

## **DETERMINANTS OF PUPIL DROP OUT RATES IN KENYAN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF KILIFI DISTRICT.**

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### **Abstract:**

*According to United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Labor organization and the provision of Education for All, every child has a right to Education. The efficiency and effectiveness of any Education system is determined by pupil enrollments, participation, Equity, accessibility, Transition, survival and completion rates. According to 2012 ILO child labor situation surveys in Kilifi County most pupils have dropped out of school and are working as casual laborers. Majority of pupils drop out in the course of their study due to various reasons. It is for this reason that the study sought to find out the underlying determinants of dropout rates in Kilifi district which is located within the coastal parts of Kenya. This was a descriptive ex-post study whose main objective was to find out how household and school factors determine dropout rates among public primary school pupils in the district. Proportionate stratified sampling was used to identify a sample of 14 Head teachers drawn from the 48 public primary schools in the area, 120 class 6 and 7 pupils of equal gender randomly selected and 28 teachers. Both quantitative and qualitative data was used. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze quantitative data while qualitative data was analyzed by thematic approach method. The study revealed that accessibility of primary schooling in the county is low due to social, economic, cultural and geographical barriers and drop outs rates were high in both gender, though the rates for boys were higher than girls. The major determinants of dropping out revealed by the study were: household characteristics like poverty, household income, nature and size of the family whereas school factors were: school environment, grade repetition, lack of school feeding program and corporal punishments. The study recommends an increased effort in addressing barriers to access to and participation in free education by pupils from poor households so as to meet the EFA 2015 goals.*

### **key words:**

Social economic status, determinants, Primary School, Dropouts, Child labour, grade retention

## **1. Introduction**

Kenya introduced free Primary education in 2003. This resulted to an increase in gross enrolment rates from 92% in 2002 to 104% in 2003 resulting to over 1.5M pupils enrolling in public primary schools (UNESCO, 2005). 2010 will go down in history as the year when the first batch of pupils to benefit from the government's introduction of free primary education sat for their Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examinations. The sad story was that over 45% of those who sat for the K.C.P.E are not the ones who enrolled in 2003. Majority of them had dropped out of school (CSA, 2010). According to the Economic Survey (2011), more than 400,000 pupils who enrolled in school under free primary education program did not complete standard eight. They were forced to drop out or repeat classes and only 59 percent of them completed. A greater percentage of the dropouts were girls. This caused concern on the high level of wastage. According to the KNBS-IPEC report released in 2008; IM children in Kenya of age 5-17 are embroiled in child labor and are getting continuously deprived of right to quality education and good health. This child labor has reduced private and social benefits to education. This is despite Kenya's commitment to end child labor by 2015 in its National Action Plan. Therefore the issue of dropping out of school has not only affected efforts of the government in ensuring access to education for all in line with EFA goals, but has also thwarted efforts of ensuring quality of education in Primary education in Kenya.

### **1.1. The Statement of the Problem**

Free primary education in Kenya is facing enormous challenges. Many challenges revolve round the impact of policy on enrolment, participation, completion and quality of education. Dropping out of school is an indicator of poor quality of education. Most policy makers and researchers have concentrated their research on the usual causes of dropping out like poverty, discipline and even pregnancy in case of girls, but the issue of dropout is more complex and is intertwined in a number of causes and may differ from region to region. Most determinants of dropping out don't exist in isolation but their association and influence greatly results to devastating effects on continued participation of pupils in schooling. It's for this reason that the research sought to find the underlying determinants of drop outs in Kilifi County.

### **1.2. Objectives of the Study**

The research was guided by two objectives.

1. To find out the social economic determinants of pupils' dropout in Public primary schools in Kilifi District
2. To find out the school factors that determine dropping out of pupils in public primary schools in Kilifi District
3. To explore the possible interventions that can reduce or curb dropping out rates in the district.

The research was also guided by four hypotheses:

1. *HO1: There is no statistically significant influence of school feeding programs on dropout rates amongst the public primary school pupils in Kilifi District.*
2. *HO2: There is no relationship between class repetition and dropout rates amongst pupils in Kilifi District.*
3. *HO3: There is no influence of mother's education on dropping out of school amongst public primary school pupils in Kilifi District.*
4. *HO4: There is no statistically significant difference in the views of teachers and pupils on the causes of drop out amongst pupils in primary schools in Kilifi District.*

### **1.3. Theoretical justification of the study:**

According to Garry Becker's Human Capital theory, wages differ because jobs differ. Each worker brings unique set of skills to the labor force which determines his or her compensation. This theory emphasizes the importance of investment in human capital like education for economic success. This paper assumes that primary education has high returns and hence an impetus in economic development and poverty eradication. The research is also informed by Vroom's expectancy theory by Luthans (1985) that argues that motivation depends on personal belief in the probability that effort will lead to good performance and that good performance will lead to them receiving an outcome they value. According to this theory, decision regarding participation and dropping out among students are functions of cognitive, social and environmental variables. According to Dewey's Value Theory and Mead's Interactionism Theory, they argue that for learners to develop an interest to undertake certain education activity, there must be some value attached to it Taneja(1990),in Ogolla(2010).

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW:**

### **2.1. Social economic status**

ILO-IPEC(2011),in their research in parts of Coast province noted that certain variables like family income, parental education level and occupation influence pupils participation in schooling.This study will assume parental education implies a higher SES.As per Karanche\$Kulkaran(2005),learners with terminally ill parents are unable to cope with juggling between schoolwork and home chores and suffer distress due to ailing parent and may use this as

an excuse to drop out of school. A study by Holmes (2003), found out that overall girls receive less education than boys. The study further argues that the opportunity cost of sending a female child to school is low in rural areas where girls are meant to be married earlier since the private benefits acquired out of schooling will not come to the household, but to the household where she is married.

According to Ashraf and Popola, dropping out of school reduce to as low as 2 percent in the households members who are graduates, 4 percent in those with a secondary and 9 percent in those with primary school education as the highest education in the family. Those with lower educational levels or illiterate have 10 percent of their children as dropout from schools. This is because they are aware of their influence over their children's academic performance in schools. They are also actively involved in the education process of their children, for instance, supporting the pupil's basic learning and development at home. Illiterate parents are not able to do this effectively; therefore, their children are highly disadvantaged and as a result can withdraw from school early (Epstein & Conoley, 1987). According to Hallman & Grant (2006), early school leaving and adolescent pregnancy are strongly associated with low economic status. Lloyd and Mensch (1995) reveal that rather than pregnancy, poor health of the girl child, lack of social economic opportunities for girls and women and the demands placed on them, coupled with the gender inequalities of education system, may result in unsatisfactory school experiences. Poor academic performance and endorsement of early motherhood all this will lead to dropping out..

According to Mietet all (1999), adolescent disorders were more likely to be found amongst youth with low SES. This applies mostly in the case of ADHS which is a form of disability. Ogadho and Ajowi(2013)In their study on the factors influencing dropouts of learners with disabilities (LWDs), in Kisumu East District found out that the family plays a big role. There are families where LWDs are seen as burdens since they require special attention. Even after enrolment in mainstream schools, parental effort is still required especially if they are physically impaired. This makes most of the parents to give up their support and as such the pupils drop out of school. Family dysfunctional can also influence pupils to drop out of school. According to Bertrand (1962), students are major casualties when families undergo dysfunctional. They tend to fit in with the system than with the school. This is because they tend to feel most teachers are not emphatic since they don't even know about the issue. These findings prove useful to my study in trying to find out to what extend the family influence pupils in dropping out.

In Igembe District, Kimondo(2007), found out that dropout rates of boys in primary in primary schools were higher than that of the girls since the boys had started engaging in the Miraa business which is dominated by men, but their dropping out had started influencing the dropping out of girls by luring them with money for love and sex. As a result most girls had dropped because of pregnancies from their former peers. Kapakasa (1992) on determinants of girls participation and persistence in school, found that initiation ceremonies contributed significantly

to school dropout as parents demonstrated willingness to pay more for initiation of their daughters than for regular schooling. Chege and Sifuna (2006) observe that parents tend to discourage their daughters to acquire too much education for fear that they would have difficulties in finding educated husbands. This clearly shows that the parental attitudes determine the child's chance of education as the parents control initial decision of a child to attend school often influence the nature of a child participation in education.

## 2.2 Child labour

In 2010 study, which was conducted within the framework of the ILO/IPEC Tackling Child Labor Through Education (TACKLE) project, and in partnership with the Ministry of Education and UNICEF (KCO), attempted to assess school, home and community factors influencing schooling and non-schooling, while deepening understanding on who is in and out of school; what is maintaining him/her in and out of school; and what strategies are working to keep children in school; found out that the ancillary cost of Free primary education had revoked different forms of child labor to meet this needs. A study conducted by Boozer and Suri(2001), established the impact of child labor on children's schooling. The study used children aged 7-18 and found out that for each one hour of work the child worked, he decreased his attendance by 0.38hours. In contrast he found out that substantial work hours may clearly disadvantage working children's education but their earnings may increase probability of another sibling in the household benefitting from the money and going to school. In terms of gender and child labour, Basul and Tzannatos (2003) found out that in developing nations, most girls drop school to become house helpers and its normal for a girl to work as a house helper than a boy since this jobs are in line with their domestic chores and that child labour takes different forms for both boys and girls but girls are the most commonly abused in the course of employment.

Russel,(2001); Bickeland Pagalannis,(1988); clark,(1992) quoted in Okumu Mike \$ Alex Nakajjo & Doreen & Isoke, (2008), found out that in Uganda communities influence dropout rates by providing employment opportunities during school . They argue that While some researchers have found out that child labour can correlate with dropping out of school, others have shown that student employment begins to correlate with dropping out when a child works for over 14 hours a week with like hood of dropping increasing with number of hours worked. In 2003, Coleman and Deleire Investigated the effect of locus control on students decision to complete high school. They found out that students with external locus of control place lower value on school education and therefore end up dropping. In a similar study by Bertrand(1962), quoted in Nakajjo & Doreen & Isoke,(2008), they found out that values greatly affect the children locus of control. Nurturing or encouraging parents tend to raise the locus of control of their children. Ogolla,(2010) in his study on free primary education in Kenya, found out that on average, girls who initially dropped out of school and got employed as house helpers can easily drop again with the slightest provocation as they are aware of the cost benefit assessment of education.

Drop out Rates for selected counties in Kenya,2013

<b>Percentages drop out for boys per County</b>	Mean %	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
TaitaTaveta	17.3	16.5	16.8	17.3	16.5	17.4	17.6	17.5	19.2
Kajiado	0.7	1.0	1.1	0.7	0.9	0.3	0.3	1.4	0.1
Kwale	3.6	2.8	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.3	4.2	3.9	1.9
Kilifi	2.8	2.0	2.3	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.2	2.6	3.3
Marsabit	2.4	2.6	3.0	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.4	0.7
<b>Percentage drop outs for Girls per county</b>									
TaitaTaveta	2.1	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.7	2.1	2.0	1.5
Kwale	3.9	3.2	3.8	4.3	3.7	4.8	4.7	4.5	1.8
Kajiado	0.2	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.2
Kilifi	3.1	2.3	2.4	2.8	2.8	3.4	3.9	4.0	3.2
Marsabit	2.6	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.1	2.8	2.4	2.6	0.6

**2.3. School factors:**

According to UNICEF Child friendly school manual (2009), a right-based child friendly school should reflect a number of standards; It must reflect and realize rights of every child, see and understand whole child in broad context, it must be child centered and encourage child participation, it must be gender sensitive and girl friendly to ensure child equity, it must provide education based on reality of children’s lives, it must ensure Inclusion and lastly it must provide education that is affordable and accessible. According to Ogolla,(2010),most parents become hostile whenever their kids are advised to repeat. On disagreement with the teachers, most parents withdraw their children in a pretext of taking them to private schools only for the kids to stay at home. Those who enroll may not complete due to high costs and will find it shameful enrolling in the same school they had dropped from. On school environment, some schools lack the basic facilities to keep children at school. According to Ogolla (2010), schools without basic water and sanitation facilities as well as toilets pose a great challenge to the girl child. Chronic absenteeism may lead to dropout. To curb this absenteeism, girls should be provided with sanitary towels to increase their participation in schooling.

According to Coleman and Deleire(2003), high parental involvement in school life of a pupil, teachers’ warmth and level of achievement of pupils tend to increase their internal locus of control. Such students are highly motivated to be in school. Teachers’ warmth will enable the children to open up and share their problems out. On mainstreaming and inclusion of learners with disabilities, Ogolla ,(2010) found out that this maybe challenging in areas where proper measures were not put in place and as such most students have been forced to drop out due to

bullying, stigma or not just coping with the congested inclusive classrooms. Ogolla (2010), further notes that discipline of students is affecting learning in public primary schools. Since the withdrawal of corporal punishment, disciplining errand students through guidance and counselling has been difficult. Free policy of enrolment has resulted to admission of overage pupils most of which will rather drop school than be caned considering that caning is still a conventional method of punishment in most public primary schools.

According to Akey.Q.M(2004),when FPE policy was introduced in 2003,parents were never fully involved. Since then, they find it difficult to understand why they should buy uniforms, replace lost books or pay examination fees yet education is free. Some parents already know that the quality of education in most public primary schools in Kenya is low and its difficult for a child from a public primary school to pass so they don't even see the need of completing primary school if the child won't pass.A study done by Kenya National Examination Council exclusively on standard three pupils revealed that Nyanza province has the highest number of repeaters at 69% and that class repeating is associated with inefficiency and inequity in the provision of education. The report indicates that repeating usually leads to drop out. As many as 60% of children have repeated a class by the time they reach standard three. At this rate, many were likely to fall out by standard five or six (Standard Newspaper, June 14.2010). This rampant class repeating in Nyanza was as a result of the poverty level of the area. Studies have shown that children who receive insufficient food are more likely to receive lower math scores, repeat a grade and even have difficulty in getting along with other children (Alaimo,Olson and Fragilo,2001 as quoted in Carmen and Whitman,2009).

#### **2.4. Summary of the review:**

In a nutshell, review of the literature on drop outs in public primary schools revolves round Social economic status of learners which focused on nature of household, nature of household head, level of education of household head, Size of economically active population in the household, presence of drop out children in the household, level of poverty in the household and attitudes of parents towards learning and child labor. The school factors play akey role on the review of school environment, school climate and effectiveness. The policy on discipline, repetition, replacing of lost textbooks was given a lot of focus by the researcher. There was need to reaffirm the role played by various interventions currently assumed to play a great role in ensuring participation and retention of pupils in school like school feeding programs, presence of water and sanitation as well as teaching and learning facilities and regular guidance and counselling programs. This were presumed to house a number of determinants of dropping out of pupils in Kilifi District

### **3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This study was undertaken in Kilifi District which is part of Kilifi County. It covered Three Divisions; Sharian, Central and Chonyi. Descriptive research design of ex-post type was employed and 14 schools participated in the study. A sample containing 14 head teachers, 28 teachers and 120 class seven and six pupils was drawn through proportionate stratified sampling. The sample of pupils was carefully but randomly selected from each school. Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires but qualitative data was collected using interview schedules administered to head teachers, few teachers and some students. The advantage of this design is that Inferences about relations among variables are made without direct intervention from concomitant varieties of independent and dependent variables and also increase saturation (Kerlinger, 1992).

The samples were selected using Krejcie and Morgan formula (1970), as shown below

Given a population size  $N$  and one wants to select a certain sample  $S$ , the sample is selected using:

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{D^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)}$$

Where  $N$  = given finite population size

$P$  = Proportion of the population with magnitude of 0.5

$D$  = Degree of accuracy that is reflected by the amount which is of error which can be tolerated in the fluctuation of  $P$ . The level of significance or  $P$ -Value is 0.05 which yields -1.96 or 1.96 from Chi-Square Tables. 14 schools were selected as shown:

$$\begin{aligned} S &= \frac{3.841 \times 48 \times 0.05 (1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2 \times 47 + 3.84 \times 0.5 \times 0.5} \\ &= 14 \end{aligned}$$

Semi structured questionnaire was administered to the Head teachers, teachers and class six and seven pupils. The secondary data on enrolments, repetition and dropping out was analyzed to establish dropout rates per school. This was done using descriptive statistics in form of means and percentages. The method that was used to analyse dropout rate was that developed by UNESCO (1972 a) available on UNESCO website.

### **Reliability of instruments**

The reliability of instruments was done by administering the instruments on 2 schools with 16 respondents. Data was analyzed and reliability tested by Cronbach's Alpha test of Reliability. It resulted to an alpha value of 0.813 which was highly reliable.

## **4. DATA ANALYSIS**

Quantitative data was coded and input into SPSS and analyzed descriptively. A total of 160 questionnaires qualified for analysis showing 100% response rate in data collection. Qualitative data was analyzed using techniques such as text/documentary, discourse, narrative and trends analyses and interpretation. These approaches assisted in drawing out relevant themes, hidden meanings, categories, dimensions, and patterns relevant to the assignment and in accordance with the deliverables.

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**The first part of the questionnaire items were administered to the head teachers.** They were about the Influence of school factors on drop outs. The first part was to establish if the school had facilities to offer conducive learning environment to the learners. The researchers found out that 45% of the schools had classes that are in a dilapidated state, 66% did not have closing doors and windows. 46% of the schools had a pupil toilet ratio of Over 1:30, 67% of the schools had a pupil teacher ratio of 1:54, and 56% of the schools could not access regular water for drinking, 82% of the schools did not have school feeding program while 18% had but it was not regular. On the same item 32% of the schools reported that they had the feeding program before but stopped in 2010, while 64% reported that they have never had school feeding program before. On issues of dropping out by pupils 65% of the head teachers indicated that the rate of dropping out of pupils was very high with 35% reporting otherwise. On gender and dropping out, 54% of the pupils who dropped school the previous year were boys while the girls' figure stood at 46%. On the major causes of dropping out of the pupils the head teachers cited Poverty at 28% child labor at 21%, Earlier marriages at 16% prostitution at 13%, Pregnancy at 17% and others reasons at 5%. On whether they are receiving support from the community in fighting the vice of dropping out of school, 56% of them reported "Not at all", 32% reported "sometimes" and 12% of them reported "at times". All these findings portray how dropping out is a complex problem to primary schools in Kilifi county. The headteachers' feeling that prostitution is a contributing cause of dropping out coincides with the (National Tax Payers Association), NTPA Survey of 2013. From the interview schedule with the head teachers, prostitution was painted as a source of income where parents use their children as instruments to earn income as they allow them to engage in prostitutions in beaches and urban centers. HTR6 explained:

*"Some of these pupils you see here do very bad things after school especially over weekends and holidays now that we don't have holiday studies. You will find them in beaches, clubs and in town roaming with men especially their former friends who left school and are either working as beach aids or as casual laborers. There is a lot of sexual exploitation of these children. Their parents may be aware but It's like they are not bothered with that problem or they don't care. In any case this problem is now common almost everywhere here in coast"*

***H01: There is no statistically significant influence of school feeding program on dropout rates amongst the public primary school pupils in Kilifi District.***

An **Independent t-test** was done on the head teacher's responses to the item that assessed if there was school feeding program in the school and the calculated drop outs rates of the previous year. The t-test result was  $t(12)=0.027$  was below the level of significance that was set at **0.05** and hence the null hypothesis was **rejected** implying that there was a relationship between dropping out of pupils and the absence or presence of school feeding program. This concurred with the findings on KNBS-IPEC 2012 which found out dropout to have reduced in schools that used to have school feeding program that became defunct in 2010. On the level of parental involvement on matters of school based management, 63% reported that parents rarely attend general meetings in schools. HTR11 reported:

*‘‘This children come from very poor backgrounds. Their parents have become so busy to attend to school issues. Most of them are never even at home or perhaps they don't meet with their children to read the letters of invitation that we send them. It is until we send them home when you will see them coming here’’*

On the issue children with disabilities, 86% of the head teachers responded that their schools don't have facilities which can effectively sustain learners with disabilities while 14% of the schools reported that they have the facilities but not for all forms of disability. On the presence of teachers trained on special needs Education; 84% of the head teachers reported that they had at least one teacher while 16% of them reported that they have no teacher. On the issue of inclusion and mainstreaming of learners with disability in mainstream classes, 88% of them reported that the idea is good but on further interviews revealed that inclusion will breed more challenges above those experienced as a result of free education and there is also stigma amongst pupils especially on those who are former child laborers. On the whether head teachers think repeating of pupils who don't perform well can improve performance, 37% of them strongly agreed, 18% agreed, 16% neither agreed nor disagreed, 20% disagreed and 9% strongly disagreed. HTR7 reported

*‘‘Inclusion is a good idea in this time and age. But we are very overwhelmed with challenges that emanate from free primary education. You see there too many pupils in this school and we are only 9 teachers and one special education teacher. The special unit in the school has over 12 Special needs pupils who must be assisted to learn. Our pupils are still adapting well with them but there is some few challenges since most pupils spend a lot of time sympathizing with them instead of understanding they are as fit to learn as them’’*

***HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between grade retention and dropout rates amongst pupils in Kilifi District.***

A Chi Square test was performed between the head teacher's responses on rate of dropouts in their schools with their perception on whether repetition can improve performance. The results gave Chi-Square  $X^2(2, N=14)=3.46, P=0.041$  a P-Value of 0.041 at 5% significance level and as such the null hypothesis was rejected implying that there was a strong relationship between the rate of dropping out and the attitude of principals towards grade retention. This is because in cases where head teachers strongly believe grades can improve after class repetition, then it must be practiced and where it is practiced it must push out some pupils who are not ready to repeat.

**Part two of the questionnaire on the school factors sought information from the teachers:**

This section had very few items. Teachers were asked to state their age and level of education. 52% of the teachers were young with an age bracket of between 25-35 years, 32% were within the age of 35-45 while only 16% were within the age of 45-60 years. This was a reasonable age bracket in terms of maintaining discipline and understanding need of the pupils. In terms of gender 57% were female while 43% were men. This is in line with UNESCO requirement of maintaining school quality and gender equity in primary school by having a higher number of female teachers. On how far from school the teachers lived, 48% of the teachers reported that they live 1 Km and below, 32% of them reported that they live between 1-2 Km while only 20% reported that they live more than 2 Km. This means a good number of them were conversant with school community. On how often they are absent school during normal working hours to attend to their personal issues; 34% of them reported they do so regularly, 35% of them reported sometimes and 31% reported not regularly. On how often they offer guidance and counselling to pupils, 47% of them reported they do rarely, 33% reported regularly and 30% of them reported that they do so sometimes. The duration that teachers spend in school determines a lot the quality of teaching and learning. It also determines the nature of discipline for the pupils. The last items on this part were on what they felt were causes of drop outs and the responses are captured in table two.

**Part three of the questionnaire on the social economic factors sought information from the pupils on the factors that influence drop outs amongst them.**

On who heads their household, 51% of the pupils had both parents, 31% were single or separated parents and 18% were total orphans. 65% of the respondents reported that it's their mother who takes care of issues of provision in their homes, 23% reported that it was both parents, while 16% reported others (guardians, well-wishers, relatives) and 6% reported that it was their father. On level of education of the mother for those who had mothers, 56% of them reported that their mother were primary school leavers and below, 23% said they were secondary school leavers, 12% were college leavers and 9% said they did not know. School leaver in this case was assumed to mean the parent went through the system and either completed or did not

complete. On whether the household head is working or doing something for a living the responses were as shown in the table below:

Job	No of Respondents	Proportion in percentage
Sisal plantation	25	21
Quarrying	28	23
Selling illicit brew	29	24
Vending	15	12
Others	23	20

On the response on other economic activity engaged by parents, the researchers found out that some parents are actually engaging in underhand deals in commercial sexual exploitation and drug trafficking by using young children.

On the sources of the pupils, 41% of the respondents live in urban areas while 35% live in suburbs and 24% live in rural parts of the research area. On the number of children in the family excluding themselves, 48% of them reported that they have at least three children in the household, 32% had two children, 14% had one and only 6% were the only child. On whether the respondents had ever attended preschool in their lives, a whopping 71% never attended preschool education with only 23% attending and 6% could not remember. On the distance of the school from the household, 44% reported that they take at least 30 minutes to reach school, 36% reported that they take about 20 minutes and 22% reported that they take about 10 minutes to reach school. On the mode of travel to school, 53% walk to school, 28% use public transport, 13% use "bodaboda" while 6% use other means. On whether they have dropped out of school before, 56% of them agreed while only 45% denied. The findings in this part reveal that most of the pupils actually come from low SES. Most of them stay far away from school and take over 30 minutes to reach school. This has several ramifications especially on the girl child because she remains vulnerable for various forms of gender based violence on the way to school. Besides, a lot of time which could have been used in doing homework is wasted on the way. The role of parental attitude to education is clearly shown in the non-attendance of preschool education by 71% of the pupils and this ultimately has an effect on future involvement in schooling. The mother's education determines a lot on school participation of the pupils especially the girl child. A hypothesis was framed to establish if there was indeed a relationship between pupils' response on mothers' education and whether they had dropped school before or not.

***H03: There is no influence of mother's education on dropping out of school amongst public primary school pupils in Kilifi County:***

The results of a **Chi-Square  $X^2(2, N=120)=3.52, P=0.035$**  which was below **0.05** which indicated a significant association between the mothers' education and dropout rates amongst pupils. This

concurrent with most of the research findings that the mother's education influences a lot participation of children in education.

The researcher sought to find out views from teachers and pupils on the major reasons why pupils dropped out of school and the responses were as summarized in the table below:

**Table two:**

Item	Why pupils drop out of school Response	Teachers		pupils	
		F	%	F	%
1	Replacing lost textbooks	1	4	2	2
2	Avoid repeating class	1	4	2	2
3	I gave up on my academic performance	2	5	5	4
4	Not afford buying other items not given in school(ancillary costs)	3	10	16	13
5	School is not pupil friendly/didn't like the school	1	4	5	4
6	Frustrations at home	3	10	9	7.5
7	My parent/guardian was chronically sick	1	4	8	5.5
8	My parent passed on	1	4	4	3
9	Pregnancy or ill health	4	14	16	13
10	Stigma or discouragement from others	2	5	5	4
11	My family could not allow me to continue	2	7	9	7.5
12	Helping home with house hold chores	2	9	13	10.5
13	Was working for payment	4	16	21	17
14	No response/others	1	4	4	3
	Total	28	100	120	100

Studying findings very closely, working for payments, pregnancy, poverty and household chores emerged strong drivers for dropping out of school.

**HO4: There is no statistically significant difference in the views of teachers and those of the pupils on the causes of drop out amongst pupils in primary schools in Kilifi County.**

In testing the above null hypothesis, a T-test for independent groups (Unpaired test) was applied in order to compare the means of the views of teachers and those of pupils regarding the some selected causes of dropout and the results were as shown below.

	Independent Samples Test								
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% confidence interval of the difference	
	F	Sig	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	lower	Upper
Percentage Equal variances assumed	.888	.362	.172	14	.866	.4370	2.5452	- 5.02102	5.89602
Equal Variance Not assumed			.172	13.30	.866	.4370	2.5452	-5.04524	5.92024

The **t-value of 0.172** for the first group is the same as the value for the second group and resulted in a sig (p) value of **0.866** which was above our alpha of **0.05** meaning that the null hypothesis was accepted implying that there was no statistically significant difference between the teachers views and pupils views on the causes of dropouts. The findings clearly show that working for payment, Pregnancy, helping home with house chores and ancillary costs of education that had high frequency for both teachers and pupils influences drop out in the research area. Surprisingly a high number of pupils indicated domestic chores as a reason for their dropout which tallies with UNICEF (2007) preliminary findings that reported a new form of informal child labor in developing countries where parents hold their children at home to assist in the house chores as they go to work in. From the interview schedules administered to some of the students, most respondents could regret having left school to go for employment. Even during their drop out period they still felt that education too was equally important: STR5 reported:

*“Even the other pupils who had completed primary school and even secondary schools are working as laborers. But with us, we already have an experience and we are better because we are at school. The money they get there will never assist them in life. It’s good for them to come back to school to make their future better”*

This clearly illustrates the attitude of most of former child laborers who reported back to school on the role of education to their wellbeing. After tasting the returns from child labour they strongly feel that education can have more returns in the future than the child labour returns which are for the present.

On how they used to spend their money that they used to earn; majority of the respondent said that they could use it to buy food, clothes, buy their siblings school items like pens and pencils and others they could give to the parents.

The last part of the questionnaire was meant to address objective three of the research and questionnaire items were administered to students. The researchers sought to find out the perceptions of the pupils towards the various interventions that are assumed to reduce the chances of pupils dropping out of school. This is because some interventions are in the policy and others are not. The respondents were to reply to what extent they agree that the following measures when well implemented can increase their participation and continued retention in school and the responses were as below:

Table two:

	Statements	Frequency in percentages				
		S.D.A	D.A	N.A.N.D.A	A	S.A
1	School feeding program may not necessarily reduce incidents of school drop outs	52	31	2	11	4
2	Provision of clean drinking water may not necessarily reduce incidents of drop outs amongst pupils	49	33	1	11	6
3	Automatic promotion of students who have not performed well may not discourage them from dropping out of school	28	28	3	21	20
4	Provision of enough clean toilets may not discourage pupils from dropping out of school	30	25	9	21	15
5	Disciplining pupils using caning cannot not influence them to drop school	32	22	12	20	14
6	Provision of uniforms and examination fees may not reduce drop out cases amongst pupils	32	28	8	14	18
7	Offering a monthly stipend to pupils from poor backgrounds may not stop them from dropping out	45	32	4	8	11
8	Having less than 50 pupils in a class will not reduce cases of pupils dropping out of school	30	20	7	22	21
9	Abolition of ranking of pupils during internal examination may reduce dropout rates amongst pupils	33	26	11	20	10
10	Regular guidance and counselling in schools may not necessarily reduce incidents of pupils dropping out of school.	41	32	2	11	11
11	Provision of boarding facilities will not reduce incidents of dropping out of school	47	40	4	6	3
12	Provision of sanitary towels for girls will not reduce incidents of dropping out of school.	38	21	5	20	16

Scale: S.D.A: Strongly disagree; D.A: Disagree; N.A.N.D.A neither Agree nor Disagree; A: Agree; S.A: Strongly Agree. It can be noted from the table that the pupils either agreed or

strongly agreed to the intended interventions that will be geared to reducing drop outs amongst them. But they maybe prone to biases considering that some respondents were beneficiaries of some of them. So the researchers went further to establish if there was a correlation amongst them by carrying out a Principal Component Analysis since implementation of one of them alone will not solve the problem of drop outs. The results were as shown below. The response to these items clearly reveals the strength they carried in the research. Because most of the pupils come from very poor families the option of boarding facilities will either rescue them from difficult lives or frustrations due to various challenges they face at home. Since most of the pupils in schools are overage, they could wish to finish school in time and pursue other goals. Therefore they strongly support the idea of automatic promotion as it was revealed from the above findings. Anew item that had enormous response was monthly stipend. This clearly indicates that the pupils need extra money to cater for their needs now that they are not working and the parents cannot manage to provide them with the item. To find out of the above factors can offer basis for an intervention to address the issue of drop out, the research went further to establish their association and the product of the principal component analysis was as shown below.

**Table three: Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Component
	1
1. Effective school feeding program in schools	.926
2. Automatic promotion/No repeating of class	.911
3. Presence of water and sanitation schools	.931
4. No caning in schools	.979
5. presence of enough toilets	.976
6. provision of uniforms and examination fees	.967
7. Less than 50 pupils per class	.961
8. Monthly stipend the poor	.947
9. Regular guidance and counselling	.955
10. provision of sanitary towel	.972
11. provision of boarding facilities to poor pupils	.899
12. Abolition of ranking in exams	.893

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.923
Approx. Chi-Square	2895.683
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df
	66
	Sig.
	.000

From the KMO and Bartlett's test, the data set was suitable for principal component analysis since the Kaiser-Meyer measure of accuracy was 0.923 which was above the KMO significance level of 0.6. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also 0.000 (i.e.  $X^2(66)=2895.683, P\text{-Value } 0.000$ ) which was also less than the significance level of 0.05 confirming a strong correlation amongst the twelve variables/interventions.

**Total Variance Explained Table**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	10.681	89.008	99.208	10.681	89.008	89.008
2	.721	6.010	95.019			
3	.188	1.564	96.583			
4	.145	1.212	97.795			
5	.077	.644	98.439			
6	.054	.450	98.889			
7	.041	.346	99.234			
8	.032	.263	99.497			
9	.021	.177	99.674			
10	.020	.165	99.838			
11	.011	.093	99.931			
12	.008	.069	99.100			

**Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.**

From the above table of variance extraction (PCA) almost all components had accumulative value of close to 100%, indicating very strong correlation. But the three variables i.e. Provision of boarding facilities, regular guidance and counselling and monthly stipend explains a very high cumulative variance of almost 100%. In fact the strong correlation amongst them indicates high efficacy in acting as interventions to the problem of dropping out.

**Summary of the findings:**

The research finds a lot of influence of Dewey's Theory of and Beckel's Human Capital theory essential in understanding tradeoffs between choice for child labor and schooling in the district. The research clearly established that participation and completion of primary schooling in Kilifi

District is a function of many factors. These factors are both school factors and social economic factors. On school factors the researchers found out that there are still a number of challenges facing free primary education ranging from absence of teaching and learning facilities to pedagogy issues. They found out that School quality, school environment and teacher quality determines a lot pupils stay in schools. The motivation level of teachers and pupils was very low. Guidance and counselling which is an integral part of teacher pupil interaction is missing in most public primary schools. This can either be explained by lack of time due to high teacher pupil ratios or lack of skills or absence of motivation by teachers. School quality was also found to affect pupils especially those who were disabled or who had reported back after dropping out. Corporal punishment and grade repetition were also found to be major determinants of dropping out in schools since they affect students who already are overage who may refuse to be caned or refuse to repeat in a class considering that their counterparts already finished. The number of students per class didn't not have a significant influence on dropouts of the learner's. On SES factors, poverty, mother's education, Presence of economically active population in the household, had a lot of influence on the dropping out of the pupils. The distance of school from the household did not show much influence on the drop outs since most of the pupils have been socialized to know that's the far the schools are in the religion. Though the distance happens to hurt girls more because they become victims of gender based violence as they go back home in the evening.

## **6. Conclusions and Suggestions:**

Dropping out of school is major problem in the county especially on the boy child. Most schools don't have proper data on pupils who drop out and those who re-enroll. There is no mapping of potential pupils who may drop out in most schools. This paper suggests for a proper MIS to be used in managing pupils especially in the use of red flags in monitoring potential drop outs. Since a large population in the district is poor, the government should move with speed to implement the school feeding program in the area to ensure pupils have meals in school. Besides, the hidden costs of free primary education seem to push pupils into working to meet the extra costs of their schooling. The government should therefore advance its bursary program to most marginalized zones in the country. The government should partner with the local communities and civil society to address the vice of child labor that is causing learning disruptions in the area. Lastly the issue of replacing textbooks and grade repetition are coming up as anew threat to pupils who can't afford to replace them once they lose them. Therefore proper policy guideline should be issued on lost textbooks. The government should think of giving monthly stipend to the poor and marginalized pupils in the county to keep them in school. I advocate for more research to be done on ways of maximizing equal opportunity for the pupils from low SES in the wake of universal free primary education to avoid earlier stages of educational inequality. The role of

communities, parents, community seasons, disasters like hunger, drought and diseases be studied extensively to ascertain their influence on accessibility and participation of pupils in education.

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