

**STUDENTS' DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS INFLUENCING
THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
NAROK NORTH DISTRICT, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for any award in any university.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my father Wilfred King'ori and my mother Beatrice King'ori for their prayers and financial support.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASALs	Arid and Semi Arid Lands
DEO	District Education Office
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
KCSE	Kenya certificate of Secondary Education
MED	Master of Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district, Kenya. Four research objectives were formulated to guide the study. The first objective was to examine how birth order affects their participation in secondary school education. The second objective was to establish the extent to which students' gender influenced their participation in secondary school. The third objective was to establish the extent to which students' attitudes towards education influence their participation in their education. The fourth objective was to determine how the age of students affects their participation in secondary schools.

The study was based on the student involvement theory by Alexander (1975). The study employed descriptive survey design. The researcher used simple random sampling technique to select the sample population. Out of the 21 public secondary schools, 6 were selected to participate in the study. Similarly, 8 Form III class teachers were selected randomly. This represented 30 per cent of the target population. In addition, 175 students representing 10 per cent of the target population were part of the sample population. Data were collected using questionnaires and student observation schedules. The results of the questionnaires and the student observation schedules were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Findings revealed that there were students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in secondary education. Such demographic characteristics included students' birth order, students' gender, students' attitudes towards education and students' age. Findings indicated that students' birth order influence their participation. Further, students' gender was also a demographic characteristic influencing their participation in secondary school education. Students' attitude towards education also played a significant role in influencing students' participation in education. Further, students' age influenced their participation in public secondary school in Narok North district.

It was concluded that students' participation in education was influenced by their birth position. It was also concluded that students' gender influenced their participation in secondary school education. More so, students' attitude towards education greatly influenced their participation. Finally, it was concluded that students' age influenced their participation in secondary education.

Through the study findings it was recommended that there should be legal changes that allow for girls re-entry to schools after getting pregnant or being rescued from forced marriages. It was also recommended the community should be sensitized on the importance of education. This will make them develop a

positive attitude toward education hence changing the students' attitude towards education. Students should be encouraged to emulate their elder siblings who have excelled. Finally, the county government should take up the initiative of allocating more money to the bursary kitty to benefit more students. This would help curb the problem of students being sent home to collect school fees.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Secondary schooling is a minimum entitlement for equipping the youth with the knowledge and the skills they need to secure decent livelihoods in today's globalized world. In many ways, secondary education is a bridge for young people from the world of school to the world of work (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations [UNESCO], 2003).

Student participation refers to a student's willingness, need, desire and compulsion to engage in, and be successful in the learning process, promoting higher levels of thinking for enduring understanding (Chapman, 2003). Chapman further adds that student engagement is frequently used to depict students' willingness to participate in routine school activities, such as, attending class, submitting required work, and following teacher's directions in class.

Newman (2002) explains that student participation occurs when students make a psychological investment in learning. They try hard to learn what school offers. They take pride not simply in earning the formal indicators of success (grades) but in understanding the material and incorporating or internalizing in their lives. Low participation is, however, characterized by unexcused absence from class, cheating on tests and damaging school property (Chapman, 2003). According to Skinner and Belmont (2003), disaffected students are passive, do not try hard and give up easily

in the face of challenges. They can be bored, depressed, anxious or even angry about their presence in the classroom; they can be withdrawn from learning opportunities or even rebellious towards teachers and classmates.

Several studies across the globe have been carried out investigate some of the students' demographic characteristics that possibly influence their participation in secondary education. Birth order and its impact on the individual is a matter of concern among researchers. A study conducted in Missouri Western State University concluded that firstborn children are considered the brightest among all the other siblings in a family (Evans & Mc Clintic, 2007). Similarly, firstborns are able to gain intellectual advantage through the teaching effect or becoming tutors and mentors to the younger siblings. Many times parents call on the older siblings to help younger siblings by answering questions, giving explanations and offering meanings of words all of which help them gain verbal fluency quickly (Zajonc, 2001).

Throughout most of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the heavy work burden of rural women may force them to keep their daughters at home to help at home to help with the care of younger siblings, time consuming tasks on the farm and household chores (World Bank, 2007). In Latin America, girls in urban areas had lower dropout and repetition rates than boys while in rural areas girls tended to leave school earlier than boys (United Nations [UN], 2002).

According to Ainley and Khoo (2005) students' attitudes to school and learning potential influence both educational intentions and continuation in formal learning through school and beyond. If the connection between attitudes and subsequent educational participation is strong, it can be inferred that students will be engaged in education. Teese and Polese (2003) add that students in Australian secondary schools said they left school because they did not like school or teachers and that they had lost interest and motivation.

Causes of low participation in secondary schools in South Africa are characterized by lack of motivation and increased absenteeism among those parents die due to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Some of the children become heads of households; they spend their time out of school fending for their siblings (Coombe, 2000).

Student disengagement follows a similar course as anti-social behavior with young students feeling disaffected from school or withdrawn from school life. Deviant behavior and attitudes tend to increase sharply during early adolescent years, peak at about age 16 or 17 and then decrease slowly. This may be considered normal among adolescents as most youths re-engage in a significant way after the period of compulsory schooling (Ainley & Khoo, 2005).

An analysis of data of the level of participation in education in five Arab countries: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Syria showed that in all the five countries much progress had been made in getting children participate in education. However,

demographic factors such as the number of siblings (especially brothers) and birth order hinder participation. Absence of one of the parents and having a mother who got her first child at a young age decreases chances of girls and older boys to participate in education (Smits, 2010).

Gender imbalance in education remains a major challenge to the Government of Kenya. Low levels of education attainment by women are evident (Republic of Kenya 2007). In many communities boys are preferred to girls when it comes to schooling. In situations where resources are limited girls are likely to be pulled out of school (Anyango & Abagi, 2005).

Narok North district is mostly occupied by the Maasai community. The Maasai community widely practices pastoralism which has long been the dominant feature of the regional economy (Leggett, 2001). He further adds that the relationship between pastoralism and education has been problematic leading to the assumption that continued pursuit of pastoralism is inconsistent with the provision of education. There could be a variety of reasons why the pastoralists have been less engaged with the education system.

According to the annual learning assessment by Uwezo Kenya (2012) absenteeism in Narok county is high with more than 4 out of 10 children missing school daily. Worse still, 2 out of 5 children aged between 6 and 16 years in the county drop out of school either to get married or circumcised. Absenteeism and drop out harm the individual and his or her prospects. When students are absent from class they miss

critical instruction for understanding key concepts being taught. Such students may end up performing poorly and eventually drop out of school. Students who go to school every day are likely to complete their homework and arrive class on time. This may make them get engaged in their own education.

There could be a variety of reasons why students in Narok North district miss school at such an alarming rate. This research sought to establish students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district. The study looked at students' birth order, students' gender, students' attitudes towards education and students' age as some of the students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in secondary school education in the district.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The Government of Kenya has formulated policies to enhance participation in secondary schools with a view to attaining Education for All (EFA). These include subsidized secondary tuition, introduction of boarding schools in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), school feeding programmes in ASALs (Narok North district is one of the ASALs) and increased bursary funds to help needy students' participate in education (MoE, 2012).

A study conducted by the Ministry of State for the Development of Northern Kenya and other Semi-Arid Lands in 2008 (Republic of Kenya 2008-2012) observed that access to education in the region is still undermined by

inappropriate teaching materials, inadequate allocation of high quality teachers and difficulties in retaining them. Cultural factors, such as early marriage and a preference for educating boys, as well as the heavy demands placed on girls, create gender differentials in educational outcomes.

Most of the studies carried out have concentrated on enrolment, retention and completion at the secondary school level (Lehman & Buys (2002); Ondara (2011); and Majiwa (2010). Student involvement in education especially at the secondary school level has received little attention. It was against this background that the researcher intended to carry out a research on demographic characteristics influencing students' participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to establish student demographic characteristics that influence their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The following were the specific objectives of the study:

- i) To examine the ways in which birth order affects students' participation in secondary school education in Narok North district.
- ii) To establish the extent to which the gender of the students influences their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district.

- iii) To establish the extent to which students' attitudes towards education influence their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district.
- iv) To determine the ways in which the age of students affect their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district.

1.5 Research questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- i) In what ways does birth order affect students' participation in secondary school education in Narok North district?
- ii) To what extent does students' gender towards education influence their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district?
- iii) To what extent does students' attitude affect their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district?
- iv) In what ways does the age of the student influence their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study may be significant to the head teachers as it will put into perspective the effects of students' demographic characteristics. This could prompt teachers to find possible solutions to raise students' participation in secondary education.

The Quality Assurance and Standards may get information on the existing situations in schools related to the influence of demographic characteristics of students on their participation. This may challenge them find ways of handling the situation. The study may also be used as a basis to sensitize learners on the importance of participating in secondary school education. The findings of this study may be used by researchers who wish to carry out a further study on students demographic factors influencing their participation in secondary schools.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The respondents may give socially acceptable answers to avoid offending the researcher and others may give negative responses which may not allow generalization to the scope of the study. To minimize this, the researcher explained to the respondents that the research was meant for academic purposes only and that their identity will not be revealed. Poor record keeping on absenteeism and age of learners in some schools was expected. This was not encountered by the researcher as the schools had computers where they have updated information concerning the students.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Narok North district. The district experiences low participation as already indicated by high students' absenteeism and dropout. The researcher obtained responses only from Form

Three students. This is because the group had a longer experience in secondary life unlike the Form One and Form Two students who have been in school for a shorter period of time. The Form Four students were likely to be involved more by their teachers in preparation for end of year exams.

1.9 Basic assumptions

The following assumptions were made concerning the study:

- i) The respondents gave accurate information.
- ii) The respondents had the information the researcher sought to collect.
- iii) The respondents provided information without feeling intimidated.

1.10 Definitions of significant terms

The following are definitions of key terms that informed the study:

Absenteeism refers to skipping school without a legitimate reason.

Age refers to the learner's number of years since birth.

Attitude refers to the students' positive or negative predisposition to think, feel, perceive and behave in a certain way towards a given situation.

Birth order refers to a students' rank by age among his or her siblings

Gender is the social differentiation between males and females.

Public secondary schools are schools after primary level that are established and are administered by the government. They cater for students from Form One to Form Four.

Students' demographic characteristics refer to facts about the make up of the students' population.

Students' participation refers to student engagement in the learning process.

1.11 Organization of the study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one of the study consists the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, delimitations and definition of significant terms. Chapter two deals with the literature review under five subtopics namely; the concept of participation, students' birth order and participation in education, students' gender and its effects on participation, students' attitudes and their effect on participation in education and students age and its effects on participation. A conceptual framework and theoretical framework are also included in this chapter. Chapter three deals with research methodology used. This includes, research design, target population, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, validation and reliability of the research instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis techniques. Chapter four consists of data analysis,

interpretation and discussion of findings while chapter five is on summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools. The section dwells on the concept of participation, students' demographic characteristics that include students' birth order, students' gender, students' attitude towards education and age of learners. The section also presents summary of related literature, the theoretical framework and the conceptual framework.

2.2 The concept of participation

School is central to the daily lives of many youths. They view schooling as essential to their long-term well being, and this attitude is reflected in their participation in academic and non-academic pursuits. These students tend to have good relations with school staff and with other students- they feel they belong at school. However, some youths do not share this sense of belonging, and do not believe that academic success will have a strong bearing on their future. These feelings and attitudes result in their failure to participate in education (Jenkins, 1995).

The importance of student engagement with school is recognized by educators as far too many students are bored, unmotivated, and uninvolved in the

academic and social aspects of school life. Laws have been used to regulate the education structure but student perspectives and experiences substantially influence academic and social outcomes (Mosher, 2005).

Participation in education is seen as a disposition towards learning, working with others and functioning in a social institution, which is expressed as students' feelings that they belong at school activities. It can be expected that student's attitudes towards school and their participation strongly affect their decision whether or not to pursue post-secondary studies. Thus, participation is probably closely tied to students' economic success and long-term health and well being, and as such deserves to be treated alongside academic achievement as an important schooling outcome (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2003).

Students who fail to participate in education may gradually withdraw from school activities, and in some cases participate in disruptive behavior and display negative attitudes towards teachers and other students. Participation is characterized by factors such as school and class attendance, being prepared for class, completing homework, and being involved in extra-curricular sports or hobby clubs (OECD, 2003).

Students who are engaged show sustained behavioral involvement in learning activities accompanied by a positive emotional tone. They select tasks at the border of their competencies, initiate action when given the opportunity, and

exert intense effort and concentration in the implementation of learning tasks; they show generally positive emotions during ongoing action, including enthusiasm, optimism and curiosity (Williams, 2003).

2.3 Students' birth order and participation in education

Given that parents have a fixed time endowment, the first born may receive a greater time endowment than subsequent children who have to compete for parental attention. However, if the children are widely spaced, then the last born might benefit more as older children leave the family nest or through the expansion of time inputs as both parents and older siblings spend time with the last born child (Booth & Kee, 2005).

First born children ask a lot of questions and want details. They thrive being in control, on time and organized. They have a strong need for approval. They are likely to be the best readers in class. They are motivated to achieve, can be compliant or strong willed (Beach 2013). Similarly, Adler (2011) adds that first born children are socially dominant, highly intellectual and extremely conscientious. They are less open to new ideas and are prone to perfectionism.

The middle born children have a lot of pressure coming from different directions. They often feel misunderstood and out of place. They avoid conflicts and will allow others to make choice in an effort to keep the peace (Beach, 2013). Middle children, often sandwiched between older and younger siblings, often develop a competitive nature- making them natural entrepreneurs later in

life. They tend to be most diplomatic and flexible members of the family and often, eager for parental praise, develop musical or intellectual gifts (Adler, 2011).

The last born children are often affectionate and uncomplicated. They can be charming one minute and rebellious the next. They thrive on praise for encouragement. They are often messy and poor readers (Beach, 2013). Last born children and only children, are regularly spoiled, and have a hard time when they do not get their own way. School can be a particularly difficult transition, as they are used to being the centre of familial universe (Adler, 2011).

According to Beach (2012) if older children are expected to assume more responsibility in assisting with younger siblings, the training may assist in making them perform more responsibly at school and become higher achievers. Older siblings may be encouraged to leave school early to assist in providing resources for the family; by giving an advantage to later birth order siblings with respect to educational attainment. Booth and Kee (2005) note that siblings are unlikely to receive equal shares of the resources devoted by parents to their children's education. This study sought to find out how student' birth order influenced their participation in secondary school education.

2.4 Students' gender and its effects on participation

Research on gender and education has focused on unearthing underlying causes of gender disparities, and the factors that hinder attempts to reduce and eventually eliminate disparities. Studies reveal that key factors include social, cultural and religious beliefs, poverty and poor learning environment (Republic of Kenya, 2007).

According to Cheboi (2007), despite the immense role education plays and the significant progress that has been made towards providing education in Kenya, gender disparities in education are apparent in some regions and in post primary levels. Most girls who lack older siblings who have excelled in the field of education do not perform well because of lack of role models in their families.

Gender-based discrimination beliefs, which determine how boys and girls access education with most parents preferring to educate the boy child and consequently academically neglecting the girl child were and still have been evident in the Kenya marginalized communities (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). Many Kenyan communities still adhere to traditional beliefs and practices rooted in patriarchy that still militate against women and girls' rights. As a result of socialization, both boys and girls tend to acquire gender-stereotyped roles, attitudes, values, and norms, which propagate the status quo (Republic of Kenya, 2007).

Gender disparities in performance are also evident. In the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), boys tend to perform better in key subjects such as English, mathematics, biology, physics and chemistry. Although girls are generally regarded as more adept than boys in languages, this position was debunked by the performance in KCSE between 2000 and 2005 when boys' performance was superior to that of girls (Republic of Kenya, 2007).

Many children especially girls have been affected by Human Immunodeficiency Virus(HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) because of loss of parents. Kelly (2002) emphasizes that such orphans' participation in schools becomes irregular and ineffective. HIV and AIDS affect women and men differently due to their biological, socio-cultural and economic circumstances. (Republic of Kenya, 2007).

Among the Maasai community education is still low among girls who are still expected to marry early, despite the fact that education is viewed as a means for changing society's attitude and cultural practices. Factors such as initiation to womanhood, force girls to stay out of school for quite some time. This, therefore, impacts negatively on the girls' education since they are not able to catch up with the rest leading to poor performance and drop out eventually (Honey for Life, 2004). This study sought to find out how students' gender influenced their participation in secondary school education.

2.5 Students' attitudes and their effect on participation in education

Students' attitudes to school and learning potential influence both educational intentions and continuation in formal learning through school and beyond. Students' attitudes can be regarded as influential on participation, because it is formed in response to curriculum, teaching practices and organizational arrangements (Ainley, 2005).

Students' beliefs about their competence and their expectations for success in school have been directly linked to their levels of participation, as well as to emotional states that promote or interfere with their ability to be academically successful. For example, students who believe they are academically incompetent tend to be more anxious in the classroom and more fearful of revealing their ignorance (Abu-Hilal, 2006).

According to Shaw (2011) many students view education as an obligation rather than a privilege, and fail to fully engage in their studies as a result. For some students, school- with its strict teachers, lunchroom bullies and large piles of homework- inspires a fear of weekdays instead of a love of learning. Some students dislike school because they find it boring or pointless. Students frequently adopt attitudes and opinions held by the adults they look up to and academic enthusiasm is no exception. Students hold a more positive attitude toward school if their parents clearly value education.

According to Newman and Golding (2002), students fear that education interactions will result in embarrassment and humiliation, and this, in turn, inhibits them from behaving in ways that might help them, such as asking questions when they are confused or when they are engaging in trial-and-error problem-solving. In addition, such students are more likely to avoid putting much effort to a task so that they can offer a plausible alternative to low ability or lack of knowledge as an explanation for failure.

The nomadic lifestyle of the pastoralists impacts negatively on their children. Pastoralists' attitudes and values are opposed to modern education. Parents see education as a threat to their cultural integrity. This leads to a conflict between old and new and the process exacerbates the problem of drop out within the education system (Cheboi, 2007). Negative attitude makes it hard to concentrate and focus. It might be hard to complete schoolwork, pay attention in class, remember lessons, or stay focused on what others say. This study sought to find out how students' attitudes towards education influenced their participation in secondary school education.

2.6 Students' age and its effects on participation

Cheboi (2007) states that most girls join primary school when old and so reach adulthood before joining high school, hence curtail their chances of participating in secondary education. Their enrolment age and being 'adults' increases chances of being married off. Children may be enrolled late where

primary schools are situated far away because their parents would like them to attend when they are old enough to cover the long distances to school. The older the children the more likely they will fail to participate in education.

According to Willingham (2010) first graders are usually happy to be in school. This is unlike students in subsequent grades who believe they do not belong there. They do not see school as a place of excitement and opportunity. They see school as a place where they fail and are made to feel ashamed. These are students who eventually drop out. Some may graduate but will do so functionally illiterate. They do not find school engaging and rewarding.

Students become overage when they repeat grades, either because they do not meet their promotional criteria or because of interruptions in their schooling, like foster care, or frequent family relocation. Overage students mean students who have a year or more older than their peers in the same grade (Horowitz,2009).

Students are harmed by the trauma of being held back, the challenge of adjusting to a new peer group, and reduced expectations for their academic performance on the part of the teacher and parents. They argue that being overage for their grade makes students more likely to drop out. Students who have previously been retained are at elevated risk for low academic achievement (Reid, 2006). It was therefore, important for the study to find out how students' age influenced their participation in secondary school education.

2.7 Summary of related literature

The literature reviewed indicates that there are links between absenteeism and participation as the student misses important instruction while out of school. It is likely that first born children and only children might receive a larger share of resources towards their education. Last born children might also receive a big share of resources if children are spaced out. From the literature, it is evident that girls are more affected in their participation in education as most of them have other chores to attend to thus denying them enough time to participate in education. There is also evidence from the literature that students who have a negative attitude towards school are likely to be disengaged while those with a positive attitude are likely to spend more time on their schoolwork. The age of the learners also affects their participation in education. Since the students are in their adolescent stage, they may be influenced to join peer groups that determine their level of engagement in education.

2.8 The theoretical framework

The study will employ the student involvement theory by Alexander Astin (1975). The theory has its roots in a longitudinal study of college dropouts who endeavored to identify factors in the college environment that significantly affect the students' persistence in college.

The student involvement theory has five postulates:

- i. Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects. The objects may be highly generalized (the student experience) or highly specific (preparing for a reading lesson).
- ii. Regardless of the object, involvement occurs along a continuum; that is, different students manifest different degrees of involvement in a given object and the same student manifests different degrees of involvement in different objects at different times.
- iii. Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features. The extent of a student involvement in academic work, for instance, can be measured quantitatively (how many hours they spend studying) and qualitatively (whether the student reviews and comprehends reading assignments or simply stares at the textbook daydreaming).
- iv. The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program.
- v. The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement.

The last two propositions are the key educational postulates, because they provide clues for designing more effective educational programs for students.

The theory of student involvement encourages educators to focus less on what they do and more on what the student does: how motivated the student is and how much time and energy the student devotes to the learning process. The theory assumes that student learning and development will not be impressive if educators focus most of their attention on course content, teaching techniques, laboratories, books and other resources.

Students who have a positive attitude to school are likely to spend quality and quantity time reading and trying to comprehend what he reads compared to a student who has a negative attitude toward school. A student who is disengaged will not put any effort towards participating in education. The student is not likely to overcome challenges.

Despite the many challenges on gender and age, engaged students will look for time to compensate time lost out of school. The girls who are faced with many household chores will look for time to read. The theory explicitly acknowledges that the time and energy of students are finite. Educators are competing with other forces in a student's life for a share of that finite time and energy. The study adopted this theory because students' birth order, students' gender, students' attitudes towards education and students' age influences their participation in secondary school education.

2.9 The conceptual framework

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), a conceptual framework is a research tool that assists a researcher to develop awareness and understanding of the situation under scrutiny and communicate them from the researcher's point of view.

The conceptual framework shows the input (the independent variables) and the output (the dependent variable). The output is achieved after the various inputs into the education process undergo education process. The inputs into the school process include learners' birth order, gender, attitude and age. The output, namely participation, is a function of how these inputs interact.

Figure 2.1: Student participation in secondary education

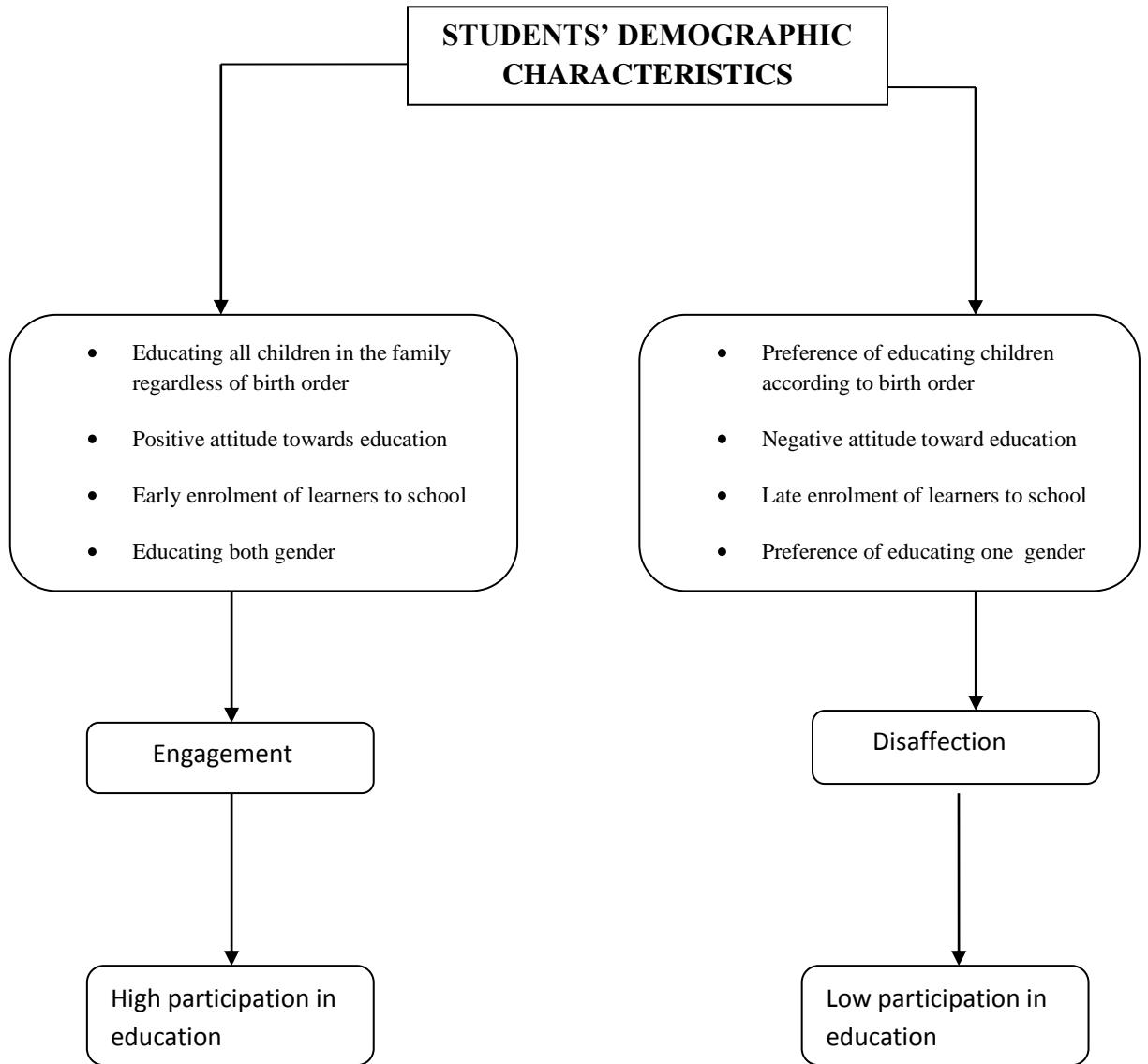


Figure 2.1 conceptualizes that students' birth order can influence their participation in education. Further, learners' attitude towards education can influence their participation. It is also conceptualized that the gender and age of the learner are powerful factors that influence their participation. If the interplay

of the independent variables and the dependent variable is healthy, students' participation in education could be good. This study was set to assess how the above inputs interact to influence secondary school students' participation in Narok North district.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures. The section also describes the research instruments reliability and instrument validity, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research design

The study employed descriptive survey design to investigate student related factors influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district. Descriptive survey is a design through which data is collected from members of the target population to determine current status of that population in respect to two or more variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This design was preferred because the subjects were being observed in a completely natural and unchanged environment. The design helped the researcher to get generalized characteristics about the target population. It further helped to collect relevant information with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money.

3.3 Target population

Target population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. It refers to an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common (Kombo & Tromp 2006).The study targeted all the 21 public secondary schools in Narok North district, 21 head teachers, 26 Form Three class teachers and 1753 Form Three students (DEO Narok North district (2013)).

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedures

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that 10-30 per cent sample is reasonable to draw generalization about the target population. The researcher used simple random sampling to select the schools. This method was appropriate since it is free of classification error. Out of 21 public secondary schools, 6 schools were selected to participate in the study.

The principals in all selected schools were part of the sample. Eight class teachers from Form Three in each of the selected schools were randomly selected representing 30 per cent of Form Three class teachers. In addition, 175 students representing 10 per cent of the target population were part of the sample population. The sample was drawn using simple random sampling to pick the students. The following formula was used to calculate the sample for each school.

$$n = \frac{\text{Class population}}{\text{Target population}} * \text{desired sample size.}$$

Where n= school sample size

The desired sample size = 175 students

3.5 Research instruments

The researcher prepared questionnaires for students, class teachers and head teachers. The respondents were required to fill in the blank spaces at the end of the question or write a statement or put a tick where appropriate. Each questionnaire comprised of open ended and close ended questions. Questionnaires were used to collect information because the population is large and time is limited. The target population was literate and had no difficulties responding to the questionnaire items. The questionnaire had two sections. Section A sought biographical data while section B gathered information on indicators of student participation in education. The researcher also used a student observation schedule was also to collect in depth information concerning the learners.

3.6 Instrument validity

Validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomena under that study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). To ensure content validity, a pilot study was conducted in one secondary school, which was later not included in the sample population.

The sample size was 10 per cent of the Form Three students in the selected schools. The head teacher of the sampled school and one Form Three class teacher participated in the pilot study. Equally, the questionnaire was given to my supervisors and my colleagues who examined the items critically and passed on their comments to the researcher. The aim was to assess the clarity of the items in the instruments so that those found to be ambiguous are discarded or modified to ensure validity.

3.7 Instrument reliability

Reliability concerns the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives similar results over a number of repeated trials (Orodho, 2005). The test re-test method was used to measure reliability of the research instruments containing both closed and open ended items. This involved administering the same instruments at an interval of one week comparing the two scores. The school was excluded in the final study. The test-retest was a feasible approach to the working out of the reliability of the questionnaires and the student observation schedule in this study. In reliability of instruments, the researcher carried out prior test of each questionnaire and the student observation schedule to the pilot sample. Prior testing was done to check the draft questionnaires and the student observation schedule structure and whether they were meaningful. The prior testing was preceded with scoring manually the piloted questionnaires and the student observation schedule, the manual scoring was then subjected to

computing using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to prove its reliability. Computation of the correlation between the scores of the two sets were carried out and the coefficient obtained became the reliability estimate.

To compute the coefficient, the researcher used the following formula

$$Re = \frac{2r}{r+1}$$

where Re= reliability of the original test

r= reliability of the coefficient resulting from correlating the scores of the odd items with the scores of the even items (Gay, L & Airasian, P, 2003).

The study used Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to test the reliability. The instrument reliability coefficients were 0.8 and so it was considered to be reliable since an instrument is considered to be reliable if it is next to the recommended 0.7 and 0.8 reliability coefficients (Howell, D, 1997).

3.8 Data collection procedures

The researcher applied for a permit from the National Council for Science and Technology and took it to the District Education Officer (DEO). A letter of introduction was given to the head teachers. Data was gathered directly by asking the respondents their views and opinions. The questionnaires were used for collecting data. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their

identity. The researcher visited all the schools to book for appointment with the school heads on the actual dates to administer the questionnaires and fill in the student observation schedule. On the material day the researcher then grouped the respondents, and explained to them in details the aim of the research and assured them of confidentiality of their identity. The researcher distributed questionnaires to students, class teachers and head teachers. The researcher waited for them to fill in questionnaires and collected them immediately for analysis. The researcher also entered the sampled Form Three classes and filled in the student observation schedule. This was done in one lesson of 40 minutes in each school.

3.9 Data analysis technique

The results of the questionnaire were checked for completeness. Quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed. Descriptive statistics enabled the researcher to meaningfully describe distribution, scores or measurement using a few indices or statistics that depended on the type of variables in the study including mode, median and mean. The quantitative data was analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21.0 for windows. Data was presented using pie charts, graphs and percentages. Qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis. This involved categorizing and indexing of responses and other field notes in to common themes.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and presentation of the findings of the data collected using questionnaires and student observation schedules. The findings of the research study are presented in figures, tables and graphs to give relevant meaning to the findings. The chapter starts with the analysis of the questionnaire return rate and then presents the analysis of the demographic information of the respondents which included the age, gender and teaching experience in their current station. This section covers themes which attempts to answer the research questions in relation to birth order and its effects on participation, how students' gender affect their participation, students' attitudes towards education and students' age and its effects on education. This is followed by a discussion on how each of the variables influence students' participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district.

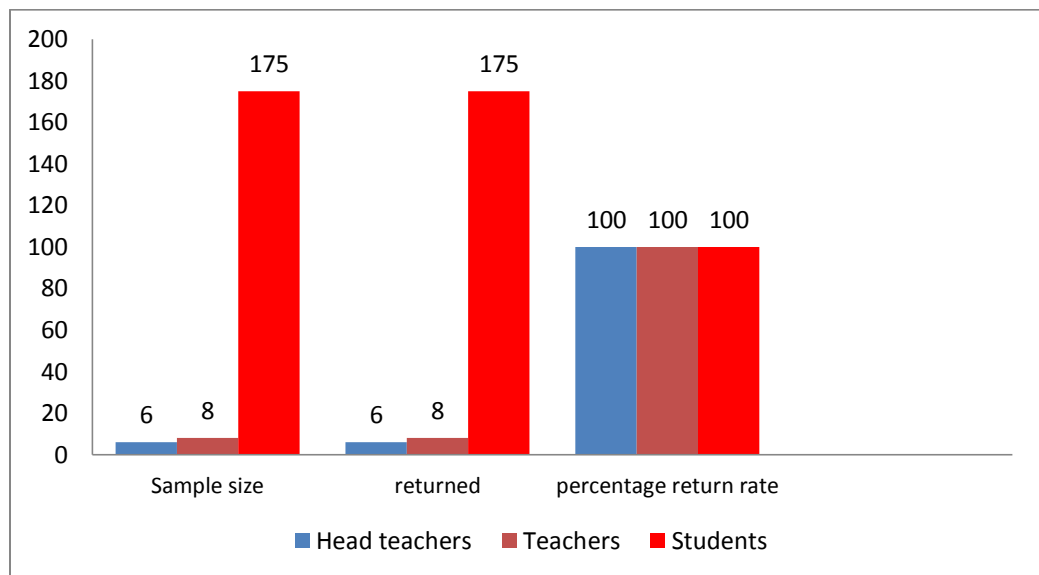
4.2 Questionnaire return rate

Questionnaire return rate is the proportion of the sample that participated in the study as indicated in all research procedures. The questionnaires were administered to a sample of 6 head teachers, 8 Form Three class teachers and

175 Form Three students. The respondents filled in the questionnaires and the questionnaire return rate is presented in figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1

Questionnaire return rate



The findings in Figure 4.1 revealed that all respondents returned their questionnaires.

4.3 Demographic information of respondents

This section presents the analysis of the demographic information of respondents as revealed from the data collected from the public secondary school head teachers, Form Three class teachers and Form Three students. This

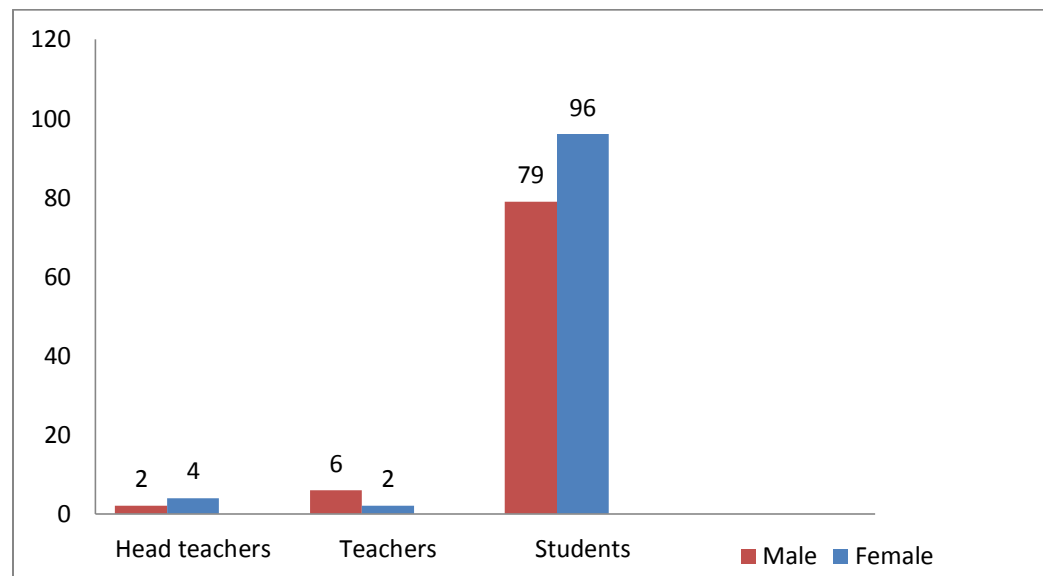
included respondents gender, age of students and head teachers and teachers experience in the current school.

4.3.1 Gender of the respondents

The study sought to establish the gender of the respondents. This was to help the researcher realize the gender parity of the secondary schools head teachers, Form Three class teachers and students. The findings are presented in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2

Gender of respondents



These findings indicate that there were more female than male head teachers.

There were two girls secondary schools, one boys secondary school and three

mixed secondary school. Two of the mixed secondary school were headed by women. This contradicts findings by Republic of Kenya (2007) that many Kenyan communities still adhere to traditional beliefs and practices rooted in patriarchy that still militate against women and girls' rights.

The findings further indicate that there were more male class teachers than females. In some girls schools class teachers in both streams were male. The number of female students is high probably because there were two girls schools sampled against one boys school. However, in mixed schools the number of boys was higher than that of girls. This concurred with findings by Cheboi (2007) that despite the immense role education plays and the significant progress that has been made towards providing education in Kenya, gender disparities in education are apparent in some regions and in post primary levels.

4.3.2 Age of respondents

The researcher requested the Form III students to indicate their age. This was meant to find out whether students age had an influence on their participation in secondary education. The findings are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Age of students in years

<u>Age of students in years</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
16	10	12
17	26	22
18	9	26
19	19	17
20	15	19
Total	79	96

The study revealed that most students in Form III were aged between 17 and 20. This shows that most of them cannot be considered overage for that level except for those aged 19 and 20 years. This is because the recommended secondary school age is 14-19 years. They may have been enrolled late where primary schools are far away because their parents would like them to attend when they are old enough to cover long distances to school (Cheboi, 2007). The older the children the more likely they will fail to participate in education.

4.3.3 Headteachers and teachers experience in the current school

The study sought to find out the experience of the head teachers as well as the class teachers. This was to enable the researcher establish how well they understood their schools. The responses are indicated in Table 4.2

Table 4.2

Headteachers and teachers experience at the current school

Number of years	Head teachers	%	Teachers	%
0-2	2	33	1	12.5
3-5	1	17	3	37.5
6-8	3	50	1	12.5
9-11	0	-	2	25
12 and above	0	-	1	12.5
Total	6	100	8	100

The findings indicated that most of the head teachers had served in their schools for a period of between 6-8 years. This shows that they had a considerable experience of the school they were in. The findings further indicate that half of

the sampled teachers had been in that school for a period of between 3-5 years.

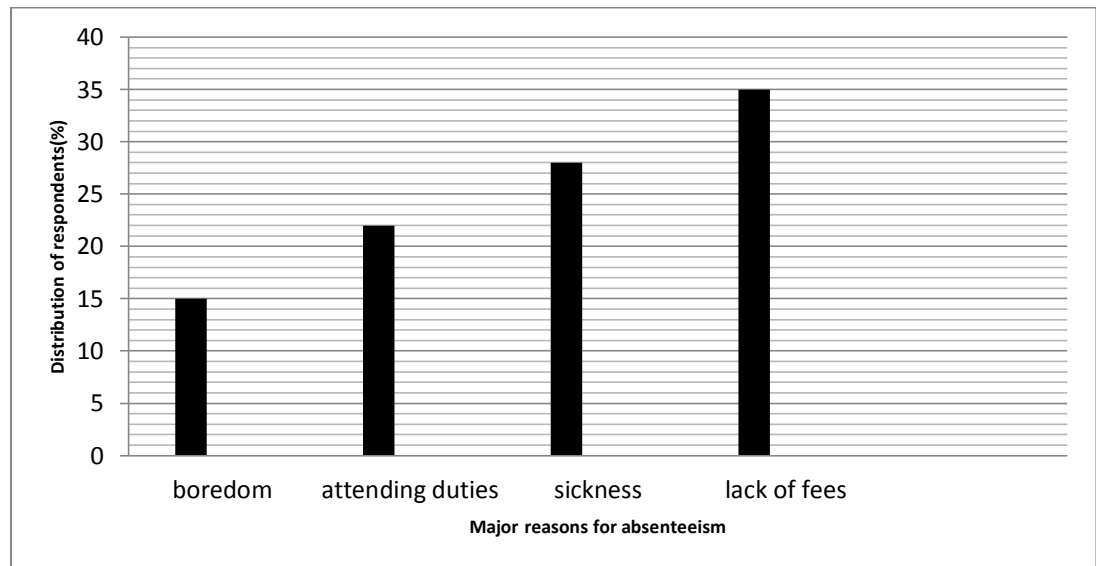
This shows that the teachers had a clear understanding of their students.

4.4 Major reasons for students' absenteeism

The researcher sought from students the major reasons given for being absent from class. The responses are given in figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3

Students' responses on major reasons for students' absenteeism

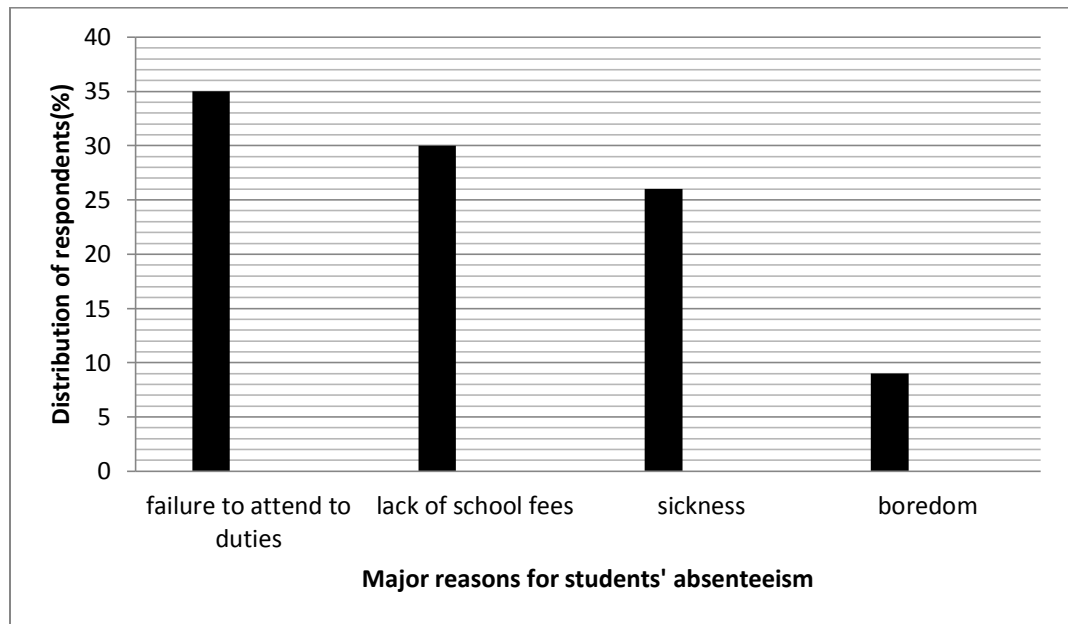


The findings indicate that most students (35%) missed classes because they had been sent home due to lack of school fees. The findings further indicate that 15 per cent of the students were bored of attending certain classes. These findings indicate that there are myriad reasons why students miss classes. The results from the student observation schedule indicated that most students were late to

enter their classes after the bell rang. This could represent the percentage that felt bored of attending classes or those that were late to attend to duties. The findings were similar to the responses given by class teachers. Class teachers' responses are indicated in figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4

Class teachers' responses on major reasons for students' absenteeism



The findings indicated that 35 percent of the respondents said that students missed classes while attending to duties while 30 per cent of the respondents said that students missed classes as they were sent home for lack of school fees. The findings further indicated that 26 per cent of the respondents said that students missed classes since they were sick. However, teachers were quick to note that most students feigned sickness in an attempt to miss classes. Nine per

cent of the students missed classes because they were bored. Teachers said this usually happened to students especially once they were through with their examinations. All head teachers and class teachers noted that their class attendance was satisfactory as most of the time all students were in class.

These findings indicate that some students are disengaged from education. Students who fail to participate in education may gradually withdraw from school activities. Participation is characterized by factors such as school and class attendance, being prepared for class and completing homework (OECD, 2003).

4.5 Student discipline problems

The researcher sought from the teachers what major discipline problems they experienced in their classes. This was meant to show whether students were engaged in education or not. The responses are indicated in table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Student discipline problems

Student discipline problems	Number of respondents	%
Noise making	7	41.2
Lateness to class	5	29.4
Absenteeism	3	17.6
Failure to attend to duties	1	5.9
<u>Rudeness</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5.9</u>
N =8		100

The findings from table 4.3 indicate that 41 per cent of the teachers had problems with students' noisemaking in class and lateness to attend classes while rudeness was not as common. This indicates that many students are disengaged from school.

4.6 Students' birth order and their participation of education

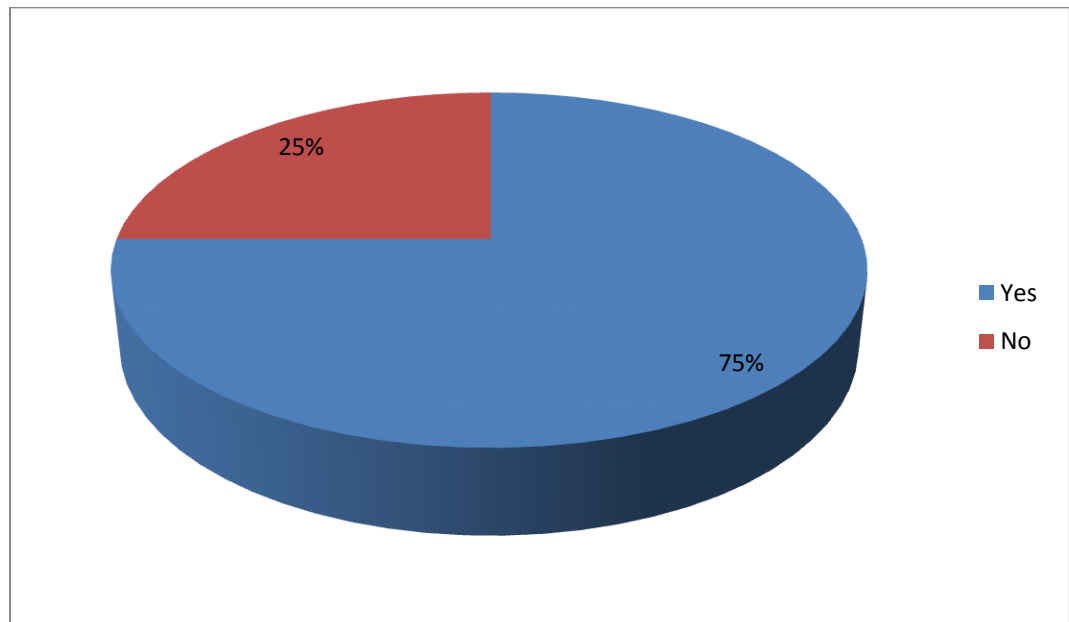
This section analyzed how students' birth order affected their participation in secondary school education. The findings are presented in the subsequent sections.

Research question 1. In what ways does birth order affect students' participation in secondary school education in Narok North district?

Various items were designed to elicit responses from the respondents. The researcher sought from head teachers and teachers whether birth order had an effect on students' participation in their education. Their responses are indicated in figure 4. 5.

Figure 4.5

Head teachers' and class teachers' opinions on students' birth order and its effects on students' participation in education



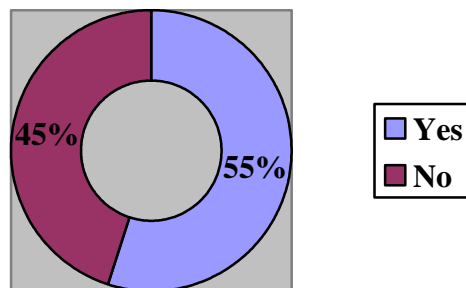
Most teachers and head teachers (75%) agree that students' birth order has an effect on their participation in education. The respondents said that students

with successful elder siblings worked hard to emulate them. Others said that last born children were pampered by their parents. They noted that last born students and only child mostly feigned sickness in order to seek permission to go home. In connection with this some noted that last born children seemed to have little interest in education. Further, most first born children wanted to set an example to their younger siblings. This concurs with Beach (2012) that if older children are expected to assume more responsibility in assisting with younger siblings, the training may assist them in making them perform more responsibly at school and become high achievers.

The researcher sought from students whether birth order affected their participation in education. Their responses are indicated in figure 4.6.

Figure 4.6

Students' opinions on birth order and its effect on their education



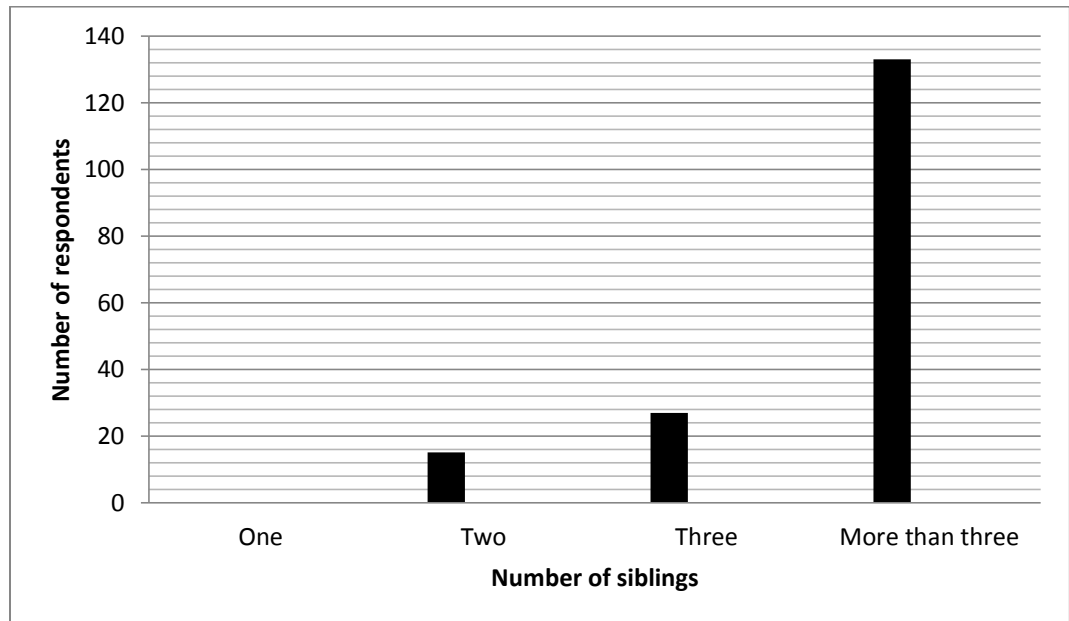
The findings indicated that most students (55%) agree that students' birth position has an effect on their participation in education while the rest of the respondents indicated that all children had an equal chance of participating in education regardless of their birth position. Most students said that most girls who were first born children in their family were asked to stay at home to take care of elder siblings. Most last born children, according to the respondents, were given a chance to attend school unlike elder siblings.

4.6.2 Number of siblings in the family

The researcher sought from the students how many brothers and sisters they had in the family. Their responses are presented in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7

Number of siblings in the family



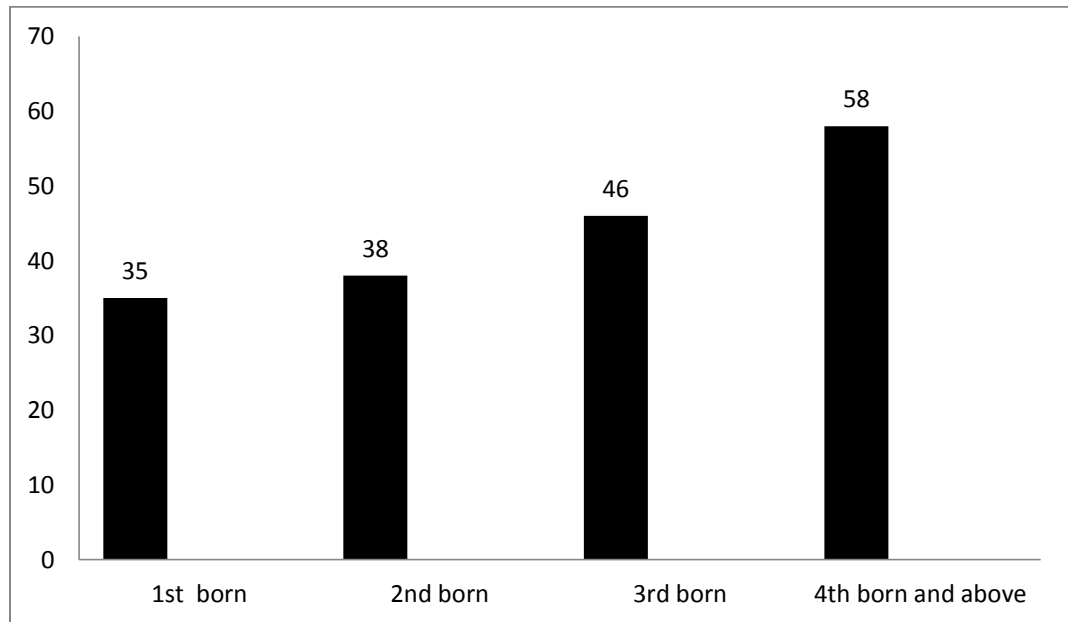
The findings indicate that most students (133) had more than three siblings while none of the respondents had one sibling. This is a clear indication that most students came from large families.

4.6.3 Students' birth position in the family

The researcher sought from the students their birth position to find out whether their birth position affected their participation in education. The responses are tabulated in figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8

Students' birth position in the family



The findings indicated that most of the students were 4th born and above while few students (35) were first born. Birth position was seen to play a significant role on participation in education. This contradicts Booth and Kee (2005) that given that parents have a fixed time endowment, the first born may receive a greater time endowment than subsequent children who have to compete for parental attention. According to Cheboi (2007) most girls who lack older siblings who have excelled in the field of education do not perform well because of lack of role models in their families.

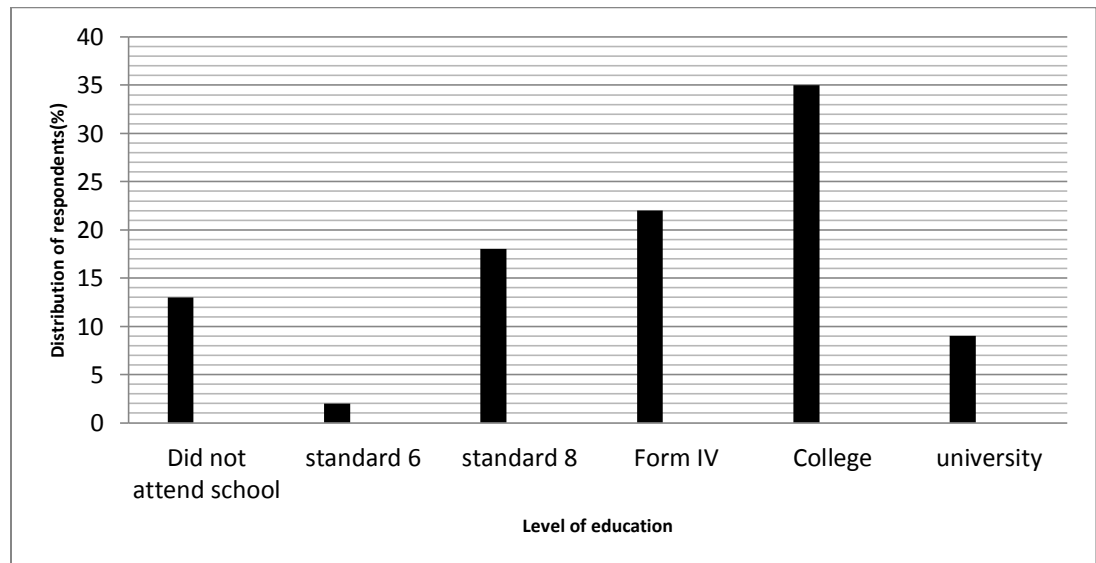
Being a last born in the family had a greater effect on participation. Booth and Kee (2005) noted that if the children are widely spaced, then the last born might benefit more as older children leave the family nest or through the expansion of time inputs as both parents and older siblings spend time with the last born.

4.6.4 Level of education reached by elder siblings

The researcher sought from the students what level of education their elder siblings reached. This was meant to find out whether elder children had been educated. The responses are indicated in figure 4.9.

Figure 4.9

Level of education reached by elder siblings



Most students (35%) said their elder siblings had gone to college while 2 per cent of the respondents said that their elder siblings had reached standard six.

These findings indicated that most families had elder siblings to emulate. This contradicts the findings by Cheboi (2007) that the nomadic lifestyle of the pastoralists impacts negatively on their children. Pastoralists' attitudes and values are opposed to modern education. Parents see education as a threat to their cultural integrity.

4.7 Students' gender and its effects on their participation in education

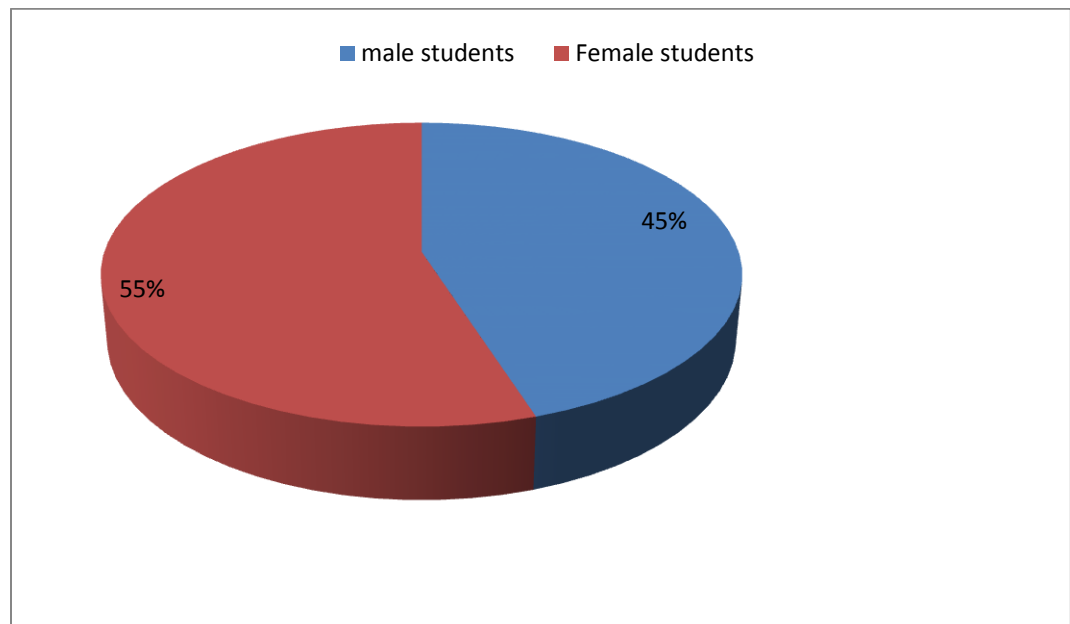
The findings of the analysis of the data obtained from students, teachers and head teachers are presented in subsequent sections.

Research question 2: To what extent does students' gender influence their participation in education?

The study sought to establish the influence of students' gender on their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district. The researcher sought students' gender and the responses are indicated in figure 4.9.

Figure 4.10

Students' gender



The findings indicated that 45 per cent of the respondents were male while 55 per cent were female. This could have been so due to the fact that there were 2 girls' schools against one boys' school.

The researcher sought the enrolment of students in their classes and their responses are indicated in table 4.4.

Table 4.4**Students' enrolment**

School	Male	Female
School A	27	16
School B	51	
School C	Form III W	48
	Form III E	36
School D		33
School E	Form III N	24
	Form III E	18
School F	34	26
Total	170	201

According to the findings the number of female students is higher than that of male students. This is so because two girls' secondary schools were sampled against one boys' secondary school and three mixed secondary schools. The findings indicate that the number of female students in mixed secondary school is far below that of male students. This concurs with the study done by Chege and Sifuna (2006) where they found that gender-based discrimination beliefs

determine how boys and girls access education with most parents preferring to educate the boy child and consequently academically neglecting the girl child.

4. 7.1 How students' gender affects their participation in education

The researcher sought from the students, teachers and head teachers how students' gender influence their participation in education. Responses from teachers and head teachers indicated that gender roles especially among girls in day secondary schools hindered their participation. It was noted that girls missed school to stay at home and attend to other siblings or do household chores. Early marriages and early pregnancies were other factors that made female students not to continue with education. These findings concur with Honey for Life (2004) that among the Maasai community education is still low among the girls who are still expected to marry early, despite the fact that education is viewed as a means for changing society's attitude and cultural practices particularly those that perpetuate poverty through discrimination based on gender.

All the students also indicated that students' gender influenced their participation in education. The responses showed that most girls had dropped out due to early pregnancies. The study concluded that the students should be allowed re-entry to the secondary schools after giving birth. There were no male students who had dropped out of school to join moranism. Most female students said they missed classes due to lack of school fees as opposed to many male

students who missed classes because of sickness. It showed that parents were very keen on paying school fees for the male child. In the context of this study, the researcher concluded that parents should pay for their daughters' school fees on time to reduce their chances of being absent.

4.8 Students' attitudes and their effect on participation in their education

This was intended to find out how students' attitude towards education influenced their participation in education in Narok North district. The results were presented in the subsequent sections.

Research question 3: In what ways do students' attitudes towards education influence their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district?

The researcher sought from students how they felt when they were in school. This was meant to find out whether students' attitudes towards education influenced their participation in education. The responses are tabulated in table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Students' attitude towards school

Response	%
(a) I feel satisfied	73
(b) I always long for the end of the day	22
(c) I feel bored	5

Total	100
--------------	------------

Data in table 4.5 indicated that 73 per cent of the students felt satisfied while in school while 5 per cent of the respondents felt bored while at school. Further the researcher noted using the observation schedule that a few students were not active in class. The researcher noted that more than 90 per cent of the students were following teachers' direction in class while the rest seemed distracted. The students who rarely participated in class discussions took a lot of time to settle down after the end of a lesson. They did not seem prepared for lessons on time. Most of the students demonstrated interest in learning according to the results on the student observation schedule.

The researcher also sought from teachers and head teachers whether students' attitudes towards education influenced their participation in education. All the teachers and head teachers agreed that students' attitudes towards education had

a great influence in their participation in education. They said that negative attitude towards a particular subject leads to student failure to perform well in school. Some teachers also noted that some students do not relate current struggles with tomorrow's success. This means that students give up easily upon coming across challenges. This is in agreement with Belmont and Skinner (2003) that disaffected students are passive, do not try hard and give up easily in the face of challenges.

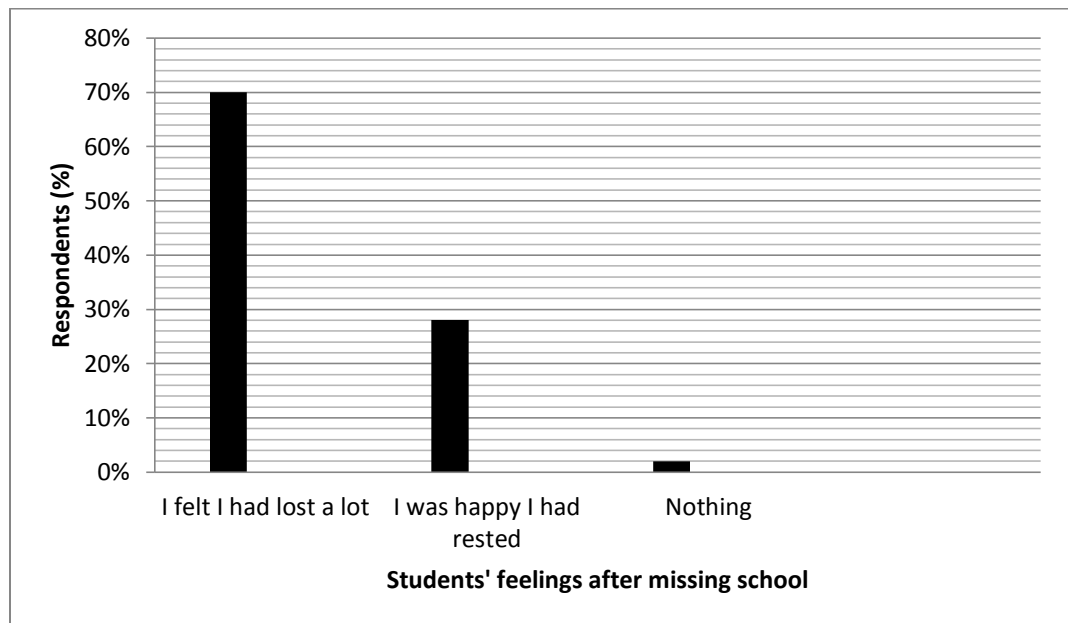
Some respondents said that students with a positive attitude towards education are determined and often perform well in school. This concurs with Abu-hilal (2002) who had noted that students with a positive attitude towards education learn more, retain more, and enjoys learning activities more than those who are not motivated. The researcher concluded that students' attitudes towards education greatly influenced education thus, positive attitude towards education should be instilled among students to help them remain engaged.

4.8.1 Students' feelings after missing school

The researcher sought from students how they felt once they missed school. The responses were indicated in figure 4.11

Figure 4.11

Students' feelings after missing school



The findings indicated that 70 per cent of the students felt they had lost a lot after they missed school while 22 per cent of the respondents felt that they were happy to miss school as they got a chance to rest. Students' attitudes toward school can be regarded as influential on participation because it is formed in response to curriculum, teaching practices and organizational arrangements (Ainley, 2005).

4.8.2 Students' future aspirations

The researcher sought from students what their future aspirations were. The responses indicated that 65 per cent of the students would wish to join

university after completing Form IV while 20 per cent of the students wished to join middle level colleges and pursue courses of their interest. Another 15 per cent of the students said they wished to engage themselves in business. This indicated that most students had positive attitude towards education as they wished to engage themselves in post secondary studies.

4.9 Influence of students' age on their participation in education

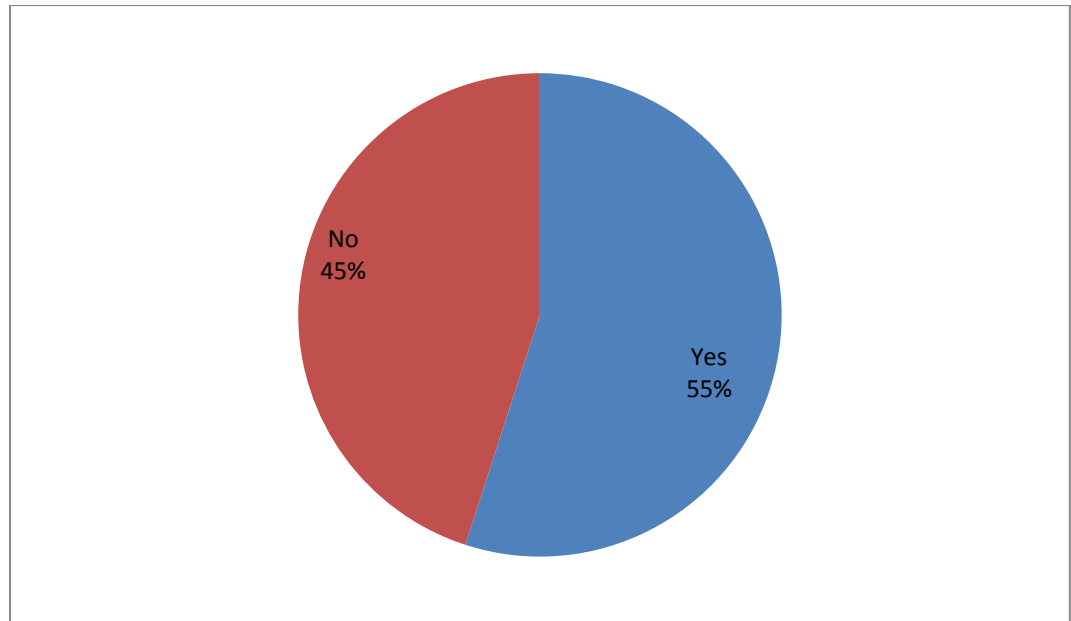
The section sought how students' age influenced their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district. The results are presented in subsequent sections.

Research question 4: To what extent does students' age influence their participation in secondary school education in Narok North district?

The study sought from the students, teachers and head teachers whether students' age influences their participation in education. Students' responses on whether students actively participate in class discussion regardless of their age. The responses are given in figure 4.12.

Figure 4.12

Students' responses on whether students participate actively in class discussions regardless of their age

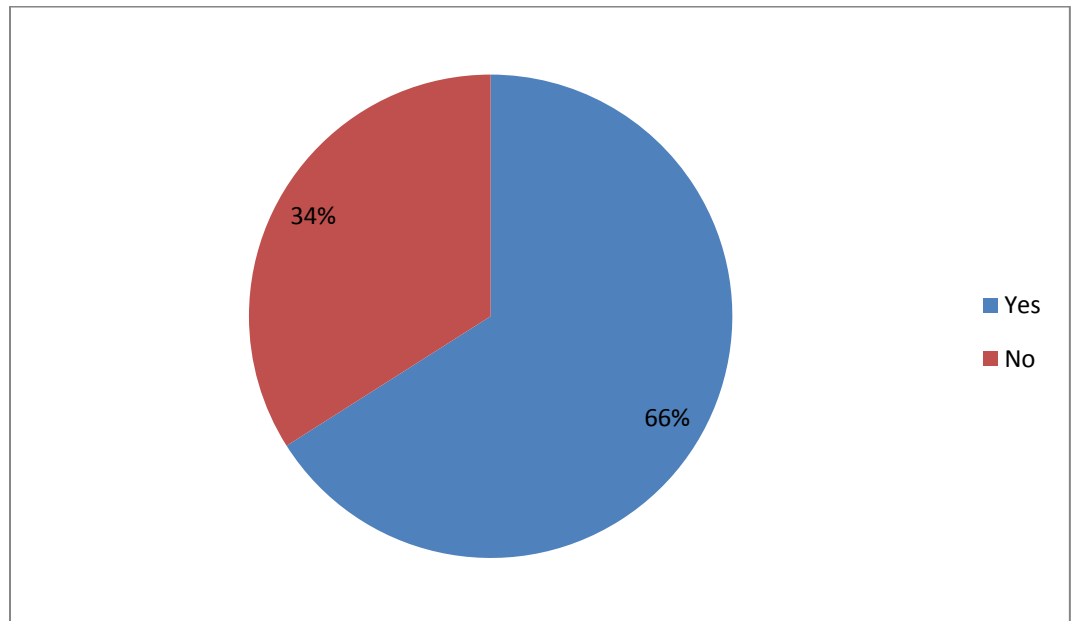


The findings indicate that 45 per cent of the respondents said that students participate actively in class discussions regardless of their age while 55 per cent of the respondents indicated that students do not actively participate in class discussions because of their age. Age, according to the study was a factor influencing their participation in education.

The researcher sought from the head teachers and teachers whether the age of students affected their participation in education. Their responses were indicated in figure 4.13

Figure 4.13

Students' age and its effects on their participation in education



The findings indicated that according to the teachers and head teachers, 66 per cent of the respondents said that age of students was a major factor influencing their participation in secondary education. On the contrary, 34 per cent of the respondents said that age of students was not a major factor influencing their participation in secondary education. Those in the view that age played a significant role in students' participation said that younger students tend to perform better than those who are overage. Others responded by saying that the older students tend to have more family responsibilities hence lack of enough time to concentrate with their school work. In addition to this, the younger students perform better in their studies as they have enough time to study.

Others said that those who were a year or two older than their colleagues had low concentration in class, showed little interest in education and most of the time missed classes. Indiscipline cases were also common among the overage students.

On the contrary, some head teachers and teachers said that older students were more disciplined compared to the younger students as they were more mature. This concurs with the study carried out by Ainley and Khoo (2005) where they found out that student engagement follows a similar course as anti-social behavior with young students feeling disaffected from school or withdrawn from school life. Deviant behavior and attitudes tend to increase sharply during early adolescent years, peak about age 16 or 17 and then decrease slowly. The study concluded that students' age was a factor influencing their participation in secondary school education.

4.10 Summary of the findings

The purpose of the study was to establish students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district.

The study revealed that 75 per cent of the teachers and head teachers indicated that students' birth order influenced their participation in secondary education while 25 per cent of the respondents said that students' birth order had no influence on their participation in secondary education.

As presented in the findings, the study revealed that all the head teachers and teachers believed that students' gender influenced their participation in their education. Similarly, the findings indicated that all students believed that students' gender had an influence in their participation in education.

The findings were an indication that 90 per cent of the students were active in class. The study further revealed that 73 per cent of the students felt satisfied while at school. All the teachers and head teachers believed that students' attitude towards education influenced their participation in education.

As presented in the findings, the study revealed that 66 per cent of the head teachers and teachers believed that students' age had an influence on their participation in education. Further the study revealed that 55 per cent of the students believed that students' age influenced their participation in education.

The findings therefore, indicated that students' birth order influenced their participation in secondary education. It was also revealed that students' gender influenced their participation in education. The study further revealed that students' attitude towards education had an influence on their participation in secondary education. Finally, the study revealed that students' age had an influence on their participation in secondary school education.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the summary of the findings as obtained from the respondents who included Form III students, Form III class teachers and secondary school head teachers in Narok North district. It also contains findings obtained using the student observation schedule. The chapter also contains the conclusions of the study, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

5.2 Summary of the study

The purpose of the study was to establish students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district. To achieve this four research questions were formulated on the students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools. These were students' birth order, students' gender, students' attitudes towards education and students' age. The second chapter reviewed literature on the concept of participation, students' demographic characteristics that include students' birth order, students' gender, students' attitude towards education and students' age. The study was based on the student involvement theory which states that educators should focus less on what they do and more on what the student

does: how motivated the student is and how much time and energy the student devotes to the learning process.

The study applied descriptive survey design. The sample population included 6 public secondary schools in Narok North district, 6 head teachers, 8 Form Three class teachers and 175 Form Three students. Data were collected using questionnaires and a student observation schedule. Through data analysis the study revealed that students' birth order influenced their participation in their education. The findings indicated that most first born female students were often sent home due to lack of school fees, were made to stay at home to take care of their younger siblings or had to attend to domestic chores. Other students also missed classes due to sickness or boredom. This made them fail to participate in education. This was attested by 55 per cent of the students and 75 per cent of the head teachers and the teachers. The study established that students' birth order had a great influence on students' participation in their education.

The findings also revealed that most girls were affected in their participation in education. Some girls dropped out of school due to early marriages and early pregnancies. This hindered their active participation in education. The findings indicated that students' gender influenced their participation in education. This was revealed by the agreement of all students, teachers and head teachers. The study concluded that students' gender influenced their participation in education.

Students' attitude towards education also influenced their participation in secondary education as mentioned by all the students, teachers and head teachers. Findings from the student observation schedule indicated that many students demonstrated interest in learning and actively participated in class discussions. The study realized there was a need to instill positive attitude toward education among all students.

According to the study the age of students influenced their participation in education. Some of the overage students were engaged in disruptive behavior hence the need to enroll students early in primary schools.

5.3 Conclusions of the study

The study sought to establish students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary school in Narok North district. The study established that :

Students' participation in education was influenced by their birth position in Narok North district. Findings indicated that most first born female students were often sent home due to lack of school fees. According to the findings, most of the teachers and head teachers believed that students' birth order had an influence on their participation. Most first born children wanted to set a good example to their younger siblings.

It was concluded that the students' gender greatly influenced their participation in secondary school education as most of the girls were unable to participate in education effectively. Responses from the head teachers and teachers indicated that gender roles especially among girls in day secondary schools hindered their participation.

Students' attitude toward education influenced their participation in secondary school education in the area. Findings indicated that 70 per cent of the students felt they had lost a lot after they missed schools. Students with a positive attitude towards education are determined and often perform well while those with a negative attitude are passive and give up easily in the face of challenges.

The study revealed that to a great extent, students' age hindered their participation in education as most overage students engaged themselves in disruptive behavior. The findings indicated that 66 per cent of the respondents asserted that younger students tend to perform better compared to overage students.

5.4 Recommendations for the study

In view of the findings discussed, to improve students' participation in education the following recommendations need to be considered;

- i) The findings revealed that girls dropped out of school due to early marriages and early pregnancies. There are legal changes by the government that allow for girls' re-entry after getting pregnant or after being rescued from forced

marriages. However, most parents and students are not aware of these changes. The Ministry of Education should sensitize them on the importance of girls' re-entry to schools.

- ii) Findings revealed that students whose elder siblings had reached college or university were determined to also join college or university. It was therefore, recommended that students should be encouraged by teachers and parents to work hard in school and emulate their elder siblings.
- iii) According to the study, students' attitudes have a great influence on their participation in education. The study therefore, recommended that the community be sensitized on the importance of education by teachers. This will make the community develop a positive attitude towards education hence changing the students' attitude towards education.
- iv) The findings indicated that absenteeism in the area was high especially due to lack of school fees. The study recommended that the county government should take up the initiative of allocating more money to the bursary kitty to benefit more students.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

The study proposes the following suggestions for further study:

i)The study did not involve other stakeholders such as parents, quality assurance and standards officers and government officials and therefore a similar study should be carried out.

ii) Since the study targeted public secondary schools in Narok North district only, a similar study should be carried out in other districts to get a picture of the whole country. This will shed a light on where the policy efforts should be concentrated so as to improve students' participation in education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Department of Education, Administration and Planning

University of Nairobi

P.O Box 30197-00100

Nairobi

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I am a Master of Education student at the University of Nairobi undertaking a research on “Student demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district.” This is part of the requirement for the fulfillment of a master degree award in curriculum studies.

I, therefore, seek your permission to administer the questionnaires on you and your students.

Yours faithfully,

King’ori Mary Wangui

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FORM III STUDENTS

This questionnaire is designed to help the researcher establish student demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok north district. You are requested to respond to all items in the questionnaire honestly and correctly as possible by putting a tick [] or provide a statement where appropriate.

Part A: Personal information

1. What is your gender? (a) Male () (b) Female ()
2. What is your age?..... years.

Part B: Indicators of participation

3. What major reasons do students give for being absent?
 - i).....
 - ii).....
4. Have you ever missed classes in your secondary school life?
 - (a) Yes () (b) No ()

If yes, how did you feel?

(a) I felt I had lost a lot ()

(b) I wished nothing would prevent me from attending school ()

(c) I felt nothing ()

(d) Others (specify)

5. How many are you in the family? (a) one () (b) two () (c) three () (d) more than three ()

6. (a) What is your birth position in the family?

i) First born () (ii) second born () (iii) third born () (iv) last born () (v) others(specify).....

(b) If not a firstborn in the family, what level of education did your elder siblings reach? (Specify).....

7. Are you aware of students who do not have a chance to enroll in school because of their birth position in their family?

(a) Yes () (b) No ()

8. I) Do you think that boys and girls have an equal chance of being educated by their parents?

(a) Yes () (b) ()

II) Do you know any student(s) who have dropped out of school because they get pregnant, are married off or join moranism?

(a) Yes () (b) No()

If yes, specify.....

9. In your class, do students participate actively in discussions regardless of their age?

(a) Yes () (b) No ()

10. Are there students who drop out of school because they are overage?

(a) Yes () (b) No ()

11. What are your future plans after completing Form IV?

.....

Thank You

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This questionnaire is designed to help the researcher establish student demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district. Please respond to all the items in the questionnaire as honestly and as correctly as possible by putting a tick [] or provide a statement where appropriate.

Part A: Background information

1. What is your gender? (a) Male () (b) Female ()

2. How many students are currently in your class?

(i) Boys----- (ii) Girls----- (iii) Total-----

3. What is the mean age of students in your class?

..... years.

4. How long have you been in this school?

(a) 0-2 years () (b) 3-5 years () (c) 6-8 years ()

(d) 12 years and above ()

Part B: Indicators of students' participation in education

5. Has your class experienced any student discipline problems?

- (a) Yes () (b) No ()

If yes, what kind of discipline problems.....

6. How can you describe your students' class attendance?

- (a) Satisfactory () (b) Unsatisfactory ()

If unsatisfactory, explain your answer.....

.....

7. Are there students who have dropped out of your class?

- (a) Yes () (b) No ()

If yes, why.....

8. In your opinion, does student's birth order affect their participation in

education? Explain your answer.....

.....

9. Do you think that gender affects students' participation in education?

- (a) Yes () (b) No ()

If yes, how.....

.....

10. In your opinion, does attitude towards education affect students' participation in education? Explain your answer.....

.....

11. Are there students in your class who shy away from answering or asking questions because of their age?

(a) Yes () (b) No ()

12. Do overage students engage in disruptive behavior in your class?

(a) Yes () (b) No ()

If yes, what are the major indiscipline cases?.....

.....

Thank you

APPENDIX IV

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

This questionnaire is designed to help the researcher find out student demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North district. Please respond to all the items in the questionnaire as honestly and as correctly as possible by putting a tick [\checkmark] or provide a statement where appropriate.

Part A: Background information

1. What is your gender? (a) Male () (b) Female ()

2. How many students are currently in your school?
 - (i) Boys----- (ii) Girls-----

 - (iii) Total.....

3. Indicate the type of your school
 - (a) Mixed day ()

 - (b) Mixed boarding ()

 - (c) Girls boarding ()

(d) Boys boarding ()

4. How many years have you served as a head teacher in your current station?

(a) 0-2 () (b) 3-5 () (c) 6-8 () (d) 9-11 () (e) 12 and above ()

Part B: Indicators of student participation in education

5. Has your school experienced any student discipline problems?

(a) Yes () (b) No ()

If yes, what kind of discipline problems.....
.....

6. How can you describe the attendance of school of your students?

(a) Satisfactory () (b) Unsatisfactory ()

If unsatisfactory, explain your answer.....
.....

7. In your opinion, does birth order influence participation of learners in secondary education? (a) Yes () (b) No ()

If yes, how.....
.....

8. Do you think gender affects participation of learners in secondary education?

(a) Yes () (b) No ()

(Specify).....

.....

9. Has attitude towards school affected participation of learners in their education?

(a) Yes () (b) No ()

If yes, specify.....

.....

10. Do you think that the age of learners affect their participation in their education? (a) Yes () (b) No ()

If yes, how?.....

.....

Thank You

APPENDIX V

STUDENTS OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

School.....


Form III...Date Time.....

Behavior skill	Comments
Arriving class on time	
Following teachers' directions	
Demonstrating interest in learning	
Demonstrating positive character traits	
Participating in class discussions	

APPENDIX VI

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349, 254-020-2673550
Mobile: 0713 788 787, 0735 404 245
Fax: 254-020-2213215
When replying please quote
secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref: **NCST/RCD/14/013/1057** Date: **14th June 2013**

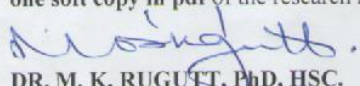
Mary Wangui King'ori
University of Nairobi
P.O Box 92-0902
Kikuyu.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application dated **10th June, 2013** for authority to carry out research on *“Students’ demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North District, Kenya.”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Narok North District** for a period ending **31st July, 2013**.

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

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


DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:
The District Commissioner
The District Education Officer
Narok North District.

“The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development”.

APPENDIX VII

RESEARCH PERMIT

PAGE 2 PAGE 3

Research Permit No. **NCST/RCD/14/013/1057**


Date of issue **14th June, 2013**

Fee received **KSH 1000**

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution
Mary Wangui King'ori
of (Address) University of Nairobi
P.O Box 92-0902, Kikuyu.
has been permitted to conduct research in

Location Narok North Rift Valley	District Province
-------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------

on the topic: Students' demographic characteristics influencing their participation in public secondary schools in Narok North District, Kenya.


Mary Wangui King'ori
Applicant's Signature

[Signature]
For Secretary
National Council for
Science & Technology

for a period ending: 31st July, 2013.