

The primary concern of this study was to find out whether there were cases of pupil's absenteeism in primary schools of Central Division, Machakos District. It also attempted to determine the factors that contributed to pupil absenteeism.

More specifically the study attempted to:

- a) Investigate the problem of pupil absenteeism in central Division of Machakos District.
- b) Find out what necessary steps headteachers were taking to solve the problem.
- c) Suggest some solutions to the problem of pupil absenteeism.

The project was limited to eighteen (18) primary schools which were randomly selected in the Division. The eighteen headteachers of the selected primary schools served as the subjects for the study.

A questionnaire, the main tool used for the collection of data, was administered to the eighteen headteachers. The data collected were analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics.

After analysing the data it was found that pupil absenteeism was a problem affecting all the selected primary schools. The major causes of pupil absenteeism in the selected primary schools were:

- a) Sickness
- b) Family problems
- c) Withholding by parents.
- d) Truancy
- e) School phobia.

The research realized that pupil absenteeism created serious administrative problems. The major problems faced by headteachers of the selected primary schools were pupils poor performance in examination problem of dealing with statistical returns; failure to cover syllabus time wasted in dealing with absentees and behaviour problems.

It was also realized that in order to solve the problem of pupil absenteeism parents had a great help include local leaders, education officers, health officers and church leaders.

The following are some of the conclusions reached from the findings of the study:

- a) Pupil absenteeism is a problem worrying the family, the school and the community.
- b) Persistent pupils absenteeism affects individual's performance in examination.

c) Some of the factors contributing to pupil absenteeism can easily be controlled if different groups of people co-operate to solve this problem.

d) School administration cannot solve the problem without the help of other groups of people like parents, local leaders and education officers.