

Journal of

Education and Practice

(JEP)

**EXAMINATION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON UPPER PRIMARY PUPILS
PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN
LAIKIPIA WEST SUB-COUNTY, LAIKIPIA COUNTY, KENYA**

Fr. Samuel Amugori Romata, Dr. Sr. Jacinta M. Adhiambo and Prof. Mary N. Getui



CARI
Journals

EXAMINATION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON UPPER PRIMARY PUPILS PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN LAIKIPIA WEST SUB-COUNTY, LAIKIPIA COUNTY, KENYA

Fr. Samuel Amugori Romata

Faculty of Education, Catholic University of Eastern Africa
Corresponding Author email: amugorisam@yahoo.com

Dr. Sr. Jacinta M. Adhiambo

Faculty of Education, Catholic University of Eastern Africa

Prof. Mary N. Getui

Faculty of Education, Catholic University of Eastern Africa
P.O Box 62157 Bogani E Rd, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Purpose: The study aimed at finding out whether parents in public primary schools in Laikipia West sub-county influence pupils to participate in academic activities.

Methodology: A mixed method research design was used where cross sectional descriptive survey was used on quantitative data and phenomenology was used to complement components of qualitative data. Population of 13 public Primary schools was sampled from the total 65 public Primary Schools in the Sub-County. Out of 2,236, pupils' in class 6, 7 and 8, 3 girls and 3 boys were selected per class through stratification and simple random method. Parents/ guardians for the selected pupils were purposively selected regardless of their age, level of education and gender. All class teachers from the sampled schools were targeted and purposively selected. The data was collected using questionnaires, interview guide, document analysis guide and focus discussion guide. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 was used to analyze quantitative data. Nine hypotheses that sought to find out parental influence on pupils' participation in academic activities were tested using correlation coefficient analysis. Qualitative data was transcribed, coded, and themed and interpreted in response to research questions.

Results: The results from the study showed that there is prevalence of parental influence on pupil's academic activities in Laikipia West Sub- County mainly through attending school functions, assisting with homework, communicating with teachers and their children and provision of learning resources. In response to parental involvement, pupils attended school regularly; asked questions in class, joined study groups and finished homework on time. Major restrictions to parental involvement included poverty, insecurity and illiteracy.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The recommendation was that those parents who were not actively involved on pupil's academic related matters be sensitized on their roles of promoting child education. The County as well as national governments should support parents by establishing structures and policies that boost the standard of education in the area. According to this study such policies includes; establishing efficient and effective guidance and counseling programs in school, taking legal action on parents who keep their children at home, providing full sponsorship to needy parents and establishing boarding schools among the pastoralists communities.

Key Words: *Parental Involvement, Academic Activities, Communication, and Public Schools*

INTRODUCTION

Currently, education is the prime mover of any socio-economic and political development of a nation. Therefore, individuals, communities and states spend many human and material resources in order to achieve educational results. However, for the realization of social and individual benefits of education, stakeholders need to set up clear policies that would lead to the realization of education agenda, which includes provision of quality education to all irrespective of geographical location, political affiliation and ethnic background. As key players in educational agenda, parents ought to maximize their contribution of time and resources in order to influence pupil's participation in academic activities. A study conducted by Cohen-Vogel and Smrekar (2001) on the voice of parents; rethinking the intersection of family and School in California found out that parents describe their roles in schools as task oriented. When parents are actively engaged in teaching and learning process of their children, when they provide the necessary resources that support education of their children and when they make follow up of pupil's academic progress, the chances of pupils' participation in academic activities are high. This means that pupils improve in asking questions in class, attending school regularly, joining study groups and finishing assignments in time. A positive interaction between parental influence and pupils' participation in academic activities result to improved pupils retention rate, high completion and consistent transition rate in schools.

According to Pomerantz and Moorman (2007), parents can influence their children by inculcating positive drive that inspires them to embrace academic activities as a means of self-development and career choice. Nevertheless, in order to influence their children Bloomstran (2002) points out that those children need to experience lifelong lessons by interacting with adults who can influence their thinking and actions positively. He continues that when parents engage in supervision of pupils work, create a friendly home environment, become role models, tutor their children, attend school functions and provide necessary resources, pupils are likely to embrace academic oriented activities as beneficial rather than punitive. Taylor (2004) termed such a positive drive as intrinsic because it enables pupils to view education as something enjoyable and of great personal and social importance. Although parents have the capacity to influence their children, they face numerous challenges such as multiple responsibilities, cultural beliefs and practices, social- economic and attitude towards school.

A study carried out by Lauryn (2012) on challenges in parent involvement in education, emphasized that when these challenges are resolved, positive results could be achieved. Parents therefore, ought to inspire children in order to boost their morale towards academic activities. Rodney (2001) citing the importance of education emphasized that there is need to re-develop the former colonial nations through education. This means that quality education is the pillar of various forms of development in a country. Educated people have the power, knowledge and capacity to maximize the available resources. The Major concern of this study therefore, was to examine whether active involvement of parents in academic activities of their children addresses the issue of pupils demotivation. This study focused on parents because of the great role they play in child formation. Their academic roles includes: involvement in the teaching and learning process, provision of academic support resources and the process of following up their

children academic progress. This study focused on class 6, 7 and 8 pupils on the assumption that they ought to understand the importance of education and further, their age renders them vulnerable to child labor, early marriages and radicalized groups.

Statement of the Problem

There has been a marked increase of pupils de-motivation in academic activities in public primary schools in Laikipia West Sub-County. Head teacher's forum (2011) revealed that some pupils do not attend school regularly, they do not finish their homework on time nor do they ask questions in class. According to head teachers, such pupils eventually end up dropping out of school for either child labor; early marriages and even joining outlawed groups. Head teachers during the forum revealed that at least six girls from each school dropout every year due to early marriage, at least four boys dropout in third term to join moranism, and at least five girls and six boys' drop out to look for employment. However, despite the government initiative of financing education programs, improving school infrastructure, introducing feeding program, staffing and establishing guidance and counseling programs (Odindo 2010), the challenge of pupils de-motivation on academic activities has been on the increase. Although the reviewed studies indicates that parents have the ability and capacity to influence their children in academic activities, perhaps carrying out this study among the parents of Laikipia West Sub-County could give different the results because of differences in social-economic, cultural beliefs and practices and geographical factors. Most of the studies reviewed were carried out in high schools where students are believed to be mature and self-motivated as compared to their counterparts in primary schools. Thus conducting the same study in primary schools might provide varied results. Most of the reviewed literatures were carried out in an urban set up where issues of insecurity, distance from school and cultural influence may not be as acute as compared to rural set part. Therefore, conducting this study in Laikipia West Sub-County rural public primary schools may give varying results.

Research Questions

- i. What justification can parents in Laikipia West Sub-County give for their involvement in pupils academic activities
- ii. How do parents in Laikipia West Sub-County assist their children to do school assignment?
- iii. How do parents in Laikipia West Sub-County attend school functions
- iv. How effective is the communication between parents, class teachers and pupils in Laikipia West Sub-County?
- v. What role do parents in Laikipia West Sub-County play in the provision of learning resources for their children?
- vi. How do pupils in Laikipia West Sub-County manifest parental involvement in academic activities?
- vii. What restricts parental involvement on pupil's academic activities in Laikipia West Sub-County?
- viii. How can parents in Laikipia West Sub-County address the challenges hindering their involvement?

Theoretical Literature Review

Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory proposed by Albert Bandura in 1977 guided this study. The theory holds that people can learn new information and behavior by watching others. This means that human learning occurs in a social environment through observing others, whereby they acquire knowledge of rules, skills, strategies, beliefs and attitudes. The theory further teaches that cognitive development alone cannot explain changes in children behavior unless social and economic considerations are considered. Social Learning Theory highlights the idea that much of human learning occurs in a social environment where both teachers/administration, school structure and resources, learning disabilities, safety and pupils willingness to learn, age of the pupil, interest, attention, mental and physical health are all in course. According to this theory, children build an effective academic background when they observe how their parents and other siblings, environment and teachers interact with them. According to Bandura, environmental reinforcement is not the only factor to influence learning and behavior. For him intrinsic reinforcement such as pride; satisfaction and sense of accomplishment also influence learning. He viewed direct reinforcement as a direct influence in the learners' learning process and considered indirect reinforcement as the consequences of behaviors expressed by what the child may view as a model. The learners may consider teachers, parents and environment as a model to be imitated regardless of the consequences. However, not all parents and teachers are role models; therefore, pupils may be intrinsically motivated in order to undertake academic activities with minimal support from parents and teachers.

Social Control Theory

Social control theory proposed by Thomas Hobbes in 1957 and emphasized by Hirsch in 1969 posits that two control systems that is the inner and the outer controls work against our tendencies to deviate. The theory aimed at investigating the inherent tendencies towards people indulgence into crimes and the corresponding role of the Government. The theory emphasizes that individual behaviors are determined by the relationships that they make with others and the social ties that bind one with the greater community. Meaning that, people with strong ties would fruitfully interact than those with weak ties. Social Control Theory considers the family to be the basic building block of society because it links individuals to the greater society. Individuals are adjusted to a certain behavior when they receive proper socialization strategies from parents. Such individual are capable of forming positive self-image right from childhood, which determines their future personality. In response to social control theory, Grasser in 1973 observed that behavior is never caused by a response to outside stimuli but instead behavior is inspired by what a person wants most at a given time. Meaning that when parents introduce their children to social norms as per the expectations of the society, pupils develop a positive self-image that enables them to tackle challenges experienced in academic endeavors. In responding to complaints that pupils are unmotivated Glasser would attest that all living creatures control their behavior to minimize their need satisfaction. For example if a pupil is not motivated by schoolwork, it is because they view schoolwork as irrelevant to their basic human need.

Social interaction theory

Social Interaction Theory attributed to Vygotsky (1978) stresses that symbolic meaning develop and depend upon the process of interaction. According to Vygotsky interactionists believes that language is a product of children social interactions with important information. The theory further states that the environment plays a vital role in language and cognitive development. According to this theory, there exists a meaningful interaction between adults and children, which can influence language and cognitive development of the children. Schafer (2010) interpreted interactional theory as ongoing relationships created by particular words exchanged in a specific interaction. The significant starting point is that people can create their relationships with others every time they interact. Referring to Bateson (1980) teaching on how non-contact and competitive schooling blend art and epistemology, Stephen and Karen (2009) observed that communication is a vehicle of discovering important interaction patterns in human behavior. Interaction between parents and pupils or between pupils and teachers alone without material support and follow up strategies might not bear fruits in the pupils' learning process.

Conceptual Framework

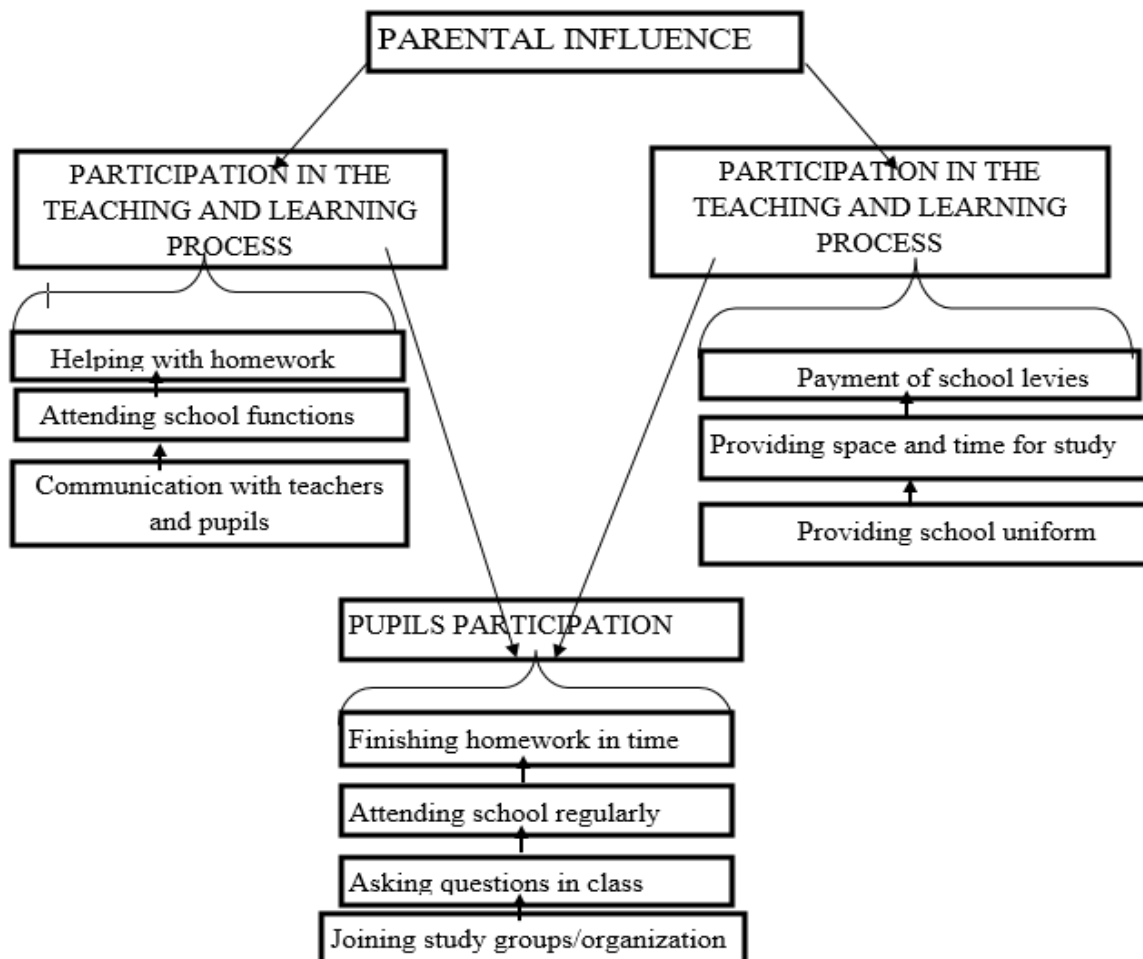


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

A Justification for Parents Involvement in Child Education

The value that parents attach to education determines their commitment and readiness to support pupils' academic activities. This means that when parents view education as something of value, they tend to strengthen their influence. This section addresses justifications to parents taking their children to school from the universal perspective. The section further addresses specific justifications why parents are involved in pupil's education. In this case, universal justifications indicate that some parents influence their children to participate in academic activities because they are motivated by both curriculum and co-curriculum activities offered in school. Such parents act as stewards whose responsibility is to ensure that their children attend school and acquire all the necessary benefits. The benefits encompass social, educational, religious and moral aspects of life.

Parents Involvement on Pupils Academic Activities

Parents' involvement in child education is of paramount importance for meaningful academic results. A study conducted by Latif (2000) identified six types of family involvement in influencing pupil's participation in educational activities. In parenting, parents ought to establish an environment that supports learning and offer information that can help pupils to succeed in academic activities. Parents further are supposed to establish a strong tripartite communication system between home and school in order to monitor pupil's participation in academic activities, establish contact between parents and the school and create a cohesive parents teachers association. In order to encourage parents to volunteer, schools should assess parent's skills, talents, needs and interest in order to establish programs that would involve them in the school management. To support learning at home, school should provide parents with right information concerning the learners, in order to enhance family learning environment and interactive communication between parents and pupils about homework. Latif advocated that parents are part of decision makers in school. Therefore, they should participate in Governments and advocacy activities. The reason for doing so is to build a team that addresses issues that require parents input and cooperation for successful outcomes. Educational achievements could be achieved through collaboration with the community. The purpose for collaborating is to establish partnership that would assist in sponsoring academic activities, provide information on the position of community resources to address parents concern.

Parents can influence their children's schooling by attending school functions and responding to school obligations such as parent-teacher conferences. They can become more involved in helping their children improve their schoolwork by providing encouragement, arranging for appropriate study time and space, modeling desired behavior (such as reading for pleasure), monitoring homework, and actively tutoring their children at home, (DeWitt, 2014). Parents' involvement on the pupil's participation in academic activities was discussed under two broad topics that is parent's involvement in the teaching and learning process and provision of academic support materials. Parents' involvement in the teaching learning process was discussed under the following sub-topics parents assisting in homework, communication between parents, teachers and pupils, parent's participation in school functions. Parental provision of academic support

materials was discoursed on the basis of payment of school levies, providing space and time for study and providing school uniform.

The role of Parents in the teaching learning process

i Assisting Pupils with Homework

Homework is the foundation upon which academic achievements is anchored; therefore, parents, teachers and other family members play a great role in stifling or promoting it. The study conducted by Hein and Wimer (2007) on improving homework completion and motivation, indicate that homework is important because it is an intersection between home and school. It acts as a window through which you can observe your children's education and express positive attitudes towards your children and their education. They identified six constructive purposes for homework in the context of child educational experience. This constructive purpose means that homework enables the learner to improve in practice and participation in the learning task and it further improves their academic achievement towards generation of knowledge as well as mastery of the basic academic skills such as reading, writing and spelling. The pupil's ability to gather and organize necessary materials to complete the assignment strengthens their sense of responsibility and equally learns time management skills. School assignment also plays an administrative role for it offers schools an opportunity to inform parents about class activities and policies and helping schools achieve their overall missions of improving pupil's academic achievements. As the bridge that joins school and parents, homework, from the school perspective is an opportunity to monitor individual pupil's academic progress. Parents on the other hand are enabled to gain an understanding and appreciation of what takes place at school. When parents appreciate the kind of homework administered to their children, their attitude towards education is positively influenced.

ii Communication between Parents, Class Teachers and Pupils

When parents, pupils and teachers engage in academic dialogue, this communication motivates and modifies behaviors of middle school learners towards academic activities (Hein & Wimer 2007). This implies that in a healthy parent child communication, parents involvement in influencing their children is not affected by their socio-economic status, income, education level, whether they are employed or not ethnicity but on depth in which they discuss academic matters. Most parents according to Hein and Wimer would desire to get as much information about their children's academic performance as possible. However, factors such as inadequate teachers parent communication, hostile school climate and parent's ignorance could hinder them from sharing freely about pupil's academic progress. Ferlazzo (2012) further argued that parents who initiate academic discussions with their children and use more than one mode of communicate for instance verbal and non-verbal, have children who are committed than those whose parents show no interest. Beside the verbal communication, parents are capable of equally influence their children through role modeling. For instance, when illiterate parents enroll in adult education, their sons and daughters view education as a noble activity. They feel spirited, encouraged and empowered to undergo the same process of education just like their parents.

Participating in School Functions

Parents may not only influence pupils through provision of academic support resources but also seek to find out what happens in the classroom. To achieve this, parents need to participate in school functions; frequently communicate with teachers and school administrators about their children academic progress, consistently attend academic clinics and prize-giving days (Hein and Wimer 2007). Parents' participation in school functions is a catalyst for pupils' academic growth and development. Labahn (2001) observes that the more parents learn about school operations, the more they understand educational processes and the more they make informed decisions about their children education progress. He continues that parents who attend school functions become allies and benefit in understanding their children successes and address difficult situations when they arise. Such parents offer financial support because they understand the pending needs more than their colleagues who never attend such functions.

Parents role in Provision of Academic Support Resources

Parent's involvement in child education is the springboard to excellent performance. Both parents and the Kenyan Government have the responsibility of providing necessary resources that promote effective learning. Chiuri and Kiumi (2005) observed that the Government of Kenya is committed to offering Free Primary Education in all public schools in the country. However, this does not exempt parents from meeting some expenses. Such expenses may include levies to cater for co-curriculum activities, security guard wages, examinations fee charges, school uniform and by extension learning materials that include textbooks, exercise books to supplement those provided by the Ministry of Education.

Pupils Manifestation of Parental Involvement

Pupil participation in academic activities as expressed by Snell (2003) indicates that shared symbols and words between parents and pupils are manifested in the way pupils respond to parental involvement. Besides providing their children with material resources, parents are also capable of influencing them through verbal and non-verbal signs. Verbally parents can influence their children by holding frequent talks, attending academic clinics where parents, teachers and the pupil interact freely on matters concerning academics. Parents could also assist pupils verbally when they help in completing school assignment. The non-verbal communication could be experienced during the payment of school levies. A pupil whose parents pay school levies promptly and attend school functions feel supported and encouraged thus increase their commitment towards academic activities. In response to parental influence pupils may express their participation by completing assignments, participating in class, joining study group, asking questions on difficult areas. Since academic activities take place in the classroom, external indicators that could easily be noticed by outsiders are retention, transition and completion rates as discussed in this section.

Restrictions to Parental Involvement on child Education

In the process of influencing pupils' participation in academic activities, parents encounter several challenges. Kerbow and Bemhardt (1993) referred these challenges as barriers that affect parental influence on their roles and obligations of supporting pupils in academic activities. The challenges as noted by Tshabalala (2008) include language and illiteracy, cultural beliefs and practices, socio-economic, attitude towards education, school environment and parents multiple responsibilities. These challenges escalate when school administrators, teachers and parents fail to uphold and appreciate the role played by each other. Tshabalala argues that these challenges reduce parental influence on pupil participation in academic activities and end up creating unfriendly relationship between parents and teachers, a situation that discourages parents from attending school functions.

A rapport between teachers, school administrators and parents could effectively be achieved through frequent communication. Abram and Gibbs (2000) have observed that poor communication between parents and schools administrators, lack of parenting skills and job pressure may inhibit parents' influence on their children. Plevyak (2003) has also made similar remark that cultural differences, fear of authority-based institutions, parents' illiteracy, family problems, and negative attitude towards education, health, living arrangements and lack of necessary resources could impair parent influence on pupils' participation. Therefore, considering that parents from different social economic and cultural backgrounds experience different challenges and require different mitigation measures, this study wishes to explore whether language and illiteracy, cultural beliefs and practices, social economic status of parents, parents attitude towards school and parents involvement in multiple responsibilities affect their influence on pupils participation in academic activities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A mixed method research design was used where cross sectional descriptive survey was used on quantitative data and phenomenology was used to complement components of qualitative data. Population of 13 public Primary schools was sampled from the total 65 public Primary Schools in the Sub-County. Out of 2,236, pupils' in class 6, 7 and 8, 3 girls and 3 boys were selected per class through stratification and simple random method. Parents/ guardians for the selected pupils were purposively selected regardless of their age, level of education and gender. All class teachers from the sampled schools were targeted and purposively selected. The data was collected using questionnaires, interview guide, document analysis guide and focus discussion guide. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 was used to analyze quantitative data.

RESULTS

The total numbers of questionnaires presented to class 6, 7 and 8 pupils in the sampled public primary schools in Laikipia West Sub-County were 234. Since the researcher used the captive method of data collection, 225 questionnaires were collected. This translates to 96.2% return rate for pupil's questionnaires. Out of the 39 class teachers expected to attend interview, only 28 attended which is 71.79%. Among the 234 parents sampled

only 150 turned up for focus group discussion that translates to 64.10%. Out of the 13 schools sampled, only nine returned the document analysis guide that translates to 69.2%.

Hypothesis Testing

To determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables a correlation coefficient analysis was used. The researcher tested 9 hypotheses that dealt with parental involvement on upper primary pupil's participation in academic activities in public schools in Laikipia West Sub-County. Variables representing parental influence includes; attending school functions, communication with class teachers and pupils, assisting with homework and payment of school levies. Variables representing pupils participation includes; attending school regularly, asking questions in class, joining study groups and finishing assignment in time. After computing using correlation coefficient analysis, the researcher generated the following results:

Table 1: Correlation

Variables	Mean	Std Dev	No. respondents	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
1. Gender	.498	.501	221	1										
2. Age	3.57	.688	221	.171*	1									
3. Class	2.010	.811	223	-.006	.433**	1								
4. Parents assisting in Homework	3.255	.967	224	.146*	.168*	-.016	1							
5. Parents payment school levies	1.053	.523	225	.034	-.104	-.012	.097	1						
6. Parents Attending school function	1.707	.512	225	.050	-.115	-.004	.261**	.192**	1					
7. Parents communicating with class teachers and pupils	2.498	.690	223	-.069	-.116	.029	.424**	.050	.189**	1				
8. Pupil Asking question in class class	2.491	.702	224	-.020	.066	-.020	.097	-.060	.162*	.196**	1			
9. Pupils joining study group/organizations	2.718	.842	223	-.010	-.043	-.030	.086	-.033	.087	.093	.273**	1		
10. Pupils attending school regularly	3.471	1.939	225	.064	-.123	.057	.274**	.037	.158*	.172*	-.017	.096	1	
11. Pupil participation in academic activities	2.685	.563	222	-.067	.107	-.074	.173*	-.063	-.055	-.056	.431**	.377**	-.836**	1
				.328	.115	.275	.010	.346	.416	.409	.000	.000	.000	

Hypothesis One

Taking the level of significance as 0.05 and p-value 0.146 the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis based on the data collected and therefore concludes that Gender is negatively correlated with parent assisting in homework. This means that there is no significant relationship between pupil's gender and parents assisting with homework. Therefore, pupils' gender has no effect on parents assisting and failing to assist pupils with homework. Those parents who fail to assist based their argument on the fact that some pupils do not seek academic assistance from them. One of the parents said, "My son feels he is grown up to carry out academic activities by himself without supervision", this alludes that although parents are willing to assist pupils with homework, some pupils are not ready for the assistance. From responses given by both teachers and parents during data collection, some parents think that their children are grown ups to conduct their affairs without much supervision. Further, some parents also think that it is the responsibility of the teachers to guide pupils in academic activities. The parents who assist with homework believe that it is their responsibility to encourage their children in academic activities by ensuring that they have effectively done their homework. The observation agrees with Bonci and Cole (2011) view that parents have the ability to influence pupil's participation in academic activities. Parents could employ various interventions such as, checking on pupil's assignments, meeting regularly with teachers and administering disciplinary measures for bad results.

Hypothesis Two

Taking the level of significance as 0.01 and the p-value 0.433, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis and therefore concludes that pupil's age is strongly and positively correlated with pupils' class. The analysis indicates that there exists a strong relationship between pupil's age and their current respective class. This implies that most of the pupils from the sampled schools are in their right classes, which could be because of parent's initiative to take their children to school at the right age, government policy of free primary education that has encouraged parents to take their children to school and pupils interest in education. The relationship that exists between pupil's age and class as indicated in Table 1 shows that most of the pupils in classes 6, 7, and 8 were between 13-14 years of age. However, the 8.1% who are at the age of 16 years and above could have joined the school late or might have repeated some classes. The desire to acquire high grades in order to join County or even National secondary schools might be the reason for some pupils repeating classes. Similarly, the policy of free primary education established in 2003 might have encouraged some pupils to join school when they are relatively old.

Hypothesis three

Taking the level of significance as 0.05 and p-0.168, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis and therefore concludes that there is a negative correlation between pupils age and parents assisting in homework. This implies that there is no relationship between pupil's age and parents assisting with homework. Meaning that whichever age groups the pupils are in, parents assist with homework have no influence. This means that pupils in the area of study do not seek parents assistance possibly because they understand what is expected of them, this could also attributed to the fact that pupils are more responsible to their academic work as they strive to achieve good result.

Hypothesis Four

Taking the level of significance as 0.01 and p-value 0.26, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis and therefore concludes parents' assisting pupil with homework is positively and strongly correlated with parents attending school function. This shows that when parents attend school functions, they become more committed in assisting pupils with homework. Meaning those parents who attend school functions understand the kind of assistance their children require and therefore execute it effectively. The class teachers interviewed pointed that most parents follow up their children academic progress as well as support them by buying learning resources. Such parents also visit school to find out how their children are performing and in a situation where children are sent home due to school levies, they respond immediately by either paying or negotiating for more time with school administrators. This is supported by the 79.6% of the pupils' respondents who said that parents support class teachers and school administration.

Table 2: Parents support class teachers and Head teachers

Response	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	46	20.4
Agree	179	79.6
Total	225	100.0

The results in Table 2 show that 79.6% of pupils from the sampled schools in Laikipia West Sub-County public primary schools believe that most parents/guardians support the class teachers and head teachers with only 20.4% believing that most parents/guardians do not support. The findings show that the parents support class teachers and head teachers on matters related payment of school levies, attending school functions and assisting pupils with homework. This trend could be explained by the fact that even though most of the parents in Laikipia west Sub-County are peasant farmers and pastoralists, they have highly embraced and shown commitment in educating their children. When asked whether support the class teachers and school administrators, one of the pupils said,

“My parent supports the class teacher because they always advise me to respect the teacher and finish my homework in time. They support the head teacher by attending school functions and communicating with him frequently whenever necessary. They further support him by paying school levies promptly”.

The teachers confirmed that most of the parents in the sampled schools support them by providing necessary learning materials, ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and by visiting school to inquire on pupil's academic progress. However, teachers cited poverty as the main draw to the realization of parent's full support. On the other hand, the study revealed that some parents do not support the head teachers. Some of the reasons cited by class teachers are failure to pay school levies, ignorance of their role in education, disinterest in attending school functions as they view it as waste of time, negative attitude towards education while some Parents remain non-committal to their children academic progress. During the focus group discussion one of the parents boldly said, “I don't want my son to pass the examination as I do not have money to cater for his high school education”. This means that some parents in Laikipia West Sub-County are

not willing to spend their resources educating their children. Such parents according to one of the class teachers, base their argument on the fact that primary education is fully funded by the Government and so they are not supposed to contribute any money. The same parents further allege that head teacher misappropriate the school funds, thus see no need to contribute any money towards the school.

Hypothesis Five

Taking the level of significance as 0.01 and p-value 0.274 the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis and therefore concluded that parents' assisting pupil with homework is positively and strongly correlated with pupil attending school regularly. This means that when parents assist pupils with homework, pupils regular school attendance increases. Which indicates that when parent assist their children with homework, the children get motivated to attend school and the issue of absenteeism caused by not finishing assignment is not applicable? In addition, pupils feel supported by parents. When pupils discover that parents are committed, they tend to value education and withstand the challenges attached to it, this is in agreement with Tshabalala (2008) view that when parents are involved in pupils learning process, pupils develop self-esteem and are motivated to handle academic activities. Parents move to help their children is an indication that they understand the importance of pupils passing examination, as it opens them to other opportunities. Similarly regular checking of report book reinforces pupil's retention in school as well as finishing homework work on time. Table 3 indicates pupil's responses when asked whether parents/ guardians check on their examinations report books.

Table 3: Parents/Guardians Check on pupils examinations report books

Response	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	13	5.8
Agree	212	94.2
Total	225	100.0

Table 3 indicates that 94.2% of the pupil respondents agree that their parents demand for their examinations report book, while only 5.8% disagree. Therefore, majority of the parents in the area of study check on their children's' report book. This is an indication that they are interested in knowing their children's academic progress. The few parents who do not demand for report books were reported as having no interest in their children's' academic progress. This could be associated to the fact that some of them are involved in multiple responsibilities in order to earn a living and so they lack time to check on pupils assignment and even examination report book and illiteracy. Others are too old to understand the demands of child education while others have negative attitude towards education. One of the parents admitted that, "I cannot check on my child's examinations report book because I do not know how to read and write at the same time am busy looking for food and money to pay their school levies". Therefore, the few parents who fail to check on pupil's examinations report books are old and illiterate. Teachers backed this idea during the interview that some pupils live with their aged and illiterate grandparents.

Hypothesis Six

Taking the level of significance as 0.01 and p-value 0.192 the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis and therefore concludes that there is a strong and positive correlated between payment of school levies and parents attending school functions. This means that when parents attend school functions, they become committed to paying school levies. This could have been necessitated by the interest to know how the school administrators are expending their resources. They could also attend to assess whether the resources available are commensurate to pupils academic performance. Attendance of school function is further an indicator to the child that the parent is interested in the school happenings and thus increases the pupil's commitment and interest in academic activities. Table 4 shows pupils responses when asked the time they spend at home when they are sent to collect school levies.

Table 4: Time spent at Home when sent to collect School levies

Statement	Frequency	Percent
More than one day	39	17.3
One day	186	82.7
Total	225	100.0

Results in Table 4 show that 82.7% of the pupils said that they remain at home for one day while 17.3% remain for more than one day. This means that most of the parents ensure that their children report to school immediately after being sent home to collect school levies. Most of the parents, who participated in the focus group discussion agreed that when they do not have money they, beseech the head teachers to give them time. According to responses given by some class teachers, such parents would not be at ease as long as their children are at home. The 17.3% pupils, who said that they remain at home for more than one day, said that their parents are poor and unemployed while other are aged and sickly. These notwithstanding, one of the teachers attested, "some parents are not willing to spend their resources educating their children because they are not sure whether the child will pass the examination or even finish school". One of the parents had similar sentiments and said, "I cannot sell my cow to pay school levies, furthermore that cow benefit the whole family, not one person". This is a clear indication that such parents do not value education and thus their willingness to fund academic activities is minimal.

Hypothesis Seven

Taking the level of significance as 0.01 and p-value 0.189, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis and concludes that there is a strong correlation between parents attending school functions and parents communication with class teachers and pupils. It is further positively and strongly correlated with pupils asking questions in class ($r = 0.162^*$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that when parent attend school function they also find time to inquire about their children academic performance from class teachers. Through such interactions, their relationship with the teachers is strengthened such that they freely report to teachers whenever a pupil is absent from school. In addition, it encourages parents to follow up on pupil's performance. Similarly, when parents attend school, pupils feel obliged to take academic activities seriously by asking question in class and joining study groups in order to improve their performance.

Hypothesis Eight

Taking the level of significance as 0.01 and p-value at 0.273, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is strong and positive correlation between pupils asking questions in class and participating in study groups. This implies that when pupils participate in study groups, they learn to be inquisitive which enables them to ask more question in class aimed at seeking for clarification and acquiring more knowledge in certain areas. When asked whether they ask questions in class pupils responded.

Table 5: Frequency of asking questions in class

Statement	Frequency	Percent
Often	198	88.0
Not at all	26	11.6
No. Response	1	.4
Total	225	100.0

Table 5 shows that 88.0% of the pupils ask questions in class while 11.6% do not ask any question. The wide range between pupils who ask questions in class and those who do not indicates that pupils in Laikipia West Sub-County are motivated to ask questions in class. When asked why they ask questions in class some pupils pointed that they do so in order to be corrected by teachers when they answer wrongly, it helps them to clarify and understand the subject and that parents and teachers encourage them to do so. The few, who do not ask questions cited that teachers are busy and they might ignore them, fear of being mocked by other pupils if they do not get the question right and the perception that asking questions is disturbing teachers. It could also be that they are disinterested in academic activities.

Hypothesis Nine

Taking the level of significance as 0.05 and p-value at 0.172, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis and therefore concludes that parents' communicating with teachers and pupils is positively correlated with pupil attending school. This means that when parents communicate with teachers, school administrators and pupils, pupils increase school attendance. Which implies that effective communication between the stakeholders, encourage the pupils to attend school because parents are in a position to solve some challenges facing the school namely payment of school levies, indiscipline cases and pupils weak performance. Therefore, the results from sampled schools show that pupil's school attendance might be enhanced through frequent communication between class teachers, parents and pupils.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made: First most of the parents are mainly motivated by social, economic, educational and moral reasons to educate their children. Therefore, the researcher concludes that most of the parents in the area of study are concerned with the integral formation of their children, which helps them to relate well with others and open them to the job market. Secondly, most parents are involved in the teaching and learning process as well as provision of academic support resources for their children despite the challenges such as illiteracy, poverty, old

age and cultural values and practices. Therefore, the wish of most parents in the area of study is to ensure that their children receive quality education.

Thirdly, most of the pupils respond to parents influence by asking questions in class, attending study groups, finishing homework in time and attending school regularly. The researcher therefore concludes that most of the pupils from the sampled school are motivated to undertake academic activities. Fourthly, there are numerous challenges facing the parents, these challenges range from insecurity, poverty, ignorance, cultural beliefs and practices and negative attitude towards school. Therefore, the researcher concludes that most parents from the area of study are willing to support their children, if some of these challenges are alleviated.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the findings, the researcher made the following recommendations; the church leaders, education officers and political leaders should take the initiative of creating awareness in the community concerning the importance of child education. This should aim at widening parent's scope and interest in educating their children. Some of the errant parents should be encouraged and sensitized on their roles such as monitoring pupil's academic performance by attending school functions and frequent communication with class teachers and school administrators. Chiefs, village elders and education officers can carry out this program during "barazas" and educational forums. The County as well as National Governments should take the initiative of promoting parents economically by sponsoring education fully, assisting the neediest families and ensuring that every child goes to school. School administrators and the church leaders should be given the responsibility of identifying the needy pupils

The County Government should device alternative means of empowering the community economically by creating irrigation schemes, drilling boreholes, introducing modern farming methods and encouraging the pastoralist communities to reduce their livestock. The National and County Governments should increase pupil's retention especially from pastoralist's communities by establishing feeding programs in schools and establishing boarding facilities. The National and County Governments should encourage pastoralist's communities in the Sub-County to embrace permanent settlements to avoid frequent transfer of pupils. The class teachers and school administrators should frequently guide and counsel pupils on issues concerning education. The guidance and counseling should aim at empowering pupils to develop self-esteem and ability to make informed decisions in life. The teachers and parents should communicate frequently in order to address the challenges facing the pupils in school and at home some of which could lead to pupils dropping out of school. Class teachers should inform delinquent pupils on the importance of participating in-group work, attending school, and asking questions in class. The teachers should also encourage pupils to finish homework in time by marking the assignments and encouraging the weak pupils. To address the issue of insecurity the researcher calls upon all the concerned parties spearheaded by the National and County Governments to establish peace caravans, engaging the warring communities into frequent dialogue through their elders and Church leaders, establishing police posts at black spots of cattle rustling in the Sub-County and disarming the communities who are still in possession of firearms.

The church leaders and community elders should advocate peaceful co-existence among the various ethnic communities living in Laikipia West Sub-County. This could be achieved by establishing common social amenities like hospitals, schools as well as shopping centre in areas that are prone to conflict. This will encourage and promote dialogue among these communities. The County Government should organize inter-cultural festivals and games to draw together people from different ethnic communities in order promote an understanding, respect and appreciation of others and their property. County Government in conjunction with the Ministry of tourism and wild life should erect electric fence along the game reserves or deploy more game wardens to the area. The National Government in consultation with the wild life officials should also explore the possibility of relocating wild animals to the neighboring game reserves or national parks.

REFERENCES

- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundation of thought action: a social cognitive theory*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Englewood Cliffs
- Bonci. A. (2008). *A Research review: the importance of families and the home environment*. national literacy trust. Il Saint Xavier University and Pearson Achievement Solutions, Inc.
- Case, A. (2008). *Why your students do not do homework*, New York: Brooklyn.
- Cohen, L. Manion, L. & Marrison, K. (2005). *Research methods in education*. London: Sage Publications.
- Hein, D. L. & Wimer, S. L. (2007). *Improving homework completion and motivation of middle school students through behavior modification, graphing, and parent communication*. Chicago, Il saint Xavier university and person achievement Solutions, Inc.
- Kerbow, D. & Bemhardt, A. (1993). *Parent intervention in the school: The context of minority involvement*. Parents, their children, and schools, (p. 115- 175). Boulder, Co: Westview.
- Labahn, S. (1995). *Education and parental involvement in secondary schools: problems, solutions and effects*. Educational psychology interactive retrieved from <http://www.Edpsyc interactive/files/pavinvol.html>.
- Latif, A. (2002). *Family involvement in children education*: Massachusetts institute of technology 30 wads worth St. E53-320
- Lauryn, M. R. (2012). *Challenges in Parents Involvement in Education*. London: Washington Publication Centre.
- Learning resources centre study skills handout (2013). *Importance of study groups*. www.bmcc.cuny.edu/lvc/studyskills/T...
- Macmillan J. H. & Schumacher, S. (1989). *Research in education; a Conceptual Introduction (2nd Ed)*. New York. Foresman Company.

- Mugo, W. R. (2011). The role of the parents in promoting effective learning in public secondary schools in teso south district, busia county. Unpublished Master's Thesis. The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya.
- Plevyak, L. (2003). Parent involvement in education : who décidees ? the éducation Digest 69(2) ,32 38.
- Pomerantz, E. M. Moorman, E. A. (2007). The How, whom and why of parents involvement in children academic lives: more is not always better. Illinois: American Educational Research Association.
- Rodney, (2001). How Europe underdeveloped africa. Nairobi. East African Education Publishers.
- Stephen W. Littlejohn & Karen A. Foss, (2009), Encyclopedia of communication theory social interaction theories
- Sutherland, R. Harris, R. Mcness, E. Ching Yee, W. (2010). Supporting learning in transition from primary to secondary schools. University of Bristol
- Technikon, S.A. (2000). Theory of education manual Module B. Florida
- Teklemariam, A.A. (2010). Effective schools for 21st century in africa, faculty of education 4th interdisciplinary Sessions March 17-18, 2010. Nairobi. CUEA Press.
- Thomson, P. (2001). Strengthening family school relationships: a story about using research to develop policy and practices in tasmania australia. (Web) <http://www.4calgary.ca/ill/volume6/Thomson.htm>s, retrieved: 2012/4/12
- Tshabalala, M. M. (2008). An empowerment approach to parental involvement in the primary school. south africa: North West University press.
- Vandiver, R. S. (2003). National education welfare board conference improving attendance; A formula that worked, www.pdx.edu/~vandiver pdf
- Wang, T. D., Shively, J. (2008). Academic planning strategic decision-making. www.oir.uci.edu
- Watters, M. (2012). Research into improving attendance in school serving deprived areas, www.deni.gov.uk/publications/research...
- Wayne, G. & Santead (2012). Annual parenting meeting school wide setting: Bismarck North Dakota