

This thesis was an investigation of the factors which influence the dropout rates among secondary school students in the Nandi district of Kenya (See Map 1). The study was guided by a theoretical framework based on socio-economic, cultural and regional differences indicative of patterns of inequalities in the distribution of resources in the society. It is from this framework that independent variables explaining the dependent variable, dropout rates were generated. The independent and dependent variables are specified in the context of several hypothesis that were tested.

A major justification for this study is that to date the issue of dropout rates has been almost wholly centered at the primary level of education. Hence there is need to ascertain whether the same explanation of this issue applies at secondary school level.

Chapter one starts with the general introduction and the background of the thesis. Here, the detailed and diverse literature on historical and current developments of the region under study have been examined to give the reader the actual picture of the region and hence a better understanding of the issue in question. It is in Chapter Two where theoretical framework takes account of socio-economic, cultural and regional differentiations in the context of historical developments and contemporary sociological theories and changes explaining and affecting provision of education, and therefore, influencing the extend of drop-out rates. Chapter Three which deals with methodology starts by highlighting the research area and then proceeds to explain techniques of data collection, sampling procedure, specification of variables and ends by stating the hypotheses.

Our empirical analyses and policy implications showed an integrated historical basis in the process of present regional disparities in education and socio-economic development. It is argued that the development of social differentiation in the Kenyan society emerged as a result of the policies and programmes pursued in the precolonial and colonial periods, thus culminating in well demarcated social classes in the post-independence period.

Statistical analyses in Chapter Four verified those arguments and showed that differences in sex, levels of aspiration, attitudes, parental level of education, school type, category and quality were by far the most important variables influencing the rate of educational wastage as a result of dropping out of the school system. However, differences in family income, regional development and students' attendance basis did not show any significant relationship with the rate of dropping out of school.

It was from those findings and interpretations that we drew up some proposals and recommendations in Chapter Five which we thought would provide the best avenues required in the improvement in reduction of educational wastage through high school dropouts.