

**FACTORS AFFECTING CHILDREN'S TRANSITION FROM
PRE-PRIMARY TO CLASS ONE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF
SOY DIVISION, ELDORET WEST DISTRICT**

BY

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**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN
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AND EDUCATIONAL MEDIA MOI UNIVERSITY, ELDORET**

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

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DEDICATION

To the pioneers of Early Childhood and Primary Education in the School of Education,
Moi University and to my beloved family.

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Firstly, I wish to acknowledge God, who gave me the strength, good health and patience during the entire time of the study. Secondly, I wish to thank my supervisors Prof. Kafu and Dr. Kisilu for their constant guidance, support and positive criticisms during my entire fieldwork and the final write up of this thesis. Special thanks must be accorded to the School Education and specifically the Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Educational media of Moi University headed by Dr. Jackson Too for their timely co-ordination to ensure that I was able to go to the field and collect data; despite few unavoidable hitches.

I must not forget to extend my gratitude to the teachers and parents in the sampled schools in Soy Division of Eldoret West district who voluntarily accepted to be interviewed or agreed to sacrifice their valuable time to answer the contents of the questionnaires; their timely answers provided a firm foundation for the basis of this thesis. I am indebted to the entire Uasin –Gishu West DICECE staff for providing me with critical insights and practical suggestions that helped me shape this work. Together with Uasin Gishu West DICECE staff, I sincerely thank my classmates who were always ready to provide any necessary support and advice during this study. I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to my husband Mr. Koskey and our children; Abel, Sheila, Erick, Abigael and Mercy whose prayers and support gave me the strength to write this thesis.

ABSTRACT

The start of primary schooling has been perceived as one of the most important transitions in a child's life and also a heed to the UN declaration that all children had a right to education. However, this has not worked well in Soy division of Eldoret West District. The purpose of this study was to investigate factors affecting children's transition from Pre-primary to Class 1 the area. The study addressed the following specific research objectives that regard children's transition from Pre-primary to Class 1: to find out the perceived roles of parents, to determine teachers' involvement in handling children's transition, to establish the roles played by the school administration, to establish the extent of community involvement and to determine effects of availability and appropriateness of physical facilities. The study was guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory (1979) which has it that children's transition from one class level to another is dependent upon certain factors found within their environment. Descriptive research design was adopted in the study and this entailed the predictions and narrations of facts and characteristics concerning individuals or situations. Soy Division has 73 public and 47 private primary schools with Pre-primary schools attached to them. Stratified and random sampling techniques were used to get a representation of public and private schools. Basing on the thirty percent [30%] requirement, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to obtain a sample size of 22 public schools and 14 private schools. Purposive sampling was used to select one head-teacher and PTA chairperson finally, random sampling technique was used to select, one Pre-primary school teacher and one Class 1 teacher from each of the selected schools. The research tools that were used were questionnaires for the class 1 and Pre-primary teachers and the structured interview schedules for the PTA chair-persons and the head-teachers. Finally, document analysis was used to check whether the professional records available in the sampled schools met the objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the collected data. The findings showed that the school administration played its roles well but lacked the organization of graduation days for the children completing the Pre-primary school level. There were some disparities in the provision of furniture, teaching approaches used and the community support rendered to the two class levels. The study farther showed that, pre-primary and primary schools did not share play materials. It was therefore recommended that, the Ministry of Education should provide more funds for community and parent mobilization and also establishment of enough physical facilities in Pre primary schools. Together with the later, teachers in the lower primary needed refresher courses to enable them understand the strategies appropriate for enhancing a smooth transition of children from pre-primary to class 1.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------------|---|
| ADEA: | Association for the Development of Education in Africa |
| CIEM: | Curriculum Instruction and Educational Media |
| CBOs: | Community Based Organizations |
| DICECE: | District Centre for Early Childhood Development |
| ECD: | Early Childhood Development |
| ECDE | Early Childhood Development Education |
| EFA: | Education for All |
| GOK: | Government of Kenya |
| K.I.E: | Kenya Institute of Education |
| KESSP: | Kenya Education Sector Support Program |
| MDGs: | Millennium Development Goals |
| MOE: | Ministry of Education |
| MoEST | Ministry of Education, Science and Technology |
| NACECE: | National Centre for Early Childhood Education |
| NEPI: | National Education Programmme Investigation |
| PTA: | Parents Teacher Association |
| UNESCO: | United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter presents the introduction to the study. It specifically discusses the background to the study, statement of the research problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, justification, significance, scope and limitations of the study, assumptions, the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, the operational definition of terms as used in the study and finally it presents the chapter's summary.

1.2 Background of the study

Education is the process that involves acquiring and imparting of knowledge, skills and values which societies need and utilize, which is viewed globally as fundamental in the development of human beings and principally as a fundamental human right (Abagi, 2001). According to the Global Campaign for education Report of 2007, those committed to universal education assert that education is a major part of the solution for many of world's development problems. Education is viewed as a prerequisite for economic growth and poverty alleviation. The knowledge and decision making skills gained in schools improves family health and well-being.

Since the declaration by the United Nations that every child has the right to education, the enrolment rates of pupils in many countries in the world have been on the rise (UNESCO, 2007). For those starting the primary schooling, transition to them is perceived as an important aspect in their life but to Fabian and Dunlop 2007 this has an impact to the child's subsequent experiences. To them, the transition process

makes the children experience change of relationship, teaching style, environment, space, time, contexts of learning and learning itself. This kind of situation can be an element of apprehension of the unknown that may cause confusion and anxiety. Lack of emotional well-being may cause worry and stress leading to aggression, fatigue or withdrawal which demands that children develop some resilience to such change.

The start of primary schooling is perceived as an important transition in a child's life. Fabian and Dunlop (2002) propose that the way in which transitions are experienced not only makes difference to children in the early months of new situation but may also have a long term effect because the extent to which they feel successful in the first transition is likely to influence subsequent experiences. Therefore challenges facing learning among the pupils remain a major and a fundamental issue among policy makers. For most countries, the numbers of students who enrol are always not the number that complete. In developed countries such as USA, the transition rates from Pre-Primary to the primary school levels are normally around 99-100% (Cosby, 2005).

In South Africa, for instance, the De Lange Commission of the 1980s took the responsibility of looking into ways of improving the education system and therefore highlighted the importance of Pre-primary Education. The commission recommended the establishment of a bridging class to the Primary school. The idea was not bought by the Apartheid of South Africa, but was later revived by National Education Programme Investigation (NEPI) of 1992, and this paved way for a smooth transition from the Pre-primary to standard one (Phatudi 2007). The South Africa White Paper No.5 on ECD had a policy whose aim was to: Eradicate the cycle of poverty, poor adjustment to

school, increased grade repetition and school drop-out rate, bridge the curricular differences and disparities between formal and informal education system, and maintain the principle of continuity in the knowledge of the children (Phatudi, 2007).

Historically, Kenya attained its independence in 1963. The Government of Kenya (GoK), households and the private sector collectively endeavored to enhance the development of education in the country. The rapid development of education and training in Kenya was a result of the *Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya*. This paper based on two long-standing concerns that: (i) every Kenyan child, irrespective of gender, religion and ethnicity, has the inalienable right to access basic welfare provision, including education; and (ii) the GOK has an obligation to provide opportunity to all citizens to fully participate in socio-economic and political development of the country and also to empower them to improve their welfare (Kamugisha, Tanui, Koros, Ondieki and Simiyu, 2005).

The Government of Kenya (GOK) demonstrated its commitment to the wellbeing of young children by participating in and signing various global policy frameworks such as the 1989 United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the 1990 Jomtein World Conference on Education For All (EFA), the 2000 World Education Forum in Senegal and the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (GOK, 2006). The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has therefore attached great importance to Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes for children aged between 0-8 years. It views Early Childhood Education as the cornerstone upon which the primary education is build (MoEST, 2000).

In pursuant of the MDGs and EFA, the GOK through the Ministry of education has worked with various partners for example the World Bank. The Ministry of Education collaborated with the World Bank and so launched an ECD project which comprised of five components and among them was; transition (Njoroge, 1999:6).The component was piloted in 900 primary schools in 30 districts. The goal was to harmonize the ECD and lower primary curriculum as well as capacity building through in-service training of teachers and school Quality Assurance Officers. As a result, a bridge curriculum has been developed, school quality assurance officers, primary head teachers and lower primary teachers inducted on the new methodologies. Evaluation of the component indicated certain success in lowering dropout and repetition rates in the pilot schools (Ngaruiya, 2006).

To give more weight to this idea of transition is the fact that the Kenya vision 2030's plan is to integrate Early Childhood Education into the Primary school education and also modernize the teacher training. This plan is an avenue for a smooth transition between the two learning stages in a school setting since the teachers will be in a position to handle the children in both the pre-primary and the primary class levels. Apart from that, the communication between the teachers in these two levels will be enhanced (Kafu Committee, 1998).

The Pre-primary school teachers seem to emphasize the child's holistic development whereas the primary school teachers emphasize the children's abilities to adjust to school, to fit in with other children and to function in class (MoEST, 2000). During the Gabon conference of 2006 (Ngaruiya, 2006) the participants discussed features that defined effective schooling and these included community roles in education

development, the school climate, culture and the teaching/learning environment. The discussions identified many ways in which schools (primary schools) were not ready for the pre-primary school children, together with this was the long distance that children walked to the new school, large class sizes, inappropriate physical facilities, rote-based learning and shortage of the learning materials (Anold, Barlett, Gowani and Merali, 2006). To curb these challenges, the African governments should review the teacher training programmes and introduce new systems where primary school teachers can serve both the pre-primary and the primary school.

According to Kenyan Service Standard guideline, an ECD child's age ranges between zero to eight years (ROK, 2006). This therefore means that the ECDE comprises of Pre-primary, standards one, two and three but this study is narrowed to pre-primary and class one. Very little has been done in these classes as far as transition of the children from pre-primary to class1 is concerned, The World Bank in collaboration with the Government of Kenya implemented a five year project which ran from 1997-2002. The objectives of the project were to reduce dropout and repetition rates at lower primary school levels (MOE, 2009).The Kafu Committee of 1998 recommendations were also timely since they came almost at the same time with the World Bank's Project. These recommendations advocated for a collaborative work between the lower primary and the Pre-Primary school teachers, this therefore meant a strive for a smooth transition between the two school levels.

In 2000, transition guidelines were made for the primary school head teachers and another for pre-school and lower primary school teachers. This was done to help these groups during the in-service training on the children's transition from Pre-School to

class 1. These guidelines were meant to provide more knowledge on the issues of transition and hence a smooth transition from pre-primary to the lower primary school level, where class 1 is inclusive. In 2001, a workshop was held in Nakuru (Stem Hotel), the inspectors and DICECE officers from varied districts gave reports of transition from their districts and this exposed the gaps that still existed between pre-primary and class 1 (Ndeda, 2001).

The challenges which the Pre-Primary school children encountered as they moved to class 1 were reported during the workshop and these included; walking long distances to the primary school, inadequate or lack of teaching/learning materials, difference in classroom arrangement, an increase in subject numbers instead of activity areas, change on attitude of parents to provide the school feeding programme or escorting the children to school on the ground that they are already old enough and finally reduction of play time (MoEST, 2000).

According to statistics in the District Education Office, Soy Division in Eldoret West District has a problem in the children's transition from pre-primary to class 1 since the number of those children in class 1 exceeds that of both the pre-primary and standard two class levels. This information is as presented in the table 1.1:

Table 1.1: Enrolment trend in Soy Division

| Class/year | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Pre-primary | 6197 | 6269 | 6347 | 6342 | 6824 |
| Class 1 | 6852 | 7009 | 6519 | 6863 | 7286 |

Source: Uasin Gishu District Education Report 2006-2010

1.3 Statement of the Problem

According to UNESCO (1996), more than 20% of the primary school children in the sub-Saharan Africa and 10% in Latin America repeat a grade but this is said to be more significant in the first grade or Class 1. UNESCO (2007) also noted that the repetition and dropout rates were still high in the lower primary and especially Class 1 levels. For many of the countries for which dropout information was available by grade, grade 1 dropout rates were at least double those in grade 2 (class 2). The Government of Kenya like those other affected countries has also suffered the same problem and has undertaken many reforms in the education sector in trying to solve this problem.

The introduction of Free Primary Education in Kenya in 2003 was meant to lead to the achievement of the MDG's and so much has been done to boost this. Examples of these are policies laid down in support of the children's access and retention in school like; the funding of the transition component by the World Bank in 1999, the establishment of the sessional paper no.1 of 2005 on Policy Framework for education training and research, the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP) of 2005, which enabled the provision of the community support grants for the pre-primary children among others. All the mentioned policies were put in place to enhance access, equity and quality at all levels of education (Thungu et al 2008). In spite of these efforts, Soy Division of Eldoret West District has continued to have enrolments in class 1 and Pre-Primary that has a lot of disparities as shown in table 1.1. This therefore prompted the researcher to try and establish factors which affect children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy division of Eldoret West District.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

To assess factors affecting children's transition from pre-primary to class one in Soy division with a view of making suggestions which would help in enhancing transition in the two class levels.

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study were divided into two; the main research objective and the specific research objectives as stipulated below:

1.5.1 Main Research Objective

The main objective of the study was to find out factors affecting children's transition from pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division, Eldoret West District.

1.5.2 Specific Research Objectives

The specific research objectives were to:

- i. Find out the perceived roles of parents in children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division.
- ii. Determine teachers' involvement in children's transition from the Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division.
- iii. Assess the roles played the school administration in children's transition from Pre-primary to Class 1 in Soy Division.
- iv. Establish the extent of community involvement on the transition of children from Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division.
- v. Determine how the availability and appropriateness of physical facilities affect children's transition from Pre-primary and Class 1 in Soy Division.

1.6 Research Questions

The research questions were derived from the objectives of the study and were divided into: main research question and specific research questions as presented in section 1.6.1

1.6.1 The Main Research Question

What are the factors affecting children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in soy division, Eldoret West District?

1.6.2 Specific Research Questions

- i. What are the perceived roles of parents in children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division?
- ii. How are teachers involved in children's transition from the Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division?
- iii. What are the roles played the school administration in the transition of children from Pre-primary to Class 1 in Soy Division?
- iv. What is the extent of community involvement in the children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division?
- v. How does the availability and appropriateness of physical facilities in Pre-primary and class 1 affect the children's transition in Soy Division?

1.7 Justification of the Study

As mentioned in the statement of the problem, enrolment disparities in the Pre-primary and class 1 remain disappointing. Statistics found in Soy division showed that the children's enrolment in class 1 was highest when compared to that of pre-primary school level. This study therefore, sought to establish factors that affect children's

transition from Pre-primary to class 1 and try to come up with recommendations which will help curb the menace in Soy Division of Eldoret West District.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study revealed various important factors which affect children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1. The findings will be useful to education officials in developing a curriculum. Secondly, it will advise the policy makers to come up with a monitoring and evaluation tool for transition of children from Pre-primary to class 1 and also put in place a clear policy that would help integrate the pre-primary into the primary cycle. The findings will be important in establishing factors that affect transition from pre-primary to primary school as an important challenge for children and that their successful passage will bring with it the opportunity for children to grow and learn and equip them to be more resilient in the future, whereas emphasis on continuity in children's lives and education. The findings will be important to the teachers and school administration in establishing the factors affecting transition from pre-primary to primary school. Finally, it will give parents and the entire community an understanding of their roles on the children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1.

1.9 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope and limitations of the study are as explained below:

1.9.1 Scope

The study focused on factors which affect children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in primary schools of Soy Division in Eldoret West District. The age bracket of children in this stage is between 3-6 years. The primary data was collected from the

head-teachers, the class 1 teacher, the Pre-primary teachers, and the P.T.A chairpersons while the secondary data was collected from the primary and pre-primary syllabi, the scheme of work and lesson plans prepared by teachers in the two class levels under study, health records and the teacher's duty rosters.

1.9.2 Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were encountered during the study:

Koisagat and Soy zones among other zones in Soy division have their schools located far apart from each other and this posed a challenge especially in movement during data collection. The researcher solved this by allocating more time for data collection and booking appointments for different schools on different days.

The study was limited by variation in the capacity of the head teachers and teachers due to experience and training. Some understood the concept of transition more than others and therefore the generalization of findings to all schools was considered basing on this possible diversity. To overcome this, the researcher employed random sampling technique and collected data from a large proportion of respondents.

In data collection, the study relied on questionnaires and interviews which include self-assessment measures for head teachers, teachers and PTA chairperson. To overcome this, the researcher collected data from the respondents and make comparisons.

The condition of the roads was generally so poor that access to most schools was a constraint. This, the researcher solved by using those modes of transport which fitted the various areas. This included hiring of the motor cycles, bicycles and cars. Together with this, the researcher visited the schools on those days when the roads

were dry and were a little bit better and booking appointments for different schools on different days.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

The first assumption underpinning this study was that, all the children in class 1 had Pre- Primary class experience. The second assumption was that, all the children in Pre-primary have appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities to cope with class 1 curriculum. Finally, it was expected that all the parents in the community were economically stable to provide for their children's needs.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Ecological Systems theory developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979). This theory borrows its ideas from a scientific point of view that, in an environment; there is always interdependence in life amongst the organisms. In such an ecological environment, organisms depend on each other in order to sustain their living. Basing on this argument, this theory looks at a child's development within the context of the system of relationships that form his or her environment.

Bronfenbrenner's theory defines complex "layers" of environment which are broken down into; the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem. These ecological layers build outwards depending on the influence they have on the developing child. Microsystem is composed of the school and the home, it is the immediate environment in which the growing child interacts and establishes relationships with other role players. The second layer is the mesosystem which consists of interrelationships that occur between the home and the school, this has to

do with how they interconnect and communicate with each other for either the success or failure of the child.

Dunlop and Fabian, (2002) argues that good communication between the child's home and the school enhances a smooth transition between the school levels. The exosystem is the third layer; this has an indirect influence to the child's transition because they occur in his absence. These include among other things the health services provided to the child, for instance the keeping of the health records in the school and the school feeding programme. The last layer is the macrosystem which include forces far from the child for example the government policies. If the transition policy is implemented, then children's transition from one school level to another will be smooth. If all the parts of the system depend on each other to enhance a joint participation then, a smooth transition would be observed (Dunlop and Fabian, 2002). The Ecological Systems Theory was therefore used to find out factors affecting children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division, Eldoret West District.

1.12: Conceptual Framework

For children to be able to adjust better to new environment there is need for establishment of various interrelationships amongst various members in the environment. In this study there was need for harmony between the roles of the physical facilities, teachers, parents, the community and the school administration for a smooth transition of children from the Pre-Primary to Class 1 in Soy Division of Eldoret West District. During the study, the independent variables comprised of parental involvement, teacher's roles, school administrative factors, community

involvement and the availability of appropriate physical facilities, however the dependent variable was the children's transition as presented in figure 1.1

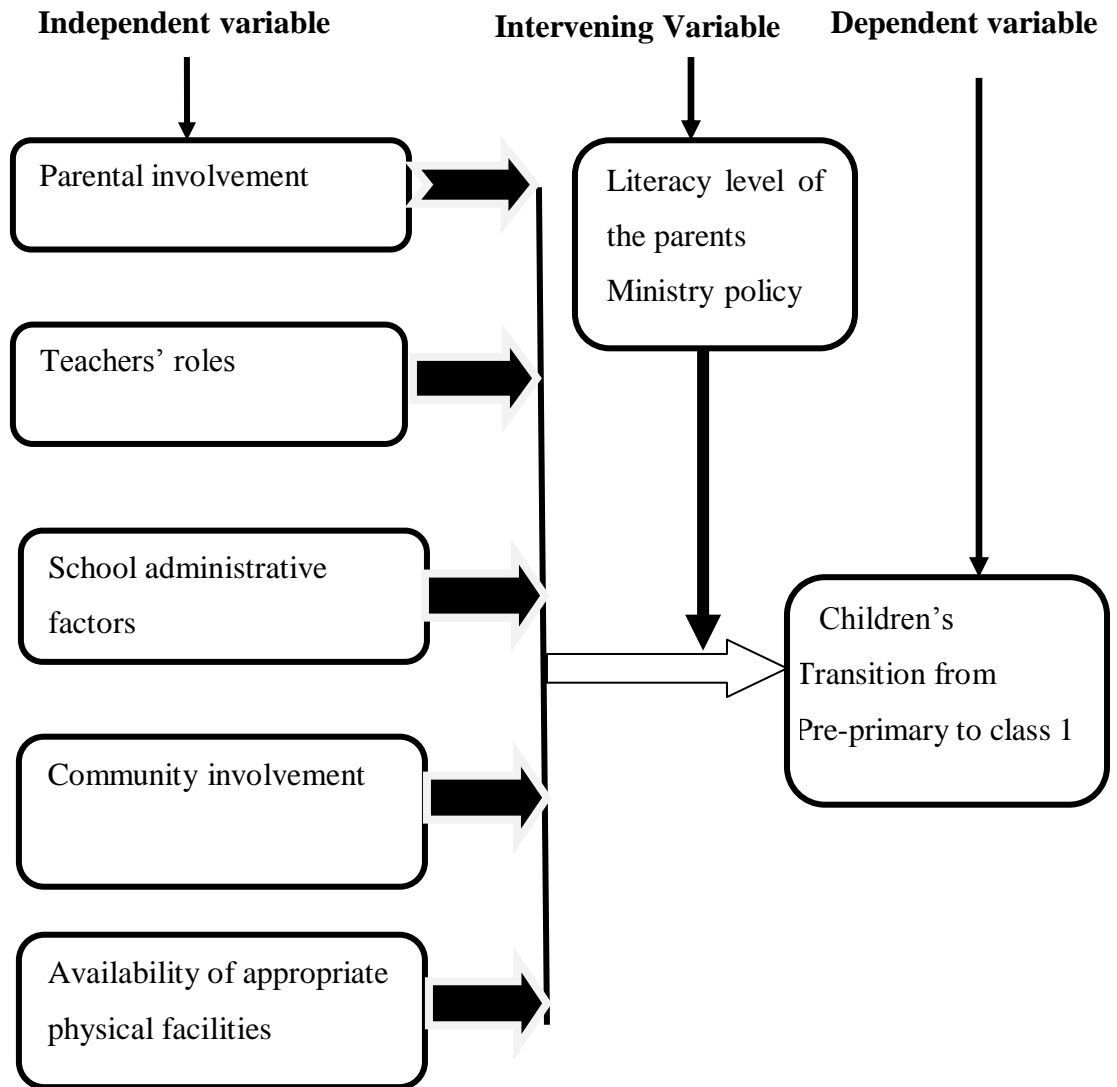


Figure 1.1 Conceptual frame work

Source: Author, 2011

1.13 Operational definition of terms

Class 1: This is the first class which children join after the Pre-primary schooling; some studies call it Grade I. In Kenya children enter this class at age six. In this study it is a reception class after Pre-primary school.

Community involvement: A community is a group of people who share a common goal. Community involvement means ways in which a community will strive to establish its set goals. In this case, it is the parents' joining of hands with other stakeholders to ensure the children's smooth transition from Pre-primary to class 1 is accomplished. This study investigated community roles which affect children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1.

Early Childhood Development: This is a preparatory stage for upper schooling. In this study it includes all children between 3-8 years. These children attend Pre-primary schooling or Lower primary schooling.

Free Primary Education: This is the kind of education given to primary school children without involving the parents' economic support. In this study it means the primary school going children have freedom to access education.

Lower primary: This entails those class levels from class 1 to 3 in primary schools in Kenya.

Parental involvement: This refers to parents being responsible for the care and well-being of their children. It means taking part in all the activities that promote a child's welfare. This study investigated the roles which parents play to allow a smooth transition of children from Pre-primary to class 1.

Physical facilities: Materials or structures which make learning easy. In this study, they are the classrooms, play equipment and furniture.

Pre-primary: This is a stage that children undergo in school prior to their primary schooling. In Kenya pre-primary school is divided into three stages namely: Baby care (1-3 years), Pre-Primary I (3-4) years and Pre-primary II (4-5)years . They are also known as pre-school, kindergarten or nursery. In this study, they are class levels where children are prior to joining class 1.This study investigated children's transition from Pre-primary to class one.

Private schools: These are those schools owned and managed by individuals or churches.

Public Primary schools: These are those schools which are managed by the government through communities.

School administration: This is a process where the school's head teacher organizes and manages the school activities for its smooth running. This study was an investigation of those roles which the school head teachers play in order to allow for children's smooth transition from Pre-primary to class 1.

Selected factors: These are factors chosen from among others. In this study, they are parents, teachers, school administration, school community and the physical facilities. This study investigated the extent to which they affect children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1.

Suitable furniture: Furniture that makes the user feel comfortable. In this study it is that furniture that is appropriate to the child's age (child-sized furniture).

Teacher's preparedness: This entails the extent to which the teacher is able to handle the children that is; socially, physically, emotionally and mentally. According to this study, it is the teacher's professional readiness to manage the children in both the Pre-primary and class 1.

Transition: This means a movement from one situation to another. In education it is a process of movement from one class level to another. According to this study, it is the movement from Pre-primary to class 1.

1.14 Summary

This chapter has presented the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the research objectives and questions. Together with the former are the justification of the study, the significance of the study, its scope and limitations, the theory that was adopted in the study, the conceptual framework and finally, the definition of the operational terms used in the study. The next chapter presented the literature review in relation to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of related literature to the research problem. Studies carried out in Kenya and other parts of the world was reviewed in order to determine selected factors affecting children's transition from pre-primary to class 1 in primary schools in relation to the teaching and learning process. Pre-primary education and primary education are distinct from one another in terms of the curriculum, teaching methods, environment, parental roles and learner expectations (Yeboah, 2002). The transition between Pre-primary and primary school levels involves rapid adjustment to new surroundings which may be traumatic for the children if it is not handled properly. According to Cowan and Hetherington (1991), the process of transition causes children to reorganize both their inner life and external behaviour.

The present literature review therefore examined various documents, including books, journal articles, reports, periodicals and legislative documents, among others, to determine the factors affecting children in transition from Pre-primary to class 1. The major purpose was to establish the knowledge gaps in the study. This section presented in the following parts: the parents' role in the transition of the Pre-primary school children to class 1, teachers' roles in handling the children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1, roles played by the school administration in transition of the children from pre-primary to class 1, community involvement in the transition of Pre-primary school children to class 1 and finally the availability and appropriateness of physical facilities in the Pre-primary school and class 1.

2.2 Parents' Role in children's transition from Pre-primary school to primary school levels.

Transition refers to the process of change that is experienced when children move from one setting to another (MoEST, 2000). It includes the length of time it takes to make such a change, spanning the time between any pre-entry visit(s) and settling-in, to when the child is more fully established as a member of the new setting (Fabian and Dunlop, 2002). Transitions between Pre-primary and primary school can only be successful if a harmonious relationship exists between the role players influencing the course the child has to navigate (Dockett and Perry, 2001). Research has shown that programmes in which parents are highly involved have the longest lasting positive effects on children (Beaty, 2000). Parents who are directly involved in their children's Pre-school programmes are more likely to encourage their children's development at home and support their learning during their later school years.

The role of parents is crucial in the educational development of their children, as children absorb life experiences that form their character, feelings and values from parents. Parents can either provide learning experiences haphazardly or they can consciously plan for quality experiences to occur in their children in a more responsible manner (Korkatsch-Groszko, 1998). Parents are said to have a long-term responsibility for their children. They provide information that help in the effective care of the child. They know the child's past difficulties and hence would help the teacher to give the child more security and stability in school. Many school settings value the parent's expertise they know it as of great benefit to the school since they will bring in many skills, a parasitic relationship where parents feel used but not valued will result in them deciding not to offer their services again (Tassoni and

Beith, 2002). The children's act of 1989 recognized parents as the best people to bring up their children and hence made the separation of children from their parents the last resort. A study done in the U.S.A show that greater parent involvement brings increased benefits in child development where children feel more confident and secure when they are aware that there is a good interaction between their teacher and their parents (Krogh, 1994). The fig.2.1 is an illustration of some ways in which parents are involved in the school setting:

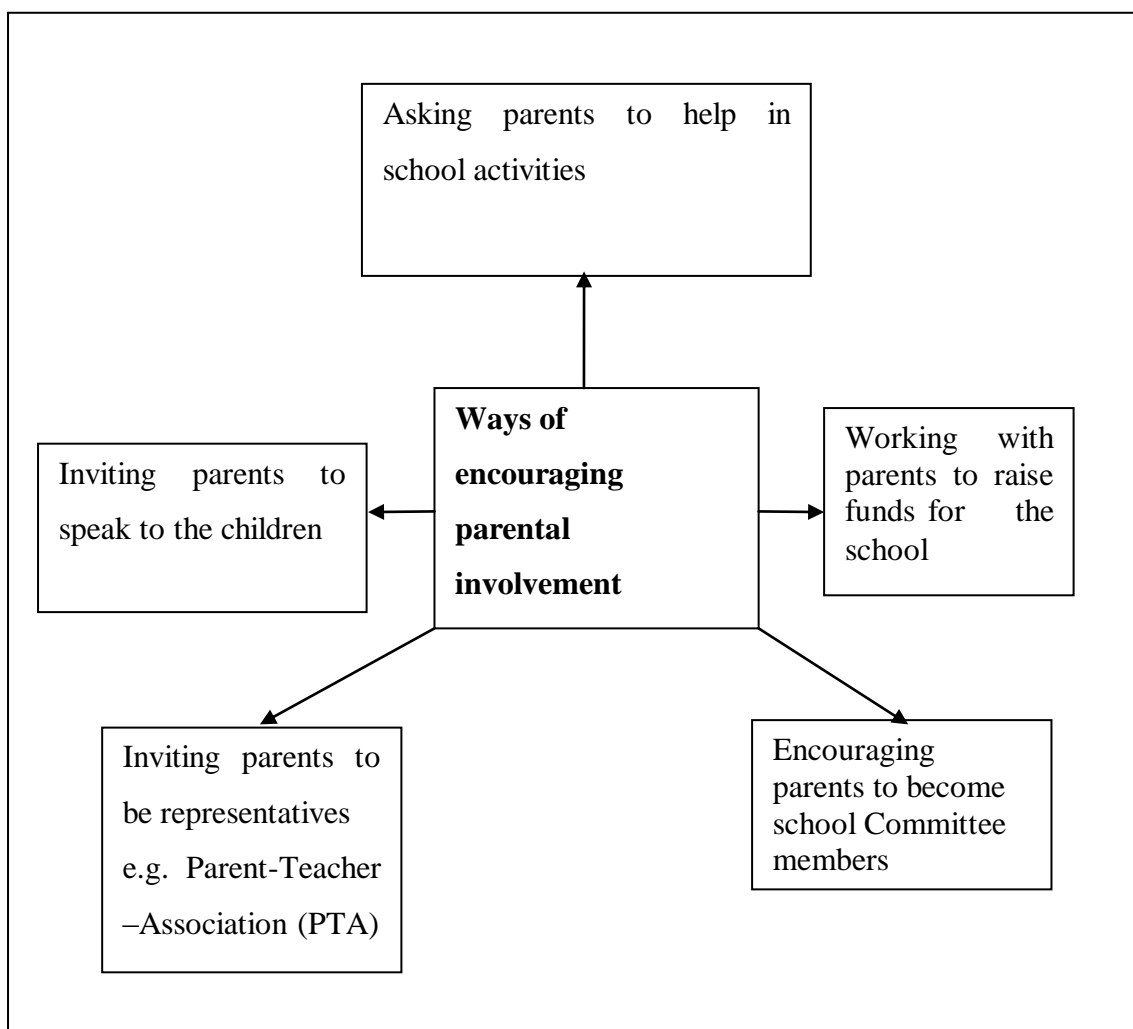


Figure 2.1: Parental involvement

Adapted from Tassoni and Beith, (2002:640)

Figure 2.1 indicates that parents can get involved in school activities for instance as resource persons, raising funds for the school, being in the school committee and also speaking to the children especially during graduation and prize giving days. However, some parents may not be able to fully participate in their children's transitions, due to extraneous factors such as employment or economic circumstances. It is in such situations that schools (especially primary schools) should step forward to help children manage the transition process. According to the Kenyan GOK (2006:7), parents have the following roles to play in the children's transition from pre-primary to class 1; provide Primary care, health and nutrition, provide an enabling environment for children's growth and development, they should also provide learning and play materials among other services. All these concurs with MOEST(2000) which postulate that the parents should provide the following for the smooth transition from pre-primary to class 1: Care, physical facilities, funds, play equipment, teaching-learning materials, repair damaged property, school feeding programme, organize trips to learning areas for children, escort children to school among other services.

Fabian, (2000) reports that transitions are normally accompanied by stress as the child sets out on the route of reorganizing his inner life and external behaviours to suit the new context. However, the author does not state whether this stress is caused primarily by the fact of moving from one level of education to another, or whether it is the environment into which the child enters that contributes to the majority of this stress. A successful transition is important both for children's wellbeing and their cognitive achievements. This is supported by Wortham (2010), who argues that although the stress hormone called cortisol helps the body to control stressful challenges, the frequent occurrences of the same situation may cause harm in self—

regulation behaviours and memory. Children benefit when they have strong parental encouragement and support for their learning. Thus parents need to cooperate with other stakeholders (including teachers) in order to support children's transition from pre-primary to primary school level.

There is a need to have continuity between the pre-primary and the primary school, so that the child will experience primary school as a familiar place, and not as a strange place in which he/she becomes lost. All of the aforementioned factors depend on the quality of pre-school education that the child received prior to experiencing the transition to primary school. It is conceivable that if a child receives a high quality of pre-primary school education, he/she is less likely to experience a traumatic transition to Primary school. However the actual transition process may include factors which are beyond parental control, such as the teachers and fellow students who the child will engage with at primary school level. The current study aims to comprehensively examine the selected factors affecting children's transition from pre-primary to primary school in order to make recommendations for improving ways of handling children from Pre-primary and also making the learning environment in the two class levels be as similar as possible.

Parents also view transitions with trepidation, as they worry about leaving their children in the care of teachers and to express skepticism and concern (Cleave *et al*, 1982); (Griebel and Niesel, 2002). This can be countered by parents doing everything possible to make sure that their children have acquired at least the rudiments of letters and numbers by the time they leave pre-school, so that they will not be overwhelmed by the academic tasks once they join Standard 1. Parents feel that boundaries in

primary schools are more rigid and remote than in pre-schools and that there is a subtle, reproachable feeling between the staff and the parents, which makes contact between them impossible (Clarke and Sharpe, 2003). This is probably because pre-primary schools in many areas are informally constituted and/or funded by parents themselves. The parents in such schools therefore have much more access to both teachers and children than in primary schools. When the degree of accessibility is drastically reduced once the children join the primary school, it comes as a shock to both parents and children.

On the other hand, Seifert (1992) has found that there is greater communication between parents and teachers when parents have younger and fewer children, and when parents are socially acquainted with other parents in their child's class or school. Parents also tend to talk more to older teachers, who are perceived as being comfortable allowing conversation about concerns that parents have about themselves, such as work or marital problems, as well as concerns focused on the child. Such communication is rarely possible in primary schools, especially after the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE). This is because the large numbers of children enrolled in Class 1 making it difficult for teachers to know them and their needs on an individual basis, so they will barely have time to meet parents to discuss the children's progress on a case by case basis.

Seifert (1992) also recognized that there are demographic changes in families which make it harder for parents and teachers to communicate. For instance, the increase in single-parent and dual-career families means that, in communities where such parents form the majority, their condition makes it difficult, if not impossible, to

communicate with teachers, visit their children's class, or to attend parent-teacher meetings. Therefore strategies need to be sought that can be used to reach out to such parents, irrespective of the fact that they spend long hours in paid employment.

Parents also express their confidence in the pre-school teachers and curriculum, but they cannot say the same with regard to primary schools (Dunlop, 2002). This is because the level of teaching at primary school is more structured and formal than in Pre-school, and the curriculum is much bigger, hence informal contact which is common in pre-schools does not exist in primary schools, which limits the teacher's ability to get to know the children as individuals as is the case in pre-schools. On the other hand, some parents claim that their children gain independence when entering primary school, which changes their previous role of parents as children transit to a position of 'big school child' and enhance their parental identity as parents of a school going child (Griebel and Niesel, 2002). The child's identity is also enhanced, especially if they are doing well academically in their new primary school. Therefore this study will discuss how parents can work with their children and other stakeholders to achieve such positive outcomes in transitions.

A problem experienced by parents is how to introduce their children to the primary school environment. Very few primary schools undertake orientation sessions for new pupils, and the few that do normally carry them out within one session on a single day. One idea suggested by Seifert (1992) is that instead of taking children and parents through one four hour orientation where the children visit the school, it would be better if schools could schedule one hour a week for four weeks prior to them starting school as it gives the children a familiarity with going to school and lets them meet their classmates on a regular basis. This gives children ample time to overcome

their fear about the new environment, and it also gives parents greater opportunities to support their children and to interact with the school and the teachers, without taking too much time off work.

Parents also state that Parents-Teachers Associations are a positive aspect of the school community, as they are a vital source of information to parents (Graue, 1999). With the support of parents whose children are already in primary school, parents of pre-school children will be able to prepare them mentally for what they should expect when they join primary school. A stable and supportive family environment is very important. Hence parents should provide emotional support to their children to avoid issues at school. The role of the family is particularly significant in terms of supporting the school with discipline. Once a child has become accustomed to following rules at home, he/she is more likely to adjust more easily to the routine of school life. Disciplinary issues early in a child's primary school life are likely to impact negatively on the transition process and create in the child an aversion to school, which will adversely affect the child's academic progress.

In addition, parents' attitudes towards education have an impact on their children's attitudes towards education (Seifert, 1992). If parents do not value education, it is likely that their children will not value education as well. Thus it is imperative that the parents should make sure that the child gets the right message from the very start, as parental support (and discipline, when necessary) will make the transition a success, as this study will show. The relationship between parents and teachers is sometimes strained. This is because, although teachers acknowledge the importance of the biographical information provided by parents about their children, teachers do not

think that parents have much to offer as teachers consider themselves to be the only ones in possession of specialized knowledge regarding children (Seifert, 1992).

This teacher's attitude leads to parents feeling unwanted by teachers, who have kept them at arm's length. Parents feel that if they are taken seriously by the schools it will increase their self-confidence and that teaching can become more responsive to the needs of children as individuals. Unfortunately, this is not always possible, especially under Free Primary Education, as teachers in public primary schools have too many pupils to deal with, and so they cannot incorporate the suggestions of each and every parent. According to Ogrodzinska (2006), teachers also lack the skills necessary for cooperation with parents and are reluctant to do so.

According to Clarke and Sharpe (2003), parents seem to be uncomfortable with the relationship between themselves and primary schools, whereas in the pre-school this type of problem seems nonexistent. Consequently this study will suggest more forums for parents and teachers to meet in order to reduce and/or eliminate any mutual antagonism that may exist, for the benefit of the children making the difficult transition between Pre-school and the primary school.

2.3 Teachers' Roles in supporting children in their transition from Pre-primary to primary school level.

Teachers play an important role in supporting children and parents during transitions (Fabian and Dunlop, 2002). However, it is possible that their own needs, especially training needs, have not been identified. The KESSP of 2005 came up with view that there was need to revise the pre-service teacher training curriculum to prepare teachers on appropriate methodology for teaching Pre-primary and Lower primary

classes, This therefore is important to ensure that Class 1 teachers are adequately equipped and prepared to cope with the needs of children who are experiencing the transition between pre-school and primary school. Although preschool teachers and primary school teachers during recent years have implemented transition activities such as mutual visits before school starts and sharing information about children's life and development (Pianta, Cox, Taylor and Early, 1999; Broström, 2002; Einarsdóttir, 2003), many children still experience problems when they proceed from Pre-school to primary school.

The transition from Pre-primary to Class 1 may be traumatic for children because of issues such as moving out of an environment of autonomy (in pre-school) into one of conformity (in Primary school), a perceived lack of choice, and lack of explanation regarding what is happening. This may result in frustration and fear, which impact negatively on the performance of the new Class 1 pupils (MoEST, 2000) Therefore, the teachers have to take on the role of orienting the new pupils to the unfamiliar environment of primary school. Children experiencing these transitions require school teachers who are able to take children's perspectives, interests and needs into account.

However, another problem facing primary school teachers in Kenya is that many children are coming to Class 1 directly from home without having gone through pre-school. This trend has increased since the onset of FPE, with many parents arguing that they cannot afford pre-schools. This means that Primary school teachers' workload is increased, as they have to cater to the needs of the students who have not been to pre-school, as well as the more advanced students. This study will discuss what can be done to rectify this anomaly. Many pre-school teachers and school

teacher's report that, a number of well- functioning pre-school children; actually seem to lose competencies during their transition to school (Brostrom, 2003).

Pre-primary school teachers described some children about to start primary School as independent, active, inquisitive and exploring people, who also functioned well with peers. However, Brostrom (2003) showed that during the first weeks in primary school these children changed attitudes and became less active, expressing a form of insecurity. Although most of these children had obtained the necessary level of school readiness, especially personal and social competence, they did not feel comfortable in school, which impacted on their wellbeing and was a hindrance to them being active learners in the new environment. Another concern is that this (temporary) loss of competence might pave the way for poor self-esteem and insecurity in the new setting. The author did not consider that the maladjustment of certain children to primary school might have nothing to do with their level of school readiness, but might be attributed to other factors, such as bullying at school or family problems. Primary school teachers need to investigate the causes of loss of competence in children undergoing transitions. They can do this by talking to parents and pre-school teachers, as they are more likely to know the case history of each particular child.

According to Brostrom (2002), more coherent transitions can be achieved in part through a shared overall curriculum and coordination of teaching practices between primary schools and pre-school. It is important to create similarities between pre-school and Primary school to make it easier for children to recognize activities and feel confident in tackling challenges as they arise. It might support children considerably if teachers were to use similar strategies and methods for planning and

implementing a project on a related topic. For example, in relation to choosing meaningful topics and problems, the children could bring photographs, drawings, and favourite stories from their life into primary school. The primary school teacher could then use these artefacts to learn about the new pupils and also to build upon their previous shared experiences as a starting point for curriculum development. These materials could also be displayed to help the newcomers feel at home in their new school environment. Although these suggestions are commendable, they may be difficult to implement in public primary schools, where the curriculum is determined in advance and where there is little room for flexibility.

Primary school teachers should help the child adjust to a new learning environment which includes both physical/organizational elements, relationships (with adults and peers), and expected behaviour. It is very important not only for a child to be familiar with the teacher but also to start forming a relationship before the child begins primary school. Methods teachers can use to do this are by organizing school visits (such as those discussed in section 2.2 above) and booklets about the school, with photos of teachers, which will ease communication between teachers, parents and children.

Other ways in which teachers can facilitate the process of transition are by involving the children as active learners and participants in the transition process, and by teachers and other practitioners working with researchers to undertake action research to improve their practice related to transitions (Ramey and Ramey, 1999). Despite these recommendations, Pianta *et al* (1999) report that primary school teachers, in spite of their teaching experience and education, lamented the lack of training or

information on pre-school to primary school transition practices. Thus if teachers are oblivious to their role as facilitators of transitions due to lack of information, it would be unfair to put the blame on their shoulders if the transition process does not go as planned. Therefore, this research will investigate whether the possibility of setting up a training forum to sensitize primary school teachers in Kenya on what they are required to do to ensure successful pre-school to primary school transitions has actually been done. It has also been suggested that there should be more opportunities for teachers and parents to discuss expectations (Graue, 1999); such as an event should be every month where general issues affecting children's educational development can be raised.

The importance of play in helping children to socialize and adjust to new environments cannot be overemphasized. Through play, new knowledge, skills and actions often emerge, so it can be assumed that play can serve as transition tool which contributes to children's thinking. In this way, play is seen as an activity which leads the development of higher mental functions such as language, thinking and memory (Brostrom, 1999).

However, the views of pre-school and primary school teachers also differ over the role of play in learning. Pre-school teachers always employ play-based methods of teaching and learning while primary schools are content-oriented and activities are teacher directed instead of being learner directed. These differences are echoed by teachers themselves, who feel that pre-school is a period of innocent playing and primary school is the beginning of serious times. These differences are also communicated to children who seem to view starting primary school as a turning

point in their lives (Einarsdottir, 2003). The use of play as a tool for learning should not be suppressed completely, as children's progress in Class 1 can be encouraged by making learning a fun activity.

Children dislike the fact that they cannot play when they want to in primary school, as play is restricted to break times, with the rest of the time dedicated to serious work (Clarke and Sharpe, 2003; Griebel and Niesel, 2002). Children also complain about the amount of homework they have to do. Since homework and a reduction in play time are part and parcel of the primary school environment, primary school teachers have to find a way to gradually introduce pre-school graduates to the primary school routine, probably by starting with small amounts of homework, and gradually increasing them until they are fully integrated into the primary school routine.

Teachers' views on transitions differ according to the context in which they teach and what underpins their role and work. Primary school teachers' conception of learning is associated with reading and writing. Pre-primary school teachers, on the other hand, view their work as part of the continuity of learning across pre-primary and Primary school. According to them, learning starts right from pre-school with basic skills such as recognition of letters, shapes and colours, which are basic and foundational to the reading and writing processes (Cleave *et al.*, 1982; Einarsdottir, 2003). This view is in agreement with MOEST (2000) which states that the teachers in the Pre-primary provide those activities which promote the children's holistic development. Tension between pre-primary and primary school continues as the result of a common belief that that real education begins at primary school.

According to Neuman (2002) the contradicting views of the pre- primary and primary school teachers are the result of historical differences in the traditions and the philosophies of the two institutions. Krogh (1994) in her study in USA she made comparisons between learning in both Pre-primary and class 1 and discovered that the children in Pre-primary had activities that had freedom of choice whereas in the primary the teachers dominated and hence chose the area that children needed to learn. This according to her raised controversies as the teachers in class 1 mistook the children coming from Pre-primary as ill-mannered. The whole problem emanated from the fact that the class 1 teachers never understood the pre-primary school's teaching and learning philosophies and there was also lack of communication between the two areas. Therefore, there is a need to harmonize the two levels of teaching, not by making them indistinguishable, but by making sure that teachers on both sides understand and recognize the importance of the role of their counterparts on the other side, as this study will do. This is supported by UNESCO, (1996) which points out that in France, the teaching team are qualified professionals who have been trained or offered skills which enable them teach all classes in a school setting.

Primary school teachers show no interest in what pre-school teachers have done. Information documents which children bring from pre-school are often discarded and disregarded as primary school teachers feel that they are of no use. Primary school teachers often treat children as if they have no background skills or knowledge to bring to primary schools (Brostrom, 2002). For these reasons, Pre-school teachers have been noted to be apprehensive of closer ties with primary school teachers. They are worried that such a relationship can result in pre-schools becoming formal, hence losing their focus of developing pre-skills for literacy and Mathematics, which are

imperative as a foundation for formal learning (Brostrom, 2002). Another possible solution to this conflict is to provide for pre-school to continue for slightly longer than at present, which would give pre-school teachers time to introduce pre-school children to the content they will face in standard 1.

Apart from the relationship between primary school teachers and pre-school teachers, it is necessary for primary school teachers to actively promote the forming of new relationships between their children and those of the pre-primary. This will make the children leaving pre-school encounter a warm and secure environment in the primary school or class 1 one class. Therefore, the success of the child's transition between pre-school and primary school depends on the primary school teacher's skill in establishing rapport, as well as the personalities of teacher and child, and on the teacher's relationship with other children (Cleave *et al.*, 1982). In conjunction with the child's family relationships, a good relationship with his teacher and schoolmates will provide a good foundation on which to build academic development in primary school.

2.4 Role of the School Administration in Transition of Children from Pre-primary school to Primary School

For all activities to go on well in a school there is need for its administrator to master the management skills and this was the reason why Primary School Management project was initiated in 1996 (MOEST, 1999) This came as a result of some findings that some head teachers were appointed from serving teachers and did not have any managerial skills. Research on effective school governance has identified a number of factors which draw attention to the effectiveness of an institution and hence a smooth transition, these include; raising pupils' self-esteem and positions of responsibility,

orderly and attractive working environment and parental involvement in children's learning activities.

Though not exhaustive the above factors provide a useful background and would require the head-teacher to supervise, monitor and always evaluate the school programmes (MoEST, 2000). A smooth and successful transition from preschool to primary school requires school administrators to pay attention to continuity in curricula, home-school communication, and a welcoming environment for family and children (Broström, 2002). The primary school administrators within a certain area can coordinate by creating transition teams in the district and the schools for development and implementation of a systematic transition programme, so that pupils will go through the same process of adjustment to primary school, regardless of the particular school that they attend (Margetts, 2000).

MoEST, (2000) points out that the head teacher should be aware of the children's emotional experiences as they undergo the transition process as this will ease some of the emotional difficulties children encounter in the new environment. However, the head teacher should work in collaboration with both the pre-primary and the lower primary school teachers to ensure that the children get the best guidance and assistance as they settle in their new classes. It is also important for primary school administrators to carry out induction or orientation sessions for the new entrants, preferably in the company of their parents. This can be done by explaining unfamiliar sounds and events, such as the school bell, older learners, big buildings and so on. This experience can be overwhelming, so children need a clear explanation of these phenomena which is sensitive but not too complicated (Dockett and Perry, 2002).

Such a session can also include parents and pre-school teachers, which will allow stakeholders to address their concerns. It is probable that the lack of school administration involvement in managing pre-school to primary school transitions can be attributed to the perceived distance between home and school. Christenson (1999) declares that the psychological distance between home and school is the result of the autonomy declared by the two institutions on themselves. Primary school programmes, unlike those of pre-schools, are more bureaucratic in nature, allowing for limited opportunity for dialogue and frequency of contacts between families and schools. While schools are charged with the responsibility of educating children, they should nevertheless involve parents as much as possible, since the family is a powerful and influential requirement for success in formal education.

Primary school administrators thus have to cultivate such a relationship in order to counter information from competing sources such as the mass media and peers, and because discontinuities between families and schools compromise the effectiveness of both school administrators and parents as agents of socialization. It is therefore up to the school administrators to facilitate the contact between teachers and parents, as neither side may be willing or able to take the first step. This will make the schools be termed ready for children moving from pre-primary to class 1

Graue (1999) holds the view that it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that it is ready to adapt to the diverse and changing needs of children undergoing transitions. He alleges that children are dependent on the ability of the school administration to extend itself towards them rather than children alone being ready to meet the demands of the school. Therefore, the school has to take the initiative of reaching out to

families and pre-schools to ensure the continuity of experiences between the primary school, the pre-school, and the home. Gaps in the experiences of children have to be filled in by the schools by adapting the school experiences to match those of the children it will be receiving.

2.5 Community Involvement in the Transition of Children from Pre-primary school to Primary School

Bray, (1987) defines a community as a group of people who share social, economic and cultural interests. Its members recognize social obligations to each other hold at least common values and identify with each as “we.” There are several types of communities ranging from geographical positions, religious positions to ethnic sects, but this study only looks at the school community whose members embrace its ownership, management and financing. Schools on themselves can not provide all that a child needs it has to seek community support in order to bridge the gap between what the government can provide and what the community want the school to be provided with, (Bray,1987).

Fabian (2000) interprets transitions as rites of passage experienced and influenced by cultural expectations. The wider community has an interest in the successful transition of children between Pre-primary and primary school levels. This is confirmed by Brostrom (2002) who argues that learning is a social and contextual phenomenon, which happens within specific, shared social practices or situations. It is situated in the specific environment in which it takes place. Therefore it seems appropriate to strengthen some of the most promising transition practices, such as having a familiar adult follow the children on their transition journey, and helping children them to become more aware of and better able to participate as agents in their own transitions.

In addition, the community can play a role in Pre-primary to primary school transitions by setting up and staffing community-run Pre-primary schools which are subsidized by parents' fees and the community as a whole.

The difference between transitions made by adults and those made by children are that adults exercise control over their own transitions while children's transitions are determined for them without actually involving them in the decision making process (Prout and James, 1997). For this reason, the involvement of social institutions is quite significant in influencing and shaping the transition of children. The community can also play a significant part in transitions and readiness to learn. Indeed, transition research suggests several such stressors for a child at this time, including discontinuity, change in expectations, change in organizational culture, and change in peer relationships (Margetts, 2000). Thus, the role of the community in ECD transition to primary school is important because community involvement can minimize the risk of stressors, by enhancing the children's internal protective factors (such as self-esteem) and external protective factors (such as positive relationships at home and school) (Ramey and Ramey, 1999). During transition phases in life, an individual's sense of worth and competence are particularly vulnerable.

According to Dockett and Perry (2002), three major experiences which can significantly affect an individual's self-esteem are exposure to a new environment, being required to make new responses, and the establishment or loss of significant relationships. All these experiences take place within the context of pre-primary to primary school transitions, and thus the community has to play a role in mitigating their effects, as this study will demonstrate. Creating a partnership between school

and community is an important area of many, if not most, effective school reform efforts. Effective school-community partnerships make a difference in improving educational quality, academic outcomes, and effective reform efforts (Graue, 1999).

In regard to community collaboration, Brown, Amwake and Speth (2002) state that partnerships between Primary schools and communities represent effective efforts at creating a complete system to meet the transition needs of children and families. However, the different collaborating agencies will need time, resources and the willingness to learn about each other and to establish trust. In the United Kingdom for example, the government initiated a programme called National Care Strategy; this supported the early years and childcare partnership which composed of members ranging from all walks of professionals (Tassoni and Beith, 2002)

In Kenya, also, a community like in the global world is defined as a group of people living together in particular geographical area or location. Such people may be sharing common goals, expectations, beliefs, norms values, religion, food and language (MoEST, 2000). From the educational perspective, these are people who share same educational goals. The community support in the provision of education is supported by Kamunge report (1988) which advocated for partnership between the government and the communities.

This is supported by the ECD investment Programme which is under KESSP. This Programme is called Community Support Grant. It was meant to help improve access, equity and quality of education of children aged between 4-5 years as this is a preparatory class for class 1 entrants MOEST, (2005).

Indakwa and Miriti, (2010) recognizes the importance of community involvement in child development, it states that parents in some parts of Kenya were empowered by Community- Based Organizations (CBOs). These CBOs lend the parents loans which enabled them vent for their children and also mobilized them on the importance of parental involvement in school activities. GOK, (2006) postulates the roles of the community in the provision for the children's needs. Among these roles are to; provide the pre-primary school with physical facilities, play and learning materials, sustainability of the school feeding programme, and augmenting the parents' efforts.

According to MoEST (2003), the community has the responsibility of setting up the Pre-primary schools and sending children to these schools, pay teachers, and provide voluntary service among other responsibilities that help promote children's smooth transition from the pre-school to class 1. For a community therefore to be effective, there is need for it to network for the welfare of the school. During networking all concerned parties need to consult and share resources with one another (MOEST 2004). Networking promotes stakeholder participation, encourage creative decision making and provides an avenue for showing skills and resources. Together with this the community needs to be mobilized and fully sensitized on the importance of smooth transition within a school setting.

2.6 Provision of Appropriate Physical Facilities in Pre-primary and Primary School

From time immemorial, man has done a lot to facilitate his life with all the physical facilities of the world. The first need arose from the physical comfort which these facilities provide. Children like other human beings need this comfort and hence the provision of their rights as stipulated by the Children's Act (2001).The physical

facilities provide and maintain safe, clean and creative educational environment which is conducive for learners' high achievement (Shah and Bhatti, 2006.)

Bruce, (2006) supports this and asserts that it is an environment which very crucial for the children's learning, this kind of learning environment is not an end in itself, there is a need to look at the way the teachers also present and use the physical facilities like outdoor ones which NACECE, (2000) confirms that they help support the young children's natural means of learning. In this children are involved in jumping, swinging sliding, climbing and skipping among other activities that provide fun. The kind of fun young children get when they play with the physical outdoor play material will always make them yearn to stay in school forever and continue to play and hence the enhancement of the school retention rate. Bruce (2006) continues to support the use of an outside space which it is said to give the children a scope to work and play on a large scale. The outside space makes the children excited and energetic. It is during this energetic play that children are able to vent out their stress and hence the provision of a therapy to the children's internal bad feelings.

The ECD children need plenty of space and time to exercise their large muscles and expand their physical skills (Krogh, 1994). This therefore shows that the kind of physical facilities to be put in place for them should be those that render exploration at the same time consider the children's safety. Daly, Byers and Taylor (2004) also supports the idea that the classroom space should be organized and focused around the children as much as possible in order to encourage and support play. It confirms that it should be a room that does not restrict or limit play. This therefore means that there is need for a sound knowledge of children development and an understanding of

how children play to enable one get to know how a classroom layout is planned.

M.O.E, (2010) supports this and hence ascertains that, for a school to be child friendly, a classroom should be organized in a manner which allows free movement. Recently, the United States Of America International Development (USAID) launched a project called Education for Marginalized child in Kenya (Emack). The project was funded by the USAID and was implemented by the Aga Khan Foundations with an intention of embracing active and quality learning and therefore addressing low literacy in classes 1-3 (Oywa, 2010), Oywa stressed that there was need for a child friendly environment in the school to rid the high repetition rates in these classes.

When children are involved in dynamic and challenging interactions, (Engestrom, 1987), new knowledge, skills and actions often emerge, these Engstrom refers to as 'learning by expanding'. A classroom that is too cramped may lead to irritability and fighting whereas that which is too open may cause a sense of insecurity or being lost (Krogh 1994). This is linked to what happens in most public primary schools especially after the introduction of the Free Primary Education. However, to enhance a child friendly learning environment, children need to be provided with the age appropriate physical facilities. The physical facilities here include classrooms, toilets, furniture and the playground. The provision and arrangement of the furniture and equipment affect the way children work and play as earlier noted by M.O.E (2010).

The furniture, that is, the tables and chairs which are to be used by children should be child-friendly this means that they should be appropriate to their age (MoEST,2001)

Poorly constructed or inappropriate seats can lead to physical deformities such as curvature of spine, contraction of chest, roundness of shoulders or confirmed stoop (MOE,2008:21). Furthermore MOE (2008) continues to support the fact that; this child unfriendly furniture creates tension and fatigue among learners. Chairs and tables are to the best furniture for young children since they provide room for flexibility in teaching and learning (Krogh, 1994:258). It should be done bearing in mind that young children are active, curious and move frequently from one place to another. The children's bodies are also growing fast and the furniture provided should be such that it supports healthy development, (K.I.E, 2007).

Indeed, children often note discontinuities in the physical structure of pre-primary and primary classes, as they tend to talk about features in Primary schools that differ from those in Pre-primary. A report on a study conducted in Italy. Corsaro and Molinari (2005) said that children are aware that in primary school, as opposed to pre-primary, children sit on desks, no time available for an afternoon nap, more homework and less time for play. Neuman (2002) adds that structural divisions, in which the pre-school has separate amenities and buildings from the primary school, may further limit links and communication between the two settings, and this adversely affects the transition of children between them, that is, from Pre-primary to class 1.

According to K.I.E (2007), the Kenyan school setting also shows a contrast between the two settings as far as the physical facilities are concerned. In the Pre-primary, the classrooms have various learning corners, child-sized chairs and tables are arranged in such a way that children sit in groups and can also move freely. This kind of seating arrangement provides the children with a psychological comfort. Together with

furniture, the displays in the classroom whether on the walls, chalkboards or on tables are at the children's height. The latrines should be clean and safe since the common trend among drop-out is the unfriendly learning environment (MOEST, 2003). In class 1 however, the environment is different; children sit on desks which are arranged in rows with all children facing the teacher, this creates a distance between the teacher and the children as he/she is viewed the source of authority (K.I.E, 2007). This study investigated selected factors affecting children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division, Eldoret West District.

2.7 Related Studies

Research relating to the children's transition from Pre-primary to the Primary school levels has mainly been done by the NGOs, Kenya's Ministry of Education, and individuals like Phaduti (2007) Ngaruiya (1991) among others. UNESCO (1996) carried out its study in many selected parts of the world. The tools that were used to collect data in this research were mailed questionnaires, the study aimed at stimulating discussions on issues, strategies and possible activities that helped in the promotion of a smooth transition between the pre-primary and the primary school levels. In this study, the variables examined were: children's preparation for the primary school level, quality of teachers, community involvement, physical facilities and teaching methods.

The research findings revealed that many strategies were laid down to ensure a successful preparation of pre-primary school children for the primary school learning. In China for instance, strategies laid down led to improved linkage between the pre-primary and primary school levels, secondly, it enhanced community participation and improved teacher methodology. In France, Guyana and China, results presented

showed that the laid strategies led to improved teacher education and the provision of physical facilities. UNESCO (1996) made recommendations that: there was need for parental education and partnership, community to be a goldmine of resources and finally a need for integrated teaching in school.

In Kenya the World Bank funded a five-year ECD project (1997-2002) and worked in collaboration with the MOE to launch it. This project was meant to address school readiness and transition issues in the country. Nine hundred primary schools from 30 selected districts were selected for piloting. Among the components of the project were the transition and capacity building. The later meant that Head-teachers, QASOs, Pre-primary and Lower primary school teachers were to be in-serviced on matters of transition. This study therefore sought to ascertain the outcomes this component.

Ngaruiya (1991) carried out a study in Nairobi on Pre-school Education and school readiness. Interviews and observation schedules were used to collect data and findings obtained showed that children who attended private pre-primary school models outperformed their peers from the public pre-primary schools. Secondly, it was established that quality of teachers and availability of appropriate materials influenced the level of school readiness. The similarity between Ngaruiya's study and the current one is that they all sought to ascertain whether the school was ready to receive children from the Pre-primary school level of education. The difference between the current study and Ngaruiya's was that the later compared performance of children from private and public Pre-primary schools in class 1.

Nyamwaya & Mwaura, (1996) research on factors hindering a smooth transition from pre-school to primary was carried out in Kenya; data was collected using document analysis and the interviews. The findings of the study showed that there was no clear policy guideline on the relationship between Pre-primary and the primary school. There was also an indication of a disparity between the pre-primary and the lower primary school environment. Lastly, indicators for child and school's mutual readiness lacked. The current study is similar to Nyamwaya and Mwaura's in the sense that the two studies established factors which affected the children's transition from Pre-primary to Primary and they both used the interview and document analysis. The difference between the two studies is that, the current study was narrowed to specific selected factors which affected the children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 whereas Nyamwaya's and Mwaura's assessed those factors which hindered a smooth transition from Pre-primary school to primary school; theirs looked at broad factors which affected the children's transition.

Phatudi, (2007) carried out her study in South Africa her research topic was on transition from Pre-school or home to Grade 1 or class 1. The study investigated the implementation of transition policy and existing practices for children transiting between the mentioned levels. The tools that were used in collecting data were the document analysis, interviews and the Social Skills Rating Scales. The research findings revealed that those children with Pre-school experience adjusted well in class 1 than their peers who lacked the same experience. Secondly, it was also found out that schools did not have unified policies and guidelines for children joining class 1. Phatudi's study like the current study looked at the children's transition from Pre-primary (pre-school) to primary. Her study, unlike the current one was not narrowed

to the transition to class 1. Another difference noted was that, one of her study objectives was to analyse the difference in adjustment level between those children with pre-school experience and those without.

The highlighted studies are similar to the current study because they all discussed about the children's transition from the Pre-primary to the primary school levels. The data collection tools varied from one researcher to another; however the interviews were used by all the groups. Every research had its own objectives but they all aimed at assessing the children's transition.

Most of the researches carried out assessed the schools readiness; this in the current study was captured through finding out the roles of the school administration and the teachers' preparedness to handle the children's transition from the Pre-primary to class levels of school. The role of the community was captured by the study carried out by UNESCO, (1996) and Indakwa and Miriti (2010) which revealed that community empowerment was a tool that put the parents in a position fit to play a role in their children's transition. The roles that were to be played were for instance provision of nutrition for the children and the assistance in the provision of resources. To make these successful, the NGOs like the AKF Provide loans and education to parents on how to use the loans.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This literature review has surveyed the available literature on factors affecting children in transition from pre-primary to class 1 in public schools of Soy Division of Eldoret West District. The review was sub-divided into sections for purposes of consistency. The information on the role of parents' in the transition of the pre-primary school children to class 1 was reviewed due to its significance as a variable. The teachers' roles on how to handle children's transition is looked at in terms of how they handle teaching activities.

The roles played by the school administration in transition of the children were determined by the kind of supervision and management of the school activities. The community involvement in the transition of Pre-primary children to class 1 and physical facilities in the pre-primary and class 1 was looked at in terms of the children's comfort which is an essential ingredient that makes teaching and learning more effective and meaningful. The related studies aimed at identifying gaps existing in the study which warrant farther scrutiny. The next chapter is a discussion of the research design and methodology adopted in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the research design and methodological procedures that were followed in conducting the study. It includes the description of the research design, study area, target population, sample size, sampling techniques and procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments ethical considerations, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures.

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was adopted in the present study. Descriptive survey research studies are those studies, which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group. These are studies are concerned with specific predictions, with narration of facts and characteristics of an individual, group or situation. This design was used because it makes accurate assessment of the incidences, and also involves measurement, classification, analysis and interpretation of collected data.

Cohen and Manion (1983) defined descriptive research studies as “what is” involves the description, recording, analysis and interpretation of conditions that exist. It entails some type of evaluation and effort to discover associations between existing and manipulated variables. All these reasons formed a basis of using the design in the study.

3.3 The Study Area

The study was conducted in both private and public primary schools in Soy Division of Eldoret West District. The schools have pre-primary school levels. The District was splited from the old Uasin Gishu District that makes up Rift Valley Province. It borders Eldoret East District to its east; Lugari District to its west and Trans-Nzoia East and Marakwet Districts to its northern side. The area comprises of four zones namely Koisagat, Soy, Moi's Bridge, Sirikwa, Koisagat and Sirikwa have a sparse population while Moi's Bridge and Soy zones have a dense population (District Development Plan 1989-1993). The study was undertaken in Soy Division; since the researcher identified that class 1 had a high enrolment as compared to Pre-primary school levels. This information is as is stipulated in Table 1.1.

3.4 Target Population

Polit and Hungler (1995), defines the term "population" as the totality of all objects, subject or members that conform to a set of stipulations. It is the group of study subjects that are similar in one or more ways and which form the subjects of the study in a particular survey. A target population is that population to which a researcher wants to generalize the results of a study. The study targeted the PTA chairperson of every school, the Pre-primary and class 1 teacher and the primary school head teachers in Soy Division of Eldoret West District. There are 73 public primary schools, 47 private primary schools, 240 pre-primary and class 1 teachers and 120 head -teachers in the division. This is shown on the Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Determination of the Sample Size

| Respondents Category | Target Population | Sample Size |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Head teachers | 120 | 36 |
| Class 1 teachers | 120 | 36 |
| Pre-primary Teachers | 120 | 36 |
| PTA Chairpersons | 120 | 36 |
| Total | 480 | 144 |

Source: Researcher, September, 2010

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Sampling is a procedure of selecting a part of population on which research can be conducted, which ensures that conclusions from the study can be generalized to the entire population while sample in a research study refers to any group on which information is obtained (Mutai, 2000). Soy Division has 73 public and 47 private primary schools with Pre-primary schools attached to them. Stratified sampling technique was used to divide the schools into public and private. Basing on the thirty percent [30%] requirement, simple random sampling technique was used to obtain a sample size of 22 public schools and 14 private schools, hence giving a total of 36 sampled schools. Purposive sampling was used to select one head-teacher and one PTA chairperson from each of the sampled schools. Finally, simple random sampling was used to select one Pre-primary school teacher and one class 1 teacher from the sampled schools. This technique was used in every school because most schools had more than one teacher in the class levels under study.

Simple random sampling enabled each and every member of the population to have an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample (Kothari, 1999). Kerlinger (1992), states that a sample size of at least 10-30% would be adequate so long as it is large enough to allow for reliable analysis and provide desired level of accuracy. According to Dale (1979), a sample of between 10-30% of the total population is appropriate for this study. Determination of sample size is as shown in Table 3.1.

3.6 The Data Collection Instruments

This involves the techniques adopted by the researcher in the data gathering phase of the work. In order to meet the objectives of the study, various instruments namely; questionnaires, structured interview schedules and document analysis were designed and developed to gather the data. The data collection instruments are as discussed below:

3.6.1 The Questionnaire

Orodho (2003) argues that a questionnaire is an efficient research tool which when used the researcher can obtain personal ideas from a respondent. A questionnaire was preferred for collecting data because the questions, wordings and sequence are fixed and identical to all respondents. It has the advantage of obtaining standard responses to items, making it possible to compare between sets of data. It also allows the participants to give their own opinion on the issue at stake, Mugenda and Mugenda (1999). The questionnaire was in two parts: The first part covered background information of the respondents; the second part obtained information on the research questions. The questionnaires were administered to the Pre-primary and the class 1 teachers. A copy of the questionnaires appears in this thesis in Appendix II.

3.6.2 Structured Interview Schedules

Structured interview schedule is a tool that has a set of questions that the interviewer asks to obtain some information from the respondent. This was appropriate in the study because it made it possible to obtain data required to meet the set objectives. Secondly, the interview schedule standardized the interview situation since the same questions were asked in the same manner. Thirdly, during the interview session, the interviewer helped the interviewees by clarifying the questions in order to get relevant answers, (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). This also enabled the interviewer get an opportunity to establish rapport, explain the purpose of the study and meaning of items that may not have been clear (Mutai, 2000). Separate interview schedules were prepared and administered to the head teachers and PTA chairpersons and their copies in this thesis in Appendix III and Appendix IV respectively.

3.6.3 Document Analysis Schedules

Documents are important source of secondary data in many areas of investigation. The document analysis identified what the researcher takes to be the key issues, the crucial questions and the obvious gaps in the current state of knowledge. During the study the following documents provided the required data: duty rosters, lesson plans, scheme of work, children's health and the pre-primary and primary school syllabi. The copy of the document analysis schedules appears as Appendix V.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

The quality of a research instrument depends largely on the accuracy of data collection procedures and for this to be achieved; the instruments used in data collection must yield the information that answered the researcher's research questions. In this sub-section therefore, validity and reliability of the research instruments will focus on relevance and consistence of the data that yielded after the study. It is important for any research study to consider issues of precision and accuracy of the results obtained to be relied on for any decision making and policy formulation.

3.7.1 Validity of the Research Instruments

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), validity is quality attributed to proposition or measures to the degree to which they conform to establish knowledge or truth. Validity therefore refers to the extent to which an instrument can measure what it ought to measure. It therefore refers to the extent to which an instrument asks the right questions in terms of accuracy. The content validity of the instrument was determined in various ways. First, the researcher developed the instruments basing on the research objectives. Secondly, the researcher discussed the items in the instrument with the supervisors, colleagues and other lecturers of the department in the school of education, Moi University. The advice given helped the researcher determine the validity of the research instruments. The advice included suggestions, clarifications and other inputs which were then used in making necessary changes.

Thirdly, content validity of the instrument was determined through piloting, where the researcher carried out a pilot study on twenty respondents from five primary schools in Wareng District of which two were private while three were public. Wareng is a neighbouring district to Eldoret West and had respondents who had the same characteristics as those of the study area. A sample which comprised of 5 head teachers, 5 class 1 teachers and 5 Pre primary teachers and 5 PTA chairpersons was randomly sampled from the 5 primary schools then the research tools were administered to them. The respondents were requested to comment on the language and length of the questionnaire. The instruments were later revised accordingly after the pilot study in readiness for administration to the respondents by the researcher.

3.7.2 Reliability of the Research Instruments

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials (Mutai 2000). Reliability is a quality attributed to proposition or measures to the degree to which they produce consistent results. An attitude scale is considered reliable, for example, to the degree to which the same respondents, or very similar respondents, receive the same or very similar score upon repeated testing. This established the extent to which the questionnaire elicits the same responses every time it is administered. Reliability tells how well a test measures what it is supposed to measure.

To ascertain the reliability of the research instruments, the researcher did a pilot study by administering the same research instruments the same respondents of the pilot group discussed in sub-section 3.7.1 using the test-retest technique. The technique according to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) entails administering the same instruments to the same respondents twice after a given time lapse. In this study, this was done and the

interval between the administrations of the instruments was two weeks. The coefficient of reliability obtained was 0.70, showing that there was a strong relationship between the research instruments and hence reliable to be used in the study.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The study stressed the need for a research that has an understanding of ethical concerns and more responsive to the local community's self-identified needs. Firstly, the study ensured privacy and confidentiality by allowing respondents to have pre-eminence over time and extent to which they could withhold or share information. All the respondents were treated with respect and equality. Secondly, the principle of free and informed consent was adhered to by emphasizing voluntarism, clear explanation and sufficient detail of the nature of the research and procedures. The objectives of the study and benefits were explained to participants. Lastly, permission to carry out the study was sought from the appropriate educational authorities that is, Moi University, Ministry of education, the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of the area in which the study was to be carried out. .

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher proceeded to collect data from the selected respondents after seeking clearance from the Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Media, Moi University. The researcher also sought authorization to conduct the research from the National Council for Science and Technology, Nairobi; the District commissioner's office and at the District Education Office in Eldoret West District. Permission was sought from the head teachers of various schools that were involved in the study. Finally, the researcher visited the selected schools before hand for familiarization and acquaintance with targeted respondents, especially the head

teachers and teachers. During this visit, the researcher introduced herself and informed the head teachers and teachers about the purpose of the intended study and booked appointments to undertake data collection. The sampled schools were earmarked for administering of questionnaires to the pre-primary and class one teachers as well as interviewing of head teachers and PTA chairpersons. This was made possible by the earlier scheduled appointments. Document analysis was carried out in the afternoon. The researcher conducted data collection in all the 36 schools in person.

3.10 Data Analysis Procedures

This is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of information collected (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). Data collected was processed, coded and analyzed to facilitate answering the research questions. Data analysis was done basing on the descriptive survey research design where measures of central tendency was used. In the measures of central tendency percentages and frequencies were used to give expected summary statistics of variables under study. Data from the structured interview schedules was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. Data was presented in form of frequency tables, pie-charts, bar graphs and percentages. To make all these successful Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 was used.

3.11 Summary

The chapter has presented a discussion on the methodology that guided preparation of instruments, data collection and data analysis. As mentioned above the appropriate research design for this study was descriptive survey. Several subtopics were presented that included the description of the research design, study area, target population, sample size, sampling techniques and procedure, research instruments,

validity and reliability of research instruments, ethical considerations, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures used. The next chapter is a discussion of data presentation, analysis interpretation and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study that was interpreted and discussed basing on the research objectives and sub-sequent research questions. The discussion was based on relevant literature review. The objectives explored in this study were to: find out the perceived roles of parents in children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 levels in Soy Division; to determine teachers' roles in handling children's transition from the Pre-primary to class 1 levels in Soy Division; to establish the roles played by the school administration in children's transition from Pre-Primary to Class 1 levels in Soy Division; to establish the extent of community involvement in children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 levels in Soy Division and to determine the availability and appropriateness of physical facilities on children's transition from Pre-primary and Class 1 levels in Soy Division. The presentation of the results in this chapter was based on the objectives that guided the study. Section one presents the findings on the background information of the respondents, while the rest of the sections presents findings obtained under each objective.

4.2 Background Information of the Respondents

This section provides the background information obtained from the respondents who included the Head-teachers, Class 1 teachers, Pre-Primary teachers and the PTA chairpersons. The background information was obtained basing on the sex, age and highest academic qualification of the respondents. Together with these, the age location of the school was also sought. This variable was meant to obtain the

characteristics of the respondents as well as that of the schools, since they may affect the children's transition from the Pre-Primary to Class 1 school levels.

4.2.1 The Sex of the Respondents

The Sex of the respondents as a variable in this study was necessary since, it helped in establishing attitudes and perception of the respondents towards the children's transition process from Pre-Primary to class 1 levels. From the study majority 34 (94.4%) of the Pre-Primary teachers and 28 (77.8%) class 1 teachers were female while only 2 (5.6%) Pre-Primary teachers and 8 (22.2%) class 1 were male. However majority of the Head-teachers 27 (75%) and PTA chair persons 33 (91.7%) were male with 9 (25%) and 3 (8.3%) being female respectively. The observation made showed that in Pre-Primary and Class 1 school levels, the female teachers dominated. These findings concur with MOE (2007) and GOK (2007) that state that handling of young children can be better done by females who have motherly feelings and care towards the children than their male counterparts. Basing on this argument, the finding of the study reveal that children's transition process between Pre-primary and Primary schools is mostly undertaken by females as recommended. This information is as summarized in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Sex of the Respondents

| Sex of Respondents | Pre-primary teachers | | Class 1 teachers | | Head teachers | | PTA chairpersons | |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------|------------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| Male | 2 | 5.6 | 8 | 22.2 | 27 | 75 | 33 | 91.73 |
| Female | 34 | 94.4 | 28 | 77.8 | 9 | 25 | 3 | 8.3 |
| Total | 36 | 100 | 36 | 100 | 36 | 100 | 36 | 100 |

4.2.2 Age of the Respondents

The age of the respondents in this study was valid because it was meant to assess maturity, experience and stability of the respondents in the handling of children. From the findings of the study 44.4% of the Pre-Primary school teachers were aged 36-46 years, with 38.9% aged between 25-35 years, while 13.9% were aged below 25 years and the least 2.8% aged over 46 years. This finding indicates that majority of the Pre-Primary school teachers were above 36 years old.

The age of the teachers of class 1 showed that majority (47.2%) were aged between 25-35 years, followed by those aged 36-46 years (41.7%) and those under 25 years and above 46 years each comprised of 8.3%. Majority of the head-teachers (66.7%) were older and aged between 36-50 years and those aged over 46 years (33.3%) was aged below 36 years. Majority of PTA chairpersons (52.8%) were aged between 36-46 years, with (41.7%) had above 46 years and the least (5.6%) were aged between 25-35 years.

From the findings of the study majority of the teachers in both the Pre-primary and class 1 level were aged between 25 and 46 years, while the head teachers and PTA chairpersons were aged between 36 and 46 years. This indicated that the community preferred to elect elderly members to be PTA chairpersons probably because they were mature and experienced enough to handle the affairs of the school and understand the children's transition process from one class to another. The age of the Pre-primary and Class teachers on the other hand, composed of energetic and productive men and women in the society fit to handle the children's transition. The analysed data of this section is summarized in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Age of the Respondents

| Age in years | Prep-primary teachers | | Class 1 Teachers | | Head teachers | | PTA chairpersons | |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| < 25 | 5 | 13.9 | 3 | 8.3 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 25-35 | 14 | 38.9 | 17 | 47.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 5.6 |
| 36-46 | 16 | 44.4 | 15 | 41.7 | 24 | 66.7 | 19 | 52.8 |
| >46 | 1 | 2.8 | 1 | 2.8 | 12 | 33.3 | 15 | 41.7 |
| Total | 36 | 100 | 36 | 100 | 36 | 100 | 36 | 100 |

4.2.3: Academic Qualifications of the Respondents

The academic qualification of the respondents sought in this study was important as it was meant to determine the competence level of the respondents in handling the children transition process from the Pre-primary to class one level. The results obtained showed that majority of the P.T.A chairpersons 14 (39%) had secondary

certificates. A large proportion 31 (86.6%) of class 1 teachers has Primary Teacher Education (P1) qualification, while 27 (75%) of the head teachers have also the P1 qualifications. Majority 26 (72.2%) of the Pre-primary teachers have ECDE certificate as their highest academic qualification. From the findings of the study, only 16% of the respondents had diploma and 13.4% had degree qualifications. The qualifications of PTA chairperson in Soy Division showed that they were not competent enough to handle the children during their transition process from Pre-primary to class one because majority of them had only secondary and primary school certificates. This showed that they had no professional qualification in handling the children's transition process. This information's is summarized in Table 4.3

Table 4.3: Highest Academic Qualification of the Respondents

| Qualification | Pre-primary Teacher | | Class 1 teacher | | Head-teacher | | PTA Chairperson | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|------------|-----------------|------|
| | F | % | F | % | f | % | f | % |
| Primary certificate | - | - | - | - | - | - | 12 | 33.3 |
| Secondary certificate | - | - | - | - | - | - | 14 | 39 |
| Primary teacher certificate(P1) | 4 | 11.1 | 31 | 86.1 | 27 | 75 | - | - |
| ECDE Certificate | 26 | 72.2 | 1 | 2.8 | 1 | 2.8 | - | - |
| Diploma | 6 | 16.7 | 4 | 11.1 | 6 | 16.7 | 7 | 19.4 |
| Bachelors Degree | - | - | - | - | 2 | 5.6 | 3 | 8.3 |
| 36 | 36 | 100 | 36 | 36 | 36 | 100 | 36 | |

100

100**100**

4.2.4: Age of the School

The age of school was used to determine the experience and routine established in the schools under the study. As a school continues to grow with time, it gains experience on how to handle some issues and also develop its own routines that need to be adhered to. In this study, the researcher sought to find out the age of the schools within the area of study so as to determine whether they were experienced enough to manage the transition process of the children from the Pre-primary to the Primary school. From the findings, majority 16 (44.4%) of the public schools were established over 10 years ago while the rest 8 (22.2%) of the private schools were established between 5-10 years. The findings therefore concluded that most public schools in soy Division were old enough and therefore had experience in handling the children's transition from the Pre-Primary to the class 1 levels. These findings are summarized in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: The Age of the Schools

| Age of school | School type | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| | Public | | Private | |
| | F | % | F | % |
| Less than five years | 1 | 2.8 | 4 | 11.1 |
| 5-10 years | 5 | 13.9 | 8 | 22.2 |
| Over 10 years | 16 | 44.4 | 2 | 5.6 |
| Total | 22 | 61.1 | 14 | 38.9 |

4.2.5: Location of the School

The location of the school was necessary in the study because this was meant to determine the kind of infrastructure that was available in schools. People in urban centres are more exposed to varied educational facilities and have higher academic qualifications as compared to the rural dwellers. Therefore, this showed that they understand the importance of education and the provision of appropriate physical facilities or infrastructure that will help promote a good transition from the Pre-Primary to the formal schooling. The findings of the study showed that a majority 26(72.2%) of public schools were located in the rural, while 10(16.8%) were located in the urban. From the study, it was concluded that transition from the Pre-Primary to the Primary school levels in Soy Division has been affected by the location (rural) where most dwellers are not exposed to education and infrastructural facilities. This information is summarized in Table 4.5

Table 4.5: Location of Schools

| Location/type | Public | | Private | |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| | F | % | f | % |
| Rural | 18 | 50 | 8 | 22.2 |
| Urban | 4 | 11.1 | 6 | 16.7 |
| Total | 22 | 61.1 | 14 | 38.9 |

4.3 Perceived Roles of Parents in the Transition of Children from Pre-primary to Class 1 in Soy Division.

The first objective of this study was to find out the perceived roles of parents in the children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division. In order to achieve this objective, a questionnaire was developed and administered to Pre-primary and class 1 teachers. The responses given by these respondents were analyzed and the findings were as follows. Majority 20 (55.6%) of the Pre-Primary school teachers and 14 (38.9%) of class 1 teachers said that parents escorted their children to school. Majority 19 (52.8%) of the Pre-Primary school teachers and 13 (36%) class 1 teachers responded that parents' assisted in the making of the teaching/learning materials. On the provision of the school feeding programme, 23 (63.4%) of the Pre-primary school and 18 (50%) of class 1 teachers agreed that parents were of assistance. Fourteen (38.9%) of the Pre-primary and 11 (30.6%) of class 1 teachers answered that parents helped in their classes as resource persons. Finally, on the provision of the school uniform, 30 (83.3%) Pre-primary school and 31 (86.1%) of class 1 teachers said that their parents in their classes provided the children with the school uniform. These findings are summarized in Table 4.6

Table 4.6: Pre-primary and Class 1 Teacher's Responses on the Perceived role of Parents on the Children's Transition.

| Perceived roles | Pre-primary Teachers | | Class 1 teachers | |
|--|----------------------|------|------------------|------|
| | F | % | F | % |
| Escort children to school | 20 | 55.6 | 14 | 38.9 |
| Assisting in making children's teaching/learning materials | 19 | 52.8 | 13 | 36.1 |
| Provide essentials for the school feeding programme | 23 | 63.9 | 18 | 50.0 |
| Helping as resource person | 14 | 38.9 | 11 | 30.6 |
| Provide uniform for children in pre-primary and class 1 | 30 | 83.3 | 31 | 86.1 |

When the head teachers were asked to state the school level at which parents play those roles which enhance children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1, the response obtained showed that, majority 35 (97.2%) of the parents in the Pre-primary and 34 (94.4%) in class 1 provided their children with the school uniform. The response on the provisions for the essentials of the School Feeding Programme revealed that, 33 (91.6%) was the proportion which represented the Pre-primary school parents while 28 (77.8%) represented the response from class 1 parents.

On the role of escorting children to school, 31 (86.1%) of the parents of the Pre-primary school children and 14 (38.9%) of the parents of class 1 children gave a positive response. As far as the assistance in the making of the teaching /learning materials was concerned, 22 (61.1%) was the response obtained from the parents of the Pre-primary school children while 14 (38.9%) was obtained from class 1 parents.

The least role played by the parents was that of assistance as resource persons where 15 (41.6%) represented the response obtained from the parents of the Pre-primary school children while 12 (33.3%) was from those of class 1. This information is as presented in Table 4.7

Table 4.7: Head Teacher's Responses on Perceived role of Parents on the Children's Transition from Pre-primary to Class 1

| Perceived roles/frequency | Pre-primary school parents | | Class 1 parents | |
|--|----------------------------|------|-----------------|------|
| | F | % | F | % |
| Escort children to school | 31 | 86.1 | 14 | 38.9 |
| Assisting in making children's teaching/learning materials | 22 | 61.1 | 14 | 38.9 |
| Provide essentials for the school feeding programme | 33 | 91.6 | 28 | 77.8 |
| Helping as resource person | 15 | 41.7 | 12 | 33.3 |
| Provide school uniform for children in pre-primary and class 1 | 34 | 94.4 | 35 | 97.2 |

The PTA chairpersons' response on the perceived roles of parents on the children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 showed that, 29 (80.6%) of the Pre-primary school parents and 7 (19.4%) of class 1 parents escort their children to school. 18 (50%) of the Pre-primary school parents and 10 (27.8%) of class 1 parents assist in the making of the teaching/learning materials for the children. On the role of providing essentials for the School Feeding Programme, 28 (77.8%) of Pre-primary school parents and 20 (55.6%) of class 1 parents responded positively. The proportion of the parents who helped as resource persons was; 20 (55.6%) were from the Pre-primary while 13 (36.15) were from class 1. Finally, 30 (83.3%) of pre-primary school

parents and 34 (94.4%) of Primary school parents provided school uniform for their children. This information is provide in Table 4.8

Table 4.8: PTA chairperson’s Response on Perceived role of Parents on the Children’s Transition from Pre-primary to Class 1

| Perceived roles/frequency | Pre-primary parents | | Class 1 parents | |
|--|---------------------|------|-----------------|------|
| | F | % | F | % |
| Escort children to school | 29 | 80.6 | 7 | 19.4 |
| Assisting in making children’s teaching/learning materials | 18 | 50 | 10 | 27.8 |
| Provide essentials for the school feeding programme | 28 | 77.8 | 20 | 55.6 |
| Helping as resource person | 20 | 55.6 | 13 | 36.6 |
| Provide school uniform for children in pre-primary and class 1 | 30 | 83.3 | 34 | 94.4 |

The findings therefore concluded that, the parents played most of their roles on the Pre-primary class levels as compared to class 1. This finding concurred with MoEST, (2000) which established that parents changed their attitudes towards the children moving to class 1 on the grounds that they were older enough. The perceived roles of parents were likely to hamper the children’s transition from Pre-primary to Class 1. The finding of the study fails to concur with Docket and Perry, (2001) and Kafu Committee (1998) who advocated for a harmonious relationship between the Pre-primary and the Primary school levels that enhanced a smooth transition between the two class levels. In this study the harmony was lacking since parents were not playing unified roles in the two class levels under the study. The findings of the study therefore conclude that parental involvement affected children’s transition from pre-

primary to Class 1 level in Soy Division.

4.4 Teachers Roles in Handling Children during Transition from the Pre-primary to Class 1

The second objective of this study was to determine teachers' roles in handling children during transition from the pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division. A research question was designed to correspond to the research objective. Questionnaires were administered to class 1 and Pre-primary school teachers of the selected schools. The first item that was sought under the objective was to find out whether the teachers were prepared to handle the children's transitions between Pre-primary and class 1. The responses showed that majority 77.8% of Pre-primary and 72.2% of Class 1 teachers were well prepared to handle the children during the transition process in schools. However, 8.3% of the teachers in Pre-primary and 5.6% of the class 1 teachers responded that they were not prepared to handle the children during transition. A total of 13.9% and 22.2% of teachers in Pre-primary and class 1 respectively responded that they were not sure of their levels of preparedness. The information on the teachers' preparedness is summarised in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

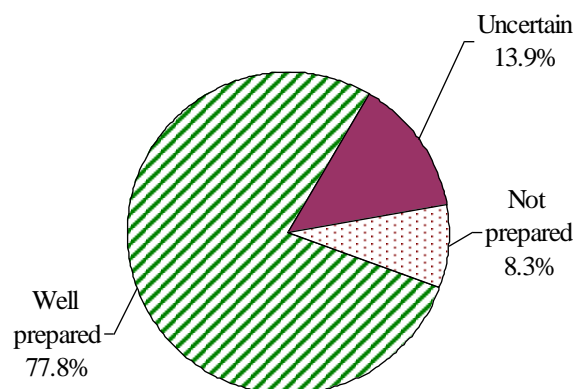


Figure 4.1: The Preparedness of Pre-primary Teachers in Handling the Children's Transition

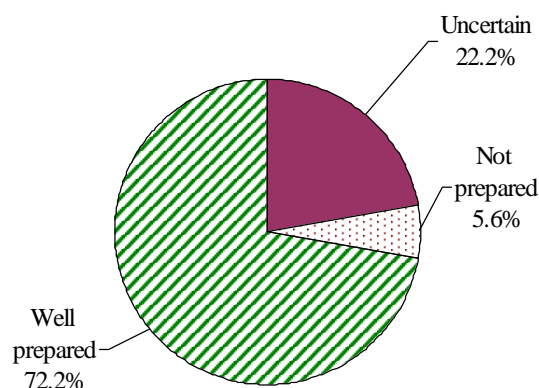


Figure 4.2: The preparedness of Class I teachers in handling the children's transition

Together with the teachers' competence level, the objective also sought to establish the strategies which the Pre-Primary and Class 1 teachers use to promote a smooth transition between their class levels. Data obtained showed that all teachers in pre-primary and 30 (83.3%) in class 1 use play as a teaching method, 14 (38.9%) of Pre-Primary and 7 (19.4%) of Class 1 teachers use parents as resource persons. All the pre-primary school teachers and 10 (27.8%) of class 1 teachers use thematic teaching approach. On the strategy of keeping of the children's records, 23 (63.9%) of the Pre-primary and 18 (50%) of the Class 1 teachers responded that they used the strategy.

A large proportion 27 (75%) of the Pre-primary school and 18 (50%) of Class 1 teachers said that they displayed their children's work. This information is as shown in Table 4.9

Table 4.9: Pre-primary and class 1 Teachers response on Strategies which promote the children’s transition from pre-primary to Class 1

| Strategies/frequency | Pre-primary teachers | | Class 1 teachers | |
|--|----------------------|------|------------------|------|
| | F | % | F | % |
| Use play as a teaching method | 36 | 100 | 30 | 83.3 |
| Use of parents as resource persons | 14 | 38.9 | 7 | 19.4 |
| Use of thematic teaching approach | 36 | 100 | 10 | 27.8 |
| Keeping of the children’s health records | 23 | 63.9 | 13 | 36.1 |
| Displaying of the children work | 27 | 75.0 | 18 | 50.0 |

The interview schedule administered to the head teachers sought to answer the question that corresponded to the second objective. When the head teachers were asked to specify whether the given activities took place in Pre-primary or class 1, the response obtained showed that, all teachers in pre-primary and 30 (83.3%) in class 1 use play as a teaching method, 14 (38.9%) of Pre-Primary and 7 (19.4%) of Class 1 teachers use parents as resource persons. All of the Pre-primary school teachers and 10 (27.8%) of class 1 teachers use thematic teaching approach. On the strategy of keeping of the children’s records, 25 (69.4%) of the Pre-Primary and 18 (50%) of the Class 1 teachers were said to use the strategy.

A large proportion 27 (75%) of the Pre-primary school and 18 (50%) of Class 1 teachers were reported to display their children’s work. This information is as shown in Table 4.10

Table 4.10: Head teacher's response on Strategies which promote the children's transition from pre-primary to Class 1

| Strategies | Pre-primary teachers | | Class 1 teachers | |
|--|----------------------|------|------------------|------|
| | F | % | F | % |
| Use play as a teaching method | 36 | 100 | 30 | 83.3 |
| Use of parents as resource persons | 14 | 38.9 | 7 | 19.4 |
| Use of thematic teaching approach | 36 | 100 | 10 | 27.8 |
| Keeping of the children's health records | 25 | 69.4 | 18 | 50 |
| Displaying of the children work | 27 | 75.0 | 18 | 50.0 |

On the issue of teachers using parents as resource persons, the response obtained from the PTA chairpersons showed that the proportion of teachers who use the strategy is equivalent 13 (36.1%) to those who do not. The remaining group 10 (27.8%) were not certain if the teachers used the strategy. This information is as shown in figure 4.3

Use of Parents as Resource persons

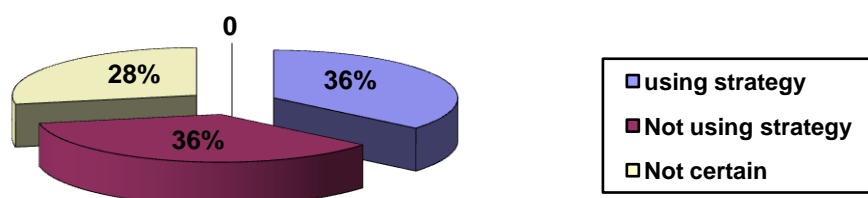


Figure 4.3: Use of Parents as Resource Persons

When the PTA chairpersons were asked to state the importance of parental resourcefulness, 25 (69.4%) of them said that it helped motivate the learners, while 5 (13.9%) was the proportion that responded that it enhanced skill development. The rest 6(16.7%) were not certain of the importance of the strategy. This information is as summarised in figure 4.4

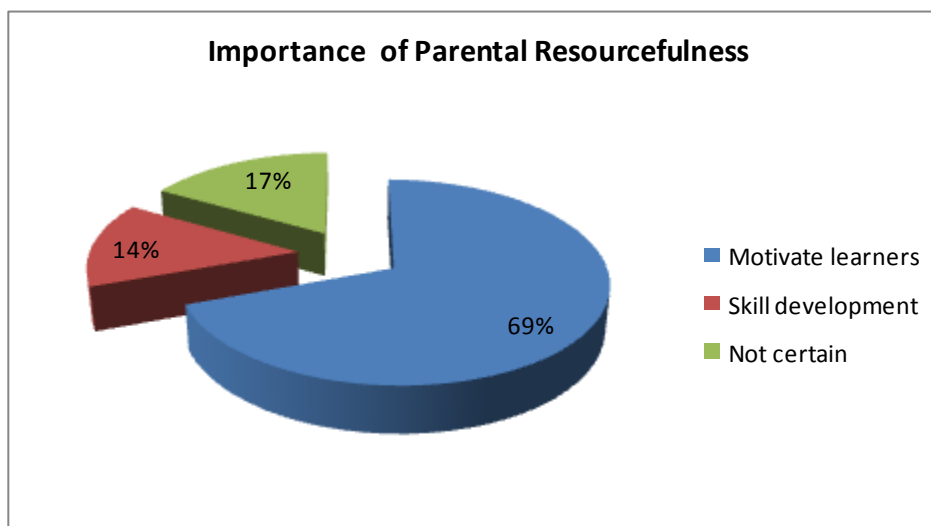


Figure 4.4: Importance of Parental Resourcefulness

Data obtained from these respondents, showed that the use of play in the two class levels was the only strategy that offered a situation that was similar to the children moving from Pre-Primary to Class 1. From this therefore, it was concluded that the use of play promotes the children's transition process in Soy Division as this concurs with (Brostrom1999) who argued that play promotes the children's holistic development.

From the study, the use of parents as resource persons, the use of thematic teaching approach, keeping of the children's health records and the display of the children's work showed some disparity between the two class levels. The findings agrees with Einarsdottir, (2003) and MoEST(2000) who viewed the differences between the teaching strategies in Pre-primary and Class 1 as a factor that makes the children see

the transition as a total turning point and not a continuity. Brostrom (2002) advocated for a harmonious relationship between the two class levels. To emphasize this, it stressed the importance of a shared overall curriculum and coordination of teaching practices. The teachers' preparedness to handle the children during the transition process from the Pre-primary to Class 1 in this study was identified as a factor affecting transition. The teachers do not use parents as resource persons. According to Krogh (1994) the use of parents is a component which makes the children feel happy, relaxed and secure in school. From the PTA Chairperson's response it was revealed that parents understood that their resourcefulness motivated the learners (Fig.4.4) this therefore means that teachers need to establish that closeness or a relationship between themselves and the parents of the children they teach.

4.5 Roles of the School Administration on the Children's Transition from Pre-Primary to Class 1.

The third objective of this study was to determine the roles played by the school administration in the transition of children from pre-primary to Class 1. These roles are important because they are strategies which the school administration lay in order to enhance a smooth transition of children from the Pre-primary to the Primary school levels. To answer the research question, questionnaires were administered to the Pre-primary and class 1 teachers, structured interview schedules were administered to the head teacher and finally the document analysis was also used. Data obtained from Pre-primary and class 1 teachers were similar and was summarised as follows: majority 35 (97.2%) of the schools administrators developed, used and maintained professional records, 34(94.4%) of them organized common parades for all the pupils in the school, 12 (33.3%) organized graduation days at the end of pre-primary education, 32 (88.9%) involved all teachers in the school activities, and 21 (58.3%)

organized the school feeding programme in their schools. This information is as summarized in Table 4.11

Table 4.11: Pre-primary and Class 1 Teachers' Responses on the Role of School Administration in the Children's Transition

| Roles of school administration/frequency | F | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| Developing, using and maintaining professional records | 35 | 97.2 |
| Convening common parades for all pupils in the school | 34 | 94.4 |
| Organizing for graduation days at the end of pre-primary education | 12 | 33.3 |
| Involving all teachers in the school activities | 36 | 100 |
| Organizing school feeding programmes | 21 | 58.3 |

Structured interview schedule administered to head teachers seeking information on their roles on the children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1 showed that, majority of them developed and maintained professional records in all the classes, involved all the teachers in the school activities, convened common parades for the pupils in the school and also ensured that all teachers share a common staffroom.

Structured interview schedules administered to the PTA chairpersons sought information on the roles of the school administration on the children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1. Data obtained revealed that: most of the head teachers convened common parades for all the pupils in the school, involved all the teachers in the school activities, organized for the School Feeding Programme and lastly, ensured that their schools had Pre-primary school classes adjacent to class 1.

The document analysis (Appendix v) used by the researcher showed that, majority 32 (88.9%) of the head teachers developed and maintained the use of thematic approach lesson plan in the Pre-primary school levels. In class 1, 16 (44.4%) use the similar document. It was observed that 22 (44.4%) of the head-teachers had children's health records from the Pre-primary school teachers while 11 (30.6%) of similar records were for class 1 children. Duty rosters displayed in schools showed that 34(94.4%) schools had one that included all teachers on the duty roster while only 2 (5.6%) had one with Pre-primary school teachers excluded. There was no duty roster showing Pre-primary teachers alone being on duty. This information is as summarised in Table 4.12

Table 4.12: Level at Which the Available Professional Documents Promote the Children's Transition.

| S/no | Documents | Available | | Not available | |
|------|--|-----------|------|---------------|------|
| | | F | % | F | % |
| 1 | Thematic approach lesson plan for Pre-primary school | 32 | 88.8 | 4 | 11.1 |
| 2 | Thematic approach lesson plan for class 1 | 16 | 44.4 | 16 | 44.4 |
| 3 | Health records kept for pre-primary school children | 22 | 61.1 | 14 | 38.9 |
| 4 | Health records kept for class 1 children | 11 | 30.6 | 25 | 69.4 |
| 5 | Duty roster with all teachers included | 34 | 94.4 | 2 | 5.6 |
| 6 | Duty roster with primary school teachers only | 2 | 5.6 | 34 | 94.4 |
| 7 | Duty roster with Pre-primary school teachers only | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The findings therefore reveal that the school administration is a factor which encourages a smooth transition of children from the pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division. The respondent's high positive response is an indication that schools in the area of study adopted the Kafu Committee, (1998) which recommended that primary school head-teachers take headship of both the Pre-Primary and the Primary levels in their respective schools. Also, the committee recommended that all the Pre-primary schools be attached to a primary school. This has allowed a close supervision and monitoring of activities in the two class levels of the study. MOEST (2000) advocated for the pre-primary school to be adjacent to class 1 as this would allow a free interaction between the teachers and learners in the two class levels. The findings of this study therefore concur with this view.

The study also sought to establish whether the school administration organized graduation days for the children completing the Pre-primary school level. The findings of the study showed that 33.3% of school administration organized it. These findings do not concur with Cowan and Cowan (2009) and Indakwa and Miriti (2010) who advocated that the children's graduation provided them with a psychological preparation to move to the next level of schooling. The conclusion derived from the findings was that; children in Soy Division lacked a psychological preparation to move from the Pre-primary to class 1 levels of school. In conclusion, the head teachers need to understand the importance of keeping the children's health records as this provides a continuity. It makes teachers who receive children from Pre-primary to have knowledge about the new pupils and hence render appropriate handling.

4.6 Community Involvement in the Transition of Children from Pre-primary to Class 1.

The fourth objective of this study was to determine the extent of community involvement in the children's transition from pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division. Community is a very important component in this study because children are born and nurtured in it. It is the community that understands the children's growth and development and hence the African proverb "*it takes a village to raise a child*" (Miriti and Indakwa 2011).

Information obtained from the Pre-primary and class 1 teachers using questionnaires showed that these respondents provided similar responses. These responses were: provision of land for school construction and hiring and paying teachers were roles that were equally 24 (66.6%) played by the community. Teachers responded that 16 (44.4%) was the proportion which represented the community's role of Providing essentials for the school feeding programme and the organization of graduation ceremonies for children completing the pre-primary school comprised of 10 (27.8%). Table 4.15 shows the summary of this information.

Table 4.13: Pre-primary and Class 1 Teachers' Response on Roles of the Community in the Children's Transition

| Roles/frequency | F | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| Providing land for the school construction | 24 | 66.7 |
| Hiring and paying teachers | 24 | 66.7 |
| Organizing for graduation ceremonies for children completing pre-primary school level | 10 | 27.8 |
| Providing essentials for the school feeding programme | 16 | 44.4 |

Structured interview schedule administered to the head teachers to ascertain their responses on the roles of the community showed that majority of them said that the community provided the school with land to construct the school while the remaining proportion said that the community hired and paid teachers, organized for graduation days for children completing Pre-primary schooling and also provided essentials for the school feeding programme.

An interview with school PTA Chairperson showed that, majority of them said that the community provided land for school construction and also did the hiring and paying of teachers. The rest said that it organized for graduation ceremonies for children after completing the Pre-primary school education and also provided essentials for the school feeding programme. The Provision of essentials for the school feeding programme appeared the least service provided by the community. This does not concur with Indakwa and Miriti (2010) who argued that children are not ready to move to the next level of schooling if the school feeding programme is not continued.

4.7 Availability of Physical Facilities and the Children's Transition from Pre-primary to Class 1 levels in Soy Division.

The final objective of the study was to determine the availability of physical facilities in Pre-primary and Class 1 levels and how they affect the children's transition in Soy Division. The physical facilities are important because they provide the children with comfort during their learning. The questionnaires administered to both the class 1 and the Pre-primary school teachers that up to 55.6% of Pre-primary school teachers and 38.9% of teachers in class 1 identified that there were suitable chairs and tables in their classes. Majority of class 1 teachers 78.8% and 38.9% of the Pre-primary school teachers responded that their classes were well ventilated. The presence of furniture organized in rows was evident in the two class levels of the study where 55.6% were in Pre-primary and 72.2% in class 1. These findings are summarized in table 4.18.

Table 4.14: Availability of Appropriate Physical Facilities in Pre-primary and Class 1 in Soy Division (class 1 and Pre-primary teachers' responses)

| Available furniture | Pre-primary teacher | | Class 1 teacher | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|------|-----------------|------|
| | F | % | F | % |
| Suitable chairs and tables | 20 | 55.6 | 14 | 38.9 |
| Well ventilated classrooms | 14 | 38.9 | 27 | 75 |
| Furniture organized in rows | 20 | 55.6 | 26 | 72.2 |

The last item sought on the teachers' questionnaires on the fifth objective was to find out the physical facilities shared between pre-primary and class 1 children. Responses obtained showed that several facilities including playgrounds 30 (83.3%), movable play equipments 10 (27.8%) and fixed play facilities 8 (22.2%), latrines 25 (69.4%),

kitchens 22 (61.1%) and water 29 (80.6%) were shared. This information is summarized in figure 4.5.

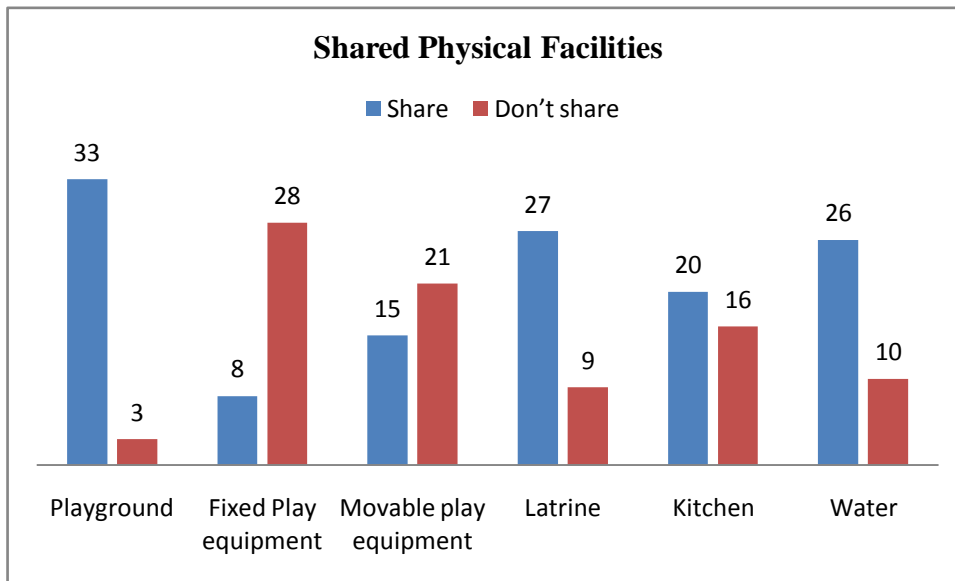


Figure 4.5: Physical Facilities Shared by the Pre-primary and Class 1

Structured interview schedules administered to both the head-teachers and the PTA chairpersons showed that similar proportions 15 (41.7%) of the head-teachers and PTA chairpersons responded Pre-primary class levels had suitable furniture whereas 11 (30.6%) of class 1 levels had the same. On the issue of ventilation, similar responses were also obtained where 14 (38.9%) of both the head teachers and the PTA chairpersons responded that Class 1 classroom was well ventilated while 27 (75%) of the same respondents said that Class 1 classrooms were well ventilated. When the head teachers and the PTA chairperson were asked for their response on the specific class levels where furniture was organized in rows, their responses were that; 22(61.1%) in Pre-primary and 25(75%) in class 1 was the head teacher's response while 20 (44.4%) in Pre-primary and 26 (72.2%) in class 1 was the response obtained from the PTA chairperson. This information is as summarised in table 4.15

Table 4.15: The head teachers and PTA Chairperson Responses on the availability of physical facilities

| Qualification | Pre-primary | | Class 1 | | Head-teacher | | PTA | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------|---------|------|--------------|------|-------------|------|
| | Teacher | | teacher | | | | Chairperson | |
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| Suitable chairs and tables | 15 | 41.7 | 11 | 30.6 | 15 | 41.7 | 11 | 30.6 |
| Well ventilated classrooms | 14 | 38.9 | 27 | 75 | 14 | 38.9 | 27 | 75.0 |
| Furniture organized in rows | 22 | 61.1 | 25 | 69.4 | 20 | 44.4 | 26 | 72.2 |

The aspect of sharing physical facilities between Class 1 and Pre-primary showed that majority of the head-teachers and the PTA chairpersons said that children in the two class levels shared the playground, latrines and water. A Few of them said that movable play equipment was shared. The findings of the study did not concur with Krogh (1994), K.I.E (2007) and MOE (2008), who argued that young children should be provided with appropriate furniture in order to make them comfortable and also avoid making their bodies become deformed. On the component of furniture arrangement in the class room, findings showed that, Class 1 had this done in rows as compared to Pre-primary whose proportion was slightly lower. The study findings in Soy Division showed that class 1 levels did not have suitable furniture and therefore it can be concluded that this is a component which affects the children's transition between pre-primary and primary school levels.

The proportions displayed by the finding shows that, the aspect of sharing fixed play equipment was minimal and hence a hindrance to free interaction amongst the children in the two class levels under study. When such facilities are shared, the children will feel that they are attached to one another. The established findings therefore, fail to agree with the Kafu committee (1998) whose recommendations advocated for the attachments of the pre-primary to primary schools in order to allow for facilities' sharing. The aspect of sharing in the schools of Soy Division is restricted to certain facilities and hence a hindrance to free interaction amongst the learners in the two school levels under study. The findings also do not agree with (MoE 2000) who argued that the school's physical facilities provide a chance for interaction between children in the pre-primary and primary school levels.

4.8 Summary

In this chapter the results were presented, analyzed and discussed with respect to the objectives of the study. The findings showed that perceived roles of parents as given by the respondents seemed not to allow a smooth transition between the two class levels of study; since the parents concentrated their roles in the Pre-primary as compared to class 1. The teachers in Pre-primary and class 1 were professionally qualified and experienced enough to teach in their appropriate classes. The teachers of Class 1 lacked training on the children's transition between the mentioned class levels and they did not also use thematic teaching approach. This was therefore a factor that affected transition.

The roles of the school administration and community did not affect transition of pupils from Pre-primary to class 1 since their roles were fairly done. However; the only role that was not played was the organization the graduation ceremony for the

children completing the pre-primary school level. Lastly, there was evidence that the physical facilities affected transition from pre-primary to class 1 since the level of sharing the movable facilities was very low and hence a likelihood of minimal interaction of children in the two school levels under study. The next chapter will provide the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the finding summarized in chapter four. The procedure for treating the recommendations will be, first to present the findings, followed by conclusions and finally recommendation for each of the objective.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The objectives that were investigated in this study are:

The first objective of this study was to determine the perceived roles of the parents in the transition of children from pre-primary to class 1 in the study. The study established that majority of the parents played most of their roles in the Pre-primary school levels than in Class 1. The only roles that were uniformly played were the provision of the school feeding programme and the provision of school uniform. It can therefore be concluded that, parents never played uniform roles in the Pre-primary and Class 1 levels in the area of study and there is a need to sensitise parents on the importance of early years.

The second objective was to establish the extent to which teachers were prepared to handle the children during transition from the pre-primary to class 1 levels. The findings of the study established that, the use of play and the display of the children's work were the only teaching strategies that were almost equally used by the teachers in both the Pre-primary and Class 1 levels. The use of parents as resource persons was below average in the two levels. The use of thematic teaching approach and the keeping of the children's health records were the strategies that were used mostly by the

teachers of the Pre-primary school levels.

The third objective of this study was to determine the roles played by the school administration in the transition of children from pre-primary to Class 1. These roles are important because they are strategies which the school administration lay in order to enhance a smooth transition of children from the Pre-primary to the Primary school levels. The findings from the study showed that, the school administrators in Soy Division played their roles well and a factor which seemed to promote the children's transition process in Soy Division. The role that was not effectively played was the organization of the children's graduation on completion of their Pre-primary school level of education; however, the Head teachers need to work in collaboration with the PTA so that the parents are mobilised and sensitised on the importance of understanding the children's psychological feelings as they move from the pre-primary to class 1.

The fourth objective of this study was to determine extent of community involvement in the children's transition from pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division. Community is a very important component in this study because children are born and nurtured in it. The findings of the study established that, the community played its roles averagely well except on the component of graduation days.

The fifth objective of the study was to determine the availability of physical facilities in pre-primary and Class 1 levels and how they affect the children's transition from pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division. The physical facilities are important because they provide the children with comfort during their learning. The study findings reveal that, the organization of furniture in both the Pre-primary and Class 1 was almost

similar. Poorly ventilated classrooms was evident in the Pre-primary, so the two mentioned variables did not show any effect on the transition process as the former had no effect while the later provided comfort after a discomfort in the previous class, the component that was likely to hamper the transition process in this study was the availability of suitable furniture where few schools (38.9%) responded that they provided class 1 with suitable chairs and tables.

The study finding under the fifth objective showed a large proportion of children in the Pre-primary never shared the out door physical facilities with the Class 1 or the lower primary school children. Findings therefore showed that the aspect of sharing was less than 35%. It is therefore recommended in this study that, the DICECE office through their District Education office organize for frequent workshops and refresher courses for the head-teachers, school managers lower primary and pre-primary school teachers. This will enable them understand the importance of provision of suitable furniture and sharing of physical facilities as components which help promote the children's social and physical status.

5.3 Conclusions

The study was set to find out factors affecting the children's transition from Pre-Primary to Class 1 in Soy Division of Eldoret West District in Uasin-Gishu County. Based on the objectives that the study explored, the following conclusions were arrived at:

- 1) Majority of the parents play their roles in Pre-primary school levels as opposed to the Primary school levels. These roles are; escorting children to school, assisting in making children's teaching/learning materials, providing essentials

for the school feeding programme, helping as resource person and finally, providing uniform for children in pre-primary and class 1.

- 2) Most of the teachers in the Pre-primary used the thematic teaching approach and also kept their children's health records as compared to the Class 1 teachers.
- 3) The school administration played their roles well. These roles included, developing, using and maintaining professional records, convening common parades for all pupils in the school, involving all teachers in the school activities and organizing school feeding programmes.
- 4) The community like the school administration played its roles well but lacked the organization of graduation days for the children completing the Pre-primary school level. Some of the community roles included providing land for the school construction, hiring and paying teachers, organizing for graduation ceremonies for children, completing pre-primary school level and providing essentials for the school feeding programme.
- 5) The chairs and tables used in Class 1 were not suitable to the children (not age appropriate). The types of physical facilities available in schools include; suitable chairs and tables, well ventilated classrooms and furniture organized in rows. The pre-primary and primary schools do not share play materials.

5.4 Recommendations

Basing on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

- i. Parents need to be mobilized so that they can get to understand the children's

developmental needs.

- ii. Teachers in the lower primary needs refresher courses so that they are able to understand the strategies appropriate for enhancing a smooth transition of children from pre-primary to class 1.
- iii. The Ministry of Education need to provide funds to the schools so that the school administration is able to continue playing its role well.
- iv. The Ministry of Education should organize for more fund allocation to allow for a community mobilization and training on the children's transition.
- v. The government should ensure that it provides more funds for establishment of enough physical facilities in Pre primary schools.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The following are the areas that need further research:

- i) The same research should be carried out with a larger population in other districts as this would allow for more generalizations.
- ii) A study to establish the extent of preparedness of trainees in the Primary Teacher Training Colleges in handling the children in the lower primary school level of learning should be carried out.
- iii) A comparative study between the children's transition in public and private primary schools should be carried out to ascertain their level of transition.
- iv) A comparative study between the children's transition in rural and urban primary schools should be carried out to ascertain their level of transition.

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APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION LETTER

SELINA J.KOSKEY,
MOI UNIVERSITY,
P.O BOX 3900,
ELDORET.

DATE.....

TO THE HEAD-TEACHER

.....
.....

Dear sir/madam,

RE: PERMISSION FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES

I am a post-graduate student of Moi University pursuing a master of philosophy degree in the department of curriculum Instruction and Educational Media. I am currently carrying out a research on factors affecting the children’s transition from pre-primary to class 1 in Soy Division. I am kindly requesting you to allow me use your school as one of the study centres. The study will involve you as the head-teacher, one pre-primary teacher, one class 1 teacher and the school PTA chairperson. Together with the above, the study will also need to seek the some information on some school professional records.

The sought information will be treated with a lot of confidentiality and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Selina Koskey.

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BOTH THE PRE-PRIMARY AND CLASS 1 TEACHER

I am a postgraduate student of Moi University carrying out a study on factors affecting children transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in primary schools of Soy division Eldoret west district. I kindly request you to answer the questions below. All responses will be handled confidentially and will be used only for this study.

Please read the questions carefully and answer them honestly as possible by ticking (√) or writing the correct answer precisely on the spaces provided.

SECTION A: Background information

a. Indicate the type of your school

1. Public
2. Private (individual)
3. Private (religious-based)

b. Which class do you teach in this school?

1. Class 1
2. Pre-primary

c. Indicate your sex:

1. Male
2. Female

d. Select your age bracket from the choices below:

1. Below 25years
2. 25-35years
3. 36-45 years
4. Over 45 years

e. Indicate your highest professional qualification

1. P 1
2. ECDE certificate
3. ECDE diploma certificate
4. Bachelor of education
5. Master of education

Section B: The role of parents

a. At what school level are these roles played by the parents?

| S/no | Parent's role | Pre-Primary | Primary |
|------|---|-------------|---------|
| 1 | Escorting the children to school | | |
| 2 | Helping the children with their homework | | |
| 3 | Preparing the children's learning materials | | |
| 4 | Buying uniform for the children | | |
| 5 | Helping as resource persons | | |
| 6 | Providing essentials for the school feeding programme | | |

Section C: The role of the school administration

a. Which of these roles are those that are played by the school administration in your school with regard to the children's transition from Pre-primary to class 1?

b. Organizing common parades for Pre-Primary and the primary levels in the school

1. Organizes
2. Does not organize
3. Not aware

c. Involving the Pre-primary school teachers in the school activities

1. Involves
2. Does not involve
3. Don't know

d. Ensuring that the Pre-primary school children have a graduation ceremony at the end of pre-primary education

1. They have
2. They don't have

e. Develops, uses and maintains professional records

1. Very sure
2. Not sure

Section D: The physical facilities' role.

a. Tick the physical facilities that are available in your class.

1. Suitable furniture
2. Well ventilated classrooms
3. Furniture organized in rows

b. Choose by ticking the physical facilities that the pre-primary and the lower primary class levels share in your school

1. Playground
2. Fixed play equipment
3. Movable play equipment
4. Toilets
5. Kitchen
6. Water

Section E: Community Involvement

a. Which of these roles does the school community play with regard to the children's transition from Pre-Primary to class 1?

1. Providing land for school construction
2. Employing the teachers
3. Organizing for the Pre-Primary II graduation days
4. Providing the Pre-Primary and Class 1 with essentials for the school feeding programme

Section F: Teachers' Roles in handling children's transition from the Pre-Primary to class 1

a) Are you prepared in handling children's transition?

Well prepared Not prepared Uncertain

b) Select those activities that you carry out in your class

1. Use of play as a method of teaching
2. Use of parents as resource persons
3. Use of thematic teaching approach
4. The keeping of the children's health records
5. Display of the children's work

**APPENDIX III: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE
HEAD-TEACHER**

My name is Selina Koskey, a postgraduate student in Moi University undertaking a master's degree in early childhood and primary education. I am carrying a research on factors affecting the children's transition from Pre-Primary to class 1 in your division. The results of this study are aimed at cubing the drop-out, repetition and absenteeism which has been noticed in most class 1 in our schools. I am going to ask you some questions on the factors affecting children's transition from Pre-primary to Class 1. As we proceed, I will be taking some short notes

The purpose of this schedule is to draw out your roles as a school administrator who might be having some information with regard to factors affecting the Children's Transition from Pre-Primary to class 1. I promise confidentiality in all the information I will get from you.

Thank you very much Mr/Ms-----.

Section A: Background information

- a. What is your school's type?
1. Public
 2. Private (individual)
 3. Private (religious-based)
- b. Researcher to indicate the location of the school
1. Rural
 2. Urban
- c. Researcher to indicate the sex of the Respondent
1. Male
 2. Female

d. I will mention some academic qualification please feel free to tell me where yours fall.

1. Primary teacher certificate (P1)
2. ECDE certificate
3. ECDE diploma certificate
4. Bachelor of education
5. Master of education

Section B: Parents' role.

I will suggest some roles played by parents in Class one and Pre primary. Please feel free to explain the level at which they are played.

| S/no | Parent's role | Pre- primary | Primary |
|------|---|-----------------|---------|
| 1. | Escorting the children to school | | |
| 2. | Preparing the children's learning materials | | |
| 3. | Buying uniform for the children | | |
| 4. | Helping as resource persons | | |
| 5. | Providing essentials for the school feeding programme | | |

SECTION C: Teacher’s involvement in children’s transition from the Pre-Primary to class 1

I will mention some activities teachers undertake in their teaching in Class one and Pre primary. Please feel free to explain the level at which they are undertaken.

| Activity | Pre-primary | Class 1 |
|--|-------------|---------|
| Use of play as a teaching method | | |
| Use of parents as resource persons | | |
| Use of thematic approach of teaching | | |
| Keeping of the children’s health records | | |
| Display of the children’s work | | |

Section D: The role of the school administration

Kindly tell me some of the roles that you play as a school administrator with regard to the children’s transition from Pre-primary to class 1

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Section E: Community Involvement

In what ways does the community get involved in transition of children from pre-primary to class 1.

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APPENDIX IV: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH THE PTA CHAIRPERSON

My name is Selina Koskey, a postgraduate student in Moi University undertaking a master's degree in early childhood and primary education. I am carrying a research on factors affecting the children's transition from Pre-Primary to class 1 in your division. The results of this study are aimed at cubing the drop-out, repetition and absenteeism which has been noticed in most class 1 in our schools. I am going to ask you some questions on the factors affecting children's transition from Pre-primary to Class 1. As we proceed, I will be taking some short notes

The purpose of this schedule is to draw out your roles as a PTA chair person who might be having some information with regard to factors affecting the Children's Transition from Pre-Primary to class 1. I promise confidentiality in all the information I will get from you.

Thank you very much Mr/Ms-----.

Section A: Background information

(a) Researcher to indicate the sex of the Respondent

1. Male

2. Female

(b) I will mention some age brackets please feel free to tell me where yours falls

1. 25-30 years

2. 31-36 years

3. 37-42 years

4. 43-48 years

5. Above 48 years

(c) I will mention some academic qualifications please feel free to tell me where yours falls?

1. Primary certificate

2. Secondary certificate

3. Diploma certificate

4. Degree

(d) I will mention some types of schools please feel free to tell me where yours falls?

- 1. Public
- 2. Private (individual)
- 3. Private (religious-based)

Section B: Parent’s role

I will suggest some roles played by parents in Class one and Pre primary. Please feel free to explain the level at which they are played.

| S/no | Parent’s role | Pre- primary | Primary |
|------|---|-----------------|---------|
| 1. | Escorting the children to school | | |
| 2. | Preparing the children’s learning materials | | |
| 3. | Buying the same kind of uniform for the children | | |
| 4. | Helping as resource persons | | |
| 5. | Providing essentials for the school feeding programme | | |

Section C: The teacher’s involvement in handling children’s transition from pre-primary to class 1

Please feel free to mention whether the teachers in your school use parents as resource persons

.....

What makes you think that parental resourcefulness in the school has an impact on the child?

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Section D: The Role of the School Administration

Kindly tell me some of the roles that you play as a school administrator with regard to the children’s transition from Pre-primary to class 1

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Section E: Community Involvement

In what ways does the community get involved in transition of children from pre-primary to class 1.

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Section F: the physical facilities in class 1 and pre-primary

I will suggest some physical facilities available in school. Please feel free and mention whether they are available in the Pre-primary or the class1.

| Physical facilities/class levels | Pre- primary | Class 1 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Suitable furniture | | |
| Well ventilated room | | |
| Furniture organized in rows | | |

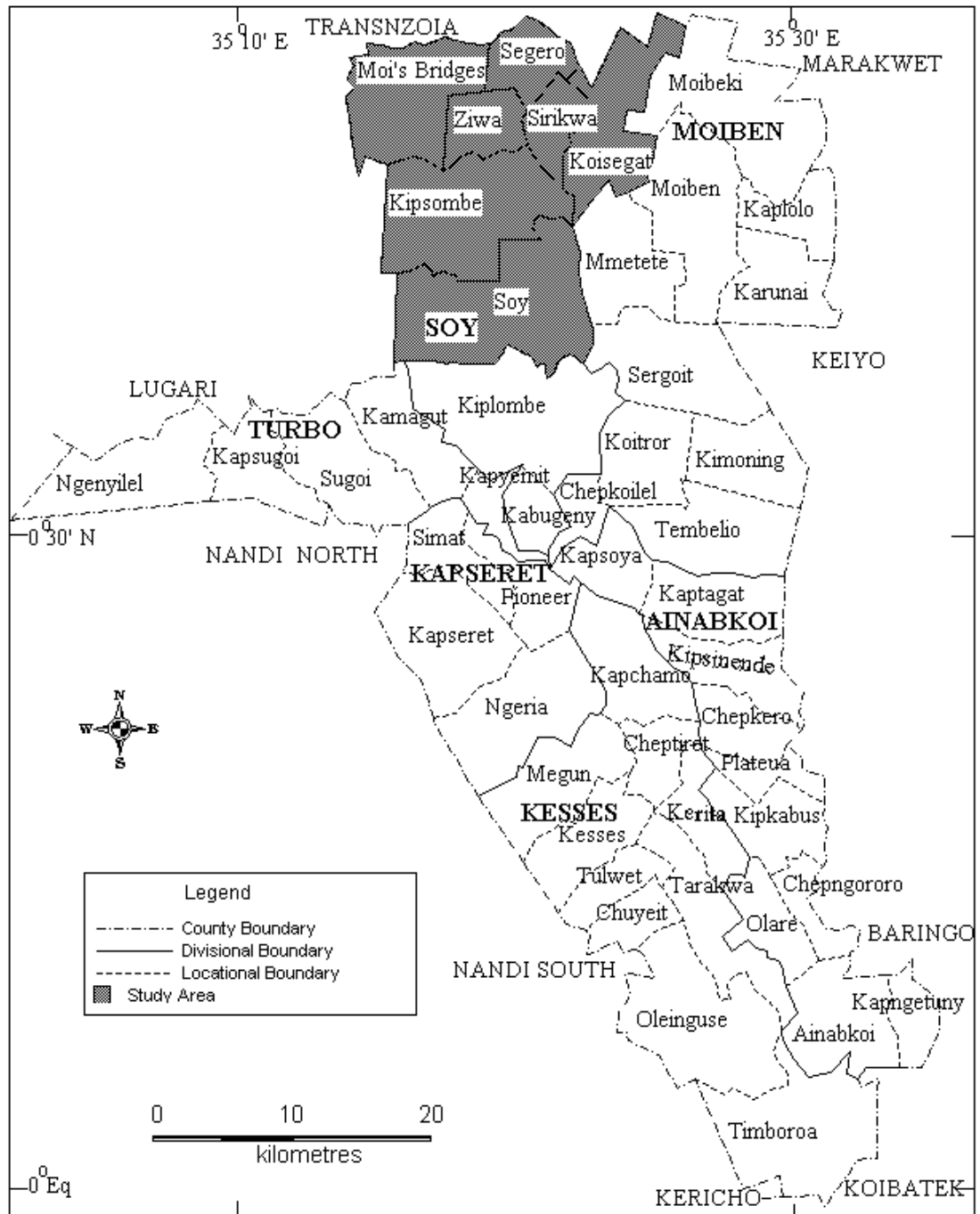
APPENDIX V: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS.

This instrument is meant to ascertain the documents required to promote a smooth transition from Pre-primary to class 1 in primary schools found in Soy Division.

Professional documents available in school

| S/no | Documents | Available | Not available |
|------|---|-----------|---------------|
| a) | Thematic approach lesson plan for pre-Primary | | |
| b) | Thematic approach lesson plan for class 1 | | |
| c) | Health records kept for pre-Primary children | | |
| d) | Health records kept for class 1 children | | |
| e) | Duty roster with all teachers | | |
| f) | Duty roster with primary teachers only | | |
| g) | Duty roster with pre-school teachers only | | |
| h) | Pre-primary syllabus | | |
| i) | Primary syllabus | | |

APPENDIX VI: STUDY AREA MAP



APPENDIX VII: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: "SCIENCETECH", Nairobi
 Telephone: 254-020-241349, 2213102
 254-020-310571, 2213123.
 Fax: 254-020-2213215, 318245, 318249
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 NAIROBI-KENYA
 Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref:

NCST/RRI/12/1/SS-011/385/5

Date:

14th April, 2011

Selina Jepkemei Kosgey
 Moi University
 P. O. Box 3900
 ELDORET

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on **"School factors affecting children's transition from pre-primary II to Standard One: A case of primary schools in Soy Division of Eldoret West District"** I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Eldoret West District for a period ending **31st December, 2011**.

You are advised to report to **the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Eldoret West District** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **one hard copy and one soft copy** of the research report/thesis to our office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. N. Nyakundi'.

P. N. NYAKUNDI
FOR: SECRETARY/CEO

Copy to:
 The District Commissioner
 Eldoret West District

The District Education Officer
 Eldoret West District

APPENDIX VIII: RESEARCH PERMIT

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THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
 Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss.....Selina Jepkemei
Kosgey
 of (Address)

has been permitted to conduct research in


.....Location,
Eldoret West District,
Riftvalley Province,
 on the topic....."School factors affecting
children's transition from pre-
primary to to standard one; A case
study of primary schools in Soy
Division of Eldoret West District".


for a period ending.....31st December, 2011

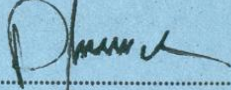
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Research Permit No.....
 Date of issue.....12/4/2011
 Fee received.....Kshs.1000




 Applicant's
Signature


 Secretary
National Council for
Science and Technology