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EDUCATION

PARENTAL FACTORS INFLUENCING TRANSITION RATES FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MATUGA SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: Education is regarded as the universal way of uplifting the standards of living for many people in a country. The government can use the findings of the study to formulate policies that can improve the transition rate. In addition, the government can use the findings to address school environment factors that can aid in improving the transition. Moreover, the study will help the donors to understand the problems that affect the pupils and the community thus can diversify their education support

Problem statement: Despite education being compulsory in many countries, a major impediment to education progress is the transition from primary level to secondary. Low transition rate from primary school to secondary school means that shortage of quality labor will be experienced in some days. The study sought to establish the parental factors influencing low transition rate from primary to secondary schools in Matuga Sub-County, Kenya

Method/methodology: Descriptive survey design was employed in the study. The population for the study comprised head teachers and parents of 89 primary schools in Matuga Sub-County Kenya. Questionnaires were used as data collection instruments. Stratified, purposive and convenient sampling method was used to obtain the sample size for the study.

Consequently the sample size for the study was 178 respondents. Content analysis was performed on the qualitative data obtained. Descriptive statistics was used analyze the quantitative data

Results of the study: The study found out that parental literacy level, parental income level and family background influence transition. Levies charged by the school, number of meals taken by students were found to influence transition rate but to a very low extent. Majority of the families live below the poverty line and spend most of their income on basic needs such as food and clothing and therefore, affording to meet the cost of education has become a challenge.

Conclusion and policy recommendation: The study concluded that parental level of income, parental literacy level and family background influence low transition rate in Matuga sub-county. It recommended that further studies be done to establish the where about of those who don't transit to secondary schools and replica studies in the other sub-counties of Kwale County and to the other counties as well. The national government in collaboration with the county government of to come up with programs aimed at reducing poverty levels within the sub-county so to promote a smooth transition from primary to secondary.

Keywords: *Parental literacy level, Parental income level, family background, transition rates, Matuga Sub county & Kenya*

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education helps to open people's minds to see greater opportunities and look forward to innovation. It tackles poverty and ailments, economic growth and social progress and strengthens people's voice (Spring, 2017). Despite education being compulsory in many countries, a major impediment to education progress is the transition from primary level to secondary (Gathmann et al., 2015). Low transition rate from primary school to secondary school means that shortage of quality labor will be experienced in some days. Innovations and technological progress may not be realized due to impediments in transition.

Parental literacy level plays a critical role in the orientation of their children to formal and informal education (Myrberg & Rosén, 2009). Parental level of income contributes to their children education in a special way, in as far as education materials and environment is concerned (Noble et al., 2015). Moreover, the family background to some extent determines the transition rate and education acquisition by children (Booth & Kee, 2009). The global education transition rates from primary school to secondary school level indicate that 90.5%

of learners who get to the last grade in primary school proceed to secondary school. However, two regions with the lowest education transition rate are west and central Africa (World Bank, 2015).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The transition rate from primary school to secondary school has been very low in Kenya, particularly mostly in the coastal region hampering social economic development (NCPSR, 2017). Without education a society cannot progress much and if so then little development can be realized. Education disseminates useful information to the learners and the informed nation can be able to achieve its goals. Thus, an increase in the transition rate to an excellent level that is of 90% and above means that the nation is informed. The study was carried out to establish the parental factors that influence low transition rate from primary to secondary schools in Matuga Sub-County Kenya.

Similar studies have been conducted in other counties of Kenya but their findings could be much different from that of Matuga Sub County. For instance, Murithi (2015) established the parental determinants of academic performance of learners in public day secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya and found that parents of students living in a household with income above the poverty level were more likely to be involved in school activities than parents of children living in a household at or below the poverty line. In addition, Mathia (2015) established the factors influencing pupils' transition rates from primary to secondary school in Kiambu Sub-County, Kenya and found the parental level of education influenced pupils' transition rates from primary to secondary school. The influence of these factors in respective Sub counties and country on transition rates from primary to secondary school could be different from that of Matuga Sub County; therefore the contextual gap was filled by conducting this study

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

i. To find out the influence of parental literacy level on the transition rates from primary to secondary schools in Matuga sub-county Kenya.
ii. To examine the influence of parental level of income on the transition rates from primary to secondary schools in Matuga sub-county Kenya
iii. To establish the influence of family background on the transition rates from primary to secondary schools in Matuga sub-county Kenya.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

i. How does the parental literacy level affect the transition rates from primary to secondary schools in Matuga sub-county Kenya?
ii. To what extent does the parental level of income affect the transition rates from primary school to secondary schools in Matuga sub-county Kenya?
iii. Does the family background affect the transition rates from primary school to secondary school in Matuga sub-county Kenya?

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the structural functionalism theory as developed by Herbert Spencer, an English philosopher. The structural-functional approach is a perspective in sociology that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. It sees human society as a living organism with different systems that work together for the wellbeing of the organism. A problem in one part of the organism slows its normal operation. Society as a structure comprises of several institution that must work together so as to achieve social harmony. These institutions include school and the family. Just like the human the human body, a malfunction in one institution affects the operation of another. In this study the researcher examined the relationship between parental factors such as level of income, literacy level and family background and how they influence transition rates from primary to secondary school. Like an organism, a change in all these variables (parental income level, parental literacy level and family background) influence transition rate either positively or negatively.

2.2 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

According to Machebe, *et al*. (2017) greater academic achievement for a student is attained by those students from financially stable familie. Parents of students living in a household with income above the poverty level were more likely to be involved in school activities than parents of children living in a household at or below the poverty line (Murithi, 2015). Eunice (2016) in her study found that Pupils from lower income background did not make a successful transition to post-primary school, as shown by teachers. Consequently, they are unable to fulfill students' needs such as uniforms, stationery and lunch and many young children failed to go to school.

According to Khan (2015), the parent's literacy level has a positive significant influence on the academic achievements of secondary school children. High level educated parents usually show interest and care in their children's academic performance or achievements and their choice of subject and career while in secondary school. Most parents with low literacy levels were not able to assist their children with schoolwork but depend on others, such as older siblings to assist (Nyama, 2011). Furthermore, the research revealed that parents do not often visit schools voluntarily but that they rather do so by invitation. However, relations between schools and parents appear to be healthy and the attitudes of parents towards their children's education are positive. Although parents with low literacy levels cannot always assist their children with their schoolwork, they motivate and value the education of their children since they realize that education remains the vehicle for social-economic development in any society.

Parental level of education influenced pupils' transition rates from primary to secondary school (Mathia, 2015). Educated parents were more effective in helping their children in academic work and that educated parents were interested in the academic progress of their children. The study of Iarmosh (2013) indicated that negative influence of family size on children school performance, parental time investments and the probability of attending general school. The study concluded that the quantity-quality tradeoff seemed present for children's educational outcomes in Russia.

According to Ella and Odok (2015), there existed a significant influence of family size and family type on academic performance of secondary school students in Government in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria. Otewa, et al, (2014) found that the smaller family size has been linked with higher academic achievement. Students with fewer siblings were likely to receive attention that is more parental and have more access to resources than children from large families. The additional attention and support leads to better school performance.

Muola (2010) asserted that a parent with a small family find it easy to provide for the physical needs of the child and is in a position to give him/her attention, encouragement, stimulation and support with his/her schoolwork. Muola (2010) further observed that this could have a motivating effect on a child from the small family in comparison with a child from a large family where the parents are always busy trying to find ways of meeting basic needs of the family.

2.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptual framework is a diagrammatical representation that shows the relationship between dependent and independent variables (Kothari, 2006). The framework helps the reader to see at a glance the proposed relationships between the variables in the study graphically or diagrammatically. Figure 1 provides the representation of the conceptual interaction between parental factors contributing to pupil education (independent variable) and transition rate (Dependent variable). The parental factors contributing to pupil education include but not limited to parental literacy level, parental level of income and family background, which principally precedes their transition from primary to secondary school

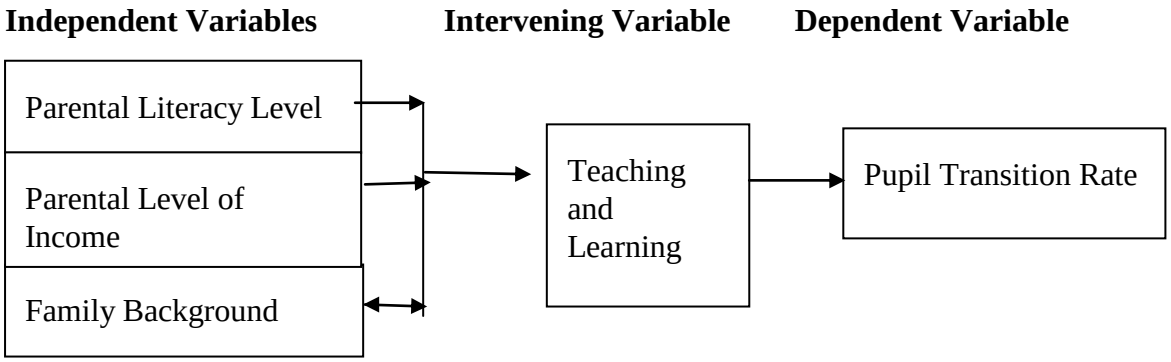

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the variables contributing to transition rate from primary to secondary school. Parental factors play a critical role in the transition of pupils from primary to secondary school. Whilst parental factors are key to the success of a pupil, teaching and learning process is also fundamental for the pupil's academic performance, which has a direct role on transition. If pupils are exposed to conducive teaching and learning environment then they are likely to have a positive attitude towards education and therefore their excelling chances are guaranteed. The converse is also true.

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which is useful in assessing practices, attitudes, knowledge and beliefs of a population either the entire population or a subset selected, and from these individuals, data is collected to help answer research questions. Also, helps in describing affairs as it is at the time of research. Survey design was therefore useful in gathering current information on parental factors influencing transition rates from primary to secondary schools in Matuga Sub-County Kenya. The target population was 89 head

teacher and 89 parents from the eighty nine primary schools in Matuga Sub-County Kenya. Purposive and stratified random sampling was used for the study. Purposive sampling was used to select primary schools therein Matuga Sub-County Kenya. Stratified random sampling was used to select the two categories of the study respondents, which are the head teachers, and the parents of primary schools in Matuga Sub-County Kenya. The study used open ended questionnaires to collect the data. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected during the study. Content analysis was performed on the qualitative data obtained from the open ended questionnaires. The main themes as well as patterns responses were recorded and analyzed to ascertain the consistency, adequacy and usefulness of the data. Quantitative data gathered from the questions was cleaned, coded and analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Science software (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the frequencies, percentage, and mean of the response.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response rate

Presentation of the response Rate on Table 1

Table 1: Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percent
Teachers	72	40.45%
Parents	70	39.33%
Total	**142**	**79.78%**

From Table 1, One hundred and seventy eighty questionnaires were distributed to the respondents (89 to the parents and another 89 to the head teachers), of which one hundred and forty two were answered and returned hence response rate was 79.78%. The response rate for the parents was 80.9% while that of the head teachers was 78.7%. Babbie (2004) opined that return rates of above 50% are acceptable, 60% is good, 70% is very good while above 80% is excellent. From this assertion, 79.78% response rate is excellent for the study to make conclusion

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

This section consists of the demographic information of the respondents which includes the gender, level of education and age. Results were presented on pie charts and column charts.

4.2.1 Gender of the respondents

Results of the respondents in terms of the gender presented in figure 2

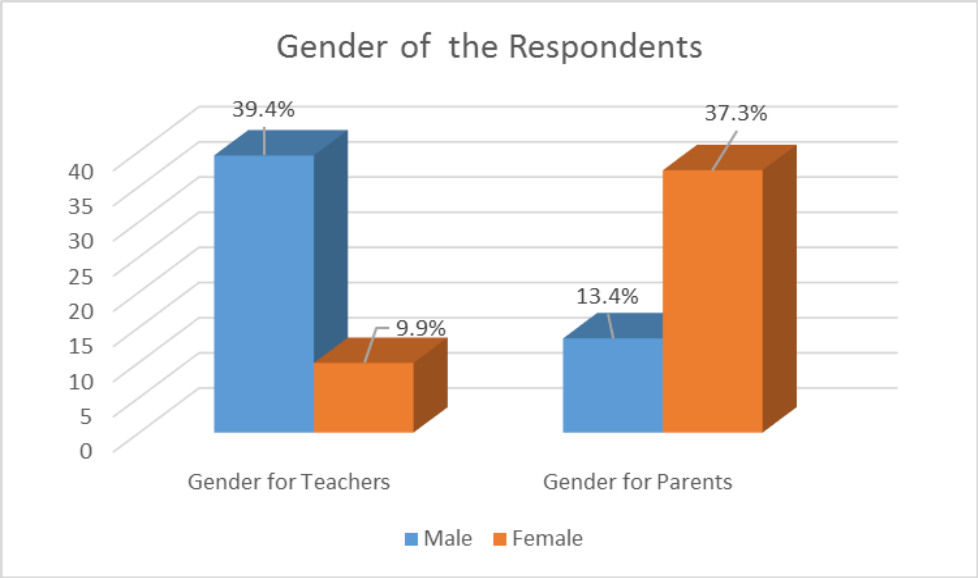

Figure 2: Gender of the Teachers and Parents

From figure 2, the respondents were requested to indicate their gender. The result show that majority of the respondents were male who represented 76.7% of the respondents while 23.3% of the respondents were female. Male teachers were represented by 39.4% while male parents were 37.3% of the respondents. Female teachers were paltry 9.9% while female parents who participate in the study were 13.4%. This implies that the gender distribution in most of the schools administration is uneven while that of parents can be regarded as a tradition that men are the most probable people who can speak for their families. The result agrees to that of Gakure (2001) and Gakure (2003) who also identified male domination in the formal and informal sectors

4.2.2 Level of Education

The respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of education as presented in Figure 3

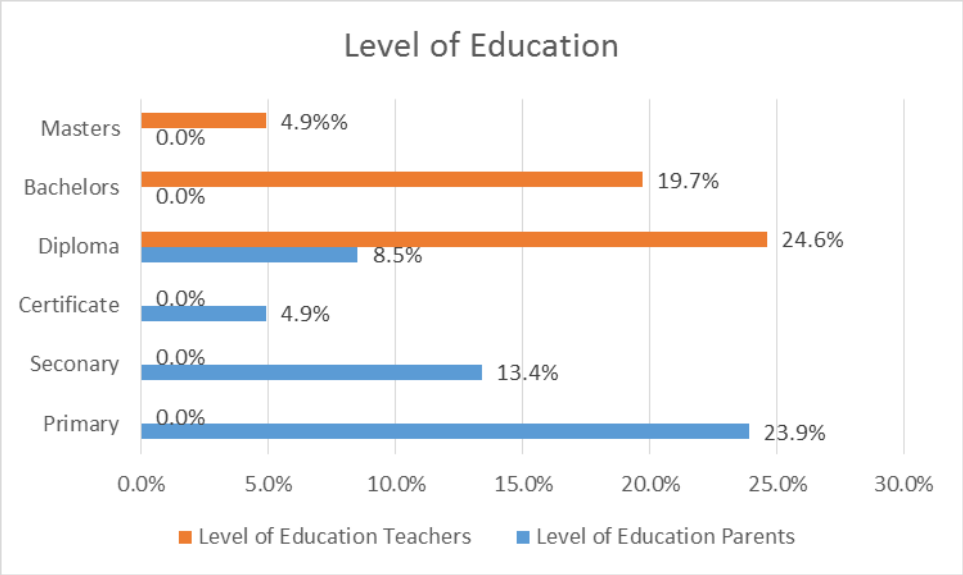

Figure 3: Levels of Education for the Teachers and Parents

From figure 3, 33.1% of the respondents had diploma being their highest level of education and 24.6% of them being the head teachers, equally 8.5% of the respondents were parents who had attained diploma level of education. 23.9% of the respondents who were parents had primary level of education, while 19.7% of the respondents who were head teachers had bachelor's degree as their highest education level. 13.4% of the respondents who were parents had attained secondary level of education while 4.9% of the respondents who were head teachers had masters' qualification being their highest level of education. Similarly, 4.9% of the respondents who were parents had certificate education. None of the head teachers had primary, secondary or certificate level of education while none of the parents had attained master or bachelor level of education. The result implies that most of the respondents understood the questionnaire and gave valid response

4.2.3 Age of the Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their age as presented in figure 4.

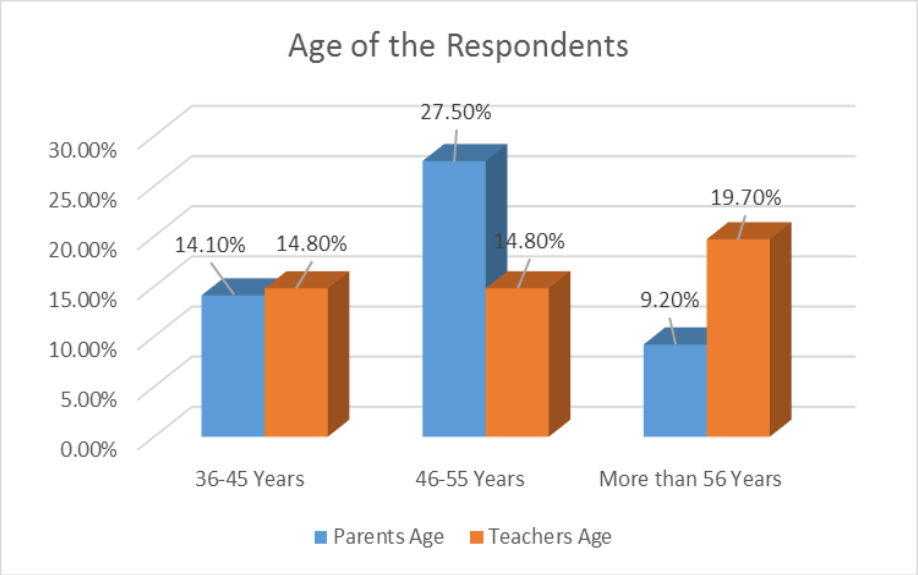

Figure 4: Age for the Teachers and Parents

The results indicated that majority of the respondents (42.3%) aged between 46 to 55 years, 27.5% being parents and 14.8% being head teachers. 28.9% of the respondents aged between 36 to 45 years, 14.8% being head teachers and 14.1% being parents. Similarly, 28.9% of the respondents aged 56 years and above, 19.7% being teachers while 9.2% being parents. The results implied that all the respondents were adults and understood parenting responsibilities and the need of education as provided by the Kenyan Laws.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

The section presents the descriptive statistics on parental income, parental literacy level, and family background and transitions rates.

4.3.1 Parental Income

The Figure 5 presents the parental Income.

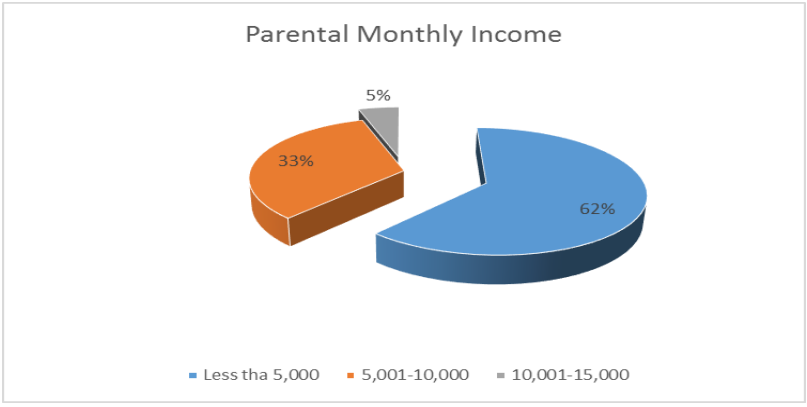

Figure 5 Average Parental Monthly Income

Results on figure 5 indicates that majority (62.0%) of the families had their average monthly income being Ksh 5,000 and below, 33% reported that their average monthly income were between Ksh 5,001 to 10,000 while 5% of the respondents indicated that families earned between Ksh10,001 to 15,000. This indicates that most of the families live below poverty level and that they spend most of their income on basic needs such as food and clothing. In general majority of the people in the area participated in small scale farming and casual labor that could only sustain them on their basic living. Affording education costs with such a source of livelihood can prove to both challenging and difficult. On the levies charged by the schools, it was reported that parents contributed only fees for buying examinations, school feeding program and motivation for tutors hired by the Parents Teachers Association (PTA)

Table 2 presented the findings of extent to which the parental income influenced the pupils' transition rate from primary to secondary level in the Sub County

Table 2: Parental Income

	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Low Extent	Very Low Extent	Mean	SD
Parental Income	4.90%	55.60%	19.70%	19.70%	0.00%	2.54	0.86
Parental Occupation	9.90%	40.80%	34.50%	14.80%	0.00%	2.54	0.86
Levies Charged by the School	0.00%	9.20%	33.80%	27.50%	29.60%	3.77	0.98
Ability to pay for private tuition	0.00%	19.00%	19.70%	47.20%	9.20%	5.54	1.06
Cost of stationery	4.90%	9.20%	24.60%	9.90%	51.40%	3.94	1.26
Number of meals taken by pupils	4.90%	9.20%	29.60%	14.80%	41.50%	3.79	1.22
Amount of bursary received	9.90%	9.20%	24.60%	32.40%	23.90%	3.51	1.23
Children in income generating activities	4.90%	4.20%	19.70%	4.90%	66.20%	4.23	1.2
Average						3.73	1.08

Results on Table 2 indicated that 55.6% of the respondents acknowledged that parental income influenced transition rate to a great extent, 19.7% of the respondents indicated that parental income influenced transition rate to a moderate extent while 4.9% of the respondents indicated that parental income influenced transition rate to very great extent. On parental occupation 40.8% of the respondents acknowledged that parental occupation influenced transition rate to a great extent, 34.5% of the respondents indicated that parental occupation influenced transition rate to a moderate extent while 9.9% of the respondents acknowledged

that parental occupation influenced transition rate to a very great extent. 57.1% of the respondents acknowledged that levies charged by the school influenced transition rate by low extent and 56.4% of the respondents accepted that parents ability to pay for private tuition influenced transition rate by low extent. 61.9% of the respondents indicated that cost of stationery influenced transition rate by low extent, 56.3% of the respondents indicated that number of meals taken by pupils and amount of bursary received influenced transition rate by low extent while 71.1% of the respondents acknowledged that children participating in income generating activities influenced transition rate by low extent.

The result implied that parents' income and their occupation determines the pupils transition rates because the fees paid to schools and support of the children in schools is dependent on finances contributed by the parent. Levies charged by the school, ability to pay for private tuition, cost of stationery, number of meals taken by pupils, amount of bursary received and children participating in income generating activities influences transition rate by low extent. This means that they are not the major contributing factors to transition rate as they can be afforded by the parents. The average mean of the responses was 3.73 indicating agreement to most of the statements; though the answers were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 1.08 which is moderate and normal on such statistics.

4.3.2 Parental Literacy Level

The respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which parental literacy level influenced pupils transition rate and the results were presented on Table 3.

Table 3: Parental Literacy Level

	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Low Extent	Very Low Extent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parent's ability to read and write	28.90%	36.60%	24.60%	0.00%	9.90%	2.25	1.17
Parent's level of education	19.00%	51.40%	14.80%	4.90%	9.90%	2.35	1.14
Mother's level of education	9.20%	38.70%	37.30%	9.90%	4.90%	2.63	0.96
Father's level of education	0.00%	38.00%	52.10%	4.90%	4.90%	2.77	0.76
Parent's involvement in pupil's homework	14.80%	51.40%	9.20%	14.80%	9.90%	2.54	1.2
Educated parents as role model	9.90%	44.40%	31.00%	14.80%	0.00%	2.51	0.87
Average						**2.51**	**1.02**

From Table 3, 65.5% of the respondents acknowledged that parent's ability to read and write influenced transition rate to a great extent, 70.4% of the respondents indicated that parent's level of education influenced transition rate to a great extent while 76.0% of the respondents indicated that mother's level of education influenced transition rate to a great extent. Similarly, 90.1% of the respondents agreed that father's level of education influenced transition rate to some extent, 66.2% of the respondents indicated that parent's involvement in pupil's homework influenced transition rate to a great extent while 54.3% of the respondents indicated that educated parents being role model influenced transition rate to a great extent. The result implied that parent's ability to read and write parent's level of education, mother's level of education, father's level of education, parent's involvement in pupil's homework and educated parents as role model influenced pupils' transition rate to a great extent. This is because educated parents know the importance of educating their children right from their exposure to education. They therefore strive to provide the necessary support in terms of learning materials; motivational talks and assisting them do their homework. The average mean of the responses was 2.5 indicating agreement to most of the statements; though the answers were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 1.02 which is moderate and normal on such statistics.

4.3.3 Family Background

The respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which family background influenced pupils' transition rate. Results were presented on Table 4

Table 4: Family Background

	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Low Extent	Very Low Extent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Family size	4.90%	76.10%	14.10%	4.90%	0.00%	2.19	0.6
Polygamous family	4.90%	34.50%	23.90%	26.80%	9.90%	3.02	1.1
Monogamous family	4.90%	9.90%	38.00%	37.30%	9.90%	3.37	0.97
Female headed families	4.90%	19.70%	52.10%	18.30%	4.90%	2.99	0.88
Male headed families	0.00%	4.90%	67.60%	27.50%	0.00%	3.23	0.52
Pupil's gender	0.00%	5.20%	41.50%	15.60%	37.80%	3.86	0.99
Number of children to transit to secondary schools	4.90%	23.90%	42.30%	28.90%	0.00%	2.95	0.85
Average						**3.08**	**0.85**

Results indicated that 81.0% of the respondents acknowledged that family size influenced pupils transition rate to a great extent, 63.3% of the respondents indicated that polygamous family influenced pupils transition rate to some extent while 85.2% monogamous family influenced pupil's transition rate to some extent. Similarly, 71.8% of the respondents indicated that female headed families influenced pupil's transition rate to a great extent, 95.1% of the respondents indicated that male headed families influenced pupil's transition rate to some extent. 53.4% of the respondents indicated that pupil's gender influenced pupil's transition rate to low extent while 66.2% of the respondents indicated that the number of children from a family who transit to secondary schools influenced pupil's transition rate to low extent.

This implies large family is likely to experience resource constraints and this affects the transition rate as compared to small family. Other factors like type of family (monogamous or polygamous), heads of family and pupils gender do have a contributing factor on transition rate. This is because their existence is influenced by the resources that the family has for disposal. The average mean of the responses was 3.08 indicating agreement to most of the statements; though the answers were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 0.85 which is moderate and normal on such statistics.

4.3.4 Transition Rate

The study also established the pupils transition rates for the last five years. The information was provided by the head teachers of the schools. The Table 5 presents the family background

Table 5: Family Background

Year	Mean	Std. Deviation
2017	58.86	15.6206
2016	55.858	15.12419
2015	56.78	11.4879
2014	59.696	13.82542
2013	56.21	15.2592
Average	**57.43**	**14.26**

Results from Table 5 indicated that pupil's transition rate in the Sub County was average as indicated by 57.43%. The transition rates per year is as ranked 2014 (59.7%), 2017 (58.9%),

2015 (56.8%), 2013 (56.2%) and 2016 (55.9%). The near transition rates could be because of the environmental factors and the parental factors.

The study also sought to know the number of years each teacher had served in their current school. The results were presented on Figure 6

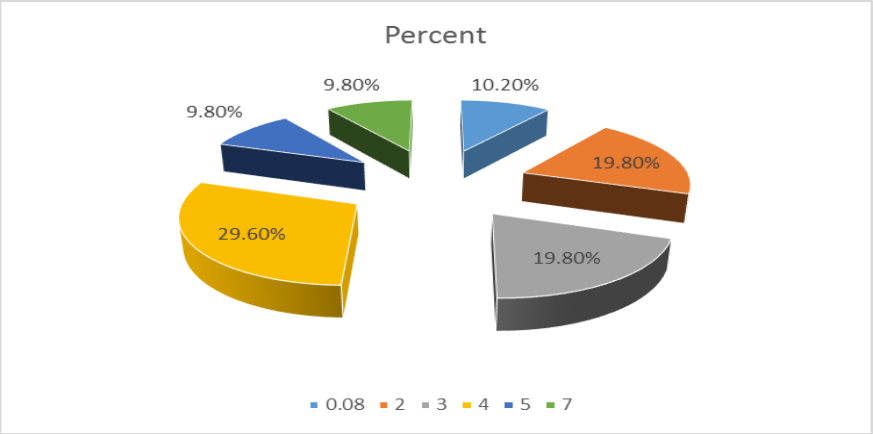

Figure 6: Number of Years Served in Current School

Results in figure 6 indicated that 29.6% of the teachers had served in their current school for 4 years, 10.2% of the teachers had served in the current school had served in the current schools for a period of less than one year, equally 19.8% of the teachers had served in the current school for a period of two and three years respectively. Similarly, 9.8% of the teachers had served for five years and seven years respectively. The average years the teachers served in the school are 3.4 years. This implies that most of the teachers had knowledge on the factors that affected pupil's transition from primary to secondary school. More prominently is the parental factors that are coupled to the socioeconomic factors in their regions.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that parental level of income, parental literacy level and family background influence low transition rate in Matuga sub-county. most of the families live below poverty level and they spend most of their income on basic needs such as food and clothing and therefore, affording to meet the cost of education has become a challenge. Large families experience resource constraint and eventually cannot support their education. It was reported that if a family has one child who has proceeded to secondary school, the rest of the

children are forced to repeat classes so as to give a chance for him/her to complete the secondary studies. This sometimes leads to dropout cases. In polygamous families resources cannot support children's education while divorced parents do not care for their kids. The results of the study conforms to that of Muola (2010) who asserted that a parent with a small family find it easy to provide for the physical needs of the child and is in a position to give him/her attention, encouragement, stimulation and support with his/her school work. Both the national government and the county government to allocate more resources to cater for the neediest students in the county schools.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended the national government in collaboration with the county government of Kwale should come up with programs aimed at reducing poverty levels within the sub-county. Also, the government should increase the budgetary allocation to the state department of education so as to facilitate the ongoing feeding program, hire more teachers and cater for the cost of stationery and co-curricular activities. Sub-county education office together with other stakeholders should come up with practical measures to sensitize the parents on the important of education in order to change their attitude.

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