INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS ON ENROLMENT OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN KURESOI DIVISION, NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA

SUSAN CHEPKEMOI NG'ENO

A Research project submitted in Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Degree of Masters of Education in Early Childhood Education in the Department of Educational Communication and Technology of the University of Nairobi

2012
DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been submitted for any award of degree in any other institution.

_____________________________
Susan Chepkemoi Ng'eno

This project has been submitted with the knowledge of the supervisors

_____________________________
Dr. Jane C. Gatumu
Senior Lecturer,
Department of Educational Communication and Technology, University of Nairobi
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband John Kiplang’at Ng’eno, children Roseline, Charles and Mercy, and son in- law Paul for their continuous encouragement and support during the study.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deep appreciation to my family for giving me the opportunity to gain access to higher education and for their full financial support during my study.

Special thanks, goes to my supervisor Dr. Jane C. Gatumu who began the journey of research with me and kept on encouraging and giving me direction until the work was accomplished. What I have learned from her will help me in future as an individual to write good reports or proposals which will create a better impression of the institutions I work for.

I thank the DEO Kuresoi District, Musikoyo S. Angoye, Head teachers of Kiptororo zone, parents and my research colleagues during the data collection stage of my research. I am grateful to Charles Ng'enno who helped me type and provide information needed during the research period.
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to find out the influence of parental characteristics on enrolment of preschool children in Kuresoi Division, Nakuru County, Kenya. The study’s objectives were to establish the relationship between parental income and children enrolment in preschool, to establish the relationship between education level of the parent and enrolment of their children in preschool, to determine the relationship between household composition and children enrolment in preschool and to find out the influence of parental occupation on children enrolment in preschool. The study employed cross-sectional design, targeting parents with children who should be in preschool, head teachers and the area chief of Kuresoi Division in Kuresoi District. The researcher used snowball sampling to identify potential respondents in the study. The sample size comprised 100 parents with children who should have joined preschool. Documentary analysis was provided by the head-teachers showing preschool children enrolment. Interview schedule was used to collect information from parents while questionnaires were used for the head teachers’ and the area chief. Reliability of the instrument was ensured by computing a reliability coefficient and validity was tested through a pilot study. The data was analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The research utilized descriptive analysis and data was presented in form of tables, graphs and pie charts. Research findings would be valuable to the government and education policy makers as it will inform them and give them a basis of further study particularly in children enrolment in preschools, parents, teachers and all scholars interested in education and factors affecting preschool children enrolment. The study noted the following findings; parental income of the parents is low causing them not to be able to enroll their children to preschool. The education level of parents is too low for them to appreciate the importance of educating their preschool children. Family composition is an issue since a majority of them come from single and polygamous families that are not conducive for their learning. Polygamous families are unstable, thus the children lack adequate academic support. Majority of the parents are peasant farmers who get too little from their occupation to be able to support their children’s preschool education and thus causing low enrolment in the district. This study concluded that there was need to improve on the enrolment of preschool children. The government can help by providing free preschool education. The government through different stakeholders should try providing school feeding programs for preschoolers. The government should also initiate adult education to help those parents who are not well educated so that they can appreciate the importance of preschool education. The researcher noted issues emerging from the study and recommended other research areas for further investigation such as family composition and its effect to preschool children enrolment.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECDE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEO</td>
<td>District Education Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPE</td>
<td>Free Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Office of Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Education Scientific and Culture Organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Problem

According to UNESCO, Education Digest (2005) on participation rate of preschool Education 2002/03, the gross enrolment ratio on participation in most industrialized countries is above 80 percent, while the lowest is Africa and Middle East range is below 20 percent. Research conducted by Friedrich (2009) showed that preschool enrolment worldwide has decreased in some countries such as the former Soviet Union and Central Europe. Low enrolment rate values were also observed in Central, South and East Asia where most preschool enrolment rates were below the required percentage. Enrolment tends to vary due to the huge differences in level of parental income worldwide.

In Kenya, preschool education has been declining since the introduction of free primary education as stated by Sessional Paper 1, 2005; where early childhood education was recognized as an independent sector. Most parents opted to keep their children at home until they attained the age of six years, which entitled them to Free Primary Education. The parents did this to avoid preschool payment, arguing that the government should provide for free preschool education as well. At this age the child is taken straight to standard one, which is free, without going through an ECDE programme. As a result of this standard one teachers complained that the children who skipped ECDE programme have difficulty coping with lessons and also performed poorly in class. This tendency was particularly pronounced among the poor families who cannot afford early childhood education centres fees. Preschool enrolment can only be increased if the government can
establish policies and incentives to create demand for preschool education.

Becker's Model (1973) indicates that the probability of a child attending preschool education comes as a result of a family maximizing their income. The study focuses on parental characteristics in order to come up with what type of parents enrolled their children in preschool and who are unable. The study focused mainly on parental income, education level, household composition and parental occupation.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Kuresoi Division is an area where people experienced chronic ethnic violence and displacement in the past years as reported by Sitienei (2008). He explained that, ethnic identity features so centrally in political conflicts, where people tend to prefer members of their own community leading to unwillingness to peacefully coexist with other ethnic groups.

Most of the people who live in this area are peasant farmers, casual workers, small-scale traders, domestic servants and underage mothers. They dropped out of school after giving birth while still under their parents’ care. Due to economic hardship in the country, most of these families suffer financial and social problems. This makes them unable to financially provide their children both the daily bread and enrollment fees in pre-school centres. Even through early childhood is important in the promotion of primary school readiness and sustain on child’s cognitive development.

Recent reports by the Kuresoi District Education Officer during 2010/2011 stakeholders forum, state that over 2000 preschool age children are not enrolled in preschool centres. This shows that most children can not gain access to learning programmes unless efforts
are made to address the challenges mentioned earlier; which are beyond the child's understanding. The study sought to investigate the influence of parental characteristics on enrolment of preschool children in ECDE centres focusing mainly on independent variables such as parental income, education level, household composition, and parental occupation.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to establish the relationship between parental characteristics and enrolment of the children in preschool.

1.4 Research Objective

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

a) To establish the relationship between parental income and children enrolment in preschool.

b) To establish the relationship between education level of the parent and enrolment of their children in preschool.

c) To determine the relationship between household composition and children enrolment in preschool.

d) To find out the influence of parental occupation on children enrolment in preschool.
1.5 Research Questions

The research questions for this study were:

a) What is the relationship between parental income and enrolment of children in preschool?

b) What is the relationship between education level of the parent and enrolment of children in preschool?

c) How does household composition influence enrolment of preschool children?

d) What is the influence of parental occupation on children enrolment in preschool?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study’s findings provide the Ministry of Education planners, teachers, learners, the public and other stakeholders with a better understanding of the importance of preschool enrolment in the district. This will help the Ministry of Education decide where to increase their investment in childcare’s early years as they set the stage for subsequent education and development.

It will also enable them to identify education sector’s institutional needs for improvement and ensure that quality teaching is offered in our preschool institutions. The findings will enable the District Education Officers to reevaluate their activities and apply the recommendations made by the study to improve Early Childhood Development Education through government efforts such as school subsidy.

The findings will also help the Constituency Development Planners and other ministries
partnering in education understand that education is in vain if the entry point to literacy is ignored. This helps the stakeholders and parents to understand the importance of early childhood education and recommends strategies to address the situation of preschool enrolment.

1.7 Limitation of the study

The study was conducted in Kiptororo zone which is a rural setting hence the results may not be applicable to other parts of Kenya. This is because the culture and economic status might be different yet they may have the same problem.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

The research was carried out in Kuresoi division, Kiptororo zone. This is because the statistics gathered at the Education Office shows that enrolment in the schools in this zone was the lowest within the district.

1.9 Basic Assumptions

The study assumed that preschool centres have adequate facilities for the children found within a given area yet parents are unable to enroll children in these centres. Secondly, it assumed that preschool fees and levies are affordable to all the parents in these areas if only they can maximize their economic inputs.

1.10 Definition of Key terms

**Marital status** refers to a person’s marital status often indicates whether the person is single or married and often includes divorced, widowed, widower and cohabiting.
**Parental Characteristics**  This refers to behavioral and social factors of the parents such as education level, household composition and parental occupation.

**Preschool Enrolment**  the means of registering and learning in ECDE centres by pre-school children.

1.1 **Organisation of the study**

This research paper is organised into five chapters and contains the introduction of the study, which highlights the background of the problem, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitation of the study, basic assumptions, and definition of key terms then ends with organization of the study.

The second chapter is concerned with the review of the literature that is concerned with enrolment of preschool children. It focuses on what other researchers have said about effects parental characteristics on enrolment of preschool children, theoretical and conceptual framework.

Chapter three deals with research methodology, research design, sampling procedures, research instruments, reliability and validity. It also presents the data collection and data analysis procedures. The fourth chapter presents the analysis of the study findings from discussions around the four objective questions. Chapter five comprises of the summary of the study, conclusion and recommendation of the study.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction
This chapter reviews literature related to effect of parental characteristics and their influence on children enrolment in pre-school. Literature is reviewed from text books, journals, articles, academic papers, newspapers and the internet on the effects of parental characteristics which include education level, parental income, household composition, and parental occupation. The study reviews work done by other workers, empirical studies, a conceptual framework developed by the researcher and research gaps.

2.2 Parental Income
According to Eamon (2005) economic hardship are caused by low socioeconomic status of the parents and can lead to disruption in parenting, increase amount of family conflicts and increase the likelihood of depression in single parent households. Socioeconomic status indicates the quality of home life for children. (Becker and Tomes, 1976) states that an increase in an individual’s income relatively increases the quality of their children. Families with high socioeconomic status often succeed in preparing their children for schooling because they have access to a wider range of resources to promote, explore and support young children mental and physical development as well as providing educational toys which can groom their character. These opportunities help parents understand the emotional, mental, social, physical, psychological, and cognitive growth of their children. High socioeconomic status builds the confidence of an
individual to face challenges in life compared to poverty stricken families who hopelessly struggle to make their ends meet in life than children’s schooling (Becker and Tomes, 1976).

Parents not only lack financial, social and educational support but they also find themselves struggling to accrue financial resources and lack time for their children to impact values, good habits, manners and basic nutrition for their children. Their children enter primary school unprepared as their peers from families with medium or higher social economic status.

According to Epstein (2001) children from low income families become victim of diseases, physical, mental disabilities and homelessness due to environmental factors than children from rich families. Therefore socioeconomic background of the family sets the road map of academic achievements. Family background is the key to student's life and outside school. The environment at home influences the child's interest in school and aspiration for the future. (Schoggen, 1979) suggested that economic and social science perspective have a role on family composition in education attainment. The higher female labour force participation increases the child's education quality but less parental time. When the child is young, time is considered more important than money (income) in raising a child quality determines a child's performance in schooling.

2.3 Education Level

According to Okoli (1981) foundation in the home is laying the moral, spiritual and intellectual foundations that build the child later in life. Unless this foundation is set at home, the school will have nothing to build upon the child later and this becomes a
problem not only to the parents but also to the community as a whole. Children of the educated parents are reliable than children of lower or home educated parents (Andrea, 1992).

Parent’s educational value has direct impact on their children's educational aspirations (Okantey, 2008). Okantey further states that children schooling is positively related to their parents because children tend to imitate their parents and also aspire to be highly educated as their parents. Children are more disadvantaged when their parents have low education level; forming a cycle of uneducated family members and making every generation of the family not to go higher than their parents. Children from highly educated families are more ambitious and attain higher levels of education.

Education levels of the parents have a positive and significant effect on the enrolment of preschool children since parental level of education influences parental involvement, support and expectation to their children. Okantey (2008) further argues that parental education level leads to good income which can empower parents to give children solid foundation for schooling and life success. Lower educational level is associated with higher prevalence of indicators of unhealthy lifestyle. Therefore parents’ efficacy has stronger predictors of schooling success.

2.4 Household composition

Majoribanks (1996) states that children from single parents households do not perform as well as children from nuclear family households. Single parents have less income and lack support which can increase stress and conflicts. They usually struggle with time management issues in order to balance many different areas; in the process some
become less involved with their children and give less encouragement and have low expectation for their children than nuclear family households. Divorced parents negatively affect academic achievement of their children and cause a decrease in family's socioeconomic status and parental connections are harmed (Jeynes, 2002; Majoribanks, 1996). Therefore a household decision to enroll their children in preschool programme is found to be difficult as they claim the cost of care. High cost of preschool education discourages them in taking their children to ECDE centres. The influence of wages on demand for schooling is expected through a combination of income and substitution wage to increase preschool participation that increases the enrolment.

According to (Becker, 1992) parental investment in their children contributes to the wealth of the entire family. Education per child is usually lower in families with more children. Lower resources for all children can lead to lower life perspective. The number of siblings decreases the likelihood of choosing ECDE centres for preschool children.

2.5 Parental Occupation

According to Homushek and Ludger (1992) parental time inputs to children during preschool age and schooling periods depend on children spacing, family size, parental education, mother's labour force participation and increase in family income. With the dramatic increase in female labour participation, mothers are likely to enroll their children in preschool centres, since preschool programs accommodate families whose working schedules are tight and they need the entire full day programme as the other older children. They also believe all day care allows children to interact with their peers and expose them to several learning experiences that are beneficial to ECDE children.
Powell (1998) found that in cities, childcare costs have a negative effect on the probability that the mother works full time. Connely and Kimmel (2000) indicate that the probability of using ECDE centres based care increases with full time employment of mothers than mothers employed part time for the rely on childcare provided by relatives. Others do not enroll their children in preschool for they do not understand why early childhood programs are important and they believe their children are not ready to begin formal education. High available wages encourage mothers to work outside their homes, while high cost childcare suppresses maternal employment. Jeynes (2005) states that there are significant negative effects on the presence of young siblings on school enrolment due to the cost of care. High cost of care can discourage parents from using preschool centres. Maternal wages influence the cost of care for young children; this affects enrolment of school going children. The influence of wages available to mothers on demand for schooling is expected through a combination of income in substitution effects. Increase in mother's labour rises school participation for boys and depresses schooling for girls, since they substitute the mother in household chores.

2.6 Theoretical Framework
The study was guided by Becker's model of family theory (1973). His underlying assumption was that household savings and consumption have a strong impact on the probability that children will join preschool. Household maximizing their utility depend on both level of consumption and the number of children in the family. Different households face certain income constrains depending on certain household characteristics such as education level of parents, household earning and the number of children. However, household problems should be solved by maximizing assets at that
time. Economic status determines the extent of parental involvement in their children's education. Parents who are illiterate and poor cannot afford to buy supplementary learning materials and are less likely to be actively involved in their children's education. They are always preoccupied with different chores to provide for their families, this involves engaging in some form of child labour that enable them contribute towards family provision and sustenance.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 represents the research structure of parental characteristics as independent variables and their interplay with dependent variable.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

**Independent Variables**

- Parental Income
  - Socio-economic status
  - Family income

- Educational level
  - Parental educational level
  - Parental educational value

- Household composition
  - Type of families
  - Number of children
  - Family size

- Parental occupation
  - Parental employment
  - Mode of employment
  - Mother’s salary/wages

**Dependent variable**

Enrolment of preschool children
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the methodology on how the study was conducted. It includes, research design, target population, sample and sampling technique, research instruments, reliability and validity, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research Design

According to Kothari (2004) research design is defined as framework that shows how problems under investigation will be solved. The design of this study was cross-sectional design. This design is where the researcher interviews a sample group either one by one or as a group to represent the opinions of the whole population. This was used to ask a group of respondents a set of questions at one point and analyze the factors pointed out. This was administered for a limited period of time as external changes may have effect on attitudes of respondents as time progressed. This research design was designed to investigate parental characteristics and strive to discuss attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of respondents. The study focused on parental characteristics such as parental income, education level, parental occupation, and household composition.

3.3 Target Population

The study was carried out among parents of Kiptororo zone in Kuresoi district since it was found to be the zone with the highest number of children between the age of 3-5
years who are not enrolled in preschool centres within Kuresoi (Kenya Population and Housing Census Report, 2009). Out of the nine zones in the district, Kiptororo has the highest number of over 2000 children not enrolled in preschool.

3.4 Sampling Procedures and Sample size

Sampling procedures means selecting a given number of respondents from a representative of a defined population (Orodho, 2004). The description of the defined population and common boundaries characteristics of the sample members are the same. The main function of sampling was to allow the researcher to conduct the study on individuals from the population so that the results of the study conclusion were applied to the entire population. The intended targets in this study were parents who were not enrolling their preschool age children in ECDE centres. The researcher used snowball sampling to identify potential respondents in the study. After observing the respondents, the researcher asked them to identify other people having the same characteristics. The researcher observed the nominated respondents and continued in the same method until 100 parents had been found.

3.5 Research Instruments

The researcher collected information from parents who had not enrolled their children in preschool centres using questionnaires. According to Kothari (2004) structured questionnaire is best suited for descriptive study as it is easily applied and requires less skill. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) said that a guided interview can be used to interview the respondents. Some may not understand questionnaires because of the low level of education which was a major hindrance in Kiptororo. The researcher therefore
guided them in answering the questions through translating the questions into the language the respondents were familiar with. This exercise took place simultaneously with note taking and audio recording using a recorder.

A questionnaire was issued to the parents from the three schools within the zone. The researcher conducted interview schedules for head teacher, area chief and area educational officer having education level, parental income, household composition, and parental occupation characteristics in order to come up with a reason why those parents are not enrolling their children in preschool centres. This made them open up more than they did on the one by one interview. During the interview the researcher took notes and also record the whole session in an audio recorder. The researcher also used documentary analysis to summarize the key findings concerning enrolment of preschool children in the district per term. This was done by checking the school enrolment records and making an average per term.

3.6 Validity

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) validity is a degree to which result obtained from data represents the phenomena under study. Ranjit and Kumar (2005) further define validity as the quality of measurement procedure that provides respectability and accuracy. In this study the questionnaire, interview schedule and documentary analysis were given to University of Nairobi supervisors who are experts in the field to ascertain the validity. The researcher conducted a pilot interview schedule in Kamara division simultaneously and at different periods with research assistants. The researcher then corrected the questions that were not measuring up. The researcher
included more questions to cover all the research objectives.

### 3.7 Reliability

A reliability test is a method of making the test reliable by pre testing the instrument. Mugenda (2008) noted that pre-testing is essential. This identifies errors found in the study instrument which can later be corrected. Moreover, pre-testing of instruments help to estimate time needed to administer the instrument.

The test retest reliability of an instrument is assessed by administering it to the same people on two different occasions and calculating the Cronbach co-efficient between the scores. The value of the alpha coefficient ranges from 0 to 1 and is used to describe the reliability of factors extracted from questions with two possible answers, a higher value greater than 0.7 shows that the questionnaire is more reliable. Table 3.1 shows the results of the test of the questionnaire. The coefficients were all greater than 0.7. A conclusion was therefore drawn that the instruments had an acceptable reliability coefficient and were appropriate.
Table 3.1 Reliability test Analysis for the questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>No of items per objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental income of the parents</td>
<td>.811</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level of the parent</td>
<td>.745</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household composition of the parents</td>
<td>.824</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental occupation on children enrolment in preschool.</td>
<td>.798</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.8 Data collection procedures

First the researcher obtained permission from the DEO's office in Kuresoi district where she was provided with the names of schools found within Kiptororo zone and their enrolment statistics. The visit to the DO's office served as an introduction step so that arrangement was made for the researcher to conduct research and participants were assured that their confidentiality would be maintained. The researcher then set out on a pilot study in Kamara to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the research instruments. The pilot study also gave the researcher the opportunity to evaluate the usefulness of the data (Kothari, 2004). Once the instruments were considered valid and reliable, the researcher headed to Kiptororo zone for the actual research study.

A questionnaire was issued to the parents who had not enrolled their children in
preschool centres and yet they had attained the required age from the three schools within the zone. The researcher also conducted interview schedule with the area chief, area educational officer and the head teachers’ parents

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to examining the collected data and making discussions, inferences and conclusions Kothari (2004). The researcher started by data cleaning where she inspected the data and corrected any errors. Data was processed (edited, classified and coded) and entered into the computer for analysis.

The data was obtained from the parents through the questionnaires. The researcher got the average of the children enrolled per term in preschools in the district. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to aid the processing and analysis of the data collected. The researcher analysed descriptive data and presented them in form of frequency tables. This was done according to objectives that included parental income, education level, household composition and parental occupation. The findings showed the difference in children enrolment to preschool from different parental characteristics.
CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the findings and discussion of findings on parental income, parents’ educational level, family composition and parental occupation and their influence on children enrolment in preschool.

4.2 Parental income and children enrolment in preschool

Table 4.1 shows the parental income and its effect on the children enrolment in preschool.

**Table 4.1 Parental income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental income per month</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of children enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5,000</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,000 to 10,000</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,000 to 20,000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20,000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 shows that the majority of the parent respondents 55% (n = 55) earn less than 5,000/= and the enrolment of their children is rated as very low since majority of the preschool children enrolled per term is just one child. They are followed by those earning between 7,000/= to 10,000/= whose children enrolment in preschool is rated as low since average enrolment per term is 2 children. Parents earning more than 20,000/=
have very high rate of children enrolled since they had an average of 3 children enrolled for preschool per term.

According to Eamon (2005) the economic hardship are caused by low socioeconomic status of the parents and can lead to disruption in parenting, increase amount of family conflicts and increase the likelihood of depression in single parent households. Socio-economic status indicates the quality of home life for children. Becker and Tomes, (1976) states that an increase in an individual’s income relatively increases the quality of their children. Families with high socioeconomic status often succeed in preparing their children for schooling because they have access to a wider range of resources to promote, explore and support young children mental and physical development as well as providing educational toys which can groom their character. These opportunities, help parents understand the emotional, mental, social, physical, psychological, and cognitive growth of their children. High socioeconomic status builds the confidence of an individual to face challenges in life compared to poverty stricken families who hopelessly struggle to make their ends meet in life than children's schooling.

Table 4.2 presents the number of parents who are able to pay school fees for their preschool children and its effect on the enrolment of preschool children.
Table 4.2 Ability of parents to pay fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental income per month</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of children enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not able</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very able</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 shows that majority of the parents 60% (n = 60) were not able to pay school fees for their preschool children. Those that are comfortable in paying school fees for their preschool children are only 17% (n = 17). From these findings most of the parents are poor and hence unable to finance their children preschool education. The school enrolment of these parents is low since majority of the parents are poor.

According to Epstein (2001) children from low income families suffer from diseases, physical, mental disabilities and homelessness due to environmental factors than children from rich families. Therefore, socioeconomic background of the family sets the road map of academic achievements. Family background is the key to student's life and outside school Epstein (2001). The environment at home influences the child's interest in school and aspiration for the future. Schoggen and Schogen (1968) suggested that economic and social science perspective have a role on family composition in education attainment.
4.3 Educational level of parents and enrolment of their children in preschool

Table 4.3 shows the educational level of parents and its influence on children enrolment in preschool.

**Table 4.3 Educational level of parents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational level of parents</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of children enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.C.S.E</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 shows that majority of the respondents 47% (n = 47) of the parents were KCSE certificate holders as their highest level of education. They are followed by 29% (n = 29) who attained education up to certificate level while 7% (n = 7) had degrees as their highest level of education. From the findings the preschool children whose parents attained degree level of education have high rate of children enrolment in preschool at 3 children per term while the children from parents who attained KCSE certificate level and below are having low rate of 1 child per term enrolled and they are making the majority. This can be explained from the fact that parent’s level of education may be leading to access to resources such as income and involve themselves more in school activities. In addition, parental level of education influences parental knowledge, beliefs and benefits about educating children by enrolling them to preschool.
Education level of the parents has positive and significant effect on the enrolment of preschool children, as a result parental level of education influences parental involvement, support and expectation to their children. Okantey (2008) further argues that parental education level leads to good income which can empower parents to give children solid foundation for schooling and life success. A lower educational level is associated with higher prevalence of indicators of unhealthy lifestyle.

However the researcher found out that in some cases of preschool children enrolment whose parents had a low education level yet they had a high children enrolment in preschool, this was shown from the interview of the head teacher. After investigation the researcher realized that the bright children from poor families get sponsorship from Child Care Fund offered to some school children in this area.

The researcher then sought to investigate the parents’ involvement in school activities and its influence in children enrolment in preschool. The results are shown in Table 4.4.
Table 4.4 Parents involvement in school activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental income per month</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of children enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 shows that majority 44% (n=44) of the parents sometimes involve themselves in school activities, 22% (n=22) involve themselves very much while a mere 18% (n=18) involve themselves much. This is as a result of the parents having low interest with the preschool education and therefore cannot visit the schools and get to appreciate the importance of the children to get preschool education. This causes them to ignore taking their children to school resulting to low enrolment in the district.

According to Okoli (1981) education at home is laying the foundation of moral, spiritual and intellectual that builds the child later in life. Unless this foundation is set in the home the school will have nothing to build upon and the child later become a problem not only to these parents but also to the community as a whole. Children of the educated parents are reliable than children of lower or home educated parents (Wilson, 1992).
In this study those parents with higher level of education are able to motivate their children in school and that there is positive relationship between education and academic performance and success (Johnson, 1996). This necessitated investigation on the level of motivation and enrolment of children in preschool. The results were as shown in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5 Children from well-educated parents are motivated and like school**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children motivation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of children enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 shows that majority 65% (n=65) of the respondents strongly agree that children from the well educated parents are motivated and like school than those children from low educated parents. Most of the preschool children in Kuresoi are from parents who are educated, from this background it can be explained why the enrolment rate in the district is low.

Parent’s educational level has direct impact on their children's educational aspirations (Okantey, 2008). Children schooling is positively related to the education of their parents because children tend to imitate their parents and also aspire to be as highly
educated as their parents. Children are more disadvantaged when their parents have low education level and thus form a number of uneducated family members making every generation of the family not to go higher than their parents. Children from more highly educated families are more ambitious and attain higher levels of education.

4.4 Household composition and children enrolment in preschool

Table 4.6 shows the family composition and children enrolment in preschool. It shows the different family composition that was found from the interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household composition</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Number of children Enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polygamous</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 shows that 42% (n=42) come from single parent family and their children preschool enrolment rate is low having an average of 2 children enrolled per term as shown from the document analysis of the enrolment records through the head teacher interview schedule. They are followed by those from extended families whose children enrolment rate is low shown by an average enrolment of 2 children per term. Children from polygamous families are having enrolment rate as being low. The few 15% (n = 15) from nuclear household composition has a high enrolment rate of an average of 3
children per term.

Majoribanks (1996) states that children from single parent households do not perform as well as children from a nuclear family households. Single parents have less income and lack support which can increase stress and conflicts. They usually struggle with time management issues in order to balance many different areas in the process some become less involved with their children and give less encouragement and have low expectation for their children than two household parents. Divorced parents negatively affect academic achievement of their children and cause a decrease in family's socioeconomic status Jeynes (2002) and Majoribanks (1996). Therefore household decisions to enroll their children in preschool programme are found to be difficult as they claim the cost of care is high. High cost of preschool education discourages them in taking their children to ECDE centres. The influence of wages on demand for schooling is expected through a combination of income and substitution wage to increase preschool participation that increases the enrolment.

Table 4.7 presents the number of children in the family and its effect on the preschool children enrolment.
Table 4.7 Number of children in the family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of children enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – 3 children</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 6 children</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – 10 children</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 10 children</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 100 100%

Table 4.7 shows that majority of the parents respondents 51% (n = 51) had children between 7 and 10 children indicating that most of the parents had more children than they could afford to educate leading to low preschool enrolment. The enrolment rate in single families is also poor this results in the district recording low preschool children enrolment.

Blake (1985) indicates that a large number of siblings and close spacing among siblings, dilutes the amount of parent time, attention and money available per child. This in turn negatively influences several child outcomes including their preschool enrolment. According to Becker (1992), parental investment in their children contributes to the wealth of the entire family. Education per child is usually lower in families with more children. The number of siblings decreases the likelihood of choosing ECDE centres for preschool children.
4.5 Parental occupation and children enrolment in preschool

Table 4.8 shows the parental occupation and its effect on the enrolment of children in preschool.

**Table 4.8 Occupation of the parents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Number of children enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8 shows that majority of the parent respondents 40% (n=40) are self employed. A few 38% (n = 38) were unemployed while 22% (n=22) are employed. The parents 40% (n = 40) who are self employed are just peasant farmers, small scale traders and under age mothers who are still depending on their parents and can not afford to take their children to preschool.

Kaspro (1999) stated that the low background status perpetuates education deprivation hence the unemployed parents will definitely find it difficult to pay school fees and meet other educational expenses for their children while employed parents have higher income and therefore deploy their resources in a manner creating preschool conditions conducive to a successful school performance. Prewit (1989) note that family income
level influence education chances for the child since this determines the motivation with which the child pursues basic education.

Table 4.9 shows parents motivating children on preschool enrolment.

**Table 4.9 Parents motivating children on preschool enrolment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental motivating</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of children enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9 shows that majority 46% (n=46) of the parents sometimes motivate their children’s on preschool enrolment. The other 27% (n=27) always motivate their children while the remaining 27% (n=27) do not motivate their children hence the low enrollment.

Cooper (1989) found that parents can be regarded as the child’s first teacher, but when the child enters school, parents begin to ask themselves how they can be positively involved in their children’s education by motivating their children. Therefore in this study, parental motivation in pre-school enrolment can significantly influence the children enrolment in preschool within the district. Education officers in the area need to encourage parents to see the importance of preschool education for their children in order to improve preschool enrolment.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summaries finding of the study and make conclusions and recommendations based on the objectives of the study. It gives the implications from the findings and areas for further research are also presented.

5.2 Summary

The study aimed to find out the influence of parental characteristics on enrolment of preschool children in Kuresoi division, Nakuru County, Kenya. The researcher was guided by four parental characteristics that she deemed are the ones influencing the enrolment of preschool children in Kuresoi division. From the data analyzed the following findings were found;

In the studying parental income, majority of the parent respondents 55% (n = 55) earn less than 5,000/= and their level of enrolment is rated as very low since majority of the preschool children had not been enrolled. Majority of the parents 60% (n = 60) were not able to pay school fees for their preschool children indicating that most of the parents are struggling to provide for the daily bread than raising the school fees for their children resulting to low enrolment of the preschool children in the division. Those that are comfortable in paying school fees for their preschool children are only 17% (n = 17). From these findings most of the parents are poor and hence unable to finance their children preschool education. The school enrolment of these children is low since majority of the parents cannot afford to pay fees for their children.
The findings of parents’ level of education showed that majority of the respondents 47% (n=47) of the parents were KCSE certificate holders as their highest level of education. They are followed by 29% (n=29) who attained education up to certificate level while 7% (n = 7) had degrees as their highest level of education. From the findings the preschool children whose parents attained degree level of education had high rate of children enrolment in preschool while the children from parents who attained KCSE certificate level and below had low enrolment and they are the majority. This can be explained from the fact that parent’s level of education may result to access to resources such as income and involve themselves more in school activities. Majority 44% (n=44) of the parents sometimes involve themselves in school activities, 22% (n=22) involve themselves very much while a few 18% (n=18) involve themselves much. This explains the low preschool enrolment in Kuresoi division. This is as a result of the parents lacking motivation on the importance of preschool education. Therefore they cannot visit the preschools and get to appreciate the importance of their children enrolling for preschool. This causes them to ignore taking their children to school resulting to low enrolment in the district.

Family composition findings shows that majority 42% (n=42) come from single parent family and their children preschool enrolment rate is very low. They are followed by those from extended families whose children enrolment rate is low. Children from polygamous families are having enrolment rate as being low. The few 15% (n = 15) have a high enrolment of children in preschools. Majority of the parents respondents 51% (n = 51) had children between 7 and 10 indicating that most of the parents had more children than they could afford to educate leading to low preschool enrolment.
From these findings most of the parents who had more than 7 children came from polygamous family. The enrolment rate in single families is also poor this results in the district recording low preschool children enrolment.

In the findings of the parental occupation, majority of the parent respondents 40% (n=40) were self employed. They are followed by 38% (n = 38) who are unemployed while 22% (n=22) are employed. The parents who are self employed are just peasant farmers, small scale business men and under age parents who still can not afford to take their children education in preschool. This explains the low enrolment of children in pre-school in the area. Majority 46% (n=46) of the parents sometimes involve themselves with their children preschool education. The other 27% (n=27) always involve themselves while the remaining 27% (n=27) do not involve themselves with their children preschool education. Most parents with high level of education are motivated to get involved with the children education since they have a positive attitude towards education and would want to assist their children to perform better academically.

5.3 Conclusions

It can be concluded that parental income of majority of the parent respondents is less than 5,000/= and were not able to pay school fees for their preschool children indicating that most of the parents are struggling to provide daily bread than raise school fees for pres-school education resulting to low enrolment of the preschool children in the division. It can be concluded therefore that most of the parents are poor and hence unable to finance their children preschool education.
The parents are not well educated since majority were KCSE certificate holders and below as their highest level of education at the time of study. From the findings the preschool children whose parents attained degree level of education have high rate of children enrolment in preschool while the children from parents who attained KCSE certificate level and below are having low enrolment and they are making the majority. This can be explained that parent’s level of education may result to access to resources in terms of income and involve themselves more in school activities. The educated parents have interest with their preschool and therefore visit the schools and get to appreciate the importance of preschool education.

Majority of children come from single parent family and their children preschool enrolment rate is very low. They are followed by those from extended families whose children enrolment rate is also low. From these findings it can be concluded that most of the parents who had more than 7 children came from polygamous family. The enrolment rate in single families is also poor this results in the district recording low preschool children enrolment.

It can be concluded from the study of parental occupation that majority of the parent respondents were self-employed who are mostly peasant farmers, small scale traders and under age mothers who are still under the care of their parents and can not afford to take care of their children preschool education. This explains the low enrolment of children in preschool in the area. Majority of the parents sometimes involve themselves with their children preschool education. Most of the parents whose level of education is higher are keen on children education since they have a positive attitude towards education and would want to assist their children to perform better academically.
5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made according to the findings of the study;

i. The government should take part in initiating free preschool education to motivate the preschool children to realize their academic dreams since most of the parents in the district are poor and cannot afford to educate their children.

ii. Family planning importance should be taught for the parents to understand the importance of having a manageable number of children in a family. This is because the findings showed that large family compositions in the district are a major cause of preschool children un-enrolment.

iii. The government should be advised to enforce protective laws to preschool children to protect them from the problems faced due to marital status of their families. For example, the parents should be held responsible by the law to educate their children and provide the necessary requirement for their preschool education. Once this is done, the preschool enrolment will be improved.

iv. Adult education should be initiated by the government to help those parents that are not well educated to appreciate the importance of preschool education and hence encourage them to get fully involved in their children’s academic matters.

5.5 Recommendations for further research

The researcher recommends the following areas to be further researched;

i. A study on the impact of school feeding programmes on preschool enrolment in public pre-school centres.

ii. A research on how Free Primary Education affects preschool enrolment in public pre-school centres.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX I

Questionnaire for the Parents

This questionnaire is for gathering information on the INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS ON ENROLMENT OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN KURESOI DISTRICT, NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA

Please answer with a tick.

Section A: General Information
1.1 What is your gender?
   Male [ ]   Female [ ]

1.2 Which is your age bracket?
   18 to 25 [ ]
   26 to 30 [ ]
   31 to 35 [ ]
   Above 35 [ ]

Section B: Parental income
2.1 What is the average range of your income per month?
   Less than ksh. 5,000 [ ]
   Ksh. 7,000 to 10,000 [ ]
   Ksh 11,000 to 20,000 [ ]
   More than 20,000 [ ]

2.2 Please rate your ability to pay school fees for your preschool children.
   Not able [ ]
   Able [ ]
   Very able [ ]
2.3 Please suggest ways how the government can help with the problem of paying fees.

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

Section C: Parents’ education level

3.1 What is your highest academic level?

Degree [ ]
Diploma [ ]
Certificate [ ]
KCSE and below [ ]

3.2 To what extent do you involve yourself in school activities?

Very much [ ]
Much [ ]
Sometimes [ ]
Not at all [ ]

3.3 Children from well educated parents are motivated and like school.

Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Strongly disagree [ ]
Disagree [ ]

3.4 How often do you visit the school to know the progress of your preschool child?

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
Section D: Household composition

4.1 Please indicate the type of your family.

(i) Nuclear family [ ]
(ii) Extended family [ ]
(iii) Polygamous family [ ]
(iv) Single family [ ]

4.2 How many children do you have?

(i) 1-3 [ ]
(ii) 4-6 [ ]
(iii) 7-10 [ ]
(iv) Above 10 [ ]

4.3 How many are in preschool? .................................................................

4.4 Do you have children who are supposed to be in preschool but are not?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

4.5 How does the house composition affect children preschool enrolment?

.................................................................................................................
....................................................................................................................

Section E: Parental occupation

5.1 What is your occupational status?

Self-employed [ ]
Employed [ ]
Unemployed [ ]
5.2 Parents involvement in preschool children education

- Always [   ]
- Sometimes [   ]
- Not at all [   ]

5.3 If the answer is always, please explain briefly.

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

5.4 To what extent are you committed towards education of your preschool children?

- Very committed [   ]
- Somehow committed [   ]
- Committed [   ]
- Not committed [   ]

5.5 If your answer is committed, explain briefly how.

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
APPENDIX II

Interview schedule for the head teachers

1. What is the current enrolment in your ECE centre? ______________________

2. What is the hindrance to the improvement of the enrolment rate?
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________

3. Do you have adequate learning facilities? ________________________________

4. What is the teacher – child ratio?

5. What strategies can you use in order to improve the current enrolment rate?
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
APPENDIX III

Interview Schedule for chief

1. What is the main occupation of the people living in Kiptororo zone? __________
   __________________________________________________________________________

2. How do they view education for pre-school children? _________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

3. Do you have families who are not sending their children to school?
   [a] Yes        [b] No

4. How many parents are not willing to send their children to pre-school? _______

5. Why are those parents not enrolling their children in pre-school?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

6. What is their education level compared to the others who take their children to
   pre-school? _______________________

7. How is the composition of most families?
   i. married,
   ii. single,
   iii. widowed

8. Are there some parents who have enrolled their children? ________________
9. What method can you use to help these parents enroll their children in school?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

10. What do you think will be the future result if children are not participating in preschool education?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

11. Can pre-school centres be built in each village to motivate these parents to take their children to pre-school? Explain

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX IV

Interview schedule for Area education officer

1. What is the current pre-school enrolment in your area?
   ______________________

2. What is the hindrance to the improvement of enrolment rate?
   ______________________
   ______________________________________________________________

3. How many parents are not willing to send their children to pre-school?
   ______
   ______________________________________________________________

4. Do you have adequate learning facilities?
   Yes [    ]  No [    ]

5. What is the teacher: child ratio?
   ______________________

6. What strategies can you use to improve the current enrolment rate in Kiptororo zone?
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________