

**SELECTED SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTAL  
INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC PRE-SCHOOLS IN TURBO SUB-COUNTY,  
UASIN GISHU COUNTY, KENYA**

**JOYCE CHEPKOECH TOO**

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for the Master of Education Degree in Sociology of Education of Egerton University**

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## DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other University.



Date: 18<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Joyce Chepkoech Too

EM17/00023/10

### Recommendation

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.



Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2022

Prof. Thomas Ronoh

Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational  
Foundations

Egerton University



Date 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2022

Dr. Joel K. Ng'eno

Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Management

Egerton University

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my husband Mr. Joseph Ngetich who offered constant support throughout my study. My children Laura, Lynette, Ivan, Keith, Zippy, and Hailey, who missed my company while I was studying.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Parents are the prime educators of their children at infancy stage till they attend pre-school. They remain a major influence on their children's learning through their early years, school and beyond. Their involvement in pre-school education is very vital since it determines the kind of foundation accorded to the child for future learning. Therefore, this study sought to determine whether the selected socio-economic factors influenced parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county. Specifically, the study sought to establish whether the levels of income, family size, occupation and levels of education of parents influence their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. The study used the symbolic interaction theory. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Stratified sampling technique was used to select pre-schools because they are categorized according to zones. Simple random sampling technique was used to select parents from the selected pre-schools. The study used 228 parents as the main respondents and 19 pre-school teachers. The questionnaire was used to collect data from parents while the interview schedule was used to collect data from the teachers. The validity of the research instruments was done through comments and reviews made by the experts in the Department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations. A pilot study was done by administering 30 questionnaires to parents in three pre-schools which were not included in the study. The reliability of instrument was determined by Cronbach's Coefficient in which a reliability index of 0.75 was obtained. Quantitative data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included the frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations while inferential statistics used was multiple regression. The findings were presented in bar graphs and tables. Qualitative data was categorized according to the study themes and presented in a narrative form. The study found that there is a significant relationship between the family size, level of education, occupation and the income of parents on their involvement in public pre-schools. The study recommends that the government of Kenya should consider funding early childhood.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|               |   |  |
|---------------|---|--|
| <b>APHR</b>   | - | African Population and Health Research                         |
| <b>NCLB</b>   | - | No Child Left Behind   |
| <b>SES</b>    | - | Socio-Economic Status  |
| <b>UNESCO</b> | - | United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| <b>UNICEF</b> | - | United Nations International Children Emergency Fund           |

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the study

Children may be viewed as growing plants and natural resources that need to be nurtured for future investment of the society. Early learning begets later learning and success and early failure breeds later failure Heckman (1999). Children who are vulnerable gain most from pre-school services (Barnet, 2004). Warm and caring relationship need to be developed between teachers and parents to enable them to detect any warning signs that might expose children to failure hence hindering their success in school. Therefore, parental involvement in early education of the children is significant for the successful developmental stage in their lives (Leroy & Ymes 2009). In United State of America and Europe, educationists reckoned that due to parental involvement, children have interest, motivation and participated more in co-curricular activities gain confidence in themselves and higher aspirations for their future learning Barnet (2004).

According to Conger (1992), children have two main educators in their lives, their parents and teachers. Parents are their children's first and most enduring educators. In the case of Epstein and Dauber (1991), argued that poverty put children at risk because of the deficiencies in resources associated with poverty such as poor nutrition, lacking in calcium, vitamins, and proteins which are all essential elements for healthy physical development and cognitive growth. They continue to state that children from economically disadvantaged families have poorer academic achievement, social skills and cognitive functioning than those from economically advantaged families thus pre-school with feeding programs will foster growth and development of the young children.

Model of parental involvement, explains that parents may decide to be involved when they understand that collaboration is part of their role as parents (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). When they believe they can positively affect their children's education and when they perceive that their children and the school want them to be involved. The ability of parents to provide parenting can be hindered by socio-economic or personal circumstances such as unemployment, stress, and/or depression. Family level factors, such as low maternal education, poor maternal mental health and lack of family networks pose risks to early

childhood development (Hertzman, 2000). In situations of extreme poverty, it results in fewer opportunities for learning experiences for children while at home (Smith, 2000).

According to Sojitz (2012), in Tanzania, concluded that pre-school is developed to facilitate transition to primary school because it enhances children's socio-emotional, psychomotor skills, academic preparedness and sound health and nutrition practices. It also helps children who speak different languages at home so as to adjust quickly to the language of instruction. Parental involvement is important to the growth and sustainability of pre-school and thus ensuring better educational foundation he added the radio programs for children who attended pre-school learning enabled them to score higher than their counterparts who did not attend pre-school thus pre-school education is the second main influence after the home and as it plays a key role in a child's holistic development. The findings of Sojitz were lacking in Turbo division because records revealed that there was a drop of enrolment of pre-school pupils compared to those who were admitted to class one. Therefore, the researcher decided to investigate whether the selected socio-economic factors influence the involvement of parents in public pre-schools.

In a study by Ng'ang'a (2009), he found that a stimulating and encouraging pre-school with a feeding program can make a remarkable difference to a child's intellectual development. This was not the case in Turbo sub-county because most of the pupils may not be attending pre-school education because the number of pupils who were enrolled in class one in public primary schools was higher compared to those enrolled in pre-schools may be because those in primary school enjoy the government's free basic education unlike those in pre-school where parents have to pay the levies in order for their children to learn. This study, therefore, found that there was need to investigate socio-economic factors that may be influencing parent involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county and the findings may be generalized to other parts with similar characteristics.

Kenya Vision 2030, under the social pillar strategy, involves the building of a first and cohesive society enjoying equitable social development in a clean and secure environment. This quest is the basis for transformation in eight key sectors among them is education and training. On the education and training sector, the overall goal by 2012 is that Kenya should provide a globally competitive quality education to reduce illiteracy by increasing access to education, improving transition and integration of pre-school into primary education

(Government of Kenya, 2009). The Ministry of Local Government was to support the pre-school program in their areas by giving finances to be used for buying furniture and equipment for the pre-school centres, pay the salaries and training of teachers (Ministry of Education Service Standard Policy Guidelines, 2006).

A case study by Koech (2009), which was done in Uasin Gishu on parent-teacher partnerships in both public and private pre-schools, he concluded that parent-teacher partnership in pre-schools was weak. However, he recommended that there was need to highlight the role of stakeholders in this partnership and appropriate strategies be adopted to promote partnership for harmonious relationship. This study done by Koech (2009), did not highlight factors such as the occupation, level of income and the family size that might have caused the weak involvement of parents in pre-schools, therefore the researcher found a gap that need to be filled so that parents fully get involved in the education of their children in pre-schools and enhance the acquisition of relevant concepts by the pupils and enable them to transit smoothly to primary school.

Further, Barno (2013), in creation of awareness seminar on the importance of pre-school education in Uasin Gishu County, he called upon the government to support the public pre-schools. He highlighted that most parents delayed their children at home up to the age of joining primary school and sought admission of their children in class one who were underage hence forcing them to a curriculum which was not initially appropriate to them. Barno added that there was lack of teaching-learning materials, feeding program and that most learners in the pre-schools did not have school uniform. In Turbo sub-county, the enrolment of pupils in pre-school has significantly dropped compared to those enrolled in class one as shown in Table 1. Therefore, this study sought to establish whether the selected socio-economic factors influenced parental involvement in public pre- schools in Turbo sub-county.

**Table 1.1: Public and Private School Trend of Enrolment**

| Year | Number of pre-school pupils |         | Number of class one pupils |         |
|------|-----------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------|
|      | Public                      | Private | Public                     | Private |
| 2011 | 3150                        | 1347    | 4410                       | 1680    |
| 2012 | 2835                        | 1221    | 4730                       | 1956    |
| 2013 | 2583                        | 1460    | 5240                       | 2100    |
| 2014 | 2457                        | 1365    | 7560                       | 2455    |

Source: Turbo Sub-County Education Office Records, 2014, 2022

From the records obtained from the Turbo division office, it is clear that the number of pupils in public pre- schools is less than those in class one in public primary schools. Besides, the number of pupils enrolled in pre-school and class one is higher for public schools than private schools.

However, overall, the number of pre-school enrollments in private schools increased slightly by 18 (1.31%) pupils while that of public schools dropped by 693 (22%). This raises concerns as to why the number of enrolments declined significantly in public pre-school while that of private schools increased, yet every public primary school in Turbo sub-county has a pre-school attached to it and the ministry of education expects every child who is of pre-school going age to attend in order to acquire basic skills for learning. Therefore, the researcher selected Turbo Sub-county, and more specifically, public schools in Turbo Sub-county, based on three factors: public schools have higher number of enrollments in all years; the number of pre-school enrollments in public schools decreased massively, a contrast to private ones, and all public schools in Turbo Sub-county have pre-schools attached to them, unlike private schools.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The period of early childhood is precisely the time of development when children need most care and support. It is time when cognitive stimulation, nutrition and emotional attachment all work together to shape the child's identity, coping skills, intelligence and problem solving skills relevant at their age. The government policy on pre-school is that the curriculum should be child-centered and developmentally appropriate which enhances holistic development of young children. It helps children in their cognitive as well as psychomotor and emotional development. In Turbo Sub-county, all primary schools have pre-schools attached to them.

Parental involvement is key in supporting their children well-being in the preschools through home learning, assistance in purchasing classroom equipment, attendance of meetings and payment of school levies. Parents are seen as the first trainers of their children and their involvement in the learning of their children is key. Nonetheless, there has been little minimal attention in parental involvement in majority of the pre-primary schools. Several factors have been cited as inhibiting parents from being directly or indirectly involved in the pre-school activities of their children. Therefore, it is against this backdrop that the researcher decided to carry out this study in order to shed light on the socio – economic factors including family size, level of education, income and occupation that may be influencing parents’ involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county.

### **1.3 Purpose of study**

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the selected socio-economic factors influence parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county of Uasin-Gishu County in Kenya.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

This study was guided by four objectives namely; family size, education, occupation and level of income;

- i) To determine the influence of family size on parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county.
- ii) To investigate the influence of parent’s education on their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county
- iii) To find out the influence of parent’s occupation on their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county
- iv) To determine influence of parent’s level of income on their involvement in public pre-schools in turbo sub-county.

### **1.5 Research questions and hypothesis**

#### **1.5.1 Research questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. Does the family size influence parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county?

- ii. Does parental level of education influence parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county?
- iii. Can the occupation of parents influence their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county?
- iv. Does the level of income of parents influence their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county?

### **1.5.2 Hypothesis**

Ho: There is no statistically significant influence of the Selected Socio-economic factors on parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county.

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

This study would be significant to Pre-school teachers, parents, the government and other stakeholders since it addresses the factors that affect parental involvement in Pre-school centers. The findings would be the basis for sensitizing parents on how their various socio-economic activities support their children in pre-school education. The findings would enlighten Pre-school teachers on the factors that affect parental involvement in their Pre-school centers to foster pre-school education which is an important level of learning. Recommendations made in this study will be used by the government to formulate policies that enhance parent involvement. Further, researchers around the globe will find the necessary literature for their studies from the findings of this study.

It is further hoped that the findings of this study may be used to create awareness to parents and the communities at large on the need for pre-primary education as a foundation for education in their bid to alleviate poverty among communities. Moreover, the findings will make parents to prioritize their time and finances on facilitating the enrollment and learning of children in the pre-primary centers thereby re-reducing on inter-generational poverty and building a strong society.

It is anticipated that the study's findings will help policy makers in the pre-primary sector to make effective policies concerning children enrolment and their participation in pre-primary schools. This study also contributes to the sociology of education since it will provide the necessary knowledge on how various socio-economic factors affect parental involvement in pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. This study will also enhance academic literature in the field of education since it is based on empirical research.

### **1.7 Scope of the study**

This study was conducted in Turbo Sub-County, Uasin- Gishu County in Kenya. The parents were the key respondents of the study. The teachers who teach in the selected pre-schools were also included. The data collected covered four main areas; family size, level of education, level of income and occupation of parents on involvement in Pre-school learning.

### **1.8 Assumptions of the study**

The study was based on the following assumptions;

- I. It was assumed that there is some extent of parent involvement in public pre –schools in Turbo sub-county owing to the fact that pre-schools are attached to all primary schools and some parents take their children to these pre-schools and are willing to use their resources in the education of their children.
- II. The study will contribute new knowledge by providing the selected socio-economic factors that influenced parental involvement in public pre-schools in Kenya.

### **1.9 Limitations of the study**

The study did not take into consideration the government policy on enrolment, age of the parents and parental attitude as part of the socio-economic factors but were treated as intervening variables. However, the researcher held these factors constant by ensuring that the questionnaire and the interview schedule were valid and reliable. Another limitation which the researcher found in the field was that some parents were illiterate and therefore could not respond to questions in the questionnaire on their own. To counter this limitation, the researcher explained the questions in the questionnaire to them in the language which they understood and then ticked the response of their choice.

### **1.10 Definition of terms**

**Parental involvement:** This is when parents participate in school events or activities and teachers provide learning resources or information about their learner’s grades.

In this study, parental involvement referred to parents’ use and investment of resources in their children’s learning. Parental involvement at home included activities such as discussions about school, helping children in doing their homework and reading with them. Involvement at school included parents volunteering in building the classrooms, attending workshops and school meetings, paying school levies, provision of teaching-learning materials and school feeding program.

**Influence:** This is the capacity to have an effect on the character, development or behaviour of someone or something or the effect itself.

In this study influence referred to the capacity that an independent variable has on the dependent variable, either positively or negatively.

**Family size:** Refers to the total number of individuals comprising a family unit.

In this study, family size referred to the number of children in the nuclear family.

**Level of education:** It is the highest level of education that a person has successfully completed.

In this study, level of education referred to the highest level of education attained by the parents of pre-school children.

**Levels of income:** It is the amount of monetary or other returns either earned or unearned accruing over a period of time.

In this study, levels of income referred to the amount of money received in exchange of a service or from the sale of products. Income was measured by the Kenya shillings received by the parents on monthly basis.

**Parental occupation:** It's the parent's job status which is a characteristic of their job, can predict the educational achievement, health occupational success, status attainment of their children.

In this study, parental occupation referred to an activity that served as the parents' source of money.

**Pre-school:** It is also known as nursery school, pre-primary school or play school, is an educational establishment or learning space offering early childhood education to children.

In this study it referred to an educational setting for young children before they join elementary school or class one.

**Socio-economic factors:** These are lifestyle components and measurements of both financial viability and social standing. They directly influence social privilege and levels of financial independence. The socio-economic factors in this study referred to the levels of income, family size, occupation and parental level of education that contribute to involvement of parents in public pre-school.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the literature in detail under the following sub-headings; pre-school education system in Kenya, parental involvement in education, benefits of parental involvement in education, social-economic factors and parental involvement, empirical framework, theoretical framework and conceptual framework of the study.

#### **2.2 Pre-school education system**

The pre-school education is the earliest education from the childhood phases which begins from infancy and ends when the child enters into the primary section. The pre-school education usually varies worldwide. The early years of the child's life are often viewed as critical for their development. Globally, many events have spearheaded the realization of the significance of the childhood foundation for the country's economic progress. These changes begun with the United Nations Convention in 1989 on the rights of the child in which a set of policies and measures geared towards protection and promotion of the children's welfare were put into writing. In Africa, the early childhood education phenomenon is not a new thing since its first inception by Nyerere in 1967 where he stated education was a sole duty of the elders and the communities at large.

The pre-school program has its own benefits socially, economically and physically at both family, community and societal levels. According to, Berry *et al.* (2013) and Gobena (2020), pre-school education is the foundational basis for shaping future responsible citizens capable of building a steady and harmonious society. Additionally, pre-school programs are designed to foster early educational backgrounds and social ethical values such as tolerance, resilience, sharing, respect and appreciation of diverse cultural backgrounds. As much as the pre-school programs are important to the growth of the children, it is paramount to instill the appreciation of its benefits to the community and parents in order for it to run effectively. Intrinsically, incorporating consultants' services in education, health and nutrition, planning appropriate pre-school curriculum and parental involvement in all features of the program should be given priority for the pre-school to be successful (Gobena, 2020). Moreover, it is through pre-school that children are nurtured and receive maximum benefits.

Several studies have been conducted in the African context and have indicated that majority of the African communities still rely on provision of manual labour and financial support for

their children in schools. In Kenya, the case is somehow different as communities/ parents share the responsibility of provision of funds to schools with the help of the government of Kenya. Also, the heterogeneity of parents is viewed from the different aspects of their socioeconomic positioning, level of understanding their children's education and their overall involvement in it bringing in the difference in education of children (Kampichler, 2021).

Several socio-economic factors have been indicated to act as a stumbling block towards the development of pre-school education in Kenya. These factors include; poverty levels of the parents, occupation of parents, level of education of parents, family size, community participation and income levels of the household (Ngesu *et al.*, 2013). Moreover, most of the stakeholders in the educational ministry including various policy makers, communities, national government and the parents are fully aware of the benefits of early childhood education yet still, the whole responsibility of ensuring that the children receive such training and meeting the educational cost is the sole responsibility of the parents. As such the major hindrance to such is the ability of the parents to pay the costs of training their children in these pre-schools. According to the policy program (KIE, 2005), the level of poverty in many Kenyan families and local communities has compromised their ability to financially support the development of the program in Kenya.

## **2.2 Parental involvement in education**

The involvement of parents in early education of their children has continuously and strongly promoted by international organizations' policies in order to equalize the differences brought about in education among children from both low and high socioeconomic status (European Commission, 2015). Parental involvement includes activities such as interactions with schools and with their children to promote academic success, (Hill & Taylor, 2004). No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001) agrees that the involvement of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication with teachers enhance student academic learning and other school activities and is supported by Epstein and Salinas (2004), who assert that school-based involvement strategies include, volunteering at school, communication between parents and teachers, and involvement in school governance while home based involvement strategies, including engaging in educational activities at home. School support for parenting and involvement between the school and community agencies make a difference in educational outcomes and holistic well-being of the child. Parents in Turbo division volunteer in building of the classrooms but they do not equip them with suitable teaching-learning materials.

Parents are not involved in the governing of the pre-school centres instead it is the head teacher of the primary school who is actually in charge of the pre-school.

Schools, teachers and peers constitute complementary agents with parental effort in order to make education a success, Houtenville and Conway (2008), which is in agreement with Walsh (2010) who established that households and students' own efforts play a key role in accounting for academic achievement. De Fraja *et al.* (2010), found in their study that parental factors, especially in the United States, indicate that the age of the parents, gender, family structure and mother's educational attainment levels are all relevant driving factors to education. According to Bonesronning (2010), noted that parental involvement programs have been shown to be notably effective in improving educational outcomes and Avvisati (2010), added that it is through such involvement that children are also encouraged to work hard in school. Parental involvement in pre-schools in Turbo sub-county is confined to taking their children into these pre-schools and they do not cater for their education needs. Thus, this study sought to find out whether socio- economic factors influence parental involvement in public pre-schools.

School-based involvement, include parent- teacher conferences, volunteering and being present in the school meetings and involvement in school governance, Comer (1995), and home-based involvement, such as parental reinforcement of learning at home and discussion about school while at home will not only develop a positive attitude towards learning but also life as a whole. Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994), articulated a three-pronged framework; this includes behavioral, cognitive and personal involvement. Behavioral involvement includes both home based and school-based involvement strategies, such as active connections and communication between home and school, volunteering at school, and assisting with homework. Cognitive-intellectual involvement reflects home-based involvement and includes parental role in exposing their children to educationally stimulating activities and experiences while personal involvement includes attitudes and expectations about school and education and conveying the enjoyment of learning, which reflects parental socialization around the value and utility of education in pre-schools which is lacking in Turbo sub-county despite the fact that every primary school has a pre-school attached to them.

Hill and Taylor (2004), asserted that within an elementary school context, school-based involvement is associated with children's achievement, because such involvement is likely to

include visits to the classroom and interactions with children's teachers. Such interactions and exposure increase parents' knowledge about the school curriculum enhance social capital, and increase the effectiveness of involvement at home and teachers may increase mutual respect and perceptions about how much they value education. Most parents in Turbo Sub-county make regular visits to their children in upper primary and a few of them visit their children pre-schools yet they are all in the same compound. Low (2006), observed that if a child lives with parental acceptance and friendship he or she learns to find love in the world. If a parent is encouraging the child become confident, if a child lives with praise will learn to appreciate and if a parent approves a child he or she learns to like himself or herself, thus parental involvement is very important in a child's education.

The aim of pre-school is to help children reduce the incidents of repeating grades and dropping out of school because of inability to assimilate into group activities, Sojitz (2012), detect growth problems and reduce incidents of children staying at home so as to take care of their siblings and therefore parents should be involved in pre-school education by taking their children in those centres. Contrary, the backdrop in the enrolment of pre-school pupils in Turbo Sub-county may imply that the aims of Sojitz (2012), in Tanzania may not be achieved by the children of Turbo sub-county, however, the Kenyan Government in her partnership policy intends to promote the relationship between parents, teachers and the community in enhancing children's education. This will be possible if the parent-teacher partnerships were enhanced, varieties techniques employed and factors that relate to parent-teacher partnerships were appreciated and catered for.

The parent-teacher partnership in Kenya as low but he did not indicate the socio-economic factors such as family size, occupation, level of education and income of parents that could be the cause of the low partnership. This study therefore sought to investigate whether the selected socio-economic factors influence parental involvement in public in pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. In a study of 72 schools across Kenya by African Population and Health Research (2010), students and principals were asked about their socioeconomic backgrounds, attitudes towards various dimensions of school, family and community interactions. The study found that parental involvement in school affairs is was affected by their attitude and perceptions.

From this study, it was established that the shortfall of social capital in teaching and learning in Kenya is significant enough to warrant policy interventions (APHR, 2010). Lack of parental involvement in the classroom also had negative effects on grades. Genuinely active parent-teacher associations are one way of fostering social capital between parents, teachers and students in schools, tend to be positively related to academic performance (APHR, 2010). The above findings are significant in Turbo sub-county whereby parents need to be fully involved in order to foster acquisition of prerequisite skills by preschool children.

One of the unique characteristics of the Pre-school program in Kenya is its policy of encouraging partnerships, at all levels. Parents and local communities are the most important partners. They have started and currently manage over 75% of the pre-schools in the country. Parents and local communities provide land and funds for the construction and maintenance of the physical facilities. They also provide furniture, materials, labor and pay the teacher's salary. In some communities feeding programs are also part of the preschool, whereby parents provide the ingredients and prepare the food for their children (Kipkorir & Njenga, 1993). The provision of land and classrooms is similar in Turbo sub-county but parents do not provide ingredients nor prepare food for the pre-school children. Good pay for teachers motivate them to put more effort in their work. Through the feeding program, children not only get the important nutrients that enhance their growth and development but also make them socialize during the feeding time.

The Ministry of Local Government has been given the mandate of supporting the program in their areas by giving finances to be used in buying furniture and equipment for the pre-school centres and also to pay the salaries and training of pre-school teachers. This is spelled out in the service standard policy enforcement guideline of the Ministry of Education (2006). This policy continues to state that the government, parents, community and all institutions dealing with children to safeguard their rights and welfare child. Some of these recommendations in the policy have been put in practice but majority remain untouched. This study therefore sought to determine whether the selected socio-economic factors influence parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county.

### **2.3 Benefits of parental involvement**

Hill and Taylor (2004), reckoned that parental involvement at home and in school includes differences in the achievement levels of working class and middle class children is more

effectively explained by the nature of child-parent and parent-school interactions (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Seginer (2006), asserted that the most accurate predictor of students' achievement in school is the extent to which families are able to create a home environment that supports learning; communicate high but reasonable expectations for their children's achievement; and become involved in their children's schools. It is expected that Programs that are designed to foster linkages between families and schools help to compensate for limited family resources and effectively alter the traditional relationship between Socio-Economic Status (SES) and school performance (Henderson & Mapp, 2004). This is not the case in Turbo sub-county because involvement of parents in the pre-school is inadequate thus alterations of the traditional relationship between SES and school performance may not be realized.

When schools work together with families to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school, but throughout life, Hughes (2002). It further noted that the shared interests and investments of schools, families, and communities create the conditions of caring that work to determine the likelihood of student success. Epstein (1996), asserted that family practices of involvement are important variables in determining whether and how students' progress and succeed in school and this also applies to pre-school pupils in Turbo sub-county.

When parents get involved, children's schooling is affected through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and confidence that can make them succeed in school, Wendy (1997). Success will be achieved because parents will monitor the progress of their children unlike in pre-school centres in Turbo sub-county where parents rarely attend their meetings. Epstein (2001), argued that, school, family, and community are important spheres of influence on children's development and that a child's educational development is enhanced when these three environments work collaboratively toward shared goals. Epstein encouraged schools to create greater overlap between the school, home, and community through the implementation of activities across six types of involvement: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaboration with the community.

By implementing activities across all six types of involvement, educators can help improve student achievement and experiences in school. Moreover, parenting is one of the primary inspirations of a child's development. They are seen as the first educators and trainers of their children (Handayani *et al.*, 2020; Larocque *et al.*, 2011) thus playing an instrumental role in

facilitating their children's early experiences. This is due to the fact that parenting, according to Prieto (2018), has a positive influence on the children's' capacity to learn and prosper all through their life. Past studies, (Ahmetoglu *et al.*, 2018; Cakir & Uludag, 2022; Camarero-Figuerola *et al.*, 2020) have appreciated the importance of parental involvement in their children's life viewing it as a positive driver towards their development both in behavior and education.

Involvement benefits, not only learners, but also schools and parents (Hughes, 2002). Among the benefits accruing to schools from successful parental involvement activities are better reputations in the community, improved teacher morale, higher parental ratings of teacher performance, and increased support from families. Involved parents reap benefits as well, including increased confidence in their abilities to parent, help their children learn at home, and communicate effectively with schools. Pre-school teachers in Turbo sub-county have little morale and some parents accuse them for not teaching their children and more so few parents turn up for their meetings (Barno, 2013). This study therefore sought to determine whether the selected socio- economic factors influence parental involvement in pre-schools in Turbo sub-county.

Teachers not only hold involved parents in higher regard than uninvolved parents, but they also have higher expectations for their children thus parental involvement can improve student outcomes (Henderson & Mapp, 2004). Parental involvement is the key to successful early years of education as it lays a foundation for later learning, child care and family support to ensure that all children got a sure start of life and helps to prevent anti-social behavior like drug taking and crime in later years (Ng'ang'a, 2009). The backdrop in the enrolment of pupils in pre –schools in Turbo division raises concern and the main question which one may ask is; why is there a backdrop and what is the assurance that these children will not engage in anti-social behavior in later years? The researcher therefore selects family size, education, income and occupation of parents as the major factors which influence parent involvement in public pre-schools.

#### **2.4 Family size and parental involvement**

The sociability of pre-school children who attend pre-school education get high school achievement compared to their peers who did not go through the pre-school education (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Fan and Chen (2001), reiterated that family size affects the social life of

children because through it children learn social relationships and in addition learn skills such as reading, writing, spelling and number work.

Previous studies have long pointed out the effect of family size on children's learning. Black *et al.* (2005), found out that the family size in terms of number of children reduced the family's available resources for each child. This meant that, the little available resources had to be shared across each child which negatively affected the children's access to education. Other studies (Almeqdad *et al.*, 2016; Scott & Seifert, 2010) came to the same conclusion that the family size was an inhibiting factor to the children's education. While Almeqdad *et al.* (2016), found out that children from large families indicated a less autonomous learning behaviors compared to those from small families. They also established that such children from the large families need more parental involvement in their learning and parental company. Scott and Seifert (2010), noted that small families had a high level of pre-school preparation skills for their children as opposed to large families. Moreover, other factors that were found to influence parental involvement in pre-school learning include race, level of education of the parent, parental socioeconomic status, gender and age of the parent (Beck *et al.*, 2013).

Children who belong to crowded families the available resources (Mize, 1990), cannot cater for their needs results in social maladjustment. Epstein (2001), added that children in high quality homes develop well while those in less adequate develop more poorly. Olmsted (1994), stated that children from one or two child family exhibit improved children's skills at sharing and cooperating. That the levels of resources such as time, energy and money are diluted among children as family size increases. This is in agreement with the findings of Peters, Seeds, Goldstein and Coleman (2008), who postulated that demands of other children hinder parents from being involved in their children's education. These findings may also apply to children in Turbo sub-county. Sacker (2002), asserted that family size and economic enhancement would reduce pressure on parents to engage their children in labour activities and that the more the educated and wealthier mothers with few children tend to invest to a greater extent in their children. This study sought to investigate whether family size influence parental involvement in pre-schools in Turbo sub-county.

## **2.5 Level of education and parental involvement**

Parents of elementary school students tend to be more involved in their children's education than parents of older students and continues to state that this could be because the higher the levels of education (Christenson, 2004), parental involvement becomes stressful when parents feel they lack the knowledge, time, and guidance to support their children in doing their homework efforts. This is in agreement with a survey of Canadian Attitude towards Learning (2006), which reveals that 64% of Canadian parents feel they do not have enough knowledge to help their children do their homework, further, Dauber and Epstein (1993), found that school and teacher practices are the strongest predictors of parental involvement. Specific practices that have been shown to predict parental involvement include: assigning homework designed to increase student-parent interactions, holding workshops for families, and communicating to parents about their children's education. In Turbo sub-county, most of the pre-school children return their homework to their teachers undone and sometimes done half way thus the researcher sought to determine whether the level of education of parents influence their involvement in pre-schools.

Many parents experience feeling of uncertainty or even inadequacy, poor education skills (Eccles & Harold, 1996; U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Parental beliefs and perceptions show a strong predictor of parental involvement and this is in agreement with Kathleen (1997), argued that parental involvement is a function of a parent's beliefs about their roles and responsibilities as parents affect their children's education, perceptions and interests in school subjects. Epstein and Dauber (1991), added that the more parents are learned, the more they are able to help their children with their school work and are able to find out what is being taught and how children learn and develop. Regular communication through newsletters about concepts being taught, reinforced and practiced at home and a schedule of after school help sessions require a parent who has acquired education so as to understand what is required of him or her and thus get involved in the education of their children in pre-school yet in reality, not all parents may be literate enough to help their children do their homework. There is no communication to parents through newsletters in Turbo sub-county.

Teachers not only hold involved parents with higher regard than uninvolved parents, but also have high expectations for their children (Fan & Chen, 2001). Some parents' involvement in their children's education prompts them to pursue further education. Home-based

clarification with homework according to Cooper (1989), provided a structure for free time and homework time, Fan and Chen (2001), added that visiting museums are educational avenues and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995), agreed with them. Parents can supplement instruction through educationally- based and cognitively stimulating activities as supported by Seginer (2006). Dauber and Epstein (1993) established that many parents feel less able to assist their children with homework or provide activities and experiences that increase knowledge. This may be so in Turbo division thus the study sought to find out whether parental levels of education influence their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county.

Pupils with parents who did not complete primary or just completed primary have little access to the education of pupils than those parents who completed secondary or university education (Nannyonjo, 2007). He asserts that parental level of education presents the ability of parents to support the pre-school children with school work and the likelihood of interactions of literate parents with their children in school related or nurturing activities are better, if level of education of parents is high. This may apply to the parents of pre-school in Turbo Division. In a study of socio-economic determinants of school drop-out done by Okumu *et al.* (2008), they found that high academic attainments of parents significantly reduce chances of pre-school drop out for both boys and girls in rural and urban areas because parents are able to monitor and supervise their children's academic work and thus yielding high attainments. This will encourage the pupils to proceed in their academics. This study thus sought to determine whether this apply to the parents in Turbo sub-county.

Parental level of education plays a significant role in the amount of parental involvement and that families of lower education level have low economic status and thus may have fewer resources to help their children in their academics for instance employing extra teachers to coach their children and provide computers to their children (Blair, 1999; Bogenschneider, 1997; Sandefur, 2006). In contrast, Hill (2002), found that some parents with lower levels of education do become involved because of a desire for their children to have upward mobility in the world and for their children to achieve the things which they themselves did not get. These findings may also be so in Turbo sub-county.

Educated parents provide adequate learning materials for their children, thus parental level of education is very critical Ezewu (1998), because educated parents understand and appreciate

and support the education of their children. This agrees with the findings of Mugisha (1991), who attempted to analyze the relationship between children's performance at school and the level of their parents' education established that the more educated the parents are, the better the children's performance in school. These findings may also apply to parents in Turbo sub-county.

## **2.6 Occupation and parental involvement**

In families which all caregivers work full-time, face significant barriers to involvement in their children's education Epstein (1995), and continues to state that it is important for schools to understand the demands that exist on the families of their students and to work to overcome them. Epstein (1995), argued that schools need to overcome these challenges by providing opportunities for school-to-home and home-to-school communications with families in a language which all families can understand; ensuring adequate representation of the entire community of parents on school advisory committees and distributing information provided at workshops to the families who could not attend. This implies that schools that work to meet these challenges and try to make involvement easier and more convenient for all families will gain support from parents and improve student achievement. Dauber and Epstein (1993), stated that working-class families and families in which mothers work full-time tend to be less involved in their children's education because they spend many hours on their jobs and much less time with their children at home.

Nechyba (1999), summarized three possible mechanisms through which social class might operate. One suggestion is that there is a 'culture of poverty' in which working class families place less value on education than middle class parents and hence are less disposed to be involved. A second proposed mechanism is that working class families have less social capital in terms of social networks and skills in that they do not know the right sort of people. In consequence, regardless of disposition, working class parents either are, or feel they are less well equipped to negotiate and deliver the demands of schooling. This study sought to investigate whether occupation influence parents' involvement in pre-school education in Turbo sub-county.

Children from high parents' occupation have better opportunities of getting better secondary schools and even universities than equally bright children of ordinary workers. Escarce (2003), asserted that there is a positive influence between education opportunities that are

available to children and their chances of educational success. This is because rich parents tend to provide full support in terms of finance and emotional support. This study thus sought to establish the relationship between the occupation of parents and their involvement in pre-schools in Turbo sub-county.

Kwarteng *et al.* (2022), investigated the effects of the socioeconomic status and levels of parental involvement on the academic performance of students in the Upper West Akim District in Ghana. A quantitative approach through a descriptive research design was used. Findings indicated that the socioeconomic status of parents; occupation, education and income levels, were critical factors in determining the performance of their children as well as their parental involvement in school activities. There was a high positive correlation between the children's educational performance and income status of parents. The results also revealed that parents who are actively involved in their children's learning through ensuring that they study at home, attend PTA meetings regularly, discuss their children's progress with teachers and provide adequate educational needs such as payment of school fees in time and support in school projects had their children perform better in their studies as opposed to children whose parents did not embrace such involvements.

Similar findings were documented by Asia (2019), who established that parents from single parent families who were actively involved in their students' academics had their children perform well. This is due to the fact that, children appreciate the presence of their parents in their education and by them seeing how committed their parents are in their studies, they are motivated to perform better in their education.

## **2.7 Levels of income and parental involvement**

Many families living in high-risk, low-income neighborhoods tend to be preoccupied with survival strategies that either focus inward on the family or do not permit them to pursue the types of parenting strategies that might involve greater school involvement (Eccles & Harold, 1996). A school climate that does not make families feel welcomed, respected, needed, and valued risks alienating parents. Sacker (2002), noted that material deprivation has a strong, negative effect on parental involvement that is as material deprivation worsened, parental involvement decreased markedly. Material deprivation was notably worse for families in the lower social classes. The deprivation factor accounted for a great deal of the differences in parental involvement between the social classes thus distribution of pre-schools is highly

driven by income level. More so, in areas where population has high income tend to attract pre-school proprietors assuming that the parents and guardians will afford fees in private schools.

Reckoned that the quality of pre-school is compounded by poor learning environment Mary (2012), poor hygiene and poor quality play kits. Ndetei (2000), added that pre-schools must be for social development and thus children must be given an opportunity to play and socialize. That it is through play that children learn tasks involving co-operation which is also necessary in real life. Most of the pre-schools in Turbo sub-county do not have suitable play kits thus the question therefore is; why is there lack of play materials? This study thus sought to investigate whether the levels of income of parents influence the provision of play materials to pupils in Turbo sub-county.

United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (2005), stated that children who lack access to pre-school services tends to come from disadvantaged communities such as those in semi-arid and slum areas. Failure of parents to accomplish their responsibility lays a weak academic foundation for their children and many of them develop trauma and feel withdrawn and may drop-out of school. Compton (1996), asserted that low economic status of parents has made them uninvolved, disinterested and not valuing and encouraging their children in their school work and success. Mary (2012), agreed that although all families want their children to succeed in school, but not all families have the same resources or opportunities to be involved in their children's education.

In the Sessional Paper No 5 (2009), on policy framework on Education, Training and Research, states that the access, equity and quality of education in pre-schools remain constrained by limited teaching-learning materials, inadequate community involvement, lack of clear policy on transition from pre-school to primary, inadequate nutrition and health care, low and irregular salaries for pre-school teachers (Government of Kenya, 2005). This study therefore sought to determine whether the levels of income influence parents' involvement in pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county.

“There was a correlation between income and enrolment of pupils” (Bjorkman, 2005). He stated that a negative income implies that school going children will lack the resources that are required in school. The key being the school fees, books and school uniform. Apart from

emotional support, creation of a conducive learning environment in pre-school greatly depends on the level of parent's income that helps facilitate the learning process for the children in pre-school. This relates to the findings of Alisa (2010), who found that pre-school children's test scores are lowest when poverty persists across the generations and highest when material advantage is long lasting. Akale (2007), in his study found that parental income is a factor which the success of learning environment which education depends upon. He added that small parental income deprives children of their essential needs and thus may perform poorly in school work. This agrees with the findings of Goldberger (1991), who asserted that the higher the income of the parent, the greater the involvement. These findings were used compare with those in Turbo sub-county.

According to Hakyemez-Paul (2019), and Menon (2013), there is a negative correlation between parental involvement and parental levels of income. From the studies, mothers who are of higher income levels have a high probability of being involved in their children's education compared to those who do not. A plausible reason for this is that, low-income parents often work in jobs that do not provide them with work leaves nor flexibility in their working hours hence makes it hard for them to have time for their children and get involved in their academics. While high income parents have the ability to be flexible and have time for juggling between work and family time, parents with low-income levels are affected by number of reasons given their demanding nature of work. These factors according to Hornby and Lafaele (2011), include, being tired after work, not being able to afford homeschooling for their children due to low incomes, living in insecure neighborhoods which makes them concentrate more often the safety of their kids rather than their education and often assume that teachers are the educational experts hence leave the education of their children entirely to teachers and the schools.

On the contrary, majority of the teachers felt that parents having a higher income are less involved in the education of their children (Mahmood, 2013; Malinen *et al.*, 2017). Such parents are often too quick to pick up their children, are overprotective over their children in that if they make any mistake, they would rather listen to them than their teachers leaving less room for interaction between the teachers and the parents to discuss about the child's educational progress. Also, majority of these families leave the entire childcare under nannies/domestic workers due to their busy work schedules.

## 2.8 Empirical review

Globally, Hu *et al.* (2017), conducted a study to investigate variations in Chinese parental perceptions on the role of quality of environment in preschools and their impact on education quality. In the study, 794 parents were targeted for the study from 91 kindergarten centers and were issued questionnaires as the primary data for the collection of data. Findings revealed that parents in Chinese kindergartens perceived the quality of environment as a key factor when considering where to take their children for ECDE training as they perceived it to directly influence the kind of learning that the children got. Similar results were also reported by Cui *et al.* (2016), who also indicated that the quality of environment was vital for the children in pre-school as it had an impact on the kind of education that they received.

Shao *et al.* (2021), conducted a study on the influence of parental involvement on parent satisfaction; the moderating effect of parental educational level and the number of children. The study majorly focused on parental involvement in their children's online learning. The study was conducted a survey on the parents of the middle school. The results indicated that there was a positive significant correlation between parental involvement and satisfaction. The moderating effect of the education level of parents yielded negative results while the moderating effect of the number of children yielded positive results. Interesting to note though was that the number of children in the family had low influence on parental involvement in their education.

Saidi (2018), investigated the factors that determine the extent of parental involvement in their young children's education, as influenced by socio-economic status of a family, parents' awareness or perception on the value of ECE, parents' level of education, parents' inadequately involved by teachers as well as religious awareness of parents. The study used the Epstein's model of parents where the parental involvement was indexed by parenting, volunteering, communication, decision making, home learning and collaborating with the communities around. Through a descriptive research design, the study drew its sample size from two pre-primary schools (public and private), two parents and four teachers and data collected through interview schedules and document analysis. Study findings indicated that parents' involvement is majorly on financial based activities as they mostly pay for financial contribution to the school to support them in buying stationery relevant to their children's schooling activities. However, they rarely engaged in their children's learning activities due to their business schedules which limits their capacity to concentrate on the education part of

their children. Teachers also reported that they rarely involved parents in the learning outcomes of the pre-school children. In conclusion, the study recommended that it is vital for pre-schools to design outreach programs aimed at sensitizing parental involvement in their children educational welfare.

Obeta (2014), stated that the parents' inability to provide for their children impedes their academic performance implying that parental occupation may indirectly or directly affect the academic performance of a child. This is due to the fact that parental occupation is a key determinant on whether a parent would be able to provide the required and adequate educational materials for the child and be there for the child throughout the his/her educational years.

Gobena (2020), conducted a study on factors influencing participation in pre-school education and its implications for quality-education. The study used a descriptive survey research design and adopted a stratified random sampling to collect data using observational checklists and semi-structured questionnaires. From the study findings, factors that contributed to the quality of pre-school education were lack of enough spaces for children practices, poor and lack of instructional materials, site of the pre-schools and unavailable curriculum materials in the classrooms for each student. Also, large class sizes, low staff salaries, high teacher-student ratio, poor curriculum programs, untrained teachers and lack of parental involvement had a negative impact on pre-schools' quality education hence was concluded that the policy makers need to be clear on what exactly are the aims of pre-school education.

Kato (2018), explored the role of parental literacy engagement in enhancing reading skills to pre-school children in Tanzania. The study's sample size was drawn from 80 respondents which comprised of 40 parents, 30 pre-school children, 2 education officers and 8 teachers. The study used a purposive sampling technique followed by a simple random sampling technique in selecting the 80 respondents with data collected using semi-structured questionnaire, interview schedules and observations. Findings from the study revealed that parental literacy involvement was the best strategy in development of the children's literacy learning in the pre-schools. Additionally, their literacy involvement was found to positively develop the oral language and vocabulary and enhanced the pre-school children's confidence. Recommendations drawn from the study was that pre-school parents need to be empowered

in order to appreciate and understand their role in enhancing both writing and reading skills to their children.

Locally, Ouma (2018), in his study sought to establish the influence of parents' socio-economic status on enrolment and participation of children in pre-primary schools in Bunyala sub-county. The study used a descriptive research design with a study sample of 277 respondents drawn from 195 parents, 60 teachers, 2 sub-county ECDE coordinators and 20 head teachers. Expert opinions were further used to validate the data instruments and used interviews and questionnaires to collect data. From the study findings, only 52.6% of the students had been enrolled in pre-primary schools with majority of the children that had not been enrolled being girls (47.6%) compared to boys at 1.3%. Moreover, education level of parents had an influence on the children's enrolment in that educated parents had a high probability of enrolling their children in pre-primary schools as opposed to the uneducated parents. The occupation of parents also significantly influenced the ability of parents to pay fees for their children. The occupation of parents significantly influenced the ability of parents to pay school fees.

Sang and Syomwene (2018), carried out a study on parental involvement in children's home learning activities in Early Childhood Education in Njoro sub-county, Nakuru County in Kenya. The Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres of influence was used as the basis for the study's theoretical background. Mixed methods approach together with a descriptive design was used to select a sample size of 46 pre-school teachers, 23 head teachers and 46 parents all drawn from 23 pre-schools. Data was collected by use of interview schedules and questionnaires. Study findings revealed that most of the parents were actively involved in assisting their children with homework since they had the knowledge and skills required to help them with their homework. Findings also showed that there was an active cooperation between parents and teachers towards the children's academic with teachers reporting that they talked to individual parents in order to design the most effective method in making them get involved in their children's home learning.

Kihia (2017), conducted a study on the determinants of children's enrolment in selected public pre-schools in Iriai-ini Zone, Nyeri County. Mixed methods research design was used and majorly targeted parents, teachers and head teachers in pre-schools. A census study was done with a sample size of 25 teachers, 20 parents and 16 head teachers. Data was collected

through questionnaires and interviews. An overwhelming percentage of teachers (92%) showed that the family economic background significant impact on the children's pre-school enrollment. From the parents' perspective, they noted that they struggled a lot financially to support the pre-school education for their children since most of them were employed. As a whole, the parents' indicated that they struggled to financially support pre-school education for their children because majority of them were unemployed. Other factors indicated were lack of government support, poor infrastructure, ignorance from parents, distance from the school and poor performance of the schools hindered children enrollment. On the other hand, school feeding programs, attitude of the parents towards pre-school, teachers' qualification, day care services and playing facilities were factors found to encourage enrollment of children in the pre-schools.

Mutai *et al.* (2016), conducted a study on factors affecting the community participation in the development of Early Childhood Development centers with the key of determining the effect of poverty, literacy levels of parents and teacher community relationship on the community participation in the development of the ECD centers. The study adopted a descriptive research design with the primary data collection tool being a semi-structured questionnaire. Findings from the study indicated that the high cost of living, high unemployment rates and lack of morale largely contributed to insignificant community participation in the development of early childhood development centers. The study further revealed that extreme poverty levels coupled with low educational attainment levels among ECD parents and the school committee made it difficult for the teachers to work with them in order to achieve the ECD set goals. Therefore, if the ECD centers were to perform well, then they needed to have an interactive session to encompass all the stakeholders, parents, teachers and the community in order to ensure effective development of the centers.

Ngeno (2012), investigated the influence of parental characteristics on enrolment of preschool children in Kuresoi Division, Nakuru County. A cross-sectional design was adopted in the study and the target group for the study were parents who had children in the pre-schools, head teachers and area chief. Snowball sampling was used to identify the target respondents for the study, 100 parents and data collected through use of questionnaires for parents and interview schedules for the area chief and head teachers. Results from the findings indicated that the level of education of parents largely determined the choice of pre-school they took their children too.

## **2.9 Theoretical framework**

The study based its arguments on two key theories; the symbolic interaction theory and stakeholder theory.

### **2.9.1 Symbolic interaction theory**

The study was based on Symbolic Interaction Theory by Herbert Blumer (1969) as quoted in The Society for More Creative Speech (1996). Herbert Blumer's definition of symbolic interaction focuses on the meanings we assign objects that impact the self. He observes that there are three types of objects-social objects such as professors, students, and parents; abstract objects such as integrity, compassion, and loyalty; physical objects such as buildings, open spaces, desks, and hallways. The essential point in contemporary symbolic interaction scholarship states that the search for constructing, knowing, and performing the self often occurs in relation to designed physical environments. Symbolic Interaction as thought of by Herbert Blumer, is the process of interaction in the formation of meanings for individuals. Blumer was a devotee of George H. Mead, and was influenced by John Dewey. Dewey insisted that human beings are best understood in relation to their environment. With this as his inspiration, Herbert Blumer outlined Symbolic Interaction, as a study of human group life and conduct. Blumer came up with three core principles to his theory. They are meaning, language, and thought. These core principles lead to conclusions about the creation of a person's self and socialization into a larger community (Griffin, 1997).

The first core principle is of meaning which states that humans act toward people and things based upon the meanings that they have given to those people or things. Symbolic Interaction holds the principle of meaning as central in human behavior. The second core principle is language. Language gives humans a means by which to negotiate meaning through symbols. Mead's influence on Blumer becomes apparent here because Mead believed that naming assigned meaning to symbols thus naming was the basis for human society and the extent of knowledge. It is by engaging in speech activities with other human beings and to identify meaning or names and develop discourse. If the parents in this study meaningfully interact with preschools through their income, education, family size and occupation, they will be in a position to develop an understanding and appreciation of their roles in pre-schools. The third core principle is that of thought. Thought modifies each individual's interpretation of symbols. Thought, based-on language, is a mental conversation or dialogue that requires role

taking, or imagining different points of view. The theory focuses on the attention of the way people interact through symbols such as the words, rules and gestures.

This study was about parental involvement in pre-schools. Parents form the social objects that need to interact meaningfully with pre-schools for the benefit of the children making Symbolic Interaction Theory relevant to the study. This study is based on the theory to determine the social and economic factors of parents that influence parental involvement in public pre-schools in the interaction of the daily schooling of their children.

### **2.9.2 Stakeholder's theory**

Freeman (1984) asserted that an institution is not self-sufficient and depends on its relationships with both the external and internal environments. These environments are often made up of interest groups who have a goal or two to achieve from the operations of the organizations. This interest groups according to Freeman (1984) are stakeholders. The stakeholder theory argues that relationships in and schools are affected following many interest groups and approaches the nature of such relationships in terms of results and processes for the organization and its stakeholders. Additionally, Clarkson (1995) argued that the interests of these groups are deemed to be of value and none is usually above the other.

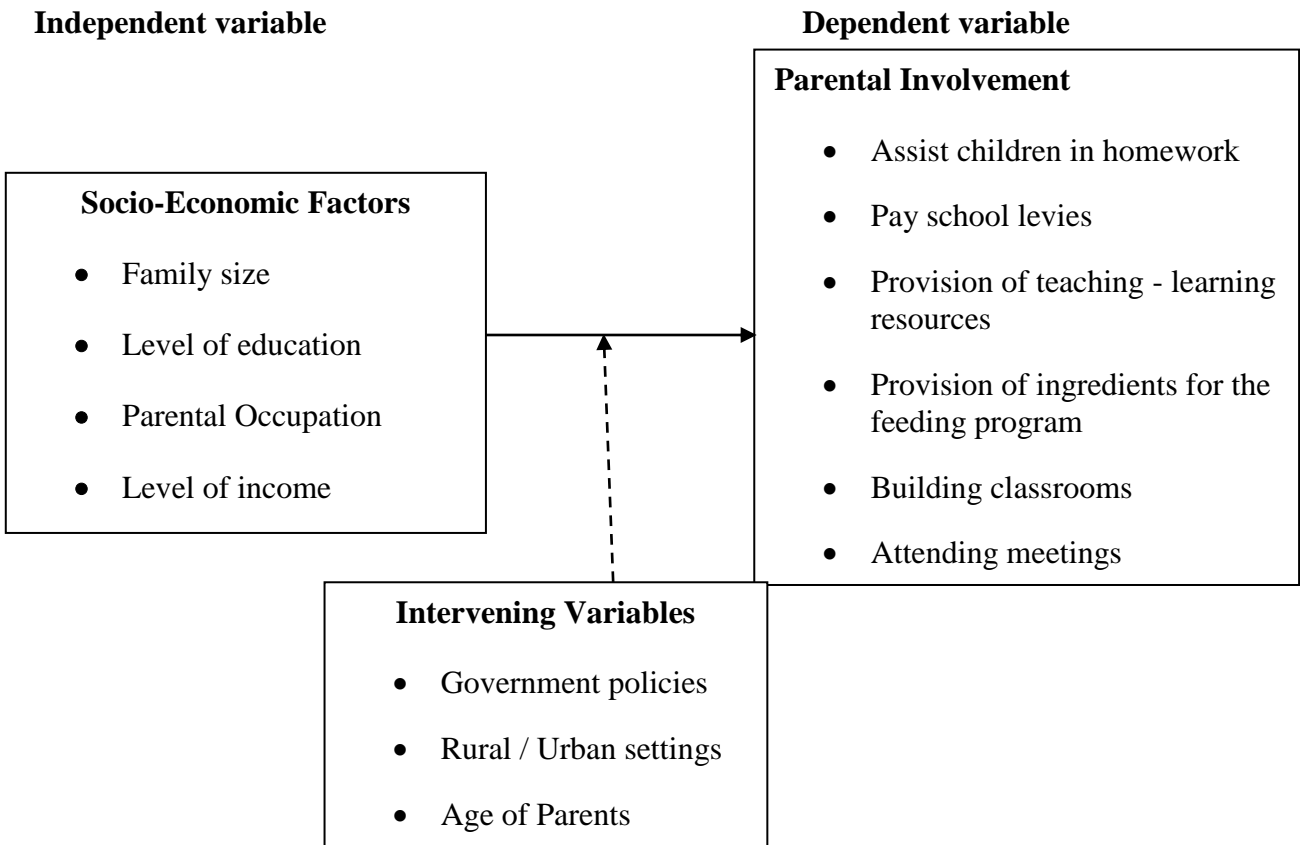
The stakeholder theory focuses on the decision making of the management of various school asserting that most stakeholders who are parents and communities will always have a tendency of influencing the decision making processes of the school for their own benefit (Civera *et al.*, 2019; Wojewnik-Filipkowska & Węgrzyn, 2019). It is therefore puts pressure to schools to understand their stakeholders' need and balance their interests. As such, parental involvement comes in handy especially when the school has various projects/needs and requires the input of parents in supporting its implementation. According to Wojewnik-Filipkowska and Węgrzyn (2019), the theory focuses on three major levels; stakeholder identification, assessing their needs and construction of relationships with them. Yet still, parents always want to define their expectations on the pre-school outcomes, internalize effects from the learning and programs in place and evaluate the results from such programs from the performance of their children in the pre-schools activities.

The theory has therefore become a central theme in most project management and more especially on areas of improving school program success rates, managing its risks and

increasing its effectiveness. Following the evidences of stakeholder theory, this study adds to the body of knowledge by addressing the pre-school learning center issues from the parents' perspective. On the pre-school learning centers therefore, the centers need to engage with its stakeholders who are parents and be able to comprehend their needs and expectations which will help them in balancing their interests (Freeman *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, through parents' meetings, teachers in such pre-schools should be able to interact with the parents and present their expectations from them in nurturing their children and improving on their learning. While parents are thought to hold down on schools receiving their funding such as fees levies and support in purchasing of school equipment in order to produce viable deliverables from pre-school leaning programs, it is vital that such pre-schools engage with them in order to strive for their empowerment and establish a joint decision-making with them (Herreman *et al.*, 2016).

## **2.10 Conceptual framework**

The study adopted a conceptual framework in Figure 2.1 showing Socio-economic factors (family size, level of education, occupation and level of income) as independent variables while Parental involvement as the dependent variable. It is assumed that the socio economic factors influence Parental involvement and for this study the socio economic parameters were parental levels of income, family size, parental occupation and parental level of education. The dependent variable was the parental involvement. The relationship of the independent and dependent variables may be influenced by government policies, rural / urban settings and the age of parents. The study controlled the intervening variables by selecting schools in both rural and urban settings, the parents were all in the age bracket of 25 years and above. The study also controlled for government policies by limiting the study to pre - schools funded by the government. Below is an illustration of how the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable in Figure 2.1:



**Figure 2.1:** Conceptual Framework of the Study

### 2.11 Summary of literature review

This literature review examined the influence various factors on parental involvement in pre-primary schools. However, from the perspective of public pre-primary schools in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya, there was limited empirical literature. This was followed by a theoretical framework in which each of the independent variables was linked to a scholarly theory. The relationship between all the variables was displayed in the conceptual framework. After this the literature pertaining to each variable was described at length. This was followed by an empirical review of key studies. From the foregoing the researcher identified a number of gaps in the literature, which will be used as the basis of the inquiry, which is set out further in chapter three.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research design, the study area, population of the study, sampling procedure and sample size, instrumentation, validity and reliability, data collection procedure and data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research design**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research Design. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a survey is an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to the identified variables. The design was useful in describing the data on socio-economic factors influencing parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county. The design was chosen because it enabled the researcher to analyze quantitative data from questionnaires and qualitative from the interviews scheduled to determine how the selected Socio-economic factors influence parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county of Uasin Gishu County.

#### **3.3 Location of the study**

The study was conducted in Turbo sub-county of Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. This is because currently there has been a drop in enrolment of pupils in pre-schools compared to those admitted in class one and yet pre-school is a foundation of formal education. The study was purposively undertaken in the division in order to determine the influence of socio-economic factors on the involvement of parents in the public pre-schools in the three zones, namely; Kiplombe, Sugoi and Turbo. The main economic activities in this area are small scale farming and businesses.

#### **3.4 Population of the study**

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having common observable characteristics. The population in this study, all parents of the Pre-school pupils, who reside in Turbo Sub-county of Uasin Gishu County formed the study population. The parents were picked upon because of their understanding of the socio-economic factors that contribute to their involvement in pre-school education better than any other stakeholder in the schooling process. The pre-school teachers were also included.

### 3.5 Sampled schools and sample size

Stratified sampling technique was adopted since the pre-schools were categorized according to their education zones. Stratified sampling is a method of sampling in which the population is divided into homogenous groups called strata. The technique was useful in ensuring that all categories of pre-schools were represented in the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to get a sample of pre-schools from each zone. Simple random sampling is a type of sampling in which elements are selected by the researcher using a random number table. The process is repeated several times until the required sample size is attained. This was done by writing the names of all pre-schools in the three zones on pieces of paper and then 30% of the total number was picked. Five were picked from Kiplombe, eight in Sugoi and six in Turbo giving a total of 19 pre-schools. Teachers whose pre-schools were selected were purposively included in the study. Therefore, a total of 19 pre-school teachers were included. Simple random sampling was used to select parents from the selected pre-schools.

The selection of parents was done by writing the numbers of all the parents in the admission register in each selected pre-school then 30% of the total population of parents were picked, giving a sample size of 228 parents. Simple random sampling technique was used because every member of the population had an equal and independent chance of being selected. The sampling percentage is in accordance with Kerlinger and Lee (2000), who asserted that 10-30% of the total population form a representative sample. The sampling procedure and sample size are shown in Table 3.1 below;

**Table 3.1: Sampling Procedure and Sample Size**

| Zone     | Number of Pre-schools | Sampled Pre-schools (30%) | Average number of parents | Sampled parents (30%) |
|----------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Kiplombe | 18                    | 5                         | 200                       | 60                    |
| Sugoi    | 25                    | 8                         | 320                       | 96                    |
| Turbo    | 20                    | 6                         | 240                       | 72                    |
| Total    | 63                    | 19                        | 760                       | 228                   |

**Source: County Director of Education (2014)**

### **3.6 Instrumentation**

#### **3.6.1 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire had two sections. In section a, parents were asked to provide their background information while the section B, had the items which covered socio economic factors on parental involvement in public pre-schools. The questionnaire was picked upon because of its suitability in collecting data from large samples and to solicit specific responses that answered research questions (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Items in the questionnaire were developed by the researcher in relation to the study objectives. The questions on socio- economic factors were scored using a five point Likert scale. Parents were asked to choose from the five responses. These five responses were assigned scores as follows: Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Undecided (3), Agree (4) and strongly agree (5).

#### **3.6.2 Interview schedule**

The interview schedule was used in this study to serve as a source of more information from the pre-school teachers on how socio-economic factors influence the involvement of parents in the pre-schools. It was developed by the researcher for this study. The interview schedule was used as an alternative source of information because it gave room for probing on some issues that were not clear from the questionnaire. As a result, 19 pre-school teachers were interviewed in order to get more in-depth information on the study problem.

### **3.8 Pilot test study**

The questionnaire was pretested to ensure clarity and content validity prior to them being administered. The purpose of the pilot test was to refine the questionnaire so that respondents would not have problems in answering the questions and to ensure that there would not be any problems in recording the data (Saunders *et al.*, 2007). In addition, it would enable the researcher to obtain some assessment of the questions' validity and the likely reliability of the data that was collected. Pilot tests helps the researcher to determine whether the proposals in the collection of data are applicable including the time taken to complete each tool (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008).

Sekaran and Bougie (2006) agree that 1% of the target total population should constitute the pilot test study. Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), recommends 10% of the sample size to be used for piloting. Therefore, 22 questionnaires were administered for the pilot test win 6 pre-schools in Turbo Sub-County, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. Preliminary analysis using the

pilot test data was undertaken to ensure that the data collected was able to answer investigative questions. The number of filled and returned questionnaires were recorded, for the purposes of determining the response rate of the pilot study. The filled questionnaires were then reviewed by the researcher and changes /amendments were made to make it more efficient in collecting useful data.

### **3.7.1 Validity of the instruments**

Validity refers to whether an instrument measures what is intended to measure. Content validity is a measure of the degree to which data collected represented a domain of indicators of a particular concept (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). In this study, the researcher used the content validity to test the validity of the formulated instruments by ensuring that the questionnaire covered all the areas of each variable and the objectives of the study. The researcher also conducted item analysis with the help of the reviewers in the Department of curriculum and instruction and Educational Foundations to check whether the items were valid to collect the intended data.

### **3.7.2 Reliability of the instruments**

The reliability of the questionnaire refers to the ability of the test to yield consistent results when it is administered repeatedly to the same conditions (Kothari, 2004). According to this study, the reliability therefore implies the degree to which the research instruments yield consistent results or data after repeated trials. To test the reliability, the researcher administered 30 questionnaires to parents from three pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county but these preschools were excluded in the final sample of this study. The internal consistency of the instruments was determined by Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha method where a reliability index of 0.75 was obtained. According to Fraenkel and Warren (2000) they consider a reliability index of 0.7 and higher to imply that the instruments are reliable.

## **3.8 Data collection procedure**

After the researcher was through with the proposal, she was given a letter of introduction by Egerton University to seek the permit from the Ministry of Higher Education through the National Council for Science and Technology. The researcher then obtained permission for research from the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education. The researcher then proceeded to the field to collect data by visiting the homes of the selected parents within Turbo Sub-county. The parents were informed that the questionnaires were for

the purpose of research. The researcher promised them that all the information given was confidential. The questionnaire was then administered by the researcher because not all parents were literate therefore the questions were explained in the language which the parents understood then the researcher ticked the responses they gave. The researcher interviewed the pre-school teachers.

### 3.9 Data analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science version 20. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics used included frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations which were summarized and presented using tables and bar graphs. The inferential statistics includes multiple regression tests which was used to show how much of the independent variable contribute to dependent variables as well as the association between dependent and independent variable. Notably, the study used the R-square value as the standard of measuring the extent of the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables. According to Braun and Oswald (2011) standardized regression is one of the most common methods of assessing variable importance; hence the selection of the R-square value in this study. The multiple regression equation will be shown;

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Where;

|                |                              |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| Y              | Parental involvement         |
| X <sub>1</sub> | Family size                  |
| X <sub>2</sub> | Parent's level of education  |
| X <sub>3</sub> | Parent's occupation          |
| X <sub>4</sub> | Parent's level of income     |
| B <sub>0</sub> | Intercept                    |
| e              | Stochastic term (error term) |
| X <sub>i</sub> | Regression coefficients      |

B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub>, B<sub>3</sub> and B<sub>4</sub> represent a unit change in the dependent variable as a result of a unit change in the respective independent variables and it is the proportion of positive effect. F-test will be carried out at 95% confidence level. Further t-test will be carried out at 0.05 level of confidence in order to reject or fail to reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative

hypothesis.

Qualitative data (data collected from interviews) will be analyzed through thematic analysis. Hence, data that will be obtained through focus group discussions as well as interviews and are not amendable to quantitative analysis will be grouped into themes.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

The chapter analyses, presents, interprets and discusses data obtained from the field according to the study objectives. The results were discussed in the following sections; demographic data of parents, family size, level of education, occupation and level of income of parents influencing their involvement.

#### 4.2 Demographic characteristics of the parents

This section presents a brief description of demographic characteristics of the sampled parents who were involved in this study. This forms a foundation for discussion of the results based on the objectives of the study.

##### 4.2.1 Respondents' number of children in school

The study established the number of children whom the respondents have in school. This variable enables the researcher to understand the influence of their involvement depending on the number of children. This information is summarized in Table 4.1:

**Table 4.1: Parents Number of Children in School**

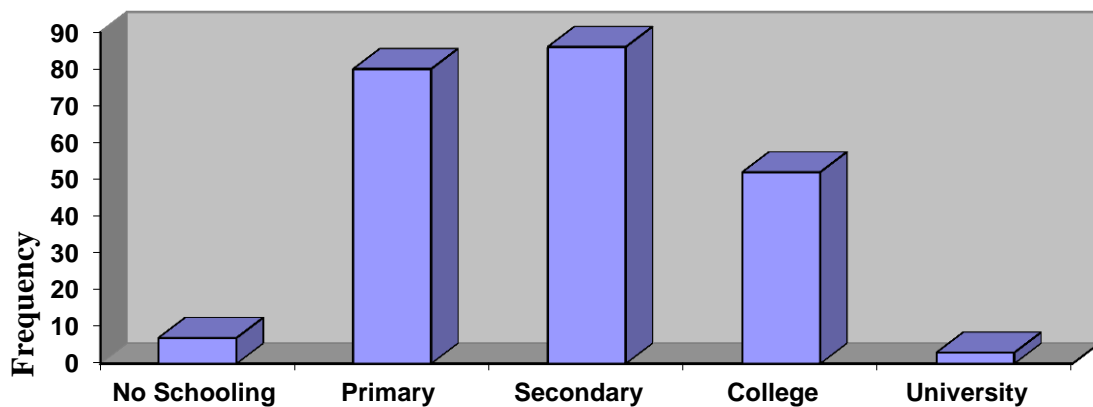
| <i>Number of children in school</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1                                   | 16               | 7.0            |
| 2                                   | 22               | 9.6            |
| 3                                   | 62               | 27.2           |
| 4                                   | 40               | 17.5           |
| 5                                   | 41               | 18.0           |
| 6                                   | 31               | 13.6           |
| 7                                   | 7                | 3.1            |
| 8                                   | 5                | 2.2            |
| 9                                   | 2                | 0.9            |
| 10                                  | 2                | 0.9            |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>228</b>       | <b>100</b>     |

Findings relating to the number of children whom parents have in school indicate that majority (27.2 %) of the parents have 3 children in school while a few (0.9%) have a total of

9 and 10 children in school. This implies that apart from the pre-school children, parents have other children to cater for, who could be in different education levels.

#### 4.2.2 Highest level of education

In relation to the highest level of education which the parents have attained, the study found that the majority of the parents have attained secondary education and a few have attained university education as shown in Figure 4.1:

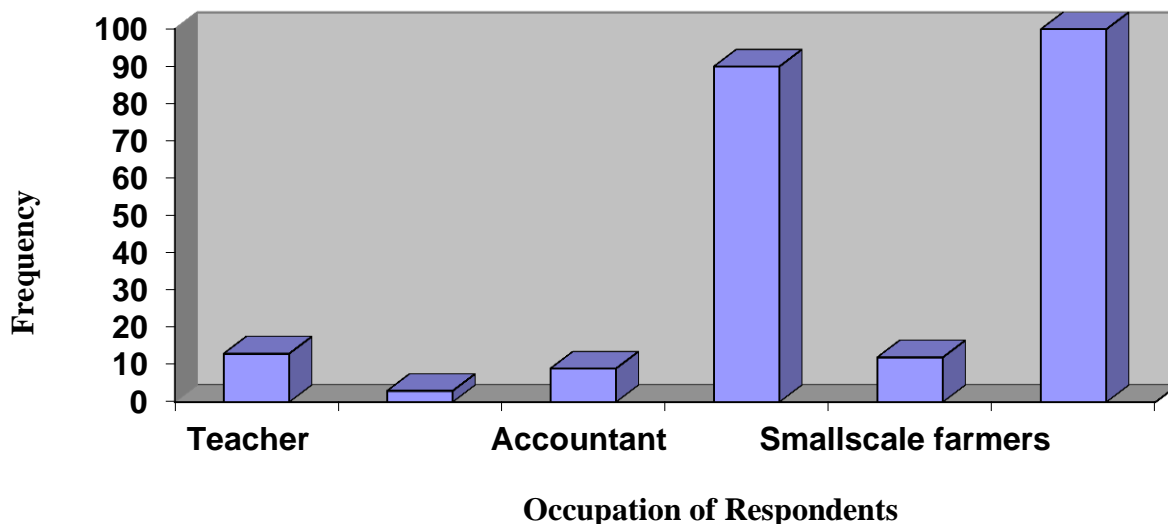


**Figure 4.1: Highest Level of Education Attained**

The findings relating to the highest level of education from Figure 2 indicates that 37.7% of the parents have attained secondary education, while 1.3% of the parents have attained university education. This implies that most parents have the literacy skills and thus may assist their children in doing their homework.

#### 4.2.3 Occupation of parents

In relation to the occupation of parents, it was established that the majority of parents were doing different jobs for instance; drivers, conductors, saloonists, bar maids, waiters, househelps and cleaners were all categorized as any other in this study while a few were doctors as shown in Figure 4.2;



**Figure 4.2: Occupation of the Parents**

The findings in relation to the type of occupation which the parents do as a means of livelihood, it was established that the majority (43.9%) of the parents were in the category of any other.while a few (1.3%) of the parents were doctors.

#### 4.2.4 Earnings of the parents

In relation to the monthly salary earned by the parents, majority of the parents earn below ten thousand shillings in a month while few of them earn sixty thousand shillings and above. This information is presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Earnings of the Parents per Month in Kenya Shillings**

| Earnings per Month | Frequency  | Percentages |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| Above 60,000       | 2          | 0.9         |
| 30,001 – 40,000    | 7          | 3.1         |
| 20,001 – 30,000    | 39         | 17.1        |
| 10,001 – 20,000    | 66         | 28.9        |
| 10,000 and below   | 113        | 49.7        |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>228</b> | <b>100</b>  |

The findings in relation to the monthly salary earned by parents, the study established that the majority (49.7%) of the parents earn ten thousand shillings and below in a month while few parents (0.9%) earn sixty thousand and above in a month.

### 4.3 Objectives of the study

This section discusses the objectives of the study which were based on the four variables namely: The family size, level of education, occupation and the level of income of parents in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county

#### 4.3.1 Influence of family size on influence on parental involvement

The first objective of the study was to investigate how the family size influences parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. This was measured by four items outlined in Table 4.3. (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree).

**Table 4.3: Family size and Parental Involvement**

|  | Mean        | Std. Deviation |
|--|-------------|----------------|
| Family Size and its Influence on Parental Involvement                                  |             |                |
| I ensure my pre-school child is in appropriate school uniform                          | 3.66        | 1.25           |
| I assign the older children to assist the pre-school child to do his or her assignment | 3.33        | 1.41           |
| I always attend parents meetings for my pre-school child                               | 2.48        | 1.02           |
| I give preference to the pre-school child when it comes to provision of basic needs    | 2.23        | 1.15           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>2.92</b> |                |

In relation to the family size and parental involvement, the study found that the parents ensure that their pre-school children are in appropriate school uniforms. This is attested by the statement having a mean of 3.66 which stands for ‘agree’ from the Likert scale. School uniform is meant for identification and a sense of belonging to specific pre-school. Some parents agreed that they assign older children to assist those who are in pre- school and this statement was attested by a mean of 3.33 from the Likert scale. However, few of the parents agreed that they do not attend parents’ meetings nor give preference to their pre-school children concerning the provision of basic needs. This was attested by the statements having the means of 2.48 and 2.23 from the Likert scale.

### 4.3.2 Influence of level of education and parental involvement

The second objective of the study was to determine the level of education and parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. This objective was measured by four items as shown in Table 4.4. To determine whether the level of education of parents influence their involvement in pre-schools Turbo division. Likert scale was used for answering (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree).

**Table 4.4: Level of Education and Parental Involvement**

|   | Mean        | Std. Deviation |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| Level of Education and its Influence on Parental Involvement    |             |                |
| I encourage my children to work hard in school                  | 3.81        | 1.01           |
| I normally help my child to understand well her/his school work | 3.57        | 0.89           |
| I have an idea of what is taught in schools                     | 3.29        | 1.31           |
| I read and understand assessment report from the class teacher  | 2.32        | 1.26           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>3.25</b> |                |

In relation to the level of education and its influence on parental involvement, the study found that the parents who encourage their children to work hard in schools was ranked first with a mean of 3.81, those who helped their children to understand well his/ her school work was ranked second with a mean of 3.57, those who had an idea of what was taught in schools was ranked third 3.29 and those who could read and understand assessment report from the class teacher was ranked last with a mean of 2.32 from the Likert scale.

From the findings it was established that parents agreed that they encouraged their children to work hard in school and this had a mean of 3.81. This is in agreement with the findings of Mary (2012) who found that all families want their children to succeed in school, although they may not be have the same resources and opportunities to be involved in their children's education which contradicts De Fraja *et al.* (2010), who found that households and students own efforts play a key role in accounting for academic achievement and Christenson (2004), who found that sometimes it is stressful when parents feel they lack the knowledge, time and guidance to support their children in doing their homework. Parental involvement does not only mean paying of school fees but also attending parents' meetings, encouraging of

children to work hard in school, but also assisting children in doing their homework and regularly checking the books of their children in order to monitor their progress.

### 4.3.3 Influence of occupation on parental involvement

The third objective of the study was to find out how occupation influences parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. This objective was measured by four items as shown in Table 4.5. In addition, following the importance of whether occupation influence parental involvement, Likert scale was used for answering (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree)

**Table 4.5: Influence of Occupation on Parental Involvement**

| Occupation and its Influence on Parental Involvement  | Mean        | Std. Deviation |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| The type of occupation which I do allow me to be at home early enough to help my child with school work | 3.11        | 1.48           |
| After my daily work I always have energy to attend to my child's school work                            | 2.33        | 1.07           |
| I normally have off at my place of work to visit my child's school                                      | 2.25        | 1.43           |
| I work very far from my child's school  | 2.10        | 1.19           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>2.45</b> |                |

From the above findings, it was found that the type of occupation which the parents perform did allows them to be at home early enough to help their children with school work had a mean of (3.11). However, parents disagreed that they do not have offs at their place of work to visit their children's school and yet they do not work far. This was attested by the statements having the means of 2.33 and 2.25 respectively from the Likert scale.

The above findings agree with those of Dauber and Epstein (1993), who observed that working class families where mothers work full time tend to be less involved in their children's education because they spend many hours on their jobs and much less time with their children at home. This may be explained by the nature of occupation which most of the parents do. Hughes (2002) observed that when schools work together with families to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school but throughout life. Therefore, it is

important that parents should have time and be concerned with their children’s learning. Comer (1995) had it that interactions between parents and teachers may increase mutual respect and increase teachers’ perceptions about how much parents value the education of their children.

#### 4.3.4 Influence of income on parental involvement

The fourth objective of the study was to determine the influence of income and parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. This objective was analyzed using five items as shown in Table 4.6. To establish whether the level of income influence parental involvement, Likert scale was used for answering (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree).

**Table 4.6: Level of Income and Parental Involvement**

|   | Mean        | Std. Deviation |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| Level of Income and its Influence on Parental Involvement               |             |                |
| I regularly communicate with my child’s teacher over the phone          | 3.64        | 1.52           |
| I contribute towards the provision of physical facilities in pre-school | 3.34        | 1.33           |
| I promptly pay pre-school levies for my child                           | 3.24        | 1.16           |
| I buy for my child the required materials for playing                   | 3.12        | 1.21           |
| I have hired an extra teacher to tutor my child at home                 | 2.99        | 1.33           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>3.27</b> |                |

In relation to the level of income and its influence on parental involvement, the study found that the parents who communicate regularly with their children’s teachers over the phone was ranked first with a mean of 3.64, parents who contribute towards the provision of physical facilities in pre-schools was ranked second with a mean of 3.34, parents who promptly pay for their children’s pre-school levies was ranked third with a mean of 3.24, parents who buy their children playing materials was fourth with a mean of 3.12 while those who parents hire extra teachers to tutor their children was least ranked with a mean of 2.99 from the Likert scale. Communicating with teachers is very critical because it enables a parent to understand more the strengths and weaknesses of his or her pre-school child and therefore be able to assist accordingly as suggested by Reynolds and Grill (1995) who observed that regular

communication enables a parent to know concepts taught in school and reinforce them at home.

From the above findings, it can be inferred that there is a significant relationship between parents' level of income and education on their involvement in public pre-schools. The total mean for the level of income on parental involvement is ranked first with a mean of 3.27. This implies that parents' income enables them to communicate with their children's teachers over the phone may be to inquire about the progress of their children or find out any issues that may be affecting their children. Income also enables the parents to contribute towards the provision of facilities in the school, pay levies promptly, buy the required play materials and hire an extra teacher to coach their children while at home. In addition, the study found a significant relationship between the level of education of parents and their involvement in pre-schools. Education is ranked the second significant factor with a mean of 3.25. The level of education enables the parents to help their children with their school work because they have an idea of what is being taught in school, encourage their children to work hard and they are able to read and understand assessment reports from the class teacher.

The study found that the family size and the occupation of parents influenced parental involvement. This is attested by total means of 2.92 and 2.45 respectively. In this study, the family size is ranked third while the occupation is ranked fourth. This implies that parents buy their children school uniform and assign older children to assist those in pre-school. Although they do not give them preference regarding the provision of basic needs may be because they have other children to cater for. The occupation of parents did not allow them to be off duty to visit their children's schools although the study found that most of the parents communicate with the teachers over the phone.

#### **4.4 Hypothesis testing**

In order to establish whether the findings were significant, the study hypothesis was tested to establish the influence of selected factors on parental involvement in pre-school.

##### **4.4.1 The model summary of the socio-economic factors**

The model summary of Socio-economic factors on parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county is shown in Table 4.7 below.

**Table 4.7: The Model Summary of Socio-economic Factors**

| Model | R                  | R square | Adjusted R Square | Std Error of Estimate |
|-------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1     | 0.648 <sup>a</sup> | 0.420    | 0.409             | 0.51201               |

a. Predictors (constant) are the monthly salary, Number of children, Occupation and Highest level of education.

Adjusted R square of 0.409 (40.9 %) means that 40.9% of the change in parental involvement is contributed by the four variables studied (income, family size, occupation and highest level of education). This finding from study implies that other factors that were not studied contribute 59.1 % to parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county, that is, there are other factors that hinder parents from being fully involved in the education of their children in pre-schools. This agrees with the findings done by African Population and Health Research (2010), who found that perceptions and attitude of parents affect their involvement in school affairs of their children. Zanchi (2010), in a study done in United states found that the age of the parents, gender and family structure are relevant to involvement. This implies that the age, gender and family structures are also other factors that may hinder parents from being fully involved in the education of their children. It is therefore clear that not only the socio-economic factors (family size, occupation, income and level of education) which was found to be 40.9% that may contribute to the involvement of parents but there are also many other factors.

#### 4.4.2 Analysis of variance

The analysis of variance in table 4.8 bellow shows the relationship between the variables studied;

**Table 4.8: Analysis of Variance**

| Model        | Sum of squares | df         | Mean square | F      | Sig               |
|--------------|----------------|------------|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| Regression   | 41.524         | 4          | 10.381      | 39.599 | .000 <sup>a</sup> |
| Residual     | 57.411         | 219        | 0.262       |        |                   |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>98.935</b>  | <b>223</b> |             |        |                   |

a.Predictors (constant) Monthly salary, Number of children, Occupation, Highest level of education

b.Dependent Variable : level of parental involvement

The ANOVA results indicate that the model significantly explain the relationship between the variables.

Ho: There is no statistically significant influence of selected Socio-economic factors on parental involvement in public pre- schools in Turbo Sub-county

**Table 4.9: Coefficients of Selected Socio-Economic Factors**

| Model                       | Unstandardized Coefficients |           | Standardized Coefficients |        | Sig  |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                             | B                           | Std Error | Beta                      | t      |      |
| (Constant)                  | 2.827                       | 0.203     |                           | 13.932 | .000 |
| Family size                 | -0.98                       | 0.020     | -0.264                    | -4.827 | .000 |
| Parental level of education | 0.272                       | 0.046     | 0.348                     | 5.937  | .000 |
| Parental Occupation         | -0.121                      | 0.027     | -0.254                    | -4.541 | .000 |
| Parental level of Income    | 0.057                       | 0.039     | 0.084                     | 1.462  | .000 |

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

From the multiple regression results, it showed that there is significant relationship between family size and the involvement of parents ( $\beta=-0.98$ ). The unstandardized regression

coefficient  $\beta$  of -0.98 showed that for one unit increase in family size would cause a -0.98 in parental involvement in pre-school. As a result, these findings agree with Sacker (2002), who argued that the more educated and wealthier mothers with few children tend to invest to a greater extent in their children. Olmsted (1994) also agrees with these findings because he postulated that the levels of resources such as time, energy and money are distributed among children as family size increases.

The level of education influences parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. From the multiple regression, it showed that there was an influence between parental level of education and their involvement ( $\beta=0.272$ ). The unstandardized regression coefficient  $\beta$  of 0.272 showed that the higher the level of education, the greater the level of parental involvement in Turbo sub-county. These findings concur with Nannyonyo (2007), who found that pupils with parents with high educational level tend to support their pre-school children with school work. In addition, Ezewu (1998), found that educated parents provide adequate learning materials for their children, which stimulate them to learn and perform better in all subjects. He added that these parents are concerned over their children's education and performance, which sometimes make them coach their children themselves or appoint part-time teachers for them. The occupation of the parents influences their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. From the multiple regression, it showed that there was no significant relationship between the occupation of parents and their involvement in public pre-schools ( $\beta=-0.121$ ). The unstandardized regression coefficient  $\beta$  of -0.121 showed that for one-unit increase in parental occupation, would cause a -0.121 increase in parental involvement in public pre- schools in Turbo sub-county.

As a result, these findings agrees with the findings of Dauber and Epstein (1993), who found that working class families and families in which mothers work full time tend to be less involved in their children's education because they spend many hours on their jobs and much less time with their children at home. These findings agree with those of Nechyba (1999), who asserted that working families place less value on education and are less involved because they feel they are less equipped to negotiate and deliver the demands of schooling. These findings differ with those of Escarce (2003), who asserted that there is a positive influence between education opportunities and success because rich parents tend to provide full support to their children in terms of finance and emotional support. Combs (1985), also established that children from high parent occupation have better opportunities of getting

better education than those from ordinary children in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county. This implies that the children of the parents with high esteemed occupations are likely to be learning in private pre-schools.

Parental level of income influence parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county. From multiple regression results, it showed that there was an influence between parental level of income and their involvement ( $\beta=0.057$ ). The unstandardized regression coefficient  $\beta$  of 0.057 showed that for one-unit increase in parental level of income would cause a 0.057 increase in parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo sub-county. The regression equation that represents the above results is shown below;

$$Y = b_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4$$

$$Y = 2.827 + - 0.98 x_1 + 0.272 x_2 + - 0.121 x_3 + 0.057 x_4$$

The regression equation above predicts parental involvement on the selected variables as;  
Parental involvement = 2.827 + – 0.98 (number of children) + 0.272 (level of education) + – 0.121 (occupation of parents) + 0.057 (monthly salary).

#### **4.5 Results from interview schedule**

The findings obtained by interviewing pre-school teachers were categorized according to themes and data was presented in a narrative form. The following are the themes and their discussions.

##### **4.5.1 Attendance of meetings in pre-school**

When pre-school teachers were asked to state whether parents attend school meetings, 5 teachers (26%) agreed that they attend, 10 (53%) teachers said that they do not attend while 4(21%) teachers said that they rarely attend. Pre-school meetings are important because it is through them that parents get to know how their children are progressing and are able to discuss issues that may be affecting both the teachers and the children and this contradicts Hill and Taylor (2004), who observed that involvement within a school context which include visits to classroom and interactions with their children's teachers. Low attendance of meetings could be as a result of a school climate that does not make families feel welcomed, respected, needed and valued (Eccles & Harold, 1996).

#### **4.5.2 Feeding program**

Teachers were asked to state whether they have pre-school feeding program, 45% agreed while 55% denied. Feeding program for pre-school children is very vital because children are still young and their growing bodies need nutrients to boost them. Feeding program motivate them to love pre-school environment. Findings from the interviews also indicate that for those pre-schools that have feeding program, parents are the ones supporting the program. This agrees with the findings of Kipkorir and Njenga (1993), who observed that in some communities, parents were the ones providing ingredients and preparing food in the pre-schools for their pre-school children. However, to enable the feeding program to work effectively, it should be made compulsory and be part of the school fees. As part of involvement, parents must ensure that their children's social welfare is taken care of while in these pre-schools.

#### **4.5.3 Attendance of children in the pre-school**

Regarding the attendance of children in the pre-school 54% of the teachers said it was irregular while 46% said it was regular. The children were irregular mainly due to the fact that parents did not pay school levies on time and thus opt to retain their children at home. As a result, the acquisition of concepts by the child is interrupted and this may lead to poor transition to primary. This finding was in agreement with Compton (1996), who observed that the economic status of parents make them uninvolved, uninterested and not valuing and encouraging their children's success.

#### **4.5.4 Rewards for pre-school children**

When teachers were asked whether they give rewards to their pre-school children, 40% agreed while 60% disagreed. Rewards may motivate the children to work harder and realize that their achievements are recognized. This will not only make them like school and thus acquire the pre-requisite skills that are vital for school readiness.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestion for further research. This study sought to determine socio-economic factors that influence parental involvement in public pre-school education in Turbo Division, Uasin Gishu County. The following objectives guided the study;

- i. To determine the extent to which family size influences parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county.
- ii. To investigate the extent to which the level of education of parents influences their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county.
- iii. To find out the extent to which the occupation of parents influences their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county.
- iv. To determine the extent to which the level of income influences parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county.

#### 5.2 Summary

The first objective of the study was to determine the extent to which the family size parents influences parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. Descriptive results showed that some parents ensured that their children were in appropriate school uniform, few assigned older children to assist pre-school children with their school work and very few gave preference to pre-school children when it came to provision of their basic needs. Attendance of the pre-school children was irregular due to the fact that their parents did not pay the school levies promptly thus the teachers had to send them back home.

In addition, the multiple regression results showed that there was a significant influence of family size on parental involvement ( $t=-4.827$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). The unstandardized regression coefficient of  $-0.98$  shows that a unit increase in family size would cause a  $0.98$ -unit decrease in the level of parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. From the results, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The second objective of the study was to investigate the extent to which the level of education influences their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county.

Descriptive results showed that most parents encouraged their pre-school children to work hard, while few of them helped them in their school work.

In addition, the multiple regression results showed that there was a significant influence of parental level of education on parental involvement ( $t= 0.348$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). The unstandardized regression coefficient of 0.272 shows that a unit increase in the level of parental education would cause a 0.272-unit increase in the level of parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. From the results, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The third objective of the study was to find out the extent to which the occupation influences the parent's involvement in public pre-school education in Turbo Sub-county. Descriptive results showed that the type of occupation done by the parents did not allow them to be at home early enough to help their children with their school work nor had an off at their work place to visit their children's school. The multiple regression results showed that there was a significant influence of occupation on parental involvement ( $t=-4.541$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). The unstandardized regression coefficient of -0.121 shows that a unit increase in occupation would cause a 0.121-unit decrease in the level of parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. From the results, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The fourth objective of the study was to determine the extent to which the level of income influences parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. Descriptive results showed that few parents promptly pay pre-school levies and few have hired extra teachers to tutor their children at home. From the multiple regression results, it showed that the level of income of parents actually influence their involvement in public preschools ( $\beta=0.057$ ). The multiple regression results showed that there was a significant influence of income on parental involvement ( $t=1.462$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). The unstandardized regression coefficient of 0.057 shows that a unit increase in income would cause a 0.057-unit decrease in the level of parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. From the results, the null hypothesis is accepted.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

This study established that family size negatively influences parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. The null hypothesis was accepted since the p-value was 0.000. The level of education positively influenced parental involvement in public pre-

schools in Turbo Sub-county. Notably, this study established that the level of education of parents had a significant relationship with their involvement levels. Further, this study established that the occupation of parents negatively influenced their involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. From the results, the p-value was 0.000, indicating that the relationship between occupation and involvement was significant. Finally, the level of income positively influenced the parental involvement in public pre-schools in Turbo Sub-county. Notably, there was a significant relationship between the income level and parental involvement.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

From the research results obtained, the study makes the following recommendations:

- I. Parents should be sensitized on the importance of their involvement in the learning of their pre-school children despite of the size of the families.
- II. From the study, it was established that level of education positively influenced the involvement of parents of pre-school children. Therefore, teachers should give assignments to learners and make follow-ups with parents to help increase the level of parental involvement.
- III. The occupation of the parents was not found to be having a positive influence on their involvement in pre-schools. Therefore, whatever the occupation which the parents engage in as a means of earning a livelihood, they should be encouraged to be involved in the education of their children in pre-school.
- IV. The level of income was found to be positively influencing the involvement of parents in pre-school. Therefore, the government should consider funding early childhood education so that children acquire the prerequisite skills for school readiness and thus foster smooth transition to primary school.

#### **5.5 Suggestions for further research**

The study was conducted in Uasin Gishu County in Kenya. There is need for more intensive research in other areas in Kenya and among other communities to establish other socio-economic factors that influence parental involvement in public pre-schools.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Introductory Letter

Dear Respondent,

I am a post graduate student undertaking my research on the topic. **Socio-Economic Factors Influencing Parental Involvement in Public Pre-School Education in Turbo Sub-county of Uasin- Gishu County.** I have an intention of establishing what you think about the following items listed below. There is no right or wrong answer, all answers are appropriate, however it is important that you are honest in your response. The information given will be held with confidentiality and will never be used against you.

Yours faithfully



T'oo Chepkoech Joyce

### Appendix II: Questionnaire for Parents

#### Part A: Demographic data

**Please tick the choice that best suits you.**

1. How many children in the nuclear family do you have in school? .....
2. What is your highest level of education  
No schooling ( )  
Primary ( )  
Secondary ( )  
College ( )  
University ( )
3. What is your occupation .....
4. Approximately how much do you earn in a month .....

**Part A: Family size and its influence on parental involvement**

5. Please tick the choice that best suits you or your feelings. In these cases the numbers 1,2,3,4 and 5 have been used as options. The following are their corresponding meanings 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-undecided, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree.

---

|   | <i>1</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>4</i> | <i>5</i> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| I always attend parents meeting for my pre-school child                             |          |          |          |          |          |
| I ensure my pre-school child is in appropriate school uniform                       |          |          |          |          |          |
| I assign the older children to assist the pre-school child to do his/her assignment |          |          |          |          |          |
| I give preference to the pre-school child when it comes to provision of basic needs |          |          |          |          |          |

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**Part B: Level of education and its influence on parental involvement**

1. Please tick the choice that best suits you or your feelings. In these cases the numbers 1,2,3,4 and 5 have been used as options. The following are their corresponding meanings 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-undecided, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree.

---

|   | <i>1</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>4</i> | <i>5</i> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| I have an idea of what is taught in schools                     |          |          |          |          |          |
| I normally help my child to understand well her/his school work |          |          |          |          |          |
| I encourage my children to hard in schools                      |          |          |          |          |          |
| I read and understand assessment report from the class teacher  |          |          |          |          |          |

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**Part C: Occupation and its influence on parental involvement**

2. Please tick the choice that best suits you or your feelings. In these cases the numbers 1,2,3,4 and 5 have been used as options. The following are their corresponding meanings 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-undecided, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree.

---

1 2 3 4 5

---

The type of work I do allows me to be at home early enough to help my child with school work

I normally have off at my place of work to visit my child's school

After my daily work I always have energy to attend to my child's school work

I work very far from my child's school

---

**Part D: Levels of income and its influence on parental involvement**

1. Please tick the choice that best suits you or your feelings. In these cases the numbers 1,2,3,4 and 5 have been used as options. The following are their corresponding meanings 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-undecided, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree

---

1 2 3 4 5

---

I buy for my child the required materials for playing

I promptly pay pre-school levies for my child

I have hired an extra teacher to tutor my child at home

I regularly communicate with my child's teacher over the phone

I contribute towards the provision of physical facilities in pre-school

---

### Appendix III: Teachers Interview Schedule

Dear respondent,

I am a post graduate student undertaking my research on the topic, **Socio-Economic Factors Influencing Parental Involvement in Public Pre-School Education in Turbo Division, Uasin Gishu County**. I have an intention of establishing what you think about the particular items listed below. There is no right or wrong answer, all answers are appropriate, however it is important that you are honest about your thinking. The information given will be held with confidentiality and will never be used against you.

1. Do parents attend pre-school parents meetings? .....
2. If yes how can you rate the turn up of parents during the parents' days?  
.....
3. Do you have a feeding program for children in this centre?  
.....
4. If yes in item three above, who supports the feeding program?  
.....
5. How do you rate the children's attendance of your pre-school centre?  
 Regular       Irregular

Give reason for the answer above .....

Do you give rewards to your pre-school children? .....

## Influence Of Family Size On Parental Involvement In Public Pre-School Education In Turbo Division, Kenya

Too Chepkoech Joyce, Dr. Thomas K. Ronoh, Dr. Emily Sitienei, Benjamin K. Bii, Jonah Kipsang Kiptum

**Abstract:** Parents are the prime educators of their children at infancy stage till they attend pre-school. They remain a major influence on their children's learning through their early years, school and beyond. Therefore their involvement in pre-school learning is very vital since it determines the kind of foundation accorded to the child for future learning. Descriptive survey design was used in this study. The 760 parents and 63 teachers of the pre-school pupils who reside in Turbo division formed the study population. Stratified sampling technique was used to select 19 pre-school centres out of 63. Simple random sampling was used to select 228 out of 760 parents and purposive sampling was used to select 19 Pre-school teachers out of 63. The data was collected using researcher administered questionnaires and interview schedules. Descriptive statistical techniques were used to analyze quantitative data and these include frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. The findings were presented in bar graphs, pie charts and tables. Qualitative data were analyzed using selective coding of common themes and concepts and presented by basing on the objectives of the study. The study found that family income has an influence on parental involvement in public pre-schools. The study concludes that parental involvement does not only mean paying of school fees or buying of school uniforms but it involves attending parents' meetings, encouraging of children to work hard in school, and most importantly assisting children in doing their homework and regularly checking books of their children.

**Key Terms:** Influence, family size, parental involvement, public pre-school

### Introduction

Children may be viewed as growing plants that need nurturance, miniature adults and natural resources that need to be nurtured as future investments of the society. Early learning begets later learning and success and early failure breeds later failure (Heckman, 1999). Children who are vulnerable gain most from pre-school services (Bennet, 2008). Warm and caring relationship need to be developed between teachers and children to enable them to detect any warning signs that might risk children for failure that may interfere with their success in school and life and thus call for parental involvement in early education of the children (Leroy & Ymes, 2009). In USA and Europe educationists has it that due to parental involvement children has greater interest, motivation and participated more in co-curricular activities. They also have greater confidence in themselves and higher aspirations for their future (Bennet, 2008). Children have two main educators in their lives, who are their parents and teachers. Parents are their children's first and most enduring educators (Conger, 1992).

It has been argued poverty put children at risk because of the deficiencies in resources associated with poverty such as poor nutrition, including calcium, vitamins, and proteins deficiencies, which are all essential elements for healthy physical development and cognitive growth. Recent studies have also documented that children from economically disadvantaged families have poorer academic achievement, social skills and cognitive functioning than children who are not from economically disadvantaged families (Smith et al. 1997). However the studies have little on how the economic status of a family affects parental involvement in children's learning. The ability of parents to provide parenting can be hindered by socio-economic or personal circumstances such as unemployment, stress, and/or depression. Family level factors, such as low maternal education, poor maternal mental health, lack of family networks, have been demonstrated to pose risks to early childhood development (Hertzman, 2000). In the case of poor parental mental health, in situations of extreme poverty, or high levels of family stress parent-child interactions resulting in fewer opportunities for learning experiences in the home (Bornstein, 1995 and Willms, 2002). The period of early childhood is precisely the time of development when children need most care and support. It is time when cognitive stimulation, nutrition and emotional attachment all work together to shape the child's identity, coping skills, intelligence and problem solving skills relevant at their age. The government policy on pre-school is that the curriculum should be child centered and developmentally appropriate which enhances holistic development of young children. It helps children in their cognitive as well as psychomotor and emotional development. In Turbo Division all primary schools have pre-schools centers attached to them. Parental involvement in these centers is revealed to be inadequate that is why investigated how family size influence parental participation in public pre-schools in Turbo, Kenya.

- Author is currently pursuing master's degree program in sociology of Education in Egerton University, Kenya
- Co-author is a senior lecturer, Department of Psychology, Counseling and Education Foundation, Egerton University, Kenya.
- Co-author is a senior lecturer, Department of Psychology, Moi University
- Co-author is currently pursuing master's degree program in sociology of Education in Egerton University, Kenya
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