CAN FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION? A STUDY OF THE INTERSECTIONS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION, GENDER AND EDUCATION IN KENYA

A Dissertation Presented

by

JUDITH A. OBIERO

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DEDICATION

To all the young girls who generously and passionately, through laughter and tears, shared their stories with me. From you I have learned a great deal about hope and resilience, about courage and survival. It is my hope that your voices will move political leaders, policy makers and all Kenyans to begin to confront the pandemic of inequality in a more direct, honest, and bold manner and to formulate more equitable policies and programs that will ultimately help to bring your hopes and dreams to fruition.

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ABSTRACT

CAN FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION? A STUDY OF THE INTERSECTIONS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION, GENDER AND EDUCATION IN KENYA

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The adoption of Free Primary Education in 2003 has expanded access to millions of children in Kenya. However, large numbers of children are still out of school. The majority of the out-of-school children belong to ethnic minority groups and the rural and urban poor, who live in abject poverty. This situation is disturbing given that free primary education was intended to universalize access to primary education, particularly for the poor. In Kenya, where gender parity has been achieved in primary education, gender disparities become obvious when analyses include geographical region and high levels of poverty. The degree to which gender parity is met varies from region to region and across ethnic groups. However this experience is not unique to Kenya. Recent global assessments of education reveal that out-of-school girls are disproportionately

represented in excluded groups. But what helps explain this disproportionate representation of poor marginalized girls among those who are out of school?

Understanding and addressing discrepant rates of participation requires close examination of factors underlying poor educational participation among those at the margins of society. However, such investigation must take into account the unique ways in which culture, poverty, ethnicity, and gender interact to affect educational processes. This study adopts a feminist theory of intersectionality to argue, based on the experiences of urban poor and rural girls in Nyanza Province of Kenya, that the educational marginalization of poor girls can be understood as an outcome of intersecting, socio-political and economic processes that emerge from their social locations within sexism, poverty, ethnic chauvinism, classism, and the simultaneity of oppression related to multiple discrimination. Based on the perspectives of the poor girls themselves, the study argues that greater acknowledgment be given to the intersectional framework within which educational exclusion occurs, paying particular attention to the interactions of culture, economy, home, and school as domains of intervention.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASALs	Arid and Semi Arid Lands
CCTs	Conditional Cash Transfers
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CPM	Capability Poverty Measure
DFID	Department for International Development
EFA	Education for All
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationists
FPE	Free Primary Education Policy
GER	Gross Enrollment Rates
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GCO	Girl- Child Officer
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GOK	Government of Kenya
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HIV/	Human Immune Deficiency Virus
IPAR	Institute for Policy Analysis and Research
IPS	Interpress Service News Agency
IRB	Institutional Research Board
IDP	Internally Displaced Person(s)
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KCB	Kenya Commercial Bank
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KESSP	Kenya Education Sector Support Programme

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The problem

The adoption of Free Primary Education in 2003 has expanded access to millions of children in Kenya. However, while access has improved, quality has declined and large numbers of children are still out of school (Chege & Sifuna,2006; Wainaina, 2008; Oketch & Rolleston, 2007; Otieno & Coclough,2009) .The majority of the out-of-school children belong to ethnic minority groups and the rural and urban slum dwellers, who live in abject poverty (Legget, 2005). Studies also show evidence of regional disparities in educational attainment and quality in Kenya (Otieno & Colclough, 2009; Schech &Alwy, 2004; Chege & Sifuna, 2006); that girls are more disadvantaged compared to boys in terms of completion of schooling and that gender disparities in education tend to be larger for poor households and ethnic minorities (Chege & Sifuna, 2006; Colclough et al, 2003). The degree to which gender parity is met varies from region to region and across ethnic groups. Based on primary net enrollment ratios of 2002, only four regions out of the eight provinces had achieved gender parity in primary education. Recent studies also show that gender disparity persists in spite of national statistics that show that Kenya has achieved gender parity in education (Otieno & Coclough, 2009). However, this situation is not unique to Kenya. The 2010 EFA Global Monitoring Report noted that children most at risk of never attending school were from rural, low-income, and ethnic minority backgrounds, the majority of whom were girls (UNESCO, 2010). Other assessments of the out-of- school children that are disaggregated by gender, location, income, and ethnicity show that gender marks the experience of exclusion from schooling (Dejaeghere

& Miske, 2009; Lewis & Lockheed, 2006). Yet very few qualitative studies have considered how the interactions of gender with these socio-cultural categories produce unequal educational outcomes (Lewis & Lockheed, 2007; Dejaeghere & Miske, 2009). Paradoxically, gender disparities are found among countries that have attained gender parity in education, whenever analyses include ethnicity and high levels of poverty (Dejaeghere & Miske, 2009).

Given the presumed attainment of 'parity', the question that we should be asking is not whether gender has an effect on educational attainment, but under what circumstances does it have an impact. Addressing this question would entail focusing on the 'zones of exclusion' (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007; Lewin 2007), which relate to four 'zones of vulnerability' that describe different stages of educational access. Zone one includes boys and girls that have never enrolled in school; Zone two are those who enrolled but dropped out: Zone three are those at risk of dropping out from school: and Zone four completed primary but failed to transition to secondary education. With reference to Zone two, Lewin (2007) observes that it "includes disproportionate numbers of girls, HIV/AIDS orphans, and others in vulnerable circumstances". Yet "too little is known of how the range of influential factors is changing as EFA [Education for All] evolves, how they result in decisions to enroll and attend at different grade/age levels, and how they have an impact on different key disadvantaged groups" (Lewin, 2007, p. 22).

Based on the foregoing observations, we can conclude that access of girls from socially excluded groups presents a major policy challenge and an obstacle to achieving universal basic education. Accordingly, "strategies for promoting gender equality need to

be located within a wider understanding of social exclusion" (UNESCO, 2005 p.15). This would entail, among other things, paying attention to the quality of education, "both the processes of learning as well as the quality of inputs, such as availability of schools, teachers and text books" (p.15). But to achieve gender parity and subsequently gender equality in education, any efforts to promote education must be responsive to gender, as well as other social inequalities (UNESCO 2005, p.15).

There is need, therefore to identify effective ways to accelerate progress towards gender equality in access, retention, and achievement in education in Kenya. To do this requires among other things: a) understanding why girls from particular regions and social backgrounds are still excluded from Free Primary Education; b) examining some of the educational policy reforms that Kenya has undertaken and the impact of such reforms on the excluded girls' and women's education, and c) identifying policy and programmatic options that can effectively address the needs of socially excluded girls. As Stromquist (2001) argues: "simultaneously, the expansion of schooling has not been accompanied by explicit recognition of the underlying factors that create the disadvantage in access and completion of rural indigenous women" (p. 53). She calls for "more studies based on qualitative research" to address this problem, arguing that educational statistics especially at the aggregate or national level that focus on access "fail to capture the dynamics of discrimination that girls and women continue to face in the educational systems of their respective countries in terms of their everyday experiences and what is learned in school"(p .53).

Purpose of study

This study therefore responds to the aforementioned need, focusing on the educational experiences of rural and urban poor girls who live in Nyanza Province Kenya, inhabited by the Luo ethnic community, commonly referred to as 'Luo-Nyanza'. The study describes the experiences of these girls as they pertain to class, gender, and ethnic identity (and other social dimensions as identified by participants) in the context of primary education. The broad purpose of the study is to examine how the marginalized children are faring in Free Primary Education. It thus explores the ways in which diverse forms of vulnerability interact with gender to influence girls' educational experiences, and outcomes. An understanding of these socio-cultural and political-economic dynamics might help identify policy options that can effectively address the needs of the excluded girls. Understanding the policy impact on the lives of those at the margins of society, particularly those aimed at improving the lives of women and girls, is imperative in view of the question of 'difference' in feminist political thought:

> What seems like a good idea for one group of women may not necessarily be of immediate benefit for another group. Thus recognizing the diversity of women's experiences and how these are shaped not only by their gender, but also by their racial, ethnic, cultural, sexual preference, age and economic background is crucial in guarding against the unidimensional view of the category woman. Like-wise not all women experience gender as their socially defining characteristic in terms of perceived impact on daily life (Hesse-Biber et al, 2004 p.17).

Focusing on excluded girls' lived experiences, their reflection on these experiences, and the knowledge that emerges from these processes, offers the opportunity for social transformation and reform in education policy.

Research Questions

Since this study seeks to explore the relationship between social exclusion and the participation of girls in free primary education, the following principle questions and sub-questions offer insights into the problem under investigation. The central research questions are:

1. What are the factors that influence the participation of socially excluded girls in free primary education?
2. What kinds of policy interventions within and beyond the education sector can best address the negative impacts of social exclusion on the education of girls?

The study seeks to answer two sub-questions:

1. From the perspectives of rural and poor urban girls, has the Free Primary Education Policy been responsive to the educational challenges of the poor rural and urban girls?
2. What have been the experiences of poor rural and urban girls in Free Primary Education? What roles have social categories such as gender, ethnicity, and social class played in the lives of these individuals?

Potential significance

Statistics have shown that 60 million girls are out of school and that they belong to the "excluded groups" (Lewis & Lockheed, 2007 p. 7). Discussions have taken place in the literature as to why they drop out, yet the excluded girls themselves are rarely asked why they drop out and how their needs can be met. Furthermore, there are very few ethnographic studies focused on the lived experiences of girls and boys in Kenyan

schools or the compound effects of gender and other sources of exclusion in girls' education. Linking these factors with the persistence of gender inequality in education, this study underscores the complexity of the problem and argues for responses informed by this complexity. This study brings the voices of the excluded girls into the discussion of the situation in which they find themselves. In this way, the study contributes to the debates on identifying and addressing the barriers to achieving Universal Primary Education, and ultimately Education for All.

A growing body of academic literature has examined the factors that constrain educational access and participation in Kenya. Within the social sciences, and sociology in particular, studies have focused on social stratification and education, and investigated the impact of social class on education **(**Buchmann, 2000); various aspects of social differentiation and education, including social class and educational participation (Wainaina, 2006), gender (Odaga & Heneveld,1995; Kitetu, 1998; FAWE,2003; Chege &Sifuna, 2006) or ethnicity (Alwy & Schech, 2004). These studies acknowledge the persistence of regional, socio-economic, ethnic and gender inequalities in education. While these studies have enriched our understanding of how these social inequalities shape children's education, most studies tend to examine each of these categories in isolation and ignore the possible interactions among these discrete cultural categories. In Kenya, for example, studies have acknowledged the persistence of regional, socio-economic, ethnic, and gender disparities in educational access and opportunities (Wainaina, 2008; Chege & Sifuna, 2006; Alwy & Schech, 2004; Abagi, 1995); and gender inequalities (FAWE, 2003). Little is known about the extent to which these sources of inequality interact to shape the educational experiences of the excluded

children. Moreover, as Alwy and Schech (2004) point out, most of these studies reveal disparities, but do not offer any interpretations or explanations of these inequities.

Clearly, the moment is ripe for a more comprehensive analysis of the ways in which the interplay of social identity variables, such as gender, ethnicity, and class, coupled with other emerging sources of disadvantage, might impact the schooling of the most vulnerable and marginalized children. An understanding of these interactions might shed light on the best policy options and programmatic strategies to reach all the out-of school children, girls in particular, and help them persist and achieve. A dearth of evidence-based interventions that focus on specific cultural contexts, leads to a vicious circle, in which poor communities reproduce uneducated women, who in turn, reproduce uneducated girls, who also end up reproduce the roles of their mothers(Chege & Sifuna, 2006) . This study therefore expands on previous studies in three ways:

- Identifying barriers to Universal Primary Education in Kenya by analyzing the intersecting nature of the multiple sources of exclusion;
- Bringing the voices of the excluded into the discourse; and
- Proposing, from the perspective of the excluded girls, policy recommendations and strategies that might mitigate the negative impacts of social exclusion on the education of girls.

Such a project requires the use of qualitative feminist research, and analytical frameworks such as intersectionality.

Theoretical framework: Intersectionality

Feminist researchers see gender as a central organizing identity that shapes the conditions of people's lives. Thus gender is a lens that brings into focus particular questions. Pertinent are the questions related to the centrality of gender in the shaping of individuals' consciousness. However, feminists also recognize that other aspects of identity such as culture, race, sexuality, ethnicity, and class interact with gender to produce a unique lived experience (Collins, 1990). They posit a theoretical and analytical framework called intersectionality to capture and explicate these experiences. Intersectional theory focuses on the very specific ways that gender intersects with a number of other dimensions in the lives of women, such as race, ethnicity, class or poverty. It pays attention to the concrete experiences of women who have been caught between multiple systems of oppression and by so doing allows for identification of relevant strategies for change (Brewer, et. al, 2002).

Intersectional analysis attempts "to understand the differences among women and among men and the ways that these differences interact to exacerbate marginalization" or privilege (Riley 2004, p.110). In this analysis, subordination is not solely "an issue of gender or race or class inequalities, but a location where there are often simultaneous and compounding relationships of subordination" (p.110). Several advantages are noted for applying an intersectional approach to multiple experiences of discrimination. For example it "offers potential as a framework for contextual analysis that may improve development outcomes for women by ensuring that particular groups of women are not excluded in policy and practice" (Riley 2004, p.110). Most importantly, it considers

social and historical context whilst acknowledging the unique and complex character of the experience of discrimination (Peb, 2001).

Informed by the conceptual repertoires of intersectionality, this research study adopts intersectionality both as a theoretical framework and analytical tool to identify and explain the multiple and intersectional experiences of excluded girls. An intersectional framework allows for an examination of patterns of educational participation by taking into account historical relations of power that shape institutions in which historically marginalized women and girls participate. It thus enables identification of the patterns of social inequality that constrain opportunities in education.

Chapter summary and organization

This dissertation comprises eight chapters. Chapter one provides the general background to the research problem, research purpose, objectives and questions, as well as its significance and theoretical framework. The remaining chapters present evidence on the determinants of school participation of excluded girls, focusing on the two-way interaction between gender and diverse sources of social exclusion. Chapter two provides an overview of the relevant literature and elaborates on the theoretical lens that guided this research, analysis and interpretation of the data. Thus, it examines literature related to theoretical and empirical issues surrounding education of girls and boys in Sub-Saharan Africa. Chapter three looks at contextual issues surrounding education in Kenya. It situates education in the context of social-political inequality, analyzing the implication for education, of intersecting nature of multiple discrimination. Chapter four focuses on research methods and methodology, highlighting epistemological and theoretical

underpinnings of the design of the study, and the rationale for choosing qualitative methods. The chapter explores alternate research approaches and articulates the merits of a feminist qualitative approach for data collection and analysis. Chapters five and six present the findings of the study. Chapter five focuses on the state of Free Primary Education, commencing with context of the Free Primary Education Policy, it assumptions, rationale and outcomes. The chapter concludes with a focus on the current status of implementation, challenges and analysis of the progress made towards meeting UPE goals. Chapter six presents case study data and empirical evidence of the lived realities of education under conditions of social exclusion. Chapter seven provides an analysis, interpretation, and discussions of the research findings, highlighting girls' multiple and intersectional experiences. Finally, chapter eight ponders the way forward with a discussion of the implications and recommendations of the study, and a forecast for further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theorizing educational inequality, structural constraints and conditions in the education system

This study is grounded on the literature on gender and education. Specifically, this chapter examines literature related to theoretical and empirical issues surrounding education of girls and boys, as well as interactions of gender, ethnicity, class/poverty, and education. It begins by examining various theoretical perspectives on gender issues in education, with particular focus on feminist theories. It then discusses research on gender and education focusing on factors that influence female and male participation in education in low resource contexts, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and Kenya in particular.

What factors determine girls' and boys' participation in education?

The literature on the determinants of girls' and boys' participation in education often makes reference to the notions of gender equality, gender parity, and gender equity. It is therefore imperative to clarify these concepts at the outset.

Gender parity, equality and equity

In examining education from a gender equality perspective, distinctions are often drawn between the concepts gender parity, gender equity, and gender equality. However, it is important to note that these definitions draw heavily from the UNESCO (2003) Report titled -*Gender and education for all: The leap to equality.* Gender parity in education denotes equal proportions of boys and girls participating in different phases

and aspects of education. Specifically, gender parity indicators measure the numbers of girls and boys with access to, and participating in education, at a particular moment (Subrahmanian, 2007). The Gender Parity Index (GPI) measures the relative proportions of girls and boys in school, indicating the ratio of female to male values of such indicators as enrollment and completion. Thus "a GPI of 1 indicates parity between the sexes; a GPI between 0 and 1 means a disparity in favor of boys/men/ male. While a GPI greater than 1 indicates a disparity in favor of girls/women/females"(otieno & Coulclough, 2009, p. 18). Hence "parity is attained when the same proportion of boys and girls—relative to their respective age groups—enter the education system, achieve educational goals, and advance through the different cycles (USAID, 2008, p. 6).

Gender parity and gender equality are not synonymous. Whereas gender parity is a quantitative concept concerned with the numerical differences between boys and girls in enrollment, participation, and completion rates; gender equality is a qualitative concept concerned with both "equality of opportunity and equality of treatment" (UNESCO, 2005, p. 22). A focus on gender equality recognizes gender as a "relational process" that manifests in social institutions, values and practices, including educational systems (Subrahmanian, 2005). Its achievement depends on giving both girls and boys the equal opportunities and equal treatment in the process of education and after schooling.

These are "interlinked dimensions of a rights-based approach: equal access to schooling, equality within schooling, and equality through schooling" (UNESCO, 2005 p.21). Attaining parity in enrollment is therefore a critical but interim indicator of progress towards achieving gender equality (Subrahmanian, 2007). However, equal access alone (parity) is not sufficient, for achieving equality, since it hardly translates into

meaningful processes and outcomes. In fact, its attainment might occur simultaneously with decline in enrollment for either or both girls and boys. For this reason, it is suggested that equality of outcome is a more reliable measure of progress towards equality.

However, measuring or achieving equality of outcome is not easy. As a result, equality of outcome is often defined in terms of the broader principle of 'non-discrimination' (Subrahmanian 2007). Thus, attention to gender equality in education might focus on "quality of experience of education, in terms of entering education (access), participating in it (participation) and benefiting from it (achievement and outcomes)" (UNESCO, 2005, p. 21).

This view on equality is also upheld by among others, USAID (2008), and Farrell, (1999). USAID's framework for achieving equal outcomes identifies four main dimensions for achieving equality namely: *equality of access, equality in the learning process, equality of educational outcomes, and equality of external results* (USAID, 2008, p.7). Similarly, Farrell's (1999) definition of equality illuminates the wider dimensions of equality within education namely: *equality of access, equality of survival, equality of output and equality of outcome*. According to Farrell (1999):

> *Equality of access* refers to the probabilities of children from different social groupings getting into the school system or some particular level or portion of it; *equality of survival* relates to the probabilities of children from various social groupings staying in the school system to some defined level, usually the end of a complete cycle such as -primary, secondary, higher; *equality of output* refers the probabilities that children from various social groupings will learn the same things to the same levels at a defined point in the schooling system; and *equality of outcome* focuses on the probabilities that children from various social groupings will live relatively similar lives subsequent to and as a result of schooling (Farrell 1999 pp. 155-156).

Farrell's model of educational inequality depicts schooling as a mechanism for "selective social screening" (p.154). He argues: "It enhances the status of some children, providing them with an opportunity for upward social or economic mobility. It ratifies the status of others, reinforcing the propensity for children born poor to remain poor as adults, and for children born into well-off families to become well-off adults" (p.154). Thus, in the process of schooling children are constantly sorted out in different ways and at different points. In this regard, therefore equality is linked with 'actual patterns in which something (e.g. years of schooling) is distributed among members of a particular group' (p.154).

This study finds Farrell's model of inequality to be relevant in the assessment of whether Free Primary Education has the potential to achieve Universal Primary Education. The model defines equality in terms of outcomes, whilst acknowledging that categories of social differentiation have a bearing on whether a child has equal opportunity of outcome from quality education. According to this model, the attainment of equality requires that all children, girls and boys, have equal opportunities to participate in education and in the learning process, implying that learning achievements should not differ by social class, gender, race, religion, caste, or disability. It also requires equality of outcomes and external results implying that job opportunities and earnings for men and women, from different ethnic, racial or social classes with similar qualifications, would be equal. It allows for an assessment, along those dimensions of "how and which children of which social groups are screened out or kept in" (Farrell, 1999, pg 155).

The first three dimensions of equality are particularly relevant in terms their short-term implications of schooling. In the context of Free Primary education, often associated

with equality of access, this model may offer important insights into why equality of survival to the end of the cycle is never guaranteed especially for girls. However, the last type of equality cannot be ignored as it relates to ways in which what is learned in the process of education is applied in later life, particularly in the labor markets. Thus, it captures the interface between the school system and adult life, and therefore, has implications for broader issues of social exclusion, including poverty, socio-economic status, and the intergenerational transfer of these categories of differentiation. In this study we are concerned with what happens to a girl who fails to enter or drops out of primary school, or does not transition to higher levels. Moreover, what happens to the lucky ones who reach the finish line or secure equality of outcome, especially in view of evidence of gender-based labor market discrimination?

Gender equity in education is often framed in terms of equality of opportunity or equal outcomes. Thus, it attempts to correct or redress social injustices through redistribution of opportunities and resources. It is based on the assumption that education plays a role in addressing these issues. Its strength resides in encompassing both the ideas of parity and equality, but also recognizing the linkages of gender with other forms of exclusion and the importance of education in achieving social justice (UNESCO, 2005).

Many scholars have questioned the effectiveness of equal access in eliminating all disparities, particularly among the poor working class pupils. Those working within cultural capital theory argue that cultural factors play a crucial role in socioeconomic inequalities in education. They contend that class membership determines the individual's access to what has been termed "cultural capital" (Bourdieu 1977). Success in school is linked to the type of cultural capital, or access to knowledge, skills and

dispositions available to an individual from family ties rather than measures of individual talent, efforts and achievement. Hence, the theory questions the ability of modern schooling to accommodate working class children, who may be disadvantaged on many counts. First, through their inability to use the language of the dominant class, and also through speaking a mother tongue not in use in the dominant culture. There is strong evidence in Kenya that significant increase in the numbers attending and completing higher levels of education is derived predominantly from the middle classes. This demonstrates that a number of other factors in addition to class position mediate various aspects of pupils' attainment. For example, girls' enrollment, attendance and educational outcome is dependent on the nature of the courses they pursue, availability of schools, availability of particular subjects, as well as other variables related to the ideologies about what constitutes gender appropriate courses for girls to study, cultural factors and the structure of the labor market (Unterhalter et al., 2010; Colclough et al., 2003).

In this study, I argue that educational policies must acknowledge the inequities specific to gender and ethnic differences as well as class positions, in order to realize a significant effect on girls' attendance and attainment at educational institutions. I will therefore adopt the definition of gender equity as measures "that recognize that in order to promote equality between women and men to, within and through education, special measures may be required to redress prior inequalities that constrain women's access to and utilization of recourses on an equal basis with men" (Subrahmanian, 2007, p. 26). While gender equity seeks to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment for men and women, it does not imply universalized approaches for all men or women. It takes into

account the multiple identities and discrimination faced by different groups in order to identify strategies relevant to their needs and interests.

Gender equity, therefore, implies more than the provision of equal access to educational facilities and girls participating in equal numbers to boys. Its achievement calls for preferential treatment which enables individuals to cope with a set of challenges that derive from their social, economic, cultural, and political positions. In the case of women and girls, preferential treatment may also take account of the power relations associated with sex and gender differences. It would help them cope with problems associated with their social, domestic, and maternal roles as well as sexually based violence and harassment (Wolpe, Qinlan & Martinez,1997).

Theoretical explanations for gender inequality in educational access and outcomes emerge from disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. Their implications for policy vary widely. In the following sections, I discuss various feminist theoretical perspectives on the gender issues in education in order to highlight the divergent views on the causes of gender inequality in education. In presenting these alternative theoretical tendencies, my goal is not so much to judge which of these perspectives is better than the other, but to acknowledge that all of them offer important insights into the problem of gender inequality in education yet have their limitations.

Feminist theoretical perspectives

The contemporary Western feminist theoretical perspectives can be classified into three major approaches, namely liberal, socialist, and radical. These feminist theories draw largely from the conceptual insights of the "theoretical and philosophical traditions

of European Enlightenment" (Brah & Phoenix, 2004, p. 82) As such, they are closely associated with the perspectives of existing modernist social theories such as liberalism and Marxism. For example, liberal feminism draws largely from functionalism and human capital theories. Socialist feminism has close ties with Conflict and Marxist theories. Despite their diversity, most of these feminist theories share certain common assumptions. Most basic is their recognition of gendered "dominance in social arrangements and the desire for change" of this social domination (Calas & Smircich, 2006, p. 6). In addition, they are critical of the status quo and are therefore always political. Among the political issues defined as central to the oppression of women include the sexual division of labor; definition and control of sexuality and the relations of reproduction; and access to education, jobs, and power over women's lives (Weedon 2003). "These issues are further compounded by power relations of class and racism and they set an agenda for feminist analysis which urgently demands strategies for change" (Weedon, 2003 p.14).

However, the nature of critique and politics varies leading to different strategies for social action, especially when applied to educational policy and practice. These range from reforming educational systems, to transforming educational systems or changing the discourse around education. Liberal feminism contends that women must obtain equal opportunities and equal rights in society (Mannathoko 1999; Unterhalter, 2005, and others). Liberal feminism attributes women's subjugation to gender role socialization, stereotyping, and discrimination manifested in unequal education opportunities, unequal labor-market opportunities, and other social-cultural dimensions in society. It argues for social, economic, political and legal equality between men and women, emphasizing fair

allocation of resources to ensure equal educational opportunities. Nevertheless, some criticisms are leveled against Liberal feminism. It does not offer a radical critique of the school and education system. Liberal feminists argue that education and the decision to participate in schooling or to enroll children in schools should result from free individual choice, and those who choose to participate in education should be responsible for the outcome. The analytical and intellectual underpinning of Women in Development (WID) is grounded in liberal feminist perspectives on gender issues in society.

Socialist feminism, unlike liberal feminism, brings into focus questions related to society and power, thus linking it with neo-Marxist theory. Specifically, it broadens the frame for analyzing power by incorporating both class exploitation and women's subordination. It holds that capitalism thrives on women's subordination as female unpaid labor ensures the reproduction of the laboring class, thus subsidizing capitalist production. In this regard, interaction between patriarchy and economic interests governs the particular forms of subordination, and their evolution overtime (Colcglough et.al 2003). The cause of low female participation in schooling is attributed to the interactions of gender and class based power relations. This perspective is useful for the present analysis of the schooling experiences and outcomes for pupils disadvantaged by ethnicity, social class, and gender.

Radical feminism differs from liberal feminism primarily in its emphasis on patriarchy, power, and the subordination of women. Women's oppression resides in male power and privilege, which governs all human interactions in society including its social institutions such as schools. Radical feminists view the state as a coalition of male forces, committed to preserving a patriarchal order and society (Colclough et. al, 2003). What

emerges is "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women" (Walby, 1990, p. 214). Within this framework, the school serves as an agent to perpetuate patriarchy by ensuring that gender inequality thrives across generations. On this interpretation, inequality in educational access and attainment is a means of legitimating and reproducing the different roles which men and women will have in society. Thus patriarchy "governs parental decisions in educating their sons and daughters, teachers' attitudes in preparing children for adult life, and girls' subject choices, which prepare them to opt for 'female' jobs judged consistent with their forthcoming family responsibilities" (Colclough et. al, 2003, p. 17).

Whereas Liberal feminism calls for reform of the existing system of education, socialist and radical feminist perspectives call for more radical changes to end women's oppression. For Socialist feminists, this entails elimination of class oppression through elimination of capitalism; For radical feminists, this entails elimination of patriarchy through a fundamental transformation in the social structure. Radical feminism is critiqued for being descriptive rather than explanatory, and of biological reductionism or essentialism, paying little attention to such issues as class, race, nationality, and age.

But in view of what has actually been achieved in the field of women's education, one wonders how radical and socialist feminists who deny the possibility of reform may account for these changes. In Africa, for example, in the colonial era and many years after independence, the education of women was very limited compared to that of men. And as Colclough et al. (2003) observe, those who happened to be in school were often taught subjects, and subject content, which were significantly different from those taught to boys. Hence, "it was not possible for girls to progress up the formal school system in

the same way as boys- even if their abilities, and the wishes of their parents, supported it" (p.18).

A lot of changes have occurred in the last two decades as more girls and women progress up the educational ladder and gender parity is being reported in most educational systems of the developing countries (UNESCO, 2010). This begs the question as to whether governments and policy makers are more responsive to women's interests or "whether the needs of the economy have changed, such that present forms of subordination require women to have more (and different) education than before, but still not quite as much as the men" (Colclough et al. 2003. P. 18). From a socialist feminist perspective, today's market is marked by changing production patterns, and as these market production characteristics change, so must the school system. The apparent benefits for women are influenced by the evolving needs of the economy mediated by the continuing patriarchal ideology which underlies its institutions. Stromquist comments:

> From the state's perspective, if women get an education that does not address the nature of gender…in society, then women become capable of making more and better contributions to the economy and to the family as presently constituted, while their increased schooling does not threaten the status quo, and so the basic structures of ideological and material domination are retained and sustained (1995, p.445).

On this view, improvement in girls' participation and performance in school, often interpreted as progress, is nothing but exploitation. Reform cannot occur unless conceived outside this framework. Despite these controversies, the fact that change is occurring cannot be denied. Girls and women are now gaining much greater access to schooling, persisting in school, and proceeding to higher levels of the system (Colclough, 2003). The question that arises, however, is that which Lockheed and Lewis (2006) have

posed in their work entitled: "Why are sixty million girls still out of school and what can be done about it?"

Indeed each of these feminist perspectives sheds some light on the reality facing women and girls' education in Africa, yet has limitations. Unlike socialist theories, liberal and radical theories do not account for social class disparities in educational achievement. Female children from poor families experience a more difficult school life than those children from wealthier middle class families. Lewis and Lockheed (2006) note that, "the girls that continue to be left behind are those who are doubly excluded, based on gender and social status" (2006, p. 75). They point out that girls from ethnic minority groups, or in rural areas, and or from poor families have not benefitted from schooling like the majority of girls.

Attempting to address this question, however, calls for a critical examination of the mechanisms through which marginalized girls get excluded from attending schools, underperform, or drop out when there. On the basis of these feminist thought we might argue that girls' exclusion is largely a function of patriarchal domination and state action. Yet patriarchal domination does not result in equal educational outcomes for all females. Thus any generalizations across gender, race, class, regions, and ethnicity about causes may be problematic as each case might be unique to its cultural, geographical and temporal context. To what extent can gender hold as the sole category of analysis in educational research on factors that determine inequality in educational access and achievement? Any explanations for the occurrence of gender inequalities in schooling need to be broad enough to encompass the wide range of schooling outcomes which exist in different regions within a country, across countries, and among women/ girls. This

study clarifies the possible causes of such differences and identifies strategies for their mitigation. To this end, I turn to alternative feminist conceptualizations of social inequalities and their implications for girls' educational experiences

Table 1: Summary of feminist theoretical perspectives on education

	Liberal	**Radical**	**Socialist**	**Alternative: Third World, Postcolonial, Black and Minority Feminisms**
Intellectual roots	Modernization, Functionalism, Human Capital Theory	Liberation Theory	Conflict and Marxist Theory	postcolonial, poststructuralist Theory
Conceptions of Schooling and Education	Schooling is meritocratic and success in it depends on individual motivation and intellectual ability; Schooling is positive and improves women's welfare.	School is an agent in the maintenance of patriarchy	Schooling reproduces structural inequalities	Schooling reproduces structural inequalities
Conception of Gender Inequality	Emerges from the separation of private and public spheres of social activity for women and men, and the sexual division of labor. Gender stereotype and discrimination limit female access and retention in education and in certain subjects	Inequality in educational access and attainment is a means of legitimating and reproducing the roles of men and women	Schooling reproduces the sexual division of labor-both domestic and industrial. Race and class interacts with gender in education.	Considers the constitution of complex subjectivities beyond western conceptions of sex/gender focusing on gendered, raced and classed aspects of educational processes
Strategies for Change	Focus on the denial of equal rights to access to education, health and employment; attempt to increase access, reviewing aspects of school organization, Analyzing curriculum materials for stereotyping.	Transformation of social structure to eliminate male dominance and patriarchal structures	Transformation of social structures to eliminate social inequalities: sexism, racism and classism.	Dismantle all forms of social division and the basic structures of ideological and material domination.
Criticisms	Ignores patriarchy, power and the systematic subordination of women as well as the effects of race and social class in education.	Biological reductionism and essentialism. Ignores such issues as class, race, nationality, age. disparities in Education.	Deterministic, pessimistic, Ignores individual agency, men's power through control of sexuality and threat of violence	Overemphasize structures of inequality and subordination. Implies that all forms of social division are roughly equivalent.

Alternative feminist perspectives

The feminist theories presented above have gender as their primary focus in explaining women's experiences of discrimination. This focus on gender has, however, come under vehement attack by theorists like Norma Alarcon, Cheyla Sandoval, Chandra Mohanty, Cherrie Moraga, Gayatry Spivak, and others. This primary focus on gender in Anglo-American feminist theory, they argue, "reinscribes the subject of western feminism in the racist imperialism and empiricism upon which eurocentric epistemology depends" (Hennessy, 1993, p. 68). As Alarcon has argued,

> With gender as the central concept in feminist thinking, epistemology is flattened out in such a way that we lose sight of the complex and multiple ways in which the subject and object of possible experience are constituted. The flattening effect is multiplied when one considers that gender is often solely related to white men. There is no inquiry into the knowing subject beyond the fact of being a 'woman'. But what is a woman' or a 'man' for that matter? (1997, p. 294).

These postcolonial feminists, feminist standpoint theorists, materialist feminist and postmodern feminists take issue with the basic analytic principle which characterizes western feminist discourse on women. Such analyses, they argue, are driven by the assumption that all women, regardless of classes and cultures, are a homogenous group arising from their shared oppression. Yet as Mohanty (1997) points out:

> The homogeneity of women as a group is produced not on the basis of biological essentials but rather on the basis of secondary sociological and anthropological universals—What binds women together is a sociological notion of the' sameness' of their oppression….Thus the discursively consensual homogeneity of women' as a group is mistaken for the historically specific material reality of groups of women. This results in an assumption of women as an always already constituted group, one which has been already labeled 'powerless', exploited', 'sexually harassed', etc., by feminist scientific, economic, legal and sociological discourses (p. 81).

The problem of such an approach, Mohanty argues, rather than aim to uncover "the material and historical specificities that constitute a particular group of women as 'powerless' in a particular context, they focus on 'finding a variety of cases of 'powerless' women to prove the general point that women as a group are powerless"(p. 81). Mohanty advocates for an analytical approach that demonstrates "the production of women as socio-economic political groups within particular contexts" (p. 83). Such an analytical approach allows for the broadening of the definition of the "female subject beyond gender identity to social class and ethnic identities" (p. 83).

Mohanty's critique of the basic analytic principles and the discursive representation of women in the Third World equally holds for research on gender and education in nonwestern contexts. The tendency to essentialize or universalize the girl-child is reflected in international education discourses related to female education in developing or Third world countries. It is exemplified by the limited influence of nonwestern feminist theorizing on UNESCO Global Monitoring Reports for the years 2002, 2003,2004 (Fennell & Arnot , 2009).

> Contemporary research about gender and education in Southern contexts today has to consider whether it recognizes the influence of such historical and negative stereotyping of the 'third world 'girl, her teacher and her community. As Mohanty pointed out, women (and we would argue, female children) cannot be studied as gendered beings without recourse to the histories that have created the nation states within which they are located and how these histories have been refashioned by the colonial encounter (Fennell & Arnot, 2009 p. 8).

Cognizant of these concerns, I adopt an alternative feminist theoretical and analytic approach that recognizes the plurality of the female (or male) experience with regard to oppression based on class, ethnic, or racial differentiation. Thus, I focus on educational experiences of girls and boys in Kenya; paying particular attention to the ways in which

such experiences are mediated, among other things, by their class, geographical, and ethnic identities. This way, I systematically analyze and reveal the different effects of educational inequality on girls of different social locations. In this regard, I employ the concept of intersectionality to attempt to explore how gender combines with other forms of discrimination and disadvantage to explain gender inequalities in education. I now turn to a discussion of Intersectional theory and Analysis.

Theoretical framework: Intersectional theory and analysis

Feminists are concerned primarily with how gender shapes experiences of boys and girls or men and women. However, sociological research has demonstrated that there is neither an 'essential' girl nor an 'essential' boy that represents the experiences of all girls or all boys. Boys and girls have many different social identities, and these identities shape human experience in a multitude of ways.

The term 'intersectionality', which refers to the existence and simultaneous experience of multiple forms of exclusion, came into the lexicon of equality discourse through the writings of Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw, renowned critical race theorist in 1991. Crenshaw, who was critical of the feminist tendency to essentialize gender, also argued against any discussions that focused on only race or only gender. However, a simultaneous focus on these categories does not imply simply 'adding race to gender' to fully understand the position of women of color. Either of the approaches risks omitting the "intersection of race and gender and erase the experiences of women of color" (Brewer, Conrad, & King, 2002, p. 9). This debate within feminist theory has led to the recognition that the experience of being a woman is dependent upon race, class, ethnicity,

age, and sexuality. The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) exemplifies the main tenets of an intersectional framework in its call

> to intensify efforts to ensure equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women and girls who face multiple barriers to their empowerment and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability or because they are indigenous people. (Beijing Platform for Action , 1995)

Three explicit assumptions are inherent in the intersectional lens. First, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and gender are co-constitutive and mutually reinforcing dimensions that shape one's life chances, opportunities, and, in turn, experiences in education. Second, access to public educational systems with limited resources and privilege is simultaneously shaped by the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status. Using gender as the sole category of analysis and centering generic women's experiences in education essentializes the experiences of non-white (privileged) women and masks the historic patterns of racial inequality that have shaped past and current access to and completion of primary education among historically underrepresented women and girls. This framework allows for an examination of the ways in which these multiple sources of oppression interact to create and sustain women's subordinate positions in society and within their population group.

Intersectional model of feminist analysis and politics has been associated primarily with US women of color politics. Black feminists argue that sexism, classism and racism are intertwined, hence feminists who struggle to end sexism and class oppression but omit race might marginalize women of color on the basis of race (Collins, 2000). Central to intersectional work is "placing the experiences of women of color at the center of the analysis" (Brewer, Conrad, & King 2002).

> By theorizing from the bottom up, that is through the everyday lives of African American women, and from the top down, by analyzing the social structure and political economy, the explication of the interplay between agency and social structure extends our understanding (Brewer, Conrad, & King, 2002 p.6)

However, intersectionality has also gained currency through the works of Postcolonial Feminists and Third-world Feminists. These groups have expressed dissatisfaction with forms of feminism that essentialize the female experience and the omission of post-colonial standpoints in western feminist theorizing. Third-world feminism, closely related to African feminism and postcolonial feminism, emerged from feminist politics in the so-called 'Third-world' nations. Mohanty (1988) for example, views Western feminism as ethnocentric, ignoring the unique and diverse experiences of women in southern countries and the existence of feminisms indigenous to those countries.

Postcolonial feminists contend that colonialism had a profound impact on nonwestern cultures resulting in a unique female experience of subordination, in which race, class and ethnic oppression are implicated. Hence they question the assumption that gender is the only source of oppression and the primary force of patriarchy. In order to "understand colonialism and postcolonialism, one must first recognize that race, gender and class are not distinct and isolated realms of experience. Instead, they come into existence in and through contradictory and conflictual relations to each other". (McClintock, 1995 cited in Brah & Phoenix 2004, p.80). This interplay of race, class, and gender was instrumental in promoting "imperialism abroad and class distinction in Britain" (p. 80). Thus McClintock writes

> 'Imperialism… is not something that happened elsewhere -- a disagreeable fact of history external to Western identity. Rather, imperialism and the invention of race were fundamental aspects of Western, industrial modernity. The invention of race in the urban metropoles. . . became central not only to the self-definition of the middle class but also to the policing of the "dangerous classes": the working class,

> the Irish, Jews, prostitutes, feminists, gays and lesbians, criminals, the militant crowd and so on. At the same time, the cult of domesticity was not simply a trivial and fleeting irrelevance, belonging properly in the private, "natural" realm of the family. Rather, I argue that the cult of domesticity was a crucial, if concealed, dimension of male as well as female identities -- shifting and unstable as these were.' (Mclintock, 1995, cited in Brah & Phoenix, 2004 p.80)

Postcolonial feminist studies tend to draw from poststructuralist frameworks, notably, Foucauldian discourse analysis and Derridean deconstruction (Brah & Phoenix, 2004, p. 83) to problematize colonial and postcolonial discourses of gender. Accordingly, intersectionality resonates with "the disruption of modernist thinking produced by postcolonial and poststructuralist theoretical ideas" (p. 82). Consequently, an intersectional framework provides the critical tools for the deconstruction of the gender essentialism within feminist thought. Interrogating such feminist discourses that essentialize gender is simultaneously an interrogation of "the race/class debate in the social sciences by examining the interconnectedness of gender, ethnicity and class" (Brewer et al. 2002, p. 6). Thus Brah & Phoenix (2004) write:

> In particular, this "recognition that race, social class and sexuality differentiated women's experiences has disrupted notions of a homogeneous category 'woman' with its attendant assumptions of universality that served to maintain the status quo in relation to 'race', social class and sexuality, while challenging gendered assumptions"(p.80).

Hence, essential to feminist analysis of intersectionality is the idea of "decentering of the 'normative subject' of feminism" (Brah & Phoenix, 2004, p. 82) and bringing into interrogation what it means to be a 'woman' (or a 'man' for that matter), under different historical and material circumstances.

Intersectional theory, hence, challenges Western feminist discourses which characterize women on the basis of their gender alone and view them as a coherent group, with similar problems and needs, and therefore also "similar interests and goals". But

how could the interests of urban, middle-class girls with educated parents possibly be the same as those of poor, uneducated house girls with rural uneducated parents in Kenya? As Mohanty (1997) points out, such homogenous representations of women "assume an ahistorical, universal unity between women based on a generalized notion of their subordination" (p. 83).

> Instead of analytically demonstrating the production of women as socio-economic political groups within particular local contexts, this analytical move limits the definition of the female subject to gender identity, completely bypassing social class and ethnic identities (Mohanty, 1997 p. 83).

However, recent debates about intersectionality have questioned "whether the notion implies that all forms of social division are roughly equivalent and whether it over-emphasizes structures of subordination" (Unterhalter et al. 2010). I do not wish to rehearse that debate here, but consider that the concept of intersectionality offers the critical tools to examine the different forms of social exclusion, and their interactions with other sources of inequality. Such critical tools may provide a forum for theorizing some key challenges that have locked some Kenyan children out of formal schooling and for identifying strategic responses to this problem.

Although Intersectionality has its roots in the US, it can be applied elsewhere to study "any context of intersecting systems of oppression" (Tetrenaut, 2008), such as in Kenya, where some girls suffer from being excluded socially, economically, and politically. Indigenous girls, girls who live in pastoral areas (Arid and semi-arid areas), girls who live in urban slums and rural areas, girls from low income families and minority ethnic groups are all excluded socially, economically and, politically (Obiero, 2004; Legget 2002; Lewis & Lockeed 2007).

Conceptualizing social exclusion, gender and education

A worldwide review of progress towards attaining EFA goals reveals the persistence of challenges in providing access to schooling for children marginalized by poverty, disability location, ethnicity, and exacerbated by gender (EFA *Global Monitoring Report* ,UNESCO, 2010). Similarly, according to The World Development Report (2012) : "Even as gender gaps in educational enrollment shrink nationally, they remain for poor people and for those disadvantaged by other circumstances, remoteness, ethnicity, caste, race, or disability" (2012, p.26). But what helps explain the persistence of gender gap among these groups?

Girls, gender and intersecting inequalities in education

The Global Monitoring Report *(*UNESCO, 2010) shows evidence of persistence of gender disparities in education**.** The report graphically demonstrates that gender shapes the experience of poverty and determines whether an individual enters into and thrives at school. It outlines critical aspects and scale of education marginalization in terms of 'falling below the minimum threshold (p. 139) which translates into 'education poverty'. Hence education poverty is defined as having less than four years of education; and 'extreme education poverty' as having less than two years of education. Thus, an analogy is drawn between international poverty thresholds of US $2.00 and US $1.25 and education poverty thresholds of four year and two year bottom lines. These bottom lines are crucial indicators for education poverty and extreme education poverty *(*UNESCO, 2010, p. 139). The odds of falling below the line of education poverty is greater for rural

folks, particular ethnic groups or regions, and areas with a history of conflict, but is exacerbated by gender since being a girl pushes one further below the line than a boy from the same community (Unterhalter, et.al 2010). But how do we account for the gender dimensions of the so called education poverty? (Unterhalter,et. al, 2010) And what has poverty, or geographical location, or ethnic identity got to do with education poverty?

The notion of social exclusion (Lewis & Lockheed, 2006) might provide some insights into the mechanisms by which girls end up most disadvantaged among most marginalized or "the socially excluded" (p.5). Lewis & Lockheed (2006), define the socially excluded as "those who receive inadequate support from public institutions and whose opportunities remain constrained due to structural and cultural factors" (p.5). Exclusion takes various forms which stem from 'endogenous' and 'exogenous' sources (Lewis & Lockheed 2006), including gender, ethnicity, disability, and the later including external factors such as poverty, social- economic status or geography, and homelessness, all of which contribute to low educational participation. Consequently, social exclusion can be defined as:

> a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live. Discrimination occurs in public institutions, such as the legal system or education and health services, as well as social institutions like the household" (DFID, 2005, p. 3).

Individuals may also experience simultaneous social exclusion, for example, when a person faces discrimination on three fronts based on their citizenship, religion, and gender. The excluded have less access to education and health services; tend to live

in poor neighborhoods with poor housing, inadequate infrastructure and poor sanitation (Lewis & Lockheed, 2006). The following sections examine the discourse around gender, girls, education and exclusion. It starts with a review of the various definitions of poverty, then explores the relationship between poverty, gender and education and suggests that intersectionality may offer a better explanation of the gendered nature of 'education poverty'.

Defining poverty

Definitions of poverty vary, with some reducing it to numbers; others tend to be nuanced. From social perspectives, poverty is understood as a lack of vital items for decent living – such as food, clothing, water, and shelter. This is also the definition embraced by the Copenhagen Declaration of 1995 where poverty is "…a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information"(Copenhagen Declaration 1995). By this definition, it is the lack of access to basic needs such schooling and health services, rather than income levels, that marks a person as poor.

Economists, on the other hand, tend to embrace statistical definitions of poverty, highlighting income or consumption values. Poverty, according to this approach is a "short fall of income or consumption from some poverty line" that is defined internationally or nationally (Laderchi et al. 2003p.247). For example "extreme poverty" is understood as living on less than USD $1 a day, and "poverty" as less than $2 a day. This is the definition adopted by The World Bank. This approach gives more emphasis to household income, consumption, and material welfare. It imagines the household as a

unitary arena whose members live in harmony and cooperation, with similar, interests, tastes and preferences and fair allocation of resources among members (Agarwal 1997, cited in Gebresenbet, 2008). Yet in reality, households are "social institutions that are informed by and inform unequal relations of power" (p.18) that exist in a community based on gender, age, clan, ethnicity, and class. These unequal relationships have a bearing on the distribution and allocation of access to resources within the household.

This income-based, monetary, or one-dimensional approach to poverty definition and measurement remains widely used. However, recent debates on poverty have challenged conventional definitions to go beyond household income/consumption numbers. This is demonstrated by the emergence of Capability Poverty Measure (CPM) and Amartya Sen's (1992) Capability Framework in the 1996 Human Development Report. Among other shortcomings, the conventional approaches are criticized for foregrounding material and economic factors as opposed to other aspects of well –being such as security, capability, and social integration. It also emphasizes individual agency without paying attention to institutional constraints to individual access to and control over resources (Gebresenbet, 2008).

Additional criticisms of this approach cast doubt on its applicability. For example, its inadequacy in accounting for the distribution of the poor below the poverty line and the difficulty in making cross country comparisons due to varying standards of living (Gebresenbet, 2008). In addition, using cash income as the only measure of household income underestimates the welfare of subsistence households**.** In other words, it does not account for the role that non-monetary and subsistence earnings have on

human wellbeing, especially in rural Africa, where subsistence agriculture is a common livelihood activity.

These debates have led to alternative conceptualizations of poverty. These include for example, the emergence of such concepts as "entitlement and capability failures by Amartya Sen; and vulnerability, deprivation, and social exclusion by Robert Chambers" (Gebresenbet, 2008, p.13). Within these perspectives, poverty becomes "a dynamic, multidimensional, relational and gendered phenomenon" (p.13), rather than individual attributes. On this interpretation, we can begin to locate poverty within the larger problem of social exclusion and argue that it comes about when individuals or groups are denied access to local systems of entitlements based on their identity. As result such individuals are deprived of locally available services and thus constrain their capability and opportunity. This in turn renders them more vulnerable to poverty (p.13). In this context, education becomes, not just a means of escaping poverty (by increasing productivity and income) but an asset which can be realized in terms of 'entitlements' such as labor, capital and social welfare support. But since gender shapes the experience of poverty and schooling the following sections look at the conceptual links between poverty, education, and gender.

The gender –poverty nexus

It is worth bearing in mind but "not sufficient to simply acknowledge that poor people are both women and men" (Whitehead, 2003 p.10) but to recognize that poverty has gender dimensions. In other words, the way poverty is experienced differs for men and women. First "men and women are often poor for different reasons and with differing

capacities to withstand or escape poverty and may experience poverty differently" (Whitehead, 2003 p.10). The recognition of poverty as a complex gendered phenomenon offers some important insights into how and why women tend to be poorer than men within their societies and families.

These different experiences of poverty are a function of the interactions between unequal gender relations and other social inequalities (Chesoni 2006, Cagatay 2001; Agarwal 1997, Kabeer, 1996). For example, gender analysis of intra-household relations show evidence of unequal division of labor whereby care work is largely left for women and productive work for men. In those conditions,

> Women's entrance into the labor market is constrained by the 'conflicting demand between making a living and caring for the family. They face 'time and energy deficit' that emanates from their triple burden: productive, reproductive, and community work (Razavi 1999 cited in Gebresenbet, 2008, p.17-18).

As a consequence, women are rendered invisible as they are confined to the 'private sphere' as men occupy the public sphere (Pearson, 1992). But those lucky ones who get a chance to enter the labor market confront other challenges related to the precarious, informal, and less remunerated types of work, available to them.

Most importantly, these studies reveal inequality in the distribution, control, and access to resources. The unequal power relations between men, women, and children govern how resources are shared within and outside the household. Often such decisions tend to favor those with "more bargaining power in the household" (Gebresenbet, 2008 p.16). Under such conditions, "women's and girls' needs, priorities and concerns often are undermined because of their low bargaining power and position within their household and community" (p.17). These observations call into question measurements of poverty that assume unitary model of the household, as they ignore the relationship

between gender and poverty. The differential experiences of poverty emerge from "gender inequalities in the distribution of income from access to productive inputs, such as credit, command over property or control over earned income, as well as gender biases in labor markets' (Cagatay, 2001 p. 6). This situation not only renders women more "vulnerable to chronic poverty" than men, but women also tend to experience poverty with greater intensity than men (2001, p. 14).

These various views on poverty and its interaction with gender are very important for this study. Specifically, the understanding of the household and the labor market as social institutions in which inequality between men and women are manifested and reproduced have implications for assessing policy impacts on boys' and girls' education. They point to the importance of analyzing gender and the domestic politics inside the household with regard to differential access to resources. These factors are especially important in policy design (Gebresenbet, 2008). However, it must be stressed that experiences of poverty differ according cultural context (Kabee,r 1996). For example women's capacity to change "labor into income, income into choice, and choice in to well being" is affected by the socio-cultural context in which they live (Kabeer 1996, p. 18). A contextual analysis reveals "through what social and institutional mechanisms – men and women slide in to poverty and stay there' (Razavi 1999 cited in Gebresenbet, 2008, p. 18). Moreover, 'not all women are poor and not all poor women are poor in the same way"- in other words women's experiences of poverty vary historically, and across and within societies based on their location within other social stratifiers including race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, class, and religion. Thus any meaningful analysis of gendered

experience of poverty must consider the context, history, geographical location, and other categories of social relations that interact with gender (Razavi 1999).

The concept of intersectionality helps to capture these interactions, and can be extended to analyze the education poverty (Unterhalter et. al, 2010). Using an intersectional perspective, we can locate 'education poverty' within a matrix of oppression or domination (Collins, 1990) to unpack the interrelations of gender, exclusion and lack of schooling. In this regard, education poverty can be understood as a function of the interactions of socio- cultural, political and economic processes.

Within this analysis, gender inequality in education can be attributed to multiple sources of inequality which constitute serious constraints to girls' participation in education. Lewis and Lockheed (2006) provide insights into the various ways in which people from different social locations face exclusion from schooling. They explain how and why "socially excluded groups tend to suffer multiple forms of discrimination" (p.55). They write:

> Exclusion and gender discrimination lead to lower returns to almost all investments in comparison with similar investments aimed at the majority population, for several reasons. First excluded groups tend to suffer multiple forms of discrimination. This lowers their economic and social status, which in turn shapes their attitude toward education and reduces their motivation to learn. Second, expectations of limited economic returns to education among excluded groups reduce demand for education, particularly for girls because women face greater labor market discrimination than men (p.55).

The exclusion and discrimination that girls face in society lead not only to underinvestment in their education, but also to underachievement and premature termination of their education. Thus problems associated with low female participation including high dropout or "early withdrawal rates and irregular attendance, are

underpinned by deeper structures of inequality" (Subrahmanian, 2002, p.12). A number of qualitative studies have shown how gender shapes the forms and effects of educational exclusion in complex ways. This is particularly evident in countries characterized by heterogeneity based on gender, ethnicity, residence, wealth or caste (Lewis & Lockheed, 2006; Stromquist, 2001; Unterhalter, et al. 2010). For example, gender disparities are large among minority groups where ethnic identity forms an important feature of social relations (Unterhalter et al, 2010). Lewis and Lockheed (2006) explain this phenomenon in terms of social exclusion and view poverty as resulting from systematic and deliberate marginalization of the poor by the wealthy. As a consequence of such marginalization, the poor are not only denied equal opportunities but may end up accepting their status (Lewis and Lockheed, 2006).

Unterhalter et.al, (2010) cite examples of qualitative studies which demonstrate the persistence of gender disparities in education among minorities in ethnically diverse contexts. In some cases, for example indigenous populations in Peru (Ames, 2005; Aikman,1999, 2002); Nomadic pastoralists in Northern Kenya (Legget, 2005), the exclusion of girls from schooling is linked to the need for cultural affirmation, and or cultural identification among ethnic minorities. Often this involves a complex decision making process which amounts to tensions among sustaining livelihoods under conditions of economic hardship through careful division of labor, and sending children to school. In India, gender gaps are noted for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe girls, and in South Africa the historical racial relations are seen to have shaped the teaching of gender equality and HIV education. These studies show that the multidimensional nature of exclusion from schooling cannot be fully explicated within the narrow confines of

education poverty. They call for policy and programmatic responses that acknowledge the complexity entailed in the exclusion of girls from education. In fact, Unterhalter et.al (2010) critique both the notions of education poverty levels and social exclusion, noting that they provide at best, an incomplete analysis of the interactions at play and are therefore problematic**.**

> both these conceptions of the problem of poverty have features that make them appear too static. The idea of education poverty levels suggests that once the line of two or four years of schooling has been crossed, there is less need for policy concern regarding gender equality and education, which is clearly not the case. Gender inequalities persist in school and as a consequence of schooling and attaining sufficient schooling to cross a line of education poverty is no guarantee for an individual or a society that conditions for gender equality are being established (Unterhalter et. al, 2010, p.5).

They find inadequate the idea of social exclusion, noting that the notion implicates both the rich and the poor in exclusion from full participation in society. Thus Unterhalter et.al (2010) comment:

> These work to mark boundaries of exclusion. This implies poverty and girls' withdrawal from schooling are a result of forms of identification made in response to these barriers. Hence they are not the outcome of any distributional problems or forms of social segregation. The implied policy response signals less racial or ethnic belonging would be better for girls' education (2010 p.5)

In Unterhalter's et al, (2010) view, the concept of 'social exclusion' reduces group's identity to nothing but ethnicity, and yet "ethnicity or race might be quite mutable in different settings" (p. 5). Moreover, apart from ethnicity, factors such as "location, age, family composition, social relations in the neighborhood", bear on household decisions about educating boys and girls. Secondly, this thinking implies "ethnicity for poor communities extinguishes educational aspiration for girls, rather than providing a resource for it" (p.5). Yet this does not apply for all parts of the world. In addition, the analysis ignores the role of historical context in shaping these outcomes.

Finally, it does not account for why "poor ethicized or racialized communities might comply with the exclusion of their children from schooling" (p.5). Unterhalter et.al (2010) argue for a comprehensive conceptual framework, such as intersectionality that can encapsulate the "complexity and multidimensionality of these relationships" and "overcome some of these static ways of thinking about poverty, gender and schooling" (p. 6).

The discourse on gender, education and social exclusion adopts a more nuanced and dynamic conceptualization of educational inequality, thus challenging us to rethink these narrow and 'static' definitions of education poverty. Various studies have attempted to analyze the barriers in girls' education within the context of poverty by highlighting the gendered nature of the causes and effects of exclusion. Kabeer and Subrahmanian (1999a) draw a distinction between 'gender-intensified' disadvantage and 'gender-specific' forms of disadvantage. Gender – intensified disadvantage relates to "the ways in which the causes and effects of exclusion shared by households in poverty are intensified by gender, and lead to greater discrimination against girls" (cited in Subrahmanian, 2002, p. 12). In other words, "factors pertaining to poverty and livelihoods affect both boys' and girls' participation, but they are felt more by girls because a lower value is placed on their education" (p. 12). Gender-specific disadvantage are those "specific forms of discrimination faced by girls and not boys and that relate to roles for girls deriving from the gender division of labor, their reproductive cycles and perceptions of risk and vulnerability to sexual violence" (Subrahmanian, 2002, p. 12). It is imperative to identify and distinguish these gender-specific forms of disadvantage from gender intensified in order to formulate appropriate social policies and to analyze the impact of national and

international policy trends. To do this effectively however, requires a nuanced understanding of poverty in relation to girls' schooling.

Gender, education and poverty

According to Unterhalter et al. (2010), understanding the complex relationship between gender, education, and poverty requires examining various conceptions of poverty. In this regard, Unterhalter's (2009) conception of poverty and analysis of the relationships among gender, education and poverty is especially relevant. She identifies three meanings of poverty: "*as a line, a net, and as fuel*", noting their correspondence with different meanings attributed to gender *as noun, adjective, or verb*. These differences in the understanding of 'gender' imply that the question of what is meant by 'gender' is central to an assessment of whether or not gender equality can be achieved. Her analysis exposes how different ways of thinking about gender reflect the strategies and policy responses to gender inequality in education. Most importantly, it underscores the importance of paying attention to the "intersectionality of different dynamics of poverty, gender and schooling, and to what works to include the poorest girls in schooling, and to the values they express about what matters to them both in school and beyond" (Unterhalter et al, 2010, p. 6). For example, imagining poverty as a line entails counting "the numbers of women and men above or below a poverty line, whether or not this is understood in terms of income or consumption" (p. 6). Thus, the UNESCO GMR (2010) definition of 'education poverty' as falling above or below two or four years at school is based on an understanding of 'poverty as a line', which in turn, reflects "an understanding of gender as a noun, with a focus on descriptive identification of numbers

of girls and boys in or out of school or achieving particular grades or levels of employment" (Unterhalter et al. 2010 p. 6).

Poverty is also understood as structural, or a net. In this interpretation, the household relations of production may constrain any efforts to transform gender relations in the wider society, including schools. And since gender relations govern particular relations of production and the kinds of work that are available for women and men, gender is construed as an adjective**,** associated with the social relations of power which produce structures of inequality Hence,

> Gendered relationships in schools articulate with wider relationships in both meanings of the term. The boundaries and networks that discursively form the net of poverty (and speak /articulate it) are as much constituted by coercive economic and political relations as of inequality maintained over generations associated with divisions of race, ethnicity, caste or location (Unterhalter et al, 2010, p.7).

Unterhalter et al. (2010) are concerned that these gender relations are reproduced in schools, where norms of femininity and masculinity govern subject choices, and classroom behaviors and activities deemed as suitable and appropriate for boys and girls. For example, girls from poor families may take up cleaning responsibilities, avoid math and science subjects, and remain passive in classrooms, while boys may present more aggressive behaviors, take 'masculine' subjects, and later, join 'male' occupations.

In this context, poor families use schooling as a strategic tool for economic and cultural survival, involving very careful calculations. If men need to migrate because they can find gainful employment in the cities, but women cannot find such work, then women will be required to stay at home to take care of household property like land or livestock. Girls and women might be kept out of school to attend to household and livelihood maintenance. In the end, it might be more urgent and beneficial for households to invest

in their survival through this sexual division of labor rather than send girls to school. These observations suggest that attempts to expand access to schooling by bringing schools closer home, or making education free and compulsory in this context, may yield disappointing results, as poor children may still not be able to attend school if questions related to opportunity costs and gender division of household work, or long distance to secondary schools are left untouched. Hence Unterhalter et. al evoke intersectional thinking by making the observation that:

> The social division associated with poverty as a net is marked by a racialized, ethicized or status marked boundary which imposes particular economic, social, political and cultural relationships on poor households. Women and girls are often associated with marking the boundary because of their dress, concerns about who they marry and at what age Thus what is noted comes to be, for example, ethnic identity and girls who are taken out of school, rather than a more nuanced appreciation of how ethnicity, gender and the relations of poverty might make it difficult to escape from the network of relationships in which gender, ethnicity and poverty all intersect (Unterhalter et al, 2010 p. 8).

Poverty may also be construed as a fuel in two senses. As a fuel it can ignite, or "propel" and "energize" individuals or groups into activism and out of poverty. Yet it may also be as toxic as petrol. For example, when it results in forms of identification "associated with adaptive preference and satisfaction with very little education" (Unterhalter et al, 2010 p. 8). These are seen as "forms of enactment of poverty", comparable to "crime and violence" often embraced by the poor as strategies for survival, but are often toxic. But as fuel, poverty might play a role of propelling people to take actions to correct their situation. For example, challenged by poverty, anger and frustration associated with exclusion a group might fight their way out of poverty. However, it may also entail performing "dangerous gender identities associated with

masculinity and femininity" (p. 8), related to an understanding of 'gender as a verb' (Unterhalter et al, 2010 p. 8).

Poverty is also understood as a hub whereby poverty intersects with many forms of gendered social structures and actions (Unterhalter et al 2010, p.8). This conception of poverty as a hub resonates with the concept of intersectionality in pointing the ways in which gender exercabates and is exercabated by different processes, "where poverty presents a line of income or consumption, nets of difficult or rewarding relationships and fuels to drive or undermine change" (p.8). In this analysis, schooling may either hurt or help the poor depending on "whether the fuel of action it provides is nourishing or destructive" (p .8). Thus, schooling may reinforce exclusions, or supply the fuel that transforms gendered relationships of poverty.

In proposing these diverse conceptions of poverty, Unterhalter et.al (2010) are calling for a broad understanding of poverty that encompasses the variety of circumstances and experiences that make it difficult or possible to overcome poverty, or education poverty. This requires a "multidimensional understanding of poverty' (p .9), not narrowly focused on incomes levels, but which includes "the sense of powerlessness, frustration, exhaustion, and exclusion from decision-making experienced by people living in poverty, as well as their lack of access to public services and the financial system" (Green 2008, cited in Unterhalter et. Al, 2010, p.9).

In this interpretation, poverty is viewed as a net, since it is a "symptom of deeply rooted inequities and unequal power relationships, institutionalized through policies and practices at the levels of state, society, and household" (p. 9). Hence, poverty becomes not just a cause of exclusion, but a consequence of exclusion whose experience is

moderated by other bases of discrimination such as a person's gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality and age**.** All these sources of social exclusion constrain individuals' access and control over resources and services, including education – and in making decisions about their lives.

In Green's (2004) analysis people living in poverty are possible agents of change, who can fight for their rights and justice and overcome poverty. In this regard, poverty is seen as a fuel. Unterhalter et. al (2010) conclude:

> Green's analysis mentions close links between gender inequalities, education, and dimensions of poverty, seeing gender inequalities as constraining girls' and women's realization of the right to education, as well as viewing the education of women and girls as important in challenging inequities. However, there is little deeper analysis of the sort of education required to do this, or the way in which multiple forms of exclusion play out within the school space (p. 9).

In thinking about intersectionality and the questions of gender, education and poverty, this research draws on various studies to illustrate, analyze and understand the different relationships at play. A number of studies document the complex character of parental choices in the schooling of their sons and daughters in the face of economic hardship. Subrahmanian (2002) identifies two major interpretations of the cause of low participation of girls in education. On the one hand are those that emphasize 'supply-factors' which relate to the provision of education services, and on the other hand are 'demand-side' factors related to household investments that constrain or facilitate education participation. The demand side factors largely stem from cultural values, behaviors and socio-economic structures that may form obstacles to girls' participation in education.

The provision of education services has a bearing on the demand for education. Commonly referred to as 'supply side factors' are critical variables in determining household decisions to invest in education. An impressive body of literature documents supply side factors. These include distance of school from home (Rose & Tembon,1997; Lloyd et. al. 2000); the quality of education provided; times when classes are held; the perceived relevance of the curricula to rural lives; availability of school of buildings, equipment, text books, teachers and other staff (Rose & Al- Samarrai, 1997; Colclough et. al 2003. The availability of these supply side variables has been shown to have gendered effects upon the pattern of demand. Research on school related factors explain the implications of supply side factors on girls' education. It is to the examination of these supply- side factors, demand side factors and the impact of their interactions on girls' education that I now turn.

Supply side factors

School quality

School related variables have been found to influence both male and female enrollment outcomes (Colclough et.al, 2003; Odaga & Heneveld 1995; Chege & Sifuna, 2006; Stromquist, 2001). If, for example, parents associate improvements in school conditions with improvement in learning and therefore improved returns to schooling, then they will be motivated to send their children to school. Large teacher pupil ratios and high rates of repetition may be associated with low school quality. High rates of repetition have been seen to negatively influence female participation in schooling. This suggests that parents are inclined pay the price of repetition for

boys more than for girls and that "where systems are very inefficient it is the boys who survive to the higher levels of the school system more frequently than the girls" (Colclough et. al, 2003, p. 69).

Other variables associated with school quality include the health environment of the school, the presence of female teachers, and the working conditions of the teachers (Lloyd et. al. 2000). Poor health affects both attendance and enrollment, as parents may fear for their children contacting diseases at school. The presence of female teachers is important for girls, as they can act as role models and provide counseling (Herz & Sperling, 2004). Poor working conditions often lead to teacher absenteeism and children missing many lessons (Colclough et. al, 2003).

The length of the school day also affects school attendance, especially for girls, as it takes away the time to perform household duties; parents who need the children's labor refuse to enroll them. This is made worse due to the amount of time spent on manual work at school during lesson time, which may negatively affect children's performance. Colclough et al (2003) note the prevalence of this phenomenon in most SSA countries. Most disturbingly, the patterns of labor in school mirrors and reinforces the household gender division of labor. In their study, they observed that girls were responsible for sweeping classrooms and fetching water; boys cut the grass, cleared the bushes, collected thatching grass, worked as hired labor in nearby farms, and carried bricks. Moreover, pupils performed domestic chores for teachers, leading parents to withdraw their daughters from school, since the girls spent more school hours working.

The view that the quality of education might cause poor girls to drop out of school is questionable. Stromquist (2002) argues that poor parents do not have sufficient

knowledge about what goes on in schools and are therefore not able to make judgments about their quality. Moreover, since parents view as beneficial investments in boys' education, quality concerns are likely to affect the schooling of boys rather than girls. While this observation is valid, it seems to be based on very narrow conceptions of 'quality'. First, it ignores the child's experience of schooling, which they may share with parents at home and some of which may be perceived as poor quality or those that may cause a child to withdraw without consulting with parents (e.g. teacher absenteeism; sexual harassment; lack of physical facilities), some of which may be very gender specific. Yet, Stromquist's assertion that domestic responsibilities are the major reason why poor girls do not get enough time for schooling, as poor households depend on their children's labor for survival, is also adequately supported by diverse literature.

Distance to school: School places and physical provision

A significant determinant of school participation relates to the availability of schools. Yet many African countries are said to exhibit uneven distribution of schools, with more schools in urban areas, leaving rural areas underserved**.** Most studies have found that distance to the nearest primary or secondary school influences children's participation in formal education. A long distance to school means additional costs both in finances and time taken to get to school. Such households are therefore less likely to send their children to school. This poses a significant threat, particularly to younger children and those in rural areas (FAWE, 2003). Other studies have found that the negative impact of distance to school is greater for girls, since they have to contend with additional issues of safety on their way to school. Colclough's et al (2003) study reveals

that parents in Ethiopia and Guinea were reluctant to enroll girls in schools that were far from home due to fear of sexual harassment en route.

Inadequate school facilities can also be a reason for non- enrollment and drop-out from school. Lack of latrines, especially separate latrines for girls, is identified as responsible for keeping girls from school, especially during menstruation (FAWE 2003, Colclough et. al 2003, Elimu Yetu, 2005). In addition, lack of sufficient desks and chairs may lead children to sit on dusty earth floors or be squashed together at one desk as was the case in Guinea and Tanzania. Not only does this situation result in poor teaching and pupils' lack of interest, but is a particular problem for girls when they are menstruating (Colclough et. al 2003).

The lack of secondary school places in rural areas poses another challenge for primary enrollment among children. Apart from safety concern among parents, most parents do not see the point in enrolling in primary school if there is no secondary school to proceed to (Rose & Tembon, 1999; Sangare et. al, 2000). In a focus group discussion in Mali a parent said:

> of what use is it to enroll a child in primary school when I am not sure that the child will continue his/ her education? I am not able to bear the cost of sending my child to a secondary school in Menaka, 90 km from here, because I am a farmer (Sangare et. al 2000 p.65, cited in Colclough et. al, 2003,).

Discrimination within schools

Not only are schools inaccessible to the excluded, but discriminatory treatment within school leads to drop out and to lower learning, which then translates to low return to education. Girls are expected to behave in a culturally accepted manner, by being submissive and obedient and performing tasks that society assigns to them. Socio-cultural

expectations are held by both teachers and pupils. Colclough et.al (2003) show how in Ethiopia and Guinea (and in fact most parts of rural Africa), girls used part of their school time performing domestic activities for teachers. Rose and Tembon's (1999) study also finds that girls spend most of their school hours cleaning classrooms and offices, cleaning latrines, fetching water, and preparing food for teachers.

Teachers and the curriculum are particularly implicated in reinforcing gender biases through discriminatory pedagogic practices in classrooms (FAWE, 2003, Kitetu, 1998). Kitetu (1998) conducted a study that examined gendered identities in the science classroom in Kenya. She found that teachers tended to treat the boys more firmly than the girls, and that girls avoided activities that were physically demanding. Kitetu attributes such gendered differential treatments to the society's cultural belief that boys should be more aggressive than girls. "As such teachers' treatment of boys and girls in these classrooms reaffirmed gender in accordance with cultural norms which define masculinity and femininity" (Kitetu, 1998, p.7). This study suggests that "gendered identities are constantly constructed within the classroom and that these identities and classroom practices are influenced by what is within and outside the classroom, the wider society' (p. 7). Moreover, the curriculum tends to contain disabling messages for girls (FAWE, 2003).

The demand side factors

The demand for schooling is influenced by incomes, costs, and by a range of other socio-cultural conditions which may have a differential effect for boys and girls (Sifuna, 2006; Colclough et.al, 2003).) In the following sections, I examine these demand related

issues under research on socio-economic and socio-cultural constraints on girls and boys education.

Research on socio-economic constraints

Studies have shown that household income and socio-economic status (parental education, occupation, and assets) determine whether or not a child attends school. Where incomes are low, for example, many households may find it hard to bear the direct and indirect costs of schooling (Moyi, 2006). Other studies in Africa reveal that the need for children to work and earn income plays a significant role in dropping out of school (Moyi,2006; Colclough et al. 2003). In a study of the gender disparities in schooling in Ethiopia, Guinea, and Tanzania, Colclough et al (2003) note:

> In all three countries girls are sometimes withdrawn from school and sent to work in urban areas as housemaids. However rather than being able to use the money they earn as contribution towards school expense, it was reported that girls are usually obliged to give the income to their parents……. Children at school were, on average from better off households than those who had dropped out, who were in turn from wealthier backgrounds than school age children who had never enrolled… (p.132).

While the direct cost of schooling affected both low income boys and girls, boys often engage in paid work to finance their education. Girls, on the other hand, are forced to drop out of school since, as one respondent stated in the above study, they "are unable to find such jobs" (p.134) and were instead engaged non income generating chores, and therefore unable to contribute to the cost of their education. Colclough et al (2003). conclude from this study that household wealth is an important determinant of school enrollment. The authors, however, note that:

> Poverty in a family will have a more detrimental effect upon the decision to enroll a girl in school than a boy. Thus in these countries, boys are more likely to attend

and complete primary school regardless of their socio-economic status, than girls (p.135).

However, other scholars have challenged the notion that child labor has a negative impact on primary schooling. Buchmann's (2000) study of the impact of family background and structure on children's educational participation found that child labor is not a significant cause of dropping out of school. She notes that "poor performance in school and inability to pay school expenses are the most frequently cited reasons for dropping out" (p. 1360). She concludes that child labor does not constrain school enrollment and attendance in Kenya. She, however, points out that there is a higher demand for girls' labor in the home or on the farm than for boys' labor. She notes, "girls in rural households that own land perform the highest average number of tasks, boys in urban households perform the lowest average number of tasks, and girls average slightly more tasks than boys in all contexts" (p. 1360). Buchmann concludes that banning child labor does not guarantee increased participation in school**.** It should, however, be stressed that involvement in labor does not necessarily curtail enrollment, but work activities may interfere with academic performance and progress, which may then lead to dropping out.

Buchmann (2000) found, however, that parental expectation for future financial help to be a significant determinant of enrollment. Parents not only educate children to ensure "their social mobility, but also to secure their own long term economic welfare" (p.1371). Buchmann notes: "If parents perceive limited returns to girls' education due to gender discrimination in the labor market, girls' school enrollment suffers" (p. 1371). She

concludes that educational participation has very little to do with patriarchal norms and the division of household labor.

> In this regard, educational inequalities are better understood as outcomes due to the evaluation of the returns to education for different children than as outcomes due to gender stereotype or the demand for child labor (p. 1371).

This conclusion ignores the fact that parents make decisions on whom to educate on the basis of family resources. When limited resources have to be spread across many children, then parents are forced to choose among the children. This is not often the case in wealthier households; gender discrimination is resorted to under conditions of economic hardship**,** where households living in poverty invest less in daughters if there are many sons in the household (Rose & Tembon; 1999; Colclough et al 2003).

Parental education seems to play a significant role in household schooling decisions. While studies have found both mother's and father's education to determine enrollment, mother's education appears to have a larger impact on girls' education (Subrahmanian, 200; Uwezo, 2011).

Direct costs of schooling

The direct costs of schooling are incurred by fees, the cost of books and supplies, uniforms, and transport costs. The negative impact of direct costs on schooling is evident in the huge numbers of children who enroll in school with the implementation of free-primary education policies. In Kenya, Uganda, and Malawi, primary enrollments increased by 104, 200, and 52 per cent respectively (Oketch & Rolestone, 2008). However, the direct costs of schooling can be significant for families, even where fees are not charged by schools. They often include the cost of providing school uniforms and equipment, such as texts or exercise books and writing material, and the costs in time and

money of getting children to school (Colclough et. al 2003; Rose & Tembon, 1999; Achoka et al 2007; Stromquist, 2006).

Financial constraints are found to be severe for households affected by HIV/AIDS. Not only does HIV lead to loss of income due to sickness of family members, it also increases the number of orphans and the financial burden for the extended family of caring for and educating the orphans and child headed households incapable of financing their own education (Kadzamira & Chibwana, 2000; Achoka et al 2007). Orphanhood poses a serious challenge to school enrollment and survival in many African countries.

The abolition of school fees is an important step in improving school enrollments. Colclough et al (2003), using the case of Guinea and Senegal, argue that free primary education has not had a marked impact on the low enrollment rates. In fact, in some cases, high rates of drop out tended to occur after the initial boost in enrollment, as was the case in Malawi and Uganda. They attribute this lack of enthusiasm to the direct costs of schooling, such as the cost of textbooks and uniforms.

Opportunity costs of schooling

The impact of opportunity costs of educating girls' schooling in SSA is well documented. This is particularly the case where family livelihood and survival depend on children's labor, and sending them to school means losing benefits of such labor (Odaga & Heneveld, 1995; Colclough et al. 2003). For poor families, the combination of these opportunity costs and direct costs of schooling can be an important factor in not enrolling children. Colclough's et al. study reveals the most important reasons for dropping out of school was "the need to earn money, or to work at home, or on the farm"

(2003, p.136). The authors note the gendered nature of differences in the sources of these opportunity costs. Whereas the girls dropped out to help with domestic, home based work, "boys did so to work on the family farm or earn money" (p. 136).

The evidence from the studies examined above indicates that "household income and cost constraints interact with gendered attitudes towards schooling amongst parents to cause under –enrollment, and particularly the exclusion of girls from school" (Colclough et al. 2003, p .91). Decisions about whether to educate children are based on considerations of 'affordability'. Yet, as many scholars have noted, perceptions of affordability range from everyday costs of schooling to long-term assessments of the returns to investments in education (Colclough et al. 2003; Subrahmanian, 2007; Lewis & Lockheed, 2006; Buchmann, 2000).

Household investment in girls' education is closely linked to social and cultural implications of household behavior. In other words, cultural values directly affect the roles which are judged appropriate for women to play in society, and therefore the kind of education deemed fit for girls. For example, if schooling does not prepare girls for their expected gender roles, then investing in girls' schooling may not be seen as positive. Similarly, if schooling is seen to expose girls to risks such as violence and sexual harassment, then girls' education may be compromised. Thus decisions about whether to educate children are often driven by perceptions about the 'best interests' of the child (Subrahmanian, 2007). Thus schooling may not be in the best interest of the girl child if she is exposed to sexual violence. Education can also be seen to be 'dangerous' for females, since it offers alternative conceptions of society and feminine identity and builds skills for economic independence, which are inimical to participation of girls in

domestic roles (Subrahmanian, 2007). Stromquist (2001) notes, in relation to the indigenous people of Latin America, that girls and women tend to bear the brunt of lack of "basic domestic facilities such as electricity, potable water, sanitation facilities, rubbish collection" (p.45). Furthermore, girls take on care giving responsibilities of the ill, especially because the poor have limited access to medical attention**.** etc. She argues that since the bulk of domestic chores fall on girls, parents view "school knowledge as moving their daughters away from essential tasks" (p. 45).

Clearly, the demand for schooling is determined by both economic and socio-cultural conditions. Four sets of factors appear to be important: the income and other characteristics of the households; the direct costs to households of sending children to school; the opportunity costs of doing so; and a set of other cultural and in school circumstances. Some of these factors are said to have different effects upon the demand for the schooling of boys and girls. Thus as Colcglough et al., citing Glick and Sahn (2000), state:

> Richer households' demand for child labor is lower because they can afford to pay for domestic labor –saving devices and for processed foods. This reduces the opportunity of cost of girls' schooling more than boys'. Thus the demand for girls schooling is expected to increase by a greater amount as income increases (p. 75).

Limited income also constraints the number of children that the household can send to school. This forces parents to choose between the children to send to school. In most cases, this choice is influenced by the costs and benefits associated with each individual child. Consequently, if the costs of educating girls are perceived to be higher and the benefits lower than those for boys, the education of boys will be favored when income is limited. The gendered effect of income on education therefore is significant only in poor households. As Colclough et. al. (2003) observe, not only are richer

households more able to afford the direct and indirect costs of schooling from current income, they also have easier access credit, and greater political leverage than poorer households. Such assets enable richer households to secure greater access to better quality schools and better post primary opportunities for their children than poor households, thereby improving their relative returns to education. Stromquist (2001) captures this relationship between poor families and schooling:

> For poor people, education means a trade off, usually between obtaining food and going to school. From the perspectives of indigenous groups in rural areas, it might mean having to sell chicken to buy notebooks. Having children go to school also means losing an income earner (p.43)

Using Nicaraguan experience in the context of economic deteriorations of the 90s, Stromquist (2001) explains how "lack of disposable money for such public school expenses as pencils, notebooks, uniforms, shoes, exams, and even fees for security guards" (p.43) made it impossible for poor families to take advantage of fee-free public primary and secondary education.

These studies show evidence of the connections among social exclusion, gender, poverty, and lack of schooling. Social policy in diverse sectors of the government, and private bodies all affect household decisions concerning children's education**.** The concept of education poverty cannot adequately engage all these dimensions related to parental concerns about girls' education, due to its narrow focus on supply side factors as opposed to the role of demand side factors on shaping girls' educational outcomes.

Research on socio-cultural constraints

Sociocultural customs and beliefs influence decisions to enroll girls in school, decisions to withdraw them from school, their own decision to drop-out of school, their

academic performance, and their grade level attainment. Rose and Tembon (1999), as well as FAWE (2003), reveal the following factors as militating against girls' education in Africa:

Teenage marriage is noted as a factor that contributes to early school leaving. Several reasons are identified as leading to early withdrawal of girls from school to get married. In communities where marriage is seen as the ultimate purpose for a woman, and where poor families view girls as a source of wealth, investing in girls' education may not be a positive use of scarce resources (FAWE, 2003). This wealth comes in the form of bride price that the man pays in exchange for the girl. Educating a girl is a waste of resources as it tends to benefit the would-be husband and his family. Teenage girls tend to mature while still in primary school and are therefore at risk of getting pregnant and dropping out of school. Parents may want to withdraw them from school and get them married before they 'get spoilt' to enhance their prospects for marriage. In a study conducted in Ethiopia, Rose and Tembon (1999) found that parents withdrew their daughters from school as early as the age of eight for fear that they might become pregnant out of wedlock. They gave these girls early in marriage to avoid any potential family humiliation. Thus for example : "One father reported that he had withdrawn his daughter from school because he had observed that if a girl stays in school beyond the age of ten she will not find a husband. As a father, he felt that it was his responsibility to be concerned about her future and was afraid that the community suspects the purity of girls who stay in school along time"(p. 92). In fact, formal education, in such socio-cultural contexts, is not perceived as appropriate for girls as it does not prepare them for

their future roles as wives and mothers, and often has negative consequences. Formal schooling for girls is therefore not valued as one father noted in the same study:

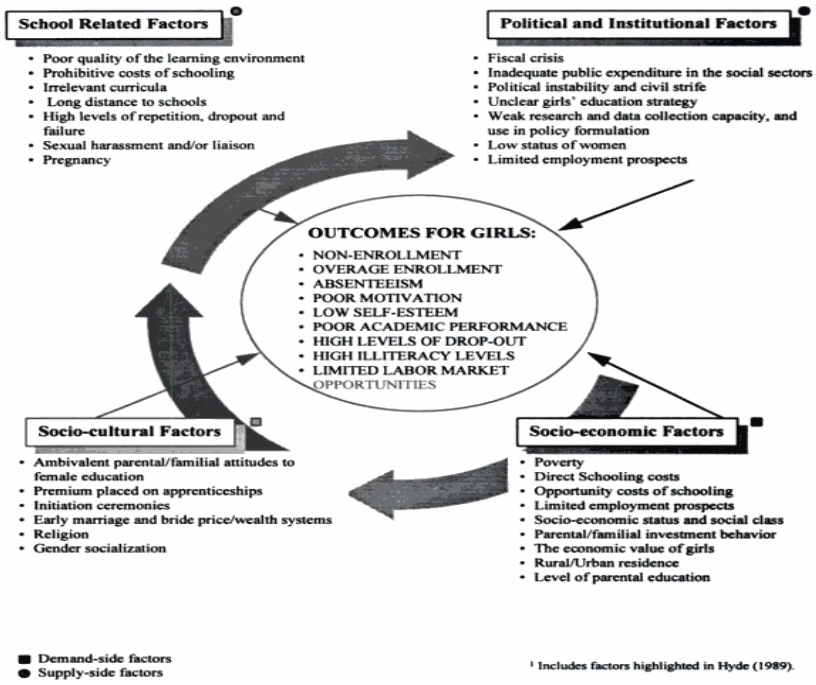
> There is a big problem faced by girls who go to school. They cannot find a husband. They do not have employment opportunities. They cannot stay with their family when they get older because they will bring shame on them. The only option they have is to migrate to bigger towns and lead a miserable life. Parents are aware of such dangers in effect they refrain from sending their daughters to school (p.91).

Moreover, the practice of 'kidnapping' girls for marriage either from the streets or from the school compound is another factor in paternal reluctance to send girls to school for fear of their safety. As Rose and Tembon (1999) observe, a major cause of early marriage for girls is related to economic constraints. In this study, kidnapping was practiced if a boy's family did not have enough money to spend on a wedding ceremony. However, some families with many children arranged a marriage ceremony on the same day for all the children, especially daughters, in order to save money.

Many studies also show that families may prefer to educate boys over girls for two reasons: The possibility of securing gainful employment after schooling, are much higher for boys than girls, secondly the expectation that a girl will migrate to her husband's home upon marriage**.** This general preference for boys adds to the disadvantage experienced by girls (Lewis and Lockheed, 2006). Research has shown the gap that exists in wages and salaries between men and women with equal human capital characteristics and work time-inputs. These stem from "gendered –job reservation" (Colclough et. al 2003, p. 152) whereby some jobs are seen to be a female or male preserve, and other forms of discrimination in the labor market. Such disparities may discourage investments in human capital for girls, which is likely to affect schooling

decisions. These labor market outcomes tend to influence schooling decisions, particularly in poor communities

It is not only the societal gendered division of labor that influences labor market-outcomes. Division of labor within the household also shapes the outcomes in the labor market. If, for example, female members bear the responsibility for reproductive tasks, the requirements of parents for help with domestic chores will involve very different burdens for girls and boys, resulting in very different opportunity costs incurred in their attending school. Equally, where the responsibility for parents differs sharply for boys and girls after marriage, the perceived benefits to parents of educating their sons and daughters are also likely to differ. Some studies have found the size and structure of a household to play a major role in school participation in two ways. First, as Colclough et. al (2003) observe, a household with many children may be constrained in providing resources equitably to all of them. Second, many children in a household allows for spreading of workload among children thereby reducing opportunity cost of schooling. However, this is particularly the case in rural areas. The presence of young children, less than seven years, has been found to affect school enrollment and attendance, particularly among girls. A possible explanation for this is the increase in opportunity cost for girls' schooling that the presence of young children poses. The opportunity cost for educating girls is incurred where girls are responsible for caring for younger siblings. While several studies attribute poor participation of girls in education to socio-cultural factors, such as early marriage, these cultural constraints are also closely interlinked with economic factors. One can argue that early marriage is likely to indicate low participation in the formal economy, and low wage returns to schooling for women.



Source: Odaga & Heneveld, (1995, p. 49)

Figure 1: Typology of factors that influence educational outcomes for female students

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has looked at theoretical and conceptual issues around gender and education. It examined the various feminist theoretical positions, and found intersectionality to be a very useful tool in the analysis and understanding of the problem of gender inequality in education. The chapter demonstrates that poor girls face multiple barriers to their education arising out of the interplay of cultural, social, and economic inequalities and their mutually reinforcing nature. In other words, gender inequalities in education intersect with other forms of inequality and deprivation. It is a consequence of a combination of poverty, social class, geographical location and an individual's ethnic affiliation. All these barriers have a gender dimension, not because they are caused by gender, but because they are exacerbated by gender.

Attempts to address educational inequality in education require many strategies. Public policy is one tool that can transform social norms by introducing specific and sensitive initiatives (Stromquist, 1997).The challenge for social policy is to identify and understand the patterns of social exclusion and its multifaceted nature in order to identify effective interventions (Lewis & Lockheed, 2006). It must eliminate supply side constraints- including locating schools closer to home, and improving the quality of education in general. Yet, ironically, in some African countries, children who live close to schools do not necessarily attend schools

(Abraha et. al. 1991). This raises the question whether poor female participation is mainly due to supply side factors. Thus Subrahmanian (2001) writes:

> To argue that demand for education is consistent and betrayed only by supply side environment inadequacies is to obscure the extent of complexity that shapes the relationship between education, well-being and empowerment, and the dynamics of household decision making especially in conditions of poverty (p. 10).

An analysis of supply and demand questions should therefore be examined not as distinct element but as closely related factors in school participation. As Fine and Rose (2001) observe, a focus on supply as distinct from demand obscures the ways in which "policy and practice are embedded in the socio-cultural environment in which they function" (p.19, cited in Subrahmanian, 2001, p.10). In other words, a focus on supply –oriented factors must simultaneously address the "gendered norms and practices that are considered appropriate within the wider economy and society, and that reinforce female disadvantage in education" (p.10). As research studies have shown, multiple factors intersect to reinforce female exclusion from school (Odaga & Heneveld, 1995; King & Hill, 1993b; Heward & Bunwaree, 1999). It is therefore misleading to attempt to separate the causes and consequences of female exclusion which stem from their subordination in

society. Subrahmanian (2001) calls for "unpacking the ways in which these factors combine [in order to] understand the conceptual importance of employing sophisticated methods of analysis for female exclusion that override the simplicity of highly descriptive 'supply-demand' metaphor" (p.10).

Policies that aim to promote gender equality in education and to must therefore strive to understand the interplay of cultural, social, and economic inequalities and their mutually reinforcing nature. Paying attention to socioeconomic disparity as well as gender inequality would result in appropriate targeting of resources. Yet other scholars emphasize the significance of cultural practices in discrimination of girls as opposed to the role of poverty (Colclough et al. 2003). They argue that cultural practices that discriminate against girls tend to persist regardless of rise in income levels, hence supporting the idea that "income growth alone will not be sufficient to eliminate gender inequality" (p. 9). Assuming that poverty is the primary cause of female disadvantage may be misleading in view of Subrahmanian's observation that household investments on girls education "are influenced by perceptions of the value of returns of that investment" (2001, p.12). Nonetheless, "The impact of cultural perceptions and practices on the decision to enroll children is related to socio-economic status and parents' own experience of schooling" (Colclough et al. p.158). To ensure gender equality will also require a focus on cultural practices that tend to undermine and threaten girls' education. My view is that cultural and economic constraints should be addressed simultaneously to ensure that excluded girls receive their education. It also requires careful targeting of interventions on the basis of girls' intersecting identities.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONTEXT FOR EDUCATION

This chapter looks at contextual issues surrounding education in Kenya. It situates education in the context of social inequality, unequal wealth distribution and income inequality. It also describes the complex structural and political issues that have influenced and continue to shape the current status of education system in Kenya, while analyzing the intersecting nature of multiple discrimination.

Social exclusion, gender and education – Evidence from Kenya

The current status of the education system in Kenya is inextricably linked to her historical past. Kenya, like the rest of the world is a country "marked by large inequalities associated with wealth, location, and race and ethnicity" (Unterhalter et.al, 2010). Accordingly, this section presents a brief account of the historical evolution of educational policy and of the policy environment for girls' education in Kenya. Colonial education and immediate post-independence education policies and practices are reviewed in the light of how they influence current educational trends, particularly gender issues in postcolonial education. Where possible statistical data are deployed to illustrate the patterns of educational inequalities in contemporary Kenya, with respect to gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.

Trends in the education system after independence

The post-independent Kenyan government made a political commitment to eradicate ignorance, disease and poverty, which 'The *sessional Paper No.10 of 1965 on*

African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya', (IPAR, 2003, p.1) had identified as the main obstacles to development. The need for rapid development in education and training emerged from two critical concerns: First "every Kenyan child, irrespective of gender, religion and ethnicity, has the inalienable right to access basic welfare provision, including education"; and, "the Government of Kenya has an obligation to provide opportunity to all citizens to fully participate in socio-economic and political development of the country and also to empower the people to improve their welfare" (IPAR, 2003, p.1). Hence, it became imperative to make education accessible to all, regardless of religion, ethnic background, gender, geographical location, race and or class (Republic of Kenya, 1964).

Numerous attempts were made to address the equity–oriented issues that had plagued the former colonial education system. First was the establishment, in 1964, of The Kenya Education Commission also known as the Ominde Commission, which urged the government to expand educational facilities in marginalized regions, and to protect and safeguard the religious convictions of all people. This later recommendation reflects the growing concern over the evangelical activities of the Christian missionary schools left behind by colonial administration (Alwy &Schech, 2004).

Another initiative followed in 1974 when fees were eliminated for the first four years of primary education. This resulted in expansion of enrollment rates to nearly 80 per cent (Eshiwani 1993). These measures however did not change inequalities in educational provision and opportunities. This was reflected in the unequal distribution of government schools in the country, large disparities in national examination

performance, and university admission patterns (Aly & Schech, 2004). Thus 80 percent of eligible children were not in school by late 1990s (Wane & Gathenya, 2003).

In addition, since independence, the sluggish economy and the widening gap between the rich and poor has significantly affected the educational outcomes with a large number of children unable to bear the full cost of education and many graduate unable to find employment, (Wane & Gathenya, 2003). The question that remains in light of Free Primary Education is: who are the out-of school children in Kenya? What are the sources of their exclusion from schooling?

Sources of inequality and exclusion

This section describes the nature of the primary forms of inequality and exclusion and identifies the ways in which they intersect with gender to exclude girls from schooling. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss all these forms and sources of exclusion, I want to argue that these forms and sources of exclusion do not operate in isolation but interact to form multiple sources of disadvantage for individuals.

Racism in the Kenyan context

The modern state of Kenya is a product of the colonization by Britain of the territory that is today called Kenya. Since Kenya was a settler colony, portions of Kenya's most fertile land were expropriated and reserved exclusively for occupation by British citizens. Thus, access to resources in colonial Kenya, was based on race, with white Kenyans being at the apex and blacks at the bottom (Chesoni, 2006). This unequal access to resources also applied to social services, patterns of settlement, and

occupational opportunities. For example, there were special schools for Whites, others for Asians and for Africans. Africans lived in 'native reserves' and had no right to freedom of movement, and had to carry a pass to be move outside of their designated "native reserves". Chesoni (2006) observes that only white bachelors were allowed to live in plush suburbs in Nairobi such as Lavington, Kileleshwa, Nairobi West and Hurlingham. Asians lived in Parklands, Ngara and Westlands. These patterns of settlement are still visible in Nairobi. The nature and quality of educational facilities available to the various racial groups confirms this inequality of access. For example Lenana High School (the Duke of York) and Kenya High school were reserved for White boys and White girls respectively. The best school for African girls, Alliance High school, lacked facilities for the study of sciences. In order to study physics "African girls had to draw straws and the two who drew the shortest would take their classes at Alliance Boys" (Chesoni, 2006 p. 212). These racially- based systems of exclusion still persist in post-independent Kenya, where Africans do not enjoy the same quality of life as their counterparts of Asian and European descent.

As Wane and Gathenya (2003) eloquently put it, "the new nation inherited a colonial education that was described as a 'caste' system with rigid boundaries for different communities, which meant that there were separate schools for Europeans, Asians (and Arabs), and Africans in that order of priority" (p.178). The "racially segregated" nature of the education system was manifest in funding, training, and general curriculum disparities that culminated in a dual system: 'Education for Adaptation for the African masses' and Education for Modernization' for Asians and Europeans and a few selected Africans (Ntarangwi, 2003). The curriculum and costs of the two systems

differed substantially. For example, the expenditure per pupil was more than five times higher for Europeans' than for Africans (Alwy &Schech, 2004). Moreover, 99 per cent of educational budget was allocated to European and Asian schools, while 1 per cent was spent on African schools, in a country that was predominantly African (Wane & Gathenya, 2003).

The medium of instruction for primary education in African schools was vernacular and the curriculum was based on vocational agricultural education (Ntarangwi, 2003). By contrast, the language of instruction in European and Asian schools was English, and the purely academic curriculum prepared the children for post-primary education. Very few Africans had access to secondary education. This therefore severely restricted their access to formal employment, where the language of administration was English for which they were not appropriately trained**.**

Table 2: Education department expenditure by race, 1930

	Pupils (In state and state-aided schools only)	**Total Expenditure (In US Dollars)**	**Expenditure per Pupil (In US Dollars)**
Africans	6948	232,293	33.4
Asian	1900	70,329	37.0
European	776	140,041	180.5
Total	9624	442,663	46.0

Source: (Kenya, Education Department Annual Report, 1930, cited in Alwy & Schech (2004)

Race, gender and access to education and other opportunities

Access of African women's education in the colonial Kenya was further restricted by patriarchal norms. Like other African countries in the colonial era, formal education in Kenya was initially available only for boys. But when it became available to girls, it was mainly focused on home-making skills (Chege & Sifuna 2006). The ultimate purpose for schooling for girls was to make them suitable for motherhood "a wife of an aspiring Christian man and a manager of the home, rather than for any public role" (Leach, 2008, p. 341). Hence the aim of the school curriculum was to produce girls who would be "obedient wives and dutiful mothers". Drawing from the archive material in Birmingham, Leach shows how education provision for girls mirrored that of the "working class girls in the early nineteenth century", where emphasis was placed on needle work and the 3Rs (reading, writing, and arithmetic). This period marked the beginning of "the differentiated curriculum that was to be endorsed as state policy by the 1870 Education Act for England and Wales and to be reproduced with minor modifications across British colonial Africa" (p. 341). Leach (2008) states:

> The provision of girls schooling reflected the socio-political changes taking place in Britain, changes which expanded educational opportunities for women while also imposing increasingly rigid views of their place in society, shaped by what was known as the 'separate roles' ideology (p.336)

The 'separate roles' ideology, Leach argues, demanded that women confine their attention to the "private and personal sphere of the home and family, while men occupied the public world of commerce, politics, civil administration" (p.366). Education would be instrumental in promoting this ideology of difference, "through a gender- differentiated curriculum in which girls were taught specific 'feminine' skills by female teachers, preferably in separate schools" (p 336). Like the working-class girls attending charity and

church schools in England, girls were to learn to sew, (Leach, 2008, p337). Additional activities would include cookery, housekeeping, and hygiene. That girls 'curriculum was dominated by needlework, and sewing, is appalling given the absence of such subjects in traditional African education. Consequently, African girls were taught skills that often had little relevance to their daily lives and which in many ways undermined their economic and social status" (Leach, 2008, p.348). Thus schooling from the very beginning was organized along gender lines, although as Leach further points out,

> Social class was to become a more significant marker of 'difference' once selective secondary schools were opened in the late 1840s, and race from the 1860s, when the biological concept of racial superiority inherent in social Darwinism took hold in the public imagination. Mission schools were therefore to become a key site for the performance of the mutually reinforcing relationships of race, gender and class (Leach, 2008, p.337).

The nineteenth century mission school emphasis on needlework for girls served both ideological and practical causes. As Mary Harris (cited in Leach 2008), observes, sewing symbolizes traditional 'feminine' virtues of "patience, orderliness, modesty, restraint and obedience"

(p. 337). Explaining the significance of sewing for British working- class girls:

> From the beginning of the Charity Schools to the arrival of the comprehensives, it was needlework, alone or combined with other domestic subjects that dominated the curriculum of working class girls, sometimes in time, always in significance. It was needlework that differentiated girls' schooling from boys' that confirmed girl' subservience to the needs of men in their homes, that reduced their access to attainment in other curriculum subjects, that channeled them into a highly restricted job-market, that ensured that their work was held in low esteem, and that hung a prejudgment of intellectual inferiority over the rest of their lives. It was through needle work that the low expectations of girls were first institutionalized, then systematized (Harris 1997, 41).

The mission schools were therefore instrumental in reproducing the very gender relations that existed in Britain. As part of the schooling curriculum of the colonies,

sewing not only prepared the girls for 'marriage and domesticity", but also provided "a convenient means of defining and controlling female sexuality through the production of clothing of a type deemed suitable for clean Christian souls" (Leach 2008, p.341). Furthermore dressmaking, which entails hard work, would minimize leisure time and moral depravity among girls. Thus missionaries conveniently used schooling to promote the ethos of hard work alongside holiness and moral virtue.

Mission schooling only offered limited opportunities to girls –including sewing instructions in girls' schools, servants and nannies in European households, or later as teachers and nurses. According to the missionaries, schooling would liberate the African girl from "demeaning practices and rituals", and increase her potential of making a good marriage. Consequently education in Africa had far reaching impacts on gender relations in Africa as it contributed to the African women's dependence on men (Leach, 2008). Leach argues that this gender differentiated curriculum led to the academic disadvantage of girls relative to boys, and is still reflected in the contemporary situation of girls' schooling in Africa.

Ethnic chauvinism in Kenya

Kenya can be characterized as heterogeneous society stratified along racial, ethnic groups, languages, customs and religion. The Kenyan territory is divided into eight provinces, along ethnic lines and subgroups. For example, the Turkana occupy the North Eastern Province the Kikuyu are found in Central Province; the Luo in Nyanza; the Luhya in Western Province; the Mijikenda in the Coastal Province; and the Kalenjin and Maasai in Rift Valley Province. This division was instituted by The British Colonial

administration which created administrative units in Kenya along ethnic boundaries. These administrative units exist to date and reflect Kenya's present ethno-geography. As Alwy and Schech, (2004) point out, "the post-colonial government further consolidated this ethno-political structure by aligning parliamentary constituencies with ethnic boundaries, which to date remains the basis of provincial administration and Kenyan politics. Hence from the district to the provincial level, ethnic groups are clustered together rendering regions in Kenya ethnically distinct" (Alwy & Schech, 2004 p.267)**.** But how do ethnic or regional inequalities translate to inequities in education, particularly gender inequity?

Ethnicity has been identified among the significant sources of variation in educational participation in Africa. Indeed the role of ethnic frameworks in shaping the pattern of development projects in Africa has been acknowledged (Noyoo, 2000; Alwy & Schech, 2004). Possible explanations include the scramble for scarce national resources after independence (Nyukuri, 1997; Alwy & Schech, 2004). Nyukuri (1997) recounts how leadership in postcolonial Kenya has often relied on ethnicity to maintain status quo and /or settle disputes with perceived enemies. As Nyukuri notes, reliance on ethnicity has created a power struggle over which ethnic community should control the national resources and has on many occasions caused serious ethnic conflicts. The extent of unequal distribution is evident in the following statement:

> Apart from their easy access to land, the economic success of the Kikuyu region in the first ten years of Kenya's independence was enviable by other ethnic groups. The Kikuyu also enjoyed good modern roads, abundant school and education facilities, expanded health services, piped water, and electricity, and other forms of infrastructure. This picture of central Kenya is in sharp contrast to Nyanza province- the home of the Luo ethnic group – 'which suffered severe repression and neglect, more than any other province for trying to challenge and question the unjust enrichment of one region (Nyukuri ,1997 p.13).

Ethnicity then becomes not just the most important criterion of identification but also a basis for social stratification in Africa. Thus, according to Alwy and Schech (2004) ethnic identification provides the means for competition for influence in the state and in allocation of resources .They note how ethnic community and allies of the ruling group tend to draw exponential benefits from state resources resulting in uneven patterns of educational development.

> The underlying cause of unequal access to education is the patron-client relationship between the ethnic group of the ruling elite and the government that prevails in Kenya. Political and economic power, and the wealth affiliated with it, is highly skewed to the ruling ethnic group, whose exclusionary practices have created marked inequalities in access to resources, including educational resources (Alwy and Schech 2004 p.267).

Trends in educational participation after independence indicate large disparities in both access to and quality of primary education, as measured by the NER, GER and the examination results from the eight provinces (Alwy and Schech 2004) of Kenya. As table 2 indicates, soon after Independence, educational enrollment levels differed between regions with the Central Province maintaining the lead and North Eastern at the bottom.

Table 3: Percentage primary school enrolment by province 1969

Province	Enrollment % of 5-14yr age group in primary schools
Central	64
Nairobi	61
Eastern	47
Western	40
Coast	32
Nyanza	31
R/Valley	29
N/Eastern	4
Kenya	38.5

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics: Kenya (1994) cited in Alwy & Schech, 2004, p.271

Alwy & Schech (2004) point to the unequal distribution of learning institutions, such that there is a concentration of schools in the three wealthiest provinces compared to other underserved provinces. They argue that these inequities are excerbated by the fact that students from regions with higher incidence of poverty, like the North Eastern and Coast Provinces, are more likely to have poor parents, a poor infrastructure , and less qualified teachers. As a consequence, similar disparities can be observed in national examination performance of the students along ethnic lines. Thus regional disparities in education mirror socioeconomic disparities in the country (Alwy & Schech,2004; Chege & Sifuna,2006). As Alwy & Schech, (2004) note:

> Some provinces, like the North Eastern and Coast Provinces, have fewer schools, which are widely scattered and thus more difficult to access, and attendance is further restricted due to lack of transport facilities. It is also difficult for children to go to school if their parents cannot afford to pay their school fees, which are particularly high for secondary schooling (Alwy & Schech 2004, p. 272).

Similar regional disparities are observed in repetition and dropout rates across the country, where the richest agricultural districts tend to have the lowest dropout rates, compared to the arid and semi-arid lands which display the largest dropout rates in the country due to parental inability to meet the cost of education (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). Buchmann (2000) attributes this unequal development of education along ethnic lines to three factors geographical location, and early exposure to Christianity and colonialism. These observations have led many commentators to the conclusion that education has served to sustain and reproduce socio-economic disparities in the country. However, these ethnic disparities in education often translate to gender disparities in education.

Intersectionality of ethnic and gender inequality

Like racism, ethnic inequality acts as a silent driver of inequality in Kenya. Whereas gender inequality manifests against women and girls in general, ethnic inequality ensures that certain groups of women are even further marginalized than others. This is best exemplified in girls' access to education in North Eastern Province. In 1970 (Kenya's first decade after independence), the number of girls from Central Province enrolled in secondary school was 9,366, while only 7 girls enrolled from North Eastern Province (Kinyanjui, 1975). This disturbing trend continues to date.

Table 4 and figure 2, indicate that most provinces registered relatively high enrollment rates as shown in the primary school Net Enrollment Rates (NER) in 2002. However, the enrollment rates for North Eastern Province and Nairobi are the lowest. In the North Eastern, the rates are 16.5 per cent for boys and 8.8 per cent for girls, with the average rate for the province being 13.4 per cent. In Nairobi, the rates are 43.3 per cent for boys, 42.2 per cent for girls, and 43.2 per cent for the province (Chege & Sifuna, 2006).

Table 4: primary school NER by sex and province, 2002

Sex	Coast	Central	Eastern	Nairobi	Rift Valley	Western	Nyaza	North Eastern	Kenya
Boys	56	81.5	72.5	44.3	67.1	69	75.1	16.5	67.2
Girls	49.4	84.1	75	42.2	66.7	76.3	74.3	9.8	68
Total	52.7	82.8	73.8	43.2	66.9	72.7	74.7	13.4	67.6

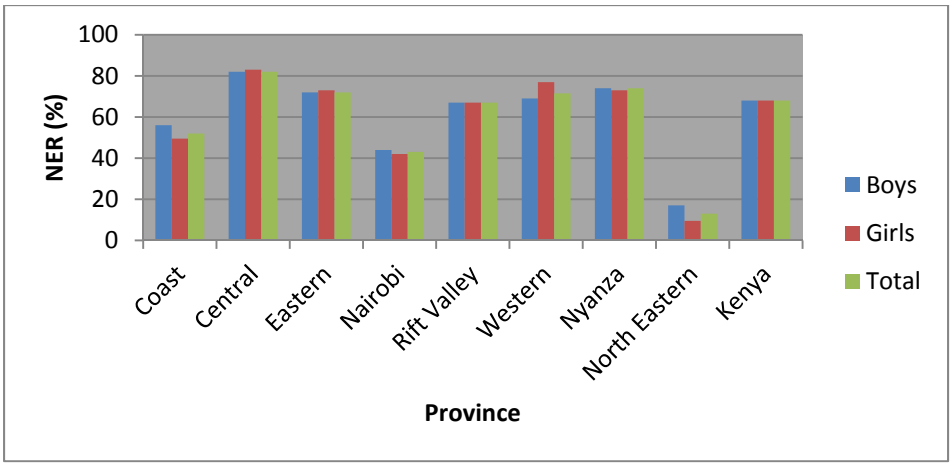
Source: Ministry of education, science and Technology

Similar trends can be observed in drop-out, completion and performance patterns where in reference to North Eastern, we can observe a disparity in enrollment based on region and gender. However, the gender and regional disparities are more apparent in dropout, repetition and completion rates. As Chege and Sifuna point out, "studies of

repetition and dropout rates show that the drop out pattern is consistent with the regional and socio-economic disparities in the country" (p. 50). The regions with the highest dropout rates are arid, semi-arid or pastoral districts, and those with the lowest are largest municipalities and rich agricultural districts (Chege & Sifuna ,2006; Legget 2005; Alwy & Schech,2004). According to Chege & Sifuna (2006) :

> Regions and districts that were successfully integrated in the colonial economy and reinforced by post -independence socio-economic and political policies, register higher girls' enrollments. Conversely, districts that were on the periphery of the colonial economy and have remained economically marginalized have very low girls' enrollment (p.50).

As table 5 and figure 3 shows, Eastern Province registered the highest dropout rate of 6.1 per cent, followed by North Eastern Province, with 6 per cent. Nairobi had the lowest dropout rate of 1.5 per cent followed by Central Province with 2.9 per cent (Chege & Sifuna, 2006)



Source: Chege & Sifuna (2006).

Figure 2: Primary school NER by province and sex, 2000

Table 5: Primary school drop-out rates by sex and province, 2002									
	Coast	Central	Eastern	Nairobi	Rift Valley	Western	Nyanza	North Eastern	Kenya
Boys	5.2	3.1	6.4	1.6	4.9	5.1	5.5	5.5	5
Girs	5	2.6	5.7	1.3	4.7	5	6.2	6.9	4.8
Total	**5.1**	**2.9**	**6.1**	**1.5**	**4.8**	**5.1**	**5.8**	**6**	**4.9**

Source: Ministry of education, Science and Technology (in Chege & Sifuna (2006)

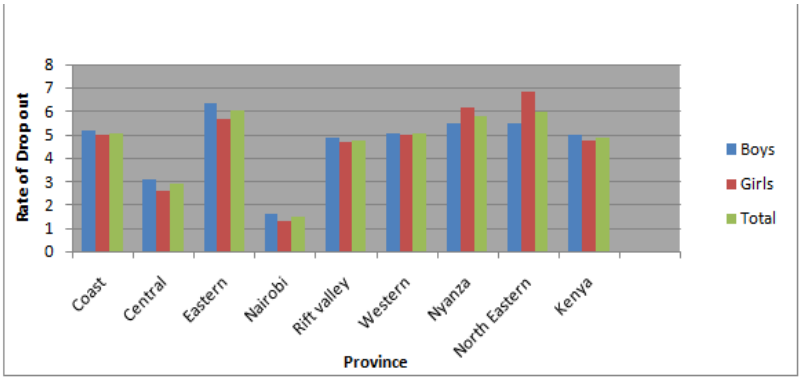


Figure 3: Primary school drop-out rates by sex and province, 2002

Table 6 shows percentage of pupils completing class eight in 2001. The data indicates a faster increase in completion rates for girls than for boys. However, Chege and Sifuna (2006) have pointed out that the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education -the primary school leaving examination tends to eliminate a larger proportion of girls than boys. This is because; to proceed to secondary school pupils must complete class eight, obtain good scores at the KCPE, and be able to meet the cost of secondary education. Moreover, the bottlenecks to successful completion of primary education tend to increase as girls advance. Girls who live in marginalized regions, face a double disadvantage as they have fewer chances than both boys and their female counterparts in other parts of the country of entering and completing primary school (Chege and Sifuna ,2006).

Table 6: Primary school completion rates by sex, 1990-2001												
	1990	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**	**2000**	**2001**
Boys	45.7	46.4	44.7	44.5	44.6	45.1	45.1	46.3	46.4	47.7	48.3	52.5
Girls	40.5	41.6	48.2	42.2	43	42.1	43.5	45.8	48.1	47.8	49.5	52.6
Total	**43.2**	**44.1**	**46.4**	**43.4**	**43.9**	**42.6**	**44.3**	**46.1**	**47.2**	**47.7**	**48.9**	**52.6**

Source: Ministry of education, Science and Technology (cited in Chege and Sifuna ,2006)

North Eastern Province registered the lowest performance in national examinations (Table 7). In 2004, for example, " the pupil from North Eastern Province with the highest score in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education was equivalent to the 100th pupil in Nairobi Province in the same examination" (Wainaina, 2006, p.20).

Boys tend to perform better than girls at the provincial and national levels in KCPE exams (Table 7). This factor is made worse by the fact that girls are allocated fewer secondary school places than boys. For example Chege and Sifuna (2006) observe that the ratio of girls' secondary schools to boys is 1:3. Thus "the allocation mechanism at the end of primary education tends to reinforce the inequality of opportunities for girls and boys at the primary school level" (p.43). Moreover, more boys than girls get to repeat Class Eight upon failing KCPE. Yet, as Chege and Sifuna note, the tendency for equal enrollment of girls and boys in standard eight in regions that are economically and educationally developed implies that both boys and girls are encouraged to repeat standard eight. Thus girls' poor performance is also attributed to lack of opportunities for repetition. For girls chances of qualifying for secondary education are therefore strongly associated with the level of socio-economic development in their localities.

Table 7: KCPE performance by gender by province, 2001-2003						
Province	2001		2002		2003	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Coast	202.68	190.89	198.70	188.91	185.17	175.15
Central	196.34	188.26	182.87	177.37	174.09	166.47
Eastern	198.49	186.48	190.48	181.46	177.72	168.80
R/ Valley	207.12	195.91	197.93	188.79	181.93	171.32
Western	203.34	192.48	196.57	185.77	183.45	172.26
Nyanza	195.41	183.23	186.02	172.63	173.26	158.47
N/ Eastern	194.07	184.61	191.20	182.33	178.55	168.74
Nairobi	209.77	206.35	202.23	200.84	191.26	189.13
National	194.07	184.61	191.20	182.33	178.55	168.74

*Source: Ministry of education, Science and Technology (*Chege and Sifuna ,2006)

Poverty, ethnicity, gender and education

From the foregoing observations it is clear that some children are excluded from schooling because they belong to minority ethnic communities; these communities aren't only 'minority' in numerical terms, but also in their mode of production. These are the communities who occupy the arid and semi arid areas (ASALs) of North Eastern Kenya, practice pastoralism, and are nomadic. Their exclusion from schooling may be attributed to the challenges of simultaneously meeting livelihood needs and attending school (Sifuna, 2006, Legget 2005). While the opportunity costs of doing both is great for girls and boys, by virtue of sexual division of labor, girls incur greater opportunity costs of going to school for their families, and it is therefore in the interest of their families that they stay at home while their brothers go to school.

Hence the origin of the problem of gender disparity seems to be class-based discrimination. In this case, poverty and 'social class' to which the entire ethnic community occupies intersects with gender to exclude girls from school. These

communities' way of life which is closely linked to their mode of production, pastroralism /nomadism , is usually frowned upon by the dominant groups, whose mode of production is agriculture and is seen as superior. In fact, any attempts at 'developing' the ASALs have been aimed at sedentarization so they can become watchmen, teachers, farmers etc. Western education has been used as a tool to sedentarize the pastoralists. However, its mode of delivery has not effectively responded to the lifestyles of the nomads, and girls' education has suffered the consequences of such policy strategies. ASAL areas are also poor with no roads, lack of transportation services, poor health services, all which are necessary for schools to function effectively and for girls to succeed in schooling.

In a study that that examined primary education provision and participation in a nomadic community in North Eastern Province, Legget (2005) found that "only 30 per cent of parents interviewed had sent all of their school aged children to school for at least part of the primary cycle. The rest had decided to keep at least some of their children at home" (p.137). In this context. Legget argues parental decisions about education of, girls and boys, are based on their judgment of what is in the best interest of the family. Thus in the context of North Eastern province, Legget states, that means two things:

> First, it means placing an emphasis on strengthening the capacity of the family to preserve and build its herds, social networks, and other economic safety nets. Second, and especially in the context of gender relations, it reflects the importance that is attached to protecting what is perceived to be the honor and reputation of girls and for preparing them for their future roles as wives and mothers (p. 137).

The outcome, Legget observes, is that some "children usually boys will attend school for as long as is practicable. Others-some boys but mostly girls –will remain at home to look

after the animals and other members of the family who need to be cared for, and to do domestic duties"

(p. 137). He argues that the government's attempt to increase educational access by providing boarding schools has not resulted in increased participation as they are severely underutilized. Other studies have confirmed that the use of boarding schools does not guarantee access to vulnerable groups or close the education gap between the pastoral districts and the rest of the country (Sifuna, 2006). Legget concludes that focus on just one form of educational provision serves to excludes pastoralist children, and calls for flexibility in delivery systems, on terms that are consistent with pastoralist lifestyle. These observations also challenge any explanations that attribute nonparticipation in modern Western education to traditional cultural values. Thus Legget argues:

> By describing the problem principally in relation to cultural values, the temptation is merely to blame pastoralist communities for those disparities, and to absolve those charged with addressing those disparities from any responsibility for their perpetuation (p.131).

Clearly these Nomadic girls experience multiple sources of exclusion and discrimination, and any responses aimed at achieving gender equity in education must therefore recognize and identify what these are and how they are interconnected. In such contexts, attaining gender equality must go beyond targeting girls or boys as a single category, but rather include specific interventions targeting specific dimensions that cause subordination in various ways. Such responses must be framed within an intersectional framework. For example, since the source of girls' exclusion from schooling in ASAL areas is ethnic based discrimination, policies that expand access, or that make education compulsory will not effectively respond to their problems, unless discrimination against ethnic minorities is removed. If their exclusion is class-based, i.e.

arising from extreme poverty that is characteristic of ASAL areas, then expanding access alone will not address opportunity costs of attending school for girls and the direct cost of schooling.

Yet, while these practices affect both boys and girls one wonders why more girls than boys drop out of primary education. For example, data for 1991 show that of the 864,593 pupils who entered Class One in 1984, only 380,990 or 44% reached class 8 in 1991 ((Republic of Kenya, 1991). The others repeated or dropped out and the repetition rates or dropouts were higher for girls than for boys). Moreover, Buchmann (2000) notes only 40-50 per cent of all primary-school graduates are admitted to secondary school each year and only 23% of secondary-school age children are enrolled in secondary school. Admission into secondary school is based on a national school leaving exam and this leads to high rates of grade repetitions as pupils strive to improve their chances of proceeding to secondary school. Buchmann thus concludes:

> against a high baseline of primary enrollment rates, the unstable Kenyan labor market and the competitive education system have led to considerably varied patterns of educational participation for Kenyan children in which gender, ethnicity, and family background should be important (2000, p.1356).

Despite evidence of gender parity in enrollment at the primary level, "girls comprise only 44% of secondary school students" (Buchmann, 2000). This situation makes it necessary to look back into girls' experiences of primary education, focusing on the questions of where in the level are they most vulnerable, what are the reasons, which girls drop out. This last question is particularly important since not all girls disadvantaged on the basis of gender. Social class remains "a major fault line in patterns of educational participation" (Buchmann, 2000). To effectively convey the differences evident in girls' experiences and educational outcomes, reference must be made social class. Essentially

the disparities among the regions are class-based, in addition to and interwoven with geographical isolation. Chege and Sifuna (2006) acknowledge this fact:

> Regional differences in the provision of educational opportunities correspond with regional variations in economic and political development. Girls are most fully represented in the primary schools of Central and Nairobi provinces. Regions with relatively high cash income from agriculture, formal and informal employment, enables parents to meet the direct costs of schooling for their sons and daughters as well as the indirect cost of foregoing their daughters' assistance in the home and farm (p. 34).

Socio-economic Status

Wealth and income continue to be a strongly concentrated and inequitably distributed. According to a 2004 study the top 10 percent of households controlled 42% of the total income while the bottom 10% controlled less than 1% (SID, 2004). Moreover, there are large disparities in life expectancy with people in Central Province living on average 19 years longer than people in Nyanza; and that income and wealth are overwhelmingly owned by men, and is that only 3% of women own land (Republic of Kenya 2009, p. 23).

The majority of Kenyan people, 56 percent live in poverty (Achoka et.al, 2007). Although the majority of the poor live in rural areas, urban poverty is rampant as over 70 percent of Nairobi's population alone live in informal settlements. Based the UNDP report of 2006, Achoka et. al (2007) note that four out of eight provinces recorded an increase in poverty levels in Kenya. North Eastern Province with the poverty index of 50.5 percent had the biggest increase in poverty levels in Kenya is. The Daily Nation newspaper report below shows the unequal distribution of poverty in Kenya. *"A new study by a UN agency reports that North Eastern and Nyanza Province are the poorest in Kenya, while Nairobi and Central are ranked the richest (Daily Nation, Nyambega,*

Gisesa July 24th 2010). The report notes: "With a population of 37.8 million in 2007, almost 23 million Kenyans live in poverty. Approximately 7.5 million spend less than $1.25 a day and another 15 million spend less than $2 a day."

Indicators of poor living conditions are varied and manifested in remoteness, poor road network, lack of production technology, lack of storage capacities and fluid cash among others (Achoka et al. (2007). Educational research has attributed inadequate access and poor retention in education to economic factors. Most of the poor children without adequate education belong to parents who themselves grew up in regions that were disadvantaged economically and therefore not only lacked schools, but also viable income generating opportunities. In such regions, primary schools are sparsely located and therefore difficult for young children to access**.** This difficulty of access is linked to lack of affordable and reliable transportation, and peculiar needs related to the demands of rural livelihoods or nomadic lifestyles. In North Eastern Province for example, only one out of three children attends school (Achoka et al, 2007; Uwezo, 2010). This means that Free Primary Education has not achieved its goal of ensuring equality of access for all primary school age children**.** This situation is mainly attributed to parental inability to provide for other direct costs of schooling such as uniforms, medical care, and other non-statutory fees, forcing their children to drop out.

All forms of inequality are greatly exacerbated by poverty. Thus Chesoni (2006) concludes "although inequality and poverty are not one and not all people who face gender inequality are poor, all poor women and girls also have to deal with gender inequality" (p. 199) This point is made manifest by an examination on the way in which poverty intersects with gender inequality in education.

Intersectionality of poverty and gender inequality

The preceding chapters have noted ways in which access to primary school is constrained not just by aspects of geographical location, but also by poverty and household dynamics. Also observed is that girls tend to bear the brunt of low socio-economic status by dropping out when families cannot bear the costs of schooling, (Chege& Sifuna, 2006; Oketch & Rolleston, 2008). Many factors are shown to present significant challenges for children's schooling. These include cost of textbooks, school uniforms, and transportation, among others**.** In addition, lack of educational facilities has been shown to affect girls' education. Girls stay away from school due to lack of toilet facilities, particularly when they are menstruating. "Most girls who were interviewed lacked money to buy sanitary wear and consequently stayed away from school during their menstrual periods" (Elimu Yetu Coalition, 2005). Gender gaps are also evident in informal settlements or poor slum communities in Kenya (Mugisha, 2006).

The vignettes (see Box 1 & 2) capture the educational realities of the majority of poor rural and urban children in primary schools in Kenya. As Wane and Gathenya (2003) observe, to many rural poor pupils recite mathematical times- table and the alphabet, in order to remember them.. Moreover, most of the material the pupils are expected to memorize are often far removed from the world in which they live. Their daily chores, related to rural livelihoods, such as tilling the land, fetching river water, collecting firewood and caring for the young require skills that modern schooling does not impart. School teaches about other countries and foreign languages. The medium of instruction is English and later Kiswahili. These rural children must speak English at school and switch to their mother tongue at home.

Box1: Dropping out of school in a rural setting

It is six o'clock in the morning. Njeri is walking briskly to school. She has two miles to get to her destination. This morning she cannot sing her recently learned hymn, nor can she chase the butterflies or pick some flowers. She is saying her times tables. Oh! She cannot remember. She examines her arms and legs where she had written her times tables, to see whether the numbers are still visible. But, alas, she forgot to preserve those spots when washing her arms and legs this morning. The alternative is to re-cite them before the teacher, so she tries again, starting from the very beginning. This time, she remembers up to 12x8 but she cannot remember 12x9. She tries once again, and, this time, she is determined to get it right. She does not want to go to school on Saturdays as a punishment. What upsets her is knowing that the teacher will force her, and those of her classmates who cannot recite their 'homework', to bring firewood and water from home. That is a long distance to carry firewood or water. She feels that this is not a fair punishment and on a Saturday . . . . That is the only full day to play with her friends or to help her mother. Sunday is too short because she has to attend Sunday school and learn all the Bible verses. She wonders how much adults have in their brains if they have to memorize everything. However, she pauses to enjoy the rays of the sun and the silver beads formed by the morning dew. She wishes these beads were real, because she would have loved to make a necklace for her teacher. Well, maybe one day she will make a colored beaded necklace for her. She has been observing her grandmother make necklaces and following her instructions on how to thread together these tiny beads. She goes back to her times tables, but her thoughts run away again. She is thinking of her sister Nyokavi, who has been out of school for the last two years. Her parents wanted her to go on, but something happened, she is not sure what, something to do with not passing her exams and being sent to a secondary school that requires a lot of money; her father referred to it as an Harambee (let us pull together) school. Yesterday she heard a story over the radio about Kantai, the Ogiek girl who has also been out of school, she recently had a baby and cannot return to school for two reasons. The boys in her former school will make fun of her, and the community does not encourage 'mothers' mixing with their children. Besides, her parents cannot afford the cost of educating all her three brothers and her two sisters, because their family was evicted from the Mau forest, their ancestral home, to pave way for conservation and some 'development projects'. Soon, Kantai's elder sister will not join the local 'harambee' school because her parents fear that she may get pregnant or elope with one of her male teachers, and possibly get HIV/AIDS, that devastating pandemic that has claimed the lives of so many teachers and parents in the village. But Njeri needs to get this times table. Once again, she is distracted. She enjoys school but sometimes her teacher does not ask her to answer questions even if she raises her hand. She hears the sound of the bell and starts to run as she completes her times table.

(Based on Wane and Gathenya, 2003, with author additions).

Often girls are withdrawn from schools to be circumcised, married or due to pregnancy (FAWE, 2003). Moreover, sending girls to school may pose a particular problem to poor households who rely on child labor in household production, and survival**.** It may, specifically, not be a worthwhile investment if the quality of education is poor (Moyi, 2006; Achoka et al., 2008). This situation has been made worse by HIV/AIDS epidemic as girls stay at home to take care of their sick parents and other siblings. By 2005, there were about 1.5 million HIV/AIDS orphans in Kenya (MOH 2002). The Elimu Yetu Colaition's (2005) study show that informal settlements in Nairobi were hardest hit by HIV/ AIDS, where "Many girls have assumed the extra responsibility of looking after their siblings, and child headed families are on the increase" (p.110)

Box 2: Dropping out of school in an urban setting

I was born in 1989, and my mother is single. I was enrolled in Class 1 in 1995 in Majengo primary school [a private school], but my mother had a lot of problems, like raising money for food and rent. We were occasionally locked out by the landlord for not paying rent on time. So we moved to Mukuru informal settlement, and my mother managed to pay rent for some time. Initially, I found it difficult to cope, but later adjusted to the cramped and squalid living conditions .When I was in Class 3, my mother had a baby and life became difficult. I began going to school without lunch, although our neighbor, called Baba Amos, would bring some food for us and give my mother some money. I learned later that he was my sister's father, and we eventually moved in with him. My mother tried doing some business and she would travel up-country to buy cereals for sale. But one day in 1999 I returned home from school to learn that she had died in a road accident. There was no money for the funeral, and I have never seen her grave. We still live with Baba Amos in one room. I wash clothes in people's homes to provide for my sister and I help Baba to sell busaa. I dropped out of school because there was no money for my fees, but recently I got a sponsor for my sister, so that she can go to school. When Free Primary Education was introduced, I wanted to go back to school, but Baba Amos became very angry. I don't think he has ever been to school, though he knows how to count money.

(Out-of-school girl, 14 years old, Mukuru Slum, Nairobi)

Source : Elimu Yetu Coalition, 2005

Sexism and gender-based discrimination

Though in and of themselves forms of inequality, sexism and gender-based discrimination can and often do exacerbate the impact of other inequalities. That is all the other experiences of inequality such as racism, ethnic chauvinism or poverty are mediated by one's sex. Chesoni (2006) outlines some of the primary forms of gender-based inequality: Legal and judicial inequality, discriminatory or gender- blind policies, inequality in access to or control of resources, unequal representation and access to decision making, gender-based violence; discriminatory and harmful socio-cultural practices and norms, inequitable access to social services and amenities. Kenya has patriarchal cultures and traditions which are said to be the source of women's economic subordination. Most Kenyan communities are patrilineal, meaning the lineage of a people are passed through the male line. Consequently resource ownership, control and access is vested primarily in male hands. Hence daughters do not inherit property. This son-preference is a major factor in girls' poor access to education. Where a family with limited resources has to choose between the educations of two children, they will pick the boy as he can be counted on to protect the lineage.

. Among the most commonly cited harmful traditional practice is female genital mutilation (FGM), which is practiced by the majority of Kenya's ethnic communities (FAWE, 2003; Chege and Sifuna, 2006). Both FGM and early marriage play a role in girls' education because of its link to early and forced marriage. FGM is also more prevalent in rural areas. Once a girl is circumcised she is considered ready for marriage. FGM and early marriage therefore are critical factors in the interruption of education of girls. Chege & Sifuna, (2006), identify initiation ceremonies associated with FGM as a

source of dilemmas for girls which not only interfere with school attendance and academic performance, but often lead to dropout. Chege and Sifuna (2006) cite several studies that document this problem. First, the initiation ceremonies tend to coincide with the school calendar, causing absenteeism from school. Second, initiated girls are viewed and treated as adults by their communities-For example, as ready for marriage. This is contrary to school expectations where, still viewed as children, girls must participate in certain activities and are often subjected to punishments that are inappropriate for adults. Circumcised girls also develop negative, often contemptuous, attitudes towards their uncircumcised peers as well as uncircumcised teachers, who they now see as children and therefore not fit to be their teachers. They also see the next step in their lives as marriage and raising children.

Finally the gender-based division of labor means that girls are responsible for domestic chores such as fetching water and firewood, cooking, cleaning the home and caring for the young and the sick. These roles have implications for girls' education as it consumes time that could be spent in studies. A study conducted by Elimu Yetu Coalition (2005) in informal settlements in Nairobi states:

> Both boys and girls interviewed reported that girls were overburdened with housework, which included cooking, cleaning, washing, and taking care of the young ones" (p.109). One pupil is quoted to have stated: "My sister is my mother's assistant. She even takes the baby to hospital. She also goes looking for water, where she might have to queue the whole day (p.109).

The same study observes that "boys engage in hawking wares at weekends and seek casual labor during the holidays in order to earn money for school fees. Girls often work in saloons, and some resort to providing sex in exchange for money" (p. 109). School related factors also tend to lead to educational exclusion. The curriculum or classroom

methods may favor certain groups to the detriment of others. Kitetu (1998), focusing on gendered identities in the science classroom in Kenya, reveals that unlike boys, girls tend to avoid activities that require physical exertion , and that teachers tend to display differential treatment of girls and boys. All these findings cannot be divorced from the society in which they occur. Kitetu, for example, attributes the teacher treatment of boys and girls in the classrooms as a reaffirmation of gender in accordance with cultural norms which define masculinity and femininity

The high rate of dropout among girls may also be linked to the highly competitive educational system. As Samoff (2007) states:

> Throughout Africa, as in much of the world, education systems are organized to provide extended, high quality education to a small group of learners. Among schools' and teachers; primary responsibilities is to sort out and track students, which requires not only differentiating among them but also assuring that there are failures as well as successes. If all students were to get the highest marks, instead of celebrating their and their schools success, there would be a good deal of puzzlement and blame (p.493).

The above quotation shows that progressive exclusion, not inclusion, is the organizing principle within the education systems of Africa. This system is clearly intended to serve small elite, and it uses various strategies to do so. In Kenya, for example, one of the tools that has been used to sort and weed students out is high stakes examination. This makes sense in a low- resource context characterized by fierce competition for scarce higher education and labor market opportunities, and where, as conflict theorists would argue, such tracking help sustain the flow of labor into the unequal structures of mobility in capitalist systems that demand different skill levels for different kinds of occupation. The low rate of transition from primary to secondary school for girls is attributed to this competitive education system (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). Admission into higher levels of

education is based on a national school leaving examination which tends to eliminate a larger proportion of girls than boys.

Buchmann (2000) points out that student tend to repeat the later grades in order to improve their exam scores, and that some parents resort to private tuition and examination preparation classes to improve their children's chances of enrollment into secondary schools. Yet even if a person successfully passes through this competitive system, their success in the labor market is not guaranteed. Buchman concludes:

> Thus, against a high baseline on primary enrollment rates, the unstable Kenyan labor market and the competitive educational system have led to considerably varied patterns of educational participation for Kenyan children in which gender, ethnicity, and family background should be important (p.1356).

School enrollments and achievement can therefore be seen to be largely influenced by supply, demand, and learning processes. All these factors influence the patterns of household investment in education. Yet in poor communities in Kenya, especially rural and urban poor settings, schools are often in deplorable conditions with dilapidated classrooms, lacking adequate infrastructural facilities**.** Thus Stromquist's (2001) assessment of the case of Latin America applies equally well to Kenya: *"*Life in rural schools, for both students and teachers, tends to be harsh. A large number of these schools have no water, electricity or sanitation facilities. Girls are frequently called upon to perform domestic tasks for teachers" (p. 42). While both boys and girls face similar difficulties under such poor schooling conditions, the biological differences between them may translate into very different experiences of the same problem. If for example a girl is menstruating and does not have access to sanitary towels, private toilets with water to clean up, then she may be shy to share public spaces, and may opt to be absent from school for as long as it lasts. And if due to lack of water and reliable source of energy

such as electricity, a girl has to fetch water, firewood, cook and clean for her teachers during school hours, then she is left with very limited time to spend on homework, or revision of classwork. This problem is further complicated by parental concern for safety of their daughters which may play a role in keeping girls away from school. Parents tend to worry about their daughters safety to and from school (Achoka et al. 2006). Girls are exposed to rape and abductions which, apart from being an intrinsically traumatic experience, also subjects their households to stigma (Elimu Yetu Coalition, 2005). While these girls may access to free education, they do not have the same opportunity to learn as boys and other girls who do not have to deal with similar challenges.

Religion is also noted as having a significant impact on girls' education **(**Chege & Sifuna, 2006)**.** Attempts to establish a Western system of education in areas that are largely Islamic encounters considerable resistance, as school is viewed as an instrument for the spread of non-Muslim ideology and culture. This fear of western education affects girls schooling for the fear that it might challenge the accepted norms held by Muslim males around the ideal wife- submissive, obedient, and content with the status of her husband and prescribed roles of women as defined by religion and custom. Notably, Coast Province and many parts of the North Eastern Province have embraced an education system consonant with Islamic ideology.

Clearly, successful participation in education is constrained by factors other than individual ability. Yet Kenyan education policy emphasizes academic merit as the basis for advancement within the system**.** In order to understand the magnitudes of inequality in Kenya' education system, ethnicity has to be considered as a crucial factor. Discrimination of women in the labor market also plays a significant role in poor

people's decision on schooling. Women in Kenya are paid lower salaries than men with the same level of education (Suda, 2002; Mariara, 2003). As Stromquist (2001) points out, two arguments are advanced to explain this phenomenon. First, women are in fields that are less important; second, women work fewer hours than men. Such negative labor market outcomes for women may discourage parents from investing in their daughter's education. Since competition in the labor market is imperfect, I agree with Stromquit's (2002) view that women should "be protected by labor legislation if their education is to be instrumental in their advancement" (p.46).

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has looked at the historical context of educational provision in Kenya, tracing the trends in the development of education from the colonial to postcolonial era. The chapter highlights how social inequalities associated with racial, ethnic and gender identities have shaped educational outcomes for marginalized girls in Kenya. It has also described the complex structural and political issues that have influenced and continue to shape the current status of education system of the nation. It has illustrated how the post – independent development model, characterized by abuse of political power that reward or chastise ethnic groups and regions based on their political preferences, has resulted in deliberate discrimination and exclusion of certain regions and communities from sharing in the national resources. This 'tribalized' pattern of development has led to unequal distribution of development resources including education. In the end, girls caught in the intersection of sexism, racism, tribalism, and gender based discrimination have been further marginalized by poverty, and hence unable to sufficiently participate in free primary education

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY AND ELABORATION OF THE RESEARCH PARADIGM

The process and methods of data collection used in this study are bound by principles of feminist research including: "(a) The research process is based on valuing the experiences of girls and women from their own perspective, and challenging taken-for-granted assumptions and stereotypes; (b) The inclusion of a diversity of girls and women's experiences; (c) Reflexivity in the research process, allowing both investigators and participants the opportunity to reflect on the content and process of the study and to share these reflections with each other through dialogue; and d) Knowledge produced by the research has the potential to foster change in the participants, in the community or both" (Jiwani & Berman 2002, p. 6).

Feminist research recognizes that no knowledge is value-free thus rejecting notions of positivism and objectivity (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004). Instead feminist researchers view knowledge as a product of historical, cultural, social, political, and economic realities, which lead to multiple truths and the understanding that reality is complex and multidimensional. One feature of feminist research, then, is its emphasis on reflexivity or sensitivity to the ways in which one's identity or personal biography might interact with and affect the research process. Accordingly, I begin this chapter with a statement of my identity followed by an elaborate reflection of how this identity shaped my research process, and the ethical dilemmas it presented.

My statement of identity positions me as a black, African, Kenyan, heterosexual, Luo, woman. My gender (woman), coupled with my feminist intellectual orientation, as well as being ethnic Luo, has significantly influenced my research topic, research

questions, and interpretation of my findings. My research is premised on the idea that theory and analysis must not only have some relevance to the everyday experiences of women and girls, but must aim to change their lives. I therefore took a course in Advanced Feminist Studies (Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies) and learnt about the importance of foregrounding marginalized voices.

Positionality, reflexivity and fieldwork

The subject of my research is dear to my heart, and I bring particular values, interests and experiences to it. Specifically, I bring my lived experience as a Luo, female who was born in Rural Seme Kadero, grew up in Kisumu town in a peri-urban location, moved to a relatively middle class estate in my teenage years, and then back to the peri-urban location where my father acquired land and built his own home(s), becoming a prominent business man, who owned real estates and had a white collar job. All these factors afforded him the opportunity to send my siblings and me to fairly good quality boarding schools. However I share a few commonalities of experience with the young girls that I studied. But even where the experience is not shared, I understand what their experiences mean just by having a chance to live alongside poverty and wealth simultaneously.

In my formative years, before my father settled in Kisumu town, my family moved from Nairobi where I had started schooling in a public primary school that as a child, I felt, was a six kilometer walk to school. It was probably two kilometers - I'm not sure –but it felt very long, and I was often scared of walking to school. I was often terrified- particularly at the thought of crossing the filthy Nairobi River alone at the age

of 7. I will never forget the morning I crossed the makeshift bridge while trembling and landed into the stinking dark sewage waters known as Nairobi River. If it wasn't for a gentleman who pulled me out of that river- I might not be alive today. A year later, I moved to the village school, where I lived under the care of my maternal grandmother, tilling land very early in the morning before I went to school. While I disliked having to wake up at dawn to do farm work, this did not by any means interfere with my schooling. I was always on time and had plenty of food to bring with me to school- since, in those days the land was very productive. When I left the village school a year later in third grade, I transferred to Kisumu City where I lived and attended school in a peri-urban setting. The school was five kilometers away from home, and there was no public transportation available on that route, so I walked to school. Growing up in Kisumu, I faced and witnessed similar experiences as my research participants when attending lower primary school. But my schooling experiences changed when I moved to girls' boarding primary and secondary mission schools.

Returning to my rural village Nduru Kadero, and Kisumu town to conduct fieldwork posed several dilemmas for me. What was once my 'home' and was still 'home' was now the 'field' of research. Being at home which was also the 'field' became not only problematic but posed serious methodological and ethical dilemmas. How could these rural and urban slums sites be 'home' given that I was coming back from a higher institution of learning in North America where I had lived for four years? These sites were very different socio-economically from Nakuru town, where I had lived and worked for several years before relocating to the United States. I entered the field very much aware that I was a differently positioned subject with a different biography

from my participants. Being an educated, ethnic Luo woman, my ethnicity, class and gender influenced the kinds of questions I pursued and my interpretation of the data. Studying one's own 'home' raises questions about whether the researcher occupies a similar epistemological position with the participants which allows her a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences or whether their understanding of these experiences are based on their unique positionalities, which may affect their interpretations of participants who are different from themselves. These questions also influenced my choice of data collection methods.

I decided to pursue my research study on marginalized poor girls very well aware that I cannot speak for them. I was studying a phenomenon that only those who had firsthand experience of could and had already interpreted. Thus, my account would only reflect the situated and partial nature of my understanding of their lived experiences.

My positionality and biography played a central role in the research process. My insider status as an ethnic Luo made it easy for me to gain easy access, acceptance, and trust of my participants. However researching and writing about inequality and education, among my own people was not without emotional and ethical challenges. My own sister had died in the middle of my research process at the tender age of 32 years, my own father had died two years earlier at 67, and my 22 year old sister -in -law had died the previous year during childbirth. All these deaths would have been prevented if there were equal opportunities to live for all Kenyans. I felt that they died because they lived in a region that had faced systematic discrimination resulting in inadequate provision of social services, particularly healthcare. And here were these young girls, narrating their experiences of unequal opportunity to succeed in education and in life in the same

cultural settings. This topic was sensitive, and I was confounded with emotion-laden material. It was difficult not to be affected, for instance, by a young girl retelling of her experiences of education amidst such unbelievable marginalization. The research process turned out to be an emotional experience in which I found myself assuming the caring position when my young participants cried, sometimes crying with them, and laughing when they laughed. The feelings and emotions of the participants and my own inevitably shaped the research itself.

Ethical dilemmas

Acting in an ethical and professional fashion is an important requirement in the conduct of any form of research involving human subjects. Rossman and Rallis advise that "an ethical researcher does not exploit any person in any circumstances regardless of differences in status, race, gender, language, and other social identity considerations" (2003, p.72). In recognition of this demand, I was compelled to ponder and reflect upon the questions: What ethical challenges did I encounter in the conduct of my study and how did I respond to them? In other words, I was concerned with the specific issue of trustworthiness in terms of its implications for my study of the girls' experiences of education and ensuring confidence in and integrity of my findings. In order to address this issue, I discuss the general ethical, and practical challenges that feminist and qualitative researchers face, as well as specific dilemmas I encountered in conducting this research. These include: consideration of participant rights and welfare; issues of privacy and confidentiality, and keeping promises.

Ethical guidelines for social researchers demand that the rights and welfare of participants must be upheld in the research process. This entails obtaining the informed consent of participants who provide information for the study, while ensuring their privacy and anonymity (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). However, obtaining informed consent is not the only indication that the rights and welfare of participants have been given due consideration. In my study, I considered privacy and confidentiality of the participants. I took precautions to protect their anonymity. In addition, I ensured that the research process did not affect the normal functioning of the home, school, and classroom processes. If I needed to tape record the interviews, I made sure that my participants were aware and gained their consent. Since this study involved human participants, the ethics were a major concern. The subjects in my study were particularly vulnerable because they are mostly disadvantaged minors and the excluded. To alleviate the ethical concerns, I closely adhered to the ethical guidelines for using human subjects that is produced by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. I also employed methods that are less exploitative of the participants. As Dankoski states, "It is important to consider methods as a factor in feminist research because it is important to be deliberate and mindful that the methods chosen are the best for accomplishing the goal without exploiting participants" (2000, p. 17). Exploitation, she notes, "is failing to neither seek or express participants' voices nor invite their responses into the research process, and or the use of human participants without consideration of how participation might affect them and failing to take protective safeguards" (p.17). I therefore assured the participants of full confidentiality with the data obtained from working with them. The methods I used to gain their trust included: a

written statement that guaranteed their rights as subjects, a copy of which was handed to them and their parents; working together to choose their study name; sharing documents and notes that I took; awareness on both sides that the subject could withdraw from the study at any time. I strived to maintain their integrity and confidentiality at all levels. However, this need to protect my participants in accordance with the IRB requirements was often at odds with my participants' wishes. For example, school boys in Nduru-Kadero village demanded that I interview them even though they were not included in my research design. Here was a case where, rather than the researcher striving to obtain their consent to participate in the study, the participants sought to obtain the researcher's consent to be included in the study. However, I rejected their request, and felt that I had betrayed the young boys.

The home that was now 'field' posed some ethical dilemmas that cannot be divorced from my identity and poisitionality. I arrived in the village equipped with my consent forms. But because this was home where my own father, mother, and relatives lived -the very clan to which I belonged- the idea of obtaining consent to 'talk' to my clansmen and clanswomen and girls was rendered irrelevant. But when in keeping with the IRB requirements, I 'forced' the participants to sign the papers before 'talking' with me- I was obviously exercising power over them. When mothers requested that I interview their children, and the boys demanded that I interview them, and I had to decline since I was bound by the IRB requirements and my research design, I felt like I was flouting some of the principles of feminist research- exercising power over local people, not giving then equal opportunities to be heard, thereby treating some possible sources of knowledge as trivial and not worthy of knowing.

This ethical dilemma relates to the nature of power relations in the field and beyond. Feminist researchers are cautioned to be sensitive to power relations in all phases of research**.** This calls for self- reflexivity throughout the research process (Rossman & Rallis, 2003) and acknowledgement of the power a researcher possesses as a participant in the observations or interviewing. Wolf (1996, cited in Sato, 2004) contends that "the most central dilemma for contemporary feminists in fieldwork… is power and the unequal hierarchies or levels of control that are often maintained, perpetuated, and recreated during and after field research" (1996, p.2). Sato (2004) identifies three ways in which power plays out during and after field research:

- Power differences stemming from different positionalities of the researcher and the researched (race, class, nationality, life-chances, urban- rural backgrounds
- Power exerted during the research process, such as defining the research relationship, unequal exchange and exploitation.
- Power exerted during the post fieldwork period-writing and representing. (Sato, p.101).

The male participants in my study felt empowered by their involvement in the research and responded with comments such as "we have never seen anyone come around here to talk about issues like this" and even discussed possible ways to initiate change. But when these participants demanded that I go to the local radio station and have their views broadcast without using pseudonyms, I declined, in keeping with the need to safeguard their privacy and confidentiality. These men were prepared to question unfair conditions and to take political action. While my participants yearned for

immediate political action following the interviews, my IRB requirement placed me in a very uncomfortable and contradictory position, where the lived realities that the participants shared with me were ultimately data to be protected and locked up in a safe place, in order to protect their identities. In fact, the participants did not care about signing consent forms as much as they cared for their voices to be heard. But if signing these forms is what it took to be 'heard', then they were willing and, in fact, signed them.

Kirsch and Mortensen (1999) call for treating research participants as collaborators in all stages of inquiry. This view is echoed by Hesse-Biber and Leckenby (2004) who argue that ethics should be observed right from the formulation of the purpose of the research and considerations of the representation of the subjects of study. In my research, I learned that simply being aware of these power relations does not get rid of them. Again, I had exercised power over my participants, being the sole decision maker as to how their work should be represented, reported, and to whom and in what manner. These men wanted their views known immediately to the local government, and to the Government of Kenya. They wanted to hear their own voices over the radio and their names mentioned on the radio, yet not even signing the consent forms in order to be 'heard' could guarantee the voicing of their concerns. In this case, my action was contrary to an important objective of feminist research- namely, to directly benefit or empower research participants. The goal of feminist search is to facilitate societal change, "the change of the status quo becomes the starting point for a scientific quest" (Mies, 1983, p. 135). Hence beyond providing data and information, the ultimate goal of feminist research is praxis, or linking research and action. Hence, "a critical/feminist "agenda", then, focuses on creating knowledge that has the potential to produce change

through personal or group empowerment, alterations in social systems or a combination of these"(Jiwani & Berman 2002, p. 6).

Many of the participants had concerns about their community that they wanted 'voiced.' In other words, they had specific research questions that they wanted addressed, but which were in conflict with my research questions. The five men in Obunga slum, for example, were interested in talking about the behavior of their local political representatives; mothers in the rural village were concerned about the actions of a powerful international non-governmental organization in the village; some very young rural girls were most concerned about frequent attacks by a female ghost and evil spirit on their way to school. Indeed, I let them speak about all these concerns, and even discussed possible ways to remedy the problems. However, these concerns did not find their way into the final dissertation and such dilemmas left me wondering whether it was possible to conduct research about marginalized populations with integrity and in keeping with the feminist research principles and IRB requirements. Hence, a mere awareness of the power hierarchy in field research and being reflexive cannot eliminate such tensions. Clearly, field dilemmas such as the ones I encountered can directly challenge these principles. These dilemmas call into question what leverage research participants have on how, when, and with whom the results of the study should be shared. I must admit that often, while sympathetically listening to my participants speak about their lives, I couldn't help getting excited about how these narratives would provide excellent quotes for my dissertation. By deciding which quotes to use, I was, ultimately deciding which 'voices' to include in the published text.

It should be stressed, however, that being aware of power dynamics enables a researcher to use methods that diminish the researcher's power and position. This allows for inclusion of various stakeholders' perspectives, desires, and interests throughout the research process. Certain methods are identified as useful in this endeavor. In the following sections I describe how I gained access to the field, selected my research participants and the methods I employed in collecting and analyzing data for this study.

Selection of research participants

Participation in this study was voluntary**.** I selected my participants from schools, neighborhood settings, funeral gatherings, community meetings or *Chief's Baraza***.** I visited local primary schools and announced my research by describing who was invited to participate and sought volunteers. I also employed the snowball technique where participants I interviewed voluntarily recommended other people they knew who met the criteria for inclusion in the study. However, I declined to involve other potential participants on ethical grounds. Two mothers requested to have their daughters participate in the study because they thought that the study participants might immediately benefit in material terms. I explained to them that this wasn't the case and they did not pursue it any further.

When I visited Obunga slums to recruit study participants, I found that this was also the day that the community gathered for a meeting with the chief to discuss social issues of concern to them. I attended the meeting, announced my research and then interviewed a group of women, a group of men, and a group of girls who volunteered to participate in the study. I then walked to Kudho Primary School in Obunga, where the

teacher on duty happened to know me even though I did not recognize him until he introduced himself to me (as the Church Minister who had presided over my late sister's memorial service two weeks earlier). Upon explaining to him the reason for my visit, he immediately identified five students whom he thought might be cases of interest to my study. I then met the girls in a separate room, explained my research study to them, and went over issues of confidentiality and protection of their identity, before they signed the consent forms. However, only three of these girls participated in my study, as the other two were very shy, and I wasn't sure if they were comfortable taking part in this study, given that their teacher had 'voluntereed' them to participate.

List of participants in the study

There were 43 participants in the study, including 16 school girls, ages 10-18, who were attending primary school, and 3 girls who had dropped out of primary school, and who I conveniently selected because they were available. The girls in school were purposively selected from upper primary classes, standards five-eight, where drop- out seems to be highest and since they are assumed to have some remarkable experience with Free Primary Education. All these 19 girls took part in the focus group discussions (FGDs), but only 10 of them took part in individual interviews. Other participants included key informants purposively selected for being knowledgeable about the subject. They were 16 parents/guardians, 6 teachers purposively selected because of their influence on children's education, and 2 professionals, one the head of a local NGO in Kisumu city, and the other the director of a private school in the Obunga slum. The selection criteria was based on these factors:

- The individuals' desire to participate
- Location of the subjects in a peri-urban low- income environment
- Location of the subjects in a rural low-income area from a very poor family
- Age and grade level (10- 14 year olds, between 5^{th} – 8^{th} grade, also 15- 18 attending or dropped out of primary school)
- Socio-economic status

Table 8: List of participants in the study

Participant Category	Rural Kedero	Peri-urban Obunga-Slums	Male/Female	Total Number
In-school girls Age (10-18)	**8**	**8**		**16**
Out-of-school girls Age (10-18)	**0**	**3**		**3**
Parents / Guardians	**5**	**11**	**7 / 9**	**16**
Teachers	**3**	**3**	**4 / 2**	**6**
Key informants		**2**	**1 / 1**	**2**

Table 9: Brief description of each core participant

Pseudonym	Description
Rose	13 year old standard five girl, Nduru school, lives with both mother and father, but father suffers from TB and is often sick, her baby sibling suffers from sickle cell disease.
Evelyn	13 year old lives with very poor maternal grandparents. Moved to the village from Nairobi after the death of her parents
Akeyo	16 year old orphan head of household lives with very old and poor grandparents in Nduru Kadero, attends a local secondary school in form 2 (10^{th} grade), also takes care of four siblings
Keke	Standard 8 Nduru Kadero School
Mimi	Mimi is 12 years old and is in standard 6 in Nduru- kadero School. Her parents are poor peasants.
Adhiambo	Adhiambo,15 standard 8, Nduru- Kadero School
Lily	16 year old form 2 (10^{th} grade), Nduru -Kadero School
Anyango	Anyango 14 year old standard 7, attends Nduru -Kadero school leaves with maternal grandmother
Yala	14 year old, standard 8, Internally displaced lives with mother and father in the IDPs camp in Obunga slum after fleeing from a different province following 2008 post election violence
Akelo	14 year old IDP girl, standard 7, lives in Obunga slums with both parents and six siblings. She also flee from a different province following 2008 post election violence.
Achieng'	18 year old orphan who leaves in and out of streets in Kisumu city. She dropped out of school at the age of 12 when both her parents died, currently leaves in Obunga slums, working as a baby sitter.
Awino	18 years old. Has six siblings, got pregnant and left school in 2004 but never returned.
Mercy	17 years old attends a secondary school twelve miles from Obunga, lives with a single mother of five in Obunga slums.
Auma	15 years old, out of school and an orphan head of household and guardian of her late sister's 3 children in Obunga slums.
Atieno	Atieno 16 years old, out of school because she did not proceed to secondary school after completion of primary school; lives with a single father of four in Obunga.
Ajudo	14 year old standard seven girl, lives in Obunga slums with a single mother
Nyalego	62 year old widow, grandparent, and guardian of four grandchildren is also a member of Nduru-School Committee.
Pati	65 year old widowed grandmother and guardian of four grandchildren, four of her seven adult children are dead leaving her their children to care for.
Mama Mercy	38 year old widow in Obunga slums
Granny	53 year old grandmother with five grand children under her care in Obunga slum.
Mama Z	35 year old single, IDP mother of five in Obunga slums.
Yala's Mother	35 year old single mother of four, living as an IDP in Obunga slums
Mother of Orphans	45 year woman who opened her home to desperate orphans for care in Obunga slums
Ojijo	A 35 year old father, Obunga slums whose children attend Kudho primary school
Standard 8 Teacher	25 year old male in Nduru Kadero school whose home is in Kisumu town, but leaves in Kadero village.
Female teacher	26 year old, teacher, Nduru Kadero school whose husband and children home live very far away from where she lives and works in Kadero village.
Male teacher	28 year old, Kudho Primary, Obunga slums
Female teacher	25 year old , Kudho Primary, Obunga slums
GCO	Female,65 years old, a local leader of the Gender and Development Center,Kisumu town.
Onyango	Male 58 years old, who heads a local private school in Obunga slum that caters to the needy children
FGD Obunga	Consisted of five men in their 30s who were playing a board game ajua, and who volunteered to be interviewed as a group. They were fairly educated, some up to college level.

Data collection: Research instruments

A commitment to feminist values and principles that guides feminist research calls for awareness of the interactions of epistemology, methodology, and method that produce feminist research (Hesse-Biber & Leckenby, 2004). Feminist epistemology drives its methodology and the approaches to data collection. Thus "Feminist perspectives in social research questions positivism's answers to the epistemological questions of who can possess knowledge, how knowledge is or can be obtained, and what knowledge is" (Hesse-Biber & Leckenby, 2004, p. 11). The feminist concern with the privileging of some knowledge is part of the reason behind my choice of certain data collection techniques, as different methods produce different kinds of knowledge.

To better understand the nature of the marginalized girl child experiences of primary education, I employed several data collection methods including photo- voice, observation, in-depth, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions. I also reviewed existing secondary literature on policy documents, and empirical research.

My approach to data collection fits the description of a "compressed or focused ethnography" (Sweet 2008, p. 4). The design is considered appropriate where the researcher is well grounded and familiar with the cultural setting, intends to use such approaches to data elicitation as individual and focus group interviews, "rather than observing naturally occurring events overtime" (p. 4). This design was useful for my study since I already had a sound knowledge and familiarity with the two study locations. In addition, the study participants were very comfortable with me, especially in my native Kadero Village, since they viewed me as one of them, or an insider, given that my parents and extended family live there.

I chose a number of strategies that would not only elicit thoughtful responses from the participants, but which were also consistent with principles of feminist research. Feminist research ethics are comprehensive, ranging from the onset of the design to the writing and presentation of the findings. Paramount is the need to forge a more humanistic relationship between the interlocutors, treating interviewers as subjects, not objects, allowing interviewers to express emotions, values, and encouraging reciprocal question and answering. Thus, "to learn about people we must treat them as people, and they will work with us to create accounts of their lives" (Fontana & Frey 2000 p.668). To this end, feminist research suggests the use of open-ended questions. This is because the open-ended questions encourage active listening on the part of researchers "allowing them to see what might be hidden and silenced through traditional means of data collection" (Hesse-Biber and Leckenby, 2004, p. 216), and forcing them to take an interest in the whole person. Achieving this relationship of trust between researcher and subject calls for conducting informal, semi-structured interviews. DeVault (1991) echoes this view, by comparing this way of interviewing to everyday woman talk in contrast to survey research.). She urges us to ground our interviews in accounts of everyday activity: "In accounts of how particular women actually spend their time at home, rather than previously defined concept of 'house-work' for it is 'in the talk' that social relations can be revealed (p.233. Wilkinson (1999) reiterates the transformative power of informal interviewing. She notes that allowing young girls to play an active role in the research process provides them with the space to question and critically assess their experiences, as well as to draw the connections between their experiences and the social world.

In order to privilege the voices and experiences of girls, I used a participatory action research method, photo-voice, which involves using photographic images to examine individual's perceptions of social reality. These images act as the catalyst for discussion and shift the power from the researcher to the participants. The primary objective of using photo- voice was to elaborate on the diverse ways in which marginalized girls encounter and negotiate multiple forms of exclusion in their lives. As a participatory action research (PAR) method the approach "recognizes that knowledge is socially constructed and embedded" (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2001, p. 74). Equally important is the fact that a PAR approach is appropriate and emancipatory and can "allow for social, group or collective analysis of life experiences of power and knowledge" (Hall, 1992, p. 22). I issued the girls with disposable cameras, showed them how to operate the cameras, and instructed them to take pictures that represented their lived experiences of education. When the girls brought back the cameras, I printed the photos, and then had them reflect upon the meanings of the photos in small groups. The photographs allowed girls to explore possible causes of the problems represented in any given picture and hypothesize causal sequences. The art of acting and reflecting deepens knowledge "through a dialectical process of people acting, with others, upon reality in order to change and to understand" (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2001, p.74) social phenomena. Hence photo-voice as a technique of data collection is highly congruent with the feminist research paradigm and epistemology as it permits the involvement of a group most affected by an issue. It allows us to hear firsthand how exclusion is defined, understood, and acted upon by marginalized girls. I adopted different techniques at different points in the research process.

Observations

Observation and field notes were the primary data gathering technique in the exploratory phase of the research process. I observed classrooms attended by the participants, was present at morning assembly, and made informal visits to their homes, observing and listening to the daily life routines and taking field notes after leaving the setting. Rossman and Rallis (2003, p. 195) identify the following elements as likely to be present in an observation:

1. The social system: Formal and /or informal patterns of interaction, tacit rules in operation, recurring events
2. Activities and actions: Full sequence of events, time sampling, rituals and ceremonies, crises, unplanned activities. (2003, p. 195).

Observation guide

I identified six school girls to observe, three in rural Kadero, and three in urban Obunga, out of the 43 participants. I focused observations on all classroom interactions and extracurricular activities. I observed classroom activities, paying particular attention to interactions among students and between students and teachers throughout a typical school day (8am – 4 pm). During these observations, I paid particular attention to the material conditions of the school and classroom environment, and the home of the children and their families.

In-depth Semi- structured interviews

Interviewing was also an important data gathering technique. I interviewed mainly girls, parents, and teachers to gain additional or clarifying information. Interviews were conducted with the participants at different times and settings. I interviewed all the young girls and the other key informants. I informed the participants that the interviews would take at least two hours. Each interview began with an explanation of the purpose of the study, followed by obtaining consent and discussing issues of participant welfare and confidentiality. The participants were given time to ask questions or raise concerns. The interviews were open-ended. Not only were they recorded, but I also took notes to capture the more subtle, contextual aspects of the interview.

Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions provided another important source of data. Specifically, I utilized the problem-posing approach, raising issues and themes for group discussion and analysis, in order to provoke group discussions. This involved analyzing photographs which represented a problem or conflict experienced by the group. This method allowed girls to analyze their experience themselves. Wilkinson (1999) presents the advantages of focus groups for feminist research, underscoring its usefulness in addressing the problems of artificiality, decontextualization, and exploitation of research participants inherent in positivistic research. Focus groups allow for the opening up of "standard topics from the discipline" (DeVault, 1991, p.233) as they enable the participants to help shape the research agenda and to express their own thoughts and feelings in their own language rather than the researcher's language (Wilkinson, 1999). Such discussions also allows

the researcher to listen to participants' voices. However, focus groups pose a major problem to feminist research. The challenge for feminist research is to balance this 'loss of power' with the need to collect relevant and useful data and realize the goals of research, while paying attention to unequal power relations inherent in group interactions.

Upon establishing rapport with the participants, I began to use audio- and video tape recording. These tools were helpful because the audio and visual records can be repeatedly reviewed and analyzed, with the help of participants, if necessary. However, this method was only employed if it felt appropriate and with the consent of the participants.

Document analysis

Document analysis was useful throughout the research, not only for gathering background information, but for searching for alternative interpretations of the research problem. I used existing documents and archival data such as attendance records, test-scores, and enrollment and dropout records, as well as stories in the local newspapers that focused on education. Documents such as class attendance records and participation and performance records helped me identify patterns of school participation, according to the social categories of interest. In addition, in order to enrich my understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, I had to read what others had written.

Language

Dholuo was the primary language of the research. As a native speaker of Dholuo, I was fully capable of conducting research in the language and simultaneously translating

the responses. I utilized audio and video recordings to cross check the translations. It should be noted, however, that a number of participants insisted on speaking to me in English, especially many of the school girls interviewed on the school compound, the teachers, and one key informant.

Data management, analysis and interpretation of findings

In feminist research, it is important to establish and maintain the relationship between the researcher and the participants throughout the research process. This means not only being careful about the way we frame interview questions and topics, but also involving participants in the interpretation of findings. Thus, for example, qualitative research analysis might adopt a narrative style. In this research study, I used participants' narratives to explore young girls' understanding of their schooling experiences. Not only have I presented my findings using participant narratives, but the data analysis also incorporates participant narratives in order to exemplify their understanding of their lived experiences.

An intersectional prospective calls for the need to analyze participant narratives or individual accounts as located simultaneously within the power dimensions of gender, race, class, etc, without separating different dimensions of social life into "discrete or pure strands"

(Brah &Phoenix, 2004, p. 76). However such an "imposition of intersectionality upon the data is at odds with inductive research methodologies" (Bilge, 2009, p. 4). It calls into question how to use intersectionality without forcing its analytical categories of race, gender, class and sexual orientation. To overcome this challenge, I used a strategy

of analysis that can be described as "a two-step-hybrid approach (Bilge, 2009, p.5). This approach, Bilge argues, might "reconcile intersectionality with inductive research methodologies" through a combination of inductive thematic analysis and deductive template approach (p. 5). The data management for this study consisted of several overlapping processes. For instance, I entered field notes including description, methodological notes, theoretical and analytic notes into a computer (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I began the data analysis by reading through all the data repeatedly, listening several times to the tape recordings, a procedure advocated by Wolcott (1994) which he calls "immersing oneself" in the data (p. 10). This I did in order to obtain a sense of the overall data (Creswell, 1998). I then wrote analytic memos to begin to organize and sort-out aspects of the data through line- by-line open coding. In these memos, I identified and developed categories of concepts and some emerging themes and provided some narratives about the themes with supporting evidence from the data already gathered. Through the use of these analytic memos, I not only began to organize the data and gain insights into the topic, but also to identify areas for further data gathering. Following the steps and procedures suggested by Guba (1978), I looked for recurring regularities in the data which represented patterns that could be sorted out into categories. I then proceed to the next level of coding, or axial coding: i.e. "making connections between themes and categories that emerged from open coding, without treating individual accounts as representative of predetermined social categories such as race, class, gender, etc" (Bilge, 2009 p.5). Instead, I focused on how the participants viewed "the topic under study without any assumptions about how [ethnicity], class or gender, or group membership might shape those responses" (Bilge, 2009, p.5).

Table 10: Generic Intersectionality template

Social Categories	Discrete considerations 1st Step	Intersectional Consideration 2nd Step
Gender	How gender informs this individual account	How gender interacts/intersects with other social categories in this individual account. Or which dimensions of the experience are interacting with gender.
Class	How class informs this individual account	How class interacts/intersects with other social categories in this individual account. Or which dimensions of the experience are interacting with gender
Ethnicity/'tribalism'	How ethnicity informs this individual account?	How ethnicity interacts/intersects with other social categories in this individual account. Or which dimensions of the experience are interacting with gender
Race	How race informs this individual account	How race interacts/intersects with other social categories in this individual account. Or which dimensions of the experience are interacting with gender
Age	How age informs this individual account	How age interacts/intersects with other social categories in this individual account. Or which dimensions of the experience are interacting with gender
Orphahood	How orphanhood informs this individual account	How orphanhood interacts/intersects with other social categories in this individual account. Or which dimensions of the experience are interacting with gender
Other relevant categories- religion, language,family status, HiV status, etc.	Are there other relevant social categories /relations informing this individual account?	How other relevant categories interact with previous social categories in this individual account.

Source: Adapted from Bilge (2009)

The emerging themes from the data hence provided the first- level categories for analysis. The second- level analysis adopted a theory oriented deductive approach which involved "reinterpretation through templates" (p.6). It was at this point that I began to directly utilize intersectionality, guided by the 'generic intersectionality template' to consider how these individual accounts were related to broader social-structural relations of domination.

Strategies to ensure study's trustworthiness

In the following sections, I address the issue of trustworthiness to ensure the credibility and acceptance of the study. But what is trustworthiness, and how is it determined? Rossman and Rallis (2003) define trustworthiness as the degree to which qualitative research conforms to set standards for "acceptable and competent practice

"and for "ethical conduct with sensitivity to the politics of the topic and setting" (p.62). In other words, a study is only trustworthy if it is ethical. This view transcends the traditional notions of reliability and validity to include ethical issues in research. I therefore addressed not only the ethical issues that I encountered in the study and how I resolved them, but also how my study conforms to standards of competent research practice.

Issues of validity and reliability (systematicity)

A credible qualitative study not only addresses ethical issues but also ensures that specific techniques and methods are used to ensure the integrity, validity and accuracy of the findings (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). There are various means for ensuring a study's trustworthiness. The strategy of triangulation is often cited as very important. Patton (1990) identifies four kinds of triangulation including mixing of qualitative and quantitative methods (triangulation of methods); "comparing and crosschecking the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means (triangulation of data sources); Using multiple analysts to review findings (analyst triangulation); Using multiple perspectives or theories to interpret the data (perspective triangulation)" (p. 464). Patton (1990) argues that "By combining multiple observers, theories, and methods and data sources, researchers can hope to overcome the intrinsic bias that comes from single-methods, single-observer, and single-theory studies" (p. 464).

Triangulation of data sources

To ensure rigor and validity, I used multiple methods of data collection and shared my analytic memos with my research participants to gain their insights and views

on the findings. To this end, I did follow up visits in December (2009) through the end of January (2010) and used this opportunity to share the data, translations and interpretations back with the participants. As much as possible, in subsequent interviews, I asked for clarification and corrections, where my translation and interpretations appeared unclear. As a way of trustworthiness, I constantly performed 'reflexivity', laying bare my ideological orientation about general issues in education from the onset as a way of informing the reader about my agenda.

Limitations of the study

As a doctoral dissertation study, this fieldwork was limited in time and scope. First, the data collection took place over four months, total three months initially, then a one month follow up. The first visit began just before Kenyan schools closed for August vacation. This meant that I had to act fast to catch the participants while school was still in session. Although I have interacted with the areas of Kisumu that I studied, as it is where I spent most part of my childhood, the concentrated time spent with the participants was limited to a span of three months, with one additional follow-up month. Finally, another limitation relates to the use of Dholuo in most of the interviewing and managing translation for analysis and reporting. I had to be careful to accurately represent the meanings of my participants. To help achieve this, I had the participants confirm that the translations fully captured their meanings, by involving them in in a review of the translated transcripts. As Kenya is an Anglophone country, most participants spoke and read English, although they preferred to conduct the interviews in Dholuo.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS I: THE STATE OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION IN KENYA

Data collected through document review and qualitative methods are presented in two chapters. First, data related to general findings on Free Primary education are presented focusing on policy aims and objectives, issues of implementation, policy challenges, and updated outcomes from 2003 to 2011. Chapter Six is a detailed presentation of qualitative data focusing on specific experiences of girls and other community members, while highlighting the impact of Free Primary Education. The results are then examined in relation to their social location within sexism, social class, ethnicity and other aspects of identity.

Free primary education overview: Rationale, aims, objectives and assumption

Faced with the challenge of attaining Universal Primary Education, the Kenya government has devised various strategies to expand access and participation in primary education. One such initiative was the introduction of Free Primary Education in 2003, which abolished all school levies and fees charged by government schools. The basic assumption behind this reform was that many poor families were unable to send their children to school because they were not able to pay school hence abolishing all fees would be the best way to address this problem. Indeed with the abolition of fees, primary school enrollment increased dramatically and many more children from the poorest households reported school in January 2003 (Bold et al. 2009). It is estimated that between 2002 and 2010, the number of children in primary school went up from 5.9 million in 2003 to 8.6 million in 2010 (The Daily Nation). The implementation of the

first Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP) (2005-2010) further extended and consolidated these gains, with primary transition rate to secondary education under the Free Secondary Education policy also increasing from 45.8% in 2003 to 61.5% in 2008 (Unterhalter et.al 2010**).** In addition, the government began to pay attention to poverty and gender issues in education, introducing in 2008, a national policy on gender and education with the aim of identifying mechanisms to eliminate all gender disparities in education in relation to access, enrollment, retention, completion, performance, transition, quality and outcomes (Republic of Kenya, 2007, cited in Unterhalter et.al 2010). This policy provided a framework for the planning and implementation of gender responsive education, as well as research and training. But is universal access to primary education a reality for the poor, particularly poor girls? This question is more eloquently articulated by Uwezo (2010), as follows: **"**But is the increased enrollment leading to better learning? Are more Kenyans better prepared today than before? Do the increased investments and enrollments translate into a more literate, numerate and skilled nation?" (Uwezo, 2010, p. 1).

Even with the apparent success of FPE in expanding access to primary education, recent research shows that 5 percent of children of school going age aren't in school (Uwezo, 2010). Moreover, as table 7 shows, the gains of FPE were concentrated in a few regions as gender gaps persisted in Coast and North Eastern Provinces, while gender parity levels dropped in other provinces (Otieno & Colclough, 2009; Unterhalter et. al, 2010). According to Otieno and Colclough (2009),

> North-Eastern Province recorded the greatest inequalities, with the GPI ranging from 0.60 in 2001 to 0.71 in 2005 Female enrollments, on the other hand, were stronger in Nairobi Province with GPIs of 1.17 in 2001 and 1.04 in 2005. While the high GPI for Nairobi indicates that there are more girls in schools in the

region compared to the rest of the country, this does not mean that all school-age girls are actually enrolled. The out-of –school are found to be among the slum dwellers as sixty percent of the Nairobi population lives in informal settlements characterized by high incidence of poverty, high population and poor access to social services, including education In these settlements, FPE gains are increasingly being reversed, and the program is being criticized for falling short of expectations. (Otieno & Colclough, 2009 p. 15).

Table 11: Primary GPI by province, 2003-2007

Province	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Coast	0.9	0.93	0.98	0.98	0.91
Central	1.01	1	0.99	1	0.96
Eastern	1	1	0.99	0.99	0.99
Nairobi	1.14	1.14	1.04	1.11	1.02
Rift Valley	0.98	0.97	0.97	0.98	0.96
Western	0.96	0.98	0.95	0.95	1
Nyanza	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	1
North Eastern	0.62	0.63	0.71	0.73	0.63
Total	0.99	1	0.98	1	0.94

(Source : Unterhelter 2010)

Otieno and Colclough's, (2009) study provide an analysis of trends in educational participation in Kenya within the past of two decades, with a particular focus on the pre-and-post FPE (2002) period. Their data indicate an increase in both the primary GER and the NER rates, with minimal variation between girls and boys. The data show a greater proportion of overage boys relative to girls in school. The authors attribute this trend to

higher dropout rates among older girls to early pregnancy or marriage. They note that such girls often do not re-enter school even with the policy of readmission in place.

A look at the drop –out rates, repetition and transition rates in primary education after FPE presents a clearer picture of the overall performance of the FPE program particularly with regard to gender and socio-economic status and regional dimensions. Progression of learners from one level to another is a function of an education system's physical capacity and internal efficiency (Otieno & Colclough, 2009). Between 2003-2006 there was a general decline of dropout rates, but with a higher dropout rate between seventh and eighth grade, with more girls dropping out than boys (Otieno & Colclough, 2009 p.18). However, more boys than girls repeated "this might be the result of higher private investment value being attached to boys' education and consequent pressure on them to succeed in school" (p.16). Moreover, girls tend to "mature faster than boys and are more likely to be allowed to proceed to the next grade than boys" (p. 16).

FPE intervention hasn't changed the patterns of transition from primary to secondary education along gender dimensions. Otieno and Colclough (2009) observe the persistence of low transition rate for girls compared to boys for a period of 15 years (1991-2004) by an average of 3 percentage points. Similar observations can be seen in post- FPE transition rates. As table 12 shows, actual transition rates have not changed at all, as pupils who gain admission tend to decline enrollment due to high cost of secondary education. It is also noted that more girls than boys decline enrollment (Sawamurai & Sifuna,2008).

Table 12: Transition rates from primary education to secondary education

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
(1) KCPE Candidates (Boys: Girls)	587,961 (303,907:284,054)	657,747 (342,979:314,768)	671,550 (352,826:318: 724)
(2)Form 1 students (Boys : Girls)	273,702 (146,645:127,057)	263,853 (139,469: 124,384)	299,461 (161,588:137,873)
(3)Transition rate (Boys: Girls)	46.6% (48.3 : 44.7)	40.1% (40.7 : 39.5)	44.6% (45.8: 43.3)
(4)Admission rate	----------	56%	60%

Note: It is difficult to verify the admission rate from public documents. The figures above are based on a presentation by the Minister for Planning and National Development (Obwocha 2007). Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2007)" quoted in Sawamurai & Sifuna, (2008, p.114)

Like other indicators of participation, the gains made in transition rates are not evenly distributed. As Table 13 shows, there are regional disparities, where Central province registers the highest about 12 percentage points above the national average, "while Coast province registers a rate that is 18 percentage points lower than the national average"(Otieno & Colclough, 2009, p. 20). Under these circumstances the equality of advancing to higher levels across the regions is compromised as the proportion of students in Central province transitioning to secondary education is double that of students from the Coast. Consequently,

> Some regions receive a disproportionate share of publicly subsidized secondary (and higher) education. Matters are made worse by the fact that Central is economically better endowed than most of the rest of the country. Thus, not only do more students proceed to secondary schooling, but they get to the best schools because they are able to afford them. These differential opportunities lead to a skewed pattern of education and skill development amongst the different regions." (Otieno & Colclough, 2009, p. 20)

Table 13: Transition rate by province (percent), 2002-2005

Province	2002	2003	2004	2005
Nairobi	32.5	33.5	34.5	50.9
Coast	30.4	31.0	32.1	34.0
North Eastern	42.9	43.8	44.9	45.1
Eastern	47.5	48.9	51.2	49.4
Central	57.3	58.5	59.6	63.7
Rift Valley	21.7	21.6	41.7	48.5
Nyanza	35.4	36.1	47.3	57.1
Western	52.6	53.7	55.8	52.0
Total	41.7	42.6	45.8	52.1

Source: Otieno &Colclough, (2009 p.)

Otieno and Colclough (2009) study also examines school enrollment by poverty levels and find that the poor tend to experience most of the constrains to enrollment such as distance from home to school, cultural and parental attitude to schooling, illness and disability , more than the non poor.

The challenge of pro-poor education is immense. An annual learning assessment, conducted by Uwezo Kenya to determine the basic literacy and numeracy skills of children ages 6–16 provides evidence of persistent inequalities in education. The 2010 report, titled: "Are our children learning?" calls into question the values of the recent expansion in enrollments, raising doubts as to "whether the reduction of inequalities in 'access' to education has resulted in creating another type of inequality, namely inequality in learning" (Twaweza, 2010, p.2). The assessment was based on standard 2 test, since it is the level where students are expected to have attained basic competency in reading English and Kiswahili and solving simple arithmetic tasks. The report highlights several key facts about primary education and is summarized in Box 3.

The Uwezo's (2011) Annual Learning Assessment reveals even more disturbing trends. The results show that four out of a hundred children were out of school nationally; "A child in North Eastern Province is 16 times more likely to be out of school than a child in Central and Nairobi Provinces" (Uwezo, 2011, p. 1). Moreover, the ones attending public schools, according to parents, were not learning. The fact that children were not learning came out of the observation that:

> Nationally, 7 out of 10 children in class 3 cannot do class 2 work. Learning levels are poorest in arid district and western province; 1 out of 5 children in class 4 cannot read simple class 2 paragraph; 9 out of 100 children in class 8 cannot do class 2 division (Uwezo 2011, p.1).

Other reasons cited for low learning levels included: frequent absence from school by students and teachers, poor eyesight and teachers shortage. The report states:

> In many districts, more than 4 out of 10 children miss school daily. On any single day, 13 out of 100 teachers are not in school. Many children are not learning because they cannot see. 3 out of 100 children seated in the classroom today maybe having unidentified poor eyesight. The learning levels of these children are 27 percent points lower than that of children without poor eyesight. Teacher shortage is acute and this is affecting learning. On average, every Kenyan primary school has a shortage of 4 teachers and counties with worst teacher-pupil ratio are also having worst learning levels (Uwezo, 2011, p.1).

From these observations we can draw a number of conclusions about the state of Free Primary Education policy in Kenya. There is persistence of inequality in the education system even with improved access to primary education for poorer Kenyans; expansion in enrollment does not imply increased learning- as shown by poor the test results which also reflect low quality of learning. The Uwezo report notes the equity implications of these problems.

> These disparities of wealth and geographic region affect enrollment rates, and are even more striking in their effect on educational outcomes. These inequalities are further exacerbated by the fact that wealthier children are likelier to attend private

school and to receive private tuition – two factors that are associated with much higher test scores (Twaweza, 2010, p.12).

Box 3: Key facts about primary education in Kenya

1. Literacy levels are low, and are substantially lower in certain regions. Girls tend to perform better in reading English and Kiswahili, while boys tend to perform better in math.
2. Literacy levels are lower in public schools than private schools.
3. Most children can solve real world, "ethno-mathematics" problems, while fewer can solve similar math problems in an abstract, pencil and paper format.
4. 5% of children are not enrolled in school, but the problem is far worse in particular regions.
5. About half of children are enrolled in pre-school.
6. Many children are older than expected for their class level, including 40% of children in class 2, and 60% of children in class 7.
7. North Eastern Province and arid districts in Rift Valley and Eastern Provinces have particularly low performance; and many older children, especially girls, are not attending school.
8. Many families pay for extra tuition, which focuses heavily on drilling and exam preparation.
9. Schools struggle to plan their budgets because they receive funds at unpredictable times.
10. Children, whose mothers are educated, particularly beyond primary school, tend to have much higher rates of literacy and numeracy.
11. About 15% of students are absent on a given day, with much higher absenteeism in certain districts.
12. There is a severe shortage of teachers, estimated at 4 teachers per school.

Source: (e-notes.com. Based on Uwezo 2010 findings)

Challenges and implications of FPE

While FPE was a well-intended initiative with a noble goal of achieving education for all, the delivery of Primary education in Kenya has been marked by serious problems. The following sections will identify and analyze some of the factors that have led to this disturbing state of FPE in Kenya. A quick look at the excerpts from a report by Washington Post Foreign Service, 2003 titled- *'Too Many Brains' Pack Kenya's Free*

Schools' captures much of the complexity surrounding the implementation of FPE. The report points to overcrowding of the classrooms as one of the serious concerns with FPE:

> In the fourth-grade class, the room was so packed with desks and chairs that students had to climb over the furniture to reach a seat. The teacher had a tiny aisle in front of the blackboard where he could stand. He could not even walk to the back of the classroom if there was a problem. Philomena Mrurigi, a third-grade teacher, attempted to conduct a spelling lesson with 136 students. "Spell 'chair,' " she yelled out in English. Primary education is conducted in both English and Swahili. A sea of hands flew in the air. Because Mrurigi didn't know her students' names, she had to wind her way through the maze of desks and tap a student on the shoulder if she wanted an answer (Kattan & Burnett, 2004, pp. 61-63)

Not only is teacher a shortage a challenge to both teachers and pupils, but teachers have to deal with the problems associated with teaching hungry children.

> At Cheleta Primary School in Nairobi, there are two teachers for 213 first-grade students. Kenya has 175,000 public primary school teachers but needs 60,000 more, according to the Kenyan National Union of Teachers."What you notice mainly is that there are so many children that learning has turned into the lecture method. But, you know, at primary level, each child has to have some attention," said Joseph, an enthusiastic man dressed in a dark blue suit and tie, said his biggest problems include a teacher shortage and hungry students. For some problems, he has found creative solutions. To feed students, teachers have offered bananas growing behind the school to those who answer questions correctly (Kattan & Burnett, 2004, pp. 61-63).

This expansion of primary education, coupled with a growing number of orphans has put a lot of pressure on the existing school feeding programs.

> Lunch programs are also a problem, because the few schools that operate them do not have enough meals for the number of hungry children now arriving. With a stunning number of children orphaned by HIV-AIDS at schools such as Asumbi Primary, where there are 181 orphans among the 954 students, these programs are needed to make sure students have the energy to learn: (Kattan & Burnett, 2004, pp. 61-63).

Moreover, the need for school going children to work to earn a living poses a serious challenge to FPE.

> In other schools, children as young as 13 attend only for a few hours because they must work in the fields. Teachers in Kenya's rural central regions found that many teenage orphans in first or second grade did not stop working just because school fees were abolished. "They now just troop back to the working fields after school and before," said Justus Muthoka, the central province children's officer. "It's a vicious cycle, because they may be able to learn how to read, but they also have to earn their daily bread. They are about to collapse. *:* Kattan & Burnett, 2004, pp. 61-63)

As the excerpts above indicate, the implementation of free primary education intervention is plagued with numerous logistical problems including lack of facilities, deterioration of teaching and learning in public schools, increased pupil teacher ratios due to shortage of teachers. This state of education has implications for the quality of education being delivered**.** This expansion has triggered increases in the pupil/teacher ratio from 32:1 to over 50:1 in most schools. These problems are contributing to high school dropout rates. By 2005, only 47% of those enrolled in primary education completed it and only 27% of those eligible for secondary school entered Form One (secondary school). In fact, the decline in quality has been such that, after the initial enthusiasm for free education subsided, parents began shifting their children back into private schools where quality standards were known to be higher (Tooley, 2004, Oketch & Rollestone, 2008; Ngware et.al 2008).

A 2004 World Bank funded research outlines the major outcomes and challenges of FPE. The report titled: *"Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and Uganda: Universal Primary Education and Poverty Reduction"*: notes that one of the unforeseen outcomes include "a possible push-out effect of overcrowding on disabled and weaker pupils and falling

survival rates" (p.16). Among the daunting challenges of FPE is reaching more poor and marginalized children. The authors conclude:

> It will take time to make free primary education universal. The top priority is to extend delivery to the most remote areas and to the poorest and most marginalized households, most of which are located in rural areas. The domestic household survey in Malawi revealed that families continue to pay for primary education: 80percent of households pay for school materials, 70 percent pay for uniforms, 60 percent pay for school development funds, and 33 percent pay for meals at school. The almost 18 percent gap in school attendance between the lowest and highest income quintiles suggests that the direct cost of primary education remains an obstacle for the very poor(Avenstrup et. al 2004 p.16).

Oketch and Rollestone (2007) reviewed the progress made by Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda towards universal education. Their study identifies barriers to enrolling in free education as including the need for children to work and the growing concerns about the deteriorating quality of education. In addition, poor parents question the relevance of primary education in relation to future employment of their children. The report outlines some unintended consequences of providing FPE in Kenya. Quality of education has dropped, due to declining teacher morale, forcing wealthier parents to transfer their children to the fee-paying private sector. This declining quality of public education makes it more difficult for bright children from poor families to succeed.

Another 2008 report by Interpress Service News Agency (IPS) describes some of the challenges to poor families of educating children in the era of FPE. The report titled *Falling Grade for Free primary Education?* Indicates that the mere elimination of tuition fee has not relived poor parents from responsibility associated with education.

> "To call it free primary education is misleading," says Gerard Mwangi of Mweiga village in Central Kenya, who is the father of three daughters. "For my youngest daughter in Standard Four I still have to pay for food, transport and uniform which is adds up to 5000 shillings ($70) per term," he said (Cited in IPS 2008).

Paul Genchu, a retired education ministry official, states:

> What constitutes free schooling is usually taken to be merely waiver of tuition fee and provision of textbooks and classroom material only. "There are many other essential expenses. So, though the policy of free primary and secondary education is sound and desirable and it has worked wonders in terms of statistical indicators, it is still beyond the reach of most Kenyan families to get a child through the full course of education. While the number of students has risen exponentially since the introduction of free primary education in 2003, the number of new teachers has increased by only 2.6 percent. The pupil-teacher ratio has risen in some cases to more than 100-1. Even the average 60-1 ratio is quite high. It has eroded not only the standard of basic education but also that of secondary education as now there are higher numbers of aspirants than ever before." (IPS, 2008).

It is also noted that free provision of education is increasing that the gap between different schools within the government system. The report observes schools in disadvantaged locations where the infrastructure was already weak most like the slums and Northeastern Province registered the highest rate of enrollment (IPS, 2008).

Numerous studies reveal that schools continue to collect fees, sometimes illegally, in a many of from pupils (Kattan, 2006; Sawamurai & Sifuna 2008). This is due to inadequacy of public funding to cover for direct and indirect costs of schools. Sawamurai and Sifuna (2008) study found that the cost of uniform, transportation, food, etc, posed significant barriers to access to primary education (see table 14). They state:

> It is estimated that parents have to raise over 10,000 shillings per year per child to meet the cost of uniforms, transportation, lunches, extra tuition, some levies and other expenses. It is partly for this reason that many children are unable to gain access to primary education, despite the government's intervention of abolishing fees (Sawamurai & Sifuna ,2008, p. 108)

Table 14: Estimated expenditure on school items

Item	Price	Remarks
Uniforms	Shirt/ Pant/ Skirt Ksh. 520-800; Shoes Ksh.1300- 1780, Sweater,Ksh.680;Socks ksh.120	Sports clothes for physical education are also required and cost ksh.720
Textbooks	Ksh.290-380 per book	The grant is not sufficient enough to purchase text books for all pupils. Good performing schools require pupils to buy their own text books and other learning materials.
Exercise books	Ksh.30 -120 per book	Parents are expected to supply exercise books and other materials
Stationery	Pencil ksh.3 , Erase Ksh.5, Pen Ksh.7	Parents are expected to supply inadequate stationery supplies
Desk	Ksh. 400- 2500	In some schools children are required to get their own desks when they enroll in the first grade. In many cases this takes the form of a "Desk Charge"
Transport	1200-4,000 per month	This is usually for middle class parents

(*Source Sawamurai and Sifuna 2008 from interviews at the school level p. 108).*

It is also apparent from these studies that the public schools that are heavily funded by parents are also the ones that offer higher quality of learning, but are too expensive for poor parents to afford. As Sawamurai and Sifuna (2008) point out:

> One school in Nairobi continues to collect funds from parents even after the implementation of free education in the amount of ten times that provided by the government. Furthermore, schools in good standing for the primary school leaving examination (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education: KCPE) in Nairobi annually collect 6,000–12,000 shillings per pupil as fees for tuition and supplementary lessons. Most good performing schools in the countryside are boarding schools which require at least 6,000 shilling per year per pupil for boarding fees. Even if tuition fees are free, payments for boarding fees and some other expenses are compulsory. Children from poor families are naturally eliminated from such schools and therefore cannot receive a good quality education. This becomes a critical issue in terms of equity (p. 107).

Poor parents are however not exempt from these additional fees. As the table 15 shows even low cost public schools, which are mostly attended by the poor still charge various kinds of fees and levies for survival. Thus Sawamurai and Sifuna (2008) observe:

> Most schools whether high, medium or low cost schools charge parents some money to meet the gaps in their budgets. These payments are generally categorized as 'compulsory' or 'optional' payments. However, in fact, even optional payments such as extra/evening/Saturday tuition turn out to be compulsory as all pupils are expected to attend classes which are intended to provide them with extra coaching for examinations. To conceal these payments from the scrutiny of district education officers, they are often made under such labels as 'child support', 'furniture replacement' and so on (Sawamurai & Sifuna, p.108).

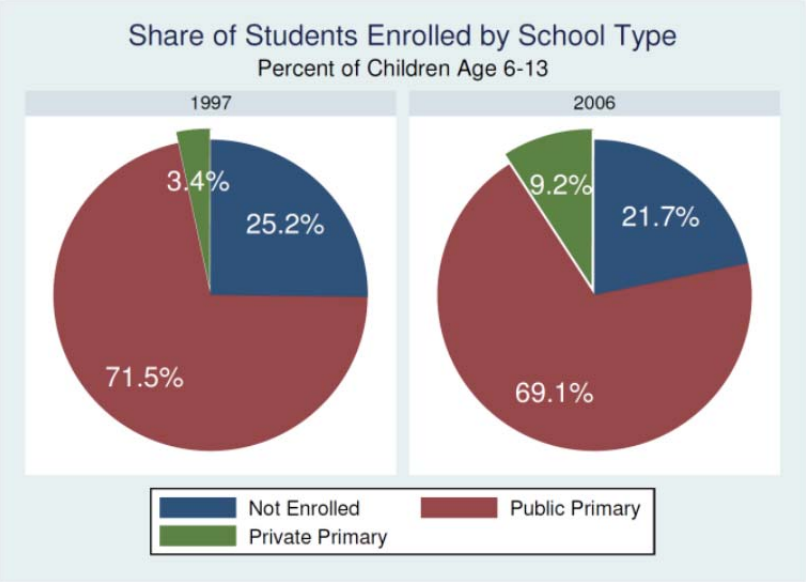
Table 15: Examples of primary school fees and levies collected under free primary education

Category	Compulsory Payments	Optional Payments
High-Cost schools	School fees child support funds: Kssh.2500-6000 per child per tem Furniture Replacemaent:Ksh.550 per child per year Bus Maintenance and repair : Ksh.650 per child per year. Swiming pool maintenance: Ksh.350	Extra/Evening/Saturday Tuiton Ksh. 2000-4000 per child per term (Note: Since all children are expected to attend such sessions, the payment of these funds is practically compulsory.)
Medium Cost schools	School fees/ Child Support Fund; Ksh. 300-600 per month	Extra/Evening/Saturday Tuition **Ksh. 100-500** **(Note : The same as above)**
Low Cost Schools	School fees/ Child Support Fund: Ksh. 50.200 per child per term Midterm final tests: Ksh. 20-50 per pupil per term	Extra/Evening/Saturday Tuition **Ksh.20- 30**

(Source Sawamurai and Sifuna 2008 from interviews at the school level, P.109)

Another consequence of the crowding of primary schools is the flourishing business of private schools. It is estimated that there are over 2000 private schools, nearly 10 times

the number that there were in 2002 (Bold et al 2009). As shown in figure 4, the introduction of FPE has seen a surge in the growth of private school enrollments.



Source: Bold et al 2009 "Free primary Education in Kenya: Enrollment, Achievement and Local Accountability"(p.1).

Figure 4: Comparison of school enrollment rates before and after the introduction

Many parents have withdrawn their children from government schools to private schools (Bold et al, 2009; Oketch,et.al, 2008). Ironically even the poor people who live in slum areas are resorting to private schools in search of quality education (Oketch,et.al 2008). This has been attributed to the deteriorating quality of education due to overcrowding and inadequate teaching and learning facilities in government schools. This new development raises another equity concern as the most marginalized or poor of the poorest children are likely to be left in public schools.

These challenges, call into question the sustainability of the free primary education policy (Sawamurai & Sifuna, 2008; Mukudi, 2004; Oketch & Rollestone,

2008). Not only is the provision of free education challenged by the poor state of the economy, but the cost of FPE is way beyond the normal education budget allocation. According to Oketch and Rollestone (2007):

> The cost of providing free primary education is beyond the scope of the ordinary education budget, economic performance has not been strong and donor finance is often temporary. The free primary education initiative of 2003 was pursued as a matter of political expediency. It was not adequately planned and resourced and thus had the consequences of increased drop-out and falling educational quality (Oketch & Rollestone, 2007 p. 24).

UPE in Kenya "was a political expediency rather than a planned education reform… as such, problems related to adequate funding allocations are being accommodated in an *ad hoc* manner" (Mukudi, 2004 p. 239). Thus Sawamurai and Sifuna,(2009) observe that in the absence of sustained economic growth that generates funding for education, Kenya may not sustain universal access. In view of these challenges, these studies are pessimistic about the ability of FPE to realize universal access. Accordingly "the attainment of sustained free primary education as an illusion in the context of Kenya" (Oketch & Rollestone, 2007, p.24) In order eliminate inequality in access and in quality of education, FPE should be targeted on the most marginalized groups such as urban slum and rural poor populations, and ethnic minorities in the ASAL areas.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter had presented an overview of FPE in Kenya, highlighting its major successes and challenges. The policy has enabled children from poor socio-economic backgrounds to participate in education. However, various logistical problems threaten

successful implementation of the FPE. These problems cast very serious doubts on the potential of the FPE policy to sustain educational opportunities for the marginalized groups. Since as Sawamurai and Sifuna (2008) point out, children are not only beneficiaries but also important actors in any educational reform. It is therefore imperative to include their perspectives in any critical assessments of policies aimed at achieving UPE. Looking at the FPE policy from the standpoint of children, and the community people, rather than the policy makers might shed new light on the international drive towards EFA efforts.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS II: THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF GIRLS IN LUO- NYANZA

This chapter presents the primary data collected in an urban slum in Kisumu municipality and a village in Kisumu rural, Nyanza Province of Kenya. Kisumu is the 3rd largest city in Kenya with a population of 700,000 and is the capital of the Nyanza Province. It is also home to the Luo community, the second largest ethnic group in Kenya, and the epicenter of the 2008 post election violence. Nyanza Province currently ranks among the poorest in Kenya, along with North Eastern Province (Daily Nation, Nyambega, Gisesa July 24th 2010). According to a 2006 study by The Minorities at Risk Project entitled: Risk Assessment for Luo in Kenya, the Luo community is challenged by declining public health conditions, environmental degradation among other demographic, high incidence of HIV /AIDs *(* MAR project, 2006). It is within this larger context that the two locations of the study are located.

Case study: Kisumu district- urban Obunga slums and rural Seme Kadero

Obunga Slums

Obunga slum where the study was conducted is in Kisumu City within Kisumu District, in Nyanza Province of Kenya. Kisumu District has the largest commercial centre in Western Kenya and is vibrant with many residents engaged in informal sector enterprises known as *jua kali*. Like most informal settlements, Obunga is a sprawling slum due to shortage of affordable housing in the city. Most of the residents are low income earners. The term 'informal settlements' is most commonly used to refer to

slums, implying their non-permanence and perhaps, justifies their lack of entitlements to adequate infrastructure and services, including water, electricity, health services, and law enforcement. In Obunga for example, living conditions are deplorable, with inadequate supply of functional toilets, and safe water. The slum has no garbage collection or waste disposal system. Housing is extremely poor, with many residents living in dingy one room houses with leaking roofs, made of semi-permanent materials such as mud, wood or iron sheets; very hot during the day and very cold in the night. With high levels of poverty, residents sustain their livelihoods through informal sector activities, such as petty trade or casual labor, or illicit alcoholic beverage brewing. In fact, Obunga is often associated with an illicit brew called 'chang'a. Many new families arriving in the city from the rural areas tend to settle in Obunga and other similar low –income settlements. Hence Obunga provided an appropriate site for this study.

Figure 5: Obunga Slums

Kudho Primary school- Obunga Slum

Kudho primary school is the only the Municipal or government school serving Obunga slum, with a population of 450 students, of whom 245 are boys and 210 are girls. There are 17 government employed teachers and six untrained or volunteer teachers. There is neither running water nor functioning toilets. Instead water is made available through harvesting and storing rain water in huge plastic tanks. There are eight pit latrines for girls and nine for boys, which are often not very clean due to water shortage. The area tends to suffer severe water shortage during drought seasons.

Figure 6: Classroom at Kudho primary school

Figure 7: Classroom at Kudho primary school

Seme Kadero

Seme Kadero Village is in Kisumu District, Nyanza Province, has a population of about 5000 people. Mothers of new born babies do not have access to modern pre- natal and post-natal medical facilities, which then leaves the infants exposed to the vagaries of nature. HIV/AIDS pandemic is rampant leading to a significant population of AIDS orphans, under the care of elderly grandparents. Besides, HIV/AIDs, most of the villagers are disadvantaged by the 2008 civil strife that left many Kenyans homeless and were forced to leave the cities and return to the villages where they now face massive poverty and unemployment.

In Kadero there is only one primary school- Nduru Kadero- serving grades 1- 8 with a population of about 1000 children of school going age. There is only one nursery or pre-primary school and most children do not get to attend them since it cannot accommodate that age-group population. Besides most of the nursery schools are concentrated in urban areas and the cost of transportation is beyond their poor parents- as

they would have to travel at least 30 miles away to find a nursery school. Most of the kids come from homes where their families survive on less that a dollar a day. Consequently, their basic needs are not met at home, making it impossible for their parents to even think of sending them to pre-primary school. Most of these children are able to attend Nduru Kadero Primary school, courtesy of FPE.

Nduru-Kadero primary school : School environment and infrastructure

Nduru School has only 2 buildings of 4 classrooms, which were in a state of disrepair. Before FPE, enrollment was estimated at slightly over 200, but has since increased to 370. The school had only 2 pit latrines (no functional toilet) used by teachers and pupils, no water and sanitation facilities, no office space for teachers, and above all no library or space for storage of textbooks . Teachers had no furniture and those provided for pupils were inadequate; about 4 pupils were assigned to a set of desk and bench.

Figure 8: Pupils taking exams under a tree at Nduru-Kadero school

Figure 9: Classroom block building and Nduru-Kadero school

Figure 10: Classroom at Nduru-Kadero school

Figure 11: Sixth grade classroom at Nduru-Kadero school

Figure 12: Pit latrines at Nduru-Kadero school

Figure 13: Rain water storage at Nduru-Kadero primary

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In this chapter findings from photo voice, interviews, observations and focus group discussions are presented. I focus on the relationships among home, family, political-culture and schooling, in order to map the factors that undermine entering, surviving and completing primary schooling in Kenya. When asked to discuss Free Primary Education and their experiences or perceptions of it, participants expressed a wide range of opinions that could be generally fit within constraints to access and barriers to education. The themes covered included:

- Poverty
- Poor Living Conditions
- The costs of education

- Food Insecurity and hunger
- Social Reproduction Activities
- Orphanhood and HIV/Aids
- Quality of education
- Gender
- Ethnicity

However, as the findings will reveal, poverty, it appears, was the overarching or primary force behind all the various factors identified as major challenges to participation in FPE.

Poverty- the main cause of vulnerability

What came through in the observations and interviews was the connection between poverty and schooling. The photo-voice data offered very rich insights into the participants' lived experiences of schooling as defined by themselves. Analysis of photo voice data highlights the complexities of living amidst gender inequality in the lives of marginalized, rural and urban slum girls. The images captured by the girls provide rich insights into ways of life captured by the very people that live, fight, and challenge them on a daily basis. The photographs allowed girls to explore possible causes of the problems represented in any given picture and hypothesize causal sequences.

Poor living conditions

Among the photographs selected by participants for analysis are many depicting conditions of poverty and its effects on schooling. One sixth grade informant who had taken a photo of a kerosene tin lamp explained the challenges of schooling under conditions of extreme poverty:

Figure 14: Tin lamp

> This lamp I use for studying. This lamp makes it hard to study- it smokes and the heavy smoke burns my eyes. Its neck collapses easily, and when you add paraffin it leaks, when the wind blows hard it goes off. The big [lantern] lamp is better for studying but we can't afford it. Sometimes you don't have a bag, your bag is torn. Because your bag is torn, your books drop out of the bag. This bag , I have mended it many times, I mend it and it tears. Sometimes you use torn plastic bags to school. A person who comes from this house (the good house) does not experience my kind of problems. She uses solar power as a source of light to study. When she wants a bag, money is simply handed to her. (Field note interview with Mimi 21 July, 2009).

Notably, the participants themselves used social class as a category of analysis, thus demonstrating their own class consciousness: The first extract below outlines how young girls took notice of the way schooling experiences often differed between boys and girls who lived in poverty and those who were from wealthier households. Often, they referred to themselves as people *who have not*, *people who suffer*, *struggle*, and *lacked basic necessities* such as quality housing, reliable lighting source, soap, cooking oil, shoes, etc. While analyzing the photographs below, one girl commented:

> This house shows people who have not, people who suffer. Look at this house it is crooked. This girl who lives here, maybe she cooks in this kitchen. When it rains like now, you get soaked while cooking in this kitchen. A person in this condition depends on luck in order to even pass your exams- your light goes off, you luck paraffin, your roof leaks, the lamp smokes and your eyes hurt. But girls from good houses do not have similar problems as we have. Both boys and girls in poor living conditions suffer equally. A child from this good house, her parents may have money to take her to boarding school so she can succeed in her education (Mimi's response in a focus group interview, 21 July, 2009).

Figure 15: Crooked house

Figure 16: The good house

They were aware that being rich, or belonging to a rich family, positioned one to succeed in schooling. For example they spoke of children who lived in the 'good house' as having better chances of passing their exams, and therefore, a higher possibility of surviving in school. For rich children, getting money to buy a new school bag or going to a boarding school, a symbol of good quality education was not a problem.

The following comment was associated with the two pictures below:

> The girl in this hut sleeps on a mat made out of straws, it's very uncomfortable, it's hard and stiff, it bites the ribs, and this hut leaks too when it rains. Since the hut is too tiny she must spread the mat at night, fold and put it away in the morning before going to school, she can't get to school early because she is folding the mat. Sometimes she shares the mat with little siblings, they urinate on you so you must take shower, air the mat to dry before going to school, and time flies so she is always late to school. (FGD , August 2009).

Figure 17: Girls in front of their hut

My parents aren't rich. They struggle, because for us to eat, they have to go to Akala market. At times we lack paraffin to light our lamp, no soap to wash uniforms, no oil to cook vegetables [crying, shows me uniform torn with patches], no blankets to cover our bodies at night on that hard mat, and it's very hard to start fire in that rainy kitchen [kitchen leaks when it rains] without paraffin (FGD , August 2009).

Figure 18: Bedroom

Costs of Free Primary Education

While the responses related to the cost of education yielded a number of themes for my examination, I will focus on one specific theme here: 'Free Primary Education is not free'. Respondents in general reported that for the most part, they viewed FPE as helpful because it provided poor children the opportunity to attend primary education. However, due to income poverty, they also experienced many challenges to participating in FPE. My first encounter came from my observation of the rural village school, Nduru-Kadero, where I volunteered to teach a class on nutrition. I will use the story below.

Akinyi's story (Nduru primary school, July 14th 2009)

At the back of the class, sat a quiet little girl who was very attentive. Unlike other children she asked very intelligent questions, and gave good responses to the teachers' questions. I got very curious about the girl. I knew very little about the students as I had only been at Nduru primary school for a week. The deputy head teacher mentioned to me that the girl was repeating standard 8. It is at standard 8, where pupils take an examination that, if passed, they can transition into secondary school. I asked "why would Akinyi be repeating for another year yet she seems so bright?" His answer very similar to the ones I had heard from other places. He said to me, "Because she lacks money to register for examinations". By then the girl required only 200ksh ($2.5) to register for the examinations and in any case, where was she going to get her secondary school fees when she could not raise just 200 Ksh? I was disturbed and got interested in her story. Akinyi's dad was an alcoholic, and her mother was jobless, and yet had seven other children besides Akinyi to feed. She had no one to look up to and was on the verge

of giving up. But as it turned out so many children in this village had stories similar to Akinyi's or even worse.

Many young girls reported that they could not continue their schooling because of a lack of financial resources within the family. They felt that they did not have the benefit of coming from a family with the economic capital to enable them to remain at school for 12 years. Many did not have the social networks that opened up opportunities for a wide variety of post- primary school options. Atieno explains how this situation has made her scared for her future.

> My name is Atieno. I'm 16 years old. I left school in 2007 because my family did not have money to pay for me to continue to secondary school. I am now just home doing nothing I can't find money for small business--- that is the only thing I can do, I don't know what else I can do. I don't know a lot of things like other kids in secondary. Even now I can't go back to school- my father says there is no money. One time I got a job as a maid, but the man would not pay me all he wanted was sex and one day he got mad and sent me away when he didn't get sex – I am scared, I have no future.

In the Obunga slums, the participant narratives show a lot of common themes. The girls consistently reflected the dominant themes of gendered vulnerability, dropping out, drifting off, sexual exploitation, being excluded as consequences of poverty as described in the following extracts. Achieng' explains how living in poverty not only drove her out of school, but also into the streets where she experiences various forms of exploitation. Her only hope resides in getting an education.

> My name is Achieng, and I am 18 years old. My parents died when I was 12 leaving behind six children. I left school because I lacked school fees. We all went different ways , some of my sisters are now housemaids in Nairobi, my brothers , I don't know where they went(Crying). Everyone left but I was left alone turned to the streets, I lived on the street in town- just here in Kisumu. At one time I got a job as a house girl but when the lady was out, her husband forced me to have sex, and I got pregnant I am now a mother of a child with no money

> for food. I do casual work for people- but they pay very little- most of them are poor too. I wish I could go back to school. May be my life can be better- maybe I can be happy again.

Irregular attendance also featured as a problem, and it was mostly attributed to 'school fees due'. These included tuition fees, salaries for uncertified teachers, exam fees and funeral fees. This When asked reasons for leaving school or for non-attendance within the past two months, many girls mentioned the costs of 'free education' as prohibitive in their stories**.** The excerpt from a focus group discussion with rural girls below reveals these costs:

Researcher: Have you missed school this term at all? If so why?

Evelyn: Yes, I was sent away to get money for non-TSC paid teachers [untrained], it was 100 shillings. Free Primary is good- parents don't pay- but when funeral money is required, they have to pay five shillings, and if you don't pay you can be sent away.

Anyango : I attend school regularly, except when I was ill with malaria- but I got treated at Nduru dispensary.

Rose: Yes, I was sent away for 50 shillings for tuition. I paid 20 shillings later that day, and 30 the next day.

In many cases children are not allowed to attend school by the head teacher or teachers until payment is made. This was the case with Akeyo's sister in Nduru School ;

> Sometimes I am sent away from school for tuition fees and I spend so many days out of school and miss a lot of lessons. Other times my sister is also sent away for tuition fees and in that case I also miss school—because I have to volunteer my time from school to sell mangoes to raise her fees.(Interview (August 2009 with Akeyo an orphaned head of household)

Notably, other costs associated with the requirement of "a tidy appearance" presented additional barriers for poor families. Among other things the schools require pupils to have a clean hair cut, neat uniform, white socks, and black shoes, and blue cardigan/sweater. However, many poor parents noted how expensive it was to buy proper school uniform and to maintain clean hair cuts:

> Parents have to buy school uniforms. Not all parents can afford uniforms. They need the kids to have shoes at school, but not all can have black shoes, socks and sweater. If you bring something different, then it is burnt. You find that a child can afford only flip flops and they are confiscated and burnt or thrown into the latrines. For example Nduru School has a blue cardigan but parents don't know what kind of blue is required, a parent may buy navy blue and his or her child will be sent home. Both boys and girls are affected. There are orphans who live with old grandparents who cannot afford school uniform and the children are forced to wear those until they are torn because the guardians cannot afford new ones. On the issue of girls, some parents are hostile to their children, or some do not tell their parents about their needs because they feel they don't want to bother them since they know they don't have money (Nyalego, July 2009).

In addition, children were required to wear appropriate footwear not "flip-flops" or *pat-pat*. Yet the majority of children walked to school barefoot or wore pat pat which were not allowed. For Irene, who with a single mother of seven children, this posed a barrier to her schooling as she was out of school for 2 days, due to lack of proper shoes. Another reason she had missed school was because her hair was too long, and she had no money to pay the hairdresser. Many parents said that it was expensive to pay a barber to cut their children's hair- yet failure to do it resulted in expulsion from school**.** One grandparent, Nyalego said to me: "Children are no longer shaved with scissors; they have to be shaved with razor blade -so now they demand to go to kinyozi which costs money". In the urban slums, children indicated that although some schools allowed them to continue to attend

when they are unable to buy uniform for school, they often felt embarrassed that they looked different and poor and therefore decided not to go to school.

Participants expressed concerns over the difficulty in meeting additional costs related to exam fee, tuition fee, kerosene/ paraffin to fuel the tin lamps. Without paraffin, children could neither revise their notes nor do homework at night. Many of the girls pointed out how lack of money meant they could not afford to buy sanitary towels (pads). While the lack of sanitary towels has been shown to keep girls away from school for many days, this problem however, did not prevent them from attending school. Many participants said they used cotton wool, cloths, socks, tissue paper and pages from old school exercise books or newspapers or pieces of sponge torn form mattresses .Here is what Akeyo had to say:

> Most of the times I cannot afford to buy pads (sanitary towels) so I use a piece of cloth so I don't miss school due to menstruation. Other times I use cotton wool after selling mangoes since the big roll which costs 200 shillings is very big and long lasting (Akeyo, August, 2009*)*.

Many of the girls however, stated that lack of access to pads was a source of embarrassment, anxiety and shame and the possibility of staining their school uniforms was a constant source of fear:

> If I don't have a pad, maybe I use toilet paper, or anything- sometimes it gets really wet and start smelling-I then fear standing up, because I will smell and the other pupils, especially boys will laugh and yell at me (Ajudo, August, 2008).

Parents consistently echoed the views expressed by the girls above. Their stories reflect the dominant themes of income poverty, direct and the hidden costs of free education as the major challenges of participating in Free Primary Education:

Nyalego, A grandmother of a 5th grade and a 3rd grade children said to me:

> Primary education is not free we pay money- we pay examination fees for mock from standard one since the local schools compete with other schools. If it is free education, then things like books, pens, should be given to the kids. But they are given once a year- six note books, after the six, you have to buy. Text books are shared between six children, so homework cannot be completed in time.

Many parents are unconvinced about the policy rhetoric, they described it as 'a lie', and listed all the other costs they had to bear (despite FPE) in order to keep their children in school.

> There is no Free Primary Education. If you take a child to school you must pay. I now pay tuition money for two children one in class seven and the other in class eight. They want Ksh.70 from each of them that is one hundred and forty for both. So I don't see anything free, there is no free education, they were just lying to us.FPE is very good but it has not solved our problems. It has brought new problems. FPE has come at a time when we are grappling with poverty and HIV/Aids. Tuition money is being required from us. We also buy books for our children. Books are bought once a year and if you don't buy your child extra books, they suffer because of this (Yala's Mother, August 2009).

In a group interview with four mothers, their responses provided similar perspectives on Free Primary education and how their children were faring within FPE. One participant who was in charge of internally displaced children and orphans observed that FPE is "free for those who can afford to pay the required fees":

> It was said to be free but we still pay some amount. You may think that a child goes to school everyday because it's free, but there are some requirements needed in school. Sometimes we get defeated until we stay with them at home. Secondly, there's this issue of tuition fee required from each and every child and the date of payment is fixed so we sometimes get defeated and we stay with them at home. So it's free for those who can afford to pay required amount. The main problem a girl child gets is when she reaches adolescence stage, when she matures when they reach this stage, we deport them back to where we got them because we like only little children who do not disturb us. Mmmh. So we cannot stay with them (Mother of orphans).

This participant further notes how specifically challenging it is to care for, and educate the girls after puberty, and that the girls were 'deported' because they are troublesome during adolescence. The extract below reveals a mothers' fears about peer influence and 'a lack of things' and living in the slums have a negative influence on her daughter's education.

> Apart from those, staying in town is more expensive and I pray to God to enable me to go back to the village and stay there-since their father who I could share problems with is no longer there and I lack several things. Paying rent, feeding and educating them. Lacking things can make my children to roam from door to door visiting their friends who can negatively influence them. Like the one in form two[tenth grade]. I used to give her bus fare because the school she's attending is far, Kasagar Secondary school. But now I don't have money and when she asks for it I tell her that I don't have, so she may find another way to get money—like looking for boyfriends to give her money which I don't like. Eeeh….. She may come back home late and when I question- her answer to me is I was walking – so to me, that can destroy a child. Eeeh… I have been dealing with her and I've beaten her several times. This is because of peer influence. The neighbor's daughter whom she used to walk with got pregnant. So she used to sit and chat with other girls who tell her bad story (ies). I mobilized my boys who caned her seriously until Mercy decided to go and report me to the police station. The policemen came and I told them that Mercy doesn't like school. They sided with me and promised to help when she refused to go to school. Peer influence is common in Obunga, even for boys and many of them have dropped out……
> (Mama Mercy, August 2008).

Here, this mother shows how a convergence of poverty, which she calls 'Lacking things', peer influence and location, or living in the slum, has a specific detrimental influence on her daughters' schooling. She fears that she no longer has money to pay for the girls' transportation to a secondary school that is not within walking distance from home. She fears that the girl may use 'walking' from school as an excuse to engage in detrimental activities, including joining 'bad girls' who are already pregnant. She also fears that the girl may resort to certain coping strategies, like getting money from men for transportation to school. All these may push the girl out of school. The mother's fears and

the need to protect her daughter from all these ramifications of poverty leads her to subject the girl to severe physical assault in the hands of her brothers. Also the girl's attempt to seek retribution from the police does little to change her situation.

Other parents felt 'shortchanged' noting how the introduction of FPE coincided with an increase in the prices of basic commodities like flour

> That child [points at a child playing] is a pupil at "Kudho "primary and I buy books for him. We have to say the truth and the government must hear this. We also pay exams money for our children to do exams. : Even if they want to beat people, we have to say. Let me ask you, did you hear when Raila and Ruto said that they are going to introduce flour costing Ksh.15 when the cost of flour went up? The citizens weren't aware that something else has been added, the government should be balancing and regulating all what it's being done……. The government should be ordering because it has power but not asking its people. It asked the fuel business persons to reduce the cost of fuel and this isn't good, it has to order. (FGD Obunga, Male parent in August 2009).

Others blamed the government for robbing parents through high taxation and increase of prices of basic commodities to fund school related needs such as school feeding programs, which in their view, was included in the donor funds for FPE support. The school feeding program, however, only benefited certain regions, especially the poor urban slums in the capital city, Nairobi.

> What I'd like to add is when it was introduced, the prices of the commodities went up and from this we knew that it wasn't free Yeah. We were paying high tax even if you don't have a child. Food is being given to some school children in Nairobi schools. Examples of these schools are at Mathare and Kibera. But its boiled maize……. We knew that FPE is being funded by the government but it was being funded by World Bank and other NGOs. Immediately this was announced the prices of the commodities went up. We don't know if school feeding program was with FPE program. The government is stealing this money because school feeding should be in the FPE program. (FGD Obunga, Male parent in August 2009).

Parents in urban Obunga slums said that they were required to buy school furniture like chairs and desks for their children to get enrolled.

> I would like to add something madam. When FPE was introduced seats were not in school. So when you were admitting a child you were to go with desks. Eeeh! it was compulsory and even now it is. You are told to go and bring desk with ksh.500 like Migosi (primary school]. This is…why some [children] aren't going to school. Their parents cannot afford to buy desks. The child who is sitting here is an example. When the pupils do class work, teachers don't mark their work. (FGD Obunga, Male parent in August 2009).

The teachers' views on FPE were very similar to those expressed by the girls, and the parents. They noted that Primary education wasn't free because it was similar to the cost sharing approach to educational financing, where both parents and government contributed to the pupil's education. For example the government among other things provided note books, pens and textbooks. However, these provisions were marked by delays and only supplied once a year, which was inadequate to serve the children throughout the year, compelling the parents to buy additional supplies. Parents also had to pay some fees. Below are some of the extracts from the FGD with teachers at Kudho Primary School and individual interview extracts with teachers from Nduru Kadero. In their view, free education meant that parents and children did not spend money or contribute anything at all towards their education. As one teacher said:

> Something free doesn't involve some cash. So I won't say that it's free in the sense that there isn't school which pupils go free of charge. But if it is free, it means that one can go to school without him/her paying money. (Female teacher, standard 6 Kudho Primary, August 2009).

Teachers also gave examples of some of the school supplies that parents had to provide

> Okay. I'm going to support my fellow teachers' views. Suppose it was free, there should be so many things the government should provide. The way my fellow has said, pens, pencils etc are being bought by parents. Mmmh…… It is like cost sharing because what they say to be free is part of education and the teachers

> being posted earlier. The government provides books; pens which sometimes delay forcing the parents to buy their own. It isn't absolutely free because there are some fees which the parents pay. They normally provide text books which are shared among the pupils. There are also some parents who buy their children text books. This is because they don't prefer sharing. They also provide exercise books which aren't enough because we give our pupils so many notes and when their books fill up, it becomes difficult to provide them with new ones. Mmmhh…. So the parents supplement exercise books, pens are provided once a year which isn't enough.(Female teacher, Kudho Primary August 2009).

The girl- child officer (GCO) who heads the Gender and Development Center, an NGO in Kisumu city, pointed out that "FPE has challenges that the government is trying to address-but parents still bear more responsibility than they did before FPE was started". She notes that parents still have to hire and pay teachers through the PTA due to the dramatic increase in enrollments without additional qualified government hired teachers.

> FPE is very good but it has not solved our problems- it has brought new problems. FPE is not really free. A lot is still demanded. School is paid, but children have to live, they have to dress, eat and be taken to hospital,-children still need security. FPE has only addressed one issue- parents still pay teachers- PTA now hires teachers due to teacher shortage as teachers cannot cope with the numbers of children.

Moreover, parents must contribute their labor and materials for the development of school infrastructure:

> GOK wants communities to build schools and they provide teachers. If we [NGOs] want to improve a school structure, GOK will provide money for buying cement, but parents will be required to provide sand, and to volunteer to manage projects like that. (GCO).

GCO further observed that the introduction of FPE was accompanied with certain support systems for the most vulnerable children but was overwhelmed by the numbers that needed such support.

> Government improves school infrastructure- when there are 3 toilets only and there are 200 girls, we (as NGOs involved in School Improvement Programs) we help. But we do more than structures- we follow the children. There are orphans

and vulnerable children who go to school but they don't have shelter, food or are HIV positive. We have formed Health Clubs where we can support the sick ones. Many of these kids live with old grandparents who are very poor so we provide them with income generating projects – like goats to rear and sell. The OVS are very vulnerable- all these support systems only came with FPE since it was started. However, there are too many schools-so GOK has to start with the most disadvantaged.

Food insecurity, hunger and schooling

During my stay in Nduru- Kadero Village, a 17 year old boy came to my mother's home to find work. I could recall that back in 2007, I learnt that the boy had dropped out of school; he did not transition to secondary school. We talked about his education and he agreed to return to school. I even promised to contribute his tuition fees as that was his problem at that time. But when I asked him how he was doing two years later, he said to me: "Give me food and I will indeed go to school". I was ashamed at my ignorance and lack of awareness of the complexity of what schooling meant for those who lived in poverty.

The challenge posed by food shortage on the education of children living in poverty and on Free Primary education in Kenya is captured in this newspaper report below:

Box 4: Pupils skip school due to hunger

More than 500,000 children have been pushed out of school largely by biting food shortage, according to a new report. The number of out –of school children stands at two million, up from 1.5 million, says a group of local non-profit organizations engaged in education. In a report obtained yesterday, the Elimu Yetu coalition said the rise in drop-out rates posed a major threat to the free learning program. The introduction of the program in 2003 saw arise I enrollment from 5.9 million pupils to 8.3 million last year. Worst affected are children in urban slums and arid and semi-arid lands. The price of food in Kenya is untenable. The cost of production is too high (The Daily Nation, August, 19th, 2009).

Food, poor nutrition and hunger, emerged in this study to play a major role in FPE. There was general consensus among pupils, parents and teachers that the children in Kadero lacked adequate food and nutrition, and that this posed a serious challenge to FPE.

Teachers emphasized the challenges of teaching and learning under conditions of poverty. Among other things inadequate food and hunger featured as a factor that influenced the quality of education.

> You find that children miss school because of food… in fact when you investigate you find that the child has gone to search for what to eat, for the daily bread – so that is one issue affecting Free Primary Education. Food is not free at home-it has to be worked for. So as a teacher you start wondering why these things are free and yet the pupil cannot --- is not appreciating- not that the pupil does not want to come to school, but because there are issues that prevent the child from coming to school. The child may fear to tell the teacher that tomorrow I will not be coming to school, she may not tell you the true story, but when you investigate, you find out as a teacher that the child has to carry mangoes to 'Akala' to get what they can eat at the end of the day. Food is a basic need, you see when you are teaching a satisfied child, she or he will definitely grasp. But when you have a child who did not take some breakfast, then this child may not be able to understand what you are teaching. Even if you are a good teacher-teaching a hungry person is difficult—though he might not tell you why he is not participating in class… it will force you as a teacher to find out why –so that is the time you will realize that this child did not take breakfast (Male, standard 8 teacher, Nduru Kadero school).

The lack of 'free' food at home and hunger not only denies children effective participation in free education but may also lead them to engage in petty theft and petty trade to get food.

> As much as education is free- food is not free at home. So kids have to bring mangoes to Akala to earn income. The pupils are providing… some of them are providing for themselves. A few weeks ago, during mango season, a mother complained to me that kids were stealing her mangoes-this means that kids are hungry and not getting enough [food] (standard 8 teacher, Nduru Kadero school).

The kids perhaps needed the 'stolen' mangoes to either eat or take to the market to sell in order to buy other types of food. Food and water shortage has specific consequences for girls living in poverty. Pati, a 65 year-old grandparent, explained how shortage of water resulted in her orphaned grandchildren going to school without taking a bath. However, failure to perform a girls' job, for example to fetch firewood, resulted in her female grandchildren attending school without breakfast.

> During a dry spell like this-my grandchildren go to school without food and when they come back they still don't have food. Another issue about children has to do with water shortage. Children go to school without bathing- because they didn't go to the river [to collect water], both boys and girls. A girl is denied breakfast in the morning because she did not fetch firewood (Pati, August 2009).

Girls among internally displace people (IDPs) in Obunga had similar experiences but they emphasized the need for food and shelter as urgent for their schooling:

> I am 14 years old, I am in class eight. FPE was introduced when I was in class four and what I can say about FPE is that it is good since we get a lot of time to study. I don't get problems since our teachers teach us nicely. The only problem is that we get disturbed by teachers when they demand for tuition fees. The other problem I have is in mathematics. I normally fail in math and I still don't know why? I came from Naivasha where we left all our property. While we were still at a camp, Kikuyu's used to attack us. We screamed and soldiers came in their lorries which they used to transport us to this place. In this camp where we, we got disturbed since the place was congested. That is when this person took us to his home. But now he says that the issue of IDPs was over and we should look for where to go. When you are an internally displaced person you get inadequate water, inadequade food and we even boycott schooling. We sometimes eat once a day which is one of our problems and the house owner sometimes threatens to beat us. He quarrels us until midnight, and reaching this time we don't study but we go to sleep until morning. When we go to school we sleep in class when the teacher is teaching. We only need food and shelter. We don't normally have such things as sanitary towels we only use pieces of clothes. You only put on a cloth and this is how one woman once told me (Akelo, IDP girl, Obunga Slum).

Not only was food shortage or lack of food a problem, but was compounded by a lack of infrastructure within the temporary shelters that the Internally Displaced people

occupied in Obunga. One guardian of internally displaced children said that lack of infrastructure including transportation, health facilities or Voluntary Testing and Counseling Centers (VCT) and medical facilities posed a serious challenge to FPE which was otherwise a welcome idea.

> Free education is good because it has greatly assisted those who cannot afford the cost of education. I was happy when I heard the government's announcement about free primary education because initially I had difficulty paying fees. Previously children were frequently sent back home because of fee, but now thy can settle down and learn. All my children go to school and no one remains at home. Books are also offered to them for free so I don't have too much of a hard time. So it's good and the government should continue with this –even secondary education should be free. I have five daughters and two sons. I am an internally displace person from Naivasha. The violence happened when my children were just preparing to open school. I don't have a job so I don't manage these children well. Right now I don't have food to offer them. But when I get a little I give them. Sometimes our church members help us because I do not have a stand. I would like to request the government to consider how to take care of internally displaced people. This is because they haven't settled down fully. Myself I came from Naivasha and we had nothing to eat even the children couldn't go to school for a long time. Where we are staying now we don't have proper health facilities. We don't have a health center and even a VCT center. When our children get sick, we do not know what to do. Whether it is malaria or other diseases we have problems especially when you get sick at night and you may never get to the New Nyanza General Hospital. We don't even have proper transport to reach such places. We ask the government to build a hospital in this place to help orphans when they get sick and even ordinary people within this locality, we have a problem in relation to medication. We can be happy when we have a hospital in this place**. (**Mama Z, IDP parent**)**

Social reproduction activities: Girls' work and household Survival

Families in rural villages tend to rely on all its members to contribute to economic survival. This means taking on tasks and duties that often are in competition with the time school timetable. In this study observation of school age girls in their daily routine revealed that they spent a good part of the day: caring for younger siblings, caring for the sick and the elderly, fetching water, collecting firewood for cooking, cleaning, washing

clothes, cooking. Outside the home, girls were also engaged in selling produce in the market, performing seasonal farm activities such as planting, weeding, harvesting, drying and processing farm produce particularly during the maize season. These duties sometimes coincided with time demanded by the school, but more often they engaged with the tasks very early in the morning before school, or later in the day after school. The pictures below show girls in their domestic roles.

The stories told by the girls photographed, as well as others who analyzed them, exemplify the direct effects of the need for girls' labor at home. The indirect costs of education to households affect both the enrollment and attendance for girls and boys. Even when girls are attending school they are still required to help with household chores, which can hamper their achievement in school and thus their possibility of continuing in education. As Rose pointed out, it wasn't unusual for her mother to request her to " skip school today to help me with farm work, especially during weeding season". Another girl Atieno said to me: "I missed school for three weeks to look after my sick mother".

Figure 19: Girls gathering firewood(Kadero village) and cooking (Obunga Slum)

The photo-voice analyses/ stories reveal this school –age child (on the right) has been forced to leave school earlier to gather firewood to cook the family's food and that the need for such labor kept her away from school for the rest of the day. Many of the young girls identified with the child in the photo and went ahead to narrate their own experiences of domestic chores in relation to schooling. The link between gender relations and gender division of labor and the gendered experience of vulnerability wasn't lost on the girls. As stated by the 13 year old Rose:

> I skip school sometimes, on market days because when my brothers are requested to stay back they normally refuse and comment that those are not their duties and would go to school. I always just agree to remain at home on Wednesdays and take care of the baby when my mom goes to Akala Market. Boys normally say that household chores are not their work **(** Rose**,** standard five girl, Nduru school).

Figure 20: Girl processing dry maize

Figure 21: Girl lighting firewood to cook

Many parents blamed the burden on girls of domestic care work on their [parental] inability to manage boys who were 'very difficult':

> No….it's not that boys cannot do chores, you may want both of them to do the same chores but when boys reach a certain age they become difficult to manage, such that whatever you say does not work. Girls have respect and can still go to fetch water. One can even divide chores for them but girls will end up doing while boys will refuse. You do this to make them finish in good time so that they can do their homework (Granny, August 2009)

Figure 22: Girl drawing water from a deep well

Figure 23: School girl cleaning

Girl's tasks are not only confined to domestic chores, those belonging to poor households engage in petty- trading as a means of generating income**.** Auma left school because she had to juggle demands of household care work and manual labor and even became the head of a household at a very young age:

> I am 15 I live here in Obunga and dropped out of primary school in 2007. I live with my older sister who is a single mother of 4 kids. I left school when my parents got sick and could no longer support me. Sometimes, I missed school to cook and sell *mandazis* for *jua kali* workers so I could buy my food and clothing**.** At times when I did not find work to do, I could go without a decent meal for days**.** And when my sister got sick two years ago, I started caring for her and her children. I could not go to school, the children needed me at home, and I had to wash clothes for people in Tom Mboya, in order to buy food for us (Auma, August 2009).

Girls in very poor households also contribute wages earned to household survival**.** Some of the girls engaged in petty trade to raise money for fees and other expenses. Akeyo (an orphan and head of household) often missed school not only for lack of tuition fees, but

also to engage in petty trade to raise money for her younger siblings' fees, other household needs, and her own personal needs:

> I am an orphan, 16 years old now. After the death of my parents, I moved in with my grandparents who are themselves very old and poor, and also depend on me for their survival. I may drop out of school because I cannot not afford to go to school. Sometimes I have to stay away from school, doing chores for people to at least earn money for a familiy meal. This interferes with my learning. I care for my siblings, four children come after me. Sometimes you look for daily bread. Sometimes I am sent away from school for tuition fees and I spend so many days out of school and miss a lot of lessons. Other times my sister is also sent away for tuition fees and in that case I also miss school—because I have to volunteer my time from school to sell mangoes to raise her fees. Most of the time I cannot afford to buy pads (sanitary towels) so I use a piece of cloth so I don't miss school due to menstruation. Other times I use cotton wool after selling mangoes since the big roll which costs 200 shillings is very big and long lasting. (Interview August 2009 Akeyo ,orphan head of household).

Girls in poor households tend to incur greater opportunity costs of schooling than boys in Kadero and Obunga slums**.** From the field observations, the time girls spend on household chores far exceeds the time spent by boys by boys. Girls' labor is particularly important for their mothers as it substitutes for mothers' household chores. The loss of girls' labor during school hours has implications for women's ability to generate household income whether from food production or wage labor (Ames et.al 2010) This does not imply that boys do not work. Indeed boys' labor is equally important for household survival, but boys are charged with different tasks. Pati, a grandparent describes this gendered division of labor in her home:

> My children have routines. The boy who is 11 his job is to clean the dog's house every morning except when he is sick. The girl who is 9 wakes up cleans the house and makes tea for everybody before she goes to school. When she comes back she must cook at night; and weekends she must clean the house which she doesn't do during the week. The boy who is in fourth grade does herding, looks after chicken and goes to school. He brings back cows after school and the hens. In this house homework is done between 8pm -10 pm then they go to bed. This

means that we must have paraffin because there is no way kids can study without light. I have to buy paraffin for the lantern (Pati, August 2009).

Orphanood and HIV/AIDS

Nyanza Province is severely affected by the HIV/aids pandemic. This has had a devastating impact on the region's education system. Not only has the death of adults led the decline in the number of qualified teachers, but also to the increase in the number of orphans, child headed or elderly-headed households. The UNESCO GMR (2010) observes how HIV and AIDS tend to exercabate challenges linked to poverty and discrimination that are associated with ill health of family members and orphanhood. The report notes that orphans are less likely to stay in school compared to children whose mother or both parents are alive.

The data reveals that where orphans are adopted by relatives following the death of their parents they tend to be marginalized within those households. This is because of the extra costs or burden to household economy. Nyalego said to me: "There are orphans who live with old grandparents who cannot afford school uniform and the children are forced to wear those until they ate torn because the guardians cannot afford new ones". Akeyo's story above shows the challenges that many orphans face when those who care for them are themselves too poor to offer meaningful support.

Notably, the orphans, especially eldest children, demonstrated the difficulty faced by child headed households. The heavy burden of caring for the rest of the family posed a barrier to their education. Their neither had access to resources nor work opportunities to enable them support the well-being of their siblings and their education. This is the case

with Akelo who said: “I may drop out of school because I cannot not afford to go to school. Sometimes I have to stay away from school, doing chores for people to at least earn money for a meal. This interferes with my learning”. Auma, on the other hand, left school when her parents died and had no one else to support her.

Girls without parents or in families where one parent was not a biological parent had other unique challenges, which threatened their schooling. Female orphans faced various kinds discrimination within ‘foster’ homes as Keke , a standard six girl narrates:

> Sometimes there are total orphans in school, so mostly they live with their uncles…..like there’s a girl we have in school who does household chores from morning to evening while the other children go to school. Especially fetching water. They fetch water very far and she goes fetches water, showers the young ones and also does cooking and washes the dishes. When she is done with the house chores her aunty would tell her that there’s no paraffin so she gets to bed while the other children do their studies. In the morning she gets up very early to leave for school. She does not study at home. This can make her run away. She told us that if that kind of life gets too hard for her, then she will take off to look for someone to put up with or will get married. (Keke, July 2009)

Perceptions about the Quality of Education

This study reveals that teachers, parents and pupils all have different perceptions of ‘quality’ of education or schooling. Apparently each group of participants, or individuals, drew their meaning from their own experiences. For example, many parents welcomed the idea of Free Primary education, but thought that the quality of education had deteriorated due to increased enrollment and inadequate number of teachers. As one grandparent pointed out:

> Initially, education was so expensive unlike the current one. No money is required from you. Mmmh……. since I took my grandchild to school no money has been demanded from me. He has reached class three and I haven’t paid any money. The books and pens are being offered to them free of charge. 200 pages

> books, pens and mathematical set. Teachers don't teach up to their level of teaching capacity unlike the initial education where teachers could be attentive to the pupils. The reason is that many pupils go to school and there are few teachers. (Granny, August 2009).

Many of the male participants, all of them parents of primary school age children presented a very negative view of Free Primary education. Most of them felt that FPE provided a poor quality of education, citing frequent teacher absence, deteriorating discipline, high teacher student ratio, inadequate teaching and learning facilities such as books and desks. They argued that, with the introduction of free education, they had lost their bargaining power and freedom to complain since "someone who is being helped has no reason to bargain" and that they preferred to transfer their children to private schools. The following extracts from a focus group discussion held in Obunga slum are indicative of the issues the parents raised.

They don't discipline children in school

> FPE isn't all that good and I feel that it's better to take children to private schools. This is because teachers are so reluctant. They don't discipline children in school. Some of them miss to go to school twice or thrice a week and the teachers aren't complaining. Since the teachers are reluctant, children are also reluctant too and it isn't their fault. Teachers only look forward to getting their end month salary but not teaching. So as parents, we feel that it's better to take to private school when you have money than the public school. The parents also are reluctant and they don't follow up their children, they don't care whether they go to school or not. If you ask a child when he/she is back from school what they have learnt he/she doesn't give any answer. The class may be has 100 children and one teacher. So it's difficult for teachers to teach them. Can a teacher know that some pupils are absent out of a hundred? (FGD Obunga, Male parent in August 2009)

A free thing isn't good

> Someone who is being helped has no reason to bargain…… you can find that in school there are eight madam teachers and two male teachers. The two are the headmaster and his deputy. Madam teachers chat in their office when they have lessons……if we could be paying for it, we could have spoken of it. It isn't

assisting us as we expected. A free thing isn't good (FGD,Obunga, Male parent in August 2009)

Sometimes we get that World Bank has sent some money to Kenya to assist in education programs. This money is only being used in Mathare, Kibera in Nairobi but not in our Nyanza. If you are a parent who cannot give a child food then you are in a wrong way. This is because they don't provide them breakfast, and lunch. : My children are in a private school here books are being distributed to them; parents are supposed to accompany them to school and lineup. As parents, we're sometimes committed in terms of searching the daily food and other things. This means that when you don't go to school with your child, books aren't given to them. (FGD Obunga, Male parent in August 2009)

Teachers are underpaid, not performing

There are several problems because of this free education. Teachers have decided not to teach as it is required. This is because the government is underpaying them. Initially they were running small businesses and the government stopped them from doing this so they decided to sit and watch as they wait for their salary. The government should implement penalties to teachers who don't teach well. On the issue of books, they are being distributed to the schools sometimes, once a year and this isn't enough. The reason why we take our children to private schools is because teaching is better as compared to public schools. It is better; you pay a teacher to perform to his/her level. If you don't pay tuition fee, your child isn't given books and pens while others are being given. Teachers go to school the time they like, when parents were paying money, teachers could go to school at 6.00 am in the morning but nowadays they go to school at 9.00 am leaving for lunch at 12.00 noon and evening 3.00 p.m. the government should impose some penalties to teachers who do this to help us parents, the pupils will also give use time and even those who are sending us money [donors] will be glad about this. Eeeh…… (FGD Obunga, Male parent in August 2009).

Other parents felt that it was unfair to judge teachers as lazy or unwilling to perform their work since the teacher lacked the tools they needed to be effective:

We complain that teachers aren't doing their job well. But teachers also can ask us parents "has the government provided books for us to teach your children? - because you keep on saying that we are reluctant". The solution to this is to know the number of teachers, pupils and schools with their facilities in each ward. Those that are lacking facilities to be provided with. The parents should also support the government by contributing for our children to learn [Ojijo- FDG, August,2009}.

One parent noted that the children of the poor are the ones who participate in low quality public schools, because the rich have access to better quality alternatives. It was noted

that leaders did not give priority to improving public schools and that the schools were neglected because the children of the ruling class were not affected:

> My last point is that our politicians feel that they are learned and sometimes their children are not even learning here in Kenya. This is because they know that education in Kenya isn't good enough. Most of their children are in Uganda, USA etc, Eeeh… Even the universities their children are attending are overseas (Ojijo-FDG, August, 2009, Obunga).

Teachers' Perceptions of quality education

Teachers also expressed their views on some of the challenges they faced as teachers within FPE. Teachers felt that they worked under were overworked and underpaid and this affected their motivation to teach as the extract below indicates:

> Let me add something on that. Since the introduction of FPE, teachers have never earned something equivalent to what they do, Mmmh…….. We may not be afraid to say that this demoralizes our morale. We do a lot of work, the books we are marking are too many- until we are sometimes being forced to work overtime. The pupils also know that teachers protest in the streets in order for the government to consider their needs and this lowers our dignity as teachers. When it comes to housing, teachers are poorly housed; you can't imagine that a teacher taught for 25 yrs. This is because where he/she stays somebody is giving Ksh. 3000 for house allowance which is equivalent to somebody you taught. It is only in teaching profession where you get that someone is earning more than his/her boss, this is because teachers are never promoted which can't happen in any other department. This happens even in secondary. When it comes to working, teachers work a lot at odd times. We carry their books to our house which other people don't carry their office documents to their houses.

Other problems included overcrowded classrooms, having pupils below the grade level, and teaching hungry children.

> Challenges are very many because the classrooms are overcrowded. This makes learning not to take place well. A hundred pupils with one teacher. There's quantity education but not quality. The teachers' pupils' ratio lowers the standard of teaching. The government didn't move in to bring more teachers. Secondly, some were brought from home without passing some stages. So when they join those who passed these stages, there's that kind of technicality of bringing these

> two to the same level. Thirdly, children don't concentrate because they aren't being fed well at home. (Male teacher, Kudho Primary August 2009)

Another male teacher at Nduru school stated:

> We have very few teachers- primary teachers learn all subjects so they teach everything. The government provides instructional materials without teachers. The government is not hiring teachers-every year we get instructional materials but no teachers who are the implementers of FPE. Just recently, two teachers got transferred- the math teacher for standard five and the English teacher for standard seven. Now we don't have teachers for those classes and subjects. This is a big problem because subjects are allocated at the beginning of the year, so if I cover that class, I will be overloaded, and my regular class will miss a lesson (Std. 8 teacher Nduru- school).

The same teacher spoke about the challenges of teaching in a poor rural village, including poor living conditions:

> I don't even have a place to stay. Those old ugly structure over there are teachers houses- they were built in the eighties- they are collapsing as you can see. I stay in that makeshift structure- here, I could move to Akala to find a decent house, but it is very far from the school-and thieves may break into my house while I am away-and even within the house- my security is important. So I feel like going back to my home in Kisumu (Std. 8 teacher Nduru- School).

And insufficient learning materials:

> Many kids are not able to read at standard eight due to this new policy of automatic promotion. If a girl is growing bigger she is taken to the relevant level, even if she is not ready. I think that the lack of teaching aids such as flash cards and manila papers is the cause of poor learning- you see we have to use chalkboards which will be erased, but a manila paper aids a child in memorizing what was taught. The capitation funds allocated to instructional materials are not sufficient (Std. 8 teacher Nduru- School)

Gender

Gender issues represent an important part of the education debate. The GMR 2008 data shows that 64% of illiterate people worldwide are women, and that 72 million primary aged children are denied the right to education, 57% of whom are girls (UNESCO, 2008). This study finds that the problem of non-enrollment and drop-out in

Free Primary Education appeared more prevalent among girls than among boys. Teachers and parents noted the equal representation of both boys and girls in the lower primary classes and the overrepresentation of boys in both higher primary classes and secondary school. Gender issues are complex, but in all places significant as an influence on demand for education.

Interviews and group discussion with various participants yielded important insights into the reasons behind persistent female disadvantage in their community. In addition, I visited the Gender and Development Center in Kisumu City and interviewed the girl-child officer (GCO). I also collected information on this issue by attending two meetings of the School Committee in Nduru School and a Chief's *Baraza* in Obunga slums. In the following sections, I present the girls' views on gender and education, followed by the local peoples' perceptions on gender and education.

The girls' views on gender and education: Caring responsibilities

Many girls identified caring responsibilities as a major barrier restricting girls' access and participation in education. The term caring responsibilities appeared to cover a broad range of activities including the care of an older family member (parent, grandparent) and young children. The girls made reference to regular domestic chores such as preparing meals, cleaning, minding younger siblings, and going to the market, as well as special responsibility placed on children who were providing physical care to a parent with a medical condition. Many interviewees stated that both boys and girls act as care givers but girls are more likely to take on such responsibilities: As stated by a male teacher:

> Okay you will get the parents to these children died and they are girls who tend to take responsibility to uplift the family left. It is this girl who looks for food to be eaten and at the same time comes to school. She has inadequate time. The girls suffer a lot in that they tend to be breadwinners and this interferes with her education. (Male teacher 1, Kudho Primary August 2009).

One of the main concerns was the impact caring responsibilities can have on school attendance and late arrival at school. This was the case with Rose 13years, 5th grade:

> I have five siblings; my older sister dropped out in 5th grade and eloped. My second sister left school in 5th grade, she was 14 years. My brother is attending a local secondary school Ogona- he doesn't miss school. But my other brother dropped out in 7th grade.[she is sobbing while narrating her story].My little brother is one year and two months old- I bathe him on Saturdays- I make porridge for him every morning at 6 am before I go to school. I try to be early since home is far from school, and I don't want to be punished for arriving late. My Father is always sick suffering from TB and the baby suffers from sickle-cell disease so my mother spends a lot of time and money going back and forth to Kisumu town to seek treatment for the child who is frequently sick. Most of the time she asks me to skip school to take care of the sick baby when she is busy, especially on Wednesdays, because she has to go to Akala Market.

One of the girls I interviewed revealed that she had missed a significant amount of primary school because of caring for her sick mother. She said to me: "I was absent from school for two weeks this month because I had to care for my sick mother". For some young caregivers, even when attendance was good, anxiety about a parent with a medical condition was seen as having a detrimental effect on concentration and learning.

Achieng' (15, not in school) said to me : "When I was 13, my father sent me to the city to work for his Aunt. I mainly cooked and took care of her babies while she was at work- but the work was too much, I sneaked out one morning and returned home". Achieng' told me about her father's opinion:

> When I ask my father why I cannot go to school, while my brothers do, he says that boys and girls are not the same. He says that if he sends the girls, it will be costlier than sending the boy. I see that he just does not want me to go to school. I told my father that if I go to school, I won't drop-out, but he won't listen.

Not feeling safe as a gender specific issue

A number of girls interviewed expressed fears about their safety**.** Feeling safe at school for many young girls entailed having appropriate uniform, shoes, not being physically and psychology abused by other people, including other girls. Other girls reported feeling unsafe in the 'matatus' [local transportation] as a result of being harassed by male passengers, and being exposed to pornographic shows. This was particularly true for Obunga slum girls who had to use public transportation to school. A group interview with six girls revealed student concerns with safety.

> Matatus and Nissans torture me mentally. They play pornographic movies- 85% of them have TVs inside. I want the government to remove these things. Imagine your child coming from Arya and they might pass the stage [bustop] and get raped; now I use the ones without TVs. You see, these people who are in parliament are useless. I watch their debates and they discuss useless things- I want to work hard to do something about it. These people we call turnboys [matatu Touts] always harass girls. One of them thought I was just a girl , not aware of my rights, started touching me, I shouted in a loud voice –stop touching me – and everyone shouted: why are you touching a young girl-and he got embarrassed and stepped out of the matatu. (Yala, FGD,August, 2009).

Although many girls spoke about their experiences of schooling in terms of challenges, many of them also demonstrated how they were overcoming these issues. As Yala's comment above shows, the girls are not passive victims of these problems. They are constantly fighting back and devising relevant coping strategies. In a focus group interview with six girls from the Obunga urban slums, the response of one student to my question about their experiences of menstruation and schooling encapsulates that spirit of resistance.

> If you don't have [sanitary towels] you just take a piece of towel or an old cloth, tear it and use. Even now I am going and I am just using clothes. But it embarrasses you when you are jumping and boys take a mirror and they put it down like this, and it reflects and your panties show and you get embarrassed.

> One day somebody did that to me when I was jumping in the sun and when I turned I took soil and threw on his face and ran to the office and reported to the teacher. The teacher punished them and from that day no boys play with me (.Yala, FGD August, 2009).

Local perceptions of gender and girls' education

Multiple needs, transactional sex

In Kadero village and Obunga, conversations with girls revealed two major reasons for early school leaving, mainly teenage pregnancy, early marriage and migration to urban centers mainly Kisumu and Nairobi to find work. Lily a 16 year old, Nduru Village, in form two stated: "When we entered standard one we were 86 girls and by the time we reached standard eight more than ten girls had left due to pregnancy". In some cases girls simply vanished from school if pregnant. For example, a male teacher at Nduru School noted that there were as many girls as boys enrolled in first grade but as they grew older, more girls than boys dropped out of school:

> There is a big difference between boys and girls in relation to survival upto class eight. At the beginning we see more girls but girls start disappearing in standard six upto standard eight. Many of them get pregnant and marry- I can say this is due to extreme poverty- bright girls don't proceed to secondary school due to lack of money. In 2007, for example a girl in standard six got married to a man in a nearby village; this girl was 15 years- she got pregnant while in school. She became embarrassed because other pupils teased her, and so she left. - A standard eight girl got lost for two weeks without permission. When she came back, I sent her back home to bring her parents. The parents were very honest- they frankly said that the girls' brother helped her to terminate the pregnancy [to procure an abortion] **(**Male teacher, Nduru School**)**

Poverty, it appears, is likely to push mainly girls out of school, not only because they cannot afford the hidden costs of free education, but due to other consequences of

poverty which are very gender specific. Early marriage plays a major role in influencing girls' schooling, but perhaps with a greater influence among the poorest families and communities. The early marriage of girls relates to poverty as poor households may encourage daughters to marry for economic reasons – in some case for bride-price. As one female teacher explained:

> On the issue of poor girls and boys- when poor parents realize they can't educate their girls, they see them as wealth. When this girl is approached by somebody who can give them something they tend to give in easily so that they can at least get support from those people. (Female teacher, Kudho August, 2009).

The girl child officer (GCO) said:

> Everything negative impacts on the girl child when one has three or more children. Sometimes they prefer to pay boys' education and ask the girl to either wait a while until the brother is done or they are simply married off. Mothers sometimes support their children's education but sometimes their hands are tied- They are told that they did not bring any kids here, their daughters will turn into prostitutes (GCO).

Dropping out for girls was attributed to their 'numerous needs', and failure of parents to meet such needs. Notably, girls from poor households sometimes were more likely to engage in sexual affairs with older boys or men hoping to to make money to support for their multiple needs:

> Boys stay in school because their needs aren't many compared to those of girls. In fact a girl child suffers a lot. In relation to what my fellow teacher has said, girls suffer a lot, this is because they may want to be given some money by their parents to buy their things, but when their parents can't meet their needs they look for those who can give them money. Like in our case, I wouldn't talk about boys who dropped out and married. If you look at the top 10 pupils from standard 1 to 8, you hardly get girls. You can find seven boys and about three girls. You find few girls in top 10 in each and every class. I can say that it is boys [who drop out less], girls who joined school after the introduction of FPE sometimes drop out to start small businesses while the boys struggle to pass their exams (Male teacher, Kudho Primary August 2009).

The girls tend to dropout in the upper primary grades because their needs tend to increase as they grow older:

> Girl children have many needs- at puberty they need brassieres, petticoats, panties, etc, and when they can't get them, they feel frustrated. When their breasts become large, they need bras- without bras teachers tease them- they are told: "you look like a woman who has just delivered a baby". They have many needs and if they get someone who can meet their needs they get married. Girls give up quickly, they decide to get married rather than bother their families. (Nyalego).

The needs of the girls at puberty are not only limited to personal grooming items. Speaking as a guardian and a female member of the School Committee, Nyalego also said:

> More girls than boys tend to drop out- girls begin very well, she can study very well, but by standard seven 7 she drops out. When I clean my child she goes to school looking clean and male teachers start admiring her, then they send her do some work for them. If the teacher wants her to be his friend and she refuses, the teacher then demands that she should leave the classroom as soon as he gets in. The girl gets out as soon as she sees the teacher- but the girls don't report such cases to parents or other teachers. But girls have other problems too, like menstruation which affects girls' attendance of school when they do not have pads- I see them around- they soil their clothes and get embarrassed and stay home for a whole week. These days there are separate toilets for boys and girls. But there is no water- they have to bring water from home and they clean the toilets on Mondays and Fridays only.

This parent recognizes the need to keep her child neat and clean, but also fears that being clean may expose her girl child to sexual gestures from male teachers. Thus, Nyalego adds another dimension to the perceived needs of the girl-child. In her view, the needs of girls go beyond sanitary facilities to include the need for special protection from sexual harassment and exploitation in school by male teachers. She concludes: "They'd rather educate boys than girls.. Girls may become pregnant"(Nyalego).

Peer pressure was noted as a problem that fueled the girls' needs and caused many adolescent girls to dropout of school. Nyalego said to me:

> Adolescence stage is a big problem and it affects girls mostly. They want to dress like working class to attract attention. They want expensive lotions this leads to dropout. A girl starts form 1 [Ninth grade] nicely but by form 3[Eleventh grade] they drop out. It is in form two [tenth grade] that there is a problem, and in standard six in primary when there is a problem of dropping out. This is the time they start disappearing- some may move to the cities to look for housework.

Additional insights on the community's perceptions on gender and education were obtained from a gathering of people who had come to my father's home to get free medical attention from a volunteer doctor who had visited the village from USA. While they were seated under a tree waiting for their turn to see the doctor, I asked the parents why many more boys than girls attended or dropped out of the local schools, especially at the upper primary and secondary levels. Reference was made to "transactional sex" as another problem, linked to girls' education.

A father commented: "our daughters rarely make it past standard eight, they get pregnant, or just run away. I don't know may be it is lack of things-she wants this and that… eeh She will find men to buy her gifts like *pat- pat*,vaseline -she may get pregnant."

A mother, Pati said : "A father says, this girl will not benefit anyone and so the girl is neglected. As a mother, you may want your girls to go to school because she is very bright, yet you are too poor [*lweti ni nono*]. This may cause a girl to drop out and get pregnant".

Another man stated: "I'd rather get cows when she is still unspoilt, who will marry her after she gets babies".

This last remark referred to the tradition where parents receive bride price in form of cows or money from the husband's family when a girl gets married. These conversations made implicit reference to some elements of Luo culture and tradition,

namely patrilineal and patrilocal kinship structure of the Luo society. This tradition requires a bride to move to her husband's home upon marriage and become a part of that family, including her children. Sons, on the other hand are expected to remain in the family home to keep the lineage. In this context poor families might view investing in their daughter's education as 'watering another man's garden'. This widely held view is supported by one popular Luo saying *: Ogwang thurgi bor'* **[** A wild animal's home is far way, unknown] in reference to girls and marriage; and it came up in two interview sessions. Nyalego, a member of the NSC said to me :

> Some parents give girls' last priority. First priority goes to the boy. They say: 'Ogwang thurgi bor' [A wild animal's home is far way]. Yet in modern Kenya, it is girls who shine. They should stop calling us Ogwang' we are not animals' [Nyalego, member of NSC].

The girl-child officer (GCO) in Kisumu supported this view, noting that it was commonly held by those who " lack information" due to lack of education and Christianity and who therefore tend to 'defend culture and tradition' :

> The girl has no permanency in her home- so the attitude is that-why should I bother educating a mere girl. Some men still hold this attitude towards girls – 'Ogwang' ni ng'ato okaw or odhi ochodi' [this wild animal should either get married to some man or try prostitution]. Orphanhood has led the girl child into prostitution. Most of those without Christianity and education tend to defend culture and tradition so they are the ones who do not have information and still hold on to the cultural belief that discriminate against girls' education (Girl-child Officer).

It should however be stressed that " lack of information" or "ignorance" about the value of education, or of girls' education in particular was never referred to in the responses from the poorest members of the community. They did not speak in terms of being an 'unaware' of the benefits of educating all their children. Indeed, the people acknowledged the special challenges that girls face in schooling, but also recognized the

possibility for girls to get education and succeed in life. A man stated: (pointing at me and the female doctor from USA): "Look, along ago we did not see girls like you, girls in big universities, or doctors like this woman, good jobs."

These perceptions on girls schooling are consistent with those expressed by the girls themselves. In their view girls do not complete school because:

> Sometimes they are forced to marry by parents because they are spoilt, or they are not academically smart or because they get pregnant. Also they get pregnant and are scared to return to school because of fear that other pupils will laugh at them and call them names-also it is shameful because she'll be seen as the oldest when they return to classroom. When we entered standard one we were 86 and by 6th grade more than ten girls have left due to pregnancy. (Lily 16 year old form 2, Nduru Village).

Many girls between standard 6 and 8 revealed that their multiple needs ranged from sanitary towels, to hair pomades, body lotions and decent shoes and clothes:

> I did not attend school for 3 days because I did not have pads to protect my uniform during menses, also I did not attend school for one week due to lack of school fees. I wish Free education also included free uniform, hair pomade, sanitary pads, body lotion [laughs]. (Adhiambo, standard 8, Nduru School].

The girls noted that such needs were likely to lead girls to engage in sexual affairs with older boys or men who could provide these needs**.**

Girls in the eighth grade admitted that their parents and teachers advised them to be careful not to fall pregnant. Being careful meant 'avoiding boys', other than that, it is not clear whether they were aware of alternative ways to avoid pregnancy.

In the urban slums, however, teenage pregnancy was attributed to '*disco matanga'* [Funeral Disco]. This refers to the extended celebrations during mourning, through music and dancing, that take place at funerals within the Luo community. This was especially the case in Obunga slums. Some parents and even girls regarded the 'disco matanga' very negatively, and thought it interfered with their children's education. One

mother said: “Sometimes, a girl, she goes there for people to admire her and sometimes sneak out with boys and men to have sex. That’s why it’s bad, she can get pregnant, Eeeh.”

Thus such gatherings were viewed as promoting immorality and sexually transmitted diseases among young girls. A young girl commented: “Disco matanga celebrations run for several days, before burial, and a few days after, it is not good for girls, they learn bad things, like sexy dancing”.

Some parents and girls identified peer pressure on girls to be sexually active as a potential barrier to educational achievement. Others spoke of how relationships with older boys sometimes led to lateness or non-attendance at school. A small number highlighted sexual exploitation as a serious but hidden problem affecting the education of some girls. Some girls even blamed themselves for their troubles, their coping strategies and the consequences of such ‘choices’:

> My name is Awino and am 18 years. We are six children in our family I left school a few years ago- 2004, to be exact- I got pregnant, and couldn’t return to school. I liked partying-you know like …disco matanga... Life is so hard – I got married to a man who is abusive- I wanted to leave, but I had nowhere to go (Awino, August 2009).

Most importantly, the teachers saw poverty as a major challenge to FPE, noting its differential impact on boys’ and girls’ education. Commenting on the effects of poverty on girls and boys education, teachers had these to say:

> Children are equal and bright. Because of poverty both of them may drop out from school. Girls may become house girls and boys struggle to make their living. They even end up getting married or marry at early ages. A girl may be a laborer while a boy may be a boda boda man [a bicycle taxi operator] (Male teacher 2 Kudho Primary School).

In response to the question as to whether girls or boys performed better in school leaving exams one teacher responded:

> I can say that it is boys. Girls who joined school after the introduction of FPE sometimes dropout to start small businesses while the boys struggle to pass their exams. Boys stay in school because their needs aren't many like those of girls. In fact a girl child suffers a lot. If you check the top ten pupils from standard 1to 8, you hardly get girls. You can find seven boys and about three girls. You find few girls in top 10 in each and every class.
> (Male teacher 2 Kudho Primary School).

It was also observed that girls in upper primary dropped out reason and migrated to the city to find work as housemaids.

> Girls are sent to relatives to work and they get abused. Like this morning before I got out, I received a phone call from a girl who told me that there is a girl in eighth grade who is being abused by a father who is HIV positive. But the mother cannot do anything about it. We have reported to the police and the chief who say they are looking into it. Incest is very common now because of alcoholism and drugs.

Other parents did not think that early drop-out had had anything to do with gender. They argued that the responsibility of completing school lies with the individual child, as long as the parent can afford to send them to school.

> It only depends on a child, it's their wish either to complete or drop out. I have a child who refused to go to school when I was still having money. : Either girls or boys drop out from school. (Granny, August, interview 2009).

Ethnicity/ tribalism, politics and falling education standards

A new study by a UN agency reports that North Eastern and Nyanza Province are the poorest in Kenya, while Nairobi and Central are ranked the richest (Daily Nation, Nyambega, Gisesa July 24th 2010). But how did Nyanza Province, the home of the Luo ethnic community, slide into such high levels of poverty in spite of its vast natural and human resources? Examining the plight of the poor people among the Luo through an

intersectional lens might shed some light into the contemporary outcomes of historical structural patterns of inequality that continue to undermine education**.** Understanding the broad social, economic and historical patterns reveals an urgent need for genuine education policy reforms.

In an article in the Daily Standard Newspaper which attempts to explain how politics affects development, Mbejamin Kipkorir narrates 'How Politics led Luo Nyanza into poverty and neglect'.

Box 5: How Politics led Luo Nyanza into poverty and neglect'

During the early 1980s, Luo Nyanza was poor not because her people are lazy or frivolous. In my evaluation that was informed by my experience in the banking sector and other interactive activities, the toughest workers in this economy come from this region. The area was in want not because it lacked indigenous professionals who are qualified in relevant fields. Indeed, on a per capita basis, few regions could then equal the Luo in educational and professional attainments.

Nyanza was impoverished because of politics, pure and simple! Political preference

But I was a civil servant and my conscience told me all taxpayers are equal irrespective of their political preference. So I opened four Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) branches to serve the people of the area.

For obvious reasons, I had earlier on effected similar development projects elsewhere in central Kenya, Rift Valley and Coast. A year or so after I was appointed to head KCB, I toured Luo Nyanza. Nothing struck me more hurtfully than seeing the vast plains of Nyanza on the shores of Lake Victoria remain in a fallow state and under-exploited, with her proud people being poorly served by a Government that was unnecessarily scared of their leaders.

In the years past, cotton had flourished on the expansive plains, produced mainly for export. But now under the emerging protectionism of Western economies, production of cotton in Africa had been rendered uneconomical. The ginneries of which peasants previously supplied highest quality cotton now only obtained occasional amounts of poor quality stuff and payments were only made intermittently to farmers who toiled to grow it. Within a short period, cotton production came to a complete stop altogether.

Desperate to survive, farmers from this region adapted maize farming. The yield could be good if properly trained agricultural extension workers gave the correct advice in a timely

manner. And what would happen to good yields? They would be sold to a market experiencing a seasonal glut.

Due to the political standpoint of their leaders, the National Cereals and Produce Board had deliberately been restrained from establishing grain storage facilities in the area. For this reason, cereal production continued to aggravate poverty among the people of Luo Nyanza because at the farmers' level, none had the resources to install a storage facility capable to reserve a few tonnes of the produce. They would sell their cereals at throw away prices soon after harvest, only to buy it through their noses a few months later as packaged maize flour.

Throughout my tour of duty at KCB, the undisputed leader of the Luo was Oginga Odinga.Early in 1984, Oginga asked to see me on issues related to banking. I thought (incorrectly) that this was perhaps the lowest moment of his colourful career. He, who had been Kenya's second most powerful political figure in the first independence Government, was subjected to all manner of humiliation and ridicule. President Kenyatta detained him for several years. He was released in 1971, but consigned to a political no-mans land in the de facto one party rule that prevailed from 1969 to 1992.

He had briefly been given a political platform by former President Moi in 1979 and enjoyed a moment of glory as Chairman of the State Lint and Cotton Marketing Board before being ejected again from the political scene in 1981, following a speech he had delivered in Mombasa concerning land grabbing by the previous regime.

His attempts at political comeback had been thwarted and following the 1982 attempted coup de tat, his son, Raila Odinga, was thrown into detention without trial.

During the brief discourse between Oginga and me, we touched on Nyanza politics and he again scoffed at Kanu's attempts to muzzle people's voice in Luoland. I could not help but be struck by the obvious human qualities in the man seated in front of me. He spoke softly in a high pitch voice, but with confidence. Oginga had a small banking matter for which he sought consideration and I was happy to be of help.

Subsequently, I briefed Moi on the visit and his only remark was that I should urge Oginga to support his Government. My lament on the state of economic development in Luoland remained unanswered until I departed from the bank. (The Standard , 10/06/2010)

Although the author of this article is not a member of the Luo ethnic group (in fact he belongs from the former president Moi's ethnic group, and I was rather surprised by his objective analysis of the Luo plight), his sentiments were strongly expressed in this study, by older members of the Luo community.

The connection between ethnic tensions, politics and education in Nyanza Province was evident in this study. One male participant, Onyango, who heads a local private school that caters to the needy children, noted that the Luo people have always been very critical of the government and as a result their factories have been closed, and relocated:

> If our voices could be heard, if our factories can be revived,Muhoroni, Chemelil, Kibos sugar factories parents can bring children to school- if parents work children go to school. All our factories are out. They have moved to Kikuyu land- Fish Processing factories are no longer here. Fish is exported to Nairobi. If we were like in the past when our local economy was vibrant with all the textile factories like KICOMI functioning, this school would be full of kids.

These participants in one way or another echo Mbejamin Kipkorir's view that the Luo have been systematically marginalized "due to the political standpoint of their leaders". They narrate how their livelihoods were deliberately destroyed by killing their major manufacturing sectors such as the local sugar factories; cotton industry; and relocating the local fish processing facilities and textile factories like KICOMI, to the region occupied by the incumbent president's ethnic group, thus killing their cotton industry, a situation that was further excercabated by the ramifications of globalization such as free trade liberalization. The government also deliberately neglected and destroyed the ability of the Luo to benefit from cereal production leading to vulnerability to poverty, food shortage and hunger. Thus according to Benjamin Kipkorir:

> The National Cereals and Produce Board had deliberately been restrained from establishing grain storage facilities in the area. For this reason, cereal production continued to aggravate poverty among the people of Luo Nyanza because at the farmers' level, none had the resources to install a storage facility capable to reserve a few tonnes of the produce. They would sell their cereals at throw away prices soon after harvest, only to buy it through their noses a few months later as packaged maize flour. . (The Standard, 10/06/2010).

Kipkor's view that "Luo Nyanza was poor not because her people are lazy or frivolous "... and that "the toughest workers in this economy come from this region" was reiterated by participants in this study. A local leader of the Gender and Development Center, the GCO, said to me:

> Nyanza is the poorest region, we have no cash crop. We are not poor because we like it, we work in plantations, for example sisal, and sugarcane. Our men are committing suicide because the only cash crop we have is sugarcane which is being sabotaged. You may grow it, but who will cut it for you? Even sugarcane which takes 18-24 months to mature does not get you out of poverty. How do you survive in the meantime? All our industries, including cotton, have collapsed (The GCO, august 2009).

The GCO traces the systematic marginalization of the Luo community from the post independent era, noting how the community's insistence on social justice had excluded them from their

"share in the national-cake" and drove them into opposition politics, and the detrimental economic consequences of their political preferences:

> At Independence, our leaders sat down and agreed that they were going to support fish processing, and cotton and sugar Industries in Luo Nyanza- Coffee, tea, pyrethrum in Kissi: Rift Valley Pyrethrum. But when we joined opposition, which is our nature- we believe in justice-- Kenyatta started all these- all of us thought we'd have a share in the national-cake, but tribalism has played a big role in our discrimination so we joined the opposition and we were marginalized-even now we're still out. Injustices we resented- we are bold that is why we left [the ruling party]. I remember when we were in Lancaster Oginga said '*Oke gi Odhiambo wachne gi gi dhogi'*. When we were in Beijing, Orie Rogo called me by name- she has a lot of energy (GCO,August 2009).

The GCO went on explain how colonial education led to the alienation of the Luo people from farming, encouraging men to migrate to the cities to take gainful employment living women without education in the rural areas, and unable to participate in the labor market.

> Right from the beginning people said we were bad, but we like justice. They say we have a lot of land, but in the colonial era we were laborers, now they want us to change to become farmers. Why is it that we have land yet we don't farm? Mzungu (White Man) took away our husbands to school and gave them white collar jobs but left us so we are way behind. They feared that education would spoil us so they erased our culture and did not replace it with anything. Our grandmothers taught our girls but now modern schooling has no place for that.

Thus she captures the interactions of politics, tribalism, poverty, gender and modern education in her narrative and ponders: "If our men are poor, then you can imagine how poor the women can be. If the men are poor then we can have bad health" (GCO, August 2009).

Other participants noted the persistence of tribalism, weak political representation, corrupt local leadership and its impact on education in Nyanza. A father, Ojijo, noted that the Luo community were excluded from senior posts in the civil service, notably Ministry of Education, yet such posts enable their incumbents to raise funds for the school in their constituencies, and ignore the rest. Ojijo said to me in a group interview:

> During former president Moi's rule, good teachers were being rewarded, there's tribalism even in education this is because since Kibaki was a president no Luo has been in high post within ministry of Education. They only fundraise for the schools in their locality and not ours.

Ojijo decries the lack of proper political representation and corruption even by their local members of parliament [MPs]. He feels that they have lost voice; They do not know how the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), for example is used. He wonders how their problems can be made public when no one comes to listen to them: "No politician has come to our schools to address people on matters concerning education. Our leaders don't concentrate on education because they think the people will only demand for money if they [politicians} attend such gathering."

> We only see our politicians when election is approaching and they give money so we can elect them- when they get into power, they forget the people who voted for them. Our MPs don't support education in their constituencies so much. Schools in their areas are failing and they don't take that into consideration. Honorable Olago Aluoch came to Obunga to ask for votes and when he won, people of Obunga haven't seen him for two good years. Do you think he can know our problems and our children's problems in relation to education? Our area councilor hasn't come to get our problems. We name them "small chicken cabinet" since they have their people with whom they eat government money. We haven't seen where CDF has been used. But we are excited you [the researcher] are here- finally someone is here to listen to us. Make sure you tell them what we want- tell it on Radio Ramogi, and don't feel shy to mention my name- that I said these things.

While Ojijo acknowledges tribalism as a factor in the problems of the Luo, he blames the Luo for 'concentrating on politics at the expense of development'

> There is so much tribalism. When I was schooling, one of Kisii teachers told us that he didn't care whether we pass exams or not. The teachers were only chatting with us. There isn't good teaching in Nyanza province. People in Nyanza have concentrated on politics than development.

He argues that only those who are corrupt thrive under tribalism and nepotism, noting that even funds that help the poor are not easy to obtain if you don't support 'those people in power' and that :" For you to succeed in filling bursary forms you have to follow a wrong and long path".

> There are bursary forms which are given to people. When you go for those people in power to sign for you- they have to know the person you are supporting during election period for you to succeed. Those who are on the right side of the politicians are the people benefiting. For you to succeed in filling bursary forms you have to follow a wrong and long path.

Summary and Conclusions

While these stories are the stories of poverty, harassment and the neglect of poor girls, they are also stories of young women's agency in creating strategies to allow their survival in these harsh environments. Poor girls tend to have a much higher primary school drop-out rate compared to the national average and yet most of the young women in this study were still in school and hoped to complete primary school- pointing to the success of their strategies. Each of the young girls in this study examined the life circumstances/situation she faced in her schooling and responded by developing various coping strategies. Some of young women felt that they must actively stand up for themselves and address their problems including those who are harassing them. These strategies take many forms, including: Missing school to sell things like mangoes or to work to pay for their own school expenses and other needs; missing school so their mothers could go out to earn a living; finding alternatives ways of coping with lack of essential needs such as sanitary towels- by using cotton wool, cloths, socks or engaging in transactional sex to secure support for their schooling, and other needs, risking pregnancy and the curtailment of their education:

Yala for example demonstrated how she was overcoming sexual harassment in public transportation (Matatus) to school:

> Matatus and Nissans torture me mentally. They play ponorgraphic movies- 85% of them have TVs inside. I want the government to remove these things. Imagine your child coming from Arya and they might pass the stage [bustop] and get raped, now I use the ones without TVs. You see, these people who are in parliament are useless. I watch their debates and they discuss useless things- I want to work hard to do something about it. These people we call turnboys always harass girls. One of them thought I was just a girl , not aware of my rights, started touching me, I shouted in a loud voice –stop touching me – and everyone shouted: why are you touching a young girl-and he got embarrassed and stepped out of the matatu. (Yala, FGD,August, 2009).

As Yala's comment above shows, the girls are not passive victims of these problems. They are constantly standing up, speaking out and fighting back by devising relevant coping strategies. Yala's dealing with bullies and menstrual problems encapsulates that spirit of resistance:

> If you don't have [sanitary towels] you just take towel or an old cloth, tear it and use. Even now I am going and I am just using clothes. But it embarrasses you when you are jumping and boys take a mirror and they put it down like this, and it reflects and your panties show and you get embarrassed. One day somebody did that to me when I was jumping in the sun and when I turned I took soil and threw on his face and ran to the office and reported to the teacher. The teacher punished them and from that day no boys play with me (.Yala, FGD August, 2009).

Akeyo, an orphan head of household, is determined to do whatever it takes to succeed in secondary education. Even failure to pass the school leaving examination will not deter her from reaching her goals. She is willing to give herself another chance to pass the school leaving examination, which promotes one to higher education. She hopes to find someone to support her in case she needs to go back two grades, but leaves the options open to supporting herself. She calls for the encouragement of girls who give up and opt for marriage:

> If I finish school in case I don't pass very well-according to my standards, I will go back to form three and do it all over again and get support from someone or from myself. A lot of girls who drop out come up with the idea of getting married. Please help our girls in our region. A girl can come from class one and give up in class six- they like saying this: 'Tem uru atema ubuywawa ka wan chien'(Just keep trying you will pool us when we are left behind'. So they need encouragement. (Akeyo FGD July,2009)

These strategies were not however employed without high cost. For example, by engaging in transactional sex to support their education. and other needs, the girls took great risks. For example they exposed themselves to sexuality transmitted diseases, such as HIV/Aids and pregnancy, factors which undermine their education**.** For these young

girls, striving to survive in school was itself very difficult. The simultaneous position of being poor and a primary school pupil meant spending much of their time trying to survive school as a poor pupils and female. This begs the question what difference would social or education policies have contributed in these young girls' experiences of schooling if it had taken into account their intersecting vulnerabilities? The voices of these girls highlight the possibilities for creating a more equitable, inclusive and rewarding educational experience for socially excluded girls.

In summary, this chapter presented the findings of the study, highlighting the major obstacles and constraints to participation in free primary education. The chapter has explored the experiences of an urban and rural poor community with FPE and the ways in which these experiences shaped their perceptions of the policy. The chapter sought to understand the complex reasons why girls in these communities did or did not fully participate in primary education considering the dire need for reprieve that FPE symbolizes. The narratives of the study participants reveal strengths and weaknesses, triumph and challenges of FPE. Confronted with multiple obstacles, girls in rural and urban poor areas are still excluded from effective participation in free education. However, these girls are not passive victims, but agents of change silently fighting to overcome these challenges

But to truly understand the reasons behind these experiences and how they impact girls' schooling, I now turn to an intersectional analysis and interpretation of the findings. These are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Understanding Girls' Experience of Free Primary Education through an Intersectional Lens

Educational inequalities have persisted in Kenya's primary education despite the implementation of Free Primary Education. Most importantly, gender inequalities remain a major challenge in achieving Universal Primary Education. This study sought to explore the ways in which various sources and forms of exclusion interact with gender to influence girls' educational experiences and outcomes. This chapter, therefore, presents an intersectional analysis of the research findings in order to answer the research questions**.** I draw on the insights of intersectionality to look at how rural and urban poor girls are faring in Free Primary Education. I further analyze and interpret how the girls demonstrate intersectionality by focusing on why and how their educational participation is different from other girls and/ or boys within their socio economic class. The findings are examined in light of the existing body of research and topical literature about gender issues in education of African children. I argue that unless we identify the varied but specific needs of girls, policies and practices which attempt to reduce school exclusion are unlikely to have a significant impact on the wider problem of social exclusion.

Applying intersectionality theory can be problematic since empirical works using intersectionality with explicit methodological guidelines are scarce (Bilge, 2009); and decisions about which categories should be included are reflexive, selective tasks (Taylor, 2009). McCall's (2009) classification of intersectional methodologies provides a useful way of making such decisions and, like Taylor (2009), I have chosen to focus on

the intracategorical. I thereby started with a singular group, 'poor urban girls', and unravelled other intersecting identifications. Drawing on the analysis of categories that participants themselves made visible within their talk, I undertook an intersectional narrative analysis (Prins, 2006). The analysis draws on the perspectives of poor girls themselves as well as parents, teachers and other key informants in the community under study.

The young girls in this study spoke of the barriers to school participation, not as personal but as a pervasive social phenomenon. A critical look at the findings, with a view to understanding the barriers to completing school, exposes the following themes:

- particular features of family location, gender and poverty positions poor girls in a class-organized experience, which often means that the demands of private life undermine participation in education
- Free Primary Education is not really free to many poor families
- various forms of exclusion may interfere with entering and completing school: and
- How Luo people in Kenya are still dealing with potent forms of tribalism that undermine participation in education

In the following section, I focus on how poverty (socio-economic class) intersects with gender, ethnic affiliation (tribalism) status, and socio-cultural factors as these are related to issues of access, retention, and completion of primary education. It is worth bearing in mind that social class is contested category with its meaning shifting depending on cultural, theoretical and political perspectives (Brah & Phoenix, 2004). My

focus is on the ways in which the study participants articulate their own perceptions and experience of social class and its intersections with other social categories. I set the boundary to include only those situations that were perceived as the site of discrimination or oppressive conditions. But to fully interpret the experience of intersectionality, I will attempt to give meaning not just to the explicit narratives, but also to the missing narratives about the girls' experience. For as Bowleg (2008) observes, "the interpretive task for the intersectionality analyst is to make explicit the often implicit experiences of intersectionality, even when participants do not express the connections" (p.11). She notes that this challenge poses a dilemma to researchers who work with historically disenfranchised communities. The problem relates to the dilemma of "connect[ing] theoretically, empirically, and politically troubling social/ familial patterns with macrostructural shifts when our informants expressly do not make, or even refuse to make, the connections" (p.11). Bowleg concludes that a key goal of intersectionality research is to make these connections through our interpretations.

Two patterns of exclusion can be extrapolated from the data analysis as the experiences that lead to poor educational participation and drop put:

- Experiences formed at the intersection of social class, poverty and gender
- Experiences formed at the intersection of ethnicity, geographical marginalization, socio-economic class and gender.

Experiences formed at the intersection of social class, poverty and gender

This study has shown that all families, whether poor or wealthy, recognize the importance of education for all their children. Poor families are eager to have their

children participate in primary education. They send their children to school, but due to various complex socio-economic reasons withdraw them early, or the children withdraw themselves from schooling. In this section, the barriers to girls' education in the context of FPE are considered under two categories: Those that have an impact on all children, but where the impact might be severe on girls, and those that affect girls alone. This is in recognition of the fact that both boys and girls who live in exclusion suffer equally, yet gender mediates the extent to which an individual experiences the causes and impacts of social exclusion. As the Girl Child Officer reminded us:

> Poverty is not just affecting the girl child- how about our boys why are we ignoring them- they have taken to drugs we have to take care of them- modernity impacts differently on or girls and our boys. Some 14 year olds now head their households while attending school. FPE has come at a time when we are grappling with poverty and HIV/AIDs. Boys tend to rebel against their mothers after the death of their father when mums get remarried. (GCO August, 2009)

Although participants consistently identified themselves as poor, or living in poverty (synonymous with low social-economic status), their views of poverty are shaped by the local context and may not travel well to other locations. They identified the following among the dimensions of poverty:

- Irregular meals and lack of food, or eating certain types of food
- Lack of access to financial and social services
- inadequate infrastructure
- lack of ownership of capital assets like boats, livestock, land
- poor living conditions including poor housing;
- lack of access to essential commodities- or 'lack of things'

Therefore it can be inferred that the girls perceived their discriminatory or oppressive experiences as arising from their poverty. Regardless of other markers identified or implied, such as age and politics which formed the interlocking nature of oppression, social class and gender shaped the lives and in turn the education of the participants. The socio-economic status (marked by poverty) and status as female (gender) interfere with or deny some girls a full cycle of primary education. The girls' self-described incidents interlocked the experience of poverty and sexism at the intersection of social-class and gender within primary education. I discuss six areas, and highlight the gender-intensified- i.e. issues that affect both girls and boys but with greater impact on girls, and gender specific issues, those that affect girls only.

Cost of Free Primary Education

Irregular attendance features as a problem, and it is mainly because of 'school fees due'. This is due to the fact that 'free' education in Kenya is not completely free**.** Families continue to bear responsibility for some of the costs linked to education. The type of direct costs found in this study included extra tuition fees, PTA fees, examination fees, stationery, textbooks, school uniforms, funeral fees**.** Orphans and other children among the poorest of the poor in rural areas and urban slums, who cannot afford the direct cost of schooling, are the most vulnerable to exclusion from schooling. Other studies have documented that the direct costs of schooling can prevent poor families from enrolling all their children in school (Sawamurai & Sifuna 2008; Oketch & Rolleston,2008; Chege & Sifuna,2006) and that girls tend to be the victims of drop out in

families with low socio-economic status (Chege & Sifuna,2006), where these costs may be higher for girls considering the lost household labor (Lewin, 2007).

Dropping out was also mainly caused by 'lack of money', which indicates that FPE faces serious retention problems. Other studies of Free Primary Education in Africa have showm that elimination of fees does not necessarily translate into an entirely free education. Referring to the introduction of UPE in Uganda in 1997, Tumushabe et.al (1999) observed that direct costs of schooling were particularly challenging for girls whose additional needs like soap, clothing, and underwear interfered with school attendance, often leading to early marriage.

Other costs that participants identified as 'direct' in relation to schooling included food and sanitary wear. The latter are gender-specific and affects mostly very poor girls. A study by Elimu Yetu Coalition (2005) found that poor girls tended to stay away from school during their menstrual periods for lack money to buy sanitary wear.

The Opportunity Costs of FPE: Child Labor

Direct costs of education are only part of the problem. Indirect or opportunity costs of education lead to irregular school attendance**.** In 2008, for example, it was reported in a top Kenyan newspaper, the Daily Nation that: *"1.7 million Pupils miss free primary education: this has been attributed to high child labor incidences in many parts of the country"* (The Daily Nation, June 17th 2008, cited in Keriga & Bujra, 2009, p.7). Children aged 7-14 in rural areas tend to engage in day jobs such as herding and seasonal agricultural work. In this context, when children go to school, their families incur additional opportunity cost related to lost labor.

The opportunity cost of sending children to school often has a differential impact on girls and boys (Aikman & Unterhalter, 2007; Chege & Sifuna, 2006). The gender-based division of labor means that girls are responsible for unpaid domestic work such as collecting firewood, cooking, cleaning the home, and care work. This study found that children engaged in a range of domestic and production activities, depending on location and gender. In the rural Kadero village, boys mainly engaged in herding, and some boys in upper classes performed *boda boda* (bicycle taxi) business, on weekends.

These roles have implications for education as they consume time that could be spent studying. This study found the need, especially for girl child labor, meant irregular and tardy school attendance. Girls as young as ten often missed school or left early to perform household chores, especially on Wednesdays when their mothers went to the market. Older girls described performing hard work from dawn till late into the night. Before going to school, many of them would have to prepare breakfast, fetch water, and clean the house. After school, some helped to collect firewood, fetch water, cook and wash dishes, or others had to take care of siblings. Before going to bed, if they still had some energy left, they would consider homework, or studying**.** It was also common for children to help on the farm during planting and harvesting seasons. This was performed by both boys and girls, but did not cause them to skip classes, as it was done very early in the morning or later in the day after school, and mostly weekends

But as Stomquist (2001) explains, poor children end up with incomplete education, not because their parents withdraw them from school, but because they fall behind in their studies. Often they miss school to take care of the sick members of the

family, or get withdrawn from school when they themselves get sick and their parents have to pay for medicine.

Age and opportunity costs of schooling

Age, position, and number of siblings in a family play a significant influence on school attendance. As Ames et. al. (2010) point out "the probabilities that a girl will not attend are higher if a girl is the oldest sibling, if she is approaching adolescence and if her siblings are too young to help with the work demanded by the family" (p.4). In this study, two specific points at which teachers and parents perceive students to be particularly vulnerable to dropping out are the transitions from primary to secondary school and in 6th grade:

> Adolescence stage is a big problem and it affects girls mostly. They want to dress like working class to attract attention. They want expensive lotions- this leads to dropout. A girl starts form 1 [Ninth grade] nicely but by form 3[Eleventh grade] they drop out. It is in form two [tenth grade] that there is a problem, and in standard six in primary when there is a problem of dropping out. This is the time they start disappearing- some may move to the cities to look for housework. [Nyalego].

While it is not very clear why most girls dropout at these points, what is clear is that the time demanded for reproductive activities enter "more and more in competition with the time (and costs) demanded by schooling, as girls grow older" (Ames et. al. 2010, p.10). This situation is made worse by HIV/AIDS epidemic forcing girls to stay at home to take care of their sick parents and other siblings. By 2005, there were about 1.5 million HIV/AIDS orphans in Kenya (MOH 2002). The Elimu Yetu Coalition's study show the gendered effect of the devastation caused in informal settlements in Nairobi by HIV/ AIDS, where "Many girls have assumed the extra responsibility of looking after their siblings, and child headed families are on the increase" (p.110).

Moreover, as Ames et.al (2010) point out, such reproductive activities as fetching water or collecting fuel for cooking are vulnerable to climate change. This means that the ramifications of environmental degradation, as manifest in scarcity of water and firewood, is borne by women and girls whose time and work load increase in search of those items (Ames et. al. 2010). This may leave girls with very little time for schooling activities. Might it be possible that care work and greater risks of pregnancy and early marriage may be the driving forces? Or is it the numerous personal needs, as Nyalego suggests that pose a greater problem, or a combination of all these factors? The important point is that age is a factor in this intersectionality of gender, poverty and education, and which education policy must acknowledge.

Quality

FPE in Kenya is characterized by the poor quality that many learners experience. Definitions of quality are subjective, but, according to Keriga & Bujra (2009), the term generally refers to "conformance to given standards (Crosby: 1979**),** in this context, education is examined in several ways; (i) relation to whether it produces individuals who are competent and skilled, (ii) inputs, these includes school set up, curriculum, school facilities such as classrooms, latrines, laboratories among others and (iii) how the school system is managed" (p. 15)

The poor quality of Free Primary education is attributed to an array of challenges. including overcrowding in schools especially those in urban slums, high pupil to teacher ratio, and high pupil to textbook ratio (Keriga and Bujra, 2009) lack of learning resources such as teaching materials and textbooks, untrained, poorly remunerated and unmotivated

teachers, lack of basic resources large class sizes-; little relevance of the curriculum; teacher centered teaching, a poor infrastructure, and low levels of community involvement. The introduction of FPE has seen parents and community members stop supporting school projects and facilities, leading to a further deterioration of quality of education (Keriga and Bujra, 2009). Yet the quality of education is important for several reasons. For example, it may lead to improvements in enrollments and continuation rates (LIoyd et al., 2000), and is also associated with improved cognitive and affective outcomes that can contribute both to economic growth and social cohesion. However, in terms of input, poverty and inequality pose a serious challenge to the provision of quality education for the majority of children. (Chege & Sifuna,2006; Alwy & Schech,2007; Keriga & Bujra, 2009). The disparities in the provision of quality education are noted in terms of classrooms and instructional materials available to different institutions, depending on their economic and geographical location. Schools located in the poorer rural areas, and in low income areas tend to lack infrastructural and learning equipment and facilities, and to conduct learning activities in open areas under trees (Keriga & Bujra, 2009).

Most of these challenges are attributed to the growth in enrollment resulting from Free Primary Education. An article in the Standard newspaper notes that enrollment expanded from 5.9 million in 2003 to 8.6 million in 2010 representing a 45.8 per cent growth. It also observes that these numbers do not persist up to the end of the primary school cycle (The Standard, April, 2, 2011).

> The introduction of FPE in 2003 has enabled the country realise a significant growth in primary school enrollment from 5.9 million in 2003 to 8.6 million in 2010 representing a 45.8 per cent growth. However, despite the huge enrollment

> at Standard One, this is not replicated at the end of the eight-year course" (Bivern Wekesa, 04/02/2011).

This expansion has triggered increases in the pupil/teacher ratio from 32:1 to over 50:1 in most schools. Further, by 2005, only 47% of those enrolled in primary education completed it and only 27% of those eligible for secondary school entered Form One (Tooley,2004). Among other things, the poor quality of teaching by 'unenthusiastic' teachers is cited as the problem:

> Since the inception of Free Primary Education, public primary schools have been performing poorly in national examinations. The recent KCPE results left many people wondering what could be the problem. And the causes of this cannot singularly be attributed to the Government. Teachers and parents are equally to blame. Teachers in public schools are less enthusiastic and only start teaching pupils when preparing for an examination. This has led to poor preparation of candidates in the schools while in private schools they start preparing early. Some teachers in public schools spend more time gossiping or engaging in private business than teaching. This is linked to poor leadership where most head teachers in public primary schools rarely ensure teachers teach. (The standard Newspaper -04/02/2011)

Lack of community participation is also said to contribute to the low quality of Primary education.

> Facilities and projects that were originally supported by parents and communities have also been abandoned; parents and community member feel they do not have to contribute financially to the running of school facilities now that FPE has been introduced; these challenges have a bearing on the quality of education for learners and the community as a whole. (Keriga and Bujra, 2009).

In fact, the decline in quality has been such that, after the initial enthusiasm for "free" education subsided, parents began shifting their children back into private schools where quality standards were known to be higher (Tooley, 2004). In addition, considering the value of child labor in household survival, sending children to school may not be viewed

a beneficial investment when the quality of education is poor (Moyi, 2006; Achoka et al., 2008).

Most importantly, the increased exodus of elite and middle class children from public schools has resulted in a "birfurcated educational system" (Stromquist, 2001), where the elite private schools serve wealthy and middle classes, and public schools are left with mainly poor children whose families have no political leverage. A disturbing consequence of the deterioration of public schools due to inadequate resource allocation is the "emergence of non-elite private schools, attended by children of middle-class and low –income families" (Stromquist, 2001, p. 50) in Latin America. Similar trends are observed in Kenya among informal settlement populations (Jakayit & Oketch , 2008).

While the poor quality of education affects both boys and girls, girls tend to suffer more adversely than boys. In a study on 'School Choice between Public and Private Primary Schools under the Free Primary Education Policy in Rural Kenya, Nishimura and Yamano (2008) observe:

> Turning to households' wealth, we find that girls from wealthier households are more likely to transfer to private schools than girls from less wealthy households. Among boys we find a similar positive coefficient but it is not statistically significant. Together with the results on the KCPE score, it can be said that parents tend to transfer boys to private schools on merit-based motivation (i.e. to gain a higher KCPE score to seek admission to good- performing secondary schools) while transferring girls to private schools is more a matter of affordability of the households. In addition, girls are more disadvantaged in transferring to a private school when there are more men in the household. This may be because when elder brothers are in secondary schools or above, less priority will be given to girls' schooling (Nishimura and Takashi Yamano, 2008, p.10).

In addition, private tuition is found necessary to compensate for poor quality of the education system, and parents are required to pay fees for their children to take extra tuition. However more boys than girls receive such extra tuition, thus lowering a girls'

chances of academic achievement (Aikman & Unterhalter, 2007) and reducing her labor market opportunities. As Tikly 2008 argues, quality of education must be treated therefore as a key issue of social justice. IIon (1994) echoes this view, noting that inequalities in national systems of schooling produce people who are globally competitive and others who are "marginally competitive for low-skill jobs" (IIon (1994, p 102)).

Lack of sanitation facilities in schools has been shown to affect girls' education more than boys. Yet this study found the two primary schools in Obunga and Kadero had some pit latrines, but not enough to meet the needs of the whole school population. They also lacked hand-washing facilities and functional toilets. An impressive amount of evidence supports the fact that lack of proper sanitation, sanitary pads, separate but clean toilets with doors and water for washing hands have an impact on retention of girls in school.

If poor girls continue to receive poor quality education in public schools, then they will end up in low skill jobs and this may discourage parents from investing in their education, due to poor returns, and perceived lack of relevance of such education. This issue is particularly critical given that the 'needs' of the girls are numerous and challenging for poor parents to meet- leaving both girls and parents with early marriage as the only viable and rationale option. It will be difficult to achieve gender equality, not just in education but also in the labor market and society as a whole.

It appears that several factors related to cost and quality of education combine to deprive poor girls of the 'opportunity to learn'. The concept 'opportunity to learn' is associated with equity issues in the US, but is increasingly gaining popularity in issues of

educational quality in especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The works of Abadzi (2004) and DeStefano et al (2007) have brought into focus the relevance of the concept in addressing issues of quality in low resource contexts. Eight critical elements are identified as basic constituents of the opportunity to learn (Gilles and Quijada 2008). Paramount are a combination of the factors including "total instructional time, hours in school year, days school is open, teacher attendance and punctuality, student attendance and punctuality, teacher-student ratio, instructional materials per student, time in classroom on task, and reading skills taught by grade" (Gilles & Quijada 2008, p. 2).

The underlying assumptions behind the opportunity to learn index is based on the premise that "learning is to some degree a function of time and effort" (Gilles & Quijada 2008, p. 3). Thus it is based on the idea that adequate time on task is necessary for learning to occur and to enhance pupil achievement. This is the basic assumption that underlies the direct linkage between learning and the opportunity to learn. It implies that any reduction in time on task as a result of the aforementioned factors will have a negative impact on learning. For example, frequent teacher absence lowers potential student learning. Conversely, pupil absence from school means less productivity on the part of the teacher, and no learning on the part of the student. In other words a combination of factors such as effective teaching methods and adequate time on task must combine with consistency in pupil attendance and teacher presence for adequate learning to occur. Yet the current study finds that for girls, much time is not spent engaged in learning due to tardiness and frequent absenteeism. Also hunger was found to interfere with learning in the classroom. Thus poor girls spend less number of days in school a year and attend fewer class hours a day due to the high costs of education.

Other OTL factors that parents and teachers identified as interfering with learning were teacher absenteeism and tardiness, which were also said to be related to low teacher morale or motivation arising from teacher dissatisfaction with low salaries, late payment of salaries, poor working and living conditions in the rural areas. It is not known how the dynamics of teacher and student attendance affect learning, but it is likely that poor girls may face a double jeopardy if whenever they are present, teachers are absent; when they are absent, teachers are present. Thus gender clearly determines whether a boy or a girl living in poverty has opportunity to learn. Further research needs to investigate the gender dimensions of opportunity to learn. A greater focus should also be placed on mitigating its effects on OTL. This finding underscores the need for government and policy to address the demand side factors that interact with supply side factors to keep poor children out of school. Hence, it highlights the need to consider the linkage of the direct and opportunity costs of attending school and OTL.

The presence of female teachers might be viewed as an issue of quality for girls education. Female teachers are viewed as good role models for school girls (FAWE, 2003). Parents are often more comfortable with female teachers around their daughters. Besides, they are a source of inspiration for girls to aim higher. In this study, there was only one female teacher in the rural school, whose husband and children lived 100 miles away. She did not have a house within the school compound since the available houses were inhabitable. While a feminization of the teaching profession at the primary level risks reinforcing the conception of women as nurturers and carers, a scarcity of female teachers may have a negative impact on girls' education, as one of the male teachers in

Nduru -Kadero pointed out that he and the girls often got embarrassed whenever they had to discuss reproductive health matters, specifically when they concerned individual girls.

Additional issues relating to quality are rarely acknowledged, but are also important from a social justice perspective. This study finds that children attending rural schools were prone to infections that are associated with unhygienic environments. For example, it was common for children to suffer from jigger infestation from dusty classroom floors. Girls also reported "not feeling safe", due to lack of proper sanitary materials, rendering them vulnerable to bullying, and were likely to experience sexualized abuse on their way to school. Teenage girls were also exposed to sexual risks as a device to meet their essential needs. All these factors need to be included in a definition of quality education for girls.

However, the findings seem to suggest that poverty and sexism that the participants self-described as experiencing were not the primary experiences shaping their lives. The self-described events were shaped or are situated in a larger historical context in which first, rural populations are marginalized by urban-centered development models. Whilst there is a close link between poverty and rurality, limiting the debate to poverty ignores the larger structural causes of exclusion of rural people. The tendency within development discourses to represent rural populations as 'traditional' as opposed to 'modern' (Aturo, 1992) sheds light on why rural locations tend to lack infrastructural facilities and to be poor. In Kisumu District, where this research was conducted, there is evidence of large rural-urban disparities in the availability and quality of schools, health services, electricity and water. Hence the issue of geographical isolation must enter into any discussions of equity and equality in education. The same applies to the informal

settlements or urban slum locations. Many studies show that these locations tend to lack schools in close proximity to homes, forcing children to walk or travel long distances between home and school. This situation has different implications for children's schooling depending on their age and gender. Parents may not send very young children to school because they cannot walk such long distances; older girls may confront issues related to safely on their way to and from school. Besides, the cost of transportation may be quite prohibitive to poor families.

Secondly, Luo people in general have historically suffered political and economic exclusion based on their political preferences. Hence ethnicity, understood as 'tribalism,' featured as a significant factor in the exclusion of the community. Luo girls and women have therefore faced and continue to suffer discrimination based on their ethnic tribe, as Luo and as women within their ethnic community and the Kenyan community. One participant attempted to capture the gendered ramifications of these historical injustices in her narrative: "If our men are poor, then you can imagine how poor the women can be. If the men are poor then we can have bad health" (GCO). I now turn to a discussion of the intersections of ethnicity, geographical marginalization, poverty and gender.

Experiences Formed at the Intersection of Ethnicity, Geographical Marginalization, Socio-Economic Class and Gender

Inequality between ethnic tribes in Kenya has not only been a source of violent conflicts, but has resulted in unequal socio-economic outcomes and opportunities in life. A 2004 report by the Society for International Development (SID) presents some striking regional inequalities in Kenya. It takes note of the ethnic dimensions of inequality: The

differences in the quality of facilities available to one in Kenya based on one's ethnic tribe are well depicted if one examines the nature of life and livelihoods available to the various ethnic groups (Provinces). The report graphically demonstrates the ways in which disparities in well-being correspond with ethnic and geographical locations (SID, 2004). For example, disparities are noted with regards to access to piped water and electricity. Only "0.6% of households in both North Eastern and Nyanza Provinces have access to piped water, compared to 11.8% in Central Province and 33% in Nairobi. Electricity access, however, has a wide urban-rural gap- only 4.6% of residents in rural areas have electricity compared to about half of the residents in urban areas" (p. 19)

The report further illustrates how the provinces differ in terms of key socio-economic indicators and outcomes including education, health and employment. It observes differences in school enrollment: "Going by the enrollment rates, practically every child in Central province attends primary school compared to about one out of three children in North Eastern province. For secondary school the difference is even bigger" (p. 20). Also noted are differences in the health reach, since access to quality healthcare is ethnically based. Whereas Central Province has 20,000 people for one doctor, North Eastern Province has 120,000 people for one doctor. Such disparities in health care have led to differences in immunization and infant mortality rates. For example Nyanza province has 38% of child immunization coverage, compared to Central Province with 79% resulting in many more infants dying in Nyanza Province than Central and Rift Valley (SID, 2004).

The report further states: "Regional differences in socio-economic opportunities and outcomes in Kenya may in effect mean stark differences in the well-being of specific

ethnic groups, living in specific regions of the country" (p. 23). In this regard, HIV prevalence in Kenya differs widely by ethnic groups and 'is highest among Luo men and women'. There are also wide disparities in the life-expectancy among regions. Nyanza exhibits the highest childhood mortality and highest HIV/AIDs prevalence rates in the whole country. Thus "while an average person in Central Province expects to live for an estimated 64 years, the life expectancy in Nyanza is only 47.7years" (p. 23).

In Kenya, however, regional economic disparities have been largely attributed to political patronage and ethnic chauvinism, as well as uneven development linked to colonialism (Alw & Schech, Chesoni, 2006). It is noted ethnic groups located within agrarian commercial areas, railways lines, ports or centers of colonial commerce have largely benefited from infrastructural development. A report released by the Central Bureau of Statistics reveals that regional inequalities are reflected in poverty patterns. The 2007 report titled '*Geographic Dimensions of Wellbeing in Kenya: Who are the poor (2007)*: ranked poverty rates across the regions as follows: Nyanza 65%, North Eastern 64%, Western 61%, Eastern 58%, Coast 57.6%, Rift Valley 45%, Nairobi 44% and Central 31%" (Keriga & Bujra, 2009 p.7**).** The distribution and access to social and developmental services, such as education follows a similar pattern:

> Exclusionary practices of the ruling elite based on ethnic interests have seen the regions in which the ruling elite gain preferential access to resources and social amenities in this case; political motivation has also been cited as an important factor in the establishment and upgrading of schools, colleges and universities in certain regions(Keriga &Bujra 2009, p. 7).

Thus exclusion over time has resulted in discrimination against and alienation of the Luo people from enjoying equal opportunities and limited their political rights and economic mobility. More importantly, discrimination has excluded them from mobility-

enhancing activities such as quality education and employment. This has led to a vicious cycle of poverty occasioned by limited economic and social mobility.

The human rights approach requires asking how poverty intersects with discrimination (Tomasveski, 2003). The pattern of exclusion coincides with internationally prohibited grounds of discrimination, combines several of them, and is exacerbated by poverty. Two recent newspaper headlines boldly stated**:** **'**Boys dominate top slots as gender gap widens in secondary schools' (The Standard 28/02/2011) or 'Widening KCSE gender gap must be bridged' (The Standard 28/02/2011) with the North Eastern and Nyanza provinces being among the hardest hit**.**

Box 6 :Widening KCSE gender gap must be bridged

We congratulate all 2010 KCSE candidates who received their results yesterday. But the continuing decline in performance by girls in both KCPE and KCSE and the overall drop in mathematics and sciences across the genders is worrying. North Eastern, Nyanza and Coast are the most affected with regard to the female candidates, as well as overall performance. Disparity in favour of boys in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) still persist in three out of the country's eight provinces, despite government efforts to address the gender gap. "Although we have put many interventions in place to address gender gap across all provinces, disparities in favour of boys still persist in North-Eastern, Nyanza and Coast provinces," said Education Minister Prof Sam Ongeri on Monday. Ongeri noted that the gender gap in North-Eastern, Nyanza and Coast provinces stand at 27.4 per cent girls to 72.6 per cent boys, 39 per cent girls to 61 per cent boys, 42.2 per cent girls to 57.8 per cent boys respectively in 2010 KCSE. "The gender gaps for the other provinces are not so pronounced. The gender ratios in 2010 KCSE examination in the other provinces were Central 50.5 per cent boys to 49.5 per cent girls, Eastern 52.6 per cent boys to 47.4 per cent girls, Nairobi at 56.8 per cent boys to 43.2 per cent girls, Rift Valley 55.2 per cent boys to 44.8 per cent girls, and Western 56.3 per cent boys to 43.7 per cent girls," noted the minister. (The Standard, 28/02/2011)

A closer examination of these Provinces, vis-à-vis the others like Central Province where gender parity has been achieved, confirms that regional disparities in the provision of educational opportunities correspond with regional variations in socio-economic development (Chege and Sifuna, 2006). Girls are most fully represented in the

regions with relatively high cash income from agriculture, formal and informal employment, such as the primary schools of Central and Nairobi provinces (Wainaina, 2006). It is noted that such high income enables parents to meet the direct costs of schooling for their sons and daughters as well as the indirect cost of foregoing their daughters' assistance in the home and farm. Hence as Chege and Sifuna (2006) note, girls tend to be the victims of drop out in regions where the majority of families have low socio-economic status.

GMR (2010) report states :

> Disadvantages linked to poverty and ethnicity are often reflected in location and livelihoods. Slums are focal points for educational deprivation, partly because many governments fail to recognize the entitlements of slum dwellers to basic services. Kibera, one of the largest slums in sub-Saharan Africa, with an estimated population of 1 million, is a short walk from some of Kenya's finest primary schools. Yet the vast majority of Kibera's children are locked out of even the most basic opportunities for education. Parents have to pay for poor-quality private schooling, while non-slum children can access fee-free government education. Security concerns present an additional hurdle: 60% of girls interviewed in Kibera expressed fear of being raped, and it was not uncommon for both boys and girls to have witnessed acts of physical violence. A common response to the fear of violence and harassment in slums is to stop going to school (GMR,2010 p. 175).

A DFID report titled *'Reaching the poor, the costs of sending children to schoo*l' gives a graphic detail of the implications of HIV/ Aids pandemic in Kenya: This is particularly relevant with reference to HIV/AIDs prevalence in Luo- Nyanza Province:

> Changes to household structures and their impoverishment (loss of income earners, grandparents taking on grandchild rearing obligations, eldest child in orphaned households becoming head of household, orphans being relocated) and the effect on education system staff (increasing numbers of premature deaths, regular and costly funeral attendance, dealing with students whose households are affected), clearly have significant effects on both supply and demand sides of the education system. The effect of socio-economic deprivation on health with a consequent decline in school attendance and/or achievement is also evident through the study. Much of this illness will be related to food or nutrition, water, sanitation and other basic needs. The interwoven and complex synergistic

> relationships of the various factors linking illness to poverty impact on a child's ability to access and benefit from school. (DFID, 2002. P. 106)

But how do girls end up as the victims of these socio-cultural inequalities? Explanations lie in gender relations which tend to permeate all aspects of social relationships. Stromquist (2001) notes how definitions of femininity and masculinity often reproduce, gender asymmetries through "ideology, sexuality, language, law, schooling, and the mass media, among many others" (p.43).

The Kenyan state is not only tribalist, it is patriarchal. Ethnic inequality and the countries' patriarchal cultural traditions shape and are shaped by other forms inequality in Kenya. While gender inequality militates against women and girls, ethnic inequality serves to further marginalize certain groups of women. For example, as Chesoni (2006) points out, being from a geographically marginalized part of the country, such as North East Province and female increases the probability that one is illiterate and will die young compared to being an able-bodied male from Central Province of Kenya. This is not surprising since the poverty incidence in North Eastern Province is 64 percent as compared to 31 percent in Central Province (GOK, 2005). Hence ethnic inequality combines with the phenomenon of political patronage and sexism to exclude women and girls from successful participation in education. Given, for example that in Nyanza Province , particularly rural areas lack piped water and electricity, it is women and girls who have to walk not less than 15 minutes to fetch water and find firewood. Secondly, the fact that Nyanza exhibits the highest mortality and HIV/AIDs prevalence rates in the whole country and deteriorating health facilities has gender implications. In this study, I found many child-headed households, orphans, and grandmothers caring for orphans, or single-parent households. Under such circumstances, women and girls who often take on

the caring responsibilities, are left with very little time to focus on their education and may eventually drop out of school. Thus intersectionality of ethnic marginalization serves to further exclude girls in Nyanza Province from education opportunities**.** Stromquist (2001) explains how geographical and ethnic discrimination affects girls' schooling:

> Among poor families, especially those in the rural areas, the sexual division of labor is of fundamental importance. Because girls in poor homes and in rural areas conduct the bulk of the domestic chores, parents perceive school knowledge as moving their daughters away from essential tasks. In communities lacking basic domestic technologies (e.g., electricity, potable water, sanitation facilities, garbage collection), girls and women assume these services. Since the poor have less possibility of regular medical attention, typically women and girls must assume these services, which usually translate into special diets and rest for the ill members of the family (p.4).

It is therefore not surprising that North-Eastern and Nyanza Provinces still lag behind other provinces in terms of all educational indicators. Hence Chesoni (2006) rightly concludes that masculinity marks one of the unstated means of access to escaping poverty in Kenya. In this way the intersectionality of ethnicity and gender-based inequality combines to exclude Luo girls from schooling and greatly undermines the quality of their schooling.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter set out to analyze the nature of social exclusion which arises from gender, ethnic affiliation, and or social class status and their impact on educational outcomes in primary education in Kenya. The chapter highlights the nature of the various intersections that shape the discrimination upon which gender inequality thrives. Addressed are significant social dimensions such as class/wealth, ethnicity/ regional or geographical location. It demonstrates that gender discrimination affects and is affected

by all these inequalities further magnifying the complexity of inequalities in education. Regions which are economically deprived and where most of the population is poor tend to display larger gender disparities in education. Such patterns of regional inequality result from ethnic discrimination, which combine with sexism and poverty to exclude girls from schooling. Specifically, the intersectionility of gender and ethnic or geographical marginalizion serves to further exclude poor girls in Nyanza Province from education opportunities.

Focusing on the relationships amongst poverty, ethnicity and girls' schooling, the following conclusions can be drawn: First, the patterns of regional and ethnic inequality combine with the patterns of political patronage and sexism to exclude poor girls from participating in and completing primary education. Second, the poor participation in education results from the interactions of supply side factors, e.g. lack of school facilities, and demand side factors related to cultural norms, family poverty or "work obligations that render the individual unable to take advantage of free education" (Stromquist, 2001, p.4). Economic constraints have less of an impact on boys than on girls. The interplay between economic inability to pay and cultural unwillingness to change are interlinked and are mutually reinforcing. This is due to broader societal gender power relations and has resulted in a perpetuation of the gender gap in education.

I propose that a substantial use of intersectional theory and analysis might place in our hands the most effective response to gender inequality in education. Taking on intersectionality and examining gender inequality within the context of other forms of exclusion exposes the fact that sexism intersects with other inequalities, and therefore provides a basis for identification of relevant strategies to address inequality in education.

CHAPTER 8

WAY FOWARD

The purpose of this study was to explore how poor rural and urban slum girls experience school with multiple sources of exclusion. The perspectives of primary school age girls were obtained in rural and urban slums of Kisumu in Nyanza Province to explore their experiences of school and their resistance to a culture of oppression and discrimination. Their stories demonstrate not only the ways in which poverty and social location constrains girls' education, but also the creative strategies these young women employed to cope with these struggles and stay in school. Primary participants were 19 poor, Luo girls , ages 10-18, who had attended or were attending primary or drooped out of school in a small rural village and urban slum in Kisumu. As poor girls in the same ethnic group in the same geographic area, from similar social positions, these young girls encountered similar experiences related to gender and poverty. These young girls should not, however be seen as 'representative' of young girls from this or other historic moment. Their experiences are best understood by examining the structural pressures that they encounter as poor girls in Luo Nyanza. The similarities between these stories and the stories of poor girls in other parts of Kenya or the world highlight the marginalized positions poor people and especially females continue to hold within societies, the persistence of schooling challenges, and the failure of social and education policy to address them, despite advances from feminist and other rights movements.

Too often, FPE is presented as having the potential to achieve universal primary education. But is universal access to primary education a reality for poor girls? While free education has the potential to include all children in education to offer possibilities of

making it in life, the probability of succeeding is very much mediated by how a child is positioned in a matrix of social class, gender, and ethnic power relations. This study illustrates how patterns of social exclusion and inequality intersect in girls' experience of Free Primary Education. In the case of the Free Primary Education Policy, the implementation of a policy specifically designed to ease the burden of poor children who were previously unable to enroll and attain basic education, only led to a mass exodus of the well off pupils leaving only poor children in dilapidated public schools, and thereby exacerbating, in the long run, the disadvantage of those already oppressed by other structures of domination. Thus the intersectional vulnerability of these poor girls positioned them to bear the brunt of the simultaneous impact of the unintended consequences of FPE and the ramifications of potential and actual realities of dropping out of school.

The enactment of FPE demonstrates how well intentioned attempts to address certain problems can be ineffective when the intersectional dynamics of poor girls who belong to ethnic minorities or 'troubled' ethnic groups are ignored. Thus being poor and belonging to an excluded ethnic group influenced the possibility that a poor girl could take advantage of free education.

Despite its mandate for full universal access, Free Primary Education often falls short of this charge and cannot attend to the needs of poor rural and urban girls effectively. One of the most sustained criticisms of Free Primary Education is that it only covers tuition and books, and it is therefore only free for those who can afford all the additional costs. Many other direct and indirect costs hinder the ability of certain groups of people to access primary education

For these young girls, striving to survive in school was itself very difficult. The simultaneous position of being poor and a primary school pupil meant spending much of their time trying to survive school as a poor pupil and female. This begs the question, what difference would social or education policy have made in these young girls' experiences of schooling if it had taken into account their intersecting vulnerabilities? The voices of these girls highlight the possibilities for creating a more equitable, inclusive, and rewarding educational experience for socially excluded girls. Taking account of the constraints identified in the study, the next section outlines strategies as well as policy options desirable to achieving gender equality in education and primary schooling for all.

Policy implications and recommendations

This study has drawn out a complex picture of the ways in which marginalized girls are excluded from schooling. Most importantly, it has raised issues regarding the complexity of achieving gender equality and education for all amidst the intersections of gender and social exclusion. I have argued that most of the schooling difficulties experienced by excluded and marginalized children, particularly girls, cannot be resolved through a single intervention such tuition free education. These groups are most often those with the least access to schooling, and even where they can participate, often receive the poorest quality of education**.** Free Primary Education is fraught with a wide range of challenges with severe impact on excluded and marginalized groups.
This research underscores the diversity of schooling experiences, not just among children, but even within a small urban or rural geographical area. For example,

schooling experiences differ for boys and girls, for poor boys and poor girls, for poor girls and wealthy girls, and for adolescent girls and younger girls. However, even within any of these groups, there is a remarkable diversity of children. Many young girls experience difficulties related to their sex and the gender roles associated with that. Their needs are varied and often complex. Yet full access to schooling is dependent upon their capacity to meet those special needs. The data also reveal that diversity of these young girls' experiences is also linked to whether they have parents, or are orphaned, or live in child-headed households, female headed households, single-parent households, or under the care of poor, old grandparents. Many young people have parents, or live in single parent households, are themselves head of households, or live with sick HIV/AIDS infected parents. Some are in school; some are domestic workers, some are married; some have babies, some are mothers, some are pregnant, others are internally displaced persons.

These experiences may be gender specific, or gender –intensified. Social policy and education policy and programming must bear in mind this diversity of experience among young people. This calls for the need for special programs for subgroups of poor children, rather than for a generic vision of marginalized children. Yet FPE policy, aimed at promoting access especially for poor marginalized children in Kenya, is largely gender-blind and generic, and pays little attention to the unique and varied circumstances of the most vulnerable children. Young girls, especially in urban slums, are at risk of rape and violence on their way to and from school. Some lack access to proper protection during menstruation, exposing them to public humiliation, bullying, keeping them away from school. Different circumstances require unique and targeted support services. For

example, simply providing education to teenage mothers, or pregnant ones, does not guarantee completion of schooling. While official policy may prohibit school expulsion due to pregnancy, in reality, for many Kenyan girls, pregnancy and motherhood often marks the end of schooling. This is because pregnant girls or school-going mothers tend to experience stigmatization both in society and in school. Furthermore, there aren't any childcare facilities available to watch their children while they are at school. Hence, school- going mothers require various support services. In order to promote inclusion and retention of the most vulnerable groups, policy responses must take cognizance of the diversity of young people, their circumstances, and experiences. To be effective, these efforts require focused targeting and segmentation of the target groups, paying particular attention to those most vulnerable and in need of support. This also calls for a broader definition of exclusion from education that encompasses the diversity of lived experiences among boys and girls. To this end, a diverse range of short-term strategies designed to promote equity, educational equality, and eliminate longer-term social exclusion might include programs of targeted support. This may include a range of programs targeting specific groups with unique needs as follows:

- For young girls and teenage mothers- establish day care centers and early childhood education centers to free them from caring for young pre-school siblings during school days.
- For older adolescent girls grappling with issues related to puberty, sexuality, menstruation, pregnancy, and sexual harassment, strategies to ensure safe spaces, access to mentors, female teachers, sex education, girls' clubs and other means of social support should be identified.

- For child day laborers, adjust the school timetable to accommodate, for example, girls' domestic chores and seasonal agricultural activities.
- For those children faced with food shortage, hunger and malnutrition, implementation of school feeding programs to provide them with free meals at school might encourage enrollment and retention.
- For internally displaced girls, providing settlements with the infrastructure and social services might help
- For orphans and vulnerable children in remote, rural and urban poor locations offering scholarships, cash transfers conditional on school attendant, free uniforms, books, and other learning materials.

This is just a short list of examples of short term interventions, not a comprehensive list of the things that could be done to promote equity in education. But, as was pointed out, equality of education, let alone gender equality, are not easy to achieve. Their attainment requires very complicated measures including both the short-term interventions listed above, and long-term micro-and macro level interventions. In other words, some of the incentives to promote access to education cannot work unless they are part of a comprehensive package for improving the quality and gender equality of education. For example, adjusting the school day or calendar to accommodate girls' domestic activities does not work unless it is accompanied by changes in attitudes and thinking regarding why school-age girls should bear the bulk of responsibilities for domestic work (Aikman & Unterhalter, 2007).

The issues raised in this study point to a much broader systemic problem, and therefore do not lend themselves to easy policy solutions. For example, the complex, multidimensional nature of poverty and social exclusion is well beyond any single programmatic action. Thus recommendations emanating from the findings would only be achievable if the wider political, socio-economic, and developmental objectives of the country are taken into consideration. It is within this context that I propose a holistic framework of intervention having in mind the implications for future policy: a) recommendations that are specific to FPE; and b) recommendations that address broader systemic issues in Kenya. In the next sections, I therefore examine and suggest a comprehensive framework within which equality of education for all can be achieved.

Towards finding solutions

Strategies to Eliminate and Reverse Patterns of Multiple Oppression: An Analytical Framework

This study demonstrates that the gender constraints to education emerge out of a complex web of factors ranging from the economic, social, cultural and political. Addressing this problem requires an approach that is holistic and integrated towards addressing the problem in girls' education. Several scholars have provided comprehensive reviews of strategies to enhance female education in Sub-Saharan Africa (Colclough, et al. 2003; Odaga & Heveveld, 1995; Rugh,2000; Subrahmanian,2008,Lewis and Lockheed,2006). Most of these works posit a supply and demand framework for the conceptualization of interventions to enhance girls' education. While cognizant of the interactions of supply and demand factors in girls' education, I

Table 16: A summary of promising interventions to promote female education

DEMAND-SIDE FACTORS	POSSIBLE INTERVENTIONS
Household and community factors High direct costs of schooling High opportunity costs of schooling Low private economic returns to girls education Chastity and sexual safety Low demand for female education	• Lower the cost of school materials • Provide transportation and uniforms • Introduce bursary, scholarship and fee waiver programs, school lunches, medical and health support such as deworming • Adjust the school calendar to accommodate household child labor requirements • Reduce the distance between school and home • Use satellite schools • Provide child care and pre-school facilities promote labor-saving technologies • Improve the legal and regulatory systems to enhance women's status • Make education curricula more responsive and relevant to livelihood and market demand • Increase community participation in schools • Construct culturally appropriate facilities • Promote more female teachers • Secularize Koranic schools • Launch information campaigns that engage community, religious, and civic services • Promote adult literacy programs
SUPPLY-SIDE FACTORS	
School level factors Enrollment and promotion policy Management: calendar and safety Curricula Materials Methods	• Increase enrollments by lowering the enrollment age • Reduce drop-out rates; review repetition and expulsion policies • Provide child care facilities • Institute flexible hours • Improve achievement, improve leaning materials for gender bias, and improve science and math teaching. • Promote female teachers in the sciences • Establish science laboratories and school libraries. • Institute tutoring and mentoring programs • Promote gender sensitivity in all pre and in training service courses and for all educational managers
Political and institutional factors Policy on schoolgirl pregnancy, promotion of female educators, training of staff Attitude, will and commitment to empowering women and the poor Legal status of women	• Create a favorable environment to support women and the poor through policy review • Invest in the necessary structures, schools, facilities for girls, dormitories, walls. • Launch information campaigns • Enhance the status of women through the regulatory process • Adopt poverty-alleviating strategies that release women and girls from the tasks of water and fuel collection for more productive activities • Improve women's access to the formal labor market.

Source: Odaga & Heneveld, 1995 p.53

take this further by urging for acknowledging the intersectional framework within which these variables operate to influence girls' education. This section presents an overview of

some promising interventions to enhance female education in Africa (see Table 16). It then presents the features of an intervention grounded in an intersectional analysis with concrete examples from various parts of the world to show the actions that can be taken by the government and NGOs to begin to overcome the effects of multiple sources of exclusion in education.

Features of intersectionality- driven interventions

The strength of the intersectionality theory and analysis is that it is grounded in a human rights framework which recognizes that the right to education is intrinsically tied to other social, economic, and political rights. Intersectional theory offers a conceptual understanding of the denial of the right to education on the grounds of gender, race, ethnicity, disability, religion, language of instruction, and curriculum.

Tomaveski (2006) points out that the challenge of access is not as it is often characterized by mainstream education policies seeking to reach and integrate the unreached; rather, from a rights-based policy, "tackling exclusion requires halting and reversing exclusionary policies and practices, not only countering their effects" (p.44). The first step in addressing exclusion calls for social, political and economic inclusion of all members of society. Tackling these forms of exclusion is a prerequisite for achieving education for all. Therefore any attempt to improve schooling experiences of excluded girls requires two sets of interventions. The first involves addressing basic long-term issues related to social conditions including:

1. Gender relations in society
2. Poverty

3. Ethnic discrimination.

4. Reviewing policies and systems of implementation.

The second involves short term interventions aimed at countering the effects of exclusion. It means tackling immediate problems related to the supply and demand for girls' education. For example, where distance to school is the main problem, special transport, boarding schools or more schools will be necessary. Where there is gender bias in classroom attitudes and practices, gender responsive teaching methodologies will be required. Where there is gender bias in policies and practices, gender positive policies will be implemented. Some of these include: Re-entry policy for adolescent mothers; appointment of more female teachers; provision of separate toilet blocks for boys and girls. Where sexual harassment and violence against girls is the norm, strict disciplinary measures, based on a strong legal framework should be initiated.

Where direct cost of education is the problem, offering free primary education, scholarships and or bursaries and other financial and material incentives for needy girls will be required. Economic inclusion does not mean sedentarizing nomadic groups, but making educational delivery, its curriculum and pedagogy relevant to the needs of the nomads. It also means developing the infrastructure necessary for schooling to take place. This includes roads, hospitals, and telecommunications. These amenities can also attract qualified teachers from other regions into rural areas and the ASAL regions.

An intersectional approach recognizes that demand for education cannot be divorced from the conditions of supply. Demand is to some degree contingent on the quality and conditions of supply. People react to the quality of schools offered them not

just to the abstract idea of education. Also quality education, access, and success in education are primarily a function of the direct interactions among categories of identity such as gender, ethnicity, and social class. A focus on gender parity is at best a partial strategy for improving educational equality. A quality education not only promotes equality in the learning environment, but also equality of opportunity. A quality education is one that addresses the issues that pose barriers to access, participation, and achievement and the risks that threaten children's well being and life opportunity**.** Therefore, initiatives must be taken to attract girls in school through better quality programs. A quality program should be able to promote better skill development, make the school environment friendly to girls, and provide curriculum that is not only relevant for rural children, but can be applied beyond their rural surroundings.

But for the poor and disadvantaged to attend school, strategies that complement supply-side interventions must be present. It is therefore critical that cultural and economic constraints are addressed simultaneously to ensure that girls receive their education. Consequently, an intersectional response focuses on poverty reduction, and/ or mitigation of its effects. Addressing poverty will involve taking care of direct, and opportunity costs of education for the poor households. Some strategies that have been noted to promote girls education include, abolition of user fees, e.g. free primary education policy; Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs), which provide income supplements to households. Such policies as Free Primary Education attempt to meet part of the direct costs of education such as user fee and other levies, but do not take care of other costs incurred by parents- such as books, uniforms, transportation, and the opportunity costs of schooling. Hence demand-side financing through conditional cash

transfers which address constraints arising from family poverty and vulnerability are critical (Subrahmanian,2007). These programs provide cash transfers to poor households in return for school attendance. Examples of successful CCT schemes include Progresa (Mexico), Programa Bolsa (Brazil), and Primary education Stipend program (Bangladesh).

Also important is the recognition that such costs as food and sanitary wear which aren't usually included among the direct costs of education are in fact 'direct' costs to certain segments of the population. Sanitary towels are a very gender-specific need and a source of significant costs for poor girls, without which they may fail to enjoy an undisrupted primary education. However, such short term interventions must target those children who are the most vulnerable and disadvantaged: the poor ones living in urban slums and rural areas, and also those coming from households hard-hit by HIV/AIDS, orphans, and street children. However, such programs must include local community members in the planning and implementation of programs, and the children too. Communities could contribute food items if they can afford, or participate in the construction of latrines, in setting up school gardens where schools can grow their own foods depending on the climatic factors.

An intersectional response is also sensitive to circumstances that make it difficult to provide schooling for the difficult to reach groups. This may arise from scattered settlements, rural residence, remote or nomadic lifestyles. This problem might be solved through direct focus on the needs of such groups through provision of flexible delivery systems rather than on rigid and standardized formats of schooling (Legget, 2005). An effective intervention that has served the needs of nomadic pastoralists in North Eastern

Province is the Mobile School Project. Its flexible timetable has accommodated the conflicting demands between schooling and livelihood activities of the community (Elimu Yetu Coalition, 2005).

The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE-Kenya) provides one example of a holistic integrated approach towards promoting excluded children's education. FAWE's response demonstrates a clear understanding of the interplay of cultural, social, and economic inequalities and their mutually reinforcing nature. FAWE's attention to the most marginalized girls with a focus on socioeconomic and cultural constraints to education, classroom based problems, and employing a critical pedagogy is a move towards an intersectional approach.

In Kenya, one of its demonstrative interventions includes the creation of Centers of Excellence (COEs). All the COE schools are government schools catering for children from disadvantaged areas. COEs seek to improve the quality of girls' education by targeting gender-oriented barriers, but paying special attention to larger factors that interact with gender influencing educational outcomes. COEs bring together under one roof most of the interventions proven to work in improving girls' education, including boarding facilities, gender sensitive educational materials; gender responsive teachers; A gender responsive school management system; provision of teaching and learning material, advocacy and local community sensitization.

Apart from establishing boarding schools where excluded children enjoy amenities ordinarily absent from their homes such as water, sanitary facilities, and regular meals, FAWE supplements efforts by parents and the government in the provision of teaching and learning materials including textbooks, science equipment, computers, and

library books. Needy girls are also assisted with bursaries to prevent them from dropping out due to lack of fees. Moreover, FAWE ensures that all resources like textbooks are women and men-friendly. This is achieved by representing both men and women's realities such that both can identify with the material. Also available are guidance and counseling desks, as well as workshops and trainings to impart life skills such as assertiveness, negotiation, decision making, and critical thinking (Mlama, 2004 p.8). A key advocacy tool is 'Girls' Education Day' through which a cross section of stake holders are sensitized on the importance of girls' education and examples of good practices are shared (FAWE news, 2003, p.8). The day's program focuses on issues such as girls' voices on HIV/Aids, poverty, and discrimination of girls at home and in schools, sexual harassment and forced marriages. Other activities include speeches by female role models, launching of bursary schemes, prize giving for best performers, and consultation with donors and other partners. The challenge, however, is how this intervention can be scaled up in African educational systems and if it can result in appropriate targeting of resources.

Addressing the gender relations in society

While it is debatable whether education changes the lives of women and gender roles and relations within the family, it is also clear that education has improved the status of women, reduced family size, and expanded their economic roles. There is, however, no simple relationship between the education and the empowerment of women. Education is an enabling factor in the development of human capabilities, but is not necessarily a facilitator unless women have control of resources.

Addressing gender relations ensures that girls benefit from the education they receive, by for example participating equitably in the Kenyan labor market. But to disrupt the gender relations in society requires a focus on promoting women's "gender interests" (Molyneux (1985, p.232) or gender needs (Moser, 1993). Practical gender needs arise out of the gender division of labor. They therefore relate to what girls or boys perceive as immediate necessities, given the socially accepted roles for boys and girls or men and women. While both men and women may share the practical need for water, shelter and food, and income, the inadequate provision of water or healthcare might pose specific problems to women and girls due to their domestic responsibilities. Out of such needs might arise gender specific interests: "Those that women may develop by virtue of their social positioning through gender attributes" (Molyneux (1985, p.232). An intersectional intervention thus, must address women's practical needs that arise directly out of prevailing forms of subordination. A focus on these material needs is largely a response to the direct and opportunity costs of girls' education. They are also short –term and may serve to reinforce the sexual division of labor.

It is therefore imperative to target women's strategic gender needs or gender interests which are indispensable in overcoming women's subordination. Strategic gender needs arise out of women and girls' subordinate position often associated with male power and control, manifest in gender violence, labor market discrimination, and unequal legal rights. A focus on strategic gender interests aims to destabilize the sexual division of labor, alleviate the burden of domestic labor and childcare, eliminate institutional forms of discrimination, such as rights to own land, or property, eliminate sexual violence and control over women (Molyneux, 1985, p. 235).

Eliminating practical gender needs becomes strategic in promoting poor girls' participation in education by eliminating their direct and opportunity costs of schooling. But getting girls into school, letting them stay and benefit from education then becomes a strategic gender interest. Several obstacles to girls' education related to both supply and demand have to be targeted at this juncture. These are issues of access, retention, and completion. Drawing from Molyneux (1985) or Moser's (1993) gender needs framework, we can identify, through a gender analysis, the needs of poor girls and boys both inside and outside of school, and strategies to address them. Some examples of practical needs may include:

Non gender specific practical needs

- Reduction in direct and indirect costs of schooling for households- this means access to food, water, transportation, school uniforms, money to buy school supplies, school level contributions and levies such as money for extra tuition, examination charges, PTA levies, funeral fees.
- Provision of functional toilets , classrooms, desks etc
- Reduction in opportunity costs of schooling

Gender specific practical needs:

- Access to sanitary wear
- Access to clean, functional separate toilets with water
- Money to afford the cost of 'neat-appearance' or well grooming like lotions, pomade, hair dressing, nice clothes, underwear, shoes etc.
- Safety, transport

- Reduction of girls' excessive workloads –this may means provision of less time consuming sources of water and fuel, or flexible school timetabling, and flexible school calendar, and other labor-saving strategies, provision of early childhood education.
- Policies to return to school after pregnancy
- Provision of child care services to teenage mother

Targeting practical needs may, for example, require making the wearing of uniforms optional or providing them free of charge to needy children. It requires targeting adolescent girls who are menstruating and offering them sanitary wear. It may require adapting the school calendar to the needs and interests of rural livelihoods, and establishing day care facilities to free school going girls from caring for siblings instead of attending school (Aikman& Unterhalter, 2007). It requires improving quality of schools, and quality of schooling experience. But since these gender specific needs arise not only from the biological differences between boys and girls, but from deeply embedded local social-cultural relationships between females and males, interventions must target their underlying causes. This calls for a focus on meeting strategic gender needs as a longer term measure to ensure gender equality in education. Examples of strategic gender needs or gender interests include:

- Removal of widespread poverty
- Changing labor market conditions
- Removal of institutional forms of inequality
- Legal protection from gender violence, and sexual harassment

- Gender sensitive curriculum and pedagogy
- Provision for life-skill programs that promote self-esteem
- Recruiting female teachers

For education to realize women's strategic interests, its content and pedagogy must be empowering. To this end, interventions must aim at changing attitudes and thinking about gender relations in society. The school becomes a good starting point by developing and offering gender-sensitive learning materials and pedagogy, gender awareness training for teachers and school management committees; offering programs to raise girls' self-esteem and better protection of girls from sexual harassment by teachers and fellow pupils (Subrahmanian, 2007; Lewis & Lockheed, 2006).

However some of these institutional and structural inequalities transcend the education system and are difficult to eliminate. They not only require inter-sectoral approaches to social policy involving multiple partnerships from government, private sector, to NGOs but also additional action including:

i).Taking measures to abolish ethnic and gender discrimination in both law and practice. This will involve guarding against discrimination in areas such as security of a person, education, political rights, work and health. A multiethnic society like Kenya, with a history of exclusion and discrimination based on racial and ethnic identities, requires constitutional protection of citizens from the discriminatory practices of the state and the ruling elites.

ii). Reviewing policies and systems of implementation. This entails evaluation of policy initiatives and systems of implementation to see how well they address the problems faced by different women and men in their different identities.

iii). Affirmative Action

In a context of historical discrimination such as occasioned by gender, ethnicity or class, justice might entail leveling the playing field for the disadvantaged by according special encouragement and support. For example, Samoff and Bidemi (2006) question the possibility of providing equitable education amidst the history of gender disparity in education in most Sub-saharan African countries. "And can the current free primary education policy guarantee equity in education?" (p.368). Indeed achieving equal access itself is challenging, but is an important measure toward achieving equity. The problem arises when equality is equated with equity. Equal means the same yet the same treatment does not always produce equal outcomes if for example, socialization processes lead to differential competence or interest certain subjects, or when labor market practices discriminate against individuals on the basis of sex and not qualifications (Acker, 1994). Conflating equity and equality diverts attention from addressing the links between discrimination and injustice and sets nondiscrimination, rather than justice, as the major objective.

The Kenya government's, just like the World Bank's tendency to equate the two terms is evident in the Free Primary Education Policy. The policy defines equity in terms of access and accords it high priority. Its basic premise is that "primary education should be universal, and students should not be denied access to schooling because they are poor or female, are from ethnic minorities, live in geographically remote regions, or have special education needs" (Samoff & Bidemi, 2006 p. 369).

> But how is it possible to know whether or not opportunities have been equal without considering outcomes? A good example is where a careful study does not find visible gender discrimination in selection to primary school or in the primary school pedagogy. But if that study also finds that attrition and failure rates are

much higher among girls, it seems likely that opportunities were not equal after all (p. 369)

They conclude that "measures of access are insufficient for assessing equality of opportunity" (p.369). It becomes imperative to consider "outcomes as well as starting points" (p.369) in order to discover and redress inequality.

In sum, I submit that given the socio-economic context in Kenya and the country's desire to achieve education for all, the findings of this and similar studies, any attempt at improving participation in FPE must directly address two key elements:

a) Quality of education including: Teachers' conditions of service; Teacher development and instructional practices; Provision of learning resources and materials; and f) improvement of school infrastructure.

b) Equity in education by focusing UPE squarely on subgroups of poor marginalized children by i).Targeting resources to communities that are particularly vulnerable to poverty and exclusion to prevent them from sliding into poverty ii) ensuring that the financial allocation system has built-in mechanisms to enable distribution of greater resources to regions with greater socio-economic disadvantage.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study makes conceptual, theoretical, and methodological contributions to diverse fields of scholarship and practice**.** To the field of education and development, particularly gender educational research, it offers a more nuanced understanding of the categories often used in social science research to study inequalities in education; to feminist theory and research, it broadens the conceptual and methodological repertoires

through its inclusion of alternative theorizations of gender from other nonwestern global locations, and to the deconstruction of universalisations within gender theory. By examining the situation of the marginalized girl child in Kenya, this study has attempted to deconstruct the universality of the categories of children and the girl-child.

The study also contributes to national and international education policies by highlighting the best ways to accelerate the move towards UPE goals. In recognition of the complexity of the issues surrounding the achievement of UPE goals and gender equality in education, this study provides reasons why further research is needed in the field of gender education studies in nonmetropolitan southern contexts:

- Gender determines whether a boy or a girl living in poverty has opportunity to learn. Further research needs to investigate the gender dimensions of opportunity to learn. A greater focus should also be placed on mitigating gendered, classed and tribalized effects on OTL.
- What would a gender sensitive school environment, including curriculum and pedagogy, look like?
- How might government ministries of education and other actors apply intersectional approaches to policy formulation and implementation?

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Introduction

Explanation of the study
Explanation of the interview procedure
Request permission to record
Review of IRB and interview protocols
Explain guarantee of confidentiality
Sign permission forms
Choose pseudonyms

Interview

Family situation
School and education
Education before FPE
Current experiences – In school, out-of school, never enrolled
Drop outs- context of drop out
Completed but failed to transition to secondary

The interview protocol is listed below:

1. What constitutes a good day at school for you?
2. Do you attend school regularly? If not what makes it hard for you to attend?
3. How old are you, when did you start school?
4. How many siblings do you have? Do they all attend school, if not why?
5. What has made it possible for you to attend school?
6. What are your fears about participating in schooling?
7. Tell me about FPE. Did you attend school before FPE, how has it affected your education?
8. Do you think it has helped many people like you? If so how, if not what else should be done?
9. Do you know of any children who are out of school? Why do you think they are out of school and yet it is free?
10. What factors in your life may help see you through school? Which ones may hinder your education?

APPENDIX B

ORAL ASSENT FORM - CHILDREN

Advisor: Dr. Gretchen Rossman
Student Researcher: Judith Obiero

Study Title: Can Free Primary Education Achieve Universal Primary Education? A study of intersections of exclusion, gender and education in Kenya.

Dear possible research participant,

My name is Judith Obiero. I am a graduate student, School of Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts, U.S.A. I specialize in girls' education, and as part of my work for a doctor of education degree, I am studying how poor girls in urban and rural areas experience gender, class and ethnic dynamics within the context of Free Primary Education in Kenya. The purpose of this research project is to bring to light what girls living in poverty think about their experiences of Free Primary Education. How does it meet their needs? What do they feel about it?

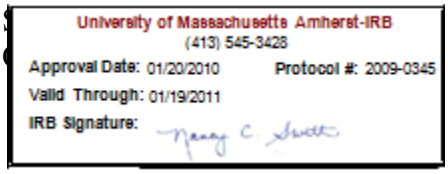
I am asking that you to participate in this project because I believe you have a valuable perspective to offer. The answers to these questions could be important for other girls around the world.

Your participation will entail interviews lasting about 60 minutes, and or observing in your classroom and home for 2 hours, and group discussions. If you allow me to work with you, we will proceed under the following conditions:

- Meetings and interviews will be tape recorded so that nothing is missed and so words are not changed or misunderstood. You can turn off the tape recorder anytime you wish.
- The information from the research will be used in my research report, and publication. Should you wish, your privacy and confidentiality will be protected by disguising names and any other identifying information. You should understand, however, that I will quote directly from our interviews but will not use your name in any part of the report.
- You will review the information I obtain so that you can discuss it with me and suggest modifications for accuracy, clarity, or new information. You will be active participants in the process of analyzing the information because I am interested in your perspective.

I appreciate your willingness to give your time to this project and helping me

learn more your experiences of free primary education. If you agree to these guidelines and would like to participate in the research, please sign the paper at the bottom and return it to me. Thank you for your consideration.



You can contact me at Mr. Obiero Ojal's Home in Nduru Kadero Village or call me at
0723- 049-
215

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at (413) 545-3428 or humansubjects@ora.umass.edu or

108 Research Administration Building

70 Butterfield Terrace

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Amherst, MA 01003-9242."

I agree to participate in this research project under the conditions outlined above.
Signature---------- Date ----------

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER: PARENTS

Advisor: Dr. Gretchen Rossman
Student Researcher: Judith Obiero

Study Title: Can Free Primary Education Achieve Universal Primary Education? A study of intersections of exclusion, gender and education in Kenya.

Dear possible research participant,

My name is Judith Obiero. I am a graduate student, School of Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts, U.S.A. I specialize in girls' education, and as part of my work for a doctor of education degree, I am studying how poor girls in urban and rural areas experience gender, class and ethnic dynamics within the context of Free Primary Education in Kenya. The purpose of this research project is to bring to light what girls living in poverty think about their experiences of Free Primary Education. How does it meet their needs? What do they feel about it?

If you agree to participate, I will meet with you for about 60 minutes. I will ask you questions about the experiences of girls in free primary education. I will ask you how you feel their education may have changed since they began participating, and I will ask you to share a story that highlights some of the changes you feel are most important. They can do this through drawing a picture, telling me a story, or writing it on paper.

Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions that you don't want to answer and you may end the interview at any time you want. Their answers, however, will help me understand how FPE is making a difference and how FPE policy can better support their education.

The information that I gather from you will be presented in a report that describes the changes that have occurred in children's lives as a result of their participation and will be shared with others who are interested in knowing more about Free Primary Education. However, your answers will be completely confidential, which means your name will not be used and will never be used in connection with any of the information you tell me.

This interview will be taped using a recorder to ensure accuracy of information. Pictures and/or video might also be used to help share these stories after the study is conducted. You will have the opportunity to state in another document whether you

agree to be included in video/or picture presentations of the final document.

I believe there are no known risks associated with this interview; however, a possible inconvenience may be the time it takes to complete the interview. If at any point t you feel uncomfortable, they can let me know and we can end the session.

You can contact me at Mr. Obiero Ojal's Home in Nduru Kadero Village or call me at
0723- 049-
215

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at (413) 545-3428 or humansubjects@ora.umass.edu or

108 Research Administration Building

70 Butterfield Terrace

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Amherst, MA 01003-9242."

Signature of Interviewer:_____Date:_____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

University of Massachusetts Amherst-IRB
(413) 545-3428
Approval Date: 01/20/2010 Protocol #: 2009-0345
Valid Through: 01/19/2011
IRB Signature:

APPENDIX D

ORAL INFORMED CONSENT – PARENTS/GUADIANS

Advisor: Dr. Gretchen Rossman
Student Researcher: Judith Obiero
Study Title: Can Free Primary Education Achieve Universal Primary Education? A study of intersections of exclusion, gender and education in Kenya.

My name is Judith Obiero. I am a graduate student, School of Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts, U.S.A. I specialize in girls' education, and as part of my work for a doctor of education degree, I am studying how poor girls in urban and rural areas experience gender, class and ethnic dynamics within the context of Free Primary Education in Kenya. The purpose of this research project is to bring to light what girls living in poverty think about their experiences of Free Primary Education. How does it meet their needs? What do they feel about it?

If you agree for your child to participate, I will meet with them for about 60 minutes. I will ask them questions about their experiences in Free Primary Education. I will ask them how they feel their education may have changed since they began participating in FPE, and I will ask them to share a story that highlights one of the changes they feel is most important. They can do this through drawing a picture, telling me a story, or writing it on paper.

Their participation is voluntary. They do not have to answer any questions that they don't want to answer and they may end the interview at any time they want. Their answers, however, will help me understand how FPE is making a difference and how education policy can better support their needs.

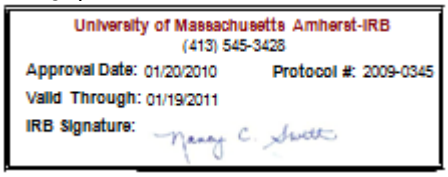
The information that I gather from all participants will be presented in a report that describes the changes that have occurred in children's lives as a result of their participation and will be shared with others who are interested in knowing more about girls' education in Kenya. However, their answers will be completely confidential, which means their name will not be used and will never be used in connection with any of the information they tell me.

This interview will be taped using a recorder to ensure accuracy of information. Pictures and/or video might also be used to help share these stories after the study is conducted. You will have the opportunity to state in another document whether you agree for your child to be
included in video/or picture presentations of the final document.

I believe there are no known risks associated with this evaluation; however, a possible inconvenience may be the time it takes to complete the interview. If at any point they feel uncomfortable, they can let me know and we can end the session.

Signature of Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

(This certifies that informed consent has been given verbally by the guardian of the minor)

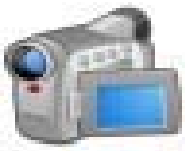


_____ Date:

APPENDIX E

PHOTO/VIDEO/ PUBLICATION RELEASE FORM

Oral Consent Form for Children and their Guardians

I grant permission to the researcher to record and use the image of my child in publications such as reports and video documentation. These images may include photographs and/or video. I do understand that my child's name will not be used in conjunction with any of the images in any publication.

Child's consent

Printed Name: Date:
Children's Signature or Witness of Oral Consent:
Parent or legal guardian consent

Printed Name: Date:
Signature or Witness of Oral Consent:
Investigator
Name: Judith Obiero

Signature: _____Date: _____

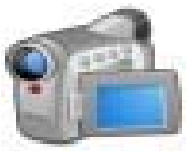
Address and Contact Information: Mr. Obiero Ojal's Home in Nduru Kadero Village or call me at 0723- 049-215

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at (413) 545-3428 or humansubjects@ora.umass.
108 Research Administration Building
70 Butterfield Terrace
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Amherst, MA 01003-9242."

University of Massachusetts Amherst-IRB
(413) 545-3428
Approval Date: 01/20/2010 Protocol #: 2009-0345
Valid Through: 01/19/2011
IRB Signature:

Photo/Video/Media Release Form

Teacher/ Head teacher Consent

I grant permission to the researcher to record and use my image in reports and video documentation. These images may include photographs and/or video. I do understand that my name will not be used in conjunction with any of the images in any publication.

University of Massachusetts Amherst-IRB
(413) 545-3428
Approval Date: 01/20/2010 Protocol #: 2009-0345
Valid Through: 01/19/2011
IRB Signature:

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness Signature: _____ Date: _____

Interviewer's Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F

IFORMED CONSENT LETTER -TEACHER/HEADTEACHER

Advisor: Dr. Gretchen Rossman
Student Researcher: Judith Obiero

Study Title: Can Free Primary Education Achieve Universal Primary Education? A study of intersections of exclusion, gender and education in Kenya.

Dear possible research participant,

My name is Judith Obiero. I am a graduate student, School of Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts, U.S.A. I specialize in girls' education, and as part of my work for a doctor of education degree, I am studying how poor girls in urban and rural areas experience gender, class and ethnic dynamics within the context of Free Primary Education in Kenya. The purpose of this research project is to bring to light what girls living in poverty think about their experiences of Free Primary Education. How does it meet their needs? What do they feel about it?

If you agree to participate, I will meet with you for about 60 minutes. I will ask you questions about the experiences of girls in free primary education. I will ask you how you feel their education may have changed since they began participating, and I will ask you to share a story that highlights some of the changes you feel are most important. They can do this through drawing a picture, telling me a story, or writing it on paper.

Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions that you don't want to answer and you may end the interview at any time you want. Their answers, however, will help me understand how FPE is making a difference and how FPE policy can better support their education.

The information that I gather from you will be presented in a report that describes the changes that have occurred in children's lives as a result of their participation and will be shared with others who are interested in knowing more about Free Primary Education. However, your answers will be completely confidential, which means your name will not be used and will never be used in connection with any of the information you tell me.

This interview will be taped using a recorder to ensure accuracy of information. Pictures and/or video might also be used to help share these stories after the study is conducted. You will have the opportunity to state in another document whether you

agree to be included in video/or picture presentations of the final document.

I believe there are no known risks associated with this interview; however, a possible inconvenience may be the time it takes to complete the interview. If at any point t you feel uncomfortable, they can let me know and we can end the session.

You can contact me at Mr. Obiero Ojal's Home in Nduru Kadero Village or call me at 0723- 049-215

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at (413) 545-3428 or humansubjects@ora.umass.edu or

108 Research Administration Building
70 Butterfield Terrace
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Amherst, MA 01003-9242.

Signature of Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

University of Massachusetts Amherst-IRB
(413) 545-3428
Approval Date: 01/20/2010 Protocol #: 2009-0345
Valid Through: 01/19/2011
IRB Signature:

APPENDIX G

CONSENT FOR VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Title of Research:
Can Free Primary Education Achieve Universal Primary Education?
A study of the intersections of social exclusion, gender and education in Kenya.

I Mr/Mrs/Ms_____volunteer qualitative study and understand that:

1. I will be interviewed by Judith Obiero using an unstructured interview format and accept to participate in "A study of the intersections of social exclusion, gender and education in Kenya".

2. The questions I will be answering address my views on issues related to social exclusion, gender and education in Kenya. I understand that the primary purpose of this research is to focus on the educational experiences of poor rural and urban girls, who live in Nyanza Province, Kenya.

3. The interview will be tape recorded to facilitate analysis of the data. The tapes will be destroyed after the analysis.

4. My name will not be used, nor will I be identified personally, in any way or at any time. I understand it will be necessary to identify participants in the dissertation by position and school affiliation (e.g., a Head teacher, teacher or student for this institution).

5. I may withdraw from part or all of this study at any time.

6. I have the right to review material prior to the final oral exam or other publication.

7. I understand that results from this survey will be included in Judith Obiero's doctoral dissertation and may also be included in manuscripts submitted to professional journals for publication.

8. I am free to participate or not to participate without prejudice.

9. Because of the small number of participants, approximately thirty, I understand that there is some risk that I may be identified as a participant of this

study.

You may contact me at Mr. Obiero Ojal's Home in Nduru Kadero Village or call me at 0723- 049-215.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at (413) 545-3428 or humansubjects@ora.umass.edu or

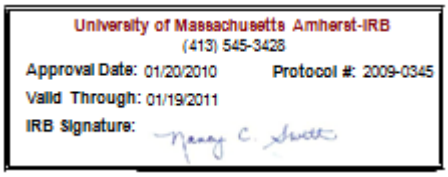
108 Research Administration Building
70 Butterfield Terrace
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Amherst, MA 01003-9242."

_____ _____

Researcher's Signature Participant's Signature

_____ _____

Date Date



APPENDIX H

CONSENT FOR VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN A FOCUS GROUP

Title of Research:

Can Free Primary Education Achieve Universal Primary Education? A study of the intersections of social exclusion, gender and education in Kenya.

I Mr/Mrs/Ms_____volunteer to participate in this focus group discussion on "A study of the intersections of social exclusion, gender and education in Kenya", and understand that:

1. I will be interviewed by Judith Obiero in a Focus Group discussion

2. No questions will be directed to individuals, but will be posed to the group.

3. I may choose to respond or not to respond at any point during the discussion.

4. All research data will be stored in a locked file cabinet and will be destroyed after the research analysis is completed

5. I agree to the importance of keeping information discussed in the focus group confidential , and that I will not discuss anyone's comment outside the room..

6. The questions I will be answering address my views on issues related to social exclusion, gender and education in Kenya. I understand that the primary purpose of this research is to focus on the educational experiences of poor rural and urban girls, who live in Nyanza Province,
Kenya.

7. The group interview will be tape recorded to facilitate analysis of the data. The tapes will be destroyed after the analysis.

8. My name will not be used, nor will I be identified personally, in any way or at any time. I understand it will be necessary to identify participants in the dissertation by position and school affiliation (e.g., a Head teacher, teacher or student for this institution).

9. I may withdraw from part or all of this study at any time.

10. I have the right to review material prior to the final oral exam or other publication.

11. I understand that results from this survey will be included in Judith Obiero's

doctoral dissertation and may also be included in manuscripts submitted to professional journals for publication.

1. I am free to participate or not to participate without prejudice.
2.

You may contact me at Mr. Obiero Ojal's Home in Nduru Kadero Village or call me at 0723- 049-215.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at (413) 545-3428 or humansubjects@ora.umass.edu or

108 Research Administration Building
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University of Massachusetts Amherst-IRB
(413) 545-3428
Approval Date: 01/20/2010 Protocol #: 2009-0345
Valid Through: 01/19/2011
IRB Signature:

_____

_____

Researcher's Signature

Participant's Signature

_____

_____

Date

Date

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