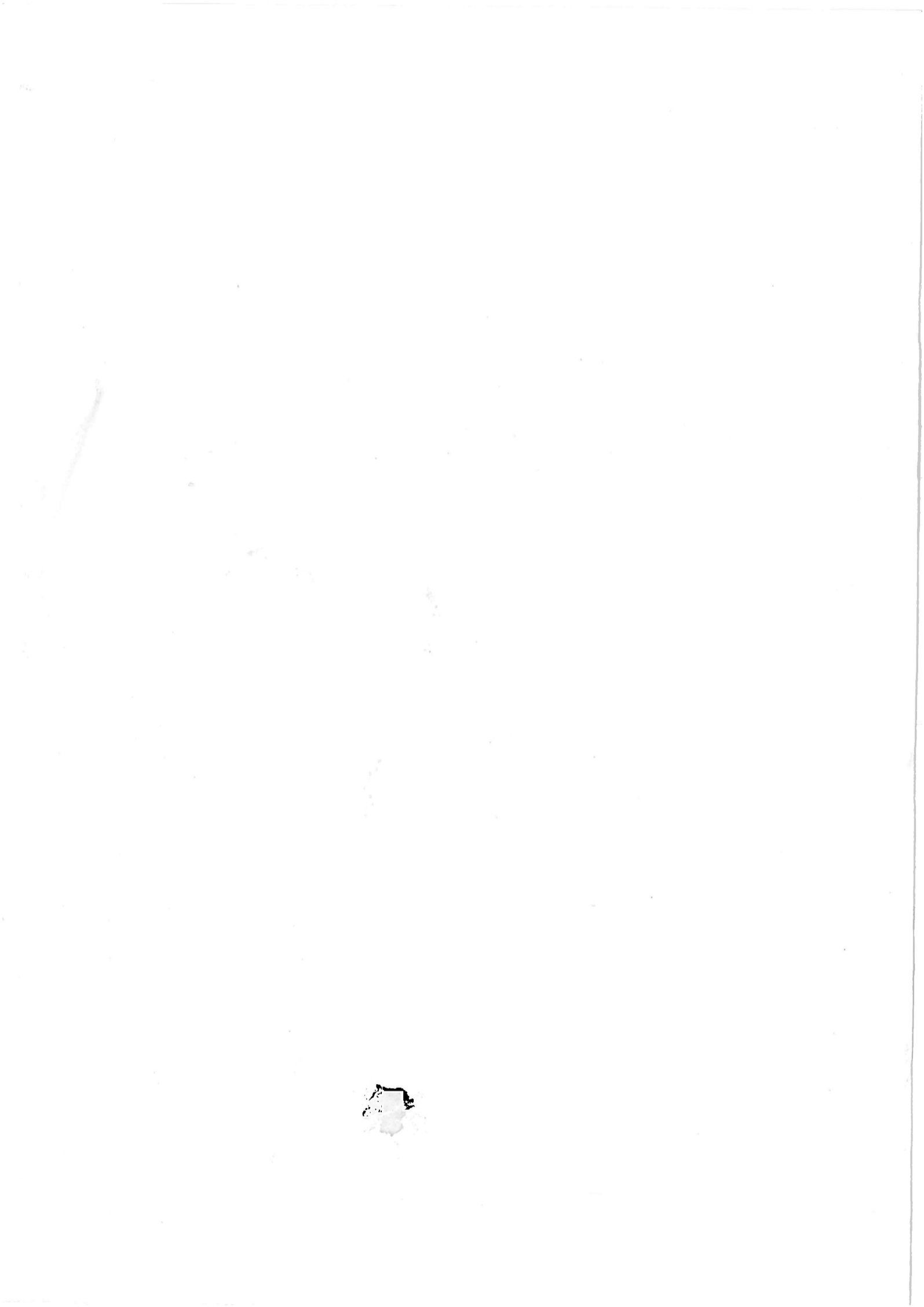


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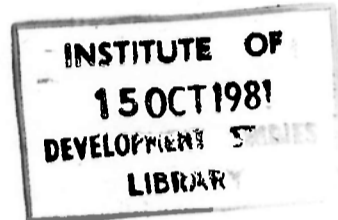
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PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION AND ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN NAIROBI

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PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND ACCESS TO
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN NAIROBI

By

O.N. Gakuru

ABSTRACT

This is a study of the structural links between pre-primary and primary education in Nairobi.

The paper observes that there is a large number of nursery schools in Nairobi. These institutions fall into two main categories: the high-cost and the low-cost nursery schools. It is hypothesised that the growth and structure of the pre-primary education is determined largely by the structure of primary education which in turn reflects the structure of the society. There are two main categories of primary schools: the high-cost and the low cost. The structural differences in primary schools were initially based on race but are now based on ability to pay.

Some preliminary findings based on data obtained from the low-cost nursery schools are discussed. The fact that standard one places are scarce is considered as an important explanatory factor in understanding the functions and structure of the pre-school education. The paper concludes by illustrating that nursery school attendance is being used to regulate entry into primary education.

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PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION AND ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES IN NAIROBI

INTRODUCTION

This is a study of structural links between pre-primary and primary education in Nairobi.

Although research in the field of Sociology of Education in Kenya has primarily focussed on the relationship of the formal educational system to social and economic context, little thought has been given to the development of pre-primary education (Court and Ghai 1974).¹ Thus we do not know:

(1) Its sociological significance in relation to the rest of the formal school system, particularly its role in determining access to primary education and thus its probable contribution to the process of social-economic stratification in the society.

(2) Its parameters such as the fee structure, the child population in the nursery schools, and the number of pre-primary institutions.

Primary education in the city of Nairobi may be divided into two broad categories: the high-cost and the low-cost schools. In this study, the high-cost schools are the private elementary schools, and the city council maintained and assisted schedule B and C primary schools. Schedule B schools are the former Asian schools and Schedule C are the former European schools. The low-cost schools are the schedule A city council primary schools. These are the former, African schools. Many new schedule A schools have been built recently. During the colonial period, it was the European schools which were labelled 'A'. The schedule A schools are wholly African in terms of pupils and teachers.

Until quite recently, access to the high-cost system for Africans has been governed almost by ability to pay. Because of the steady withdrawal of European and Asian pupils, places have been readily available. The fee, although much higher than in the low-cost schools has not been a hindrance to anyone on a middle level income. Since a few years ago, however, competition for high-cost places has suddenly intensified because there are now few Europeans and Asians left to replace. Existing facilities have expanded only slowly, and furthermore, there are now many more Africans able to pay the fees.

Similarly competition for places in low-cost schools has intensified because of the abolition of fees in the lower primary classes, inadequate provision of new facilities, and a very large increase in the low income population.

Hence the crucial decisions are now those which govern access to infant classes in the primary schools and as a result pre-school education has taken on a significance which it previously lacked.

Pre-primary education is a term which includes a range of infant institutions. The more specific labels used in Nairobi and other urban centres are: day nursery, playgroup, kindergarten and pre-school. Similar institutions in rural districts are commonly known as day care centres. The children going through the pre-primary institutions comprise an important category of the child population in Nairobi. There are also other categories of children such as the mentally retarded, disabled, the children who do not attend the nursery school but go to primary schools as well, and the children who do not attend both the nursery school and primary school. All of these children who do not attend the nursery schools also are an important category of the child population but are not included in this study for practical reasons only.

Large numbers of nursery schools have been established throughout the higher income suburbs of the city. Nearly all of them charge fees substantially higher than the primary schools. A typical figure for the fees seems to be about Shs. 600 - 1200/- per term. Similarly many pre-primary institutions have been established in the low-cost neighbourhoods of Nairobi. They charge fees between Shs. 20/- to 400/- per term. If nursery school attendance does influence admission into primary schools then the economic filtering for access to places in primary schools are thus a good deal more severe than the level of fees charged in primary schools would suggest.

These two broad categories of high-cost and low-cost nursery schools can be subdivided further. The high-cost category includes private and church nursery schools which give access to both private preparatory primary schools and expensive city council primary schools. These schools are called day nurseries and charge about 200/- to 600/- per month. There are also the pre-school classes owned by the education department of the city council which are attached to both high-cost and low-cost city council primary schools. Most of them charge a fee of 100/- per month. The final category of high-cost nursery schools are the day nurseries run by the health department of the city council. These are not

attached to primary schools and charge fees varying between 75/- and 250/- a month. Those charging a higher fee are also located in high-cost housing areas in the city.

Inside the low-cost nursery school category are a few nursery schools which belong to welfare organisations. They charge a monthly fee ranging from 50/- to 100/-. All the other cheap nursery schools are called harambee day nurseries. These harambee schools are run by self-help committees and charge about 6/- to 20/- per month.

Thus, as a whole, the pre-primary education institutions in Nairobi are owned by the city administration, individual entrepreneurs, self-help committees, church and welfare organisations. Most of these institutions are of recent origin. Out of 165 nursery centres registered in Nairobi in 1968 less than 40 claimed to have been in existence before 1960 (Herzog 1969).²

The modal age of children in both high -- cost and low - cost nursery schools is between 4 and 5 years, and the range is about 2 to 6 years. In most of the high-cost nursery schools children of up to three years comprise the baby classes. The emphasis in these classes is child care. Ideally, the child is provided with a safe environment which allows free play and interaction with other children so that he may develop physical and mental co-ordination which is considered a pre-requisite to future intellectual development. The age of four is transitional. A child is introduced informally to topics such as the alphabet and number work. At the age of five a child goes to the pre-school class. A pre-school child is formally taught academic subjects such as reading and writing and mathematical manipulations. At this point the child begins formal school work. In the low - cost nursery schools, children learn together in one room and are not usually grouped according to age. In these schools the teacher stands in front of the class and uses hardly any teaching aids other than chalk and a blackboard.

For the reasons discussed above a detailed study of the functions of the nursery schools in Nairobi is important and relevant. I intend in this study to investigate the structural links between pre--school education and primary education. Further, I shall look at the allocation of primary one places. This approach will be useful in analysing the mechanisms within the educational system that serve to intensify social stratification. The project is also intended to provide general information which might be useful in developing a suitable curriculum for pre-school education and also for the improvement of

its organisation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

An examination of the literature on pre-primary education: its growth, and its relationship with the rest of the formal educational system and the society at large, indicate that most of the studies which have been done in Kenya and elsewhere are largely psychological and emphasise development of cognitive skills in children. Some attempts however, have been made to identify the sociological significance of pre-primary education. Herzog (1969)³ found that a majority of parents of nursery school children in four communities in Kenya vigorously favour academic instruction in the pre-schools - it is the basic raison detre of the centres for all but a few parents. In the United States of America remedial programmes aimed at counter acting the effects of poverty on human development have shown that pre-school education has an influence on the later development of children. Some early findings from the most important programmes, the Headstart for pre-primary children and the Follow-Through for lower primary classes indicate that;

Follow-Through children made significantly larger fall-to-spring gains in attainment than did children in the control group. Furthermore, greatest gains were made by the children who had participated in the Headstart (Bron-Fenbrenner 1974).⁴

Difference in cognitive ability among pre-school children is an important factor to look at in this study because it can be used as criterion for selection among the applicants for primary one places. Thus the U.S.A. studies touch on the topic I am proposing to study only to the extent that pre-school experience has influence on which primary school students go to by increasing cognitive ability. Besides influencing entry requirements into primary schools, pre-school experience may be used in lower primary school to categorise the children. A child who has attended pre-school may be considered better prepared for schoolwork than a child who lacks similar experience. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968)⁵ in a study on the influence of labels on the performance of children found that both the teachers and the pupils tend to respond to the labels. In Nairobi primary schools, a child who has attended pre-school may be labelled as better prepared for academic work while another child who has not been to a pre-primary institution may be considered unprepared for schoolwork. Thus the former child may continue to do well at school and the latter may be discouraged from working hard

enough from the very beginning of his school life.

Maleche and Krystall (1975)⁶ observe the following three important changes in the world of children, particularly in the urban areas which make pre-school education important;

i) that these days, the children especially the boys can do little to contribute to the family welfare. Furthermore any duties required are meant to benefit them and not the family as a whole.

ii) The freedom in space and time has diminished. Mothers who live in small rooms in urban centres do not give their children real independence and fail to entrust them to perform tasks in the absence of adults which help them to develop feelings of competence and self-esteem.

iii) Children begin to see and hear and enquire about many aspects of life which the mothers report that they themselves do not understand.

The importance however, of pre-schools needs also to be seen in relation to the needs of the adult population. The adult population in Nairobi largely comprises working parents who have partly delegated the duties of baby care to either ayas or institutions such as kindergartens, and playgroups. It is not quite clear how the parents combine the use of nursery institutions and the aya service. Are they regarded as complementary or substitutes or both? Certainly, a mother who sells local brew in her house as a source of income would wish to have the children out of the way of the customers. In most cases such children are left on their own to play outside the house or sent to a nearby nursery school if the parent can afford the required fees and uniform. But a mother who works away from home has no choice but leave the children under the care of an institution such as a pre-school or a housemaid.

Although the child-care function of pre-schooling cannot be ruled out altogether, ayah service in Kenya is cheap, unlike in other countries with a shortage of labour. A lot of families with children attending pre-schools, especially in the urban centres, also have ayahs at home. The availability of inexpensive domestic labour and other forms of child care makes the argument that pre-schools are serving educational aspirations in the society all the more convincing. An additional factor in understanding the rapid expansion of pre-primary education is the changing pattern of parent -

child relationship among the educated parents which tends to place the child at the centre of the family activities.

Maas (1973)⁷ observed tremendous growth in pre-school education in Kampala. She tested the hypothesis that the growth of the pre-schools was due at least in part to an increased selectivity of primary schools. She found some evidence which tended to confirm this hypothesis, but the most vigorous selection seemed to be a form of self-selection in which parents restricted themselves to applying to schools with statuses roughly commensurate with their own. The differences in primary education in Kampala alluded to by Maas are spelt out much more clearly in Nairobi. In Nairobi education was established on a racial basis with the high and medium cost schools reserved for the Europeans and Asians respectively and the low cost for the Africans. Although the Africans have moved into the high and medium cost schools, the essential differences among the schools have not been removed. In Kampala the educational structure based on race was less rigid because race was not as ^{strongly} emphasised in Uganda as in Kenya. Uganda was a British protectorate and Kenya a Colony.

Research with public examinations suggests that the dichotomy between the high-cost and the low-cost schools in Kenya is as much a quality as a cost differentiation particularly at the lower levels of the educational system. Somerset (1974)⁸ in his work on the examination results of Certificate of Primary Education (C.P.E.) illustrates this fact very clearly:

Table 7.1

Certificate of Primary Education: Means Marks and Efficiency of Items in 1970 Mathematics Paper.

Sample	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Item Efficiency		
				Good	Fair	Poor
Nairobi, High-Cost: Boys	170	56.77	15.1	16	29	5
: Girls	171	53.31	.	13	29	8
Nairobi, Low-Cost: Boys	307	37.57	13.0	4	32	14
: Girls	154	30.64	10.2	0	23	27
Nyeri Low-Cost: Boys	332	36.91	14.7	11	24	15
: Girls	241	33.19	13.6	4	34	12

Somerset commenting on this table has this to say:

Several trends are strikingly apparent from this table. In the first place, pupils in the high-cost schools perform much better than pupils in the low-cost schools. The mean difference is well over one standard deviation. Differences of this order are to be expected from the greatly superior quality of education high cost schools provide although no doubt socio-economic factors also play some part.

Following the same argument in a footnote, Somerset adds that among the 1971 leavers from the city of Nairobi primary schools, 19 per cent of children from low-cost schools gained government maintained secondary places, as compared with 53 per cent of those from medium - cost schools, and as many as 69 per cent of those from high - cost schools.

Mundia (1975)⁹ notes that primary schools in Nairobi are categorised as private, assisted, special and city council maintained schools. Discussing the high-cost schools he says that fees in these schools is usually too high for most of the people and as such they are essentially enclaves of educational or social privilege and are only accessible to the rich. 'Initially these schools admitted European and Asian children only, but the process of integration is now complete.. The Africans have moved in largely because most of these schools especially schedule C primary schools have excellent results. However, no sooner than anyone of these schools admits a sizeable proportion of African children and an African or Asian headmaster comes in than the European children are withdrawn. To-day there are very few white children left in these schools: the ethnic composition is roughly four-fifths African and the rest mainly Asian. The differences among school types are now income and class differences rather than differences among races. The elite is aware of the academic excellence of these schools. Indeed if these schools maintain their performance they will definitely foster the development of an elite of birth rather than talent.

Mundia (1974)¹⁰ also looked into distribution of the 20 top Nairobi primary schools in the years 1969-71 judged by performance at Certificate of Primary Education. He found the following:

Table 2:2.

Distribution of the 20 Most Successful Schools in Nairobi in the Years 1969 - 71, by Cost Category.

Year	High-Cost	Medium-Cost	Low-Cost
1969	10 (N= 11)	10(N= 24)	0(N= 51)
70	10 (N= 11)	11(N= 24)	0(N= 51)
71	10 (N= 11)	9(N= 24)	1(N= 58)

N.B. (N=11) shows the number of schools in the cost category offering candidates for Certificate of Primary Education. The one low-cost school which did well in 1971 and the one high-cost school which performed poorly were atypical cases.

Although no systematic research has been done to explain these performance differentials among the primary schools, the high-cost schools have better physical facilities and more qualified teachers. Among the schools Mundia (1974)¹¹ studied, differences in academic attainment of teachers were quite evident. He summarised the educational characteristics of the teachers in the following table:

Teachers' Educational Attainment in the three School Types

Teachers' Educational Attainment.	Schedule 'A' %	Schedule 'B' %	Schedule 'C' %
Full Secondary	27.6	77.8	100
Part Secondary	20.7	11.1	0
Primary Education	51.7	11.1	0

In the literature from industrialised nations, there are two main approaches to the complex issue of intelligence, school performance and job access. One view stresses hereditary factors. Differences in inherited intellectual potential lead to differences in performance, which in turn lead to differential access to the most desired educational opportunities and to the most highly rewarded job opportunities. The other view emphasises environmental factors. Socio-economic differences lead to qualitative differences among schools: the wealthy can afford to pay for better education for their children. Differences in school quality lead to differences in performance which in turn lead to differences in access to opportunities. The writer of this study inclines strongly towards the latter outlook.

In the context of Nairobi, differences in primary school cost and

quality are important because structural differences once based on race but now on ability to pay have consequences for the growth and structure of pre-primary education and the reproduction of the emergent social classes.

THEORITICAL FRAME WORK

In the rhetoric, pre-primary education is perceived as an attempt by society to actualise its socialisation and pedagogical goals. The process of socialization as role training is defined by Goslin (1971)¹² as training the child for participation in rewarding adult tasks; a participation that is seen as occurring on terms set by society through the educational institutions rather than the individual's own terms. An individual however, is able to learn virtually anything presented to him so long as it ties positively with the reward system prevailing in a given socio-economic context. For instance in Kenya most educated African parents would not be concerned to ensure their children learn English if that language was not emphasised in the school curriculum and by employers. Early learning of the English language is emphasised because it is the medium of instruction and is tied to highly paid employment opportunities in the modern sector of the society.

The use of socialization and pedagogical approach as a way of looking at the development of pre-primary education in Kenya is unlikely to give us a basic understanding of the sociological significance of pre-primary education as a social development. This is largely because the socialization and pedagogical processes are evolving in a context of severe scarcity of educational, economic and employment opportunities. Arising from this scarcity and the resulting need to select and allocate, pre-primary education is contributing to the process of socio-economic stratification by differentiating children at a very early age indeed. These differences are used to legitimise the structure of the existing educational and socio-economic system.

The following remarks by Jackson and Marsden (1966)¹³ concerning educational selection in Britain apply equally well to the Kenyan and to all selective educational systems in general.

It is now clear to see the many small ways in which money and power in society prepare early for a competitive situation---. We can note how the middle classes (supported by the nursery and primary schools) respond to and prepare early for the divisions of the eleven plus - at which their children do so particularly well.

Upward mobility inside the educational system depends on the performance of a pupil in the official examinations. A child who secures a place in the high-cost schools has excellent chances of qualifying for higher education and finally enter into highly rewarded employment unlike a child who enters the low cost system.

"High^{-cost} schools provide educational ladder up which mobility is virtually unimpeded by selection examinations. Once a child secures a place in the bottom class at the age of six, his chances of graduating from the top class, thirteen years later are excellent. In the low cost system by contrast, less than 2% of the original entrants can expect to survive all the selection hurdles and graduate from higher secondary school with passes good enough to get into University.¹⁴

And access to highly rewarded adult tasks outside the educational system depends to a very large extent on the level of formal education attained and performance in the school leaving examinations. (Kinyanjui 1972).¹⁵

The process of differentiation, selection and allocation has definite implications on the distribution of scarce opportunities in the society. The most obvious outcome is the unequal^{access} to all types of socially desired opportunities including the educational opportunity. The concept of inequality of educational opportunity among the child population is an important aspect of the theoretical framework advanced to explain the structure and functioning of the pre-schools. Inequality of opportunity refers to the fact that some children have access to high-cost schools. These schools as already mentioned, virtually guarantee upward mobility inside the educational system and by implication an advantaged access to the highly rewarded adult tasks.

HYPOTHESES.

The following hypotheses are concerned with the allocative function of the pre-schools:

(1) Pre-primary experience is an important factor in the selection for primary school entrance.

Although it is not compulsory for a child to have pre-school experience to be admitted into primary school, most of the standard one entrants have in fact been to nursery schools. A situation has emerged whereby primary schools have become selective because there are far more applicants than available places for standard one children.

(2) The type of nursery school attended is one of the most important factors in determining who gets admitted into the different types of primary schools. Thus the flow of pupils tends to be from high-cost nursery schools to high-cost primary schools and from low-cost nursery schools to low-cost primary schools respectively.

The children who have attended expensive pre-schools will also be selected for places in standard one in high-cost schools and those who have gone to cheap nursery schools will gain access to low-cost primary schools. Furthermore, informal structural links between specific nursery schools and primary schools are likely to emerge. A particular primary school may tend to give preference to children from a particular pre-school. The reason may be that the pre-school provides high quality educational experience, alternatively economic factors may be involved.

(3) Children who attend the expensive private nursery schools, the high-cost city council day nurseries and some of the nursery schools owned by the church go to private schools, high-cost city council primary schools, and overseas. Other children, including those who attend the nursery schools owned by the self-help committees, welfare organisations and the cheap proprietary and city council day nurseries are admitted into the medium-cost and low-cost city council primary schools.

(4) Thus pre-schools are strictly serving an important role of allocating children to educational opportunities which are seen as a direct path to very scarce highly rewarded employment opportunities in the society.

(5) As English is the main language that is used in the schools and in the highly rewarded employment opportunities, it will also be the language of communication and instruction in the nursery schools.

English language is the mother tongue for a very small number of nursery school children and second language of the majority who must learn it because of its functional ties with the school system and the society at large.

(6) Most pre-schools will emphasise teacher directed instructional programmes partly because they are serving the children whose parents are upwardly mobile. Only a few which are serving the children whom allocation

does not matter because of their social background, and the children whose opportunity systems are in other societies, will provide a child with a learning environment geared to broad intellectual development and not just preparation in school work.

The pre-schools which only prepare children in academic work such as reading and writing also acknowledge ideally the importance of physical, moral and broad intellectual development in infants. But they do not offer a rich and stimulating learning environment which this type of development requires, that is, a place where a child may experiment creatively with educational toys and materials as well as with social relationships. This is partly because these nursery schools gear their educational programme to the expectations of parents who put a lot of emphasis on role training in form of specific skills which would place a child at an advantage over other children. Furthermore, parents may expect the children to be given special instruction on formal school work as preparation for admission into particular primary schools. These nursery schools are thus serving informally as extra classes at the lower end of primary education. This is particularly true of both the pre-schools attached to the primary schools and the classes of children who are four to six years old in the other nursery schools.

(7) Where nursery schools are attached to primary schools, the waiting lists are longer.

A child who attends a pre-school that is attached to a primary school has a better chance of securing a place in that school than a child from another nursery school. This advantage attracts a lot of applicants particularly for places in the schools which are attached to high-cost and medium-cost primary schools.

There is a subsidiary hypothesis based on the non-allocative function of the pre-primary institutions:

It is hypothesised that pre-schools are used both as inexpensive and professional form of ^{childcare} especially by working mothers in low income occupations and mothers who are in high income stratum respectively.

The low-cost nursery schools do not give access to high-cost primary education. What factors, then account for their ability to command fees? As already mentioned in the literature review, a mother who works away from home or is a member of a club has no choice but to leave the children under the care of a day nursery or housemaid.

We may now summarise the hypotheses raised in this discussion of the patterned relationships we expect to find between nursery and primary education.

(1) Pre-primary experience is an important factor in the selection for primary school entrants.

(2) Since the type of nursery school attended is one of the most important factors in determining who gets admitted into the different types of primary schools, the flow of pupils tends to be from high-cost and low-cost nursery schools to high-cost and low-cost primary schools respectively.

(3) Children who attend expensive private nursery schools, the high-cost city council day nurseries and some of the nursery schools owned by the church go to private and high-cost city council primary schools and overseas. Other children, including those who attend the nursery schools owned by the self-help committees, welfare organisations, and cheap proprietary and city council day nurseries are admitted into low-cost primary schools.

(4) Pre-schools are strictly serving an important role of allocating children to limited educational opportunities which are seen as the only direct path to very scarce highly rewarded employment opportunities.

(5) English is the language of communication and instruction in the nursery schools.

(6) Most pre-schools will emphasise strongly teacher directed academic programmes largely because they are serving children whose parents are upwardly mobile. Only a few which are serving both the children whom allocation does not matter because of the social background that they are born into, and the children whose opportunity systems are elsewhere, will provide a child with a learning environment geared to broad intellectual development and not just preparation in school work.

(7) Nursery schools which are attached to primary schools will have longer waiting lists.

(8) A subsidiary hypothesis is that pre-schools are used both as inexpensive and professional form of child-care especially by working mothers in low income occupations and mothers who are in high income section of the society respectively.

To answer these questions data on the following points will need to be sought. To what extent do pre-primary institutions differ from one another in terms of quality, fees, equipment, quality of teachers, pedagogical goals and teaching styles, etc? When and for what reasons did nursery schools first appear in Nairobi? How many are there at present? Do parents see pre-school experience as valuable in its own right or as a necessary pre-condition for either acceptance into primary school or better performance in elementary education? If the latter is the case, do the parents look to the nursery school for informal instruction it provides in English? Or do they expect the pre-schools to prepare children for primary school by formal teaching of academic skills? Do the pre-schools cater for children from families representing the entire socio-economic spectrum, or do they benefit only socially privileged children? Where do primary schools recruit primary one entrants from? If recruited from the pre-schools, which are these pre-schools? Which factors are considered in the selection for primary one classes? How long are the waiting lists? Is it cheaper or more convenient to send a child to a pre-school instead of leaving it at home until it is old enough to go to school?

Do nursery school headmistresses agree with each other and with the parents in their respective views of the appropriate role of pre-school institutions? In particular how do headmistresses view their schools' role in relation to the primary school selection and quality of its academic work? What opinions do primary school headteachers and infant teachers have about pre-primary education in Nairobi?

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

An investigation of the set of hypotheses raised in this proposal requires use of a comparative design. Out of all the children admitted into primary schools some have a pre-school background and others lack this experience. (hypothesis 1). Comparison will be made between the primary schools that admit children to the different categories of pre-schools (see hypotheses 2, 3 and 4). Information on the various characteristics of nursery schools relevant to hypotheses 5, 6 and 7 will be gathered by use of an interview schedule and observational techniques. Population data from the city council files will be used to investigate the relationship between (a) the management of nursery schools and the level of fees charged and (b) the geographical location of the nursery schools over the city and the type of management.

SAMPLING

Out of about 213 pre-primary institutions in Nairobi, 113 are private day nurseries. The private nurseries are either owned by individual entrepreneurs or by organisations such as the church and welfare institutions. For instance, a day nursery may belong to a sisterhood and is located in the grounds of a church or may be owned by a proprietor who rents the church premises to run a private day nursery. The city administration owns about 30 nursery schools; 15 of them are under the department of health and the rest are under the department of education. The nursery schools under the department of education are attached to city council primary schools. The remaining 70 out of the total of 213 pre-primary institutions are self-help nursery schools.

Thus, there is a large number of nursery schools in Nairobi and one cannot collect information on all of them. Quota sampling has been used in identifying the nursery schools that are included in the sample. This is a method of stratified sampling in which the selection within strata is non-random, but adequate safeguards have been built to make it quite reliable against selection biases. Quota sampling technique has been used for one main reason: it makes it possible to include in the sample schools representing the various categories of nursery schools. For instance, out of a sub-sample of 5 pre-school units, two are attached to high-cost (Schedule C), and the rest to low-cost (Schedule A) primary schools. Furthermore, some important categories of nursery schools have too few units to necessitate a random selection. An example is the city council day nurseries. There are 15 in number but only 5 are located in the high and medium cost residential areas. The rest are situated in the cheap estates, found in Eastlands of Nairobi. These cheap estates are open communities where the children from different homes interact regularly mainly due to lack of enclosed compounds. This may be contrasted with the expensive suburbs where homes are more or less exclusive. The children in these secluded areas can only mix freely with their friends during family visits and with other children when they are at school. As a whole, there are many residential communities in Nairobi. The estates are heterogeneous and vary greatly particularly in terms of incomes of the residents. Some of these communities are not only situated at the periphery of the city and are occupied by poor families but are also rural in many ways. Most of the self-help nursery schools are found in ^{the latter} communities. Other suburbs particularly the former European and Asian residential areas are occupied by families of mixed races with substantial incomes. Nearly all of the private day nurseries are situated in these neighbourhoods.

THE STAMPLE

CATEGORY OF PRE-PRIMARY INSTITUTION	TOTAL NUMBER	THE NURSERY SCHOOLS IN THE SAMPLE
<u>PRE-SCHOOLS</u>		
These are attached to primary schools. They belong to the city council and admit children at the age of five, one year before entering primary school.	15.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Muthaiga2. Karen C. <p>These are two of the four pre-school units attached to the high-cost city council primary schools.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Madaraka4. Uhuru <p>These two pre-schools are attached to low - cost primary schools which are located in medium income estates.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Kariobangi. This pre-school is attached to a low - cost primary school. Kariobangi estate is at the periphery of the city and is an essentially poor community.
<u>CITY COUNCIL DAY NURSERIES</u>	15.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Joseph Kangethe (formerly Woodley Day Nursery)2. Lady Northey. <p>These are two of the three city council day nurseries located in the expensive suburbs which were almost exclusively European.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Nairobi West: Is situated behind the Nairobi West shopping centre. Nairobi West is a suburb which has been a residence for Asians until recently when Africans started to move in.4. State House Day Nursery: This is located in an expensive suburb. It was built to meet the child care needs of domestic workers at State House.

These nurseries are located in the expensive residential areas which were predominantly European. They charge a fairly low fee which is considerably less than the fee charged by the private day nurseries in the same suburbs.

PROPRIETARY DAY NURSERIES: 78

a) Nursery schools charging fees of up to shs.100 per month. These institutions are situated in fairly expensive suburbs which were formerly Asian but Africans have moved in. Thus the population in these residential areas in a mixture of Africans and Asians.

b) Nursery schools charging monthly fee from shs. 101/- to shs.250/- per month 33

c) Nursery schools charging monthly fees of shs.251/- and over. 30

The nursery schools in categories b and c above, are located in very expensive and exclusive suburbs. Some of these residential areas were exclusively European, others Asian, and the rest a mixture of both. But now Africans have moved in, thus at the moment the residents are a mixture of blacks, whites and Asians. The majority of the nursery schools charging monthly fees of shs.251/- and over also charge termly fees between Shs.750/- to shs. 1800/-. Some of them also have lower primary school classes, mostly standards one and two.

NURSERY SCHOOLS OWNED BY CHURCH, WELFARE SOCIETIES AND OTHER PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS: 35

- 5. Ziwani Day Nursery: Is located in a fairly cheap estate which is wholly African.
- 6. Bahati Day Nursery: Is located in a low - cost residence at the Eastlands of Nairobi and is entirely African.

- 1. St Judes Day Nursery
- 2. Okwara Playgroup
- 3. Cockar "
- 4. Happy Hours Day Nursery
- 5. Rahima Day Nursery

- 1. Lenana Day Nursery
- 2. Wonderland Kindergarten
- 3. St. Ann's Day Nursery
- 4. St. Teresa's Day Nursery
- 5. Sclatters Kindergarten
- 6. Andy Pandy
- 7. Jack and Jill - Nairobi South C.

- 1. Greengates Kindergarten
- 2. Malborough Day Nursery
- 3. Kestral Manor School
- 4. Riverside Day Nursery
- 5. Riara Day Nursery
- 6. St. Stephen's Day Nursery
- 7. Westlands Kindergarten
- 8. Jambo Kindergarten

- 1. Consolata
- 2. Baptist Kindergarten
- 3. Valley Road

a) Owned by Christian Church and managed by both Europeans and Africans

15

These nurseries are located in the expensive residential areas which were predominantly European. They charge a termly fee which is considerably less than the fee charged by the private day nurseries in the same suburbs.

1. Waridi
2. St. Andrews.

These two day nurseries are located in expensive suburbs

3. St. Joseph's-Jericho: This day nursery is located in a low cost estate. It charges a monthly fee much higher than the rest of the nursery schools in the Eastlands and other cheap estates in Nairobi.

b) Owned by Asian Welfare and Religious communities and managed by Asians.

10

1. Visa Oshwal
2. Vive Kanand Bar Mandir
3. Mariakani Christian Centre.

These three are located in fairly expensive estates which are occupied predominantly by Asians and Africans.

c) Owned by other Welfare organisations and public institutions.

10

1. Mama Ngina Day Nursery
2. Dr. Barnados Day Nursery

These two nursery schools are located in medium income residential areas. Some of their pupils are the destitute children who are admitted into these institutions. Other children are brought to school and taken back home by their parents or by domestic workers everyday.

3. Nairobi School Day Nursery
4. Kenya Science Teachers College Day Nursery.

These two nursery schools are meant to serve the needs of the children of employees of these institutions. However, they also admit children from outside.

SELF-HELP NURSERY
SCHOOLS (HARAMBEE)

70

1. Mathare Valley-Village 1
2. " " " 2
3. " " " 3
4. " " " Kanu Office
5. " " " Village IV A
6. " " " " IV B
7. " " " Ngei I
8. " " " Ngei II
9. Thayu Village
10. Kariobangi
11. Baptist Day Nursery
12. Gitathuru
13. Mango Farm.

Most of the self-help day nurseries are not licensed and are under the department of Social Services. These nursery schools fail in every way to meet the prevailing requirements of running a nursery school. But they are allowed to operate partly because they are established by poor communities. Also the City administration has not built better day nurseries to replace the existing ones.

DATA COLLECTION

The study aims to use several approaches to data collection:

- (i) the use of a standardised interview schedule for the nursery school head-teachers.
- (ii) Use of documentary sources of information. For instance, the application forms, time-tables, and other relevant records available in the pre-schools. These sources would give information about age, sex, religion, parents' occupation and any other information considered useful to a study of this kind. A detailed study of the socio-economic status of the children would add a new dimension into the insights on pre-school education. However, it is not likely that we shall be able to collect detailed information on socio-economic status due to the limited scope of the study.
- (iii) Population data from the available records will be collected. This data will be used to strengthen the sample data where necessary.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics will be used mainly and will include percentages, means, and other measures of central tendency and dispersion as required. For instance, the characteristics of different types of nursery schools will be compared with the characteristics of the primary schools which admit their children and the results presented in form of statistical tables.

Other statistical techniques particularly the chi-square measures will be used to establish the significance of the identified relationships.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

These findings are based on data obtained from nursery schools in two Nairobi communities. Both of them are among the poorest communities in Nairobi and have distinctive geo-social boundaries with their neighbouring residential areas.

Using the notation in the table (see table 1), community A is served by two nursery schools and four primary schools, and Community B is served by nine nursery schools and three primary schools. Until recently, however, most of the children in community B, used to cover a long distance past another large community to a cluster of primary schools.

These nursery schools are very poorly equipped. They have only a blackboard, a duster, a box of chalk and a piece of stick. The stick is used for beating naughty infants. In one case, there are no seats. The children are made to sit in lines on a concrete floor.

About 95 per cent of class one places in primary school (P1) are filled by children from two nursery schools N1 and N2. The remaining vacancies go to children without a pre-school background but on a condition that they enroll in a particular nursery school (N2) once selected. Admission forms for primary one places are issued in August. From what I have gathered from the nursery school teachers, the primary school headmasters issue just enough forms, thus in practice doing the selection.

Primary school (P1) can only absorb a small proportion of children in community A. Others seek admission into primary schools P2 and P3. There are also many children who join the youth centres which operate as cheap private schools while others do not go to any school at all. Primary school (P3) is relatively new and has not submitted candidates for Certificate of Primary Education (C.P.E.) Although primary schools P1 and P2 are both old schools, P1 is better in quality than P2. Primary P1 is able to secure proportionately twice as many C.P.E. passes as primary school P2.

The method of selection for primary one places in primary school P1 is very interesting indeed. The headmaster walks into nursery schools N1 and N2 one morning in the month of August and asks the teachers to present children for selection. The interview consists of checking on the age of children. If he is satisfied that a child is of the required age, the child is given a note to take home to the parents. The purpose of the note is to inform the parents that their child has been offered a primary one place.

They are also advised that they are required to present the child fully dressed in the prescribed school uniform on the day they go to the school to fill in the admission form. Thus evidence of having spent some time in a pre-school and age respectively, are the conditions looked for before a child is admitted in this particular primary school. Most of the children in nursery N2 once selected for primary one places in August, are immediately withdrawn from the nursery school for the rest of the year. This makes it very clear that pre-school education is attended with the sole purpose of gaining a place in primary one.

The method of selection used by primary school P1 is generally representative of the approach used by the other schools which admit children from the nursery schools I have visited so far, of course with slight variation here and there. For instance, the headmistress of nursery school N8 presents her children for selection at primary school P6 and also fills the admission forms for the children without involving the parents.

These preliminary findings support the hypothesis that the nursery schools are being used to regulate the entry of children into primary education.

There are fewer primary one places than the number of children of school going age at any one year. This is true of the two communities that we are discussing and may also be true for the rest of Nairobi. The fact that primary one places are scarce is very important in understanding the functions and structures of pre-school education and also its role in the allocation of educational opportunities. In a situation of scarcity, the desired service has a cost which is used to discriminate against those who cannot afford to pay the required price. The nursery schools that I visited charge shs.15 - 60/- per term. Indeed one of them knows precisely its real worth in determining who gets a place in primary one and is utilising it fully. Its headteacher had this to say:

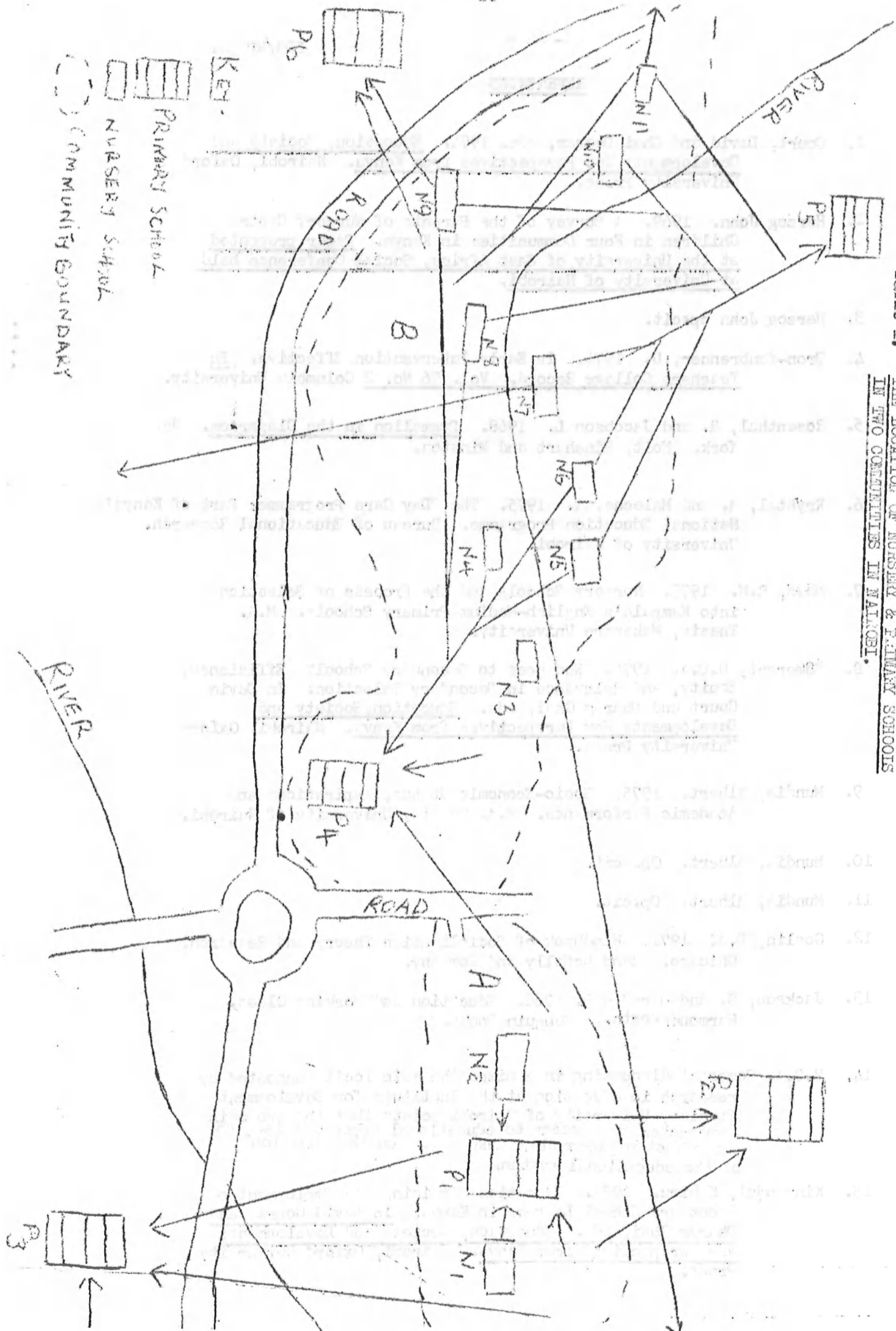
"I do not allow any child to discontinue once selected for primary one place in August. However, a child could be withdrawn under special circumstances such as when parents want to send a child to visit relatives in the rural areas BUT on the condition that the fees for the remaining part of the year is paid. If however a child is withdrawn without paying this money we can contact the headteacher of the primary school and make arrangements to re-allocate the vacancy to one of our other children."

I have not collected sufficient information to investigate the complementary hypothesis which sees pre-schools as baby sitting institutions for busy mothers. However, the little evidence that I have gathered so far does support this view. Most of the mothers of these children are working either in small businesses within their respective communities or are employed in the offices and restaurants in other parts of Nairobi.

In nursery school N7, there are more than four children who live with their grandmothers. Among them, there are two children, a brother and sister whose mother work in a restaurant in the city centre. In nursery school N2, many children were withdrawn when the fees was doubled from shs. 10 - 20/- per month. One parent withdrew her two children. On further investigation I learnt that she employed a house maid. Another mother who had three children in the class withdrew the younger two; but left the five year old.

These findings indicate quite clearly that an investigation of the patterns of interaction between these two uses of pre-schools; the allocation of children into places in primary one and child care, may yield very interesting results.

Table 1. THE LOCATION OF NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN TWO COMMUNITIES IN MALIBOI.



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