles and Smith; 1974). McClelland (1961) applied this theory when he argued that the rise and fall of civilisations is due to the individual values

held by the majority of the population in the society. In their discussion, Delacroix and Ragin (1978) concluded that the primary interest of modernisation oriented scholars is the social psychology of individual change rather than the sociology of economic development. Besides, the economic process of modernisation focuses upon the productive capacity of human powers. Accordingly, the improvement of the human work force is viewed as a form of capital investment.

The modernisation theories are criticised on several grounds. First, they represent an ethnocentric world view of developed societies whose past showed the future path of those societies on the road to modernity. Secondly, as argued by Portes (1973) and Hyden (1987) modernisation could contribute negatively to development through the behaviour of the elite whose tendency to consume is greater than to save. Besides, the elites are also the ones who often migrate to the industrial countries and when at home, engage in devastating armed conflicts especially in Africa that leave thousands of people dead, injured or as refugees.² Thirdly, modernisation theory predicates development to factors that are within individual societies and whose interaction is assumed to

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The current civil wars which have been started by the elites in Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda and Uganda are causing untold havoc to their fragile economies, deaths of thousands and displacement of millions of people in the region. Kenya, although to a lesser degree, is currently experiencing ethnic conflicts which are instigated by the political elites. According to Lays (1974) the weakness of the new third world bourgeoisie manifests itself in all sorts of conflicts which constantly threaten to engulf the rest of the society as individuals seek to enlist ethnic and regional interests on behalf of their class interests.

produce well balanced changes. In other words, the success in development is entirely dependent on the internal resources of individual countries.

The competing conflict paradigm and its related theories of underdevelopment and dependency provide a theoretical basis for explaining the influence on development of both external and internal factors. In contrast to modernisation theories, the underdevelopment and dependency theories focus on the relationship between and within societies in regard to social, political and economic structures. The underlying assumption of this theoretical orientation is that "developed" and "underdeveloped" as relational concepts within and between countries are inversely related. This perspective treats education as a reproductive mechanism of underdevelopment and dependency.

Kinyanjui (1979) criticised the underdevelopment and other development oriented theories for inspiring only a few studies on education because of their strong economic bias. He cites the work of Carnoy (1974) as an example of some of the few studies on education and underdevelopment which focused on the interaction of the global economy and the national economies instead of the internal dynamics of peripheral societies and their influence on the development of education. This lacuna in the underdevelopment theory might explain why educational studies in the underdeveloped

countries employ the conflict theories of social structure. For instance, it is this theoretical gap that encouraged Kinyanjui (1979) to apply the classical conflict theory of social classes and social reproduction in his study of educational inequalities in Kenya.

Similarly, in his study of primary school dropout and repetition in Kenya, Nkinyangi (1979) focused on the internal dynamics of the social class structure and regional differences as the main sources of inequalities in educational provision and outcomes. There was also an attempt by Gakuru (1979) to explain the social significance of pre-school education on the basis of social class inequalities and the structural differences in the schooling system. On the whole, most of the studies that have been carried out both in the equilibrium and the conflict traditions have therefore focused on the structural functional role of education in the creation and reproduction of cultural and economic inequalities, its contribution to development and the bureaucratisation of education. Other studies have focused on the economic determinism of educational growth (Bowles and Gintis; 1976). But the harbingers of corporate capitalism, power, state apparatuses and even social class antagonism do not offer adequate explanations of the expansion of educational systems as convincingly argued by Meyer et.al., (1979) in their very informative publication entitled Public Education and Nation

Building in America. The authors present evidence that depicts education expansion as social movement rather than mechanistic response to urbanisation and industrial growth. Their analysis proved that school enrollments were high, much earlier than the emergence of corporate capitalism in the United States of America. They argued that the spread of schooling was a social movement implementing a community ideology of nation-building in the Eastern United States. The ideology of that social movement consisted of the outlook and interest of small entrepreneurs in a world market. The capitalist political economy and the religio-political ideology held together groups who acted not simply to protect the status of their children but to build a 'millennial society for all children'. Therefore, the authors argued that it was not a narrow elite or powerful state that erected schools across the country in the United States of America but rather thousands of millions of people who shared a common ideology of nation building.

However, an important contribution of the underdevelopment perspective in the understanding of the role and character of the education system is found in the attempt to analyze the nature of the underdevelopment societies, which are seen as products of articulation of the dominant capitalist mode with the indigenous economies. Conceptually therefore, underdevelopment has been perceived as a historical

process which intensified during the colonial period culminating in the establishment of colonial societies. With independence however, the colonies became nations opening a new era of nation building.

Perhaps, Archer (1982) was even more critical of the contribution of the theories of human capital, consumption, modernisation, political integration, social control and ideological diffusion. According to Archer, they all represent general explanations which pinpoint some particular variable or process as universally responsible for the explanation. Her criticism is based on five major fallacies or omissions of these theories: epiphenomenalism that denies the partial autonomy of the educational systems; lack of specifications of the mechanisms producing educational growth; omission of the structure of the educational system and the omission of the temporal dimension and neglect of the structural elaboration of the educational system.

However, Archer (1982) attributes the appeal of these theories to their treatment of money, power and stratification which are part of education growth. Her argument is that these are ingredients which are blended by social interaction. They are not lone determinants and can only account for a small proportion of the observed variance in educational growth. Her concern is to be able to explain why an educational system grows by adopting an institutional analysis

in which expansion is seen as an integral aspect of a social institution, not a detachable quantitative property. The analytical model proposed by Archer categorizes the development of the educational institutions into three phases: take-off, growth and inflation. The first phase of educational take-off largely involves provision of and increased attendance. The second phase of growth is the change that originates from the transition from private ownership of schools to public control of education. The third and final phase is marked by increased institutional corporate self-determination.

The following brief case study of the Kenyan experience serves as an illustration of the complexities that characterize the relationship between education and society. Part of the discussion is a theoretical attempt to understand the forces behind educational expansion.

2.2 Schooling in the Context of Colonialism in Kenya

A great deal had been accomplished towards the establishment of a society which was characterized by racial segregation among the three races of Africans, Asians and Europeans by 1920 when Kenya was designated a British colony. There seems to be consensus that the colonial situation was created in Kenya between 1905 and 1923 (Mutiso, 1975). This included the framework of a capitalist economy which was based

on plantation agriculture owned by the settler population, and a commercial and industrial sector which was mainly in the hands of the Asian immigrants. The emergent social structure was hierarchical and unequal with the Europeans occupying the highest position in the distribution and control of power and the administrative machinery. The Africans occupied the lowest position providing the bulk of labour requirements in the colony (Leys, 1974; Kitching, 1980).

The Europeans did not bring the idea of formal education to the Africans, but through such practices as grouping children into classrooms for instruction, teaching of reading and writing and laying great emphasis on examinations, they have done much to shape the dominating idea of education as schooling. The development of formal education in Kenya, variously referred to as schooling was therefore inseparable from the introduction of the colonial society and the related policies which were aimed at the establishment and subsequent development of a modern and capitalist society. Starting from the very beginning, formal education and other related school experiences were expected to play a key role in this process.X

In his study on the political economy of educational inequality in Kenya (Kinyanjui, 1979) identified three broad educational objectives that guided the development of education in colonial Kenya. The first objective was the establishment of separate systems of education for the

different races. The obvious consequence of this objective was the development of a racial system of education which discriminated against the Africans and favoured the European and Asians. The second objective was to replace African cultural systems with Christian and other Western moral values. There was consensus among the missionaries, settlers and the colonial officials that the African required a definite religious belief so as to be an honest member of the society. The role of the school as an agent of transmission of Western culture was best articulated by Lugard (1923:618) in his ethnocentric defence of the British colonisation of black Africa:

As Roman imperialism laid the foundation of modern civilisation and led the wild barbarians of these islands along the path of progress, today, so in Africa we are repaying the debt, and bringing to the dark places of the earth, the abode of barbarism and cruelty, the torch of culture and progress, while administering the material needs of our civilisation We hold these countries because it is genius of our race to colonise, to trade and govern.

The degree and pace of the transformation of the African culture as a result of the strong influence of the agents of colonialism including the missionaries, were observed as early as in the first decade of colonial rule by an American missionary:

No native tribes in the world have been subjected to such a forcing process as those of Kenya Colony. Nowhere has the whole system of civilisation been dropped so suddenly and completely in the midst of savage races as here. In 1885 I crossed from Mombasa to mainland in dug out canoe and walked into the interior. Twenty-eight years later these infant races are shaking their rattles and talking politics! It is a situation that may well give pause to missionaries and officials alike, for it has within it the seeds of an unprecedented development or an appalling disaster (Stabler, 1969:3).

The third objective was the "role education was expected to play in the creation of skilled but subservient labour force" (Kinyanjui, 1979:173). Although the settler community was in favour of the role of Christian education, any academic instruction of the Africans was a source of concern for fear that academic education would interfere with the supply of cheap manual labour to work on their farms. Altogether therefore, the original educational policies and objectives were aimed at the political, socio-cultural and economic development of a colonial society.

The early outlook of the agents of colonialism on the indigenous peoples was not only racist, paternalistic but also ethnocentric. Consequently, the policy of education dealing with African population as reported by the Department of Education in 1924 was as follows (Stabler, 1969:8):

The policy of the Department in dealing with savage races is rather to educate the masses on practical lines so as to improve their physique and their food supply and their standard of living rather than to hurry the civilisation of a select few who become detribalised and divorced from their people ... Like Children, the untutored savage requires guidance and if he finds that education means a better and more regular food supply, better housing, congenial work and good pay or good crops the danger of agitation from "mis-fits" is likely to decrease.

Furthermore, the policy of adapting education to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations and traditions of the various peoples which was the cornerstone of educational policy in African dependencies (Cowan, et al, 1965) led to the application of special methods of teaching African children who were generally viewed as severely under developed:

Generally speaking, the African mind in Kenya has reached the stage of sense perception. The imagination and the emotions are both highly developed but the development of the reasoning faculties must be slow. Just as hard work has been found useful in the training of mentally defective children, so the most useful training which the African can receive in his present condition is contact with material processes . . . The training of the African mind, therefore, in its present stage of development is more dependent upon the practical than the literary arts (Stabler, 1969:8).

The Christian Missionaries were mainly responsible for the development of education for the Africans while the

colonial government undertook to provide education to European and Asian minorities. Sheffield (1973) observed that within the framework of racial segregation and European dominance, the missionaries enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the field of African education until the 1920s. Although later the government assumed the primary responsibilities for African education, missionary dominance persisted throughout the colonial era.

However, there were fundamental conflicts between the missionaries and Africans over the implementation of the educational policies especially in the areas of content and pace of provision of educational facilities. An example of such conflicts was the famous controversy over female circumcision between the Gikuyu and the Church of Scotland together with other several missions (ibid, p.28). The African response to the ultimatum to denounce the custom was to initiate their independent schools for their children. But as noted by Ng'ethe (1979), the momentum to establish the independent schools had gathered over a period of time prior to 1929. His interpretation of the African response was "that the community seized on the occasion to express general grievances against the colonial regime and particularly the educational system which was part and parcel of the "general nationalist struggle and revolt against encroachment".

As clearly noted by Cowan, et al, (1965), both the West

and Christianity have been destructive of African culture and even today, the need to borrow from the West hurts the self-esteem of the African intelligentsia. The Africans were also critical after it became evident that access to better rewarded occupations in the colonial economy, influential positions and social status required literary education instead of the heavily practical and agricultural training in the schools that were run by the missionaries. Already many Africans were concerned with the question of their own economic and social development which were being frustrated by the rural-oriented educational program designed for them.

Perhaps, it was John Anderson, in The Struggle for the School (1970:5) who captured the combination of the factors that best explain the African response in establishing their own independent schools which they hoped would strengthen their position in the struggle against colonial oppression and racial discrimination.

Finally, concerns about personal returns to education and the prospects of economic and social advancement became affected by the rising political aspiration of African society, so the academic standards became a central theme of the nationalism movements.

But as clearly stated by Anderson, in the ensuing struggle, the paradoxical element heightened, for, whilst the Europeans focussed their attention on the school curriculum in an attempt to guide African development into a cheap source of

manual and semi-skilled labour, the social and economic conditions that were emerging clearly drove it in another direction. Therefore, the African, realising academic education led to greater prosperity and power in European community, focussed mainly on the school's function of mobility to gain an increasing share of the positions of wealth and authority being created around them.

One of the major consequences of the establishment of colonial society was the imposition of racial and class form of differentiation upon the existing ethnic and clan differences among others. An important aspect of social differentiation was the creation of a cleavage consisting of the "Asomi" and "non-Asomi". Mutiso (1975) defines the Wasomi class as the pariah society made up of "Christians or semi-christians" since some were opportunistic and not really interested.³

The social status and advancement of the Asomi was predicated upon acquisition of the attributes of the coloniser. Mutiso (ibid) observed a subdivision of the Asomi between the associative and disassociative categories. The significance of this social division among the Asomi was that the disassociative Asomi provided the leadership to the non-

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Mutiso (1975:10) defines the "Asomi" as the Africans who associated with the christian missionary centres after rejecting the institutional framework of the traditional society .He also defines the "Non -Asomi" as the traditionalists who rejected christianity and westernisation. The two terms which are derived from the Kiswahili word "Some" which means "read"should be "Wasomi" and "Non-Wasomi" respectively .

Asomi in their struggle for opportunities in the colonial situation. Indeed, it was the alliance of those Asomi who were critical of the colonial regime and missionary dominance in religious and schooling activities that developed into nationalist movements that eventually seized the political power when Kenya became independent in 1963.⁴

2.3 Education Expansion

If only because the newly independent states build on and are influenced by the previous regimes, there is no distinct break between the periods of colonial and nationalist educational policies in Africa. Many of the ideas contained in the 1925 report on educational policy in British tropical African - still occupy policy makers in the independent nations (Cowan, 1965).

As clearly illustrated by Kinyanjui (1969), the transition from colonial society and the establishment of post-colonial economy was from 1952 onwards. Among the first challenges of transition was the need to restructure the economy in order to accommodate an African minority who would be committed to the preservation of the capitalist economy and act as a buffer against the masses.

Henceforth, numerous policies were designed and reforms in the colonial pattern of development were implemented. For

⁴ The independent schools were built on self-help basis or "Harabee". The concept of harabee is generally understood as working together for common need and embodies ideals of mutual assistance, joint effort, mutual social responsibility and community self-reliance (Nbiti, 1977). The self-help movement also served as a very important basis of resource mobilisation for the expansion of the education system during the post-colonial era.

instance, the economic reforms which were initiated ranged from efforts towards the integration of the indigenous peoples into modern agriculture, cash crop production and private land ownership to access to finance and technical advice.

There were corresponding educational reforms as a response to the increased demand for educated Africans. As observed by Kinyanjui (1969;232):

Political and economic factors in this period made the issue of educated manpower the top priority of the educational system.

He cites three factors: the Mau Mau revolt which necessitated the incorporation of educated Africans into the colonial state apparatus; the achievement of political independence and the expansion of the economy resulting from industrial and agricultural growth and increased flow of international finance capital (Kinyanjui, 1979; 233). It was Cowan (1965:3) who probably best summarised the politico-economy of educational development during this period:

The revolution in African education since 1950 has been as important for Africa's future as the political revolution that brought independence to much of the continent. Students have increased in numbers, schools and Universities have mushroomed, and expatriate and local teachers have been employed to staff them. The political leaders regard education as the basic component in nation-building and the foundation from which they hope the economic revolution of Africa will be launched. Their faith in education is matched by that of parents and students, whose demands for increased educational facilities have often outstripped the ability of governments to provide them.

Although manpower development became the overriding educational objective in post-colonial Kenya, the schooling system was expected to fulfil many other objectives (Republic of Kenya, 1964). An immediate and short term objective was racial integration in school enrollments as part of the new political philosophy of equality of races. By the middle of the 1970s however, virtually all the former government white schools had been fully Africanised. For reasons best known to themselves, the white community later withdrew their children from these schools in favour of the exclusive and expensive private schools where they have been joined by a minority of African elites. The other main objectives included integration, nationalisation of curriculum, provision of equal educational opportunities and the development of personal potential.

The post-colonial preoccupation with the production of middle and high level manpower, coupled with an insatiable mass demand for education and populist political ideology (Nge'the; 1979; Kinyanjui, 1979) resulted in a phenomenal growth of the educational system. Quantitative expansion has been the most remarkable feature of this growth. Numerically, the greatest gains have been made at the primary and secondary school levels. The enrolment in primary and secondary schools increased between 1963 and 1987 from 891,353 to 5,031,340 and from 31,120 to 522,261 respectively. The other educational

sectors have also been expanded greatly. For instance, university education grew from a small program of 452 undergraduates in 1963 to about 15,155 undergraduates and over 2,200 post-graduates in 1987/88 academic year in the four national universities. Similarly, the expansion of pre-school enrolment which is the concern of this study increased from 177,033 in 1968 to 662,532 in 1986 (Republic of Kenya, 1988; Republic of Kenya and UNICEF, 1988).

However, the economy has not grown as rapidly as the educational system. As a result, starting from the 1970s increasing numbers of secondary school leavers were unemployed followed by university graduates in the 1980s. The debate that followed on the causes and search for solutions to the problem of unemployment of school leavers treated the problem as being the consequence of an irrelevant educational curriculum and white collar mentality of the school population. This was tantamount to assigning the blame to the victim (Kinyanjui, 1972; Republic of Kenya, 1976; Gakuru, 1979). No wonder then, that the educational reforms which were proposed by the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (NCEOP, Republic of Kenya), the sessional Paper No. 6 of 1988 on Education and Manpower Training for the next Decade and Beyond (Republic of Kenya, 1988) and the implementation of the current 8-4-4 educational system represent a policy of adaptation of the schooling

system to the capitalist and social class structure of the society. In particular, the reforms focus on the development of practical skills, positive attitudes to self employment and a system of morals and ethics relevant to the economic and social realities of a poor capitalist society.

The nature of social interaction in Kenya during the colonial and post-colonial restructuring resulted in the establishment of an educational system which became an arena of major struggles among the various interest groups (Anderson, 1970). As already indicated (p.51), a notable feature of Kenya's educational system has been its expansion at all levels. There are numerous accounts of the factors and process of its expansion and growth. For instance, Anderson, (1970) and Kinyanjui, (1979) provide excellent reviews of the extent to which European, church and government interests sought to utilise not only their own resources but also efforts of the Africans to develop the school system. A common view in these studies and other historical works on the development of education in Kenya is that conflict in a structural form has been a major drive in the expansionary process of the schooling system (Sifuna, 1989: Anderson, 1970). Generally, conflict has existed where the activities of different individuals or groups obstruct the efforts of others in obtaining their desired goals. Furthermore, this conflict developed quite often into a struggle when the

competing groups took action to influence the capacity of others in order to achieve their own objectives. For instance, there were serious differences over the aims, methods, adequate provision of schooling facilities and the quality of education among the Africans, colonial authorities and missionaries as well as intra-group disagreements within the competing groups.

Perhaps, one of the greatest source of influence on the expansion of the educational system and growth of the school enrollments has been "harambee" or the self-help movement. This is a social movement that is associated with group effort regardless of the nature of the task. A great deal has been written on harambee (Thomas, 1985; Nge'the, 1979;) where attempts have been made to link harambee with traditional forms of social co-operation and mutual assistance. However, Nge'the (1979) argued that the actual predecessor of harambee as a movement is to be found in the colonial period in the form of resistance to colonial penetration and the subsequent racial discrimination. He identified two forms of organisation which most likely served as the roots of harambee: formation of associations to raise money to meet charges that were imposed on indigenous people in the colonial courts and the establishment of independent schools in order to counter the colonial and missionary cultural imperialism.

Coupled with concerns and prospects of personal and

community economic, social and political emancipation which were predicated on the educational attainment, the self-help movement became an invaluable vehicle for the establishment of schools and the expansion of the schooling system in Kenya. For instance, in her study, (Thomas 1985) found that sixty percent of harambee projects in a sample of six locations were on the provision of educational facilities. In the post-colonial era, harambee has also served as a mechanism of resource allocation and preemptive development (Holmquist,1970), especially in the provision of schooling facilities. One of the government's educational policies was to provide assistance to schools which the communities established through self help. Besides, the past educational policy was expansionary, thus making meritocratic ideology credible (Court, 1981).

The social movement of harambee also plays a role in the centre-periphery politics and the client-patron relationships which characterise the practice of political life in Kenya (Mutiso, 1975; Nge'the, 1979). In addition to its allocative and developmental roles, the religiosity which is attached to educational provision is a clear indication that education in Kenya, especially schooling is much more than a mere functional property or just a value that is shared by the majority. In addition, it is an integral part of a social movement whose dynamism is the struggle for adaptation,

survival and desire for a better life in a society in which the capitalist economy and its corresponding social system have generated a high demand for formal education at all levels of the social system. The deep faith in the power of formal education is further manifested by the apparent behaviour of thousands of parents whose children drop out of school every year because they cannot afford the various charges.

Nkinyangi (1980) calculated a drop-out rate for standard one between 1970 to 1976 as high as 38 per cent in Turkana District. The Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Kenya (Kenya and UNICEF;1989) also presents extremely high rates of wastage in the primary education. For instance, an incredible 63.2 per cent of the 1974 standard 1 intake did not reach standard 8. Also, an equally high rate of 64.7 per cent of the 1979 standard 1 intake did not make it to standard 8 in 1986. Although most of the dropouts are children of the poor (Nkinyangi; 1980), the popular support of formal education even among the disadvantaged majority, accords further credence to the thesis that educational expansion and growth of school enrollments is part of the social movement which originated in the colonial society, consisting of a combination of nationalism, personal advancement and general progress.

Therefore, especially in the case of Kenya, specific

aspects of political economy such as intensive parental demand for the education of their children, coupled with a pervasive modernizing social movement of self-help have been of considerable influence on the development of formal education including organized pre-school education. "Becoming Kenyans", is a concept that Kituyi applies in the analysis of the integration of the Maasai into the Kenyan society. He treats it as the "historical process of integration characterized by colonial occupation, governmental control, encroaching market, emergence of a new elite, opportunities, constraints and normative proximity deriving from assumptions of shared destiny and values (Kituyi, 1990; 229).

2.4 From the Pre-school to the Primary School

Pre-School education is part of the schooling system. It is therefore not exceptional in terms of how it is influenced by the basic socio-economic structures in the wider society. Although pre-school contributes to the intellectual, social and emotional development of the child, we know that educational systems including ours, have rarely behaved according to traditional precepts. Rarely have they promoted either social equality or full human development (Bowles, et. al., 1976). In Kenya today, only a few have the economic security and knowledge that is required to experiment with liberal concepts such as the 'whole child', or 'real life'

experiences, developed in the progressive educational movement. Indeed, the overall uneven development coupled with the class nature of our society has resulted in gross inequality in access to material wealth and services such as food, shelter, medical care and education. The provision of pre-school education is not an exception and should be viewed in this context of inequality.

Nursery education differ in the type of primary schools entered by their graduates particularly in the urban areas where existing acute economic and cultural differentiation is reproduced in the educational sector. The nursery and primary sectors have three basic categories interlinked by the flow of children. The three categories are the low-cost, medium-cost, and high-cost educational sub-systems. The low-cost schools consist of nursery schools that charge less than Ksh. 235 (or US\$ 8.1) per month and are linked with the schedule A primary schools. Most of the primary schools in Kenya are schedule A schools which are the former colonial African schools. Today, these primary schools are wholly African and do not charge for tuition. Although their intake is African, the students are from the poor families in urban areas and the peasantry and pastoralists in the rural areas. However, there are newly rich families in the rural areas who send their children to the schedule A schools mainly because schooling facilities in the rural areas are less differentiated. The few educational

opportunities available in the rural boarding schools are preempted by the rich who are conscious of their class position.

The medium-cost schools consist of both nursery and primary schools that serve the lower middle class group found mainly in the large urban centres. Most of the graduates from the medium-cost nursery schools go to the schedule B (former colonial Asians) and the schedule C (former European) primary schools. In the colonial period, schedule C schools catered for the ruling class, the Europeans. Today, these schools carry out this function without the racial characteristics of the colonial past. In addition, there are two types of private primary schools on top of the state schools described above. The first type belongs to the Catholic Church while schools in the other category are commercial enterprises. The children who go to these two types of primary school first attend the medium and high-cost nursery schools charging not less than Ksh.500 - Ksh.825 (or US\$ 17.24 - US\$ 28.45) per month respectively. (Government of Kenya and UNICEF, 1989). The private primary schools charge such high fees that only the very rich can afford.

The literature on social differentiation in contemporary Kenyan Society has identified four broad social formations which are differentially articulated with or tied to the process of production. According to Kinyanjui (1979) and

Nkinyangi (1980), these are:

a) A Small National Bourgeoisie:

This is the class which controls and exercises surveillance over the process of production. This class is composed of two interrelated segments. The political class and then a small group of large-scale capitalist farmers and a small group of an industrial bourgeoisie. The political class is made up of three frequently discordant groups: the politicians, top civil servants and heads of parastatal organizations, and top military and police officers. This is a multiracial class consisting largely of Europeans, Asians and Africans.

b) A Petty-bourgeoisie:

This is seen as a much more diffuse and indigenous social formation numbering in tens of thousands and including both Africans and Asians in state bureaucratic apparatuses, trade, transport, construction, small-scale manufacturing and house rental.

c) An Embryonic Proletariat:

This is a class consisting of urban workers and others engaged in work on large farms, as casual labour, or in self employment. Members of this sub-category are concentrated in main urban centres such as Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and Thika. However, there are certain problems of definition which relate to this social formation. Sandbrook (1975) argues that the

working class cannot be described as 'proletariat' in the real marxian sense since it does not rely wholly on selling its labour power to maintain its livelihood. Besides selling its labour power, many African workers also retain some rights over the land. There is another problem of class articulation which concerns this social formation. In the urban areas, a large segment of the population is unemployed and although this group has working class aspirations it is not involved in the production process.

d) A Large Category of Peasants and Pastoralists:

Peasants and pastoralists comprise about 90% of the population. When Kenya was incorporated into the capitalist mode of production, much of the productive land was alienated from the Africans. However, when social divisions by race officially ended after independence, and social class became more important in the former European farming areas, large-scale capitalist farmers could be seen as the dominant social class. In the former African farming areas, this class is paralleled by a stratum of rich peasants whose farming is also essentially capitalistic since it involves the process of control and utilization of wage labour in commodity production. In the former African areas, there is also a segment of middle-level as well as poor peasants.

Middle peasants are also involved in the process of production but mainly utilize family labour in the process of

production. Their production is controlled from outside through government agencies. The quality of products produced, marketing, and the prices paid to the producers are determined by agencies which control this process. Poor peasants own land which is mainly utilized for subsistence production. Often, these peasants live on very small parcels of land, sometimes averaging no more than two acres, and supplement their livelihood with income from wage labour for the rich and middle-level peasants.

Apart from the three distinct categories of peasants, there is also developing a distinct category of a landless class which may be both the result of the social dynamics of differentiation taking place in Kenya's countryside and part of the general dynamic of capitalist development. The landless class sells its labour to the rich and middle-level peasants or squatters on large-scale farms in return for its labour power.

Nkinyangi (1980) argued that the capitalist incorporation which affected the agricultural areas of the country, left the pastoral areas of Kenya largely untouched and both colonial and post-colonial policies exacerbated underdevelopment in those regions. However, mere cursory observation alone, would show great variations in livestock ownership, the medium in which wealth is stored in pastoral areas, between individuals, communities, and different areas of the pastoral region.

Besides, the process of integration of the pastoral peoples into the capitalist economy and state has resulted in further differentiation in wealth, power and status.

The social class differences which characterise the Kenyan society are reflected in gross income and other inequalities. For example, the structure of income distribution is marked by gross inequality.

Table 2.1: Urban household income Distribution before and after tax, 1968-69.

Income bracket (Ksh. per month before tax)	Household & absolute No.	%	Share of total urban household income	
			before tax	after tax
0-199	16.3	8.5	1.1	1.1
200-299	31.9	16.6	4.8	4.8
300-399	25.5	13.3	5.2	5.3
400-499	17.4	9.1	4.6	4.6
500-699	26.0	13.5	9.2	9.3
700-999	19.0	9.9	9.6	9.5
1000-1399	18.9	9.9	13.4	14.3
10000-1999	17.8	9.3	17.9	17.8
2,000 and over	19.1	9.9	34.1	33.2

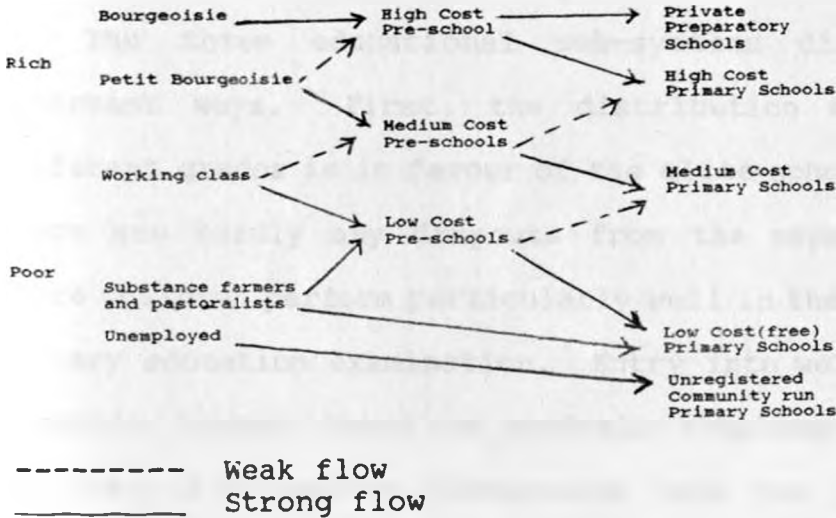
Source: ILO Report on Employment, Income and Equality: for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya 1972 p. 75.

The social barriers that exist among the various social groupings and the inequalities in wealth, power and status have jointly created the wealthy and poor classes. The diagram in the next page presents an outline of the structural relationships between classes and their corresponding educational categories both in the pre-school and primary educational sectors.

My study on pre-school education and access to

educational opportunities in Nairobi, found out that the fees charged by pre-schools is strongly related to the primary school outcome index (Gakuru, 1979). In this study, I traced the pre-school graduates to their respective primary schools. The primary school outcome index for all the nursery schools in the sample was then computed on the basis of the number of children entering a particular primary school and its value in the ranking structure. The ranking of primary schools was based on cost, quality and status of the schools. For example, the quality of primary schools was assessed on the basis of performance in certificate of primary education examination which is used to select secondary school entrants.

Relationship between Class Structure and Schools⁵



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A diagrammatic model of the links between the social structure and the categories of the educational system was first developed by Gakuru (1977) and Kinyanjui (1979).

Pre-schools are being used as filters for admission into primary schools. In the urban areas and in some rural districts for instance, children with pre-school experience are given priority during the selection for standard one places. Although the official entry requirement for a child is six years of age, there is competition for standard one vacancies because the existing facilities are inadequate. Furthermore, the problem of entry into primary schools, particularly***** in schedule A schools, is now intense due to the abolition of fees in 1974 and later, the removal of building fund and equipment levy. Lack of adequate government primary schools is illustrated by the development of expensive private elementary schools and the informal community primary schools built through self-help.

The three educational sub-systems differ in other important ways. First, the distribution of teachers of different grades is in favour of the elite schools. Secondly, there are hardly any dropouts from the expensive schools, where children perform particularly well in the certificate of primary education examination. Entry into well paid jobs in Kenya is largely based on academic attainment. Therefore, children from wealthy backgrounds have the privilege to a guaranteed educational mobility which legitimizes the future leadership positions that they will occupy in the society.

As we have pointed out already, the development and

structure of both nursery and primary education reflects the existence of the inequalities among the different social classes. For example, virtually all the children who are born in a slum community, or a plantation go to the low-cost self-help nursery schools and later to the poor quality neighbourhood schedule A primary schools. But the children born in the wealthy families go to the costly schools. Although there is competition for vacancies in all the educational sub-systems, all the elite families are able to place their children in schools of their choice. On the other hand, not all the poor are able to send their children to schools due to the inadequate provision of primary school facilities. Briefly, in Kenya today, there are schools for the poor and schools for the rich.

Primary school entrants also differ in the use of language. In my study (Gakuru 1979), I identified the following three different language uses both at home and in nursery schools. First, there is the use of English language by the ruling class. There are now, unlike in the independence days, black kenyan children who are born in families that use English as a mother tongue. These children attend multi-racial nursery schools with teachers who are qualified enough to understand the meaning of liberal concepts such as the 'development of the whole child'. Besides these teachers use English as if it were their mother tongue.

The other type of language use corresponds with the middle class background which is culturally uncertain in the type of language that children should be encouraged to learn. This group buys the support of the English medium nursery schools at the earliest possible time so as to prepare their children for the good quality English medium primary schools. In my view, this is the social group that is benefitting most from pre-school education. The children of this upwardly mobile group go to nursery schools that are language melting pots whereby the children are socialised from the use of vernaculars and Swahili into the use of English. The early mastery over the English language is an invaluable resource since this is the language that is almost solely rewarded in the educational system and to a large extent in the occupational structure in Kenya.

The children from the non-English users' background are the majority and are found both in the rural and urban areas. These children can only speak their vernacular languages in the rural areas and Swahili in the towns at the time of starting primary education. These different uses of language present a major obstacle to curriculum development and efforts to equalise the educational opportunities. There are indicators that the curriculum will be progressively integrated with the local environment including the use of language in schools (N.C.E.O.P 1976). However, this will mean

continued English medium for the ruling class and use of vernacular by the other social groups.

There are several factors that impose serious limitations on the effectiveness of the organised educational programmes for the pre-school child. First, the number of children that are enrolled in the pre-schools is only a small fraction of the total population of the pre-school age children. Secondly, there is unequal distribution of the existing pre-school educational resources. The few centres that serve the elite background offer to children a wide range of educational materials to work with under the guidance of qualified teachers. On the other hand, the children who attend other centres are the majority and are exposed to a very limited educational environment. Most of the teachers in these centres are untrained or have attended only short courses. The poor quality of the teachers, coupled with lack of teaching aids have reduced these centres to extensions of primary education whereby most of the time is spent on teaching numeracy and literacy. The impact expected from the teachers with one year training might be very limited given that the socialization of teachers in the school setting is significant when considered in light of teachers reverting to old teaching patterns.

The third factor is that the prevailing interpretation of nursery education particularly by the parents is in favour of academic training. These expectations are a response by the parents on behalf of their children to acute competition for desired opportunities. For example, some primary schools administer entry examinations while others require nursery school experience. Since the emphasis on achievement by competency in literacy and numeracy skills is so strong, parents have disapproved of the free play activities involving playing in the mud and sand. This is disconcerting since free expression is an important part of the growth process of the pre-school child. This attitude should not be confused with the legitimate concern of parents in areas where scarcity of water does pose problems of cleanliness of the child.

There are also not enough financial resources that can be channelled into nursery education both by the community and the government. The parents are already spending a large proportion of their incomes to pay the fees and to construct the nursery school buildings. It must be pointed out that a nursery school is just one of the many self-help projects in the community.

2.5 The Determination of Pre-school Education

A major source of influence on the development of formal pre-school education schools includes the policy goals, greater social equality, improvements in productivity, improved cost/benefit ratio in social service and improved human potential and quality. For instance, the policy goal of equal educational and social opportunity as illustrated by the Head Start Program in the United States of America under the umbrella of President Lydon Johnson's "Just Society" of the 1960s was aimed at the educational needs of the under six year old from the disadvantaged families. There has also been a developmental rationale in support of formal pre-school education based on educational and psychological theories and empirical research on the influence of educational interventions in the future development of the child (Mwamwenda, 1983).

Although the debate on the consequences of formal intervention on child rearing is hardly conclusive, there is research evidence indicating that formal early childhood education has positive influence on the intellectual and social development of the child. For example, in their High/Scope Pre-school Curriculum tracer study, Schweinhart, et al, (1986) found out that the mean I.Q of the children who attended high quality pre-school programmes rose a dramatic 27

points during the first year of the program, from 78 to 195 on the Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale. Another finding of social significance was that children who had attended high quality pre-school programmes were likely to be more successful in their careers and more responsible as adults.

Thirdly, the existence of formal early childhood has been explained on the basis for the need of mothers to engage in paid employment outside the home such as it was during the industrial revolution, depression and the world war II. In addition, the parents' need for extra-familial early childhood care and development arrangements seem to be surfacing world wide, partly as a reflection of the global increase in the incidence of one-parent families and in the participation of women in the labour force (United Nations, 1988; UNESCO; 1988).

A collection of studies on formal learning environments attribute this development to pressures emanating from changes in the demographic and social-economic milieu. Some of the related determinants that are enumerated include decline in mortality; increasing labour force participation by women, modification of traditional family patterns, increasing primary school coverage and growing political awareness. Kilbride and Kilbride (1989) support the view that the impact of the forces of modernisation has resulted in the economic and cultural delocalisation of the indigenous peoples. For

instance, they pointed out that the resulting disintegration of the traditionally extended family and the destruction of the kinship system of social organization have fundamentally altered the traditional perceptions of the child, from that of immense value to potential victim of abuse and neglect. Thus, inspite of the great advances in medical care, reduced mortality rates and unprecedented opportunities, the modern threat to children comes from the parents and other relatives who are reacting to the threat of their economic and social well-being.

In Kenya, there is already evidence to suggest that the differentiation at the economic level is being reproduced at the cultural level in childrearing and education (Somerset, 1972; Kinyanjui, 1979; Nkinyangi, 1980; Gakuru, 1979). The socio-economic divisions are a result of the establishment of the colonial society and the subsequent subjugation and integration of the indigenous communities into the larger social system which is western and deeply divided on the basis of wealth, power and social status. On the one hand, there are the communities and families that may be seen to constitute the centre or the mainstream of the society. Consequently, there are those communities and families that may be seen to constitute the center or the mainstream of the society while others are located outside this mainstream of the society. The latter are also experiencing material and

social deprivation (Mbithi, 1977).

The emergent social structure has a corresponding continuum of varied and unequal child socialisation contexts. However, the marginalities that affect the children and families stem from the wide range of socio-economic changes, ecological variations and even individual physical disabilities. Some of the social and economic factors that have had very strong negative impact on an increasing number of children include the appearance of the slum communities in the urban areas, the rural poor and the widespread poverty in the society at large. For instance, virtually all the squatter communities suffer from severe deprivation and poverty. They not only lack the material and other possessions most people have but also do not have enough to live on. Mbithi (1977) found out that the squatters are politically marginal, economically and technically backward and have no hospitals, few schools and roads. Further, there were others whom he found in remote bush areas which are inhabited by dangerous wild animals.⁶

There are also pockets of the landless and poor families in central Kenya who live in the former emergency or Mau Mau

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Mbithi (1977) defines marginality as a concept that describes or depicts the position, situation or behaviour where individuals or groups are perceived as peripheral and/or negatively articulate their assets such as material, social and psychological; and may assign their loss to the perceived advantage of other individuals or groups.

Villages and abandoned motor ways.⁷

These families might already be victims of the culture of poverty syndrome. Another growing category of marginalised children belongs to single mothers who live in the rural areas. These single mothers together with their children are negatively evaluated. They are considered as immoral and their children as illegitimate. Elsewhere, the environmental hardships, coupled with a biased and unequal developmental strategy, may explain the persistence of traditional communities especially among the pastoralists, which are largely inaccessible and uphold their traditional lifestyle virtually intact. Thus seemingly isolated, these communities have remained relatively marginal to the mainstream of the contemporary society.

Research on the influence of social class structure, which has become the dominant form of social organization in the modern societies, in terms of human development, confirms the hypothesis of differential child socialisation among the different classes. For instance, recent comparative research work by Melvin L. Kohn, and others (1990) on position in the

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Kenya was a British colony from 1920 to 1963. The colonisers forced the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru who fought the guerilla war of independence to live in the emergency villages. The freedom fighters were known as the Mau Mau.

class structure and psychological functioning in the United States, Japan and Poland confirmed the hypothesis that: "men who are more advantageously located in the class structure of their society are more likely to value self directions for their children, to be intellectually flexible, and to be self directed in their orientations than men who are less advantageously located."

Similarly, Mbithi (1982), using a traditional-elite construct for childrearing contexts in Kenya identified a differentiated system of perceptions of early childhood into rural-traditional and elite categories with the middling quasi-elite and pseudo-traditionalist categories. He hypothesised that the children who are born into the middle social categories manifest serious identity crises, cognitive disorder and a weak ideological base. Some members of the middle categories identified by Mbithi were also found to rely heavily on nursery schools in Nairobi to initiate their children into the norms and practices of the middle class which they failed to acquire in their upbringing especially those from the peasant background. As indicated earlier, Gakuru (1979) found the nursery schools in Nairobi to be very influential agents of differential socialisation of the

8 In the study, "Classes" were groups defined in terms of their relationship to ownership and control of the means of production and of their control over the labour of others.

children. For example, the medium-cost nursery schools which serve the upwardly mobile middle class are like language melting pots where the child is quickly transformed into a proficient user of English which is the language of instruction in the schooling system.

2.6 The Relevant Theory

The research literature on the related themes of scholastic achievement and educational attainment is usually presented as an attempt to explain the relationship between the structures of opportunity, privilege and social mobility in the industrial societies (Tyler, 1977). While the two concepts of achievement and attainment may be treated as different in certain ways, educational attainment could be seen as a consequence of a long process of individual performance in school and also a product of a completely different set of factors which have nothing to do with the ability and performance of the individual in the school setting. As observed by Miller (1971), highly significant correlations of the order of 0.30 and 0.35 are usually found between social class and academic achievement. These correlations account for at most 12 percent of the variance in achievement, leaving 90 percent to be accounted for by other factors.

Although the concept of social class seems to be assigned

varied operational meanings depending on the objectives of a specific study, there is consistency in looking at social classes as unequal groupings which are principally but not exclusively determined by their place in the economic system (Poulantzas, 1975; Kohn, 1963, 1990). For instance, the early studies which are reviewed by Miller (1971) suggested that the low social class backwardness in school was encouraged by characteristics of poverty, high population density, poor health, large family size and inadequate general knowledge.

The focus in contemporary research is not only on social class but also and more specifically, on the influence of social background attributes of income, education and occupation on scholastic achievement and educational attainment. The concept of social class has also been used to account for the influence of other factors such as cultural stimulation, family size, child socialization practices, values and attitudes of parents on the educational success of their children. Furthermore, as an analytical concept, social class could also help to explain the differences in the values of parents towards children and also the forms of early childhood intervention mechanisms which are established by the society to cater for the needs of the child.

Paulantzas (1976) strongly argues that the class barriers such as unequal distribution of income, wage differentials and their extended reproduction have the effect of imposing

specific and concentrated social inequalities on certain groups according to the various classes in which they are distributed, particularly on the young and the very old. This observation by Paulantzas seem to be confirmed by a wealth of research findings on child rearing (Douglas, 1964; Bernstein, 1973; Kohn, 1990). Kohn, for instance, maintains that corresponding to the social class difference in occupations, is a difference in emphasis on values between the middle and the working classes. He notes that the high class people value both obedience and self direction in their children but place much greater emphasis on obedience and are less concerned with self direction. Bernstein, too, identified a clear distinction in the use of language between the middle and the working classes. He found that the middle class children learnt the language that the school rewards.

Attempts have been made to explain the research findings on the determinants of educational attainment using the two sociological theories of value and social position (Tyler, 1977). The value theory of attainment claims that different social classes attach a different value on educational credentials. Accordingly, the working class, values tangible rewards for effort and job security whereas the middle class aspires for higher educational attainment and personal fulfillment even if it meant some degree of uncertainty.

The social position theory attempts to account for

variations in educational aspirations and attainment which cannot be explained by either IQ, social background or scholastic achievement. The theory stipulates that these variations are a result of costs and benefits associated with specific social positions. A synthesis of the two theories was developed into what is defined as the theory of educational choice (Tyler, 1977).

The theory of educational choice attempts to demonstrate how economic differences translate into educational attainment. Its premise is that the income career of the father determines the world view of the child and the family. In turn, the ideology thus acquired, determines the educational aspirations of the child and the social position which is marked by the income career, sets the limits on the costs and benefits of educational aspirations.

Todaro (1972) applied the educational choice theory to explain the problem of primary school drop-outs in Kenya. He observed that the private costs, especially the opportunity cost of child labour to the poor families is higher for poor students than for rich students while the expected benefits are lower for poor students. Together, the high costs and low benefits force the poor to drop out of school. Similarly, other studies which have focussed on problems of school retention, academic performance and educational attainment have invariably considered social background factors as the

principal determinants. For instance, Nkinyangi (1980) used the low socio-economic status variable to partly explain the high drop-out and repetition rates in primary schools in Kenya. He also found the variations in regional development an influential factor in explaining the problem of wastage, which could also be seen as an aspect of educational attainment albeit in the negative sense. On the other hand, Lockhart (1972) has used the theory of educational choice to explain the phenomenal expansion of primary and secondary school enrollments in Kenya inspite of the high rates of unemployment among school leavers. His explanation of this apparent contradiction is that the private benefits of schooling are greater than the costs, hence the insatiable demand for education at all levels of schooling.

Finally, it is probably important to point out that educational attainment as social action is a consequence of multiple decisions of more than one actor. No doubt, this would most likely be the case in considering problems of school drop-outs in the primary and post-primary stages of schooling or the number of years of schooling attained by any one individual in the society. Precisely, educational attainment is a product of shared human behaviour mainly among the parents, school administrators, teachers and the learners themselves. But pre-school education is different in one unique way from the other stages of the schooling system.

Enrollments are determined entirely by the parents and the availability of opportunities with no child influence whatsoever.

One tends to agree with Miller (1972) that the concept of social class together with its operational dimensions of unequal distribution of income, wage differentials and occupational hierarchy, cannot alone explain differences in educational attainment. Therefore, it is essential to look closely at and beyond the classic status-attainment social class model. The question is "what other factors other than those related to social class account for the differences in educational attainment?" Efforts to provide answers to this question have been directed mainly to other social variables such as ecological diversity and regional inequalities.

Lamb (1972) noted that the use of economic factors in classifying people may limit the understanding of the social processes, struggles and conflicts which people fail or succeed to improve on in their material life. The other likely tendency is for people to organise on principles of immediate relevance such as religion, region, race, ethnic, clan and community affiliation, where the criteria for inclusion or exclusion have a clear bearing on the modes of social life and possibilities of change.

Of course, some social scientists have been aware of the explanatory value of the non-class determinants in the access,

attainment and overall distribution of educational resources and opportunities. Consequently, studies by Kinyanjui (1979); Nkinyangi (1980) and Bigsten (1978) have been carried out along this tradition. They undertake to account for the variations in the distribution of educational resources including differences in educational attainment using both the idea of social class, school quality and regional inequalities. However, these and other similar studies have tended to overlook the importance of other equally influential factors such as religion, ethnicity and family background attributes (Blake, 1989). Yet, Halsey, et al, (1961) long ago pointed out the need for investigation into the precise nature of the hindrances placed by the home background in educational attainment.

Perhaps, the lack of adequate attention to these other determinants could be explained by the dominance of the social class theory in explaining the issue of scholastic achievement and educational attainment. The other most likely reason would seem to be the preoccupation with the macro level issues of the distribution of educational resources and opportunities which do not treat the individual and the family as the unit of analysis.

Therefore, as already indicated above, in addition to the social class factors, the ecological and regional variations are also considered to have considerable influence on the

distribution of educational opportunities and attainment. Elsewhere, as well as in Kenya, the influence of these variables is viewed in terms of the dominant patterns of uneven and unequal regional development (Kinyanjui, 1979; Bigsten, 1978; I.L.O., 1972; UNICEF, 1988).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Criterion Variables

Research on education, especially on the key aspects of the educational systems such as the equality of educational opportunity, expansion and growth of these systems, is often based on the analysis of participation and school enrolment (Kinyanjui, 1979; Archer, 1980). This study follows the same tradition of determination of school enrolment which is a relational property between the educational system and the social structure. Since the study is addressed to issues related to pre-school education, the criterion variable is child enrolment in the pre-school education institutions.

In addition to child enrolment, there are other important aspects of childhood that affect the lives of young children. For the purpose of this study, the other aspects of childhood that were considered as part of the criterion of the study were child evaluation of parents, the work of children and the social relationships between the parents, teachers and children. The functionalist paradigm studies of the child and society (D. Kayongo-Male and Walji, 1984; Callan, 1980) are generally supportive of the hypothesis on the economic, social and psychological value of children to their parents. For

instance, one way of looking at the economic value of children has been in terms of their contribution to the labour needs of the family. This world of work is also their education (D.Kayongo-Male and Walji, 1984).

Altogether therefore, the dependent variables for this study are limited to particular social practices and interventions which are aimed at the developmental and care needs of the child such as enrolment in the pre-schools and the type of values adults attach to children. Since the child is entirely dependent on the parent, the decision of the parent to send a child to the nursery school is indeed a part of the expectations and value system of the parent. In this case, the value of the child refers to both the negative and positive instrumental and socio-psychological benefits parents attach to children.

3.2 The Determinant Variables

As already suggested above, one way the concept of school enrolment has been used in many sociological studies, is as evidence or data to explain social problems that are related to schooling. In this type of studies, the social significance of school enrolment is established by examining its social structure, and distribution depending on the preferred criteria. The other approach treats school enrolment as the problematic and therefore the subject of

explanation. Either way, school enrolment is regarded as the product of social demand and provision of education both of which in turn depend on the level of development, social structure, resource endowment, ideological orientation and educational policies of a given society or community. Similarly, in this study, the general hypothesis is that child enrolment in pre-schools is determined by these factors especially the social class background, and locality.

3.3 Definition of Concepts and Operationalisation of Variables

The following are the main concepts and key variables:

Independent Variables:

1. Social Class: The concept refers to a group of families in society who live under similar economic and social conditions which separate their mode of life from those of others. These include the rural groupings of pastoralists, peasantry and the various categories of working and other classes found in both rural and urban settings. In operational terms, the social class concept is defined on the basis of socio-economic status variables of income, occupation, education and some selected material possessions.

2. Income: refers to the gross family income which is computed on the basis of reported monetary earnings of the family. The related economic variable of family possessions is defined as the ownership of industrial items of radio, clock, telephone, television and video cassette player.

3. Education: refers to the level of schooling completed by the parent who was interviewed.

4. Occupation: refers to the main economic activity of the head of the household.

5. Locality: refers to geographical and administrative units such as the district. The concept also includes both the rural and urban settings.

6. Family Structure: refers to marital status of single, married, widowed and divorced. Operationally, the two parent families comprised the married category and the one parent families the single category.

Dependent Variables

1. Pre-school education: mainly refers to the organised and formal education that is offered in the various types of pre-schools such as nursery schools, day care centers and Kindergartens.
2. Pre-school enrolment: The concept of child enrolment is defined as those children who were not only registered in any one of the various types of pre-school institutions but also reported to be regular attenders. Furthermore, these were also the children who were in school at the time the study sample of the children whose parents were subsequently interviewed was selected.
3. Value of the child: refers to parent's personal judgement and evaluation of the importance of the child in terms of instrumental and socio-psychological costs and benefits. The instrumentality of the child is mainly in terms of perceived material and labour contributions and costs while the socio-psychological attribute include the social status and emotional condition of the parent in relation to the child.
4. Pre-school age: refers to the period between 3-6 years of the child.

3.4 The Research Districts

The three districts which were purposefully chosen for the study were Nairobi, Samburu and Kirinyaga districts. The map of Kenya below shows the location of the three research sites within a geographical and administrative context. The three were chosen in such a way as to highlight the basic disparities resulting from the geographical differences in resource endowment and the historical process of the development of the country.

First, there is an acute differentiation between rural and urban areas and the choice of Nairobi was supposed to reflect the existence of these two basic social strata. Nkinyangi (1980) utilised this social dichotomy in his study on primary education. Furthermore, the importance of the dichotomy is underscored by the fact that the relationship between the rural and the urban is replicated in macroscopic ways between towns or market centres and the countryside.

In Kirinyaga district, which is situated in the Central region, emphasis is on agriculture, mainly cash crop production. In contrast, the mainstay in Samburu district is pastoralism. The district is in an arid and semi-arid region, situated in the eastern side of the Rift Valley. However, these differences are not always clearly demarcated since in each locality there are also entrenched social cleavages such as the various strata of the peasantry.

KENYA : THE LOCATION OF STUDY AREAS.



3.5 The Sample:

The sampling design consisted of three contrasting ecologies: urban, pastoral and agricultural. Within these ecological areas, I selected nursery schools within each of several strata. In Nairobi and Kirinyaga districts, the strata reflected income and the quality of agriculture respectively. In Samburu district the two strata represent the urban-rural contrast. The map of Kenya (p.90) shows the location of the three localities. The anticipated and the actual number of nursery schools is shown in the table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: The Study Sample of Nursery Schools

Site	Category	No. of Nursery Schools	
		Sampled	Proposed
Samburu District	Urban-mission	2	3
	Manyatta(Village)	6	4
Kirinyaga District	High Potential	4	3
	Medium Potential	4	2
	Low Potential	4	2
Nairobi City	High-Cost	0	3
	Medium-Cost	2	2
	Low-Cost	3	2
Total		25	21

The sampling plan called for 20 families from each nursery school who were then interviewed at the home. When sampled families were unavailable, they were replaced by other randomly drawn families. However, limitations of time, and

absence of parents from home, sometimes made it impossible to interview all the 20 families. Furthermore, it was not possible to interview families from the high-cost nursery schools in Nairobi. Nonetheless, a much bigger sample of 504 (rather than the originally expected 420) was achieved from the increased sample of the nursery schools and the selection of more than 20 families from the nursery schools with very high enrolment. In addition, 10 families who did not enroll their pre-school age children were to be interviewed from the same community served by the nursery schools in the sample. From the anticipated number of 210 families only 135 were interviewed. The combination in these two samples resulted in 639 interviews. Although the unit of study was parent, preference was given to the head of the household.

As already indicated, the composition of the sample of the pre-schools was adapted to the conditions in each of the three research localities. In the selection of the sample, the pre-schools in each district were first stratified on the basis of the preferred determinants before the selection of the schools in each category. The second stage was the selection of a sample of children whose parents were interviewed and this consisted of randomly selected cases of children from the school register. Part of the sampling
ing intervals between cases
ldren enrolled in a particular

pre-school. The sub-sample of the parents with pre-school age children but who were not enrolled in the nursery schools was purposefully selected. The snowball method was used to identify the parents. At the end of the interview, the respondents were asked to identify the families in the community which did not send their children to nursery school.

Table 3.2 shows the distribution of the sample of parents by locality, category within the locality and the status of enrolment.

Table 3.2: The Distribution of the Sample of Parents

Site	Category	No. of Families Interviewed	
		Enrolled	Non-Enrolled
Kirinyaga	High Potential	101	18
	Medium Potential	58	41
	Low potential	93	32
Samburu	Urban	53	4
	Rural	63	15
Nairobi	High-Cost	-	-
	Medium-Cost	70	-
	Low-cost	66	25
Total		504	135

3.6 Research Instruments and Data Collection

The research instrument used to obtain information from the parents was an interviewer administered open ended questionnaire. A sample of the instrument is presented in Appendix A. The instrument was presented and translated into Samburu, Kikuyu and Swahili languages. Therefore the questions were asked using either the mother tongue of the

respondent, Swahili or English with the responses being recorded in the English language. The researcher was aware of the linguistic problems which are associated with translation such as concept boundaries and meaning. However, efforts were made to minimise these problems by obtaining assistance with the translations from experts in these languages and engaging interviewers who spoke them as their mother tongue. The questionnaire contained sections focussing on socio-economic status of the family, family size and composition, the relationships between the parents, children and school, aspirations and child evaluations of the parents.

In the family background sections, the data collected covered variables such as family income, education, occupation, marital status, family size and material possessions. Although under-reporting of incomes is quite likely in an interview, in the absence of any other reliable method of collecting family income data, the method chosen for the study can be said to be as accurate as is possible in survey research. While the socio-economic data especially those that are related to family income and occupation need to be interpreted with caution, one is encouraged by the distribution that underscores disparities which exist in the society. However, what is more likely to affect the influence of the socio-economic factors in the explanation of pre-school enrolment is omission from the sample of the families who are

served by the high-cost pre-schools in Nairobi. A sub-sample of these schools was selected and several visits made but the parents were not interviewed due to administrative, technical and personal problems.

Two other instruments were used. These were headmasters' interview schedule and classroom observation guide. Together, the two instruments were used to gather information on the profiles of the pre-schools including enrolment, teachers' qualifications and educational activities.

The fieldwork was carried out in 1986 and 1987. There were several problems encountered in the three research sites. First, there were the related problems of time and distance. The sampled pre-schools were tens of miles apart within the research sites especially in Samburu and Kirinyaga districts. In Nairobi, the problem revolved around the bureaucracy and formalities that are characteristic of metropolitan life.

The problem of distance also existed among the respondents whose homesteads were long distances apart as a result of the randomisation of the sample. Consequently, it took a minimum of an hour and half to about three hours to complete an interview given the problem of first tracing the respondent, establishing rapport and finally, the administration of the questionnaire.

The second source of problems was the nature of the study. The field work was only conducted during school term

since it was the only time the parents could be reached on the basis of pre-school enrollments. Certainly, this resulted in interruption of the fieldwork and the subsequent loss of time.

The multi-ethnic background of the respondents posed linguistic problems and inhibited free interaction with the communities in the research localities. In the case of Nairobi, it was often necessary to use interpreters when interviewing the parents who did not speak the common languages of Kiswahili and English.

Finally, there was a major problem of identifying the parents who did not send their children to the pre-schools. There was a general reluctance to offer their names by those who send their children to school. Besides, many of those who were identified vehemently denied having pre-school age children.

Furthermore, it was not easy to conduct the interviews irrespective of the enrolment category of the respondents especially in the slums in the urban areas and villages in the rural areas because of frequent interruptions from children and many curious neighbours.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data were post-coded. However, only the information that related to the understanding of the phenomenon of child enrolment in the pre-schools was coded. The coding exercise

was carried out at the University of Nairobi while data entry and analysis was done using the SPSS computer program at Cornell University.

The data were analysed through the use of cross-classifications and joint distributions of the variables (Goodman, 1987). This method, which is often referred to as cross-tabulation consists of the joint distribution of cases according to two or more classification variables. Usually, the contingency tables are used to display the distribution of the cases and percentages as disposed on the variables. Control for independent variables was also done in the analysis. In order to answer the research questions, the chi-square tests were used as tests for the existence of relationships.

The other method of data analysis applied is the logistic regression which is a non-linear probability model. This is a type of regression suited to the analysis of relationships between many independent variables and dichotomous dependent variables. (Gujarati, 1988).

CHAPTER FOUR:

DATA ANALYSIS: THE DETERMINANTS OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION ENROLMENT

4.1 Introduction

Pre-school education enrolment is influenced by many factors. Obviously, pre-schools must be established first before children are enrolled. No doubt there are many children in Kenya who are not enrolled in pre-schools simply because of lack of such institutions in the immediate neighbourhoods. However, enrolment is still problematic, even in situations where there is provision of pre-schools. This problem has its roots in the social class nature of the society which is characterized by inequalities in the distribution of and access to the goods and services of collective consumption such as education, housing and health care. Some of the socio-economic factors which are considered influential in this process include the level of family income, occupation and level of education. There are also other non-class factors such as the differences in localities, family size and organisation and ethnic background.

This chapter will do four things: first, it will present a brief statistical description of the data on the study variables. Secondly, it will test the widely accepted

hypothesis that socio-economic status determines school enrolment. It will also test the counter hypothesis that non-class factors determine school enrolment. Thirdly, by way of control tables and introduction of alternative variables, the chapter comes to a decision on the question, "do class or non-class variables determine enrolment?" Lastly, there will be an investigation of parents' evaluations of the child and the social relationships that govern the interaction between them. An attempt to understand how the parents evaluate their children, the interaction between them and whether or not the parents send them to nursery schools is important since all these are important aspects of early childhood which determine the nature of child rearing in the society. It was hypothesized that these processes are subject to the social class differences such as levels of family income, occupation, level of education and also the non-class differences in locality, ethnicity and family organisation.

4.2 Data Description

This section is limited to a brief statistical description of some of the sample characteristics and a selected number of variables which were used in the data analysis. As already indicated, about eighty percent (79.9) of the study sample were parents who had a child enrolled in the pre-school at the time of the study. First, there is a

cluster of interrelated background and socio-economic variables. Out of the total sample of 639 respondents, the majority (74.5 percent) were mothers and the remaining 25.5 percent were fathers. Also the majority of the respondents (65.6 percent) were between the ages of 26-40 years. About an equal proportion of the remaining cases were either younger or older.

The socio-economic variables were categorised for analytical purposes. The frequency distribution of the education variable for the total sample was as follows: no schooling (37.2 percent), primary (41.6 percent), secondary, (20.5 percent) and university (0.6 percent). The monthly family income data was obtained for 541 cases. The frequency distribution was as follows: less than Kshs. 500 (26.4 percent), Kshs. 501-1500 (24.9 percent), Kshs. 1,501-3,500 (18.6 percent and over Kshs 3,500 (14.6 percent). There were 91 cases (15.5 percent) with missing data. In comparison, there were higher frequency distribution percentages in the "No schooling" category and less than Kshs. 500 income category for parents who did not enroll their children in nursery school, than for those who had enrolled their children. For instance, 45.2 percent of the parents who did not have a child enrolled in the pre-school had no schooling which was 10.0 percent higher than those who had a child enrolled in the pre-school (35.2 percent). Similarly, more

than half (53.6 percent) of the non-enrolling families had a reported monthly income of less than Kshs. 500 as compared with only 25.5 percent of those enrolling.

The occupation of the head of the household variable was divided into five categories. These were professional (22.4 percent), business (13.7 percent), labourer (18.8 percent) farmer (35.2 percent) and pastoralist (10.0 percent). There were ninety missing cases which was 14.1 percent of the total sample. Part of the professional category were those employed as teachers and in other skilled jobs.

The key non-class study variables included married status, locality and ethnic background. About eighty percent of the respondents were in the married category. Each of the other marital categories had less than ten percent. Besides, over fifty percent (55.2) of the cases were in polygamous marriages. The rest (37.1 percent) reported they were in monogamous marriages. Only 49 (7.7 percent) cases had missing data on this variable. The frequency distribution for the ethnic variable consisted of 62.3 percent Kikuyu, 22.8 percent Samburu and 14.9 percent were respondents from other ethnic backgrounds such as Luo, Luhya, Kalenjin and Kamba. The locality variable consisted of the three research sites. The sample distribution among the three categories was as follows: Kirinyaga district (53.4 percent), Samburu district (21.4 percent) and Nairobi (25.2 percent). Altogether, the

rural category had a total of 455 cases (71.2 percent) of the sample. The rest (28.8 percent) were in the urban category.

4.3 Analysis of the Socio-Economic Determinants and Enrolment

4.3.1. Parents' Education and Income

The starting variable in measuring socio-economic status is income. In this study, income is measured by the monthly earnings in Kenya Shillings (Kshs.) reported by the interviewed parent. Table 4.1 shows a moderately strong relationship between nursery school enrolment and income. It is also highly statistically significant at 0.001 level. Starting with 66 percent of the poorest category with a child enrolled in the nursery school, the proportion increases to 98 percent of the richest category. Thus, the difference between the lowest and the highest proportion is 32 percent.

Table 4.1: Nursery School Enrolment by each Income Category
N = 541

Enrolment	Income Category			
	<500	>500<1500	>1800<3500	>3500
Percent Enrolled	65.1	78.6	87.4	97.8
Total	169	159	120	93

$\chi^2 = 45.81$; $df = 3$; level of significance = 0.001

The high proportion (65 percent) of enrolment among the lowest income category seems surprisingly high. Ordinarily,

the poor have been found to be less interested in the education of their children. Indeed, there is overwhelming evidence that children from poor families comprise the majority of school drop-outs in contemporary societies (Bray, M. et al, 1986). But this is not the case with pre-school enrolment as shown in Table 4.1 above. This inconsistency is probably a unique feature of pre-school education in Kenya.

There are two plausible explanations to this: first, the very young age of the pre-school children and the net gains for both the parent and the child. The pre-school enrolment is composed of children between the ages of 3 to 6 years, most of whom are too young to be of much assistance to their parents. Consequently, sending them to school does not constitute a high cost to the family as would be the case with the older children. Secondly, most of the rural schools and those in the slums in the urban areas have very low monthly charges. Nearly 70 percent of the parents who were interviewed reported that they were paying a lot less than Kshs.100.00 per month. However, whatever the explanation, sending a child to nursery school is beneficial to both the parent and the child in several ways: it releases the mother for productive work; improves the welfare of the child where there are feeding programmes and provides day-care to the child.

Although the cross-tabulation between "enrolled" and "family income" was based on the entire sample of 639 cases, only the distribution of the enrolled cases is presented in table 4.1 and also in the subsequent tables in this chapter. There are two reasons: first, the main study objective was to explain pre-school education enrolling. Secondly, as table 4.1 demonstrates, the presentation of the categories of the independent variable in columns makes it much easier to observe the pattern of the distribution of percentages of the enrolment variable among them.

The second variable in measuring socio-economic status is education. In the study, education is operationalised by the various levels of schooling starting from no Schooling up to university. It was expected that there would be a relationship between pre-school enrolment and education of the parents. Table 4.2 shows that this is in fact the case, although the relationship is not as highly significant as with the family income. Starting from a majority of about 75 percent enrolled in the category of parents with no schooling, the proportion increases steadily to cover almost all of the parents with secondary education and all of the parents with university education.

Table 4.2: Nursery Enrolment by Parent's education (N = 639)

	Education Level of Parents			
	No. Schooling	Primary	Secondary	University
Percent Enrolled	74.4	77.8	88.5	100.0
Total	238	266	131	4

$$X^2 = 11.51; df = 3; \text{significance level} = 0.01$$

The next question is whether income and parents' education are separate determinants of nursery school enrolment. Controlling for income, the cross-tabulation between enrolment and education reveals different patterns among the four income categories. Table 4.3 shows that in the highest category of income the level of education is not important since virtually all children are enrolled. In the middle categories three and two, the relationship is positive. But in the lowest income group, education is inversely related to enrolment.

Table 4.3: Nursery Enrolment by Education, Controlling for Income

Level of Income	Level of Schooling			
	No. Schooling	Primary	Secondary	University
Level 1 <500 Percent enrolled N	68.2 (85)	63.5 (74)	50.0 (10)	-
Level 2 >500 <500 Percent enrolled N	70.8 (48)	76.8 (69)	90.2 (41)	100.0 (1)
Level 3 >1500 <3500 Percent enrolled N	73.7 (38)	94.9 (39)	93.0 (43)	0.0 (2)
Level 4 >3,500 Percent enrolled N	100.0 (27)	97.4 (38)	96.2 (26)	100.0 (2)

The other determinant of socio-economic status which is often used in this kind of study to explain educational attainment is occupation of the parent. Table 4.4 below shows the expected relationship between occupation of head of household and child enrolment in the nursery school with the exception that the proportion for herding families is much higher than expected. The quick explanation for this very high percentage is that the Christian Missionaries together with the local communities have been active in providing pre-school facilities. The other likely reason is the food offered to children at school because of the severe food shortages afflicting the pastoral peoples.

Table 4.4: Cross-tabulation of Nursery Enrolment by Occupation N=549

Enrolment	Type of Occupation				
	Profes sional	Business	Labourer	Farmer	Pastora list
Percent Enrolled	91.9	76.0	67.0	76.7	81.8
N	123	75	103	193	55

$$X^2 = 22.26 \text{ df} = 4 \text{ Sig. Level} = 0.001$$

There are fairly distinctive variations in the relationship between enrolment and occupation among the different income groups as Table 4.5 shows. The table shows quite high enrolment percentages in the lowest income group ranging from about 89 percent to 59 percent among the pastoral, labourer and farmer categories as compared with only 45 percent of the business category. In income group two, the professional category had the highest percentage enrolment (94.9) while the labourer category had the least (62.1). The farmer and the business categories fall between the two with the business category having a slightly higher enrolment percentage. In income group three, almost all of the cases in the business and professional categories had a child enrolled in nursery school in contrast with the pastoralist and the farmer categories. In the highest income category, the type of family occupation made no difference since all the families had an enrolled child, except the labourer category which had

eight percent enrolled. Altogether, the control of income shows virtually no relationship between occupation and enrolment.

Table 4.5: Enrolment by Occupation, Controlling for Income

Level of Income	Type of Occupation				
	Professional	Business	Labourer	Farmer	Pastoralist
Level 1 <500 Percent enrolled N	72.7 (11)	45.0 (20)	70.6 (34)	59.3 (54)	88.9 (27)
Level 2 >500<1500 Percent enrolled N	94.9 (39)	81.0 (21)	62.1 (29)	76.0 (50)	80.0 (5)
Level 3 >1500<3500 Percent enrolled N	4.7 (38)	93.8 (16)	81.8 (11)	80.0 (30)	63.6 (11)
Level 4 >3500 Percent enrolled N	100.0 (24)	100.0 (6)	80.0 (5)	97.6 (42)	100.0 (3)

There is consensus in social stratification studies that the possession or non-possession of property also determines the individual life chances in a competitive market situation (Roth and Wittich (eds), 1978). Although, it was originally expected to explore the influence of material wealth in educational attainment, it became evident that the modes of economic production of pastoralism, peasantry and the market system posed questions considered to be out of the range of this study. Therefore, in order to avoid the unresolved problems of comparability of data from the three modes of economic and social life, the analysis was limited to a few

selected electronic items which originate from the market.

The electronic items were selected because they were considered to be probably the best collective measures of social status, means of communication and education and powerful symbols of modernity and assimilation of the industrial culture. Besides, these are quite expensive items. Altogether, five items: radio, clock, television, telephone and video were used to compute an electronic possession index abbreviated as "eposs". The frequency distribution of the ownership of the items was as follows: those with 0 item were 45.4 percent; 1 item 35.3 percent; 2 items 13.4 percent; 3 items 3.5 percent; 4 items 1.6 percent and 5 items 0.8 percent.

The finding on the nature of the relationship between enrolment and ownership of the electronic items confirms the initial expectation. As table 4.6 shows, the greater the number of possessions, the more likely it is that families will have their child enrolled in nursery school. But for all practical purposes, this form of wealth is a dichotomous variable. It makes a difference only if there is one or more electronic possessions.

Table 4.6: Cross-tabulation of the nursery enrolment by Electronic possessions. N= 621

Enrolment	No. of Eposs Items		
	0	1	2+
Percent enrolled	62.8	92.7	94.2
N	(282)	(219)	(120)

However, control of the level of income indicates hardly any relationship between enrolment and eposs in the highest income level. In the lowest income category, none had more than two items with those owning more than one item having the highest enrolment percentage. Perhaps, as shown in Table 4.7, it is in the second level of income that the relationship between enrolment and the ownership of the selected items is best demonstrated. Only about 50.0 percent of those without any of the items had a child enrolled in pre-schools.

Table 4.7: Enrolled by Eposs, Controlling for Income

Enrolment	Eposs Items		
	0	1	2
Level 1 <500			
Percent enrolled	62.3	77.5	60.0
N	(114)	(40)	(5)
Level 2 >500<1500			
percent enrolled	52.5	93.9	95.5
N	(59)	(66)	(22)
Level 3 >1500<3500			
Percent enrolled	74.3	93.8	87.0
N	(35)	(48)	(23)
Level 4 >3500			
Percent enrolled	94.4	100.0	96.2
N	(18)	(39)	(26)

The educational level was also expected to affect the relationship between enrolment and eposs. As Table 4.8 below

shows, the enrolment percentages almost double in the two categories of no schooling and primary level, between those with no item and those with only one. All the cases with University education had more than three electronic possessions. A similar analysis was carried out controlling for occupation. It was found out that the enrolment percentages were consistently low for the group which did not own any of the five electronic items except for the pastoral category.

Table 4.8: Enrolment by Eposs, Controlling for Education

Enrolment	Eposs Item		
	0	1	2 or more
No. Schooling			
Percent enrolled	65.5	93.0	88.9
N	(147)	(71)	(9)
Primary Level			
Percent enrolled	59.3	93.2	97.2
N	(112)	(103)	(36)

4.4 The Non-Class Determinants:

It was hoped here that the rural-urban duality and the differences among the rural districts would help in confirming the relationship, if any, between child enrolment and regional and other ecological variations.

Table 4.9 shows the results of the cross-tabulation between child enrolment and the rural-urban variable, while controlling for income. Contrary to the commonly held view, the rural-urban differential makes no difference in the

percentage enrolment among the lowest income categories both in the rural and urban contexts. The relationship is significant only at 0.05 level. The only noticeable difference in the proportion of child enrolment between the two groups is the second level of income. Instead, what makes the real difference is the level of income regardless of whether or not the family is rural or urban.

Table 4.9: Enrolment by Rural-urban, Controlling for Income.

Income Level	Place of Residence	
	Rural	Urban
Level 1 >500 Percent enrolled N	65.5 (148)	61.9 (21)
Level 2 >500<1500 Percent enrolled N	69.6 (92)	91.0 (67)
level 3 >1500<3500 Percent enrolled N	83.1 (77)	95.3 (43)
Level 4 >3500 percent enrolled N	97.3 (75)	100.0 (18)

Controlling for educational level of the parent produced only a fourteen percent enrolment difference in the secondary education category in favour of the urban families. However, control over the occupational variable revealed a real difference in the enrolment percentage for the unskilled working class. The enrolment percentages were forty seven in the rural areas while that of the urban category was literally double (84 percent). Therefore, it is quite clear that there

are some unidentified factors which discourage much more the unskilled wage workers in the rural areas than in the urban areas from sending their children to nursery school. One probable factor might be the better opportunity for earning a higher income in the urban areas for an unskilled worker, than in the rural areas.

It was pointed out previously that one of the study objectives was to explore the potential influence of regional factors in educational attainment taking into consideration the diverse pastoral, peasant and urban contexts. Table 4.10 presents the findings on the nature of the relationship between child enrolment in pre-schools and the regional differences using the district variable as the determinant.

The cross-tabulation between child enrolment and the district variable, controlling for income shows a high percentage difference of about 30 percent between the lowest income groups in Samburu district and the other two regions. But more striking is the finding that the enrolment proportion in the income level one in Samburu district is greater than that of income level three in Kirinyaga district. It would sound almost incredible to infer from this unexpected finding, *ceteris paribus*, that families in Kirinyaga district should be three steps higher in the income hierarchy than the Samburu families in order to attain comparable enrolment ratios.

Another striking finding in Table 4.10 is that unlike in

Samburu district where variation in income makes very little difference in child enrolment, there is a difference of over 40 percent in enrolment between the lowest and the highest income levels. Therefore, it can be argued correctly from these findings that unlike in Samburu district, nursery school enrolment in Kirinyaga district and Nairobi area is greatly influenced by the level of family income.

Table 4.10: Enrolment by District, Controlling for Income.
N=632

Level of Income	District		
	Samburu	Kirinyaga	Nairobi
Level 1 <500 percent enrolled N	6.5 (52)	55.6 (99)	5.6 (18)
Level 2 >500<1500 Percent enrolled N	94.1 (17)	68.7 (83)	88.1 (59)
Level 3 >1500<3500 Percent enrolled N	86.7 (30)	82.4 (51)	94.1 (39)
Level 4 >3500 percent enrolled N	100.0 (6)	97.1 (70)	100.0 (17)

The study also focussed on some key social and cultural variables as independent sources of influence on the various aspects of early childhood education. Of particular interest were the family structure variables whose independent effects have been largely ignored in the research on educational attainment. Blake (1989) thought that this lack of attention on family structure variables was perhaps a result of the dominant focus on the meritocratic concerns, the nature of the

study populations, the complexity and general lack of operational clarity of the variables.

The cross-tabulation of the three family related variables listed above with child enrolment focussed on marital status as the most influential variable. Table 4.11 shows a wide variation in the enrolment percentages based on the family type categories of married, single, widowed and divorced. It is quite evident that the divorced marital category had the least enrolment of 48.7 percent while the married family category had the highest. The other two categories of widowed and single strengthen the relationship with 52.8 and 68.0 percent enrolment levels respectively. The relationship is also highly significant well beyond the 0.001 level.

Table 4.11: Enrolled by Marital Status (N=635)

Enrolment	Marital Status			
	Married	Single	Widowed	Divorced
Percent enrolled	84.0	68.0	52.8	48.7
N	(512)	(50)	(36)	(38)

$X^2 = 47.5$; $df = 3$; Sig. level = 0.001

Controlling for income, the cross-tabulation of child enrolment and marital status shows a steady increase in the

percentage enrollments from the lowest income level to the highest but only for the married family background. The lowest percentages of 28.6 and 37.5 percent were obtained for the divorced and widowed backgrounds and those occurred in the second income level. The single parent families, popularly known as single mothers or the "liberated" for some cases, offer the next most advantageous family context and here, as in the other two categories, income has little effect.

It is important to note that there is nearly a thirty percent difference in the enrolment percentages between the married and divorced family categories in the lowest income level and that this difference holds at higher income levels. Thus, married (versus broken) family status is an additional determinant of enrolment.

Table 4.12: Enrolment by Marital Status, Controlling for Income.

Enrolment Level of Income	Marital Status			
	Married	Single	Widowed	Divorced
Level 1<500 Percent enrolled N	71.2 (118)	52.9 (17)	53.8 (13)	45.0 (20)
Level 2>500<1500 Percent enrolled N	85.0 (127)	70.6 (17)	37.5 (8)	28.6 (7)
Level 3>1500<3500 Percent enrolled N	90.5 (104)	66.7 (6)	62.5 (8)	100.0 (1)
Level 4>3500 percent enrolled N	97.8 (92)	100.0 (1)	-	-

The other variable related to family structure with some

influence on the variation in child enrolment worth noting is the presence of both parents at home. It was found out that a percentage difference of about twenty percent in the enrolment levels existed between the families where the father is present (85.2 percent) and in the cases where he lives away from home (64.1 percent)

As is often the case, controlling for income, even after dichotomising this variable produced a greater enrolment percentage differential among the cases where the fathers lived away from home than where the fathers lived with the family. Certainly, the presence of the father seemed to make a difference for those families with an income of less than Kshs.1500 per month. The negative effects of the absence of the father was substantially minimized for the families in the second level of income.

Table 4.13: Enrolment by Fathers' Residence, Controlling for Family Income.

Enrolment	Father's Residence	
	Away	Home
Level 1<1500		
Percent enrolled	56.7	81.3
N	(120)	(203)
Level 1>1500		
Percent enrolled	83.6	95.3
N	(61)	(149)

The likely effects of the number of children (sibsize) was also assessed. Ordinarily, sibsize is expected to have a negative effect on child and adult achievement outcomes. This

negative effect is usually seen to be a result of the dilution of the familial resources available to children in large families. (Blake,1989). On the contrary, it was found that the relationship between child enrolment and the sibsize was characterized by very high enrolment percentages in all the sibsize categories. Therefore, this study finding does not support the dilution hypothesis.

In other words,unlike the other levels of schooling, pre-school education caters for the very young children, each of whom every parent strongly wishes would succeed in future life. The other likely reason for the high enrolment percentages in all the sibsize categories could be the light burden, if any, the pre-school education program imposes on the parents, coupled with the day-care benefits for the working parents.

Of equal interest to the study was the influence of the cultural variables of ethnic origin and religious affiliation. These factors were of interest to the study because they are major bases for the organisation of social life in contemporary society (Shibutani and Kwan, 1965; Lamb,1972). Therefore, any influence of ethnic origin and religious affiliation on the decisions of parents in the education of their children, would be expected to have its independent roots in cultural systems. Besides, the social science and educational researchers in post-colonial Africa have often

omitted the ethnic variable probably as a form of self-censorship due to political pressure and also as an attempt to avoid the stigma associated with anthropological studies of the indigenous cultures or "tribes" as tools of colonial domination.

Although there are many ethnic groups in Kenya, the analysis was limited to the groups found in the study area and also represented in the study sample. As Table 4.14 shows, there were equally high enrolment percentages across the three ethnic categories. The "other" category consisted mainly of cases from the Luo, Luhya, Kamba, Kalenjin and Turkana ethnic groups who were in Nairobi, Kirinyaga and Samburu districts.

Table 4.14: Enrolment by ethnic category N= 637

Enrolment	Ethnic Group		
	Kikuyu	Samburu	Other
Percent enrolled	75.4	87.7	80.0
N	(398)	(146)	(95)

$$X^2 = 9.78; df = 2; Sig. level = 0.005$$

Controlling for income, ethnicity produced one of the most interesting patterns in the distribution of the enrolment percentages. Fluctuations in the enrolment percentages in the

Samburu category appear not to be related to the income differentials. As indicated earlier, the Samburu pre-school education is highly subsidized by the Christian Missions. Perhaps this explains the lack of differentials by levels of income. On the contrary, the enrolment percentages in Kikuyu category seem to be closely associated with the level of income. For instance, the enrolment in the lowest income group of the Kikuyu respondents is as low as 53.8 percent, which dramatically increases to 74.8 percent in the second level of income. Thereafter, the enrolment percentages increase steadily to almost 100.0 percent in income level 4. The variations in the enrolment percentages in the "other" category are similar to the Samburu pattern. Therefore, unlike the other ethnic categories in the study sample the Kikuyu group presents a frequency distribution which suggests the social clan dominance in pre-school education enrolment.

Table 4.15: Enrolled by ethnic group, controlling for income

Enrolment level of Income	Type of Ethnic Group		
	Kikuyu	Samburu	Other
Level 1<500 Percent enrolled N	53.8 (106)	85.7 (49)	78.6 (14)
Level 2>500<1500 Percent enrolled N	74.8 (103)	94 (19)	81.0 (37)
Level 3>1500<3500 Percent enrolled N	84.4 (64)	89.2 (37)	94.7 (19)
Level 4>3500 Percent enrolled N	97.5 (79)	100.0 (8)	100.0 (6)

It is evidently clear from the findings presented and discussed in this section that the four factors of social class; family income, educational attainment, occupation and material possessions have considerable influence on pre-school education enrolment. However, there is also overwhelming evidence that these factors are not the only determinants of enrolment. It was found that other non-class determinants especially those related to the family social structure and regional differences, such as marital status and place of residence help in explaining whether or not a child attends pre-school. Secondly, it was found contrary to expectation, that the low-income group of families enjoys a considerably high percentage of enrolment. If pursued further, this finding would seem to suggest that family income alone is not as much of a barrier in pre-school enrolment as generally believed. Another unexpected and quite surprising finding was the inverse relationship between enrolment and some of the educational categories after controlling for family income. This is a finding worth following in future research because it seems to indicate that the poor parents with limited exposure to schooling are likely to be less enthusiastic in sending their children to pre-school.

4.5 The Logit Analysis of Enrolment

The problem with cross-tabulation, of course, is that it is cumbersome when the number of independent variables exceeds two or three. What is needed is a regression-like technique that shows the independent contribution of the several predictors when the dependent variables are dichotomous. Logit regression is such a procedure and the results of such an analysis are shown in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: The Relationship Between Enrolment, Family Income and Education of the Parent

Variable	Regression coeff.	t-Statistic
Income	.13703	4.48653
Education	.1167	2.77137
Married	-.63518	4.93938
Age	.05433	1.21174

In addition to the measures of level of family income and education, marital status (married = 1; all others = 0) and age were entered as controls. In the logit analysis the t-value of 2 is considered statistically significant at 0.5 level. It is clear from table 4.16 that education and income are positive predictors of enrolment at higher than the .05 level of significance. Age is not a significant predictor. But the effect of marital status, that is, married as compared to all other single statuses is slightly greater than that of income but in the same direction. Therefore in this model

whether or not a child belongs to a two parent family would count more in determining pre-school enrolment. One way of interpreting this finding is that the two parent family is a key mechanism of labour reproduction.

The connection of income and education, in other words, socio-economic status to enrolment is understandable. But why should the married category have a higher percentage of enrolled children? Certainly, the answer does not lie in the difference in education or income, for those have been controlled and also not in child care since the single mother would equally be expected, if not more, to take advantage of the non-parental care in the pre-schools. (Melhuish and Moss, 1991).

In line with the theoretical discussion in Chapter Two, we could interpret this result as follows: parents enroll their children because "it is the proper thing to do", i.e. it is in line with modern educational national norms. The married, being more integrated into the society, are more responsive to these norms.

4.6 An Analysis of the Parents' Child Evaluations, Perceptions and Social Relationships.

The parents occupy a unique position in the lives of their children. In particular, they play a major role in the determination of their socialisation contexts and life chances. Therefore, the decisions that parents make to send

their children to nursery school should be viewed as social action that is part of a complex network of values, perceptions and social relationships between parents and their children.

4.7 The Socio-Economic Factors:

It was expected that the socio-economic status of the family would have some varying influence on the parents' valuations of the children and also on the social relationships among the parents, children and teachers. A wide range of attributes of parents with a child who was enrolled in the nursery school was used as indicators of their child evaluations, perceptions of the educational opportunities for the child and the social relationships which characterise their interaction with the nursery school. For analytical purposes, the attributes were divided into three categories. One category consisted of the attributes which aimed to quantify some aspects of the values parents attach to children. The data was obtained from the responses to the following question "If you were to start again, how many children would you like to have?". Although the hypothesis was that the number of children preferred would be closely associated with the socio-economic determinants of income, education and occupation, the non-class factors of the family structure, rural-urban dichotomy and ecological diversity were

expected to be more closely associated with child values held by the parents.

Table 4.17 shows contrasting relationships between the preferred number of children and the educational background of the parents. For instance, there is an inverse relationship between attribute No.3 and the level of schooling of the respondents with up to secondary level of education. Therefore, the higher the level of schooling the lower the percentage of parents who would prefer to have five or more children with an exception of those with university education, where the percentage tends to increase only slightly. The reverse applies to attribute No.1 namely "prefer two or three children" which is positively associated with the educational background of the parent. In this case, the finding was that the percentage of the parents who would have preferred to have only two or three children increased with level of schooling. Another important finding regarding the evaluations of children by the parents were in response to the question "Do you want more children?". The Table shows the percentages of parents who would have liked to have more children tend to decline as the level of education of parents increase. The sudden percentage increase of the parents with secondary education could have been due to their relatively young age which places them at the beginning of the family life cycle.

Table 4.17: Attributes of child evaluations of parents with a child in nursery school by their level of education.

Type of attribute	Level of Schooling			
	None	Primary	secondary	University
1. Prefer two\ three children	22.9	29.8	36.9	50.0
2. Prefer four children	27.1	42.7	38.7	25.0
3. Prefer five or more children	50.0	27.5	24.3	25.0
N	218	231	126	4

The second group consisted of attributes which focus on the instrumental value of the child. These included both actual and expected work of children. As Table 4.18 shows, high percentages of parents at all levels of education reported that they had received some help from the pre-school age children. Asked "What kind of help do you expect from your child when she/he becomes a big girl/boy?", the majority provided the following answers: fetch water, collect firewood and baby care. In order to obtain a comprehensive instrumental evaluation of the child, parents were asked "What are the most important activities/duties you would expect your child/ren to do for you?". Their responses to this question were used to construct attributes Nos.2 to 4 in table 4.18 below.

Table 4.18: Instrumental attributes of parents with children in nursery school, by their level of education.

Type of attribute	Level of Education			
	None	primary	secondary	University
1. Expect child help with domestic work	50.3	54.2	85.9	100.0
2. Expect child help with farm work	29.8	37.4	10.9	0.0
3. Expect child help with herding	19.9	8.4	3.3	0.0

It is quite clear from table 4.18 above that the instrumental expectations of the parents are variously associated with their level of education. For instance, none of the parents with university education expected the child to engage in either herding or farm work. However, all of them expected the child to assist with domestic work. Infact there is an inverse relationship between the parents expectations of the labour contributions of the children in the traditional economic activities and their educational background. This contrasts with the positive relationship between their expectations on the role of the child in domestic work and their educational attainment.

Surprisingly, all the parents with university education expected their children to help with domestic work. Also, as high as 85.9 percent of the parents with secondary education expect similar assistance from their children. In contrast, 50.3 percent of the illiterate and 54.2 percent of parents with primary education share a similar expectation. There are

two possible explanations to the popularity of the idea of involving the child with domestic work among the parents with university education. First, the participation of the child in domestic work is viewed as child socialisation into sound work ethics and responsible behaviour. Secondly, these families live in the urban areas where the options of involving the child are limited to play and school-related activities. It could also be a confirmation of the failure of these parents in the organisation of outdoor activities for their children. Besides, these parents are part of the elite class who are known to discourage their children from participating in herding or farm work, which they classify as low status activities and boring to the child. In any case, the overriding preoccupation of the elite parents is to have their children properly trained and socialised for leadership positions in future (Gakuru,1979;p.129).

The value bias in the expectations of the parents in favour of domestic activities and generally negative towards herding and agricultural work for their children could be an important indicator of the basic changes in the traditional family division of labour which has devalued the productive labour of the child except probably in domestic activities. It could be seen also as an adjustment to the new child values which emphasise schooling. Some of the impact of the new child values was evident among the parents who did not send their

children to nursery school. They were often apologetic and quite uneasy. Our evidence seems to suggest that the parent-child relationship may be becoming less instrumental. If so, this might also explain the inverse relationship between parents' perceptions of parenting and their level of education. Asked "Would you say that you have an easier time as a mother/father than your parents?", the majority of the respondents, particularly those with no schooling, said that it is more difficult parenting than it was in the past. Under the circumstances, a child would probably be expected to secure a place in the modern sector of the society after growing up and hopefully not in his immediate local community. Hence the interest of the parents to give them an early start beginning from nursery school.

The third category includes attributes on the knowledge of the child's educational opportunity, together with the social relationships which explain the nature of the interaction between the parents, children and teachers. The percentages were obtained from cross-tabulations between the attributes and the level of education. The reported values are positive cases of the yes/no frequency distribution. Quite clearly, almost all of the attributes that are listed in table 4.19 are positively related with the level of education of the parents. For example, there are increasing percentages of parents, starting from those with no schooling to those

with university education, who reported to have had discussions with the teachers concerning the behaviour and activities of their children. A similar relationship was found between the education of the parents and the provision of learning assistance to the children at home. Another important finding which might probably have some serious consequences on the quality of life of the children is the general ignorance of the parents. A majority of them seem to be poorly informed on the functioning of nursery and primary schools. For instance, the majority of the illiterate parents did not know that there are better nursery schools than those attended by their children or that there are primary schools that would not admit their children because of extremely high charges which only the elite can afford.

Table 4.19: Perceptions and Social Relationships of Parents, with Children in Nursery School by Level of education.

Type of attribute	level of Schooling			
	None	primary	Secondary	University
1. Face probles N	74.1 162	82.9 205	84.5 110	100.0 4
2. Discuss behaviour N	22.7 238	34.6 226	58.5 130	75.0 4
3. Discuss activity N	22.9 175	39.7 204	61.2 116	75.0 4
4. Know of better nursery N	19.3 171	31.7 199	54.1 111	50.0 4
5. Primary Sch. requirement N	64.8 216	76.1 251	84.0 125	75.0 4
6. Inaccessible Primary sch. N	9.2 153	16.7 192	26.2 107	66.7 3
7. Parent asst. in Learning N	74.5 192	82.1 224	94.1 118	100.0 4

Similarly, the majority of the illiterate parents together with those with primary level education seem to be contented with just enrolling their children in nursery school. As can be seen in Table 4.19 only a minority among them discuss the behaviour and activities of the child with the teacher unlike the majority of those with secondary and university education. Therefore, it could be correctly stated that the educational attainment differential tends to have a dichotomising effect on the social backgrounds. One category consists of both the illiterate parents and the majority of those with primary education. As suggested by the evidence above, most of the families in this socio-educational category appear to perceive education of their children in terms of provision of physical facilities and child enrolment. The other category consists of parents with secondary and university education. It is quite evident that the majority of parents in the two categories seem able to translate their interest in the education of their children into active participation in supporting the nursery school and also discussing the behaviour and activities of the child with the teacher. The differentiation in the child socialisation contexts on the basis of educational attainment of the parents is important evidence of the existence of groups with social class mechanisms of social reproduction.

However, there were some attributes in which the majority

of the parents appeared to be similar irrespective of their educational background. For instance, it was found out that the majority in all the educational categories knew about the primary school admission requirements. This possibly indicates that they are all watching keenly at the educational path their children have to follow. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that most parents in all the educational categories agree that their child would face problems if she/he did not attend nursery school. This parental disposition could also help to explain the distribution of responses of the parents in answer to the question "Do you help /assist your pre-school age child with learning?". As high as 74.5 percent of the parents with no schooling, virtually all of those with secondary education (100.0 percent) and those with university education level and above reported that they did. When probed, the illiterate parents reported that they helped their children in learning by telling them stories, encouraging them to go to school and providing them with educational materials.

The family income was the other factor that was expected to contribute towards the understanding of child evaluations of the parents and the relationships that govern the interaction between the parents, children and the nursery school teachers.

As Table 4.20 shows, there is no overall pattern in the relationship between family income and the number of children

preferred by the parents. Altogether however, the four-child preference would seem to be a more popular norm among the parents in income categories two and above. In contrast, nearly 50.0 percent of the lowest income parents reported a preference of five or more children which is nearly double the rates in the second and third levels of income.

Table 4.20: Attributes of Child Evaluations of the Parents with a Child in Nursery School by the their Level of Income Parental Attributes

Attribute	Level of Income			
	1<500	2>500<1500	3>1500<3500	4>3500
Enrolment				
1. Prefer two or three	23.2	34.2	36.4	19.5
2. Prefer four	28.4	38.3	37.3	46.3
3. Prefer five or more	48.4	27.5	26.4	34.1
No. of cases	(155)	(149)	(110)	(82)

Similarly, there is no clearly identifiable relational patterns between the instrumental values parents have for their children and the family level of income. However, as Table 4.21 below shows, there are notable variations in the percentages of the parents who evaluate their children as a source of labour in domestic work, farming and looking after livestock. For instance, the highest percentages of families who were found to expect their children to assist in domestic work are in the middle income groups. While the highest income

category has the lowest percentage that expects assistance in domestic work, it has the highest percentage of parents who expect their children to help in farm work.

Table 4.21: The Instrumental Attributes of the Parents With Child in Nursery School by Their Level of Income.

Attribute	Level of Income			
	1<500	2>500<1500	3>1500<3500	4>3500
1. Domestic work	58.2	64.4	64.8	45.5
2. Farm work	27.3	27.9	19.8	49.4
3. Herding	14.5	7.7	15.4	5.2
N	(110)	(104)	(91)	(77)

The results of the analysis of the third cluster of the attributes of the parents by the level of family income are presented in Table 4.22 below. As the table shows, there is a clear dichotomy between the percentages in the lowest and the other income categories in the behavioural attributes of the parents. Comparatively, the percentages of the parents who discuss the behaviour and also the activities of their children with the teachers are much higher in the income groups two and above than in the lowest category. This distinction in the parent-child relationship is an important piece of evidence of the emerging social class culture as the society, including the rural communities, become increasingly divided on the basis of income.

Table 4.22: Relational Attributes of Parents With Children Enrolled in Nursery School by Level of Family Income.

Type of attribute	level of Income			
	1<500	2>500<1500	3>1500<3500	4>3500
Enrolment				
1. Discuss behaviour M	21.3 (169)	43.7 (158)	46.7 (120)	50.5 (93)
2. Discuss activity M	27.8 (108)	49.2 (124)	46.2 (106)	47.8 (90)
3. Know of better nursery M	25.2 (107)	39.0 (118)	38.8 (103)	28.4 (88)
4. Primary school no entry M	8.4 (95)	21.1 (114)	22.9 (96)	15.1 (86)
5. Parent help child to learn M	76.2 (130)	89.4 (132)	90.4 (104)	82.0 (89)
6. Child help parent M	77.2 (145)	83.1 (142)	78.1 (114)	84.8 (92)
7. child face problem M	83.8 (105)	85.0 (120)	82.5 (103)	75.9 (87)
8. Know entry requirements M	56.9 (153)	77.0 (148)	79.6 (113)	92.5 (93)

It is quite surprising however that income seem to have no influence on the understanding of the parents on the functioning of the schooling system. As the percentage distribution of the parents in attributes Nos.3 and 4 suggest, the majority of the parents seem to be quite ignorant of the differences in the school system. On the other hand, the majority of the parents in all the income groups appear to be quite informed on the primary school entry requirements and the usefulness of nursery attendance if their children were to avoid facing problems in future.

The occupational variable was the third socio-economic determinant that was used in the explanation of the ideology

of the parents in terms of social relationships and values that they attach to children. Table 4.23 shows wide variations in the percentage distribution of the responses among the three evaluational attributes of the number of children preferred by the parents. It is quite remarkable how the variations in the percentages correspond with the occupational groups and by implication, with the pastoral, agricultural and modern economic modes of production. For instance, as high as 83.3 percent of the parents in the pastoral category reported that they would prefer five or more children as compared with only 20.1 percent of the families in business occupational background. In contrast, the professional and the business occupational categories have the highest percentages of parents, 38.5 and 34.3 respectively, who would have preferred to have two or three children.

Table 4.23: Child Evaluational Attributes of Parents with Child in Nursery School by their Type of Occupation.

Attribute	Type of Occupation				
	Professional	Business	Labourer	Farmer	Pastoralist
1. Prefer two or three	38.5	34.3	31.3	25.3	8.3
2. Prefer four	29.5	44.8	35.4	42.5	8.3
3. Prefer five or more	32.0	20.1	33.3	32.2	83.3
N	(122)	(67)	(96)	(174)	(48)

Probably the most informative finding is that the professional class had the lowest percentage of families who would have preferred four or more children (61.5 percent) followed by the business (64.9 Percent) while the pastoral group had the highest (91.6) percentage. However, it is worth noting that all the occupational categories have quite high percentages of parents who would have preferred four or more children.

Table 4.24 presents the cross-tabulation results between the instrumental values that the parents attach to children and their occupational background.

Table 4.24: Instrumental Value Attachment to Children of Parents With Child in Nursery School by Occupational Status

Attribute	Type of Occupation				
	Profes sional	Business	Labourer	Farmer	Pastor alist
1. Domestic work	79.8	89.8	59.7	39.7	53.3
2. Farm work	14.3	8.2	33.9	52.5	2.2
3. Herding	6.0	2.0	6.5	7.8	44.4
N	(84)	(49)	(62)	(141)	(45)

As expected, farm work is most popular among the parents in the agricultural category. In fact, hardly any of the parents from the pastoral background expected their children to engage in farm work. Furthermore, the pastoral category had the highest (44.4) percentage of parents who viewed herding as the most important type of activity that they expected their

children to carry out. Domestic work was extremely popular among the professional and business classes. As high as 89.8 percent of parents in the business category and 79.8 percent of those in the business group reported domestic work to be the most important child activity that they expected their children to undertake. Certainly, if the idea is to engage the child in some useful activity, then domestic work is probably the only available activity for these two occupational classes, most of whom live in the urban areas. This contrasts sharply as pointed out above, with the expectations of the parents in the agricultural category. Only 39.7 percent of them reported domestic work as a priority for their children in comparison with 52.5 percent who assessed farm work to be the most important form of help to expect from their children.

Perhaps, the most outstanding differences were in the percentages of parents from the various occupational backgrounds who interacted with nursery school teachers. As Table 4.25 shows, while 14.5 percent of parents in the pastoral category discussed the behaviour of their children with the teacher, the percentage for the professional group was as high as 59.3 percent. The percentages of parents in the other occupational backgrounds who reported talking with the teacher about the behaviour of their child fall between the two. There are also similar percentage differences in the

parents who discuss the activities of their children with the teacher. The percentage distribution is 15.6 percent for the pastoral and 60.5 percent for the professional occupations.

Table 4.25: Relational and Awareness Attributes of the Parents With Child in Nursery School by Type of Occupation.

Attribute	Type of Occupation				
	Professional	Business	Labourer	Farmer	Pastoralist
1. Discuss behaviour N	59.3 (123)	40.0 (75)	30.4 (102)	27.5 (193)	14.5 (55)
2. Discuss activity N	60.5 (114)	52.7 (55)	38.2 (68)	27.4 (146)	15.6 (45)
3. Know of better nursery N	51.4 (111)	30.8 (52)	31.3 (64)	21.6 (148)	26.8 (41)
4. Primary school no entry N	31.7 (101)	17.3 (52)	18.3 (60)	11.1 (144)	2.7 (37)
5. Parent help child learn N	94.7 (114)	83.9 (62)	78.6 (84)	81.3 (150)	69.8 (53)
6. Child help parent N	82.1 (117)	73.9 (69)	79.8 (94)	76.6 (171)	79.6 (54)
7. Child face problem N	93.6 (109)	87.5 (56)	75.9 (66)	80.3 (137)	67.4 (43)
8. Know entry requirements N	83.6 (122)	77.3 (66)	57.9 (95)	79.3 (179)	56.0 (50)

Table 4.25 has also some evidence on the nature of the parent-child relationship. Although the majority of the parents in all the occupational categories reported that they help the child with learning, the greatest percentage difference is between the professional and the pastoral classes with 97.3 and 67.0 percentages respectively.

Similarly, the majority of the parents in all the occupational groups admitted that they receive help from their

pre-school age children. However, the percentage (79.6 percent) of parents in the pastoral group who reported that they receive help from their children is higher than for those who reported that they assist the child with learning (69.8 percent). This contrasts with some of the other variations in the occupational categories in which the percentage of parents who receive assistance from the nursery child is lower than that of the parents who reported helping the child with learning. Therefore, one could argue that among the pastoralists, children are likely to be more helpful to their parents than the parents are to their pre-school age children. Of course, the other occupational backgrounds, have quite high percentages of parents who are dependent on the labour of their children.

As Table 4.25 above shows, there are large percentage differences in the respondents between the professional and the pastoral categories in knowledge of some of the important characteristics of nursery school education. For example, due to possibly limited exposure, only 26.8 percent of the parents in the pastoral group knew of a better nursery school than the one attended by their child, in contrast with 51.4 percent in the professional category. Also comparatively, a much lower percentage (67.4 percent) of the pastoral group as compared to 93.6 percent of parents in the professional group thought that lack of nursery school experience would present a problem to

the child in future.

Finally, the majority in all the occupational categories were of the opinion that parenting is more difficult now than it was in the past, with the highest percentage in the labourer category (80.4 percent) and the lowest in the professional category (63.1 percent). This difference between the two occupational groups is understandable since the two groups are rooted in the monetary economy and are largely dependent on salaries and wages in child rearing.

4.8 Factors of Ecology and Family Structure:

Part of the main hypothesis which was stated at the beginning of the chapter was the expectation that the non-class factors would enhance the understanding of the child evaluations of the parents together with the social relationships that govern their interaction with the children and the nursery school teachers. The non-class factors that were found to yield some varied influence on the perceptions and behaviour of the parents were the ecological factors of rural-urban differences and their internal localities; family structure (marital status) and ethnic background.

Cross-tabulation between the child evaluations of the parents and their social relationship attributes with nursery school teachers showed relatively higher percentages of the urban parents than those in the rural areas. The only

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Cross-tabulation between the child evaluations of the parents and their social relationship attributes with nursery school teachers showed relatively higher percentages of the urban parents than those in the rural areas. The only

exception, but an important one, was that the percentage of rural parents who would have preferred five or more children was nearly twice that of those in the urban areas. Altogether, there was a much higher percentage (76.5 percent) of urban parents who seemed to prefer the relatively small family of up to four children as compared with only 57.9 percent of the rural respondents. Furthermore, nearly twice as high as those in the rural areas discussed the behaviour and activities of their children with teachers. Otherwise, the rural-urban determinant did not make any noticeable difference in the percentage distribution of parents among the attributes of parent-child relationship and parental understanding of the nature of the educational system.

The findings in this chapter are ample evidence of the differences in the socialisation contexts of young children. In particular, the differences in child evaluations of the parents make it clear that the low income families, together with those of a pastoral background prefer large families. In contrast, the parents with relatively higher incomes and educational attainment were in favour of smaller families of at most three children.

Secondly, there is evidence to suggest that the differentiation of the socialisation contexts is patterned on social class lines. It was found out that a majority of parents with post-primary education, together with those in

the middle and high income categories discussed their children's work with teachers. They were also found to be aware of the qualitative differences in the schooling system.

However, the majority of parents, irrespective of their class position, were eager to assist their children with learning; the only difference was in the type of assistance. Similarly, nearly all the parents were aware of the primary school entry requirements, which is an indication of how interested they were in the educational progress of their children, thus reflecting a strong belief and commitment to the educational value of their children.

CHAPTER FIVE:

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary and Conclusions

The formally organised and non-parental or familial child education and care has become a major aspect and most likely, the dominant form of child upbringing in modern societies. The establishment of formal education for the pre-school age children is a relatively modern development. The provision of these services is seen as a response to pressure emanating from changes in the economic, social and demographic milieux. Some of the major economic changes include the increasing labour force, participation of women and the organisation of work.

Equally important changes that have been cited as influencing the development of pre-school education are those that affect the organisation of the family, decline in child mortality, the establishment of the schooling system and the increasing importance attached to pre-school education as part of human resource development. The other source of influence is policy: greater social equity improvements in productivity, improved cost/benefit ratio in social service and improved human potential and quality. For example, there has been a general shift in policy orientation towards the fulfillment of

the needs of children, rather than dealing with children with special problems. There are also specific aspects of political economy such as the growing parental demand for the education of their children coupled with needs for social movement of modernisation fuelled by national aspirations which have considerable influence on the development of education systems.

The formal pre-school education in Kenya originated in the urban areas where the first pre-schools catered for the children of the minority ruling class of whites. Subsequently, the services were extended to cover the Asians and part of the African population in the same areas. The spread of day nurseries into the rural areas was part of the modernisation process which involve agrarian change, cultural transformation and position of women in society and also as a response to the specific adverse situations such as guerrilla war of independence which threatened and jeopardised the lives of children.

The growing demand for pre-school education, as evidenced by the rapid expansion of enrolment could best be explained by the establishment of the competitive market economy with its corresponding modern institutions which require schooled and trained individuals, employment of mothers, the strong values attached to education, the destruction of the traditional forms of child care and the organisation of work which takes

mothers away from home for long periods of time. There is also an array of institutions involved in the provision of pre-school education in pursuit of profit.

Under such circumstances, it would seem only logical that all parents would eagerly take advantage of the schooling opportunities for the benefit of their children. However, only about three-quarters of a million children, who represent roughly 25 percent of the 3-6 year-old, are enrolled in the pre-schools. Hence the need to find out who goes to pre-schools in Kenya.

Generally the social class structure of the society and the dominant conditions of underdevelopment are the major barriers against wider participation of children in pre-school education, similar to other education sectors. It would be quite logical therefore to expect full enrolment of children from the now non-racial upper class, and, the middle class, including the rich peasantry and the salaried workers. On the contrary, only a minority of 3-6 year-old children from the subsistence agricultural and pastoral backgrounds and petty commodity producers and traders secure places in the pre-schools. Besides, pre-school education enrollments are greatly influenced by the inequalities arising from the differences in the level of development and resource endowment among regions and local communities. Furthermore, there are severe socio-economic imbalances between the rural and urban

areas and within regions resulting from uneven development in colonial and post-colonial Kenya. It is not surprising therefore, to find that the majority of those who did not enrol their children in nursery schools mentioned reasons which reflected their poor backgrounds or lack of pre-schools within walking distance for their children. There was also evidence suggesting that many children are reared within traditional contexts as illustrated by their performance of specific economic and social roles within the family division of labour instead of being enrolled in the nursery schools. For example, in Samburu one of the district we have studied here, the majority of children are still playing the traditional roles.

Pre-school education is part of the education system. In theory therefore, its contribution to the processes of social reproduction and human resource development is inseparable from the rest of the schooling system. Similarly, it is equally subjected to the same problems that affect the rest of the education system such as inequalities in access, differences in quality and uneven development and biased policies.

In this study, attempts have been made to explain pre-school enrollments which were considered to be at the core of the development of pre-school education. The major hypothesis was that enrolment in pre-school was determined by both class

and non-class factors. Empirical evidence drawn from a study sample of parents with preschool age children was used to test the study hypothesis. The three ecological contexts were urban, agricultural and pastoral. Besides, the sampling procedure ensured that the important differences in each ecological unit were represented.

The analysis was based on point distributions and logistic regression. One of the most important findings of the study was that class indicators of family income, occupation, education and material resources are key factors in the determination of pre-school enrolment. Similarly, other non-class factors related to the family structure and ecology also helped to explain the distribution of child enrolment. In fact, marital status, i.e. "married" as compared to all other single status was found to be as strong as income. Therefore, these findings confirmed the hypothesis.

However, there was an extremely important finding which was not expected. It was found out that a very high percentage of low income families also have their children enrolled in the pre-schools. This finding was subject to a range of interpretations and perhaps, the most convincing view for us here is that either preschool education is perceived to be so valuable that even the poor are determined that their children also benefit from it, or that sending a child

to the preschool is the "right thing" to do anyway. In case of the latter, it could be argued strongly that pre-school education has become part of the normative behaviour of parents as they engage in their child rearing activities. What is most probable however, is that trapped between the indigenous systems of subsistence economies and the capitalist political economy of the Kenyan society, the parents are willing if not eager, to provide their children with a headstart into the complex and highly competitive modern society starting with pre-school education.

There is a very clear social class element in the way parents relate and interpret the functions of the pre-schools. As the research findings showed, virtually all the wealthy families enroll their children in pre-schools unlike a majority of the poor, who would wish to do so but either cannot afford it or their way of life, especially the nomadic pastoralists and the bottom of the poor, prevents them from establishing schools for their children. However, a trend in which the parents with a limited level of schooling were less keen in sending their children to pre-schools as compared with illiterate parents seemed to emerge. Probably, the parents who dropped out of the schooling system at primary school level could be less mystified by the mysterious nature and power of the school in determining the quality of life. Therefore, they might not be in a hurry to enroll their

children in preschool. Besides, they could be convinced that primary schools would also teach literacy and numeracy skills already taught in the pre-schools.

Although the decision to send a child to nursery school solely depends on the parent, the general provision of pre-schools was found to rely on community resources and organisational capacity. It is in this respect that the self-help movement which is inseparable from nationalism and the desire to modernise has contributed greatly to the development of preschool education through collective provision of resources for the establishment of pre-schools.

Besides, the social support, both at the individual family and community levels, the expansion of preschool enrolment could also be a consequence of population growth. According to the population data, the child population between 3-5 years is growing rapidly. For instance, in 1979, the number of children aged 3-5 years was 1,677,00 while the estimated number in 1990 was 2,827,000 (Riak, et. al., 1989). The decision to enroll a child in the preschool is determined by the material and ideological orientation of a parent. The analysis of the parents, child evaluations and intervention strategies revealed a patterned difference tending to correspond to the socio-economic differences of the parents. For instance, it was found out that parents with post-primary education and also those in the middle and high income groups

discussed the school work of their children with teachers. They were also found to be aware of the qualitative differences between the schools where they send their children and those serving other social groups.

However, a common characteristic among the parents in the study sample was that the majority, irrespective of their class position, were eager to assist their children with learning, the only difference was in the type of assistance. The latter tended to correspond to either the socio-economic background or the level of modernisation of the community and incorporation into the modern economy.

5.2 Policy and Research Recommendations

The basic premise of this study is the view that education is one of the important aspects of social reproduction, and which mankind partly relies on in confronting the challenges against its survival. Viewed thus, pre-school education is considered an important stage in the process of child socialisation and education. It has also become evidently clear, in the course of this study that those parents in the mainstream of the society with young children are keen to invest heavily in early education of their children and indeed are strongly attached to their children and are ready to do everything possible to ensure that they

grow into able and responsible adults. It has also become evident that the importance of the non-parental and formal child care and education are coming quickly to the fore, as formal preschool education expands as a result of changes in the child rearing contexts.

Therefore, policy on early childhood education and care should be concerned mainly with issues of expansion and the improvement of pre-school education provision. It would be quite useful also to build on the existing community initiative and explore creatively effective ways of developing organisational capacity and material resources for the benefit of the children. Efforts should also be made to educate the parents on the need and how to intervene effectively in the development of their children.

The provision of quality preschool education for the child must also be accompanied by similarly good quality education in primary and other levels of schooling. At the moment, as more children enter the pre-schools, most of which are of poor quality, confining them to these impoverished centres denies them the opportunity of learning from the nature around them. Besides, teaching children of the poor is not only inhibited by severe inadequacy of material resources but also by practical ideologies of teachers which force children to develop a negative self-concept and lack of the need to achieve.

Education, especially schooling, which is seen as a major factor in human development, is theoretically linked to social and economic change. This linkage assumes participation of skilled and creative individuals in the process of production of material and social wealth. Unfortunately, the prevalent conditions of underdevelopment, including an acute lack of employment opportunities and growing population, could introduce a degenerative culture and widespread hopelessness among the majority.

Perhaps what is most important to note at this juncture is that the issue of formal preschool education and care has increasingly come into the limelight both in research and policy process. It is recommended that further research should be directed towards human development aspects of the child. It is also recommended that an enabling environment which would optimise the fulfillment of the care, health and development of the child be part and parcel of the government policy and practice. However, since the upbringing of the majority of preschool age children takes place in the informal and traditional contexts, it is strongly recommended that these modes of child care and development be studied and improved upon so as to exhaust their potential for human development.

In conclusion, this study has shown that the enrolment in the pre-school institutions is greatly influenced by social

economic factors such as the level of family income, education attainment and occupational status of the parent. There is also strong evidence which confirm that other factors, particularly those related to the nature of the family and ecological diversity are part of the explanation of pre-school education enrolment.

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APPENDIX A

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION STUDY

PARENTS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Respondent's Name ----- Date: -----
Sex: (1) Male------(2) female-----Age-----
Religion-----Ethnic Origin-----
Name of Nursery school-----
Name of child attending pre-school-----
District ----- Division ----- Location -----
Sublocation -----.

I am from the University of Nairobi and I am interested in studying the education of young children. I would therefore like to talk to you about the nursery education of your children and also the things that they do here at home.

This study has the permission of the Government.

Background Information

1. What level of education did you complete?

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------|
| 1. None | 5. Form 3-4 |
| 2. Std. 1-4 | 6. Form 5-6 |
| 3. Std. 5-8 | 7. University |
| 4. Form 1-2 | 8. Other (specify) |

2. What is your main occupation at present? (Indicate main occupation, and Others where applicable).
1. Farmer (specify) -----
 2. Herdsman (specify) -----
 3. Small trader (specify) -----
 4. Casual labourer (not employed permanently) -----
 5. Business shop operator, wholesaler, matatu operator
etc. -----
 6. Professional- teacher, minister of religion,
policeman, soldier, secretary,
nurse, doctor, supervisor, manager,
engineer etc. -----
 7. White collar clerk, typist, office assistant etc.--

 8. Skilled labour - plumber, mechanic, driver,
carpenter etc. -----
 9. Unskilled labour - watchman, messenger, ayah -----

 10. Housewife -----
 11. Unemployed -----
 12. Other (specify) -----

3. (a) Do you have any other occupations or sources of income besides this employment?

Yes ----- No -----

(b) If yes, what are the other sources? State clearly

4. Are you single, married, divorced or widowed? (specify) -

5. How many wives does your husband/do you have? -----

6. If the husband/wife is alive and they are not divorced; answer questions (a) - (b) below:

(a) What is your husband's/wife's occupation? (specify as above in question 2). -----

(b) Does he/she have any other occupation or source of income besides this one? -----

If yes, what are these sources (specify) -----

7. Other than the above, do you or your wife/husband own any other property?

Yes ----- No -----

If yes, specify. (probe for land size and use - cash crops, food crops, livestock, other - commercial buildings, vehicles etc.). -----

What is the total family income per month/season/year? (specify amount and period). -----

8. Do you/does your husband stay with the family or elsewhere? -----

If elsewhere, what district or town? -----

9. What is your place of residence? (specify; name of village, estate, suburb etc.) -----

10. Is the house that you live in rented, owned, or it belongs to the employer?-----

11. Do you have items such as the following?

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|
| (1) Radio | (4) telephone |
| (2) TV | (5) motor vehicle, car(s) etc. |
| (3) Video | (6) clock |
| | (7) Other (specify) ----- |

12. How many families live in your compound? (list the number of nuclear families, number of adults and children staying in the compound or homestead, or manyatta) -----

Type of residence -----

No. of families -----

No. of mothers -----

No. of fathers -----

No. of grandparents -----

No. of children -----

13. What advantages/disadvantages do you and your children have as residents of this area in comparison with other families elsewhere in the country?

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Children		
Parents		

Family Size and Composition

14. How many children do you have? -----

For each child ask and record answers in Table 2.

1. Is the oldest child a boy or a girl, and 2nd oldest, 3rd oldest etc.
2. How old is he/she (1st, 2nd, 3rd oldest child etc)
3. Is he/she attending school?

Family Size and Compositions

LIVING CHILDREN

Name of Child	Sex		Age	Dates and Schools attended					Living Home Elsewhere Specify	Occupation	Married/ Unmarried
	F	M		Nursery	Primary	Secondary	University	Other			

4. What schools did she/he attend?
5. What level of schooling has she/he attained?
6. Is he/she living with you here now?
7. Is he/she employed and if so, what is his/her present occupation?
8. Is he/she single or married?

For parents with Children who attended or are attending nursery school. (Questions 15-18).

15. Now, from the information you have given I see you have ----- number of children who attended nursery school before going to primary school.

(a) Why did you send them to the nursery school and what expenses did you incur? (Specify for each child, reasons for sending, fees paid per child per term, other expenses on food, transport, uniforms, reasons for the choice of nursery schools attended etc.)-----

(b) If some of the older children did not attend nursery school why didn't you send them? (specify for each child). -----

16. I also see you have ----- number of children attending nursery school.

(a) Why did you send her/him/they to the nursery school? (give reasons). -----

(b) How did you know that they were ready for nursery education?-----

(c) If only some of the nursery school age children attend, how did you select among them those to send to the nursery school and those to remain at home? (Specify) who decides, child attributes etc.) -----

17. a) How much do you pay to the nursery school per month/term (specify) per child? -----

b) What else have/do you contributed to the nursery school? (specify: harambee; labour/cash contributions to the school, uniforms, transport, food etc.). -----

c) Which child/ren have cost you less or more to educate in the nursery school? (Specify finance, time, emotions) -----

Why?-----

d) Would you child/ren face any problem if she/he/they didn't attend nursery school?

Yes ----- No -----

If yes, what problems? (specify for entry into primary schools, lack of school readiness etc.) ---

e) If no, why do you send your child/ren to the nursery school or agree to pay the nursery school charges in order to have your child in the nursery school rather than at home? -----

18. a) In what ways does/do your child/ren benefit from attending the nursery school? -----

b) What other benefits do you expect your child to get from the nursery school? -----

c) What differences if any, do you think will be there between the children who attend and those who do not attend the nursery school? -----

Why?-----

19. a) Do you and the teacher discuss your child's behaviour? Yes ----- No -----

If yes, what does the teacher say his/her conduct is like?-----

b) Do you also discuss your child's school activities with the teacher? Yes----No----

If yes, how does he/she perform in those activities you discuss with the teacher? -----

20. a) What things do you particularly like about the nursery school attended by your child? -----

b) What things do you dislike about the nursery school?-----

21. Do you know of other nursery schools:

(a) which are better than the one your child/ren attend? Yes ----- No -----

If yes, which ones? -----

b) What makes them better? (explain)-----

c) Why don't you send you child/ren to these better nursery schools? -----

22. When your child completes nursery school, what primary school/s will he/she attend? (specify) ----

Why would you like to send your child to this primary school? -----

23. a) What does/do your children require to be admitted into the primary school of your choice? -----

b) Are there other primary schools that your child would not gain admission? Yes ----- No -----
If yes, which are they?-----

Why?-----

For parents with Nursery-Age Children Who Are Not In the Nursery School (Questions 24-28).

24. Would you like to send your child/ren to the nursery school? Yes -----No -----

25. a) Why don't you send your child/ren to the nursery school?-----

b) Will they go to the primary school? Yes----- No---
Explain-----

26. a) If they were to attend what benefits would he/she/they get from the nursery school? -----

b) Now that they don't attend, what do you think will become of them? -----

27. a) Do you know of parents who send their children to the nursery school? Yes ----- No -----

b) If yes, are there any differences between you and they, that makes them send their children to the nursery school? Yes ----- No -----

c) If yes, what differences? -----

28. a) What differences if any, do you think will be there between the children who attend and those who do not attend to nursery school? -----

b) Why-----

29. What type of employment would you like your children to get when they are adults?

(1) Boys:-----

(2) Girls:-----

30. What activities do your nursery-age children carry out at home (probe for games, songs, work, role-play) -----

31. Do you help/assist your pre-school age child/ren with their learning? Yes ----- No -----

If yes, how do you help them? (probe for attention parents give to the child during play, in difficulties of carrying out an exercise; material support - buying books, collecting toys etc.) -----

32. a) Who else helps your child to learn? -----

b) What kind of help? (Specify) -----

33. a) Do the nursery school age children help/assist you
in any way? Yes ----- No -----

If yes, what help do you get from them? -----

b) If not, at what age will they be ready to
help/assist?-----

c) What kind of help do you expect from him/her when
he/she is (i) a big boy/girl? -----

(ii) an adult -----

34. From the information you have given, I see you have -----
number of children. Do you want any more children?

Yes ----- No -----

If yes, how many more (a) boys ----- b) girls -----

Why? -----

35. If you were to start all over again how many children would you like to have? (a) boys ----- (b) girls ----
Why? -----

36. Have you any other children who were born alive but who are not living now? Yes ----- No -----
If yes, how many? Boys ----- Girls -----

37. What help/assistance do you get from your daughters aged:
(specify for children who are in and out of school)
(i) Under 7 years (nursery age children) -----

(ii) 7-14 years (primary age children) -----

(iii) 15 years and over (secondary age children) -----

(iv) Daughters and sons who have completed schools? ----

b) What help/assistance do you receive from your sons aged:

(i) under 7 years (Nursery school age) -----

(ii) 7-14 years (primary school age) -----

(iii) 15 years and over (secondary school age) -

(iv) Daughters and sons who have completed school?-

38. As far as you are concerned, what are the most important activities/duties that you expect your child/ren to do for you? (specify the activity/duty and the child/ren indicating age/sex who help out most? -----

39. What help do you expect from your children that is not given to you? -----

40. What makes you exceptionally happy as:

(a) a mother/father of your children?

(b) What makes you exceptionally unhappy as a mother/father of your children? -----

41. What would you like to do for your children that was not done for you by your parents? -----

-----Explain -----

42. (a) Would you say that you have an easier time as a mother/father than your parents? Yes ----- No-----

Explain-----

(b) What problems if any, prevent your children from becoming the adults that you would like them to be? (pay attention to the qualities preferred and the related problems). -----

43. What level of education did your parents complete? (see Question 1)

1. Father's level of education (specify) -----

2. Mother's level of education (specify) -----

What is/was father's/mother's present/last occupation? (see Question 2).

44. 1. Father's present/last occupation (specify) -----

2. Mother's present/last occupation (specify) -----

45. Please, make any other comments? -----

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!