Socio-cultural Factors Influencing Primary School Attendance in Asego Division, Homa-Bay County.

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A Research Project Submitted to the Faculty of Arts in Partial Fulfillment for the Award of Master Degree in Medical Sociology.

University of Nairobi

2015
DECLARATION

I Selline Mwomo, declare that this Project Paper is my original work and has never been presented for any academic award at any institution.

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Signature: ________________________________

Date:               ________________________________

This Project Paper has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor

Name:               MR ALLAN KORONGO

Signature: ________________________________

Date:               ________________________________
DEDICATION

Special dedication of this work goes to my late Father Alphonce Mwomo (RIP)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I place God first for His protection and guidance throughout these tough times of my studies at the University. May Glory and Honor be unto Him. I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to all persons whose co-operation, support, encouragement and criticism helped in the successful writing of this Project.

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Glory Be to God.
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ABSTRACT

In the 20th and part of the 21st century some countries in the less developed and developing world have witnessed declining performance in primary schools due to school absenteeism. The diverse socio-cultural practices with negative impact are more pronounced in poor states than the developed world, and East Africa experiences diverse socio-cultural practices that have greatly affected educational performance. The Kenyan rural areas and the informal settlements in towns are affected by continuous school absenteeism leading to poor academic performance. This study therefore assessed the socio-cultural factors influencing primary school attendance in Asego Division-Homabay County. The objectives were as follows; to examine the role of family members in influencing school attendance of primary school children, to establish the kind of activities children engage in when not attending school, to assess community members’ role in influencing primary school attendance and to examine the socio-cultural factors that influence primary school attendance. The study adopted descriptive survey design to collect data from the respondents. A standard questionnaire with open and close ended questions was used. An F.G.D guide was also used to collect qualitative data. The results were analyzed using descriptive methods. Quantitative data were presented by use of text, frequency tables and charts while qualitative data were presented in words and phrases. The results show that majority of the people never went through primary education, thus have low opinion on value of education. Majority of the parents do not care about education as a result of their ignorance of the benefits of education as they make children absent from school to provide labour in the family, instead of providing them with school requirements. Children when out of school engage in activities such as: household chores, fishing, farming, and sand harvesting. The Community is not assisting children to be positive about schooling, and the government is held responsible for school absenteeism due to poverty on families, poor teachers’ motivation, and withdrawal of school feeding programme. Socio-cultural factors that influence school absenteeism include: large number of children, rampant wife inheritance, low female ownership of property, women bestowed with little household decision making power and prevalent of dependent children in most families. Other issues influencing school attendance included; little care from the guardians/parents, school aged children challenged by hunger, lack of basics for primary schooling. In Conclusion, practices and activities within the area influence school attendance of primary school going children. The researcher therefore recommends; for adequate clear policies to foster regular school attendance, continuous sensitization on the benefits of education, monitoring by all the stakeholders in the primary sub sector for realization of the value of education for children, creation of awareness through aggressive educational advocacy to enable the people realize the benefits of education, random check on the sand harvesting sites to ensure these sites are not hiding points for primary school going children who do not want to attend school, this will avoid the danger of denying children their educational right.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Over the past decade, there has been increasing interest in the impact of primary school absenteeism among primary school going children in most parts of the least developed and developing countries of the world (UNICEF, 2006). More recently, attention has been focused on the impact of socio-cultural factors on school going children’s performance. Children from different cultural backgrounds face diverse problems varying from religion to pure socio-economic problems rooted in cultural practices that prohibit gender balance and lead to marginalization of the vulnerable women and children who become the immediate victims (UNICEF, 2006). The developed world with less restrictive cultural practices has fared on well in monitoring and maintaining children schooling, resulting to zero school absenteeism as school is more of place of pleasurable living for children where they are well catered for than their counterparts in poor states.

The recipe for success in children’s development includes consistent, goal oriented cooperation among the stakeholders of education, the triangular formation of parents, teachers and learners, each with equal inter-related responsibilities, well designed to carve into shaping a child’s comprehensive development (Geoff, 2009). Elsewhere Moore, (1996) noted from other perspectives that cultural factors are the basic fundamentals upon which the society tends to bend the values to suit their practices, and through this, the children fall prey to school absenteeism which most of the time tend not to be noticed. In the primary stage of education, children’s experience should revolve around games and occupations through which mankind satisfies its basic material needs for food, clothing, shelter and protection.
School absenteeism is as common to girls as is to boys and it is common among children aged between 5-17 years old, twenty eight percent of school aged children refuse schooling at some point during their education. Although the problem is considerably more prevalent in some rural areas, it equally cut-across all socio-economic set ups (World Bank, 2006)

According to Republic of Kenya, (2008) school absenteeism is an extremely disturbing issue, not only because it involves so many children who miss school but also because it is characterized by abuse and exploitation. A large number of school-aged children in developing countries face major challenges of school absenteeism as they find themselves engaged in income generating activities during their education period. This adversely affects their ability to take advantage of the limited educational opportunities available to them and that brings down attempts made by children to reap the benefits of classroom instructions. (Moore, 1996)

There are incidences of child school absenteeism both in the rural and modern settlement areas, and attention is being set on the dynamics of child school absenteeism in various parts of Africa and East Africa in particular as shown in Republic of Kenya, (2008) report, which showed that children missed two to three weeks of schooling in a year because of their participation in puberty rites and domestic activities. Today, similar practices are still common in some parts of Africa where the rites provide reasons for withdrawing children from school altogether, suggesting that the value placed on formal education is very low (Republic of Kenya, 2008)

Eastern African States have continued to perform poorly socio-economically; rural areas of Kenya being most affected especially Northern and Eastern regions of the
country being the hardest hit by poor climate and socio-political insecurity. Children below the age of 15 years from the affected regions have continued to miss primary education and these has caused concern about educational performance in some regions due to late and low enrolments and now even school absenteeism (Republic of Kenya, 2003, 2007). Like other countries, Kenya has had several policies on education improvement and the objectives of enhancing sustainable primary education among all the learners as well as to improve educational quality. The effort nonetheless has not yielded to the people’s expectations (Ondieki, 2013).

School absenteeism has been a major problem witnessed in many parts of Kenya and various studies have shown that the problem is common in the rural and semi urban areas (Cornelius, 2013). World Bank (2006) noted that primary school absenteeism has negative consequences on the child, that turns out to be detrimental for the country at large; especially when children turn to crime and their study time is limited due to their being out of school. Ibid (2006) further noted that children who miss school frequently get themselves hooked up in organizing illicit acts during their schooling times, such acts includes; drug abuse, social crime and also engaging themselves in immature sexual immorality. Many reports through the mass media have also confirmed that children have been used as messengers, spotters, attackers and porters of harmful weapons and also to transfer and hide the same weapons, as well as for kidnappings—such acts are often committed when learning sessions are on progress in different parts of the nation (Leonard, 2013).

It has been noted through The Catholic Relief Services, (CDOH, 2007) Survey report, that Asego Division in Homa-Bay is one of the divisions in Homa-Bay County, that has declining primary education due to school absenteeism which has created ground for
outcry for major interventions to promote regular school attendance. Previous survey reports by the World Vision-Kenya (2009), have shown that Homa-Bay has the highest number of Non Governmental Organizations operating within unlike in other counties, an indication that Homa-Bay County is facing several social problems.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Nations make effort to ensure that primary education is compulsory and that child school attendance is adhered to. However in many developing countries, children are still victims of school absenteeism (Lynda, 2011). Despite implementation of compulsory education, its achievement in developing countries is not significant (UNICEF, 2006). Compulsory education keeps children out of factories and other work places; however this has not been the case for countries like Kenya where there is still a lot of absenteeism from school. In Kenya, it was estimated that there were more than 3 million children between the ages of 6 and 14 years who either had no schooling at all or dropped out of school (UNICEF, 2006). But one decade along the line of free primary education in Kenya, many children are still engaged in socio-economic activities instead of attending school. Some past studies on educational achievement show that the objective of compulsory education in Kenya has not been achieved. (Ondieki, 2013).

According to The Catholic Relief Services, (CDOH, 2007) Survey report, Asego Divison in Homa-Bay County faces challenges of primary school absenteeism. This has created ground for outcry for major interventions like; advocating for primary teachers recruitment by the government, continuous creation of awareness on child labour, creation of awareness on educational benefits to the community, and provision
of school requirements like uniforms, books, pens, feeding program at schools to promote regular school attendance.

This study therefore sought to explore the major socio-cultural factors that influence primary school attendance in Asego division.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

i. What are the socio-cultural factors influencing school attendance at primary school level?

ii. What role do family members play in influencing school attendance at primary school level?

iii. What role does the community play in influencing primary school attendance?

iv. What activities are children involved in when not attending school?

1.4 OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Main Objective

The major objective of the study is to Explore socio-cultural factors influencing primary school attendance in Asego Division, Homa-Bay County.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives:

Specifically the study sought to achieve the following Objectives;

i. To examine the role of family members in influencing school attendance by primary school children

ii. To establish the kind of activities children engage in when not attending school

iii. To assess community members' role in influencing primary school attendance.

iv. To examine the socio-cultural factors that influence primary school attendance
1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

This study is justified on the following grounds:-

First, education performance appears to be lowest in rural and marginal areas where poverty is most endemic and opportunities for income generation are limited (Lynda, 2011). There is a need to identify regions and areas where participation of primary school children are particularly poor, so as to systematically investigate, document and address the causes of school absenteeism. This should be done in collaboration with local communities and should involve all the stakeholders who include: teachers, parents, and students.

Secondly, the complexity of household and familial perceptions of education, role of children in the family, arrangements and low investments in formal education at the primary level is beginning to attract attention. This warrants further research, particularly where the provision of subsidies and incentives to allow poorer parents to send their children to school is being considered. Therefore, this research is intended to inspire greater efforts in providing information to improve school attendance and to ensure that children suffering school absenteeism are well provided for and supported in different ways to improve their performances in school.

Finally, all data and information to date (Republic of Kenya, 2012), indicates that East African societies have placed the primary social responsibility of the welfare of children on the family. The family is observed as the primary caretaker of children, so then they are entrusted with the responsibility for educating children and ensuring consistency in school attendance, this study thus sought factors that hinder families from such roles, (Osewe, 2003) states that Asego division is featuring in the reports of children abuse,
and engagements of children in activities like fishing, farming and general domestic activities.

### 1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was carried out in Asego division, Homa-Bay County, the study was particularly concerned with exploring the socio-cultural factors that influence school attendance of primary school children in Asego Division.

Only households hosting primary school children operating from home to school were studied.

Relevant information was mainly sought from head of households staying with the children during school going period. Key informants were mainly head teachers and community elders who were contacted to give their views on the school attendance of children in the study area.

The study was exclusive of school going children in the boarding schools. The study also excluded children in secondary schools even if they were staying at home with their caregivers at the time of study. Only parents/ caregivers staying with the children at the time of study were interviewed.

### 1.7 CHALLENGES DURING THE STUDY

i. The researcher had the difficulty of accessing all the respondents involved in the actual study since some of the head teachers were often unavailable or presume to be busy to attend interview with the researcher.

ii. Some of the respondents were unwilling and became un-co-operative especially the respondents whose children were victims of primary school absenteeism for fear of victimization. The researcher therefore had to explain to them that the
study was purely for academic purposes and its ultimate goal is for future education planning.

iii. Some of the respondents failed to answer and submit the responses in good time, hence delaying data analysis.

iv. At the same time, owing to conservativeness of head teachers, community elders and parents/guardians, some school heads were unwilling to allow accessibility of some vital information on attendance of children. In situations where such happened to be, the researcher conducted interviews and probed the respondents to extract information.

1.8 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Absenteeism- Being out of the place one is expected to be in at a particular time. In this study, absenteeism means frequently missing school, being absent from school some days of the school learning period. It includes children who are of school going age being in the social places like market, or along the lake shores or sand harvesting sites during school time. Also children doing duties like fetching water from the water points, or collecting firewood during school hours.

Children- The Children Act (Republic of Kenya, 2002) define a child as any human being under the age of 18 years, for the purpose of this study; the term is used on primary school going children (both male and female) who have their records in school as learners,

Community members- All the people living in one district/group/ village with shared origins or interest or the public society. In this study it implies people who have lived within the study area for a period of time (five or more years), their kinsmen are also staying in the area.
Culture- Continually changing pattern of acquired behavior and attitudes transmitted among members of a society. According to (Gutek and Levin, 2011), it is a way of thinking and behaving, it is a group's tradition, memories and written records, shared rules and ideas. In the line with this study, it means accumulated beliefs, habits and values and is further defined as; set of beliefs and guidelines as to how people ought to behave in the study area, which people regard as natural and normal. In addition, it implies the socio-cultural practices and way of living among the people of Asego Division. It also includes the daily activity that the people do to earn a living, and that they tend to engage the whole community in one way or another including the children.

Elders- According to Collins Dictionary it implies older person, people of wise ideas, they can advice on issues, and according to this study, it is a person who is giving instructions to others and can be relied on by the community members, includes religious leaders, chiefs, assistant chiefs, older members of the village both male and female.

School Attendance- This is the regular presence of a learner in classrooms to allow the learner to gain from what the teachers are teaching on a daily basis and also allowing for chance to participate in school activities. In this study, school attendance implies that all the enrolled pupils in a particular class are present at all times of the day and in all learning days of the week, unless authorized by school for unavoidable reasons. The implication is that children of school going age are not out of school compound at any time of school learning hours.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter presents literature on the global primary educational perspective among early learners, and the aspect of irregular primary school attendance among primary school going children. Consequently it provides various scholars’ views on irregular primary school attendance and the socio-cultural factors that influence primary school absenteeism. The chapter is organized in sub-themes based on the objectives of the study, as it provide the global school absenteeism perspectives, how school knowledge promotes health, the role of the family in encouraging primary school attendance, the socio-cultural factors influencing school attendance of the primary children, activities children engage in when not attending school, community attitude towards school absenteeism, education performance verses school attendance, The last section of the study gives the conceptual and the theoretical perspectives of the study.

2.2 GLOBAL SCHOOL ABSENTEEISM PERSPECTIVE
Schools are often the first to detect a possible concern when a child fails to arrive at school and can initiate contact with home. According to Lynda (2011) School is a safer place for children than home and for some it is the only place they may get a nutritious meal especially when school feeding programme is factored in the National Budget to alleviate food inadequacy in affected regions. In most societies, regular school attendance correlates directly with success in academic work, improves social interaction with adults and peers and provides opportunities for important communication between teachers and students (UNICEF, 2006). Regular attendance also has a cumulative effect of establishing life-long positive traits - responsibility,
determination, respect for rules of society that are critical for developing career readiness skills, success in college and in life (Badman, 1999).

In the affluent society, any mishap towards children school attendance receives quick reaction and immediate corrective measures. School absenteeism is therefore a problem that is stressful for children, families, and school personnel. Reche notes that, failing to attend school has significant short- and long-term effects on children's social, emotional and educational development. He further notes that most affluent countries in Europe, America and other fast developing countries have so far succeeded primary school attendance as opposed to least developed countries facing greater economic burden (Reche, 2009).

2.2.1 Regional Concern for School Absenteeism

School absence is an indicator of challenges occurring within the family, school, or community. Regardless of the reason for school absence, however, students who miss school are losing out on critical academic and social learning opportunities. And as they fall behind, students disengage from school and become much less likely to graduate (Badman, 1999).

According to Lynda (2011) too often, parents and guardians, schools, communities, and city agencies perpetuate the cycle of disengagement and absenteeism either with indifference or with punitive responses to absence. When students' absences are ignored, the reasons for those absences are not resolved. Worse, when schools respond to tardiness and truancy by suspending students, they send a clear message that certain students are not wanted back in the classroom.
Researchers are just now delving into the short and long-term effects of school absence showing that frequent absence unambiguously predicts later academic problems, dropout, and even criminal justice involvement (Reche, 2009).

Average daily attendance rates provide additional information about the school absence problem. During the 2006-2007 school years in Maryland (U.S.A), average daily attendance (ADA) was 95.6 percent of elementary school students, 94.4 percent of middle school students, and 92.3 percent of high school students. In Baltimore (U.S.A), ADA was significantly lower, especially at the middle and high school levels: 94.1 percent of elementary school students, 88.3 percent of middle school students, and 82.7 percent of high school students. ADA was even lower for certain demographic groups; for instance, special education high school students in Baltimore had an attendance rate of 74.9 percent that meant that, on an average day during the 2006-2007 school year, one-quarter of special education students who were enrolled in high school were absent.

Children’s reasons for frequent absence vary with age, gender, and family resources, but can include chronic illness, work, childcare or family responsibilities, fear of bullying or safety concerns, disengagement from school or push-out practices of schools, involvement with drugs or crime, and lack of easy, reliable, and affordable transportation (Lynda 2011).

A study of 4th- and 8th-graders in 2005 in Baltimore found several demographic factors correlated to school absence. The study found that students in both grades were more likely to report having missed three or more days of school in the prior four weeks if the student spoke English as a second language or if the student had a disability. Also, for both 4th- and 8th-graders, a lower percentage of Asian/Pacific
Islander students and a higher percentage of American Indian students reported missing school than their peers in other racial and ethnic groups. Eighteen Students who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch were also more likely to report absence from school for three or more days than those who were not (Cammish 1994).

It is noted worldwide that school attendance in less developed countries is faced with stiff challenges owing to declining global socio-economic resources that have created grounds for increasing school absenteeism (World Bank, 2006). In the list of Education for All (EFA) Development Index, among 125 countries, India ranks 99th, even though there have been reductions in the number of out-of-school children since 2004 in that country. There is need for better understanding of the issues involved, starting with the burden of problem, the causative and associate factors, interventional strategies and cost effectiveness of school based programs at national level (Cammish 1994).

2.2.2 School Absenteeism in Kenya

In Kenya, the development of the education sector has been a long standing objective of the government of the Republic of Kenya since independence in 1963. While the need for inclusive primary education for all is the priority of the government, the private sector is increasingly catering to the want of parents for sophisticated exclusive schools and colleges for their children. Parliament has passed the historic Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2008, which envisages providing free and compulsory education to 6-14 year old children.

Education is considered by various stakeholders as a basic need and a basic right (Reche 2009). Performance ranks high on the national agenda, with educators and
policymakers focusing on testing, accountability, curriculum reform, and teachers’ quality, school choice and other concerns. Literature exists that links school absenteeism with other factors (Reche, 2009, Republic of Kenya, 2008).

The introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in January 2003, following the passing of the Children’s Act in 2001, has led to vital educational achievements. Enrolments in public schools increased significantly from 5.9 million in 2002 to 6.9 million in 2003- a 17% increase; representing a Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) of 99% (102% girls and 97% boys). The Government provides funds, through both the School Instructional Management Book Account (SIMBA) and the General Purpose Account (GPA) to procure need based materials and improve on some infrastructure, thereby raising the quality of education (Republic of Kenya, 2008, 2009).

The Kenya’s education system is dominated by examination-oriented teaching, where passing examinations is the only benchmark for performance because there is no internal system of monitoring learning achievements at other levels within an education cycle. In Kenya, examinations are generally acceptable as valid measures of achievement, and Reche, (2009) notes that Secondary school placement, and to some extent admission, depend on performance of Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination in standard eight. Although the government has channeled funds into basic education, performance at KCPE shows that most of the students making transition to top schools are from private schools; this creates inequality to access opportunities to national and top performing provincial schools (Reche, 2009).

In 2009 KCPE results, out of 1374 candidates who sat for the examination in public day primary schools, none gained admission to the well endowed national schools in the country. The KCPE examination is marked out of a maximum mark of 500, and results
in five consecutive years show that Mwingi division scored as follows from 2005 to 2009, an indication of a drop in performance.

Table 2.1: KCPE Mean Grades from 2005 to 2009 for some Schools in Mwingi Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Primary School</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mutindwa</td>
<td>213.24</td>
<td>210.44</td>
<td>214.11</td>
<td>200.67</td>
<td>178.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiru</td>
<td>222.08</td>
<td>203.75</td>
<td>219.47</td>
<td>212.04</td>
<td>198.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nduraguri</td>
<td>195.54</td>
<td>223.94</td>
<td>213.69</td>
<td>208.41</td>
<td>199.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirumi</td>
<td>228.04</td>
<td>217.17</td>
<td>189.30</td>
<td>193.74</td>
<td>200.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source (Republic of Kenya 2010)

According to Republic of Kenya (2008), The MoE released a report detailing the causes of poor performance in national examinations in schools. The survey identifies the ills among them lack of assistance in doing homework mainly by parents, shortage of teachers, academic qualifications, pupil absenteeism and indiscipline in schools. Releasing the findings, ÙThe then Education Minister Sam Ongeri also pointed an accusing finger at some officials including provincial directors of education and teachers who walked to schools for inspection "as if they were going to a political rally" (Omanga, 2010). The then Education Minister said some education official were not keen on their inspection duties and merely visited schools for the sake of it. "I am concerned even in my own meetings some PDEs have notoriety for absenteeism, which is now being reflected in the manner they conduct education matters in their provinces," said the then minister.
2.3 EDUCATION AS A SOCIAL DETERMINANT OF HEALTH

According to UNICEF 2006, a substantial body of International evidence clearly shows that those with lower levels of education are more likely to die at a younger age and are at increased risk of poorer health throughout life than those with more education. Access to and participation in education is prerequisites to achieving the health benefits that education can provide. While education attainment has increased substantially in recent decades for the whole populations, some groups continue to experience poorer educational outcomes (Lynda 2011).

One of the objectives of primary education is to provide quality education to children so as to acquire the basic skills, knowledge and values that enable them to fit well into the society after they graduate from school and also help people improve their health as they acquire the basic needs in life (UNICEF 2006). According to World Development Report of 2007, Simple hygiene practices are done in the early learning years of children at pre-primary schools for example how to wash hands, how to keep the body clean, (bodily hygiene and environmental hygiene),

Given the large number of absenteeism and its effects on education and health, it is important that policies in education and health are not looked at in isolation (Lynda 2011) Instead, a systematic and coordinated approach should be taken by the relevant stakeholders through applying Health Impact Assessment to their policy-making process; departments can be supported in making better decisions for better health to improve on education, this is because children spends more time at school than anywhere else except home (UNICEF 2006). Schools can teach children about health and promote healthy behaviors impacting on their Physical and emotional health.
Schools work to:

- Prevent risky behaviors such as alcohol and tobacco use, or bullying
- Encourage healthy habits like exercise and healthy eating
- Deal with specific health problems in students, such as asthma, obesity and infectious diseases.

The school building and environment should be a safe and healthy place for children. When children attend school they avoid the risks they may engage in in the activities like farming, fishing, sand harvesting, fetching water from the water points and such like activities (Lynda 2011). The criminal acts that the children engage in are also risks to their lives, exposing them to dangers like being shot down by the police that may end their life or even make them disabled for the rest of their lives. At school the children are also taught on how to reduce risks and to promote health (Cammish 1994)

According to Cammish 1994, individual's knowledge, personal and social skills provided through education can better equip them to access and use information and services to maintain and improve own family's health, research also shows that better-educated individuals live longer and healthier lives than those with less education, and their children are more likely to thrive, ( UNICEF 2006), however with the demographic trends young people are likely than members of their parent's generation to require more efforts to improve on their health status.(World Health Organization 2008)

In the World Development Report of 2007, establishing healthy behaviors during childhood is easier and more effective than trying to change unhealthy behaviors
during adulthood. Schools play a critical role in promoting the health and safety of young people and helping them establish lifelong healthy behavior patterns.

According to Lynda 2011, many parents are keenly interested in the basic academic education of their youngsters—reading, writing, and arithmetic—but are not nearly as conscientious in finding out about the other learning that goes on in the classroom. A comprehensive health education program is an important part of the curriculum in most school districts. Starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school, it provides an introduction to the human body and to factors that prevent illness and promote or damage health (Cammish 1994).

Health education at school provides knowledge and skills to empower pupils to lead healthy lifestyle and take responsibility for the health and well-being of others and the environment. It also aims to provide pupils with the opportunities to develop and practice good health habits and attitudes, (Lynda 2011). At the end of classroom teaching on the subject of health, pupils will be able to learn that: good health habits will contribute to healthy growth and development of the body, e.g. practice good nutrition, hygiene and exercise, exhibit good health habits in daily life, express and manage emotions appropriately, exhibit behaviour and attitudes that show consideration for others, practice safe behaviour that will protect themselves and others around them, understand the relationship between health and the environment and demonstrate understanding of their roles and responsibility in caring for the environment (World Development Report 2007).

On the other hand health education is a significant addition to the curricula of schools because health is a source of major concern. The existence of health problems can
disrupt the opportunities for learning in the sense that it can disrupt classroom attendance and overall state of mind.

2.4: ROLE OF FAMILY IN CHILDREN EDUCATION

According to Michael and Martin (2008) when presenting the means to acquire knowledge there is need to understand socialization which is the process an individual learn the culture of their society and this happens in stages within institutions like family, schools, churches, and even through the mass media. Durkheim notes that school rules should be strictly enforced. Punishments should reflect the seriousness of the damage done to the social group by the offence, and it should be made clear to transgressors why they were being punished. In cases where it is not clear, then the children tend to avoid punishment through being absent from school, but learn to exercise self-discipline not just because they want to avoid punishment, but sees it that misbehavior damage others and society and that their school attendance is meant for the good of all (Durkheim, 1961).

Durkheim argues that in complex industrial societies, the school serves a function which cannot be provided either by the family or by the peer group. Membership of the family is based on kinship relationship, membership of the peers on personal choice, membership of society as a whole is based on neither of these principles. Individuals must learn to cooperate with those who are neither their kin nor their friends. The school therefore provides a context where these skills can be learned and is miniature model of the whole social system in which a child must interact with other members in terms of a fixed set of rules. This experience prepares him/her for interacting with members of society as a whole in terms of society’s rules which children out of school hardly get (Ibid, 1961).
In light of the increasing role of attendance on educational performance of primary school going children Anand et al, 1998, nonetheless confirmed that developing countries like People’s Republic of China, Costarica among others in Southern Sahara and Eastern Africa in particular have failed to achieve the expected academic standards due to school interruptions at early stages of learning (Lockheed et al 1989). Both elementary and primary learning largely determine whether a child complete basic education or be among those who almost are assuredly confined to the margins of society (Lockheed et al, 1989).

As put by Ajetomobi and Ayamwale (2007), while the composition of the family is important to children, how the family functions to support children is more important to children's development. Family functioning aimed at supporting children's development is commonly called parenting. In the Western family structure, this is largely the role of biological parents. However, in the varying family structures present in Jamaica, and indeed in the Caribbean, the terms 'family' and 'parenting' have much broader contexts. Psychologist Diana Baumrind's seminal work on parenting, along with others that extended her work as presented by Lockheed, identified two main characteristics of parenting: responsiveness and demandingness (Lockheed et al 1989). The responsive parent is accepting of the child, is warm, patient, attentive and sensitive to the child's needs. The non-responsive parent is cold, emotionally rejecting, and frequently degrades the child. The demanding parent establishes high standards for the child and insists that the child meets these standards. The non-demanding parent makes little demands on the child and rarely tries to influence the child's behavior. The implication of Lockheed et’al (1989) is that in parenting, the information and support should be
made more widely available, to improve parent-child interaction and is more focus to educating the child into responsive adulthood

Changes in family structure that children experience during their lives are not without consequences. Western societies have found that children from father-absent homes manifest a number of internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors, including sadness and depression, delinquency, aggression, sex role difficulties, early initiation of sexual activity and teen pregnancy, as well as poor social and adaptive functioning and low self-esteem as reported by Princeton sociologist-Sara McLanahan in the work of Lockheed of 1989. Similar problem behaviors have been identified in children from single-parent and otherwise disrupted households in Asia-Indonesia (Keen et al, 2001).

Jamaican children who live in the less stable common-law and visiting unions and those in single-parent homes or homes with a biological and surrogate parent are more withdrawn in their interactions with others. Additionally, children who frequently move from one residence to another in the process of child shifting, also exhibit problem behavior, and poor academic performance as their level of school attendance is often lower than those from the stable family backgrounds (Lockheed et al 1989)

Child shifting is a common sequel to parental absence in Jamaica, it requires children to adjust physically to their new environment, and is also of requirement to adjust emotionally. The children of incarcerated women, though relatively few in number, require special consideration because of the effects of this more unique type of parental separation. In a report by sociologist Dr.Lee as expounded by Lockheed et al revealed that women are worried about their children's well-being but thought their relationships with the children were not affected (Ibid). The children, however, were depressed, cried
frequently and expressed silent resentment and anger. They were frequent victims of child shifting and experienced physical and emotional abuse as well as discrimination. The presence of these children often worsened already impoverished homes and their schooling was often affected (Lockheed et al 1989).

Ramkissoon (2008) in her research on the interaction between Jamaican fathers and their children investigated two aspects of the father-child relationship: physical absence and psychological absence. Psychological absence refers to the father's absence in the minds of their children based on emotional inaccessibility, lack of responsibility and indifference to the welfare of their children which has been proofed to affect children academic performance as such children are reported to be out of school more often than usual.

According to the Children's Act 2001, parental responsibilities are well stated, in relation to the child and child's property in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child. In part three of that act, the duties referred to include adequate diet, shelter, clothing, medical care, education and guidance, the responsibilities concerning education entails ensuring that a child gets the best education so far and also monitor child's school attendance and performance, which is the responsibility of both parents and caregivers (Republic of Kenya 1989, 2008).

Child's early social environment and other factors influence how children attend school and how low attendance influences the whole school performance not just the pupil who miss school (Badman1999). Occasionally, children need to be alone and on their own, but when with other family members, they learn more through their family members, by choosing what they would like to do, adults helping them plan their work, helping one
another try out various ways and means of performing the tasks, comparing and appraising the results, the youngsters would best develop their latent powers, their skill, understanding, self-reliance and cooperative habits (Ibid).

In the Children Act of 1989, psychological presence of the father is more important to the emotional well-being of the child. Physical presence necessarily promotes psychological presence, but physical presence and psychological absence can lead to expressive rejection and greater psychological damage. It is suggested that concerns about the effects of fathering on children should consider both physical and psychological presence. It is stated in the Republic of Kenya, 1989 that there are fines to parents in circumstances where they know that their children are failing to attend school regularly without reasonable justification to cause them to do so. In Republic of Kenya, 2008 it is also given that the authority can take action via the Family Proceedings Court under Section 36 of the Children Act of 1989 and apply for an Education Supervision Order, making the LA (local authority) responsible for the education of the child. Ajetomobi and Ayanwale (2007) noted further. This action is taken to support parents in caring for the children (Republic of Kenya, 1989). The authority can serve School Attendance Orders under sections 437-443 of the Education Act of 1996 in respect of pupils who are not registered at any school or registered to be receiving education other than at school (Ibid).

2.5: FACTORS INFLUENCING PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Absenteeism from school is a most complex area to address, as it is often the symptom of some other issues. Schools support services have the primary role in trying to identify the underlying causes of non-attendance and, once identified, it is essential to provide well coordinated, planned interventions from the range of services available
within the Local Authority (Anand et al, 1998, Keen et al 2001). There are various contributing factors to chronic absenteeism. Asthma is one of the leading causes of school absence in the United States. Also impacting negatively on the primary school attendance are important socio-economic factors, such as low income, troubled and unstable family life, behavioral problems and cultural adaptation issues. A strong partnership between the community, families, teachers and counselors make the difference in the lives of children by providing strategies to address the problem of chronic absenteeism (UNICEF, 2006).

It is obvious that every school day matters! When a child is committed with other things she/he may not be able to attend school and this leads to the saying “School attendance cannot be separated out from other aspects of the child’s life” in a research undertaken by Education Leeds as contained in Anand et al of 1998 revealed that primary school children non-attendance of schooling are associated with deprivation that children face on the process of schooling and symptom of confusing lives the modern society is facing (Ajetomobi and Ayanwale, 2007)

For the vast majority of parents and caretakers of children and young people, responsibility is met through regular attendance at mainstream and, sometimes, with specialist provision. It should also not be forgotten that the society has corporate parenting to children, and a child failure in education leads to a total failure to the entire community thus regular school attendance is a societal responsibility. Regular primary school attendance based on well provided grounds leads to the expectation that all children should be accessing high quality learning and appropriate curriculum which meets their needs and get appropriate support from the expertise in educational matters.
to fully meet children needs including ensuring children are kept safe from harm and meet all their basics of life (Lewin et al, 1993).

The available evidence clearly shows that absenteeism of school is one of the symptoms of other often complex problems. As a result there exist the Children’s Services Attendance Strategy aiming to secure the commitment of all those who work with children and families to contribute to improving school attendance and therefore improving the life chances of young people in the city. The responsibility for reducing Persistent Absence from school cannot reside with one service and demands a multi-faceted response (Ibid et al, 1993).

The Fula of Northern Sierra Leone of W. Africa, were a poor Moslem society twenty-five years ago, today they are a strong entrepreneurial force in Freetown in Southern Africa, investing in real estate and property development. Similar evidences are noted in Mali, Nigeria and Senegal by Ajetombi and Ayanwale studies of 2007. Common facts are that people in Moslem dominated areas of West Africa are using their wealth to invest in the education of their children. They have established schools and encourage their children to seek professional occupations. Twenty-five years ago, there were few Fula girls in formal schools, but as families fortunes have changed, the education of Fula girls has increased significantly because of the increasing efforts they exerted on children education having realized its values (Cammish et al 1991).

In Northern Nigeria a geographical region of Nigeria, it is more arid and has less population density than the south. The people are largely Muslim, and many are Hausa. Much of the north was once politically united in the Northern Region, a federal division disbanded in 1967. , despite government efforts to promote Universal Primary Education, rural parents still hold negative attitudes towards western education and
prefer Koranic education for girls. However, the influence of an urban setting is demonstrated by the sample of urban women in one study who supported western education for their daughters and had high aspirations for their education and employment (Cammish et al, 1991). And as a result, the Muslim dominated societies are aggressively turning to formal western education to reap its benefits (World Bank, 2006).

In Guinea, religious beliefs are reported to keep children, particularly girls, away from public school. A study conducted in Guinea by a team of sociologists lead by Levitt in the mid 1990s came across three villages where children were not sent for formal western schooling because of religious reasons. In some of such societies, they are more resistant to educating girls than boys. In Muslim dominated villages, Koranic school coexists with public formal learning but, depending on religious beliefs and gender expectations of the society, appropriate education for boys and girls are defined by culture, some communities send mainly boys for education but reserve few opportunity to girls for formal education. The general perception is that girls "only need to learn prayers" and have no use for reading as they are unlikely to become scholars. This expectation appears to be transferred to expectations for children's schooling in the public system. Consequently girls tend to attend Koranic school for less time than do boys (Levitt et'al, 1994). As a result, religion is a main force in socio-cultural that causes children staying out of the formal learning environment.

Both World Development Report, (2007) and Lewin et al, (1993) submits that Religion, especially Islam in Kenyan Society is usually associated with low female participation in schools. The history of the imposition of formal western education, which is associated with Christianity, and the pressure to convert, is still very much an issue in
some Islamic regions. It is evident that some parents prefer Islamic education for their daughters, as the fear that western education promotes values and behavior for girls which are contrary to cultural norms (often articulated as religious edicts) remains strong (Cammish et al., 1991). However, religion is often a proxy for cultural views about appropriate female roles and it is necessary, although difficult, to distinguish between religion and formal education.

2.6 ACTIVITIES CHILDREN ENGAGE IN WHEN NOT IN SCHOOL

Regular attendance in school is crucial to a child’s ability to learn, grow and thrive. It forms the foundation for further academic and social development. This is why chronic absenteeism in primary school is an issue which needs to be addressed from the very beginning in kindergarten. Studies released by the National Centre for Children in Poverty (NCCP) highlight the adverse effect of chronic early school absenteeism, most notably in the child’s diminished educational progress in the primary grades (Republic of Kenya, 2009).

In a study carried at the New York City Affairs in USA by researchers Chang Hedy and Mariojose (2008), it was reported that school attendance of the primary schoolchildren is a concern turned out to chronic problem to schools. The Center for New York City Affairs at The New School conducted such an analysis of NYC’s attendance data in 2007-2008 and found that one in five students in grades 1 to 5 were chronically absent. In New York’s poorest neighborhoods, the rate was as high as one in every three students. From the report, it concluded that community schools in schools that organize and integrate community resources into the core instructional program are well-positioned to not only identify students who are at risk of being chronically absent but also respond to their multi-faceted needs but however little was being done
to risqué the situation given the root causes were deeply rooted in the family problems (Ritu Jain, 2010) remarked. UNICEF (2006) noted similar phenomena and noted warned that communities need to be fully capacititated to education as a key agenda.

In a September 2008 report from NCCP, “Present, Engaged and Accounted For,” researchers Chang Hedy and Mariojose (2008) concluded that children from low income households have the highest rates of absenteeism in kindergarten and often ranked at the bottom of their class academically in future years. Further, the report finds a link between chronic absence in students’ early years and a number of negative outcomes later in life including truancy, delinquency, drug abuse and dropping out of high school. School absenteeism has a far-reaching impact on a child’s academic progress and future of the economic (Republic of Kenya, 2009).

As reported by UNICEF, 2006 and an Aids specialist and a sociologist, chronic early absenteeism from schooling represents a pernicious and hidden problem. Young children who miss schooling head down to great disadvantage, especially if they fall behind their peers on the critical task of learning how to read says Jane Quinn at The Children’s Aid Society. Fortunately, by shining a light on this problem, schools can join forces with community partners who can help them address the root causes of chronic absenteeism in the early grades most likely health or family problems. Ritu Jain (2010). Her report brought to light the shocking reality that children under eighteen prone to school absenteeism are reported to be increasingly victims of AIDS and STDs (Ritu Jain, 2010).

In Kenya children who are not attending school are involved in various activities including those that are harmful to themselves, they engage in such activities together.
with fellow children or even adults (Ondieki, 2013). As noted school absentees find themselves in such activities as organizing gang activities, smoking, taking alcohol, indulging in unhealthy sexual relations, collecting metals and selling, playing cards, accompanying adults to the market places, frequenting fishing and sand harvesting beaches and sites to earn money, so in order to get money to contribute to the household expenses (Leonard, 2012)

2.7 COMMUNITY ATTITUDE TOWARDS SCHOOL ABSENTEEISM

It is universally known that education is a major investment that any economy would miss without being branded unable to marshal her resources comprehensively for the future development of her people. It is hence common that people should work together to support and encourage families and communities to facilitate primary school regular attendance as a key avenue for the success of the people and economy as large. In this aspect Lynda (2011) and World Bank (2006) insist that all must be encouraged to pursue educational goal so as to attain Millenium Development Goal to realize the talent and potential of each individual child poor or rich whatever it takes. In the US like other developed states “Community schools” are lauded as best mechanisms for integrating social services, health care and other supports into the public education system. But it is recall from several other studies as contained in the work of Badman of 1999 that the success of education begins with consistence of school attendance at primary level of education and rely much on formidable partnerships between public school principals and the leadership of community-based nonprofits organizations such as the Children’s Aid Society in New York and any other organization in other parts of the world (Ibid).
UNICEF (2006) highlighted the facts that least developed country faces other brands of challenges that make them unable to enhance and encourage regular routine primary school attendance. Research in Malawi and Uganda reports 'lack of money as some of the excuse for the reluctance of parents and families to investment in the education of girls because they do not perceive the value of education for girls. Similar domestic role of women in the society put them against pursuance in education (Fleuret, 1992).

In other study report, recently, the negative attitudes towards female education in the north of Cameroon, predominantly a Moslem area, explained 'the remoteness, vast distances, poverty and the resentment of out of negative attitudinal changes imposed by Muslim region on the education of the female gender (UNICEF, 2006) reports in parts. .

Further, across the region, formal education has historically been linked to employment opportunities in the labor market, particularly in the civil service (UNICEF, 2006). Communities tend to judge the value of education by the returns from the labor market. Given the historical exclusion of girls from education and the formal labor market, it seems prudent for families to invest in the formal education of boys because they often find themselves always be better placed to explore formal labor market opportunities that their female counterparts. Cammish et al (1991) laments that the tradition of poor female participation and performance in school and the labor market reinforces familial and community bias

In the light of World Development Report (2007) noted that from the practical school of thought, other educational models are viewed by society as more efficient and practical than the formal white collar job oriented education systems at preparing girls to be wives and mothers. Apprenticeships continue to be applauded in the modern society and
gaining in providing practical entrepreneurial skills to young people across the region. Such programs are popular with parents who often want to ensure that their daughters acquire some practical skills before they get married. Sewing and trading are particularly popular (Gaba, 1992). In such instances school going children emulate their successful peers and become reluctant to attend formal primary education opting to pursue apprenticeship on their own accord to engage in economic activities. Cammish et al (1991) reports a common say among school going children that "Enough education to set up as a hairdresser or to run a chicken parlor may encourage bright girls to drop-out of school in order to earn."

Pupils who are absent from school without authorization are often pupils who are disengaged and disaffected, and therefore vulnerable. Community views impact of poor attendance on pupils especially when children get to be involved in offending behaviors as lack of responsibility for monitoring regular school attendance and ensuring that schools and services meet the needs of the young people in community, enabling them to get the best outcomes and fulfill their potential. Rightly, these standards are measured positively when children perform better in life and meet basic of life in adulthood. Nonetheless parents/caretakers commit an offence when a child doesn't attend school regularly as it required by all the educational stakeholders that children attend school regularly (Keent et al, 2001).

It was common knowledge in most communities to give the excuse of lack of resources for not educating specifically girls, but the practice has caught up with even boys. Although poverty is a very real constraint to education and the economic costs of education are prohibitive to some parents, research findings by Cammish and Brock suggest that this categorization needs to be held to close scrutiny (Cammish et al 1991).
The researcher is in agreement with Cammish et al. 1991 and World Development of Report (2007) on the grounds that the practice of neglecting education need of children is rampant in the least developed countries in the world but differs in the senses that poverty should not be yard stick of measuring the ability of a community to oversee regular attendance of children. It is known practice that even among the well to do families, children’s irregular school attendance are often reported. Children regular attendance is ensured by many factors, general attitude towards education included. General awareness is the remedy as recommended by Ajetomobi and Ayanwale (2007).

2.8 EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE VERSUS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Schooling gives children not only an insight into the social importance of various activities with their environment and beyond, but also all the opportunities to practice newly learned knowledge in play form (Republic of Kenya, 2008). This naturally leads children into problem solving habit "project pursuance methodological practices" identified with the essence of the progressive procedure of life. Children soak up knowledge and retain it for use when they are spontaneously induced to look into matters of compelling interest to themselves. Ennew, (1994) remarks that children progress fastest in learning, not through being mechanically drilled in prefabricated material, but by attending lessons, experimenting with things, changing them in purposive ways by immolating their peers from different family backgrounds often found in social learning gathering grounds like school.

In the contemporary's competitive world, all economies are keen and concerned to attain healthy educational performance of children especially at the early ages when children form base for understanding. Parents worldwide monitor children school attendance (Cammish et al, 1994). Regularly maintained school attendance lies at the
heart of everything being done to ensure that children and young people are happy, healthy, safe and increasingly successful and acquire basic wellbeing received by shaping children to learning morals as well as life standards. As revealed by (Moore, 1996), in school, children are helped to read, to count, to sing, to dance, to play and to become confident, powerful good learners by age of eleven and on a pathway to success by age of sixteen years old. Right knowledge acquisition and practice is real when children set to enroll, attend, engage in learning in right time and attend schooling regularly (Ibid, 1996).

Regular school attendance influences on a child’s learning and on how well a child performs in school. Children who lack the opportunity to be regularly present in class stand no better chance of recommended performance as those attending regularly. It well noted that weak children who do not attend lessons find themselves in great trouble of poor performance in school and general failure in life (Republic of Kenya, 2004)

According to Glawwe et al, (1999) children who delay their enrolment in primary schools are more likely to repeat, which result to poor academic achievement, likewise irregular attendance contributes to poor performance in class and eventually reflects in adulthood life. Research shows that regular class attendance is important for good performance; therefore, attendance is vital to a child’s academic performance at all levels of learning. Attendance provides awareness and knowledge to work out the questions, in as much as even a moderate lack of in attendance has lasting effects on children’s cognitive development and school performance in general. Based on the School Census report as contained in Republic of Kenya of 2008, absent children from class never do well in their class work (Republic of Kenya, 2008).
According to Johnson & Sharpe, (2000) excellent attendance is the key to ensuring that children and young people have the best life chances and all brilliant opportunities in life. It is therefore strongly believed that having access to and receiving good education is the best way to ensure that all children achieve positively in life. Regular learning with positive results empowers primary school children to be able to make the best and most positive choices about their future lives. To achieve this, all children have the right to education, the right embedded in law, requiring parents and careers to ensure that children receive a suitable education through regular school attendance (Ennew, 1994).

Promoting regular school attendance is a key component in the Government’s strategy to raise educational standards. Regular school attendance set strategies that were set place in the mid 2000s by Public Service Agreement (PSA) to reduce school absenteeism by 8% in 2008 compared to an improvement from 6.98% in the early 2003 to 6.42% by the end of the same year (Republic of Kenya, 2008).

In the Developed Countries, Leeds, (2011) reported that plans were under way to reduce persistent absence in secondary schools to 5% across all local authorities by 2011. To achieve this, statutory requirements were mounted on local authorities to set annual targets to achieve or maintain low levels of persistent absentees. All state schools were to set targets to achieve or maintain low levels of overall absence. The objectives as contained in the Leeds recommendation were meant induce regular school attendance as a key to improved life chances and greater choices for the future generations. In this regards, regular school attendance has the aspect of legislative issues at hand in as much as behavior, attendance and learning are three aspects that impact on each other and influences children formation from the early stage of life and should factored in any academic planning and be reinforced by all the educational stakeholders (Ibid, 2011).
Regular school attendance with regards to positive performance of primary school going children has a lot to do with life learn behavioral pattern. Therefore as recommended by Steer, 2004 there should be a set standards and practices in schools to show a Children’s Trust Boards so as to routinely consider the impact of behavior and attendance issues on all children of five years old. In light of other educational sociologist, Steer (2004) recommendations were meant to ensure that children acquire regular school attendance behaviors right from their childhood of early primary learning and this should be monitored, and regularly reviewed by all the committed educational stakeholders to enhance performance of children right from their stage of learning (Gakuru et al, 1982)

At another level an educational sociologist Lord Laming as contained in the work of Gakuru et’al of 1982 and Johnson & Sharpe, (2000) were of the feeling that regular education attendance was a safeguarding issue and offers many physical, emotional and social safeguards to children and young people as well as access to additional specialist support (Ibid).

In the early 1980s, an inquiry “The Lamb Inquiry” reported by Nyonyintono et al of 1981 in a review of Disability Information was found to be relevant to school attendance in that; children and young people who had disability and/or were determined to be over represented in the PA cohort, had the main role of preparing children for entry into pre-school education in Kenya at the right time with habitual regular attendance pattern (Ibid, 1981). However this has not been fully achieved; the consequences of juvenile delinquent child still befall the family due to inadequate care from the households as a result of economic reasons as most families do not send their children for kindergarten learning thus need from other educational stakeholders to lent hand (Persons and Bales, 1956)
The researcher concurred with Persons and Bales of 1956 and the Nyonyintono et al 1981 recommendations because children below age 15 years are under the guidance of parents or caregivers, and especially when they school from home; their actions are therefore controlled by the family members, elder siblings, parents or caregivers. Furthermore, the study of child education is an important aspect of human success as a whole (Republic of Kenya, 2008). Therefore any historical study that ignores the contribution of education to the welfare of children is therefore incomplete. It is hence worth noting that contribution of education in social economic activities in Kenya has generally been left to the educationists. Nevertheless, it should be the responsibility of all the stakeholders, sociologists included to understand fully, factors surrounding educational failure or success of the children at stages of life. Therefore, the researcher feels that it is important to carry out this study to reveal the socio-cultural factors influencing primary school absenteeism in Asego Division of Homa-Bay County; Kenya.

2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Durkheim's Anomie Theory

Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist, introduced the concept of anomie in his book The Division of Labor in Society, published in 1893. He used anomie to describe a condition of deregulation that was occurring in society. This meant that rules on how people ought to behave with each other were breaking down and thus people did not know what to expect from one another. Anomie can be defined, as a state where norms (expectations on behaviors) are confused, unclear or not present. It is normlessness that led to deviant behavior (Durkheim, 1961)

Anomie thus refers to a breakdown of social norms and it is a condition where norms no
longer control the activities of members in society. Individuals cannot find their place in society without clear rules to help people guide their behaviors. Changing conditions as well as adjustment of life leads to dissatisfaction, conflict, and deviance. He observed that social periods of disruption (economic depression, for instance) brought about greater anomie and higher rates of crime, suicide, and deviance (Durkheim, 1961).

Durkheim felt that sudden change caused a state of anomie. The system breaks down either during a great prosperity or a great depression as anomie is a conditional life pass even to school going children as long as schools and families do not adhere to set norms.

**Application of Durkheim’s Anomie Theory to this study**

The contemporary society is characterized by low observation of rules and regulations and activities are not controlled by social norms, individuals do not find safety in society without clear rules to help guide them (Durkheim, 1961). The implications of Anomie Theory is that people always need to be followed closely in order to do what the norms require them to do without which the entire economy is disrupted ending up in dubious means of survival. The clear set standards, increased working hours and quality performance in all sectors of education add value to education and hard work are realized, when there is greater concern for regular education attendance, educational gains are observed to be high and the reverse when the gains from education are low. Ondieki, 2013 concludes that; Poor outcome of education makes parents/caretakers assign school going children other duties that hinder them from attending school regularly. It is a developed fact that whenever there are changes and adjustments, people really fears to conform even if the change is for their own betterment. It is for this that the popular free primary education in Kenya never achieved the mission and to date in many parts of Kenya, children still notoriously absent schooling.
Due to unclear norms and inadequate awareness of the consequences of not educating children, people engage children to help participate in various socio-economic and political activities to make ends meet. This has resulted to selfishness as children mainly rely on close relatives (Ondieki, 2013).

From the theory, it is concluded that unclear set norms on persistent primary school attendance and un-emphasized need from all the educational stakeholders contribute to increasing primary school absenteeism.

**Strain Theory of Deviance**

The strain theory was developed in 1938 by Robert Merton and then updated by Robert Agnew in 1985. Agnew’s general strain theory is based on the general idea that “when people get treated badly they get upset and engage in crime.” Sometimes people find that when they attempt to attain culturally approved goals, their paths are blocked, not everyone has access to institutionalized means, or legitimate ways of achieving success in this case they turn to violent means of attaining their goals. The theory as portrayed by the sociologist Merton of 1992, posits that when people are prevented from achieving culturally approved goals through institutional means, they experience strain or frustration that can lead to deviance. He said that they also experience anomie, or feelings of being disconnected from society, which can occur when people do not have access to the institutionalized means to achieve their goals. Merton theorized about how members of a society respond to cultural goals and institutionalized means.

General strain theory identifies various types of delinquent adaptations, including escapist (e.g., drug use), instrumental (e.g., property offences), and retaliatory (e.g., violent offences) outcomes. Coping via illegal behavior and violence may be especially
true for adolescents because of their limited legitimate coping resources, greater influence from peers, and inability to escape many stressful and frustrating environments.

Agnew (2004), contends that crime becomes a likely outcome when individuals have a low tolerance for strain, when they have poor coping skills and resources; when they have few conventional social supports, Agnew et al (2004), for example, found that individuals with the personality traits of negative emotionality and low constraint were more likely to respond to strain with crime. Such individuals are impulsive, overly active and quick to lose their tempers.

**Application of Strain Theory to this Study**

Various strains- i.e. economical, social, cultural, physical and even spiritual make many societies to rebel. People not only reject approved means of achieving goals, but they replace them with their own means. Families are observed to be rebels who run away from the societal expectations like that of educating the children; instead they engage children in other activities hindering them from regularly attending school (Agnew et al, 2004).

Families have revolved, rejecting the status quo and making attempt to replace them with their own form of government. And this is how the family has deployed ways of dealing with their own issues. The larger community tries to stay away from family interference, so children are suffering and end up indulging into non accepted ways of living like absenting themselves from school. When children learn that they may blame the family for their failures, they take advantage and become deviants. This cycle continues, and in their old age they make their children miss school.
Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter focuses on the logical procedures followed to realize the objectives of the study. It presents the study location, research design, the study population, sample size and sampling procedures, data collection methods, instruments used, data analysis methods, presentation techniques and ethical considerations.

3.2 STUDY LOCATION
The study was carried out in Asego Division in Homa Bay County, Kenya. Homa Bay County is in the former Nyanza province of Kenya, it is however the capital of Homabay county as per the new constitution. Its capital and largest town is Homabay, the county has a population of 963,793 (2009 census) and an area of 3,154.7 km 2 (1999 census) It is located in Nyanza Province of Western Kenya. Asego is one of the 5 administrative divisions within the county, the others being Ndhiwa, Nyarongi, Rangwe and Riana. Asego division has urban and rural population; the urban part has a population of 29,315, while the rural part has a population of 47463. Other towns include; Oyugis, Kosele, KenduBay, Rodi Kopany, Rangwe, Mirogi, Ndhiwa, Sindo and Magunga. Asego division covers 184.1 acres (km 2 ) and has 9 locations subdivided into 17 sub locations falling within one municipal council of Homa Bay (Republic of Kenya, 2009).

The division borders Lake Victoria to the North, Ndhiwa to West and South West, Riana to the South and Rangwe Division to the East. Asego has a population of 99,490 and a population density of 540 km 2 . The study area is most densely populated division with an estimated density of 495 persons per square kilometers (CSA Homa Bay District, 2007) a situation attributed to the divisions small size and also the migration of people
into the division due to employment opportunities and business activities. The divisional headquarter is as well the county’s headquarter and is therefore the largest urban centre in the region and has the highest level of housing, shelter and other social amenities thus attract the rural urban immigrants (Republic of Kenya 2010). The population includes both the rural residents and comprises both public and private sector workers, fish traders, and business persons in Homa Bay Township.

Asego division has the highest number of primary schools given that the division is composed of town centre and part of rural, there are six boarding schools that are situated within town and the only existing boarding schools in the division (Raphael 2011). The whole county has 1000 primary schools serving 283,162 pupils with the teacher pupil ratio of 1: 45 respectively (Raphael 2011). Data will only be collected in the rural part of Asego which is the most affected due to the level of poverty in the area.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN
The study adopted descriptive survey design to collect data from the respondents. A descriptive approach is a set of survey procedures designed to obtain information regarding the current phenomena and draw valid conclusions from facts discussed (Kombo and Tromp 2006). The researcher therefore used descriptive survey design to explore socio-cultural factors contributing to primary school absenteeism in Asego Division of Homa-Bay County.

3.4 STUDY POPULATION
Borg and Gall (1996) define population as all the members of a real or hypothetical set of people, event or objects to which a researcher wishes to generalize the results of the study. In this study, the study population is composed of head teachers from 20 primary
schools, heads of Households and Community elders within Asego Division of Homa-Bay County in Nyanza Province.

3.4.1 Unit of Analysis
In this study the unit of analysis is socio-cultural factors contributing to increasing primary school absenteeism in Asego Division of Homa-Bay County in Nyanza Province, Kenya.

3.4.2 Unit of Observation
The unit of observation for this study is composed of 169 Households sampled through systematic random sampling procedure from a total household population of 513 from the two locations in Asego Division, 20 head teachers purposively sampled from 20 primary schools and 34 community elders drawn from a population of 67 community elders all from Asego Division in Homa-Bay

3.5 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE
In selecting the study sample, the researcher focused on Asego Division whose population includes both rural and urban residents. Guided by the Local leaders (Chief and sub chief), the researcher specifically focused on the rural part of Asego, this is because Asego Division has a large population covering an area of 184.1 acres (km²) and has 9 locations subdivided into 17 sub locations. Researcher purposively selected two locations (East Kanyada and West Kochia) to carry out the study, the two locations being on the extreme ends represented the division, hence study to be generalized to the whole division. Sample size was only drawn from these two locations, and data collected in the same two locations, (3 sub locations in East Kanyada and 2 sub locations in west kochia). Researcher focused on households with primary school children only:
**Heads of Households:** Asego division has a total of 1,821 Households (census, 2009).

East Kanyada and West kochia locations within Asego division have a total of 513 households, (East Kanyada 276, West Kochia 237); this was obtained by the help of Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs. The researcher through the local leaders identified households hosting children below primary school, and those above primary schools in the two locations, only the households with children going to primary schools qualified for the study (East Kanyada 179, West Kochia 166). The researcher came up with a total of 345 households from the two locations, who qualified as the target population for the households. With 345 household, the researcher used systematic random sampling procedure and assigned all the households hosting children going to primary school random numbers, the researcher determined sample size to be 169, and therefore divided 345 by 169 obtaining 2 as the interval number and so picked randomly at an interval of 2 and came up with a study sample of 169 households.

**Community Elders:** The researcher purposively sampled 34 elders from the two locations with a population of 67 elders.

**Teachers:** Twenty teachers were sampled using purposive sampling procedure from the two locations to represent the schools to be studied.

**Table 3.1: Distribution of Study Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Target Population</th>
<th>Sampled Population</th>
<th>Sampled %age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Households</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>48.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Elders</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>50.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary head Teachers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

3.6.1 Questionnaires
Primary data was collected by use of questionnaires administered to the heads of households with the help of the researcher and the research assistants. Information gathered included; extent of absenteeism, causes of absenteeism and the activities children involved themselves when out of school. The questionnaire had both structured and semi-structured questions to obtain quantitative and qualitative data from the respondents.

3.6.2 Interview Schedule
Interview schedule was administered to the head teachers and community elders. Intensive interview with the teachers using interview guide aided obtaining data from the teachers and community elders as stakeholders and key informants from the community.

3.6.3 Focused Group Discussion Guide
The study made use of 7 focus group discussions with each group composed of head teacher, village elders and community members purposively sampled to explore and discuss factors contributing to primary school absenteeism in the study area. This was based on the facts that the respondents came from within the same locality of school and for heads of households, have at least a child at same school or surrounding school. The discussions aided gathering relevant information from teachers, community elders and household heads because all are key participants in primary school education. Data on emerging issues during the study that needed clarifications generated need for further probe by the researcher.
Table 3.2: Composition of the members for the seven group discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Head teacher</th>
<th>Village Elders</th>
<th>Community Members</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION

A total of 194 respondents participated in the study. The researcher distributed a total of 169 questionnaires responded to mainly by household representatives and interviewed 32 of the 34 community elders targeted and 20 primary school heads. Out of the 169 household representatives targeted with questionnaires, 143 respondents participated successfully on answering the questions at 85% return rate from the household representatives while 32 out of 34 community elders and 19 head teachers out of the 20 satisfactorily took part in the interviews and discussions successfully.

Data received from the field were coded and clustered for subsequent statistical analysis. The researcher used statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS), as well as descriptive method to analyze the data. Results analyzed from quantitative data were presented by
use of text, frequency tables and charts while qualitative data were presented in words and phrases

3.8 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

For Validity the researcher used secondary data from secondary sources and also carefully formulated the study instruments which included questionnaires, interview schedules and focused group discussions. The researcher improved on the instruments and made final copies of the tools used.

For reliability, the responses that the researcher gathered enabled the identification of vague questions that were redefined to improve the reliability. This enabled the researcher to gauge the appropriateness of the instruments. Whenever there was need, the researcher made adjustments before the final copies were made.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the University of Nairobi which was presented to the local chiefs and subïï chiefs who informed and briefed the respondents on the objectives, procedures and requirements of the research. Children were not interviewed due to ethical issues, only Parents/Caregivers, head teachers and community elders were engaged in responding to the questions. The researcher sought consent of the respondents before engaging them into the study.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents data from the field; it provides demographic characteristics of respondents and discussion of main findings on socio-cultural factors influencing school attendance at primary school level in Asego Division, Homa-Bay County. The chapter is sub-divided into topics based on objectives of the study. Key information discussed include; the role of family members in influencing school attendance of primary school children, community members’ roles towards primary school absenteeism and the kind of activities children engage in when not attending school.

4.2 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

A total of 194 respondents composed of 143 heads of households, 32 community elders and 19 head teachers successfully took part in the study.

Table 4.1: Target and Sample Population of the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Target Population</th>
<th>Sample Population</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Households</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Elders</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Teachers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. 2.1: Gender Distribution of respondents in the Study

Data gathered by use of questionnaires showed successful return rate of 143 (85%) of responses from the 169 households contacted. From the 143 responses received, 86 (60.1%) of them were females with only 57 (39.9%) being males.

Table 4.2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Composition</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Households</td>
<td>57 (39.9%)</td>
<td>86 (60.1%)</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Teachers</td>
<td>17 (89.5%)</td>
<td>2 (10.5%)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Elders</td>
<td>30 (93.8%)</td>
<td>2 (6.3%)</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>104</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
<td><strong>194</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author 2014

From the results above, it is clear that women are the majority heads of the family in the two locations under study with 60.1%, while men are at 39.9%. Only 2 women were in the teaching profession in the two locations, and only two female elders in the study area.

4.2.2 Marital Status of Respondents

Results from 143 household representatives contacted in the study showed that 86 (60.1%) of the respondents were married while the single parents were 21 (14.7%). The divorced cases reported accounted to 13 (9.2%) while the separated families were 20 (14%). Results were distributed as shown in the graph below.
N=143

Source: Author 2014

Figure 4.1: Marital Status of the Respondents

The outcome of the study is a clear indication that most households (60%) housed the married couples, divorced cases are not many according to the table, while single parenting and separated cases are at 15% and 14% respectively.

4.2.3 Education Level of the Respondents

The researcher sought to know the educational status of the households’ respondents.

The results were as follows in the Graph below:
Figure 4.2: The Educational Status of Respondents in the Study Area

The information was sought from 143 household representatives with the results showing that most adults in the study area (58.0%) are primary graduates, followed by secondary at (21.0%) when the certificates and diploma holders were found to be (17.0%) at a time when university graduates were discovered to account for (4.0%). From the five university graduates contacted in the study area, two were not origins of the area, but had lived in the area for more than a decade. It was a clear indication that majority of the people in the study area never went beyond primary education and most respondents gave financial problems as reasons for not continuing with education.

4.2.4 Occupational Status of Respondents

To establish the occupational status of the household heads, the researcher asked the respondent to state their occupations, mentioning their actual area of earning in case they were self-employed. A total of 139 respondents gave their responses to this and the outcome showed that the people are mainly self-employed (67%), with (5%) in formal employment as the remaining (28%) reported being without any form of regular earning.

Table 4.3 Respondents Occupational Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Employment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Employment</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Employed</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results revealed that the people are farmers, fishmongers, sand harvesters, and others engaged in off farm small scale business either as industrial products merchants, farm products value adders and retailers or textile brokers while others are general labourers in the area. It was therefore possible to infer that the people of Asego in Homa-Bay County are self-employed with majority (65%) as farmers. It was revealed through the result that farming is the main occupation of the people thus explaining why most children engaged in farming activities when out of schools.

4.2.5: Income Level of the Respondents

To find out the income level of the respondents, the researcher asked respondents to choose the category they fall under concerning their income. A total of 143 respondents answered this question as shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Income</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below Kshs 5000</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5001-9000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9001-13000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13001-17000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 17000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>143</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The outcome shows that majority of the people (50%) earn below Ksh 5000/= with an equally large percentages of the people (14%) getting an average of between kshs. 5000-9000 as 8% and 6% are earning between kshs. 9001-13000 and kshs. 13001-17000 respectively at a time when 17% could not account for their earning. These results clearly implied that only a minority (6%) of the residence of Asego Division earn above...
kshs. 13000. A bigger percentage (17%) could not state their actual earning; this showed that their earnings were erratic, irregular and too minimal such that they could not sum the total within a specified period of time.

4.3 MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM OF PRIMARY SCHOOL ABSENTEEISM IN THE STUDY AREA

The researcher looked into the magnitude of primary school absenteeism in the study area, effects of school absenteeism in the study area, and level of awareness of school absenteeism as a challenge in the area.

4.3.1 Effects of School Absenteeism

School absenteeism was found to have contributed to idleness of the children thus engagement in activities like fishing, farming and sand harvesting. The researcher asked the respondents in a focused group discussion to state the effects of school absenteeism, in the 7 focus group discussions, the respondents stated various reasons as follows; school dropout 11 (20 %), low education performance 9 (16%), engagement in illicit criminal acts 4 (7%) and poverty 32 (57%).
This outcome showed that school absenteeism in the study area has created room for poverty in the area. The respondents confirmed that the more the children absent from school, the more the likelihood that they performance poorer (16%) and the higher the chances of dropping out of school pre-maturely (20%) before attaining even primary eight of primary education. One respondent said “these children are absent from school too often and end up dropping out of school altogether”

The respondents reported that poverty in the study area make children go without food, forcing children to seek for jobs to earn in order to care for their family. During the interviews with teachers it emerged that the key consequent of school absenteeism is low level of education. In an elaborated interview with the schools heads, a respondent stated that:

“School absenteeism is rampant during the early and late periods of the year particularly when the much expected harvest turned out to be poor after either short or long rains seasons and equal hits are experience after December festive season, when families have had much spending from the meager resources of the people making January schooling a nightmare”.
Respondents stated that April is the month where there are lots of farm work and parents tend to use children as source of labour in the farms, in a focused group discussion with the teachers, Community elders and heads of households, a respondent stated that sometimes when they confront the parents for encouraging absenteeism, they get replies like;

*this farm is what assists them to feed, cloth, and even get health care services*, *if they do not assist as much as they can, what can they feed on.*

Such answers make the elders not to be in a position to fully control attendance, but only left to persuade the people to try and ensure that school attendance is adhered to.

**4.3.2 Awareness of Primary School Absenteeism**

To check on the awareness of school absenteeism as a challenge in the study area, the researcher inquired from the heads of households to state whether they have realized that school absenteeism is a challenge in the division. The findings shows that (68%) stated that school absenteeism is a challenge, while (17%) gave No as their answer, the remaining (15%) were not aware. The outcome was distributed in the figure below:

![Awareness of Primary School Absenteeism](image)

N=143

**Figure 4.4: Awareness of School Absenteeism as a Challenge in the Study Area**

From the results above, the respondents are clearly aware of primary school absenteeism as a major challenge. The 17% of the household heads did not confirm school
absenteeism as a challenge, while 15% were not aware of school absenteeism as a challenge.

### 4.3.3. Reasons for School Absenteeism in the study area

The researcher sought to establish the reasons pertaining to school absenteeism in the study area. The respondents mentioned various reasons that were listed and ranked by the researcher as indicated in the below table.

#### Table 4.5: Mentioned reasons for School Absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sn</th>
<th>Reasons for school absenteeism</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Inadequacy of Schools</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Parents/guardians Apathy to Primary Education</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children being the family Bread Winners</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lack of basic Education Facilities</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Community Ignorance on the Values of Education</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Low level of Income</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Children refusal to attend school</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Poor health Status of the Parents</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Inappropriate Curriculum</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Children Providing Family Labour</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Author (2014)*

Lack of education facilities (23.8%) is noted to be the main reason contributing to highest cases of school absenteeism as indicated in the above table, followed by low level of income (22.4%). Community ignorance on the values of education (14.0%) followed closely as a reason why children are not regularly attending school, poor health status of the parents (11.9%), inadequacy of schools came at (11.9%), meaning these factors affects at the same rate. (7.7%) of the responses indicated that children engage in bread winning activities and these are the reasons why they are unable to attend school regularly, inappropriate curriculum quoted only at (6%).

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4.4 FAMILY INFLUENCE ON PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The researcher took initiative to find out the actual role of the family in influencing school absenteeism. The respondents’ answers were distributed in the frequency distribution table with the results as follows.

Table 4.6: Role of family in influencing School Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sn</th>
<th>Role of family in influencing school attendance</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ensuring sufficient basic school items of the school going children</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Controlling the activities children engage in when not attending schools</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Provision of adequate children meal</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ensuring that the child attend to school home work when at home</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Counseling the children daily after day schooling</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pleading with the children to attend school without failures</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Influencing community attitude to be positive towards primary schooling</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table, provisions of sufficient basic school items to school going children is the highest responsibility to family members, followed by controlling activities children engage in when not attending school, provision of adequate children meal came at third, while supervision of school homework followed at (17.5%). Engaging community to promoting school attendance is the least mentioned at (5.8%).

Outcome of the ranking (Table 4.6) of the family roles in influencing primary school attendance shows that the family especially the parents and or guardians are expected to take the leading role of ensuring sufficient basic school items to school going children (32.8%), provision of adequate meals (21.2%), followed by the duty to ensure that children attend to school home work when at home (17.5%), school attendance from the results above is seen not to be a communal affair, and so the table further revealed that family still has a social role of influencing other community members to be positive.
towards primary schooling, however the parents of school going children have not done enough to influence community to work together through maintaining children in school, it was the lowest rated role at (5.8%) 

In an interview with the teachers, one respondent remarked that “the parents/guardians, who should be in the forefront to encourage children education, are often overwhelmed by socio-economic burden and turns to children as immediate home helps and or bread winners”. While many echoed that “Primary attendance is faced with lots of challenges, from the socio-economic background of the community” 

In an attempt to find out how the elders assist in improving school attendance, the researcher asked them in a focused group discussion, to state their roles in improving school attendance, they explained that they are trying to use their authority as elders to question parents/guidance whose children are often absenting from school, this they do during gatherings like church services, community meetings and other forums. At this time, one respondent said;

“I take the opportunity in church, to encourage parents to let their children attend school, and even try to plead with them to provide the necessary school requirements to their children so that they keep attending school”

4.5 ACTIVITIES CHILDREN ENGAGE IN WHEN NOT IN SCHOOL

The researcher sought to find out the actual activities children engaged in when absent from school, 143 respondents gave various answers including: farming, babysitting, fishing, sand harvesting, household chores, studying and doing school homework. Most respondents mentioned fishing and sand harvesting as the most common activities among the school going boys, due to economic reasons, children make effort to
supplement family needs. Household chores and playing was also quoted more often, showing that majority of the children undertake household duties while not attending school, especially when mothers are held in other domestic activities at home or away from home for some reason. Farming and babysitting scored third and undertaken by both genders. Children studying and doing school homework was not mentioned much, a sign that school is not given a priority.

Focused group discussions with the community elders, teachers and heads of households, revealed that School absenteeism in the study division is family driven as children often fail to attend school with the permission from the parents, with others sneaking to carry out activities for monetary gains. One teacher among the group said;

"It is difficult to control school absenteeism because the parents themselves are involved in making the children absent from school, sometimes children do miss school with the knowledge of their parents”

The researcher sought to find out from the heads of household how frequent they involve children in activities when absent from school, the respondents gave their answers as shown in the figure below.

N=139
Different opinions from the respondents concerning frequency with which the tasks are distributed to children when not in school were as follows: 64.8% of respondents observed that children are engaged daily in home duties, 22.2% noted that children are engaged weekly were as 12% stated monthly engagement of children, with 1% reporting yearly.

Concerning allocation of duties based on age, 53.2% of the respondents were of the opinion that the daily task to children is distributed based on age of child, while 47.5% reported that the task is not based on age but on the child accessibility to carry out these duties.

4.6 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ROLE OF COMMUNITY

Primary school absenteeism is a concern worldwide (UNICEF 2006). Stakeholders including teachers, guardians, government through the Ministry of education and the civil society are all required to play their part to ensure consistent school attendance.

It is a greater concern among the stakeholders in the education sector to ideally come to term as to who should play a bigger role in ensuring the physical responsibility for the notable school absenteeism in most part of the developing countries, as reported by (UNICEF 2006).

4.6.1 Primary School Stakeholders and School Attendance

The researcher sought to find out who is responsible for encouraging school attendance among the school going children in Asego Division in the Homa-Bay County, raised question to respondents on whom they hold responsible for encouraging school
attendance, this question was answered by 143 respondents who gave their answers as, teaching body 19(13.3%), parents 68 (47.60%), government 45 (31.5%), and or both 11(7.7%) outcome was distributed in the figure below

![Figure 4.6: Responsibility for School Attendance](image)

N=143

**Figure 4.6: Responsibility for School Attendance**

Most of the respondents stated parents (47.6%) as the key body that should be responsible for encouraging primary school attendance with the other respondents stating Government through the MoE (31.5%) as the stakeholder not doing enough to prevent schools absenteeism as teachers being optioned at (13.3%) of the responsibility with (7.7%) of the respondents of the opinion that all the stakeholders are equally responsible for encouraging school attendance.

On further interrogations through interviews on who should be ensuring that children were not absent, there was the implication from the findings that the parents as the immediate children supervisors at home where children stay awaiting reporting to school every morning and therefore should be fully responsible for encouraging school attendance without which the children’s school attendance is set to drop, one community elder lamented during one of the focused group discussions saying:
These parents are to be solely responsible that their children go to school every day, because they are staying with them, they should not keep them back from attending school”

However, in another focused group discussion, respondents had different opinion, stating that parents’s supervision to ensure school attendance is not enough without assistance from the other stakeholders and this is what they echoed:

without total support from other stakeholders including the government, school attendance is set to drop,

But one respondent in the same discussion was of a different opinion, and was quick to blame the government as the major party to take responsibility, this is what he said,

in fact the county and the central government should ensure that parents are fully empowered to meet the school needs of the children to assists address absenteeism”.

4.6.2 Community Participation towards School Activities

The researcher sought to bring to light the role of the community towards school absenteeism and therefore asked the heads of households through the questionnaires if community members participate in the school activities, they were asked to state based on: Community positively participate on school activities, Community negatively take part on school activities, Community do not know what is taking place around concerning school. The outcome of the study became very clear that 39.7% of the people in Asego Division participate in the educational affairs with 34.75% being of the idea that people in the study area do not participate well in the primary school activities, as 25.5% did not have any knowledge of what is happening concerning school activities.
100 participants responded to this question and results analyzed in the figure below:

![Bar Chart](image)

N=100

**Figure 4.7: Community Knowledge on School Activities**

During interview with the respondents, the researcher asked them to give reasons for lack of participation concerning school activities, these are what they mentioned in the session; Ignorance on values of education, Poor economic status of the economy-thus ever increasing poverty despite families previous efforts to educate children, Inability to meet the needs of children learning materials, Low employment for the educated at all level of learning in the country. It also emerged that the people have low confidence in educational matters and hardly care about their children education, as was quoted by one respondent;

"Schooling is of no benefit nowadays, many children who have gone to school, are still with us here in the village without jobs, even when they do well in their education"

At another level, the researcher contacted household representatives through the questionnaires to say whether primary school matters form part of the agenda at the chief barazas. The analysis of the finding shows that majority of the respondents (49%) were of the opinion that educational matters hardly form part of the chief barazas agenda on
development. The other cross section (29%) admitted having participated on primary education affairs on chief barazas meetings when (22%) of the respondents could not make up their minds whether or not chief barazas discuss issues of education. The figure below summarizes the extent to which the communities are concern with the educational matters in the study area.

N=143

**Figure 4.8: Community Level of Concern on Primary School Absenteeism**

In an interview with school heads, the respondents admitted taking part in the chief baraza. It was also learned that parents who violate child education right are occasionally brought in the chief barazas, especially when the child or any concern body report the matter to the local authority.

But elsewhere in a focused group discussion with the elders, they agreed that school attendance is still a challenge in the area, as the offenders are not brought to law to desist from using school children on economic activities. The researcher therefore asked the heads of households whether parents/guardians show concern when their children fails to attend school, and asked them weather other community members question them for letting children fail to attend school. The following were the results:
Table 4.7: Community Members Concern on School Absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not aware</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result in the table above shows that 35% of the community members show concern and whenever they notice children absenting from school, they approach their parents and question them for the same. However 60% of the community members do not show concern and never approach parents/ caregivers who let children absent from school. The remaining 5% of the respondents were not aware whether there is concern for school absenteeism.

4.7 SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SCHOOLABSENTEEISM IN ASEGO DIVISION

Various themes emerged as discussed in the following sections:-

4.7.1 Lack of Decision making power by Female head of households

Women who are the majority gender in the study area were found to be bestowed with little household decision making powers as respondents stated, the respondents unanimously agreed that the female head of households do not have the power to decide on many issues affecting the family including that of their own children, rather their male partners tend to decide on all the matters, and this has affected school attendance, one respondent had to say this;

“This happens when the children are to report to school and the male head of households are not at home, since it is the male partners who decide on what can be done, the children may not report to school in time, also in other situations
like when the children have been sent back home for school requirements, it may not be easy for a female head of household to decide to sell some of the family property to settle the child’s requirement before authorization by the male head of household, this make the child to absent from school”.

Other respondents agreed with the statement and one respondent added;

“this has even broken so many families in cases where the woman try to sell any property when the husband is not in”

this is worsened by the fact that women have no ownership of properties, while men are observed to be the sole owners of family properties including farm produce.

4.7.2 Male head of households having little contact with the children

Men were also mentioned to have little touch with the school going children yet are conferred with all the household ownership and decision making powers. The male genders’ household ownership and decision making powers is at the disadvantage of women who are marginalized and have large number of children at their disposal on daily basis. The custom is faulted for female underdevelopment and given that women are the majority and in charge of daily action of the children and with the high level of poverty in the area, children become the most immediate victims when they lack the basics of life. But since men are not ever present at home, they may not be able to assist the primary school going children, who came from school with home work, and other instructions from their teachers, this is what a respondent had to say;

“They are never at home when the children return, and to make it worse, they even sometimes not return, so if there is any action to be attended to immediately concerning the children’s schooling, he is not able to handle it immediately, and we the women are burdened by the household chores that we may not be able to
attend to other issues on addition to lack of resources, this is why the number of absenteeism is ever increasing in the area”.

4.7.3 Tendency of having large number of children

On trying to understand if the impact of pursuing large number of children as a cultural practice affects school attendance the researcher asked the respondents in an intense interview with the school heads, community elders to state the average number of children that the families have, and if that leads to school absenteeism, many quoted that most houses housed an average of six children, and they said this was linked to the culture of extended family-hood. The researcher thus sought the actual number of children taken care of by the households in the study area. These are the responses:

“Most couples tend to bear more children, ranging from six to ten, and this is not only among the older couples but even the young couples, the number of children they have become a problem when they cannot support their education through provision of school necessities; including provision for other basic needs like food. This has made primary school going children from such families to drop out of school and assist their parents in such of their daily bread to feed the rest of the family.”

It became quite clear that the study area suffers from increasing numbers of dependent children with most family housing 3 and above children who are not their blood relations. Large number of children under the care of poor families clearly shows that dependents is a major drawback to school attendants in the area as the children are hardly taken care of adequately, school requirements being a challenge to obtain—thus low rates of school attendance. This is what one respondent had to say in an interview:

“More families have three or more children that they take care of but are not their blood related children, this kind of number added to their blood children,
make the number larger hindering the provision for their school needs, and thus contributing to the high rate of absenteeism in the area”

4.7.4 Wife Inheritance

The study further linked increasing orphan hood and children dependency on wife inheritance and lack of family ownership by female gender. Men inherit widows giving them more children whom they later abandon with their helpless mothers. And due to poverty experienced in the area, the female partners rush for someone (men) to take the responsibility of caring for the family of the deceased which often turns out not to be real as the new male in the house become part of the family burden. Similarly, men often precipitate to reposes the widow in hope of taking charge of the deceased belongings. In a earlier discussions on cultural factors influencing school absenteeism, females were found not to be able to make decision on their own, this is viewed to be complicating children education in the study area as the poor mothers would hardly raise income from the sale of family assets to cater for children requirement when the males are a way for various reasons either with other concubine or in alcohol drinking centres. Worse, the facts that men have little touch with children (7.81%) and often leave women with large number of children as confirmed by 12.5% of the respondents make them unaware of children education needs and unable to cater for basics of children. As a result children find themselves unable to get most basic of life and 10.42% of them begin to seek for themselves during their primary school age. It is on this account that children in the study area are believed to acquire the practice of fishing at the beaches and sand harvesting sites to earn to acquire the basics of life and for education they cannot find from the families thus perpetual victims of school absenteeism.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a summary of research findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the study findings and suggestions for further studies.

5.1 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The study assessed the socio-cultural factors contributing to primary school absenteeism among school going children in Asego Division of Homa-bay County, Nyanza Province Kenya.

The results show that children directives are dominated by female parents/caretakers, mostly causing rampant absenteeism either knowingly or unknowingly (60.1%) as shown in table 4.2 in Asego Division as opposed to the male parents/caregivers. On the other hand, low level of employment (28%) as shown in table 4.3 and low level of education of parents 58% as shown in figure 4.2 are the main causes of neglecting school activities. Majority are self-employed as farmers (67%) a shown in table 4.3, while only (5%), table 4.3 are in formal employment with 28% not employed at all thus have low value on education as both the educated, semi-illiterate and illiterate ends up being farmers, fishermen/ women, sand harvesters and casual labors, thus this has created an avenue to consistent poverty in the area as was quoted by many respondents through the questions asked to the heads of the households.

Objective One

The study found out that family plays a major role in school attendance as indicated in table 4.6. Among these roles, ensuring sufficient basic school items rated at (32%) and controlling the activities children engage in when not attending school rated at 31.4%.
However (68%) of household heads admitted that primary school absenteeism is still a challenge as indicated in figure 4.4

**Objective two**

Activities that children engage in when not in school include; farming, shepherding, baby sitting, fish/sand harvesting among others, this they do when school sessions are on, and many a times with their parents knowledge and approval.

**Objective three**

The community members were found not to be participating in the school activities as is expected, their roles in influencing school attendance was not met, circumstances like poverty, orphan hood; and the people’s attitude towards education has been realized to be contributing much to the school absenteeism.

**Objective four**

Key socio-cultural factors contributing to increasing school absenteeism include rampant wife inheritance (28.1%) and low female ownership (16.7%) - the most detrimental cultural practices that have affected education sector in the study area most. Women in the study area are granted little household decision making power and have no ownership claims on family capital assets as compared to men conferred with all ownership rights and decision making powers marginalizing women and children who then become the immediate victims of increasing school absenteeism in the study area.

5.2 **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

School absenteeism in Asego Division is affected especially from the poverty stricken parents in their efforts to make children to supplement their meager earnings with little regards for children education. Thus regular primary school attendance has not been taken seriously as people engage children in undertaking domestic duties on their behalf.
when learning sessions are on contributing to 67.8% of school absenteeism in Asego Division

The increasing primary school absenteeism in Asego Division is blamed on socio-cultural traditions that deter school attendance. The notable customs include rampant wife inheritance (28.1%), low female ownership (16.7%) as the most detrimental cultural practices that have affected education sector in the study area most. The situation is worsened by women’s little household decision making authority (15.1%) as compared to men conferred with all ownership rights and decision making powers when they have little control of children. The customs marginalize women and children who then become the immediate victims of increasing school absenteeism in the study area.

5.3: RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations proposed in this study are based on the key findings obtained during the interviews with the key informants, and collection of information through the use of questionnaires and focused group discussions, the researcher came to understand key issues, that called for the following recommendations.

1. Community to be Sensitized on educational issues to enable parents/ caregivers appreciate the fruits of education and to enhance their ability to pursue educational matters aggressively as well as stakeholders being vigilant on parents who deliberately avert school absenteeism so as to improve primary school attendance in the study area. It is equally necessary to come up with permanent solution to low income status of the people by promoting avenues that inculcates socio-economic independency of the people through entrepreneurship cultures practices.

2. There should be a complete ban for school going children from being seen on fishing beaches and sand harvesting sites and from family ventures when school
sessions are on in addition, activities like sand harvesting being licensed to those holding national identity cards only.

3. Awareness through aggressive educational advocacy to enable the people realize that education is the best gift to a child and not only a way of preparing children for employment but a way of life, as well as to came up with guide line policies to educate the people of Asego Division to realize the value of education for their children right from the primary levels to avoid the danger of denying children their educational right.

4. That local administration to be sensitized that educational matters should form part of the local administrations' agenda (chief barazas) to enable the community to realize that promoting children school absenteeism is equal to violating children rights and that provincial administration should be capacitated to the grass root to enable even the village elders to provide educational awareness campaign within the area to root out deliberate school absenteeism in the Division

5. Promotion of social welfare programmes by the County Government to leverage rising costs of the orphans and the children from the marginalized families as they carefully plan and objectively implement family planning modules to attain manageable number of children to improve the standard and education of the children in Asego Division and as well encouraging economic institutions to promote entrepreneurship among the marginalized especially women to free them from the economic burden and leverage them from the straining laws.

6. A clearly well-defined role and level of responsibility of each stakeholder where community leaders are involve in ensuring that children are not providing labor, also the Ministry of Education should step up motivating principal for teachers as the
immediate children care takers as was called upon by 16.67% so as to enable them closely monitor children attendance to avoid cases of absenteeism as shown in Figure 5 in which 67.8% are fully aware of the school absenteeism in the area.

7. The Government should encourage bilateral and multi-lateral understanding with investors to devolve investment in low developed regions in the country to improve employment for the educated so as to improve people’s morale to pursue education to reap its values. and also encourage understanding with investors to practice devolves system of investment based on quarter’s arrangement of development to all regions to bring employment opportunities close to people and to promote development to make people reap benefits of education in the country.
5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The study suggests the following for further studies:

i. Impact of school absenteeism on local economies of the County Government of Homa-Bay

ii. The Capacity of Primary School Committees in ensuring reduction of school absenteeism, and improvement in primary school performance.

iii. The capacity of CQASO and DQASO on follow up on intervention measures for standardized performance for secondary entry.
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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Respondents,

I Selline Mwomo is a student at University of Nairobi, carrying out a research on, socio Cultural Factors Influencing School Attendance of Primary School Going Children

This research is a partial fulfillment for the requirements of Post Graduate Degree in Social Sciences- Medical Sociology. This is academic based research, and for no any other purposes.

I therefore, in a most sincere way appeal for assistance from you to enable me to pursue this course to the end.

Any information given will be treated confidentially and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Yours Sincerely,

Selline Adhiambo Mwomo

C50/62910/2010

University of Nairobi.
APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

PART I

SECTION I

Social Demographic Information of Respondents (Head of Households)

1. (i) Gender? Tick appropriately.

   Male ☐  Female ☐

(ii) Marital Status?

   Single ☐  Married ☐  Divorced ☐

   Other, (Specify) ___________

(iii) If married, what kind of decision is left to mothers and which one is left to fathers?

   Mothers- The kind of resources to be used in the family ☐

   Day today assigning of duties to children ☐

   None of the above ☐

   Fathers- The kind of resources to be used in the family ☐

   Day today assigning of duties to children ☐

   None of the above ☐

(iv) Residence (Tick One)

   Urban ☐  Rural ☐

2. (i) What is your level of Education?
Primary □ □ Secondary □ □ Certificate/ Diploma □ □ □
University
Other, (Please Specify)
_________________________________________________________
(ii) If you did not continue with education from primary level, what made you not to do so?
__________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
3. (i) What is your Occupation?

Formal Employment □ □ Self Employment □ □ Not □ □ Employed

(ii) If you are self employed, Please State your actual area of earning?

___________________________

(iii) If you are self employed, who helps you in your undertakings?

___________________________

4. (i) How much is your Monthly Income?

Below 5,000 Ksh. □ □ 5,001 Ksh.- 9,000 Ksh. □ □ 9,001 Ksh.- □ □ 13,000 Ksh.

13,001 Ksh.- 17,000 Ksh. □ □ Above 17,000Ksh. □ □ Not Sure □ □
(ii) In your opinion, do you think your level of income contribute effectively to your children's education? YES[ ] NO. [ ] Explain?

_____________________

5. A. (i) How many children do you have under your care in this household?

1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5 [ ] 6 [ ] 7 [ ] above 7, Please Specify [ ]

(ii) How many of these children are your blood children?

None [ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5 [ ] 6 [ ] 7 [ ] above 7, Please Specify [ ]

B. (i) What could be the reasons behind having the number of children in 5 (ii) above?

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

(ii) What explanation do you have on the increasing number of dependence 5 (i) above?

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

(iii) How does this trend affect primary school attendance of children?

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

(iii) What is the cause

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________
1. What is your role in the family as the family head?

Providing instructions ☐  Providing basic needs ☐

Disciplining the family members ☐  Role not clear ☐

SECTION II

School Attendance of Primary Children

7. According to you, is school absenteeism a challenge in your location?

Yes ☐  No ☐  Don't know about school absenteeism ☐

Please explain

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

8. (i) Are any children of school going age in this family not attending school regularly?

Yes ☐  No ☐  If yes, what are the reasons for them missing school?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

(ii) What solutions would you provide toward school absenteeism in the area?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

(iii) Which month of the term is often most affected by primary school absenteeism?

___________ Why?

_____________________________________________________________________

x
9. (i) In your opinion, whom do you think is most responsible for ensuring regular school attendance? Teachers □ Parents □ Government through □ MoE, (DQASO)

Both □ Other,  
(Specify) _______________________________

(ii) If it is the responsibility of both, who plays a greater role in ensuring school attendance? Teachers □ Parents □ Government □ None □

(iii) If you say the government, give reasons for you holding it responsible for low primary school attendance?

________________________________________________________________________________________

(iv) What solutions would you suggest to encourage primary school attendance in the area?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

10. (i) In your opinion, kindly list known socio-cultural factors contributing to low primary school attendance in your area?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

(ii) From the listed socio-cultural factors, please explain four cultural practices and their impact on primary school attendance
SECTION III

Role of Family on school attendance of primary school going children

11. (i) What is your role in influencing school attendance of children?
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

(ii) Do you at times make pupils not to attend school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If YES what are your reasons for making children to be absent from school?
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

12. Has anyone questioned you for not letting your child not attend school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If YES, did you realize that you were violating a child’s right?

Yes ☐ No ☐
SECTION IV

Activities children engage in when not attending school

13. What do your children engage in when not attending school?

- Farming, Fish and sand harvesting
- Household chores
- Studying and doing homework
- Playing

14. (i) How do your young children help you at home?

- Cooking
- Fetching firewood and water
- Babysitting
- Farming
- None

(ii) How often?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Yearly

15. Do you give tasks to the children depending on gender of the child?

- Yes
- No

16. Do you give tasks to children depending on age?

- Yes
- No

Whatever answer provided, please explain
SECTION V

Community Participation towards School Absenteeism

17. How do the community members respond towards the school?

- Positively through participating in school activities
- Negatively - they are not taking part in any school activities
- Don’t know what is taking place around concerning school

18. In the barazas, do they discuss issues concerning children schooling?

- No
- Yes
- Not Sure

19. Do community members accompany children who are not attending school back to school to discuss with teachers the reasons for absenteeism?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

Please explain

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

1. Date __________ Place of the interview ______________ Gender of the participants____

2. How long have you served in the teaching profession?
   ____________________________

3. Do you think that school absenteeism is a challenge in this division?

4. What are the reasons for school absenteeism in this division?

5. What are the effects of absenteeism on education?

6. Are there any socio-cultural factors that contribute to absenteeism? Explain these factors?

7. In your opinion, who are the parties to help improve school attendance?

8. Do you have any role as a teacher to assist improve school attendance of children?

9. What is your general view towards education in Asego Division

10. What do you think can be done to improve children school attendance in this division?
APPENDIX IV: FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE:

1. Date of the discussion __________ Gender of participants ___ Place of discussion__________

2. As a leader, what is your role in improving school attendance?

3. In your own view, is school absenteeism a challenge in this division?

4. What are the key activities children are engaged in when not in schools and why?

5. What are the Socio-cultural factors contributing to primary school absenteeism?

6. In your opinion, what are the challenges contributing to school absenteeism?

7. Who are responsible to encourage primary school attendance?

8. What recommendations can you give to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in school attendance of primary school going children in East Kanyada and West Kochia Locations- Asego Division?