

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ALTERNATIVE CARE PRACTICES
AND THE EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION OF LOWER
PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS, IN EMBU COUNTY,
KENYA**

**WACHIRA ESTHER WAMBUI
E55/OL/EMB/26114/2019**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION (DEPARTMENT OF EARLY
CHILDHOOD AND SPECIAL NEEDS) IN THE SCHOOL OF
EDUCATION AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING, KENYATTA
UNIVERSITY, KENYA**

MAY, 2025

DECLARATION

I confirm and declare that this research project is my authentic work and has not been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for consideration of any certification. This research project has been complemented by referenced sources correctly acknowledged. Where, data, graphics, words, pictures or tables have been taken from other sources, including the web, these are specially approved and references cited using the current APA system and in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

Signature **Date**

Wachira Esther Wambui

E55/OL/EMB/26114/2019

Department of Early Childhood and Special Needs Education

SUPERVISOR

I confirm that this research project has been submitted for appraisal with my approval as a university supervisor.

Signature **Date**

Dr. Wanjohi Githinji

Department of Early Childhood & Special Needs Education

Kenyatta University

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my husband and children for the support they gave me in completing this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I give thanks to the Almighty God who kept me fit physically, mentally and spiritually, and gave me this opportunity to undertake and accomplish this task. I am grateful to Kenyatta University for giving me an opportunity to pursue my Master's degree program. My gratitude also goes to my supervisor, Dr. Wanjohi Githinji, who devoted a lot of his time, patience and guidance towards the completion of this task.

I am indebted to my mum for her encouragement and moral support. My deep appreciation also goes to my husband James Njogu, my children Kellen and Samuel, to my grandchild Leia and to my sister Nancy who gave me a reason to live, read and write. Finally, many thanks go to my colleagues and my entire respondent team who included headteachers, teachers, learners and alternative caregivers in Embu West Sub-County.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	xi
ABSTRACT.....	xii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY 1

1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Study Background.....	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.4 Purpose of the Study	6
1.5 Objectives of the Study.....	6
1.5.1 Specific Objectives	6
1.5.2 Research Question and Hypotheses.....	6
1.5.2 Research Hypotheses	7
1.6 Study Significance	7
1.7 Limitations & Delimitations of the Study.....	8
1.7.1 Limitation of the Study	8
1.7.2 Delimitations of the Study	8
1.8 Assumptions of the Study	9
1.9 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework.....	9
1.9.1 Theoretical Framework.....	9
1.9.2 Conceptual Framework.....	12
1.10 Operational Definition of Key Terms	14

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW 16

2.1 Introduction.....	16
-----------------------	----

2.2 Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils	16
2.3 Foster Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils.....	20
2.4 Kinship Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils.....	24
2.5 Institutional Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary	27
2.6 Literature Review Summary	30
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	31
3.1 Introduction.....	31
3.2 Research Design.....	31
3.3 Research Variables.....	31
3.3.1 Independent Variables	31
3.3.2 Dependent Variables	32
3.4 Study Locale	33
3.5 Target Population.....	33
3.6 Sampling Techniques & Sample Size.....	34
3.6.1 Sampling Techniques.....	34
3.6.2 Sample Size.....	34
3.7 Research Instruments	36
3.7.1 Questionnaires for Headteachers	36
3.7.2 Questionnaire for Lower Primary School Teachers.....	36
3.7.3 Interview Schedules for Lower Primary Pupils.....	37
3.7.4 Interview Schedule for Alternative Caregivers.....	37
3.7.5 Observation Schedule	37
3.8 Pilot Study.....	38
3.9 Validity & Reliability	38
3.9.1 Validity	38
3.9.2 Reliability.....	39
3.10 Data Collection Procedures.....	39
3.11 Data Analysis	41
3.12 Ethical and Logistical Considerations	42
3.12.1 Ethical Considerations	43

3.12.2 Logistical Considerations.....	43
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS	45
4.1 Introduction.....	45
4.2.1 General Information and Demographic Characteristics	46
4.2.2 Response Rate	46
4.2.3 Demographic Information.....	46
4.3 Participation in the Education of Lower Primary School Pupils in Alternative Care	54
4.3.1 Enrolment Status of the Pupils.....	54
4.3.2 Status of School Attendance	55
4.3.3 Status of School Retention up to Grade 3	57
4.4 Relationship between Foster Care and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils.....	58
4.5 Relationship between Kinship Care and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils.....	59
4.6 Relationship between institutional Care and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils.....	64
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 68	
5.1 Introduction.....	68
5.2 Summary of the Findings.....	68
5.2.1 Status of Educational Participation of Lower Primary School Pupils	68
5.2.2 Foster Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary School Pupils.....	68
5.2.3 Kinship Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary School Pupils.....	69
5.2.4 Institutional Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary School Pupils.....	69
5.3 Study Conclusions	70
5.4 Study Recommendations	70
5.4.1 Policy-makers Recommendations.....	70

5.4.2 Recommendations for Institutions with Alternative Care Practices	71
5.4.3 Recommendations for Headteachers.....	72
5.4.4 Recommendations for Teachers.....	72
5.5 Recommendations for Further Research.....	73
REFERENCES.....	75
APPENDICES.....	82
Appendix i: Questionnaires for the Head Teachers	82
Appendix ii: Questionnaires for the Teachers	84
Appendix iii: Interview Schedule For Lower Primary Pupils	85
Appendix iv: Interview for the Alternative Care-Givers	86
Appendix v: Pupils Observation Schedule	87
Appendix vi: Map	89
Appendix vii: Research Authorization.....	90
Appendix viii: Letter from the Ministry of Education.....	91
Appendix ix: Permit From NACOSTI.....	92

LIST OF TABLES

Table: 3.1: Study Sample Size.....	35
Table 3.2: Summary of Analysis tools as per the Questions/Hypotheses.....	42
Table 4.1: Participants' Characteristics and General Information.....	47
Table 4.2: Availability of Basic Needs for the Lower Primary School Pupils	49
Table 4.3: Type of the Meals Provided to Lower Primary School Pupils	51
Table 4.4: Enrolment Status of the Pupils	54
Table 4.5: Number of pupils under foster care	59
Table 4.6: Number of Pupils under Kinship Care.....	60
Table 4.7: Bayes Factor Inference on Pairwise Correlations between Kinship Care and Educational Participation	62
Table 4.8: Paired Sample t-test Correlations between Kinship Care and school attendance	63
Table 4.9: Number of Pupils under Institutional Care.....	65
Table 4.10: Bayes Factor Inference on Pairwise Correlations between Institutional Care and Educational Participation.....	66
Table 4.11: Paired Sample t-test Correlations between Institutional Care and School Attendance.....	67

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework	12
Figure 4.1: Adequacy of Meals Carried to school by Learners as Observed	52
Figure 4.2: Teacher's Roles in Pupils' Participation in Education.....	53
Figure 4.3: School Attendance as Rated by the Teachers.....	55
Figure 4.4: School Attendance as Observed.....	56
Figure 4.5: Teachers' Perception of School Retention among Lower Primary Pupils.....	57

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSWB	:	Central Social Welfare Board.
CWC	:	Child Welfare Committee.
MGFC	:	Model Guidelines for Foster Care.
NCCS	:	National Council for Children’s Services.
NESMUA	:	Network Surveys on Migration and Urbanization in West Africa.
OVC	:	Orphans & Vulnerable Children.
U N	:	United Nations.
U S	:	United States.
UNCRC	:	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children’s Fund.

ABSTRACT

Alternative care is a childcare arrangement service offered to children mainly in predicaments, whose biological parents are incapable of providing basic needs. With millions of children in alternative care globally, awareness of the impact on education is very crucial. In Kenya, despite the prevalence of alternative care arrangements, such as grandparents, extended family members, or community-based caregivers assuming parental responsibilities, there is lack of comprehensive understanding regarding their impact on educational participation of lower primary pupils. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between alternative care practices and educational participation of 60 pupils in alternative care in Embu West Sub-county, Embu County. The study was guided by the following objectives: to determine the status of educational participation of lower primary school pupils, to establish the relationship between foster care and educational participation, to determine the relationship between kinship care and educational participation, and to find out the relationship between institutional care and educational participation of lower primary pupils in Embu County. The study was anchored on the Bronfenbrenner Ecological System theory. A correlational design was embraced in this study. The population target was 1303 across various schools in Embu West. This study applied purposive sampling to choose a sample size of 132 participants comprising alternative caregivers, pupils, lower primary teachers and headteachers. Reliability of instruments was tested using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, where $r = 0.7$. The study utilized an adapted Kitwood's Qualitative Technique to analyze descriptive data. This entailed various methods but the study adapted the Framework Analysis method. The study found variations in school enrolment and resource allocation among schools, but overall, school attendance was high among lower primary pupils in alternative care. Teachers had a positive perception of school retention among these pupils, emphasizing the importance of adequate instructional materials for enhancing educational outcomes. The absence of pupils in foster care and incomplete data limited a thorough analysis of the relationship between foster care and education participation. The study suggested the need for further research with comprehensive data collection methods to understand this relationship better. There was a significant negative correlation between kinship care and school attendance, indicating a potential inverse relationship ($r = -0.691$), suggesting a significant inverse relationship between these variables ($p = 0.001 < 0.05$). Institutional care showed a strong negative correlation with school retention, suggesting a detrimental effect on school retention among lower primary pupils ($p = -0.836$). However, the influence on school attendance appeared to be less pronounced and statistically insignificant ($p = .356 > 0.05$). The study established that, there was a relatively strong and negative effect of kinship care on educational participation among lower primary pupils in Embu West, Embu County. The study therefore, recommended that there is a need for government through the Ministry of Education to prioritize equitable resource allocation among schools and provide ongoing support for school attendance. County governments, in coordination with other non-governmental organizations, should provide adequate support and resources to pupils in kinship care to ensure their educational needs are met.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of the study's background, statement of the problem, purpose, research objectives, research question and research hypotheses. It also focuses on the study's significance, limitations and delimitations, assumptions, theoretical and conceptual framework and operational definition of key terms used in the study.

1.2 Study Background

According to the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2021), alternative care is childcare arrangement services offered to children, mainly in predicaments, whose biological parents are incapable of providing basic needs. The substitute alternative care settings may be offered through either foster family care, lawful guardianship, adoption or residential care, conditioned by the needs of the child (UNCRC, 1989). Educational participation is associated with children becoming actively involved in school activities. Such activities include but not limited to attending school regularly, children enrolling in primary schools and becoming positively and actively involved in the learning process (UNICEF, 2022). Based on learners' experiences, learner participation creates engagement and motivation for learning here and now, and for future profession.

Care and basic education involve providing support to children of school-going age, combining both physical care and learning. Countries like Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Spain and France have made education a top priority for extra

government spending (UNESCO, 2021). In Finland, a study by Koskela et.al (2020), shows that education is seen as the key opportunity and a basic human right, helping people gain skills, knowledge and chances to grow.

Moreover, by going to school, children gain skills and knowledge that help them and their communities. It also gives them a chance to learn, grow and improve their lives. Every child has a right to basic education, as supported by the United Nations on the Rights of a Child. Every child has a right to primary education, which builds a strong foundation and opens doors to future success (UNICEF, 2022). When parents cannot take care of their children, it harms the children's educational life preventing them from growing to their full potential.

Globally, many children are raised in alternative care systems. In Brazil, a study carried out by Lacio, et al. (2021) revealed that over 30,000 children were placed in foster care. In Australia, a study by Kiraly et al. (2023), highlighted the widespread use of kinship care. Their study found that children in kinship care benefit from stronger cultural ties and family connections, which can positively impact their educational outcomes. In contrast, a study conducted in Ghana by Addy (2020) reported that some children in foster care were subjected to corporal punishment by their care givers. Additionally, UNICEF (2024) noted that kinship care in Zimbabwe was hindered by financial challenges, leading to emotional and educational difficulties for children due to economic instability.

In Tanzania, a study by Save the Children (2024), found that children benefited emotionally and socially from living within their families. However, the same study reported that these families struggled with inadequate resources, which negatively impacted their children's access to education. Similarly, Makuu (2019), conducted a study on strengthening existing alternative care for Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Tanzania and noted that HIV/AIDS significantly influenced child placement. The study highlighted that OVCs often experienced discrimination, stigmatization and abuse, which led to the promotion of family guardianship care as a strategy to ensure their protection and care. In light of this, it was imperative to find out how children in alternative care practices in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County, Kenya, were participating in education specifically regarding school enrolment, attendance and retention in lower primary school.

In Kenya, despite the global and national recommendations discouraging the separation of children from their families, UNICEF (2023) reported that kinship care remains prevalent in Kakuma Refugee Camp. According to UNICEF, the majority of children in the camp are cared for by relatives or community members. The government of Kenya (2014) acknowledged that, factors such as child abuse, neglect, political and ethnic conflict and family breakdown contribute to the need for alternative care arrangements. Research by Shihundu et al. (2019), revealed that children in foster care in Kiambu County, particularly those affected by HIV/ AIDS, often faced adverse experiences that harmed their psychological well-being. The orphan status was linked to anxiety and suffering, promoting intervention from the government and other stakeholders to reduce the social marginalization of children. Kenya is also a signatory to the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1990), which supports adoption practices that prioritize the best interest of the child.

According to the Children's Act (2001), the Department of Children Services (DCS) is mandated to safeguard the welfare of children in alternative care. This mandate is executed through various child placement options such as foster care, kinship care and institutional care. Institutional care is legally recognized as Charitable Children's Institutions (CCIs) under the same Act. The Government of Kenya, through the DCS, ensures that children in alternative care are offered opportunities to participate in education (Children's Act, 2001).

Embu County is not an exception in offering protection and rescue services for children in need. One such institution is St. Stephen Children's Home, established in 1989, which provides care for vulnerable and at-risk children in the community (Mercy, 2020). Mercy (2020) observed that the home experienced funding challenges, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to its reliance on donations from well-wishers. However, the study focused mainly on the operations of the center and only briefly mentioned the influence of alternative care on educational participation among children in lower primary school. Therefore, this study sought to explore in greater depth the relationship between alternative care practices and educational participation among lower primary pupils in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County, Kenya.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite international guidelines advocating for children not to be separated from their biological parents, globally, millions of children are unable to live with their parents due to neglect, conflict, orphanhood and abuse. These children often find themselves in alternative care settings which aim to provide safety, protection and well-being. However, many of these children, especially from marginalized communities, those with disabilities and those living in serious poverty, face challenges that hinder their growth and educational participation. In spite of legal policy frameworks promoting free compulsory education such as Education for All, the Basic Education Act, Sessional Paper No.1 and research on ways of ensuring access and retention to education, an estimated sixty million primary-school-aged children are out of school. These children mostly face barriers that prevent them from fully participating in education, which leads to high dropout rates. Although alternative care practices are increasingly recognized, there is limited research on how these practices affect the educational participation of lower primary school pupils.

Existing studies primarily focus on parental care practices, leaving a significant gap in understanding how alternative care systems impact educational outcomes. This lack of comprehensive research may hinder the development of policies and programmes to support children in alternative care. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the relationship between alternative care practices and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County. By evaluating the challenges, opportunities and strategies associated with alternative care, this study aimed to contribute to enhancing the educational participation outcomes of these children.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish the relationship between alternative care practices and educational participation of lower primary pupils' on school enrolment, pupils' school attendance and their school retention consistency from grade 1-3. The study sought to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving alternative care practices to foster the educational participation of lower primary school pupils.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives listed below acted as a guide for the study:

1.5.1 Specific Objectives

1. To determine the educational participation and continuity of lower primary school pupils under alternative care practices in Embu West, Embu County.
2. To establish the relationship between foster care practices and the educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West, Embu County.
3. To determine the relationship between kinship care practices and the educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West, Embu County.
4. To find out the relationship between institutional care practices and the educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West, Embu County.

1.5.2 Research Question and Hypotheses

Objective 1 aimed to answer the following question:

What is the status of the educational participation of lower primary school pupils under alternative care practices in Embu West, Embu County?

1.5.2 Research Hypotheses

For objectives 2 – 4 the following alternative hypotheses were tested. These are as follows:

Alternative hypotheses

H_{a1} There is a significant relationship between foster care and the educational participation of lower primary school pupils.

H_{a2} There is a significant relationship between kinship care and the educational participation of lower primary school pupils.

H_{a3} There is a significant relationship between institutional care and the educational participation of lower primary school pupils.

1.6 Study Significance

These study findings may be useful to the Ministry of Education. First, the Ministry may use the results to make policies that would encourage programmes to support and improve on alternative care practices. The ministry may derive value in making relevant guidelines to safeguard the well-being of lower primary pupils in alternative care.

The study findings may also be appropriate to the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), which may utilize the results to develop educational programmes for schools that would address the needs of lower primary pupils in alternative care.

The findings of this study may also be suitable to the children's department by using the results to adapt better child protection programmes to defend and preserve the rights and welfare of children as per the Children's Act, 2001. They may use the findings to advise alternative caregivers to be obliged to enrol pupils on time and the significance of consistent school attendance. Lastly, alternative caregivers may be empowered on the need for timely enrolment of their children to school.

1.7 Limitations & Delimitations of the Study

The following were limitations and delimitations of the study.

1.7.1 Limitation of the Study

The researcher encountered some difficulties especially during data gathering such as transport challenges. This was because some schools in Embu West Sub-county are located in areas with poor and rough road networks, hence making it difficult to travel efficiently. To reduce the influence of that challenge, the researcher sought travel options which allowed efficiency during travel to avoid inconveniences. Another challenge was the time for data collection as in some schools, the lower primary school pupils were not available for data collection in the afternoons. To minimize the impact of this, the researcher allocated early morning sessions to avoid those hindrances.

1.7.2 Delimitations of the Study

Many factors may have affected educational participation. Nevertheless, the study focused solely on the relationship between alternative care practices and the educational participation of lower primary pupils in Embu County. This was because there were

diverse ranges of different alternative care settings in our community impacting school participation in children. There were other substitute caregivers, but the study just centralized on foster care, kinship care and institutional care practices in Embu West Sub-county, Embu County.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The researcher set out to study with the following assumptions: first, that the participants would be truthful and give honest responses. Secondly, that the available records were accurate and up to date.

1.9 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The following are the theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

1.9.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was grounded on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. The Ecological Systems Theory, introduced by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979, explains how a child's development is influenced by different environmental systems that interact with one another and with the child to shape their growth and behaviour. There are five layers organized into ecological systems, which include the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem.

The microsystem represents the immediate settings and relationships that directly impact an individual, such as family, school, and peers. The mesosystem involves the interactions between these immediate environments, such as how parental involvement in schooling influences a child's education. The exosystem includes systems that indirectly

affect the individual, like a parent's workplace policies or community services. The macrosystem encompasses broader societal and cultural influences, including norms, laws, and economic systems. Finally, the chronosystem adds the dimension of time, considering how life transitions and historical or socio-economic changes impact development.

This theoretical framework was particularly relevant to this study on alternative childcare settings which are foster care, kinship care, and institutional care and their relationship to educational participation among lower primary school pupils. The nature of these relationships can significantly influence the child's educational participation and success.

In the Mesosystem, interactions between key environments, such as the collaboration between caregivers and schools, are part of the mesosystem. For example, how well a foster parent communicates with teachers can impact the child's educational outcomes. Likewise, in the Exosystem, policies governing foster care, kinship care, and institutional care, as well as community support systems like access to counselling or extracurricular activities, indirectly influence the child's educational opportunities.

On the other hand, in the macrosystem, cultural attitudes toward alternative child care, the societal stigma associated with foster or institutional care and the broader educational policies in the country shape the educational experiences of children in these settings. Finally, in the chronosystem, over time, transitions such as moving from one foster home to another, changes in institutional policies, or shifts in societal attitudes toward

alternative care can have long-term effects on a child's educational participation and outcomes.

By using Bronfenbrenner's theory as a framework, the study can holistically examine how foster care, kinship care and institutional care systems can influence the educational participation of children. Children in alternative care can often have disrupted family relationships and may rely on caregivers and educators for support. A nurturing ecosystem with positive caregiver relationships can enhance children's educational participation. This theory applied to this study because it helped the researcher to establish how alternative care influences educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-county, Embu County that ensured access and consistency of schooling.

1.9.2 Conceptual Framework

The below conceptual framework is showing the connection between Independent and Dependent Variables.

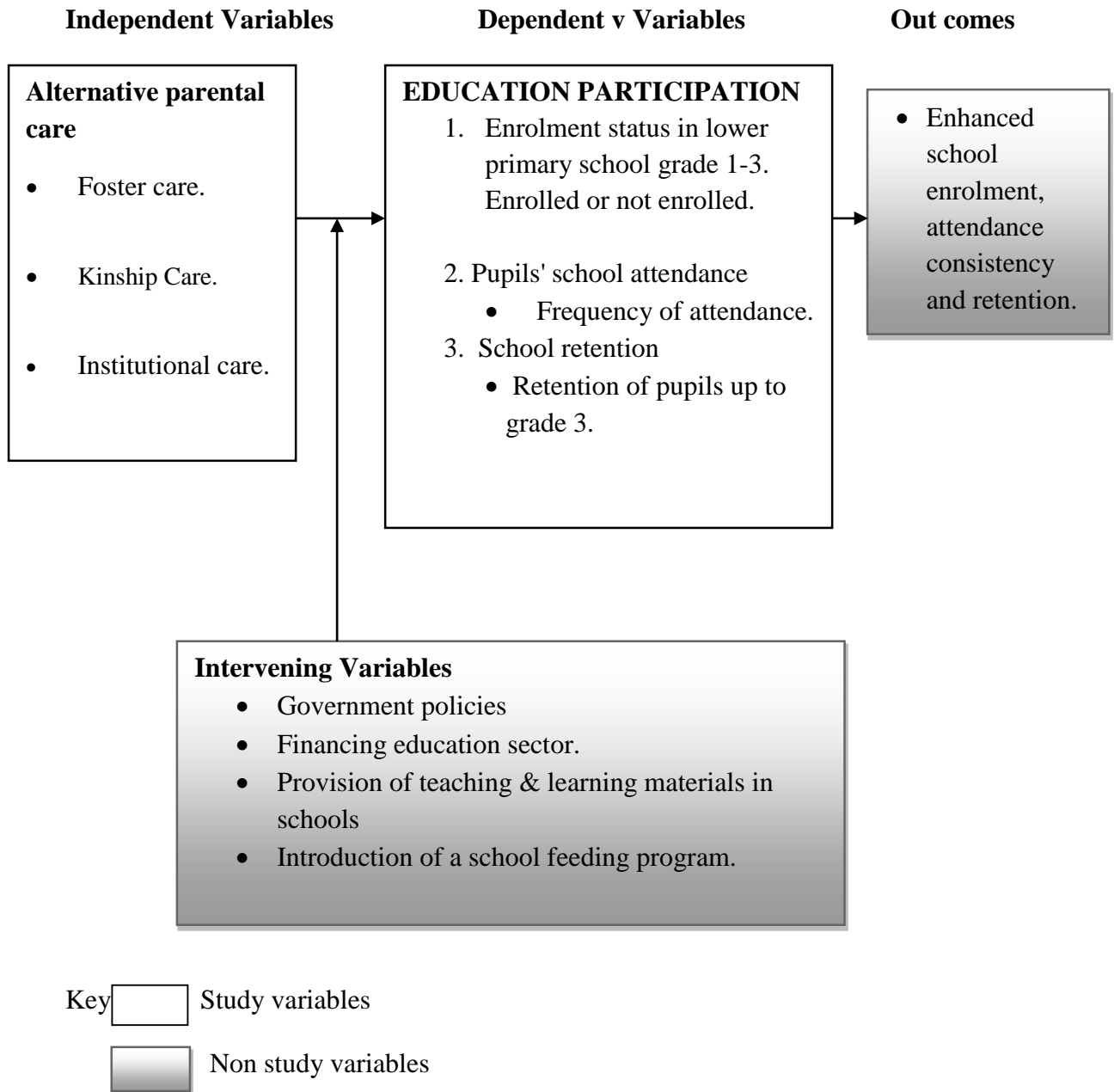


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

The independent variables in this study were foster care, institutional care, and kinship care. The diagram illustrated that independent variables influenced the dependent variable, which was the educational participation of pupils. As indicated in the framework, the learners' educational participation was measured by three indicators: school enrolment, pupils' school attendance, and school retention.

1.10 Operational Definition of Key Terms

The following words and terms have been used.

Alternative care: According to this study, it is any setting, official or non-official, makeshift or lasting care for a child disunited from his/her parents in Embu County.

Childcare: It is defined as the care, support and supervision of children at a time, and ensuring that their emotional and educational needs are met.

Early childhood: It refers to the time from birth to eight years of age, when the growth and development of children is remarkable with the brain reaching developmental peak.

Education participation: Based on the study, it is defined as learners' being actively engaged in school activities including enrolment, school attendance, and retention impacting on curriculum and feeling of belonging to a community.

Enrolment: This is the act of putting a child on the official list of pupils in a class.

Foster care: This refers either to formal or informal custody of a child with a non-relative who is ready to care for the child according to this study.

Institutional care: According to this study, it refers to a home or an institution established and allowed to run a programme for nurturing, safeguarding and rehabilitation of juveniles.

Kinship care: Any formal or informal arrangements inside the household where a child is attended to temporarily or lastingly by a kin.

Lower primary: This refers to the level of learning in primary school consisting of grades 1 to 3 in the C.B.C system of education in Kenya.

School attendance: This refers to the presence of the required number of pupils at school and the number of hours they attend.

School retention: Refers to the ability of a school to keep pupils enrolled and actively attending classes until they complete a particular level of education.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one was essentially introduction and background of the study. This chapter presents the reviewed literature on alternative care practices based on the objectives. It is divided into the following sub-headings: Educational participation, foster care, kinship care and institutional care of lower primary pupils in Embu West Sub-County. Additionally, the chapter gives a summary of the related literature reviewed and the research gaps.

2.2 Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils

Educational participation refers to an individual's involvement in formal, non-formal, or informal learning activities, which contribute to personal and societal advancement. Globally, more effort is being made to improve inclusivity in education through targeted interventions, especially in marginalized communities. Non-formal education has become increasingly important for lifelong learning and addressing social and workforce-related challenges (Holford et al., 2022; ILO, 2022; UNESCO, 2020). Additionally, structured participation in both traditional and alternative education systems enhances social integration, economic empowerment and civic participation (Boyadjieva & Ilieva-Trichkova, 2022; Boeren, 2023). However, significant disparities persist due to socio-economic status, educational background, and regional educational policies (Desjardins & Kim, 2023; Iñiguez-Berrozpe et al., 2020). This literature informed this study by establishing the broader understanding of educational participation and highlighting the

persistent barriers faced by disadvantaged groups, which include children in alternative care, a group which this study specifically targeted.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2023), emphasizes the foundational role of early childhood education in cognitive, social, and emotional development. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and (Kenya's Children Act, 2001), every child is entitled to safe, accessible and affordable education. This therefore, reinforces the importance of focusing on early grades 1-3, as this study did and aligned with legal and moral responsibility to ensure inclusive education for all children in alternative care.

Globally, most educational research originates from high-income countries. According to UNESCO (2021), education is one of country's top priorities in Scandinavian countries and European countries such as Italy, France, Ireland, and United Kingdom. In the United States, the Department of Education ensures quality education access through legislation (U.S., 2020). However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread school closures, affecting over 50 million students (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). This global context helped to illustrate how external disruptions and national policy frameworks influence educational participation, providing a comparative foundation for understanding participation levels in Embu West Sub-County, in lower primary school. In Finland, studies reveal that education is universally accessible and both schooling and meals are free, contributing to nearly 90% preschool enrolment for children aged 3-5 (Koskela et al., 2020). This shows the importance of organized support in increasing

enrolment, which contrasts with situations in Kenya and highlights areas where support for children in alternative care may be lacking.

In Africa, dropout rates remain high, especially in under-resourced areas. Roman et.al. (2022) found that South African students in low-income schools drop out of school at higher rates due to financial and family-related pressures. This supports the idea that socio-economic and family conditions are key factors in alternative care directly linked to educational participation, which validated the focus of this study. According to the African Union and UNICEF (2021), report on transforming education shows that while enrolment is improving in Africa, dropout rates are rising. West Africa alone accounts for 40% of the continent's school dropouts. This reflects a regional crisis that reinforces the need to examine vulnerable groups such as children in alternative care, whose experiences with educational participation are still undocumented, an issue which this study sought to address.

In Nigeria, despite free basic education, 10.5 million children aged 5-14 are out of school (UNESCO, 2020). Factors such as hawking and poverty, have adversely affected enrolment, attendance and retention in basic education of students in Zamfara State (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Similarly, another study revealed that the COVID-19 lockdown lessened the likelihood of school presence by 7% of children aged 5-18 years of age (Dessy et al., 2021). Additionally, another study carried out by Eze et al. (2021) asserted that, the epidemic, without sympathy, impacted education, resulting in poor school enrolment, imbalance in education and poor achievements. While these studies revealed structural and economic causes of low educational participation, they did not address the

situation of children in alternative care, which highlighted a knowledge gap that this study aimed to fill.

In Somalia, according to the United Nations Office of the Coordinator Humanitarian Affairs (2020), a study indicates that more than 3 million children are out of school. This study affirms that many parents across the country are not able to fund education for their children due to poverty. In a study by Global Partnership, it was indicated that about 70% of school-age children in Somalia were out of school (Global Partnership for Education, 2023). This study has further affirmed that the Somali government has started initiatives to enhance equitable access to education as part of the transformation of the education sector. Although reforms are under way in Somalia, studies lack data on educational participation of children in alternative care which this study affirmed the need for localized study in Embu West Sub-County, where similar socio-economic challenges may affect children in alternative care.

In Kenya, like many other countries, study on educational participation has notable aspects on efforts and challenges in enhancing access, retention and transitions to overall education levels (Ziziafrique, 2024). Additionally, Ziziafrique has indicated that lower primary schools in Kenya are facing inadequate teacher training on Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), overcrowded classrooms and insufficient learning materials. These findings indicated that ensuring educational participation for all remained a challenge in Kenya especially children in marginalized areas which the stakeholders should address (Ziziafrique, 2024). Another study by the World Bank on COVID-19 indicated that the pandemic impacted education systems through lockdown and school closures (World

Bank, 2020). In January 2021, all Kenyan schools reopened for all grades but quite a number of children especially girls failed to return to school (Mlaba, 2021). However, despite these insights, there remains limited data on how children in alternative care were affected and therefore this gap directly informed the purpose of this study to explore the relationship between alternative care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

2.3 Foster Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils

Foster care is an arrangement of putting a child with a person who is not a relative, or a custodian and also who is ready to take up, care and nurture the child (Children Act, 2001). As stated by United Nations Guidelines for Alternative Care of juveniles, fostering is where children are taken up by a capable system with the intention of offering a substitute care in a household environment other than the child's own family (United Nations, 2009). Some governments respond by increasing foster care allowances to enable caregivers meet growing needs of children under their care (Fostering Network, 2023). Foster care offers a valuable contribution to the children who have been abandoned, orphaned or at-risk of losing parental care. This literature informed this study by establishing a foundational understanding of what foster care is and how this caregiving environment may influence school participation among lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

Education is an elementary right of all children in spite of their social, cultural, religious and financial status (UNCRC, 1989). According to OECD (2023), educational participation goes beyond enrolment and emphasizes consistent school attendance and

meaningful involvement in learning. This highlighted the importance of evaluating not just whether children in foster care were enrolled in school but also the quality of consistency of their participation which was an essential focus of this study in assessing lower primary school pupils in foster care in Embu West Sub-County.

In South America, Brazil is one of the states where juvenile placement system has been under reform to gain approval from UNICEF (Licio et al., 2021). A study carried out in Brazil indicated that more than 30,000 children accounting for 4% of children, were placed in foster care (Licio et al., 2021). Further, another study found that the children in foster care had felt lonely due to splitting up from siblings (Cassarino and Perez et al., 2020). Additionally, Cassarino et al. affirmed that the family ties with their children were not preserved and were done without providing them with information about children's rights (Cassarino et al., 2020). Although these studies focused on emotional well-being rather than education, they informed this study by illustrating how psychological challenges of foster placement could influence school attendance, engagement and overall participation, which were key elements of this research in Embu West Sub-County.

In Australia, a study indicated that children entered out-of-home care after having experienced significant childhood adversities (OECD, 2020). Further, another investigation took place to assess the aftermath of COVID-19 on placed children (Cornell et al., 2022). Cornell and MaCaffery asserted that from the start of the pandemic, face-to-face interactions by children with their birth families were restricted due to lockdown and COVID-19 restrictions. Singer and Brodzinsky (2020) added that the growing pressure of

the pandemic had led to uncertainty on foster children's placement. Further, their study indicated that child welfare systems were not adequately able to follow up on children's maltreatment during the closure of schools since the schools were a critical part of the reporting process (Jentsch et al., 2020). This literature informed this study by showing how disruptions in foster care systems and external crises could affect children's emotional and social stability, factors that may directly impact educational participation. It therefore reinforced the need for this study to investigate whether similar conditions affected educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

In Ghana, Africa, empirical research shows that in 2020, the country had 500 trained and confirmed foster caregivers attending to the needs of 201 foster children (Ghana Department of Social Welfare & UNICEF, 2021). Additionally, this empirical research indicated that these juveniles perceived that their material needs were met and secured in their placement (Frimpong-Manso et al., 2020). On the contrary, a study carried out by Addy (2020) affirmed that these foster children were reported to experience corporal punishment from their foster caregivers. Further, foster caregivers reported several challenges emanating from lack of financial support that the children were entitled to (Frimpong-Manso et al., 2020). Additionally, Frimpong-Manso et al. affirmed that the cost of caregiving towards foster children had increased due to the pandemic, with a further impact on children's school feeding programmes (Parkpour et al., 2020). However, the study by Parkpour et al. (2020) did not address the issue of foster children's participation in education. These findings were relevant to this study as they highlighted both strengths and weaknesses within foster care systems that may impact children's

ability to attend school consistently. However, since these studies did not directly address educational participation, this study aimed to bridge the gap by focusing on pupils in lower primary school in Embu West Sub-County in foster care practices and educational participation.

In Tanzania, a study was conducted by Makuu (2019) on making stronger actual placement systems for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). According to this study, it was found that HIV/AIDS was the main contributing factor to the difficulties connected with the placement of children in foster custody. Makuu found that OVC in Tanzania have continued fighting in terms of care, safety and protection of children in alternative care. According to Makuu, these findings further affirmed that the Orphaned and Vulnerable Children were thrust into serious abuse, stigmatization, discrimination and neglect (Makuu, 2019). Further, Makuu disclosed that advocacy of family-based custody for OVC was a very crucial measure for giving an address to a child's need for love, care and protection. While this study focused on care and protection, it did not explore how these factors influenced children's school participation. This research therefore, built on Makuu's insights and examined whether the experiences of fostered children in lower primary in Embu West Sub-County were affected in their educational participation.

Shihundu et al. (2019), conducted a research in Kenya, on the correlation between care provided by foster custody on the psychological welfare of juveniles affected by HIV and AIDS. Their results demonstrated that children in foster care affected by HIV and AIDS appeared to have unfavourable actions inflicted on them by their caregivers (Shihundu et al., 2019). Additionally, their study affirmed that an elevated proportion of negative

deeds administered to these children brought about low self-regard, lack of assurance, guilt and fear. Although Shihundu et al. only concentrated on psychological well-being, it indirectly suggested that such emotional challenges could impair learning and school engagement. Thus, this researcher extended the discussion by investigating how these foster care dynamics, were related to educational participation among lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

2.4 Kinship Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils

Kinship care refers to a form of child placement that is family-centred within the child's household or family friends, as stated by the Child Welfare Information Gateway, United States (2019). Kinship care has been a tradition for quite some time across cultures globally (Delap et al., 2019). Further, Delap et al. affirm that kinship care is a priority that is valuable despite being neglected by policymakers and practitioners. The system can be unofficial but many nations in the world now possess lawful structures for kinship care (Harwin & Simmons, 2019). Globally, 1 out of 10 children lives without birth parents, most of them putting up with relatives (De Wet, 2019). Internationally, evidence indicates that kinship care gives greater security of the location than non-relative fostering (Brown et al., 2019). This part of literature informed this study by establishing that kinship care is a widely accepted and culturally grounded practice, offering stability that could support children's consistent school enrolment, attendance and retention which were key aspects of this study to explore on relationship between kinship care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021), carried out a research and identified that family-centred care placements are more widespread than foster care. Further, Australian study indicated that 54% of children in out-of-home care were under kinship custody (AIHW, 2021). Additionally, another study by Gatwiri et al. (2019), affirmed that many children in Australia were being raised in kinship care. A study carried out by Kiraly et al., indicated that kinship care children in Australia experienced positive outcomes in terms of cultural continuity and family connections, which may influence their educational outcomes (Kiraly et al., 2023). While these studies highlighted the potential positive influence of kinship care on child development, they did not examine educational participation among lower primary school pupils which this study aimed to bridge the gap by examining the effect of kinship care practices on enrolment, attendance and retention of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

In Zambia, kinship care practices are widely preferred as alternative care for children who need protection and care (Benjamin et al., 2019). Benjamin et al. asserted that children who put up with a sister or close grandmother were found to fare better than those who lived with a relative they were not close. Another study in Zimbabwe affirmed that children maintained stronger and better connections with their kin caregivers than their birth parents (Mann et al., 2020). Similarly, according to Abdullah, Cudjoe and Manful (2020), children reported that kin caregivers were more reassuring and caring than biological parents. On the contrary, a study carried out by UNICEF (2024) indicated that kinship caregivers often face challenges like financial constraints to support their caregiving systems in Zimbabwe. These findings provided an understanding into both emotional benefits and economic challenges of kinship care, highlighting the influences

that may affect a child's ability to consistently participate in school. This study, therefore, sought to investigate how kinship care influenced the educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

In Tanzania, a study was conducted on opportunities to access education and help for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in both junior and senior schools in Bagamoyo District (Loisiki, 2020). The study findings indicated that most of the OVCs who lived with their kin experienced more problems as compared to those living in orphanages. Despite the advancement of basic education provision in Tanzania, Loisiki (2020), affirmed that acquiring academics among OVC was caused by little and unreliable financial sources to meet their essentials. Furthermore, a study by Save the Children (2022), indicated that children benefited from living within their families which provided emotional and social connections. On the contrary, save the children's study indicated that, these families struggled with inadequate resources affecting their children's educational opportunities. These studies enlightened the researcher by revealing that while kinship care promotes emotional security, financial instability may limit school access and participation. Thus, reinforced the need for this study to explore the relationship between kinship care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

In Kenya, as in many other countries in South of Saharan, the number of children in need of protection is high. A study carried out in Kakuma Refugee camp indicated that kinship care is prevalent, with children being cared for by relatives or other community members (UNICEF, 2023). UNICEF asserted that, while these children benefited from emotional

stability, they still required support to get connected with worthy education. This national context underscores the relevance of examining how widespread kinship care influences educational participation. Since there is limited local research linking kinship care to educational outcomes, there was a need for this study to seek the relationship between kinship care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County.

2.5 Institutional Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary

Institutional care refers to structured forms of care offered to vulnerable children in settings such as residential institutions or orphanages (OECD, 2021). Educational participation is assessed through indicators such as enrolment rates, attendance and retention rates and offering awareness into the accessibility of educational opportunities worldwide (OECD, 2023). The early years of a child's life in educational participation, builds the basis for lifelong growth (UNICEF, 2022). In recent years, it has been observed that the family has been losing some of its roles and obligations on the care of children. This has brought about out-of-school children and greatly impacts on their educational participation (UNICEF, 2021). These key findings showed that stable care is important for helping young children take part in education. It framed the justification for this study that focused on how institutional care settings influenced educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, approximately 187,124 children have been placed in residential institutions (Lumos, 2020). Further, Lumos affirms that, in all parts of these mentioned regions, the Child Safeguarding Care System has been improved to conform

with international child rights guidelines. It is affirmed that Beyond Institutional Care has come into being to support the government across the two regions to advance the child defence and deinstitutionalization process (Lumos, 2020). Whereas Lumos literature offered important insight into system reforms and child protection, it did not address how residential care arrangements affected children's school enrolment, attendance and retention. This represented a key gap that this study sought to fill by carrying out a research on the relationship between institutional care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, a study was conducted in South Africa on the Covid-19 aftermath in residential care (Fallon et al., 2020). These findings indicated that lockdown restrictions placed extra pressure on vulnerable children in residential homes. Similarly, another study asserted that adapting to new modalities of education and other essential services posed major problems to children in orphanages in South Africa (Better Care Network, 2020). Further, Bega et al. (2020) affirmed that approximately 27 abandoned babies in this country during the pandemic were taken to residential homes in Johannesburg. These studies revealed how crisis conditions affected children in institutional care but did not analyze how these conditions impacted educational participation. This gap strengthened the relevance of this study, which aimed to explore how institutional care practices influenced educational access and continuity among grades 1-3 pupils in lower primary schools in Embu West Sub-County.

In Tanzania, OVC have experienced serious neglect, abuse, discrimination and stigmatization (Makuu, 2019). Makuu's findings were a case study carried out in Ubungo

Residential Centres in Dar es Salaam on psychological issues affecting orphaned children and caregivers. Additionally, another study carried out in Tanzania on disability and inclusive education indicated several gaps in access to education (World Bank, 2023). Further, World Bank indicated that only 50% of children with disabilities in the institutional care attended school due to inadequate teacher training. These findings show that problems in institutional care make it harder for vulnerable children to attend school. However, they lacked a comprehensive focus on educational participation on enrolment, attendance and retention as indicators. Therefore, this study supported the need to assess these outcomes by carrying out research on the relationship between institutional care practices and educational participation among lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County.

In Kenya, institutional care practices continue to face challenges such as inadequate funding and service delivery, demanding policy change to maintain progress (Better Care Network, 2023). A descriptive study was carried out in Kibera exploring the link between resources and customer satisfaction in residential centres (Kilio et al., 2021). Kilio et al. revealed that residential care centres in these slums had inadequate infrastructure to offer quality care for children. Further, it that the institutions lacked enough accommodation facilities and had scarce playgrounds for extra-curricular activities for scholars (Kilio et al., 2021). While Kilio et al. study linked resources to satisfaction levels, it did not explore how these factors influenced educational engagement of children. Therefore, this gap in Kenya justified this research which sought to determine how institutional care practices, amid infrastructure and resource constraints, affected enrolment, attendance and retention of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County.

2.6 Literature Review Summary

Despite the international guidelines advocating against the separation of children from their biological parents, studies indicate that millions of children live in alternative care due to neglect, conflict, orphan hood and abuse. Many of these struggle to fully participate in education. An empirical study by Addy (2020) has indicated that children under foster care were reported to experience challenges such as financial constraints in meeting their educational needs. Similarly, UNICEF (2024), reported comparable issues in its study on kinship care in Zimbabwe. Studies have also shown that vulnerable and orphaned children in institutional centres in Tanzania face abuse, discrimination and stigmatization highlighting significant gaps in access to education (Makuu, 2019).

However, despite the growing focus on alternative care practices, there is a lack of localized studies addressing their impact on educational participation among lower primary school pupils in Embu County. Existing research has primarily focused on upper primary and secondary schools, leaving out lower primary school pupils. Additionally, there is limited literature on the implementation of Kenya's child protection policies in enhancing educational participation outcomes in alternative care. This study, therefore, sought to establish the relationship between alternative care practices and the educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-county, Embu County, Kenya.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the entire procedure of how the study was undertaken. It included research design, research variables, location of the study, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, pilot study, validity & reliability of the instruments, data collection techniques, data analysis as well as ethical and logistical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This study embraced a correlation research design. Creswell (2023), posited that correlation design is a qualitative research method used to examine the correlation between two variables and to determine their relationship without manipulating them. The aforementioned was helpful to the researcher to ascertain whether there was a relationship between alternative care and the education participation of grade 1-3 pupils in the study. The design helped to draw attention to the relationship between variables and asserted if the relationship was strong, weak, or no relationship occurred between them.

3.3 Research Variables

The variables were as follows:

3.3.1 Independent Variables

The independent variable was alternative care practices, which included: foster care, kinship care and institutional care.

Foster care: In this variable, consideration was on children who had been placed with adults who were not their parents or relatives but were ready to take care and nurture the children. The variable was measured by getting the total number of fostered children in grades 1-3.

Kinship care: The consideration in this variable was on children who were living with extended members of the family. This focused on how their needs were met in relation to food, clothing, and shelter. The variable was measured by using an ordinal scale whereby words such as 'never', 'rarely', 'sometimes', and 'always' were used and assigned with corresponding scores as 1 never, 2 rarely, 3 sometimes, 4 always.

Institutional care: This referred to the children who had been placed in residential institutions. This sought to measure how they preferred to be in those institutions. This variable was measured on a four-point Likert scale of preferences namely 'exceedingly prefer', 'modestly prefer', 'lowly prefer', and 'not at all prefer'.

3.3.2 Dependent Variables

The dependent variable was educational participation of lower primary school pupils from grades 1-3. This variable was evaluated based on the enrolment in lower primary school, school attendance and retention in school up to grade 3. Enrolment was measured by checking the records of children who joined school each year, attendance was gauged through the class attendance register, while retention was established based on proceeding to the next class level. The variables were predictors of educational participation in alternative care among lower primary pupils in Embu West Sub-county, Embu County.

3.4 Study Locale

This research took place in Embu West. The Sub-County is situated at the nerve centre of Embu County which formerly used to be the provincial head office of Eastern province (Eastern region). Most of the groups of people in the area of study are engaged in both formal and casual occupations. Children in the area attend local schools found in the municipality and in rural setups. Additionally, some children in the location of the study had been placed under alternative care in institutional centres due to abuse, neglect or parental loss (Mercy, 2020). Embu West Sub-County was chosen because it provided unique socio-cultural and economic interactions. The sub-county also offered an exceptional scenario for understanding the challenges faced by children in alternative care and has a notable number of children in various alternative care settings. Moreover, there were many cases of high enrolment of children in rescue centres and children's homes. However, information was lacking from the education office on whether these children were schooling. It was therefore necessary to establish how these children in alternative care were progressing in their educational journey. Lastly, enrolment in lower primary schools has been low in this area in the recent years (Ministry of Education, 2019).

3.5 Target Population

The target population was 1303 which was broken down into thirty-five (35) public schools, four (4) institutional centres, (105) lower primary school teachers, thirty (35) head teachers, 1050 lower primary school pupils, seventy (70) alternative caregivers and four (4) headteachers from the institutional centres.

3.6 Sampling Techniques & Sample Size

Below were the sampling and sample size of the study.

3.6.1 Sampling Techniques

In selecting subjects of research, the researcher employed a purposive sampling technique to select lower primary school pupils, lower primary school teachers and alternative caregivers. This helped the researcher choose the participants that provided information related to the issue studied. Patton (2015), described purposive sampling as where the researcher intentionally selects participants who are rich in information about the topic being studied. The researcher also employed a stratified sampling technique to select five (5) schools in each of two (2) sub-zones in the sub-county based on rural and urban schools. The 10 schools in the sub-county provided 132 respondents who were believed to possess reliable information for the study.

3.6.2 Sample Size

The percentage of the subjects of the study was between 10%-30% in various categories. A sample size between 10% and 30% is considered practical for descriptive studies. Recent studies on sampling methods recommend this range for maintaining representatives while ensuring efficiency in the data collection process (McNeeley, 2020). The study sample size had a total of 132 participants, constituting 10.1% of the 1303 target population. A sample size of 28.6% of 35 targeted public primary schools was selected, 25% of 4 targeted institutional centres in Embu West Sub-County and 28.6% of 105 targeted grade 1-3 teachers from the selected schools. The selection of 25%

of the institutional centres ensured a focused investigation into the role of institutional care, in line with the recommendations of experts in child welfare.

A percentage of 28.6% of 35 targeted headteachers, 5.7% of 1050 targeted lower primary school pupils, 28.6% of 70 targeted alternative caregivers, and 25% of 4 targeted institutional headteachers were sampled for the study. 10.1% of the target population was favourable as it provided a comprehensive exploration of the phenomenon being investigated. That being the case, the sample size was 132 respondents which was 10.1% as illustrated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Study Sample Size

Category	Target population	Sample size	Percentage
Public Primary Schools	35	10 Schools	28.6%
Institutional Centers	4	1 Institution	25%
Grades 1-3 teachers	105	30 from sampled schools	28.6%
Head-teachers	35	10 from sampled schools	28.6%
Pupils in public schools	1050	60 from sampled schools	5.7%
Alternative Caregivers	70	20 from sampled schools	28.6%
Institutional Head-teachers	4	1 from the sample institution	25%
Total	1303	132	10.1%

3.7 Research Instruments

The investigation applied interview guides, a set of questions and an observation schedule to gather information from the respondents.

3.7.1 Questionnaires for Headteachers

Questionnaires (Appendix I) were directed to the headteachers in the schools. The questions were categorized into 4 sections. Section A tried to obtain demographic information details. Section B was to collect information on pupils from alternative caregivers in the lower primary. Section C gathered information on the adequacy of instructional materials and section D on school attendance and expectations. The respondents were required to scrutinize the questions, clarify what was anticipated, and put in writing their responses. The questionnaires were applied in both closed and open-ended formats. The respondents were required to give a straightforward answer either to tick or give a YES or NO answer, and also give a rating on their views in the closed-ended questionnaires, while in open-ended questionnaires, however, they were expected to give out their views and provide in-depth information.

3.7.2 Questionnaire for Lower Primary School Teachers

A questionnaire (Appendix II) was issued to teachers in grade 1-3. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section A sought the background information of the teachers and the pupils in each grade. Section B enquired information on rating pupils' school daily attendance and section C obtained information on adequacy of instructional materials on how the materials influenced pupils' enrolment and school attendance.

3.7.3 Interview Schedules for Lower Primary Pupils

The interview guide was Appendix III. The scheduled interview was administered to lower primary pupils from alternative care. The interview guide had three sections. Section A was on background information of the pupils. Section B was to get information on the adequacy of basic needs and section C was on support, care and protection both at home and school. The interview schedule was appropriate for use for those respondents as the researcher was enabled to gather information to combine with what was collected using questionnaires. Interviewing also gave room for clarification and elaboration of respondents' views in their own words.

3.7.4 Interview Schedule for Alternative Caregivers

The interview guide (Appendix IV) was directed to caregivers. It contained three sections. Section A sought to acquire background information on the alternative caregivers. Section B obtained information on the provision of adequate basic needs to meet educational needs for their children, and Section C collected information on how the alternative caregivers provided care, protection and support for their children. This involved guiding them in doing homework, protecting them from all kinds of harm and ill-treatment and caring for them when they are sick to support their participation in school.

3.7.5 Observation Schedule

The Observation schedule was Appendix (V) and was applied to pupils from the alternative care. This instrument had two sections. Section 1 was (a) Basic information, (b) Meals that pupils carry for their lunch. Section 2 was based on pupils' engagement in

classroom lessons. Learners were observed by the researcher and results were written down through coding. The researcher observed the physical appearance of the learners from alternative care in relation to their clothing and the food they carried to school for their lunch. The researcher also observed their participation in classroom learning in terms of answering questions asked by the teacher during the learning process.

3.8 Pilot Study

The piloting study was undertaken in two institutions which were not in the main study but which provided a habitat and characteristics, similar to the intended information for the eventual study. Crucial adjustments were made after the pilot study which helped to enhance the instruments before the actual data collection. Piloting refines the efficiency of the tools to capture relevant data that facilitates the study to respond to concerns highlighted in the research objectives. This made the study to achieve its objectives by gathering accurate data upon which findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study were made.

3.9 Validity & Reliability

The researcher validated and checked the instruments' reliability as below:

3.9.1 Validity

To make sure there was content validity, the research tools were tested during piloting. This assisted the researcher in acquiring adequate and precise information on the research variables. The tools were subjected to content interpretation to make sure they possessed the correct items about educational participation at school entrance, school attendance,

and school enrolment age. This brought assurance of accurate information about achieving study objectives. This was attained by seeing to it that try-out elements made up for all objectives and study variables. In addition, the researcher worked through consultation with the supervisor and other skilled people in this field of research.

3.9.2 Reliability

In this study, the test-retest method was conducted to test the reliability of the tools. This involved administering the same instruments two times to the same respondents for a duration of a fortnight. Results for the first week were recorded and analyzed. The same tool was given to the same participants after one week, and the recording was done again. Then, both these outcomes were differentiated to examine the reliability of the tools. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, $r = 0.7$, was utilized to establish the reliability of the research instruments. The tools were operated several times for a duration of two weeks to examine whether they brought about similar results. Data gathered and the procedure of data collection were contrasted and their differences were brought out. Moderations were made on the instruments where the questionnaires, interviewing methods, and ways of observing were adjusted. This review of instruments helped strengthen their reliability and validity.

3.10 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher visited sampled schools beforehand to make self-known to the school management. The researcher explained intended research and appealed to the principal to present her formally to the teaching staff of the particular grades to be investigated. During this activity, the researcher built rapport with teachers and learners and gave

assurance to the respondents that the data given would be confidential. Primary data was obtained from the headteachers, teachers in lower primary schools, and pupils using the questionnaires, interview guides, and the observation schedule that was used for the study.

The questionnaire was administered to the heads of institutions and teachers who were able to read and answer the questions comfortably. This helped to gather quantitative data from the participants. The researcher interpreted the contents of the questionnaires to the respondents where necessary and guided them on what to do.

The interview guide was administered to the caregivers and pupils. The interview was carried out with a view to collecting qualitative data from respondents. First, the researcher sought to get information from caregivers by interviewing them through the written interview questions to gather in-depth information on the care and protection of those children. Second, the researcher interviewed the pupils to get information on their school attendance, and how they were cared for by their alternative caregivers in relation to their basic needs.

The observation schedule was administered to carry out an in-depth analysis by observing pupils. It was used to assess grade 1-3 pupils' level of manifestation on clothing and the kind of meals they carried for their lunch. The observation schedule was filled and coded on how pupils participated in the classroom learning process. This was on how they responded to questions asked by the teacher.

3.11 Data Analysis

Data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. In quantitative analysis, an Excel spreadsheet was made ready for the recording of data that was gathered through questionnaires. Every data was coded where required and keyed in the worksheet. A pivot table was used to organize and analyze data interpretatively and given in the form of frequencies, percentages and means of each objective and a correlation linking the objectives was established. Pearson's Correlation analysis was utilized to test the hypothesis to establish and determine whether there was a significant correlation between alternative care practices and education participation of lower primary pupils in the study.

Creswell (2023), affirms that Pearson's Product Moment of correlation was a functional way to measure statistical association that occurs between variables. Descriptive data collected through interviews and observations was analyzed by employing Kitwood's Qualitative Technique of analysis to make evident emerging trends and themes. This is a functional technique for analyzing qualitative data that calls for various methods such as content, narrative, discourse and framework analyses. However, this study utilized Framework analysis to organize and manage data thematically. Open-ended questionnaires and interviews were transcribed by recording and categorizing them into themes. Each theme was organized into sub-themes, which were of primary focus in the study objectives. Correlation analysis typically precedes t-tests in statistical analysis.

Correlation analysis was used to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between two continuous variables. It helps in understanding whether and how two variables are related to each other. Once correlation analysis indicates a relationship

between variables, a t-test may be used to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the means of two groups or conditions. T-tests are often used to compare the means of two groups and determine if the observed difference is likely to be due to chance or if it represents a true difference in the population. Table 3.3 gives a summary of analysis tools as per the question/hypotheses.

Table 3.3: Summary of Analysis tools as per the Question/Hypotheses

Research question/Hypotheses	Analysis tool	Presentation of data
Research question 1: What is the status of participation in the educational of lower primary school pupils under alternative care in Embu West, Embu County?	Frequency and percentages	Tables, graphs and charts
H0₁ There is no significant relationship between foster care and the educational participation of lower primary school pupils.	Pearson correlation & t-test	Graphs and tables
H0₂ There is no significant relationship between kinship care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils.	Pearson correlation & t-test	Graphs and tables
H0₃ There is no significant relationship between institutional care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils.	Pearson correlation & t-test	Graphs and tables

3.12 Ethical and Logistical Considerations

Beneath were the ethical and logical considerations:

3.12.1 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are important in research. The researcher complied with the data governance framework to ensure compliance with Data Protection Act, 2019. The study was given authorization by NACOSTI and safeguarded the rights of children through informed consent endorsed by their caregivers. The researcher explained thoroughly to the participants the aim of the study as a way of obtaining their consent. The researcher did not coerce participants to respond to research questions but allowed them to participate voluntarily. This made the researcher gain cooperation from the participants. The researcher also came up with a consent form for caregivers in order to request them to collect information from them. This made it easier for researcher to contact caregivers during data collection.

Further, the researcher assured the participants that, the details they presented would be private and kept for the purpose of the research. The researcher saw to it that the participants did not write their names on the questionnaires to avoid their personal identity for tracking. Finally, the researcher tried as much as possible to avoid plagiarism and provided own work using citations from other resources.

3.12.2 Logistical Considerations

Ahead of fieldwork, the researcher acquired a letter of introduction from the Graduate School at Kenyatta University and authorization from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher presented them to the County Director of Education in the County to be permitted to perform the study. The researcher then paid a call to selected institutions and made orientations. The researcher

gathered information related to the study from headteachers through questionnaires and interview guides. During the visit, arrangements were made by requesting headteachers in the sampled schools to facilitate the invitation of alternative caregivers to avail themselves in school for data collection through interviews. All participants in the proposed study were notified of the reason for undertaking the study to have their voluntary acceptance.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings, interpretations and discussions based on the data provided by the respondents to establish the relationship between alternative care practices and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in grades 1-3 on school enrolment, learners' attendance and their school retention in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County. The data was analyzed, presented, interpreted and discussed guided by the following research objectives: to determine the status of educational participation of lower primary school pupils in alternative care in Embu West, Embu County, to establish the relationship between foster care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West, Embu County, to determine the relationship between kinship care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West, Embu County, to establish the relationship between institutional care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County.

Data obtained from the field were analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Data were presented and discussed in four sections: section one discussed the general information and demographic characteristics while the other three sections discussed results as per the study objectives. Table 4.1 below shows the response rate

4.2.1 General Information and Demographic Characteristics

This section presented an overview of the demographic composition and general information pertinent to lower primary school pupils in alternative care in Embu West, Embu County. It provided insights into the distribution of pupils by gender and grade level, as well as the number of pupils per class in alternative care arrangements. These insights were crucial for understanding the context in which educational participation and outcomes were examined in subsequent chapters.

4.2.2 Response Rate

Out of the sampled respondents, 10 headteachers, 30 grade 1-3 teachers and 60 pupils participated in the study, translating to a response rate of 100%. Complete participation ensures that the sample is fully representative of the target population. A study by Hendra and Hill (2021) emphasizes the importance of representative sampling in research to ensure the generalizability of findings. A 100% response rate maximizes the representativeness of the sample, enabling researchers to make more accurate inferences about the population as a whole.

4.2.3 Demographic Information

The demographic characteristics of the pupils under study were discussed in terms of gender, grade level and number of pupils per class under alternative care.

Table 4.1: Participants' Characteristics and General Information

Demographic characteristic	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Distribution of pupils by gender	Male	36	60.00%
	Female	24	40.00%
	Total	60	100.00%
Distribution of pupils by grade level	Grade One	6	10.00%
	Grade Two	28	46.70%
	Grade Three	26	43.30%
	Total	60	100.00%
Number of Pupils per class in alternative care	One	4	13.30%
	Two	8	26.70%
	Three	6	20.00%
	Four	3	10.00%
	Five	7	23.30%
	Six	1	3.30%
	Seven	1	3.30%
	Total	30	100.00%
Distribution of Head teachers by Gender	Male	9	90.00%
	Female	1	10.00%
	Total	10	100.00%
Distribution of headteachers by type of school	Public	9	90.00%
	Private	1	10.00%
	Total	10	100.00%
School enrolment	Single streamed	6	60.00%
	Double streamed	4	40.00%
	Total	10	100.00%

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.1 presents demographic characteristics and general information about lower primary school pupils in Embu West, Embu County. Among the 60 pupils surveyed,

there was a slightly higher representation of males (60%) compared to females (40%). Regarding grade levels, the majority of pupils were in Grade Two (46.7%), followed by Grade Three (43.3%) and Grade One (10%). When considering the number of pupils per class under alternative care, it is notable that the distribution was varied, with the highest frequency in classes with two and five pupils (26.7% and 23.3% respectively). Among the 10 headteachers surveyed, the majority were male (90%), indicating a gender imbalance in school leadership. Additionally, most schools were public (90%), with only one being private. Regarding enrolment, the data showed that the majority of schools were single-streamed (60%), suggesting a possible limitation in resources and infrastructure.

Table 4.2: Availability of Basic Needs for the Lower Primary School Pupils

Item		Frequency	Percentage
Are you provided with enough meals at home?	Enough	49	81.7%
	Not enough	11	18.3%
	Total	60	100.0%
How many times per day do you have your meals?	Twice	15	25.0%
	Thrice	42	70.0%
	Four times	3	5.0%
	Total	60	100.0%
Do you have enough clothing?	Enough	30	50.0%
	Not enough	28	46.7%
	Torn	2	3.3%
	Total	60	100.0%
Who takes care of you at home?	Grandmother	42	70.0%
	Elder sister	2	3.3%
	Great grandmother	2	3.3%
	Aunt	3	5.0%
	Cousin	2	3.3%
	Stepfather	3	5.0%
	Homecare centre	6	10.0%
	Total	60	100.0%
	Are you taken to hospital when you are sick?	Yes	56
No		4	6.7%
Total		60	100.0%
At school, do you feel secure supported and protected?	Yes	60	100.0%
	No	0	0.0%
	Total	60	100.0%

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.2 assesses the availability of basic needs for lower primary school pupils, including meals, clothing, and access to healthcare. The majority of pupils reported having enough meals at home (81.7%), with meals typically consumed thrice a day (70%). However, there were discrepancies in clothing adequacy as only half of the pupils reported having enough clothing, while some mentioned having torn clothing;

" I wear the same clothes every day, even when they are torn because my grandparents do not have enough money to buy for me" (Pupils interview school F).

This response reflected a lack of adequate clothing, which may affect pupil's self-esteem and social integration in school. Inadequate clothing indicated economic in the caregiving environment. Notably, the primary caregivers were often family members such as grandmothers (70%). Access to healthcare appeared to be adequate, with 93.3% of pupils being taken to the hospital when sick. As evident from a response from a caregiver;

"When they fall sick, I take them to the local dispensary for treatment. If there is no money I use herbs" (Interview with a caregiver in school C).

This reflected the challenges in accessing healthcare, suggesting that health support for children in alternative care can be inconsistent. Lack of reliable healthcare access can compromise children's wellbeing, potentially affecting school attendance.

Table 4.3: Type of the Meals Provided to Lower Primary School Pupils

Meal type		Frequency	Percentage
Chapati	Yes	21	35.0%
	No	39	65.0%
	Total	60	100.0%
Rice	Yes	50	83.3%
	No	10	16.7%
	Total	60	100.0%
Githeri	Yes	45	75.0%
	No	15	25.0%
	Total	60	100.0%
Ugali	Yes	51	85.0%
	No	9	15.0%
	Total	60	100.0%
Vegetables	Yes	26	43.3%
	No	34	56.7%
	Total	60	100.0%
Beans	Yes	11	18.3%
	No	49	81.7%
	Total	60	100.0%
Meat	Yes	6	10.0%
	No	54	90.0%
	Total	60	100.0%
Mokimo	Yes	10	16.7%
	No	50	83.3%
	Total	60	100.0%

Table 4.3 illustrates the types of meals provided to lower primary school pupils. It shows a varied diet, with staples like rice (83.3%), ugali (maize porridge) (85.0%), and githeri (maize and beans) (75.0%) being commonly provided. However, there were discrepancies in the provision of other foods such as chapatti (35.0%), vegetables (43.3%) and meat (10.0%), with lower percentages indicating their availability. Further, observation was carried out in the ten sampled schools through observation checklist and the data were analyzed and the findings are presented in Figure 4.1.

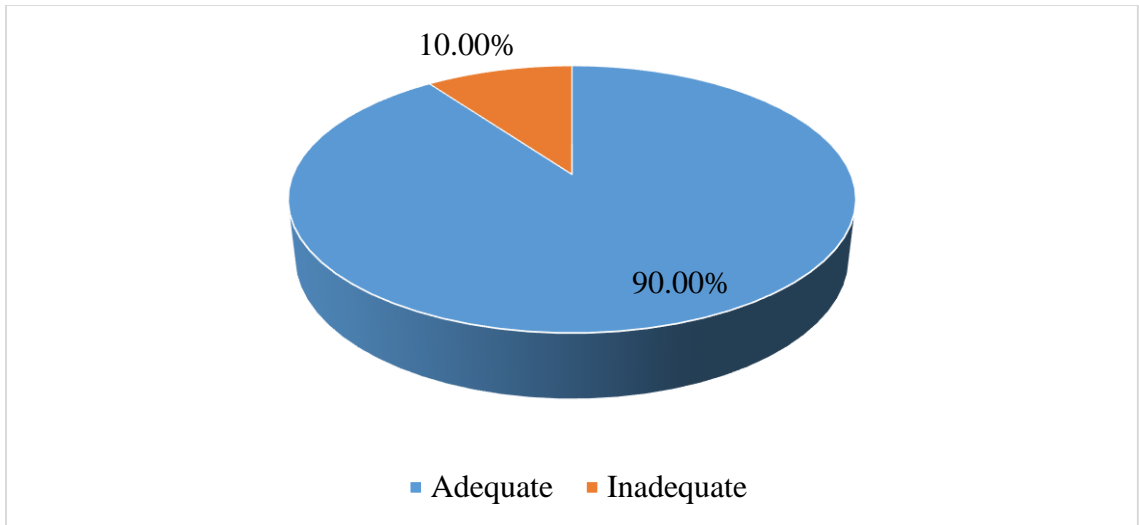


Figure 4.1: Adequacy of Meals Carried to school by Learners as Observed

The figure presents observations on the adequacy of meals carried to school by learners. It highlights that over 80% of learners carried enough meals, suggesting that most pupils had access to sufficient food while at school. Further, it was observed that over 10% of learners carried inadequate meals. From the interview with the pupils, one pupil reported;

"Sometimes we eat only once. If there is no food, we sleep until morning. My grandmother only prepares little food in the morning to carry to school" (A pupil interview, school B).

This indicated serious challenges some pupils in alternative care face regarding food insecurity. Inadequate access to meals can negatively impact a child's ability to participate actively in school activities.

An in-depth analysis was done with regards to pupils' perspectives on the role of teachers at school. Data is presented in Figure 4.2.

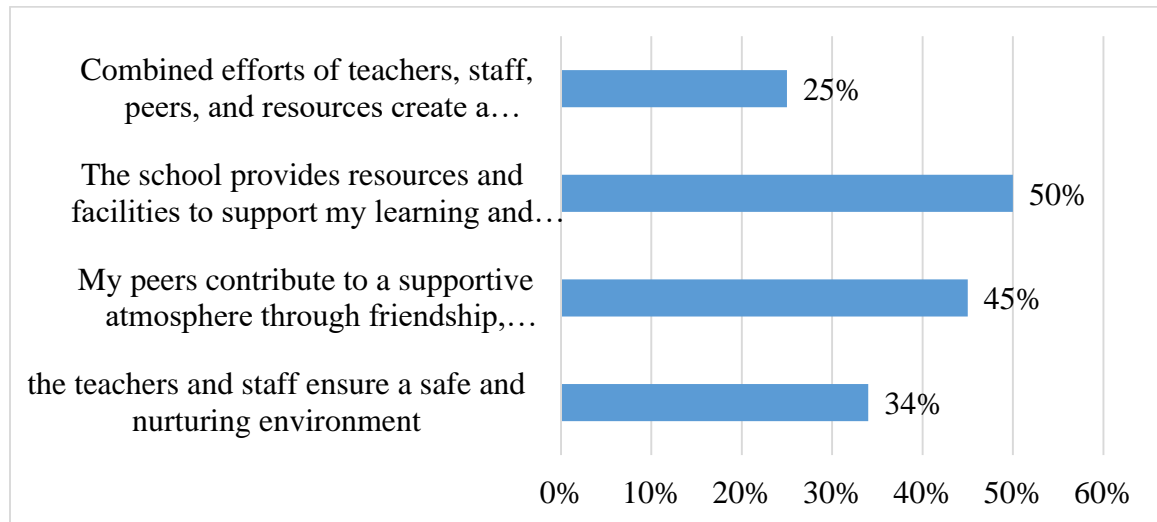


Figure 4.2: Teacher's Roles in Pupils' Participation in Education

The findings in Figure 4.2 showed that approximately one-third of the pupils recognize the role of teachers and staff in maintaining a safe and nurturing environment at school. A larger percentage of pupils, almost half, acknowledge the importance of peer relationships in creating a supportive atmosphere. Half of the pupils emphasize the significance of school resources and facilities in supporting their learning and overall well-being. A quarter of the pupils recognize the combined efforts of teachers, staff, peers and resources in shaping a supportive ecosystem at school. While this percentage is lower compared to the other categories, it highlights the holistic perspective of pupils, acknowledging the collective contribution of various stakeholders in their educational experience.

4.3 Participation in the Education of Lower Primary School Pupils in Alternative Care

The first objective of the study was to determine the status of the educational participation of lower primary school pupils in alternative care in Embu West, Embu County. Educational participation was measured through school enrolment, attendance and retention. The findings of each of these were presented and discussed in the following sub-sections.

4.3.1 Enrolment Status of the Pupils

The focus on how many children were enrolled in lower primary school was measured by collecting data on the total number of pupils registered in grades 1-3 from class enrolment records across selected schools. The results were provided in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Enrolment Status of the Pupils

School and enrolment	Grade 1 enrolment	Grade 2 enrolment	Grade 3 enrolment	Total
A	24	22	25	71
B	27	38	53	118
C	42	39	45	126
D	14	11	12	37
E	48	47	71	166
F	21	40	34	95
G	57	59	58	174
H	25	31	25	81
I	54	90	77	221
J	20	23	24	67
TOTAL	332	400	424	1085

Source: Researcher, 2024

Table 4.4 presents the enrolment status of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County, across different schools and grade levels. The findings indicated varying enrolment numbers across schools and grades in Embu West, Embu County. Some schools showed the highest enrolment totals, suggesting possible disparities in school resources and size. This finding concurs with UNESCO (2021), which also noted that enrolment rates can vary significantly based on socio-economic factors and geographical location in educational settings globally. Moreover, the variation in enrolment aligns with findings from a study in Nigeria, which highlighted disparities in school attendance linked to socio-economic status (UNESCO, 2020). Thus, the findings support the idea that enrolment disparities are influenced by local contextual factors.

4.3.2 Status of School Attendance

The data in Figure 4.3 presents the school attendance as rated by the teachers.

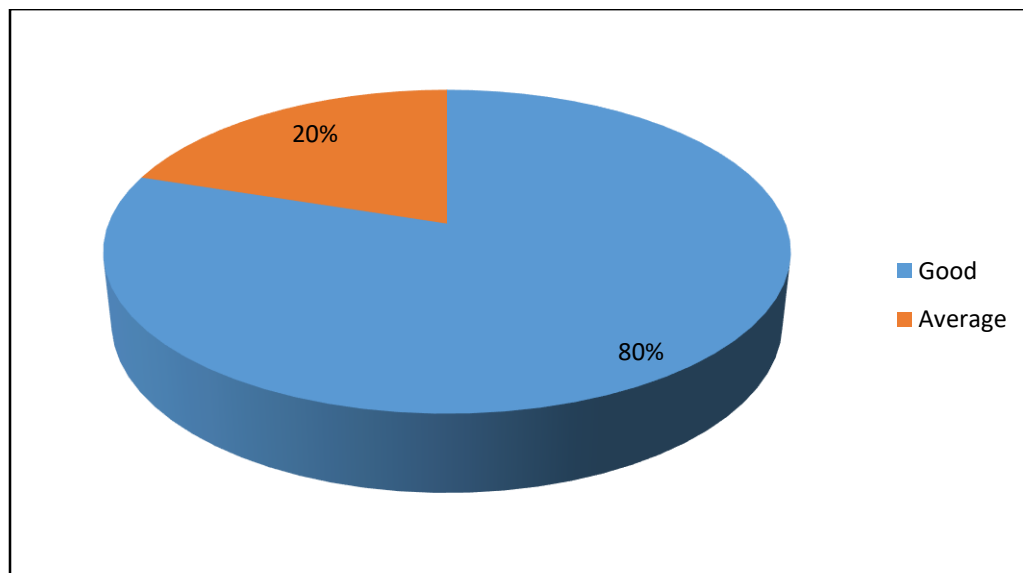


Figure 4.3: School Attendance as Rated by the Teachers

Figure 4.3 presents the school attendance as rated by teachers, indicating generally high attendance rates among lower primary school pupils. The generally high attendance rates and positive perceptions of school retention suggested a commitment to education among pupils, despite potential challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic (World Bank, 2020). This observation is further supported by Figure 4.4, which depicts consistent attendance patterns observed through a checklist.

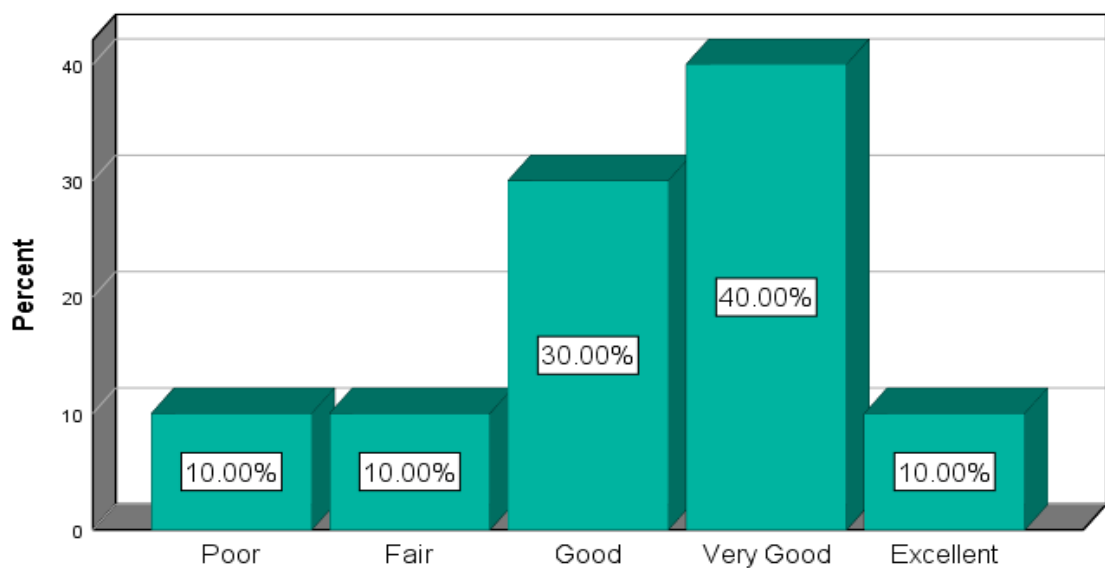


Figure 4.4: School Attendance as Observed

The observation in Figure 4.4 reinforces the high attendance rates reported by teachers, highlighting the consistency of attendance among lower primary pupils. Figures 4.3 and 4.4 illustrated consistently high school attendance rates among lower primary pupils in Embu West Sub-County corroborating teachers' perceptions and observational data. This finding aligns with a study in Finland (Koskela et al., 2020), which emphasized the importance of high attendance rates in ensuring continuous learning and academic progress. Similarly, findings from studies in Kenya during the COVID-19 pandemic

highlighted challenges in attendance due to lockdowns (World Bank, 2020), underscoring the resilience of attendance rates shown in the study despite external challenges. Therefore, the findings support the notion that despite external disruptions, school attendance remains robust among lower primary pupils under alternative care in Embu West Sub-county.

4.3.3 Status of School Retention up to Grade 3

The following data in Figure 4.5 presents the general expectation in terms of school retention as rated by the teachers.

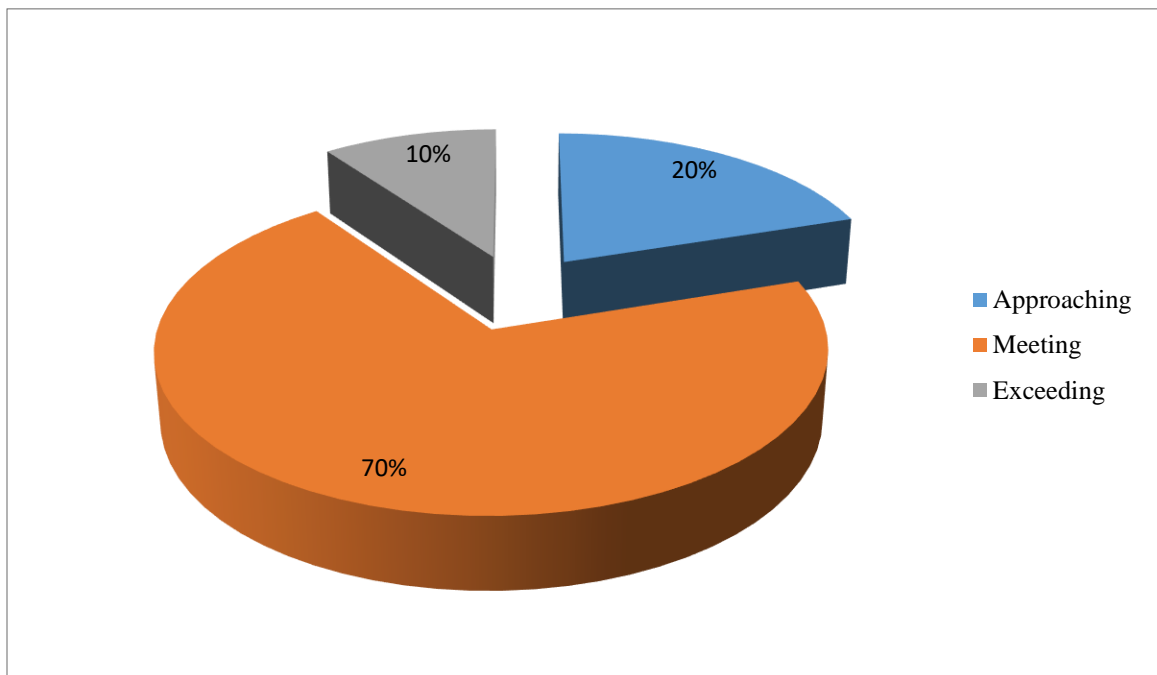


Figure 4.5: Teachers' Perception of School Retention among Lower Primary Pupils

Figure 4.5 illustrates teachers' positive perceptions regarding school retention among lower primary pupils. This was evaluated by tracking the pupils' consistency and how they remained enrolled and retained in their early years of education. It was also done by tracking from the lower primary school register from grades 1-3 through examining

records of initial and current enrolment to identify continuity. These findings suggested confidence in the ability of pupils in alternative care to successfully be retained in lower primary school education up to grade 3. Figure 4.5 indicates positive perceptions from teachers regarding school retention among lower primary pupils in Embu West Sub-County. This finding aligns with studies in high-income countries like the U.S, where educational policies aim to ensure high school retention and completion rates (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). However, it contrasts with findings from studies in Somalia, which highlighted challenges in school retention due to educational infrastructure and economic barriers (UNOCHA, 2020). Therefore, while the positive perceptions in the study are promising, they suggest a need for further investigation into the underlying factors affecting school retention rates among lower primary pupils in alternative care settings.

4.4 Relationship between Foster Care and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils

The second objective of the study was to establish the relationship between foster care and the educational participation of lower primary school grades in Embu West, Embu County. The respondents were asked to give the number of pupils under foster care as reported, and the findings were as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Number of Pupils under Foster Care

Item		Frequency	Percentage
Number of pupils under foster care as reported	None	10	100.0%
	<6	0	0.0%
	6-10	0	0.0%
	10-15	0	0.0%
	>15	0	0.0%
		10	100.0%

Source: Researcher, 2024

From Table 4.5 above, it is indicated that, according to the headteachers' and teachers' reports, there were no pupils in foster care in the sampled schools in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County. This suggested either a low prevalence of foster care in the area or a lack of reporting on this particular form of alternative care. Singer and Brodzinsky (2020) underscore administrative challenges in reporting foster care cases, which aligns with the findings suggesting potential underreporting in the study area. Therefore, while the current study highlights a lack of foster care cases, global evidence provided by Licio et al. (2021) in Brazil suggests that where foster care is present, it can positively impact educational outcomes.

4.5 Relationship between Kinship Care and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils

The third objective of the study sought to determine the relationship between kinship care and education participation of lower primary school grades in Embu West, Embu County.

The respondents were asked to give the number of pupils under kinship care as reported and the findings were as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Number of Pupils under Kinship Care

Item		Frequency	Percentage
Number of pupils under kinship care	None	2	20.0%
	<6	4	40.0%
	6-10	0	0.0%
	10-15	4	40.0%
	>15	0	0.0%
		10	100.0%

Source: Researcher, 2024

From Table 4.6 above, the findings indicated that headteachers reported the distribution of pupils in kinship care, revealing that 40% of pupils fell into the category of having less than six individuals in kinship care, while another 40% fell into the 10-15 category, as shown in Table 4.6. This finding contrasts with some literature that emphasizes the benefits of kinship care, such as emotional support and stability for children (Brown & Broadhurst, 2019). However, it aligns with studies indicating challenges faced in kinship care, such as financial constraints to support their caregiving (UNICEF, 2024). To support this, a caregiver had a response indicating the economic struggles faced by alternative caregivers in providing basic needs and negatively impacting children's educational participation;

"Sometimes I have to skip meals so that the children can have enough. We do not always have everything, but I try to provide the best I can" (Interview with an alternative caregiver in school A).

This response highlighted the economic struggles faced by alternative caregivers in providing basic needs while they try to meet the children's requirements because of resources insufficiency. The rejection of the hypothesis in the paired t-test supports the assertion that kinship care influences educational participation negatively, suggesting the need for further investigation into mitigating factors.

Further, correlation between kinship care and educational participation of lower primary school grades was done using Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) for linear relationships. The Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was to determine the strength and direction of the relationship and the results were as presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Bayes Factor Inference on Pairwise Correlations between Kinship Care and Educational Participation

		Kinship care	School completion	School attendance
Kinship care	Pearson Correlation	1	-.371	-.691
	Bayes Factor		2.429	.365
	N	10	10	10
School Retention	Pearson Correlation	-.371	1	.527
	Bayes Factor	2.429		1.238
	N	10	10	10
School attendance	Pearson Correlation	-.691	.527	1
	Bayes Factor	.365	1.238	
	N	10	10	10

a. Bayes factor: The hypothesis.

The results, outlined in Table 4.7, indicated a negative correlation between kinship care and school attendance (-0.691), suggesting a potential inverse relationship between these variables. This implies that a unit change in kinship care reduces participation in education among pupils in lower primary schools by 69.1%. These findings corroborate the negative correlations observed in Table 4.6, indicating consistent evidence that higher levels of kinship care are associated with lower levels of educational participation among lower primary school pupils. This is contrary to assertions that kinship care provides a more stable and supportive environment for children compared to non-relative foster care (Brown & Broadhurst, 2019). Instead, the Bayes Factor analysis suggests that the inverse

relationship between kinship care and education participation warrants further investigation into the specific factors contributing to this negative association.

Further, paired t-test was used to test for the following alternative hypothesis:

Alternative hypothesis: Ha2 There is a significant relationship between kinship care and education participation of lower primary school pupils.

The Calculated t-value was compared with the Critical t-value and on the principle that if calculated t-value exceeds the critical t-value, then the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a significant difference between the means of the two groups or conditions.

The results are as presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Paired Sample t-test Correlations between Kinship Care and school attendance

Sampled pair-test		t	df	Correlation	Mean	Std. Dev	95% CI		Sig.
							Lower	Upper	
Pair 2	Retention rates of lower primary pupils and kinship care	2.623	9	-.371	1.300	1.567	.179	2.421	.001*

The results, as presented in Table 4.8, revealed a calculated t-value of 2.623, which surpassed the critical t-value. This suggests a significant difference between the means of retention rates and kinship care, indicating a potential relationship between these variables. Therefore the null hypothesis: H02 There is no significant relationship

between kinship care and educational participation of lower primary school pupils was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

The findings indicated a negative correlation between kinship care and school attendance, suggesting a potential inverse relationship between these variables. These results contradict the null hypothesis, which posited no significant relationship between kinship care and school retention rates. They align with previous research suggesting that children in kinship care may face additional barriers to completing their education compared to those in other care arrangements (Dziro & Mhlanga, 2018). The significant t-test result underscores the need for targeted interventions to support school retention among lower primary school pupils in kinship care, potentially addressing factors such as access to educational resources and stability in care environments.

4.6 Relationship between institutional Care and Educational Participation of Lower Primary Pupils

The fourth objective of the study sought to establish the relationship between institutional care and education participation of lower primary school grades in Embu West, Embu County. The respondents were asked to give the number of pupils under institutional care as reported and the findings were as shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Number of Pupils under Institutional Care

Item		Frequency	Percentage
Number of pupils under institutional care	None	8	80.0%
	<6	0	0.0%
	6-10	0	0.0%
	10-15	0	0.0%
	>15	2	20.0%
		10	100.0%

Source: Researcher, 2024

According to headteachers' reports in Table 4.9, 80% of lower primary pupils were not under institutional care. Only 20% of lower primary pupils in Embu West are under institutional care, with more than 15 individuals reported in this category. This finding aligns with global statistics that indicate a relatively low percentage of children in institutional care settings (Petrowski et al., 2017). According to Petrowski et al. (2017), institutional care is often associated with challenges such as inadequate individualized attention and reduced educational opportunities, which could negatively impact children's educational participation. Therefore, the low prevalence of institutional care in Embu West suggests a potentially positive influence on educational participation among this group.

Further, the correlation between institutional care and educational participation in lower primary school grades was done using Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) for linear relationships. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was to determine the strength and direction of the relationship and the results were presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Bayes Factor Inference on Pairwise Correlations between Institutional Care and Educational Participation

		Institutional care	School Completion	School attendance
Institutional care	Pearson Correlation	1	-.836	-.327
	Bayes Factor		.048	2.780
	N	10	10	10
School retention to grade 3	Pearson Correlation	-.836	1	.527
	Bayes Factor	.048		1.238
	N	10	10	10
School attendance by pupils in lower primary	Pearson Correlation	-.327	.527	1
	Bayes Factor	2.780	1.238	
	N	10	10	10

a. Bayes factor: Null versus alternative hypothesis.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was employed to analyze the relationship between institutional care and educational participation. The results showed a strong negative correlation between institutional care and school retention (-0.836), indicating a potentially adverse effect of institutional care on retention up to grade 3. The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = -0.836$) indicates a strong negative correlation between institutional care and school retention rates among lower primary pupils in Embu West. This finding contradicts the assumption that institutional care provides adequate support and resources for children's educational needs (Fallon et al., 2020). Fallon et al., argued that institutional care settings may lack the personalized attention and familial support necessary for children to complete their early years of schooling successfully. Thus, the strong negative correlation observed in this study suggests that institutional care may hinder retention of lower primary school pupils' educational participation.

Further, a paired t-test was used to test for the following alternative hypothesis:

Alternative hypothesis: Ha3 There is a significant relationship between institutional care and the educational participation of lower primary school pupils.

Table 4.11: Paired Sample t-test Correlations between Institutional Care and School Attendance

Sampled pair-test		t	df	Correlation	Mean	Std. Dev	95% CI		Sig.
							Lower	Upper	
Pair 3	Institutional care and school attendance of lower primary school pupils	.832	9	-.327	.500	1.900	-.859	1.859	.356

Source: Researcher, 2024

A paired t-test was conducted to test the hypothesis regarding the relationship between institutional care and educational participation, as shown in Table 4.11. The paired t-test results ($t = -0.327$) show no significant relationship between institutional care and school attendance among lower primary pupils in Embu West. This finding supports the nuanced understanding that the impact of institutional care on educational outcomes varies across different aspects of school participation (Kilio et al., 2021). Kilio et al. argue that while institutional care may negatively affect some educational indicators like school retention, its impact on school attendance might be less pronounced. Thus, the non-significant relationship observed in this study suggested that institutional care may not uniformly influence lower primary pupils' school attendance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The comprehensive purpose of this study was to establish the relationship between alternative care practices and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-county in Embu County. Thus, in this chapter, a summary of the study in relation to the objectives, general conclusions, recommendations to different stakeholders and also suggestions for further research are presented.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

5.2.1 Status of Educational Participation of Lower Primary School Pupils

The first objective of the study focused on establishing the status of educational participation among lower primary school pupils. Findings revealed that variations in enrolment numbers were observed among schools and grade levels. This indicated differences in school sizes and possibly resource allocation among schools. Both teacher-rated and observed school attendance were high among pupils in alternative care. Teachers generally had a positive outlook on school retention among lower primary pupils in alternative care. Approximately two-thirds of teachers reported that instructional materials were adequate.

5.2.2 Foster Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary School Pupils

The absence of pupils in foster care suggests potential challenges in accessing accurate information about foster care in the study area. Incomplete results for correlation analysis

and paired t-test limited a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between foster care and educational participation among lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County.

5.2.3 Kinship Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary School Pupils

There was a negative correlation between kinship care and school attendance (-0.691). This suggested a potential inverse relationship between these variables. There was a significant difference between the means of school retention rates and kinship care. This implied a potential relationship between these variables. Bayes factor inference showed that there was a strong and negative direction of the relationship between kinship care and educational participation among pupils in lower primary schools in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County.

5.2.4 Institutional Care Practices and Educational Participation of Lower Primary School Pupils

The majority of lower primary school pupils (80%) were not in institutional care, while only a minority (20%) were reported to be in institutional care. Pearson's correlation coefficient revealed a strong negative correlation (-0.836) between institutional care and school retention. This suggested that institutional care may have a detrimental effect on retaining pupils in lower primary school up to grade 3. The Bayes factor analysis suggested that the relationship between institutional care and school retention may not be statistically significant. The paired t-test did not show a significant relationship between institutional care and school attendance.

5.3 Study Conclusions

It can be concluded that there is a relationship between alternative care practices and educational participation of lower primary pupils in grades 1-3. However, variations were observed in enrolment numbers and resource allocation across schools. The absence of pupils in foster care limited a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between foster care and education participation. This study, therefore, established a significant negative relationship between kinship care and educational participation among lower primary pupils in Embu West Sub-county, Embu County. However, the influence of institutional care on school attendance appeared to be less pronounced and statistically insignificant.

5.4 Study Recommendations

5.4.1 Policy-makers Recommendations

Variations in enrolment numbers attributed to limited resource allocation among schools studied. It is therefore recommended that the Ministry of Education prioritize equitable resource allocation across schools, provide ongoing support for school attendance and enhance teacher training and support programmes to address the unique needs of pupils in alternative care. Additionally, collaboration with families, caregivers, and community stakeholders should be promoted to create a supportive educational environment for vulnerable children.

The absence of pupils in foster care in the study area indicates potential challenges in accessing accurate information about foster care options. It is recommended that the Department of Children Services in Embu County initiates awareness campaigns to

promote foster care programmes and their benefits. This would help increase understanding and uptake of foster care as a viable alternative care option, potentially benefiting more children in the region.

The negative correlation (-0.691) between kinship care and school attendance suggests that children in kinship care may face barriers to consistent school attendance. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education develops programmes specifically targeting children in kinship care arrangements. These could include mentorship programmes, counseling services and financial support for guardians. Regular monitoring and evaluation of school attendance and educational outcomes among these children are also advised to identify and address any barriers promptly.

The strong negative correlation between institutional care and school retention suggests a potentially detrimental impact of institutional care on educational outcomes for lower primary pupils. It is recommended that the Ministry of Social Services conducts a thorough review of institutional care policies and practices in Embu County. The aim should be to improve conditions within institutions to support educational participation and retention. This may involve enhancing educational facilities within institutions, implementing targeted educational support programmes and ensuring that children's educational needs are prioritized alongside their care and protection.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Institutions with Alternative Care Practices

It is recommended that caregivers ensure all children under their care are enrolled in school, attend regularly and receive adequate support to meet their basic needs.

Caregivers should actively monitor school attendance by maintaining regular communication with the teachers and heads of schools. Additionally, to promote consistency in learning, unnecessarily school transfers should be avoided unless absolute necessary.

5.4.3 Recommendations for Headteachers

It is recommended that the headteachers ensure that the school policies and practices promote inclusion and reduce stigma for children in alternative care. Additionally, schools should develop internal mechanisms for monitoring the enrolment progress and attendance of children in alternative care and use the data to guide targeted interventions and referrals.

5.4.4 Recommendations for Teachers

Teachers are at the frontline of providing educational support to children in alternative care. It is therefore recommended that they foster a conducive classroom culture where all learners feel valued, respected and preventing any form of discrimination. They also keep regular records of their school attendance and use this to identify their frequencies in attending school. Additionally, it is recommended that they maintain open communication with guardians and institutional caregivers to share progress updates and discuss on support strategies. This will help close the gap in educational participation of children in alternative care

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

1. This study only covered Embu West Sub-county of Embu County. There is a need to extend the research scope to include comparative analyses across different counties in Kenya, to examine variations in alternative care practices and their impact on the educational participation of lower primary school pupils. By comparing findings across regions with different socio-economic contexts and cultural norms, researchers can identify contextual factors influencing educational outcomes and inform targeted interventions.
2. This study did not examine factors such as existing government policies, educational sector financing and the introduction of school feeding programmes. A related study is recommended to evaluate the effectiveness of current policies and interventions aimed at supporting children in alternative care arrangements in accessing and participating in education. Such a study could assess policy implementation challenges, gaps in service delivery and areas for policy improvement to enhance support for vulnerable children and promote inclusive educational practices.
3. Educational participation among lower primary pupils in grades 1-3 is dynamic, especially with interventions such as early literacy programmes currently being implemented. A longitudinal study should be conducted after five years or more to examine the long-term educational outcomes of lower primary school pupils in Embu County, Kenya. This study could track academic performance, school retention rates and educational attainment over time to gain insights into the

sustained impact of various care arrangements on children's educational participation.

REFERENCES

- Addy, T. (2020). *Formal foster care in Ghana: The experience and perceptions of foster children and foster parents* [Master's thesis, University of Gothenburg].
- Ashioya, D., Shihudu, L. K., Ogola, J., Waudu, J., & Koinange, W. (2019). *Relationship between care provided by foster families and psychological well-being of children affected by HIV/AIDS in Kiambu County, Kenya*. *Internal Journal of Social Sciences and Information Technology*, 5 (5), 128-141.
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2021). *Child protection Australia: Children in the child protection system* (Cat. No. CWS 75). Canberra: AIHW. April 2021.
- Basic Education Amendment Act. (2017). *Provision of education for all children*.
- Bega, S., Smillie, S., & Ajam, K. (2020). Spike in child abandonments and the physical abuse of youngsters during COVID-19 lockdown. *Independent Online (IOL)*.
- Benjamin, T., Chang, D. F., & Steele, M. (2019). A qualitative study of *fa'a'amu* kinship care experiences in Taliti. *Adoption Quarterly*, 22 (3), 173-198.
- Better Care Network. (2020). *Technical note on the protection of children during the COVID-19 pandemic: Children and alternative care*.
- Better Care Network. (2022). *Deinstitutionalization of children in Kenya: A Focus on family-based care alternatives*.
- Better Care Network. (2023). *Supporting children in kinship care: Current evidence and practices*.
- Boeren, E. (2023). Conceptualizing lifelong learning participation: Theoretical perspectives and integration approaches. In M. Schemmann (Ed.), *Handbook of lifelong learning*.
- Boyadjieva, P., & Ilieva -Trichkova, P. (2022). *Adult education as empowerment: Re-imagining lifelong learning through the capability approaches, recognition theory and common goods perspective*. Springer.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Brown, R., Broadhurst, K., Harwin, J., & Simmonds, J. (2019). *Special guardianship: International research on kinship care*.

- Cassario-Perez, L., Costivelli, M., Escadovelli, L., & Reason, P. (2020). *Minha vida fora dali: Perspectiva de jovens egressos dos serviços de acolhimento para crianças e adolescentes.*
- Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2019). *Protecting children and strengthening families.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Children's Act. (2001). *Every child has the right to education.*
- Cornell, S., Nickel, B., Cvejic, E., Bonner, C., McCaffery, K. J., & Ayre, J. (2022). Positive outcomes with the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia, 33* (2), 311-319.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approach* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Cudjoe, E., Abdullah, A., & Chiu, M. Y. (2020). What makes kinship care unprepared for children in their care? Perspectives and experiences from kinship care alumni in Ghana. *Children and Youth Services Review, 101*, pp. 270-276.
- De Wet, A. (2019). Human rights literacy: moving towards rights-based education and transformative action. *South African Journal of Education, 39* (2), 1-12.
- Delap, E., & Mann, G. (2019). *The paradox of kinship care: The most valuable but least resourced care option. A global study.*
- Delap, E., & Mann, G. (2020). *Kinship care in Sub-Saharan Africa: An asset worth supporting.* Family for Every Child.
- Desjardins, S. L., & Kim, J. (2023). Participation in non-formal adult education: Examining the multilayered social and economic factors. *Frontier in Education, 8*, 734209. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.734209>
- Dessy, S., & Mohohlwane, N. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 in education: More than a year of disruption. *National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) - Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey Wave.*
- Education for All. (1990). *Education for All.*
- Eze, U. N., Setotho, M., Onyishi, C. N., & Eseadi, C. (2021). Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education in Nigeria: Implications for policy and practice of e-learning. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e- journal), 5651.*

- Fallon, D., McGhee, K., Davis, J., & MacLeods, F. (2020). Capturing the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Children's Nursing. *Comprehensive Child and Adolescent Nursing*.
- Fostering Network. (2023). *Foster care in the U.K.: An overview of the fostering system*.
- Frimpong-Manso, K., Togoe, L., & Mawutor, S. M. (2020). Experiences of formal foster parents in Ghana: Motivation and challenges. *Southern African Journal of Social work Development*, 32 (1), 1-18.
- Gatwiri, K., McPherson, L., Parmenter, N., Cameron, N., & Rofuman, D. (2019). Indigenous children and young people in residential care: A systematic scoping review. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*.
- Gelli, A., Aurino, E., Folson, G., Arhinful, D., & Adamba, C. (2019). A school meals program implemented at school in Ghana increases height-for-age during middle childhood in girls and in children from poor households: A cluster randomised trial. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 148 (8), 1434-1442.
- Ghana Department of Social Welfare [DSW], & United Nations Children's Fund. (2021). *Children living in residential care in Ghana*. UNICEF.
- Global Partnership for Education. (2023). *Transforming education in Somalia*.
- Government of Kenya. (2005). *Sessional Paper No.1 of 2005 on policy framework for education, training and research*.
- Government of Kenya. (2014). *Guidelines for the alternative care of children in Kenya: A user-friendly handbook*.
- Government of Kenya. (2019). *Data Protection Act, 2019: Kenya Gazette Supplement No.181(Acts No.24)*. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- Harwin, J., & Sammons, J. (2019). *Special guardianship: A review of English research studies*.
- Hendra, R., & Hill, A. (2019). Rethinking response rates: new evidence of little relationship between survey response rates and nonresponse bias. *Evaluation review*, 43 (5), 307-330.
- Holford, J., Webb, S., Milana, M., Hodge, S., & Waller, R. (2020). Editorial. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 39 (1),1-5

- Ibrahim, A., Magdalene, D., & Abasido, A. (2022). Street hawking as predictor of enrolment, attendance and retention of students in basic education in Gusau, Zamfara State, Nigeria. *International Journal Of Intellectual Discourse*, 4 (3), 191-201.
- Iñiguez-Berrozpe, T., Marcaletti, F., Elboj-Saso, C., & Garavaglia, E. (2020). Conceptualizing, analyzing and training computational - Critical Thinking. *Sociologia del lavoro*, (157), 143-169.
- International Labour Organization (ILO). (2020). *The strategy learning for 2022-2023*. Geneva: International Labour Organization Available at: ILO Website(36) (37) (38).
- Jentsch, B., & Schnock, B. (2020). Child welfare in the midst of coronavirus pandemic: Emerging evidence from Germany. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 110, 104716.
- Kilio, S. M., Wasike, S., & Mathenge, P. (2021). Link between research use and customer satisfaction: The case of charitable children institutions in Kiber-Langata Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya. *Journal of Strategic Management*, Vol 5 (2), 76-91.
- Kiraly, M., & Roff, J. (2023). "We're just kids as well": The experience and support needs of young kinship caregivers in Australia, *Children and Youth Services Review*, 150,106967. Cambridge University Press.
- Kithome, J. M., Syanyisa, W. M., & Asanta, S. (2021). The role of community-based opportunities in child protection in Mwingi Central Sub-County, Kitui County. *Journal of Research, Innovation and Implications in Education*, 5 (3), 104-115.
- Koskela, T., Pihlainen, K., Piispa-Hakala, S., Vornanen, R., & Hämäläinen, J. (2020). Parents' views on family resilience in sustainable remote schooling during the COVID-19 outbreak in Finland. *Sustainability* 21.8844.doi: 10.3390/sul12218844.
- Liccio, E. C., Pinheiro, M. B., Natalino, M., & Rocha, E. (2021). *Reordenamento dos serviços de acolhimento de crianças e adolescentes e implementação de novas modalidades*.
- Loisoki, B. E. (2020). Education opportunities and support for orphans and vulnerable children in Bagamoyo District, Tanzania. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 2 (1),187-197.
- Lumos. (2020). *In the of care and protection: Child institutionalisation in Latin America and Caribbean*. Lumos Foundation.

- Makuu, M. J. (2019). Situation analysis of Orphans Vulnerable Children in existing alternative care systems in Dar es salaam, Tanzania. *Social Work Society*, 17(1), 1-17.
- McNeeley, S. (2020). Practical considerations for sampling in social science research. *Journal of Research Design and Statistics in Social Sciences*, 18 (3), 125-139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/123456789.2020.1234567>.
- Ministry of Education. (2019). *Enrolment of pupils in schools in Kenya*.
- Mlaba, K. (2021). Thousands of children in Kenya failed to return to school this week. *Global citizen*.
- OECD. (2021). *Where do rich countries stand on children?* OECD Publishing.
- OECD. (2023). *Education at a glance 2023: OECD indicators*. OECD Publishing.
- Pakpour, A. H., Griffiths, M. D., Chang, K. C., & Chen, Y. P. (2020). Assessing the year of COVID-19 among different populations: A response to Ransing et al. *Brain, Behavior and Immunity*, 89, 524-525.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice (4th ed.)*, Sage Publications.
- Population Council. (2021). *Promises to keep: Impact of COVID-19 on adolescents in Kenya*. Nairobi: Presidential Policy and Strategy Unit (Kenya) and Population Council.
- Reinen, B. K. (2019). Six strategies for 21st-century early childhood teachers.
- Republic of Somalia, Ministry of Finance Department. (2020). *Fiscal and economic implications of COVID-19*. (April).
- Rev. Mary. (2020). *Ack St. Stephen Children's Home: Progress report from January-December 2020*.
- Roman, N. V., Davidse, P. E., Human-Hendricks, A., Butler-Kruger, L., & Sonn, I. K. (2022). School dropout: Intentions, motivations, and self-efficacy of a sample of South African youth. *Youth*, 2 (2), 126-137. <https://doi.org/10.3390/youth2020010>
- Ribeiro, M. F., Costa, C. G. da, & Ramos, F. R. (2024). Exploring purpose-driven leadership: Theoretical foundations, mechanisms, and impacts in organisational Context. *Administrative Sciences*, 14 (7), 148.
- Save the Children. (2022). *The Impact of kinship care on children's wellbeing and education: A global perspective*.

- Singer, J., & Brodzinsky, D. (2020). Virtual parent-child visitation in support of family reunification in the time of COVID-19. *Developmental Child Welfare*, 2 (3), 153-171.
- U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics. (2020). *Kindergarten and elementary school teachers: Occupational outlook handbook: U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics*.
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Fast facts: Back to school statistics (372)*. Retrieved June 3, 2020.
- UNCRC. (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*.
- UNCRC. (1990). *Ratification status for CRC - Convention on the Rights of the Child*.
- UNESCO. (2019). *New methodology shows that 258 million children, adolescents and youth are out of school*. (Factsheet No. 56). Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2020). *Global education monitoring report 2020: Inclusion and education - All means all*.
- UNESCO. (2021). *Global out-of-school children initiative (OOSCI). Kenyan Country Study*.
- UNESCO. (2021). *Global adjusted net attendance rates, primary education, 2021*.
- UNICEF. (2020). *Annual report on education*.
- UNICEF. (2021). *Children living residential care in Ghana*. New York: UNICEF.
- UNICEF. (2022). *Monitoring the situation of children and women*.
- UNICEF. (2023). *Global annual results report on kinship care 2023*. UNICEF.
- UNICEF. (2023). *Kinship care in Kakuma Refugee Camp: Kenya*. UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa.
- United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (2020). *Somalia humanitarian bulletin, 1-31 March*.
- United Nations. (2009). *Guidelines for the alternative care of children*.
- World Bank. (2020). *The global economic outlook during COVID-19 pandemic: A changed world*. World Bank Group. Washington, Dc.
- World Bank. (2023). *Tanzanian education sector institutional and governance assessment*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Zizi Afrique Foundation. (2024). *Transforming Kenya's education system through a multi-stakeholder engagement approach.*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE HEAD TEACHERS

Dear respondents,

The researcher is a student undertaking a course in Masters of Education in Early Childhood Studies at Kenyatta University, carrying out a research on relationship between alternative care practices and educational participation of lower primary school pupils in Embu West Sub-County, Embu County. The information you will provide will be treated with confidentiality and used for purposes of this study.

Instructions:

Put a tick where necessary and fill in the gaps.

Section A: Demographic information

1. Gender..... Male [] Female []
2. School..... Public [] Private []
3. School enrolment
- (a) Single streamed [] (b) Double streamed []
4. Number of teaching staff in school.....
5. Enrolment of pupils in lower grade school.
 - a. Grade One.....
 - b. Grade Two.....

c. Grade Three.....

Section B: Information on pupils from alternative care in the school

1. Are there children who are under alternative care and not under their biological parents in lower school primary? Yes [] No []
2. If yes, how?.....
3. If no, why?.....
4. How many alternative care pupils are under the following caregivers? (a) Foster care..... (b) Kinship care..... (c) Institutional care.....

Section C: Adequacy of Instructional Materials

1. Does the school have adequate instructional materials in lower primary school? Yes [] No []
2. If yes, how do they influence learning in lower primary?.....
3. If no, why are they not adequate?.....

Section D: School attendance and Expectations

1. How would you rate the general expectations of lower primary pupils in your school? Exceeding []. Meeting []. Approaching []. Below [].
2. How is the frequency of school attendance of alternative care pupils in lower primary? Regularly []. Irregular [].

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE TEACHERS

Section A: Background information

1. Gender identity.....
2. Your highest qualification. Certificate [] Diploma [] Bachelor []
3. In which grade do you handle? Grade 1[] Grade 2[] Grade 3[]
4. How many pupils in your class are under alternative care, which include foster care, Kinship care and institutional care?

Section B: School daily attendance

1. How would you rate the school daily attendance of lower primary pupils in your class? Good []. Average []. Poor []

Section C: Adequacy of Instructional Materials

1. How adequate are the instructional materials in your class?
Adequate []. Not adequate [].
2. To what extent has the quality and adequacy of teaching and learning materials have influenced the following?
 - (a) Performance of alternative care pupils in your class?.....
 - (a) Enrolment of alternative care learners in lower primary?.....
 - (b) School attendance of alternative care pupils in lower primary?.....

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LOWER PRIMARY PUPILS

Section A: Background information

1. Gender.....
2. In which grade are you?.....

Section B: adequacy of basic needs

1. Are you provided with enough meals at home?
2. How many times per day do you have your meals?.....
3. What kind of food do you eat at home?.....
4. Do you have enough clothing?.....

Section C: Support, Care and protection

1. Who takes care of you at home?.....
2. Are you taken to hospital when you are sick?.....
3. At school, do you feel secured supported and protected?.....
4. How are you cared for, supported and protected at school?.....

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW FOR THE ALTERNATIVE CARE-GIVERS

Section A: Background information

1. Sex.....Male [] Female []
2. Where do you come from?.....
3. What is your major source of livelihood?.....
4. How many young ones do you have?.....
5. Among them how many are alternative care children?.....

Section B: Provision of quality and adequate basic needs

1. Do you have adequate basic needs to meet the needs of alternative care children at home?.....
2. How do you make sure that they are of good quality and adequacy?.....

Section C: Care, support and protection

1. Do you follow up and assist your alternative care children in doing their homework?.....
2. How do you make sure that they are secured from all kinds of harm and ill-treated?.....
3. What do you do when they fall sick?.....

APPENDIX V: PUPILS OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Section A : Basic Information

(i) School category.

Public Primary

Institutional Centre

(ii) Grade.

Grade 1

Grade 2

Grade 3

Section B: Meals carried to school by learners

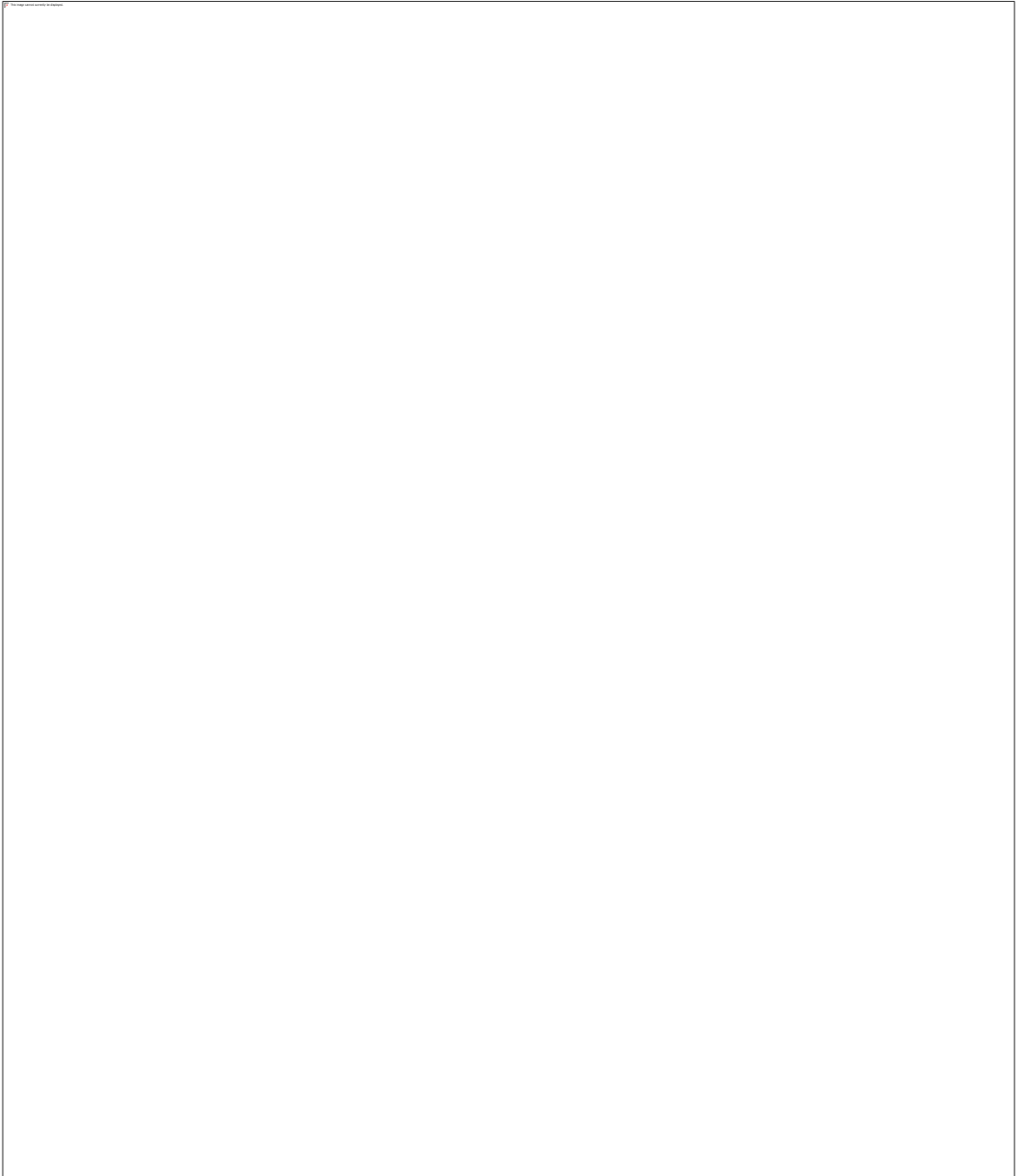
Name of school	Grade	Adequate	Enough	Little	Inadequate

(2) Participation in school attendance

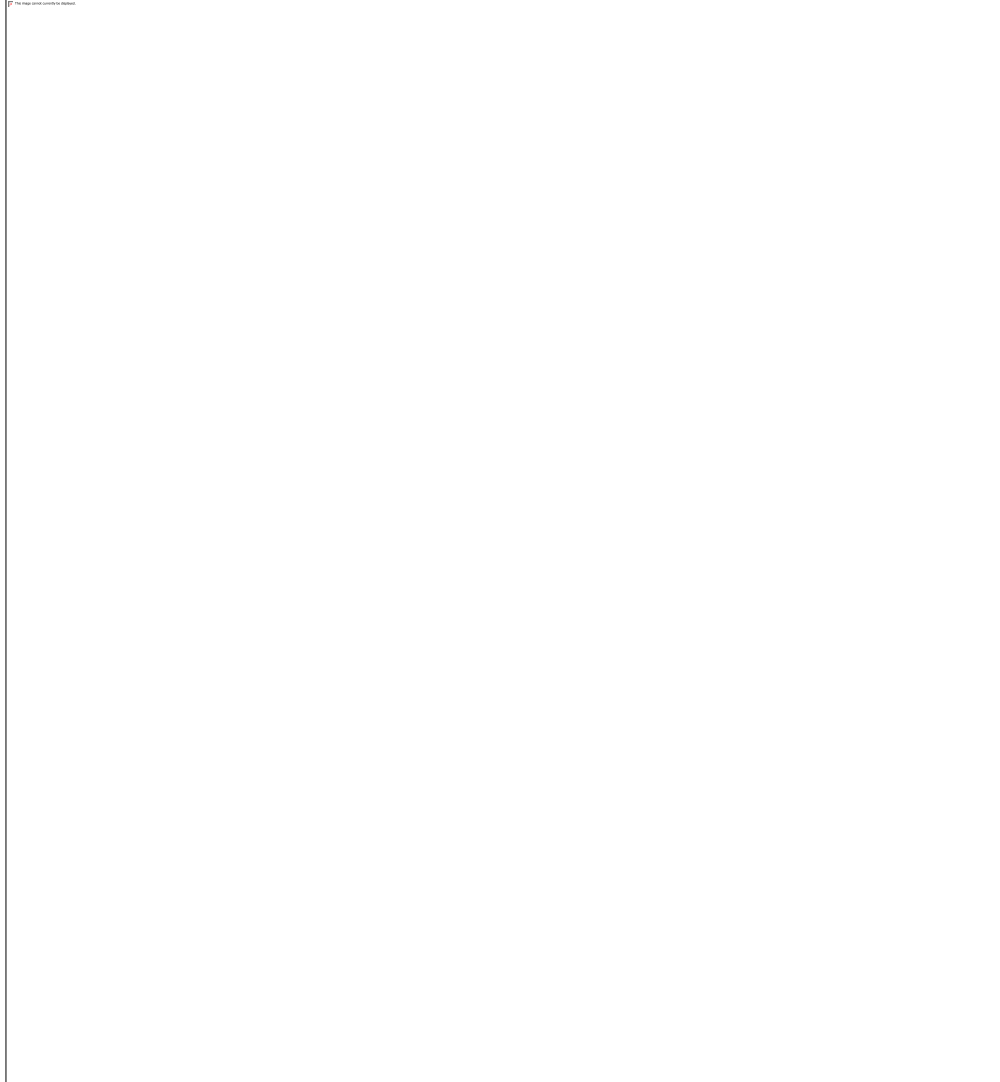
Name of school	Poor	Fair	Good	V. Good	Excellent	Frequency

APPENDIX VII: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

© 2010 Pearson Education, Inc. All rights reserved. This document is the property of Pearson Education, Inc. and is not to be distributed, copied, or reproduced in any form without the prior written permission of Pearson Education, Inc.



**APPENDIX VIII: LETTER FROM THE MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION**



APPENDIX IX: PERMIT FROM NACOSTI

