

**TO INVESTIGATE FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR  
STUDENTS' ABSENTEEISM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
RUIRU DIVISION, THIKA DISTRICT**

**BY:**

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Bironga, Sophia  
*To investigate  
factors responsible*



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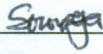
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# DECLARATION

DEDICATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in  
any other University.



**BIRONGA SOPHIA MORAA**

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as  
University Supervisor.



**PROF: M. M. PATEL**

**SCHOOL FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

### **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to my Husband, Parents and my Children for their support and encouragement in the course of my study.

I express my sincere thanks to Prof. M. M. Patel for his wise and selfless guidance, untiring patience and encouragement throughout the course of this research was of great help.

I also thank the Headteachers, Teachers and Students of the sampled schools for their cooperation during the data collection phase.

I thank Mary Omariba for her excellent work in typing the final draft of this project and the research instruments. She did commendable work.

At least, I am thanking all those who in one way or another have helped me to complete this study. Special mention must also be made of the members of my family for their understanding and endurance throughout the course of this study.

Finally, I, however, remain responsible for the views expressed in this study.

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I cannot adequately express my sincere thanks to Prof. M. M. Patel my Supervisor whose tireless guidance, untold patience and encouragement during the course of this research was of great help.

Thanks to the Headteachers, Teachers and Students of the sampled schools for their co-operation during the data collection phase.

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The Author alone, however, remains responsible for the views expressed in this project.

## **ABSTRACT**

Many students who enroll in form one of secondary school don't complete this within the prescribed minimum period or a significant number don't complete the cycle at all. This has led to high rate of educational wastage. One factor that contributes to educational wastage is persistent absenteeism of students from school.

This study investigated what causes absenteeism. It also suggested some solutions to the problem of student absenteeism.

The subjects of the study consisted of form two and form three students (120) and their teachers (90). Sampling was used to select six schools located in Ruiru Division in Thika District.

A questionnaire, the main tool used for the collection of data, was administered to the above students. There was an interview schedule and scale for teachers which was equally administered to teachers. The data collected were analysed through the use of descriptive statistics.

After analyzing the data it was noted that students absenteeism was a problem affecting all the selected secondary schools. The major causes of students absenteeism were lack of school fees, sickness and withholding by parents.

It was realized that in order to solve the problem of students absenteeism then other people need to be involved like parents, curriculum developers, and school counsellors.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM**

Education is an issue of primary concern in most countries, both developed and under-developed. This is not only at national level, but also at family and individual levels. For instance, Kenya has used a lot of money on education and there are great educational opportunities for the youth. Despite the importance which is attached to education, all countries especially Kenya have a number of children who regard going to school as a burden to be endured rather than an opportunity to be grasped. The Kenya Government accepts the provision of basic education to the citizens as a right not a privilege. Not only does education contribute to social and economic progress of individuals but also enhances cultural progress and international co-operation. The development plan of 1994-1996, states that, the basic aim of education is to remove disparities between groups and economic regions. The government and educators should ensure that every child gets basic education. The main delivery system for basic education of children outside the family is primary school. Primary education must be universal and ensure that the basic learning needs of children

are satisfied. After that then the pupil can now proceed to secondary education. The secondary education like primary education should take into account the needs of a particular community. Supplementary alternative programmes can help meet the basic learning needs of students with limited or no access to formal schooling, provided they share the same standards of learning applied to school and are adequately supported.

In Kenya one of the most important constraint which hinders realization of universal basic education is educational wastage (Achola, et al 1994). In Kenya there are two main forms of education wastage which have been identified: Drop-outs and repetition. Sago (1984) in Tanzania showed that there was a significant relationship between educational wastage and absenteeism. He found out that an early indicator of dropping out of school was students persistent absenteeism from school.

Absenteeism has a negative and profound effect on students academic achievement. Students who are persistently absent from school have low education attainment which leads to repetition and eventually students drop out of school. There are four main reasons why absenteeism is a problem; (i)

Educational (ii) Economic (iii) Psychological (iv) Institutional. Educationally absenteeism is a problem because persistent absentees tend to fall behind in their school work. Economically, investment on education does not achieve the desired objectives. Psychologically, absenteeism is symptomatic of a deeper disturbance within an individual and may foreshadow a more serious condition in later childhood or adult life. Institutionally, persistent absenteeism suggests disaffection with the school.

Although education wastage is more pronounced in marginalised urban areas, the same problem confronts educationist countrywide. In Kenya female wastage continues to be higher than male wastage. Eshiwani (1984) estimated that female wastage was three times higher than that of males.

Like said earlier it has been everyone's dream to have every Kenyan have basic education. According to the Addis Ababa conference of 1961 Resolutions they said that African <sup>states</sup> States were resolved to provide universal primary education to their children by the year 1980. Since independence, the Kenyan Government has committedly been working towards the goal. In normal situations, all these efforts should enable all Kenyan

school aged children to go to school with the determination to pursue education wholeheartedly, so that national development for self-reliance can be realised. Education is the only way to good independence. So all the Kenyan children should feel obligated to attend school regularly involve themselves actively in learning. Should there arise causes making a child not to attend school, then such causes must be fought against decisively and forthwith.

Like said earlier all other things being equal, a student who attends school regularly performs well, while the irregular student performs poorly and sometimes loses interest and drops out before attaining the expected standard of education.

Many parents are crying that their children are drinking illicit brews, smoking anything and listening to no one. They are playing truants, they abscond classes and come up with all sorts of strange excuses in order not to go to school. Some of the children illustrated in the (East African Standard, Monday August 6, 2001) showed that due to absenting themselves from school, their academic work suffered and there was general concern in the school that they were beginning to be a bad influence on other students. Due to this, there was an urgent

need to understand and identify reasons underlying this pattern of school wastage. One reason which may account for the high rate of educational wastage as already noted earlier is absenteeism of students from school. It is due to such problems discussed above associated with absenteeism that called for a careful investigation.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

At a time when more money and time is being spent on education than ever before, students absenteeism becomes an issue of great concern to the nation. Everyone is worried why most students are avoiding to attend school regularly. Secondary cycle is very important in the Kenyan education system. A large percentage of students who enroll in form one do not complete this within the prescribed minimum period and a significant number do not complete the cycle at all. This has been attributed to high rate of educational wastage. This therefore called for an urgent need to identify and understand reasons underlying the patterns of school wastage in Kenya.

Like seen earlier in the introduction, students absenteeism from school is a possible reason which may account for the high rate of wastage in Kenyan secondary schools. Research in other

countries has actually shown that persistent absentees are less successful on achievement test and intelligent tests (Ross, 1965, Fogelman et al 1980). Most persistent absentees don't attain permanent literacy levels (UNICEF, 1990). Poor academic achievement of persistent absentees leads to repetition and subsequent dropping out.

Of late the public has been showing a lot of concern on school attendance. Members of the society, among them local leaders, educationists and parents have been condemning the habits of students' absenteeism in schools. One parent with bitterness and sadness reported this in the Kenya's local newspaper. "Student Unrest" East African Standard, Nairobi, Monday, August 6, 2001 pg. 1).

"At age 15, my son has already started smoking and drinking. My son is playing truant, repeatedly absconds classes, is generally degenerating into a deviant, and could very well be on his way out of school."

In light of the above concern, there was very little research that had been done on factors contributing to absenteeism in secondary schools in Ruiru Division in Thika District. Well, that was why the researcher decided to do a research on this particular area to exactly know why students in this area were not attending school regularly. The choice of this problem was

prompted by the fact that there was a hue and cry over the increasing rate of absenteeism in secondary schools in Ruiru Division.

### 1.3 **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

As the researcher thought about this constant problem of students absenteeism, there are some questions that came into her mind.

- Are our schools experiencing the problem of frequent absenteeism?
- What are the probable reasons for absenteeism?
- What are the effects of students absenteeism?

### 1.4 **OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

- To find out the severity of the problem of absenteeism in secondary schools.
- To find out the reasons behind the problem of absenteeism.
- To suggest ways and means of eradicating this problem of absenteeism.

### **1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Coming from the area of study, the researcher was alarmed by the repeated incidences of absenteeism among students; the possible meaning of such problems with regard to low academic achievement and the continued debate among the parents, members of the public and educationists in daily newspaper over the problem. With this in mind it appeared necessary to carry out this study so as to understand the source of what underlies this repeated issue of absenteeism in Ruiru Division, Thika District. The study aimed at two main things. It attempted to find out what factors contributed to students absenteeism and to suggest some solutions to the problems.

### **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

It was hoped that students, teachers, parents and the nation as a whole were to benefit from the findings of this study. In the first place the study tried to find the causes of students absenteeism and gave useful solutions. This was to help in improving learners' performance as a result of improved school attendance. Teachers were also to benefit because they could use the findings to guide and counsel the students.

It was also hoped that if the study helped to improve school attendance, the money allocated for education was going to be utilised properly for the purpose it was intended for. There is so much money used on education and it is wasted when it is spent on students who don't benefit much from schooling due to absenteeism.

Finally, it was anticipated that the study was to stimulate or encourage more educators and students of Educational Administration to undertake research in areas not covered in this study.

## **1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Despite the fact that there are many secondary schools in Ruiru Division, Thika District, not all of them were covered. Due to limited funds and time the study was only done on only six schools which were selected purposively. There was a temptation that normally existed on over-generalising from data obtained on a limited sample, under certain conditions. The limitation was that the findings were based on the sample and not all the population. Also some teachers and students were not cooperative to freely divulge information. One of the things the

researcher used to get information was a register and some of them were not complete.

## **1.8 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study assumed that the school population was not to vary significantly. It also assumed that the resources allocation among the six study schools was the same. The study equally assumed that the respondents could be willing to co-operate and give accurate information on students absenteeism so as to assist the researcher to accomplish the objectives of this study.

## **1.9 DEFINATION OF TERMS**

Absence from school : Not present at school when one is required to be there

Absenteeism : Physical absence of the student from the classroom at the time the register is filled in the morning and afternoon.

School phobia : Some morbid fear which makes a child reluctant to go to school

Education Wastage : Students who after enrolling in form one of secondary school don't complete

within the prescribed minimum time or drop-out of school.

**Truancy** : Absence from school without leave (i.e. unlawfully) and without parental knowledge and consent.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

It looked like not much work had been done in connection to students absenteeism in Ruiru Division in Thika District, but quite a number of people have researched on factors responsible for absenteeism in many parts of the world. People are concerned with education because it is generally accepted as a key factor to a successful life. This can be successful if students absenteeism is reduced. Studies and literature on students absenteeism are plentiful, particularly in the United States and Europe. This is probably why the researcher depended to a large extent on foreign but related literature. At the same time, local literature on students drop out, an area which is closely related to absenteeism, provided valuable information. From review of related literature some aspects on students absenteeism came up.

The major areas discussed in this chapter are: theoretical rationale on the problem of absenteeism, socio economic reasons for absenteeism, psychological explanations on the

problem of absenteeism, the effects of absenteeism on performance and solutions to the problem of absenteeism.

## **2.2 THEORITICAL RATIONALE**

Bart (1952), Adriola (1953), Hay (1955) all influenced by Freudian theory of psychoanalysis viewed absenteeism as an attempt on the part of children to: (i) Avoid pressures and responsibilities which accompany maturity and adulthood, (ii) Escape real or fancied injuries or intolerable psychological situations (iii) Retreat from normal intellectual growth brought about by unstable ego, possibly caused by psychological or developmental trauma. The above theory has been supported by Broadwin (1962). As for Broadwin, he says that, a child who is absent has obsessional neurosis and runs home from school in terror. When he is at home, he seems unhappy and carefree, when he is at school he is miserable and anxious. These turn of events leads to the child being depressed.

Most of the neo-Freudians have commented on depression in children who do not want to go to school. Usually in most children the depression is transitory, only in few children that it is pathological. School absenteeism should not be seen as a

true clinical entity with uniform etiology, psychopathology, causes, prognosis and treatment, but rather as a collection of symptoms occurring against the background of a variety of psychiatrist disorders. Normally, persistent depression results into school withdrawal which is a form of escape behaviour. Escape is the underlying construct of interest in most withdrawal studies. The withdrawal response is therefore an escape approach to attractive non-school outcomes (Morgan, 1976). The importance of students self concept is vital. Therefore, the precise relationship between student's self concept and absenteeism should be investigated.

Reid (1982) in the Shiefield study, he used the Brookover self-concept of Academic Ability Scale and shortened form of Copper Smith Self Esteem Inventory with 77 absentees and two control groups. He found out that persistent absentees had significantly lower self-concept than students in the two control groups, however in the findings there was no significant difference between male and female students.

According to Benson (1980) absenteeism is a coping mechanism maintained by short term reduction of frustration, discomfort and little regard for long term consequences. An

aversive school environment creates a no-specific avoidance response in which means of increasing distance from the noxious stimulus is sought. So to say absenteeism is a coping mechanism to help students avoid school.

In conclusion it is noted that some students are better able to cope with all forms of negative reinforcement, socio-psychological and institutional than their peers irrespective of whether they are boys or girls. Persistent absentees become more used to patterns of failure at school than their regularly attending peers. Students' withdraw from the offending stimuli is caused by consistent patterns of failure at school. The school is a place that rewards the able more than the less able. Due to this fact then schools can also be blamed for absenteeism as much as the students' parents and their background. Most of the persistent absentees have low self-concept of academic ability and low achievement motivation, therefore they have poor attainment in school and this results into persistent school absenteeism.

## **2.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC**

### **REASONS FOR ABSENTEEISM**

There has been consistent research findings in connection to family factors associated with absenteeism. Low socio-economic status, higher than average family size, poverty, poor housing condition have all been significantly associated with absenteeism. The children who acquire adult status too early through their domestic and personal circumstances usually become persistent absentees. Thereafter, school life becomes boring, irrelevant, petty and restrictive. Such attitude leads to withdrawal and conflicts (Jones 1980; Bird et al 1980; Grunsell 1980). Under the same point (Turner 1974) found out that some children especially girls according to him feel that school is childish. Once they get initiated into sex very early on, they get used and find school life boring compared to the pubs where they are usually taken by their older guys. When in school they feel that they are superior, because they have experienced all the things the other children are having as fantasies about. Since they are with older men, in a way they feel that they are mature and have money. Rutter (1975) stated that there is little doubt that parents assist shape the child's behaviour. This takes place by means of their selective encouragement and

discouragement of certain behaviours. Parents normally differ in the amount of freedom they allow. Rutter (1975) did a research where he compared families in two contrasting locations. He found out that families in the inner regions suffered more social disadvantages, including worse housing conditions, greater family disorder, more family disorder and increased incidence of criminality. In addition, their siblings were found to have behavioural, emotional and reading disorders. Broken homes were associated with delinquency and psychiatric disorders. Rates of absenteeism were higher in the inner region. Valam (1974) also showed similar association between home and social background and reading problems. In connection to broken homes (Mullen 1956, Stott 1966) also carried out a research and it showed that many of the students not going to school everyday came from homes where there were no both parents. The term "broken home" included different conditions which had very different psychological reflects. The home might have been broken by death, a foster, child or the unrecognized child of one of the children of the family. According to them all the above made the children affected psychologically thus hating school.

There is need for training. Love is not enough; children need training. One other reason why children don't go to school everyday is lack of proper training by their parents Tyerman (1968). He also explained that the children need to be taught the basic rules of conduct and how to live with other people. This he said was best learnt by example rather than by precept. Under the same factor Reid (1985) found out that faulty training was often just one aspect of parents inefficiency and lack of interest of their children. Some children he said don't go to school everyday because they know that their parents don't care and they will not discipline them even if they found out that they didn't attend school. Some parents seem to give up so easily thus giving the children freedom. Carlen et al (1992) when they interviewed many parents to get views of targeted truants' parents concerning their legal responsibility to ensure their teenage children's attendance at school, many of them had given up. One parent said this:

"I even took him up to the bus stop, watched him get on the bus, and he's got off. And I've told them that he's got on the bus, that he is coming. I've then not been in half an hour and the school board man's been here. Says He hasn't gone! I said, Well I can't take a big lad to school. I got little runs to see to" (Mrs. Smith).

Among other reasons for absenteeism in Kenya is parental poverty. It has been found out that poverty affects the female students more than the male students. Girls in particular withdraw from school so that they can help earn money for their family. Some become housegirls and boys become houseboys Kirui (1982) hotel attendants and matatu touts Nkinyangi (1977) handcart drivers Waka (1980) or even help in other activities at home which contribute to family income. Nderitu (1987), Sago (1984) also found out that many students come to school hungry because of lack of food at home. This results in malnutrition and illness which could lead to persistent absenteeism. Besides school fees many parents find it difficult in buying school uniform and paying additional school levies. This most likely make parents to withdraw their children from school. Therefore, many children from poor and unenlightened homes are persistently absent and subsequently drop out of school (Liondo; 1987, Sago 1984; Eshiwani 1984; Kirui 1982; Mbunda 1983; Waka 1980).

In general the events that are observable over the years are that, the absentees are more likely to originate from families of low socio-economic status (Davie, 1976). In Kenya children mostly girls are withdrawn by parents to help with house-hold chores which might produce tangible results. The parents are happy when their children engage in some activities which contribute to family income. The high rates of absenteeism in Kenyan schools could be caused by early drive for money of regular fees remittance by parents and low educational motivation from parents. Most children in Kenya through their domestic circumstances are forced to acquire adult status too early and this leads to the problem of persistent student absenteeism. The parents' lack of interest to train the children to have good behaviour and discipline them causes persistent student absenteeism. Carlen Pat et al (1992) found out that some children refuse to go to school everyday because they don't want to put school uniform and do homework. This make them to be chased back home or suspended.

Some writers report that change of school and also distance to schools can have negative effect on school attendance. Raju did a study and she found out that communication and

distance between the home and the school affect school attendance. She said that means of transportation in many areas are inadequate and some students drop out of school because of the long, distances which they have to travel everyday to and from school.

#### **2.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS FOR ABSENTEEISM**

Some students miss school mainly for psychological or psychological-related factors such as illness, psychosomatic complaints, laziness, a fear of attending school for any reason such as dislike of teacher, a lesson, an impending confrontation or fear of bullying. Among many others, psychological reasons include a myriad of personality factors like low self-concept of academic ability, introversion, isolationism and school phobia.

Many researchers have shown that depression is one of the common reasons for absenteeism. Champbell (1959), Agra (1954) found out that depression was one of the symptoms of school withdrawal. The depressed child does not want to go to school because depression has made school too difficult for him. Some students don't go to school everyday because of emotional disturbance. According to Clyne (1966), he says

that some parents are to blame for this because in spite of the pressure of prodromal symptoms which might give the people in the child's environment at least an inkling that all is not well, little notice is taken. This results to children refusing to go to school as they are affected emotionally and nobody is caring.

More study has been devoted to the family than to any other influence on behaviour, and there is widespread agreement that through the family the child adopts standards, values and ways of behaving that persist throughout his life. Many children with conduct disorders come from bad homes. Tyreman (1968) found out that a child becomes like the people he lives with. Most important of all in determining the type of reaction he will show in a situation, is the affection and training he has received at home. According to him few truants receive either affection or training. He goes further to say that those who do come from families where there is love and discipline rarely play truant for long. Investigations in Britain and America have revealed the unhappiness in the home lives of many truants. A parent who cares about his child will ensure that he is educated. An interested parent

who wants his child to go to school regularly will rarely have any difficulty over attendance.

Another factor that contribute to absenteeism is excessive anxiety and fears. Clyne (1966) concluded that some children fear of being bullied, devoured, of sexually menacing children of opposite sex, of arousal of sexual longings, loss of a friend etc. He went further to say that at times the children's excessive anxiety could only be inferred from symptoms like insomnia and fainting. Some parents of persistent absentees have indicated that their children have obsessional symptoms. Some mothers speak of their children as being over-tidy or exceptionally neat and orderly. Most persistent absentees show withdrawal, irritability and aggressive behaviour (Benson, 1980). So absenteeism can be linked to fear, anxiety, projective paranoid symptoms, compulsive obsession. Anorexia, insomnia, hypochondriasis and nail biting are less common among persistent absentees (Morgan, 1976).

Feidhusen (1977) in his research discovered that persistent absentees tend to be impulsive, unpredictable assertive and aggressive in their relationship. The above findings were also

confirmed by Rutter (1976). Also Lack and Savita (1976) in Philadelphia suggested that delinquent behaviour within school can be a major factor which causes absenteeism.

(Turner, 1974) pointed out that some children find school lives boring so they prefer to go to places where they can have fun and do what they want. These children he went on to say are those that come from uncondusive home environment. For example, homes where the mother is married to another man yet is moving, so the step father might even want to have an affair with the step daughter or be cruel to her. So this makes these children to hate school and home at the same time.

Hearly (1915) suggested that some British Writers like Burt and Eysenk felt that genetic influences was one cause for students refusing to go to school everyday. Burt (1925) suggested that an urge to wander was the main cause in about 2 percent of his case. He argued that the results of factorial studies indicated that there is a general factor of emotionality compable in emotional life to general intelligence in intellectual life.

He attached greater importance of the strength of this general factor than to that of any particular impulse. He said that many absentees tend to be frightened, timid children who are running away from their difficulties. He regarded these variations strength of anger, aggressive fear etc to be based on genetic constitution.

Another factor responsible for absenteeism according to Tyreman (1968) is health and physical defects. He is supported by Reid (1985) who said that one of the reason why some students don't go to school regularly is medical. He pointed out that the vast majority of absentees are away from school for legitimate medical reasons, either illness or accidents.

## 2.5 EFFECTS OF ABSENTEEISM ON <sup>Performance</sup> PEROMRANCE

A research done in America by Still (1962) showed that persistent absentees were poor readers and attained low positions. Also Chazan (1962) in Colorado reported that more than half of his persistent absentees sample were having very difficult time with their school work.

Mueni (1984) in Machakos District found out that absenteeism leads to poor performance. Muturi (1987) working in Muranga District in Kenya attributed poor performance in examinations in Kandara and Muruka Divisions to persistent absenteeism that had been observed in the area.

Effects of absence of students from school are obvious, direct and immediate. A child cannot progress if he does not go to school. Wall (1954) noted that:

“Probably less care is taken by the harassed teacher of a large class to bring the child who has missed an afternoon up to date than is exercised in making good the ground lost through a lengthy period of illness. The teacher of a child who has been absent through truancy or to the irresponsibility of his parents will feel little urge to go over the lessons with him individually”.

This then means the child's performance will be affected due to absenteeism. Clyne (1966) noted that absence from school may also lead to the loss, perhaps irretrievably, of such educational benefits as the child's intelligence might have

entitled him to. According to Clyne (1966) he pointed out that under present-day highly exacting and competitive conditions for secondary and higher education the loss of a year's or even several months' schooling may make the difference between passing and failing qualifying examinations. He also noted that for the less-gifted child, it may mean permanent educational backwardness either generally or some field of knowledge.

Rhodes Boyson (1974) found out that apart from affecting school work, absenteeism also affects other aspects of life. He explained that there is a risk that many absentees who do not obtain jobs become delinquents.

Commenting on Tyreman's research findings, Faraj Dumila (1984) says that truancy has been a major problem in our schools for it worries both parents and teachers. He quoted Tyreman's remarks as follows:-

“To keep warm, truants like to go into cinemas and shops. They may steal the admission fee or be tempted by the good display. Unable to have a meal at home or at school, they may steal money for food”.

Dumila also pointed out that most truants are below average in intelligence and it is expected that their work is below the normal level of their age.

From the above examples on effects of absenteeism it can be seen that it poses serious problems to the individual, the school and also the society. Therefore there is a need for serious measures to be taken to solve this problem.

## **2.6 THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF ABSENTEEISM**

Many people have come up with many suggestions on how to solve the problem of students absenteeism. Different people have shown their views according to their culture.

For instance, Britain put a lot of emphasis on compulsory school attendance in order for the learners to receive adequate instructions. British act of 1944 stated that it was the duty of the parent of every school age child to cause him to receive efficient full time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude by regular attendance at school.

Compulsory school attendance is not confined to Britain and Scotland but Tyreman (1968) said that a similar practice is

found in America. Carlen et al (1992) supported this when they noted that attendance at school for all children of U.S.A. from the age of five to the current statutory leaving age has been compulsory since the foster Education Act of 1870. Infact, they continued to say that during this time parents had a statutory obligation to ensure that children's attendance and the legislation was widely interpreted then as it is today. School attendance committees were appointed to deal with non-attenders.

Psychologists advocate for diplomacy in dealing with cases of absentees. Karlin, a psychologist, noted that there should be great understanding on the part of teachers. They should try to understand the child's problem so as to help in deciding on what measures to be taken. However, others feel differently, for instance Eric Khasakhala, Assistant Minister for information and Broadcasting then (Kenya) once said in the Kenya Local Newspaper, Daily Nation January 17 (1984) that he had authorised chiefs in Emuhaya Division of Kakamega District to arrest students who refused to go to school and take stern measures against their parents for failing to care for them. The Director of Education (Kenya) in the Kenya Standard Sunday 16 September, 2001 told the Principals that

if those students in form four miss school for 15 days continuous, they should not be registered. She was trying to discourage absenteeism. She warned them that Principals should be serious on this issue. Other studies approach this problem from medical point of view. As noted earlier, a number of research findings attribute absenteeism to illness. Anderson (1982) conducted a research on causes of absenteeism and he discovered that illness was the leading cause as far as irregular school attendance was concerned. He then came up with the idea of co-operation between the school, parents and the health department. He suggested that there should be effective programme which required teamwork between the school, parents and health services.

In connection to the above suggested solutions it is felt that there cannot be a general rule of solving absenteeism problem. Treatment for any particular child should be determined by the fact of his/her case. It will also depend on the child's home circumstances, the school situation and the facilities available.

## **2.7 SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW**

From the research carried out previously it has been seen that high rates of absenteeism in Kenyan schools could have been caused by parental poverty. Students from low socio-economic status have higher rate of absenteeism compared to those from high socio-economic status. From the research carried previously, sickness anxiety and fear, lack of interest from parents to train children good behaviour and household chores have contributed to absenteeism. From other researchers it has been noted that absenteeism affects performance. To solve the problem of absenteeism, it has also been found out that there should be understanding of teachers towards children and having co-operation among the school, parents and the health department.

To conclude the chapter, it should be pointed out that most of the reviewed related literature is based on foreign educational systems particularly in the United States and Europe. Well, although the literature cannot be generalised to other systems, it served as a useful base in the present study.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

After having read the related literature to this study, various scholars indicated that some factors that contribute to student's absenteeism. However, the researcher felt that she could not rely on the information gathered from the readings. She therefore decided that further inquiry was necessary. This the researcher felt could enable her fill in the gaps that had been left out. The researcher decided to use some questionnaires on students, because she felt that the affected were the ones who could tell her the factors influencing absenteeism. An interview schedule was also used for the class teachers so that the researcher could be able to get some information. Since only those students who were absent were needed, the researcher felt that the class teacher could be in a position to give her the names and tell her the class with most absentees. In addition to this the researcher used the attitude scale for the teachers to get their opinion on absenteeism. Well, the research was designed to find out the factors responsible for students absenteeism in Ruiru Division, Thika District. This chapter outlined the different aspects of methodology that were

used in the study, like population sample and its selection, research instruments, procedures and data analysis.

### **3.2 SAMPLE AND ITS SELECTION**

There are many educational divisions in Thika District. Out of the many only one Division (Ruiru Division) was used in the study . Limited funds and time could not allow any more spatial coverage.

The reason for this choice was that Ruiru Division is well known to the researcher and therefore the subjects drawn from this population in the division were thought to be likely ready to respond to the research more freely and willingly. The division is divided into different zones like Ruiru, Juja and Gathu.

The population from which the subjects were selected were picked purposively. Six secondary schools in Ruiru Division were chosen specifically those that had absenteeism. Then 120 students were selected purposively. The students were those that frequently absented themselves from school. They were identified from the school register and assistance from the class teachers. The researcher decided to use students from form two and three because from the interview schedule it was noted that the problem of absenteeism was felt in those two forms. Besides, form ones

were new and not settled fully to miss school frequently. On the other hand, the form fours students are serious with their studies as the exams are around the corner and the schools might not have wanted them to be disturbed. So the form 1 and 4 were excluded as the problem was not much.

The researcher also used 5 teachers from each school thus having a total of 30 teachers from six schools. These teachers were used so that they could assist in identifying students who were always absent from schools and to give information especially reasons for absenteeism. Finally, 60 teachers that is ten from each school were used. The researcher used them so that she could get their opinions on absenteeism through the attitude scale.

The teachers and students were included in the sample because they are at the centre of this study. Teachers are aware of students' absenteeism and they are most likely to know most of the factors which influence absenteeism. Especially those who always deal with the students who are usually absent frequently from school. As for the students, they are the ones who best know the problems which face them. That is why it is important that their own experiences are to be taken into account in order to make a valid conclusion for future use.

### 3.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

To get the required information, three instruments were used:-

#### a) QUESTIONNAIRE

One type of questionnaire was used. It tried to answer the questions raised in the study. An anonymous questionnaire was used as the major tool for the collection of data. The instrument was set for the students who were usually absent from school. There was a combination of open and closed ended items. The open ended items were there to enable the respondents to express their view and opinions, while the closed ended items were there to enable the respondents to give responses to specific questions. The questionnaire was a 20 item tool divided into three sections. In section 1 the students were required to give general information about their own personal background covering such variables as age, sex, form, where they stay, who they stay with etc. Then in section II it was designed to elicit responses on factors contributing to absenteeism and section III was meant to give the researcher measures that should be taken to reduce the problem of absenteeism. Questionnaire was to give a comprehensive data on a wide range of factors responsible for absenteeism.

## b) INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

This had 19 items. It was used on a few class teachers. The purpose of this tool was to elicit verbal responses from the respondents. The interview helped the researcher to do more probing and therefore more in-depth information was obtained. Just like the questionnaire for students it also had items requiring them to give personal information like age, gender, qualifications, teaching subjects, teaching forms etc.

The interview schedule for these class teachers equally sought information on:

- Whether they had noticed absenteeism with their classes.
- Reasons that they thought contributed to absenteeism
- Of which class had the most absenteeism
- Whether they had any records of students attendance. The registers they used helped to get the absentees.
- The reason students give them for not being able to attend school everyday.
- What is done on those students who miss school.
- The role played by parents and Principals in connection to absenteeism.
- Methods used when dealing with absenteeism.
- Finally time of the week when attendance is low.

### c) **ATTITUDE SCALE FOR TEACHERS**

Just like the interview schedule already discussed it had personal information that was similar. The purpose of this scale was to give some of the opinions of the teachers on absenteeism. The researcher wanted to know their attitudes and feelings in connection to absenteeism. Besides the general information the attitude scale for teachers had 20 items that sought information or how they felt on the following:

- Effects of absenteeism on performance.
- Whether sickness contribute to absenteeism.
- How they feel about bullying and threats, school fees, students helping with household chores, too much homework from teachers whether they contribute to absenteeism.
- Whether the parents and Principals contribute to absenteeism etc.
- Whether the parents should be made aware of their children's absenteeism.

### 3.4 **PILOT STUDY**

A pilot study was carried on two of the schools in Ruiru Division that had not fallen among those schools selected for the research.

These were St. Linda and Kitamaiyu Secondary Schools. These schools were suitable because they had similar characteristics with the school selected for the study. The data collected was analysed for clarity purposes. This helped in estimating the time to be allocated for the questionnaire and also some unclear statements were undone in all the instruments. More importantly it helped to validate the research questionnaire.

### 3.5 **PROCEDURE FOR COLLECTION OF DATA**

With the permission of the head teacher in the sample under study, the researcher went to the respective schools in different days. The teachers of the six schools were interviewed respectively. In the interview schedule the researcher used 30 class teachers that is five from each school. The researcher then talked to the teachers personally giving them time to think as they answered and she also explained where necessary. The interview schedule had 19 items. After one week the researcher took her second instrument that was the attitude scale for teachers. It had 8 items that enquired about the personal information of the teachers. The 20 items teachers were to say on how they felt about the statements given. The researcher gave this to 60 teachers in the six sample schools thus 10 teachers from each school. After that she gave these teachers

one week whereby she went back to collect them. During this time after the interview schedule the researcher was able to identify the absentees so the researcher took the students' questionnaire to administer. This was done in the month of October, 2001. The questionnaires were distributed to 120 students who had been identified as absentees and then collected after 40 minutes. The respondents were assured of complete confidentiality and that no respondent would be victimized for the information given. This precaution was infact taken to make the respondents feel free and secure to provide appropriate information as required.

The data collected were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, mainly frequency distribution and percentages. The analyzed data is presented in chapter four in percentages and tables of frequency distribution.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS AND OBSERVATION OF DATA

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the analysis of data derived from the students and teachers' response to the research instrument; the anonymous questionnaire, interview schedule for teachers and scale of attitude for teachers. This chapter is sub-divided into different sections for example:

- a) General comments on the respondents
- b) Analysis of the teachers' responses during the interview
- c) Teachers' response on the questionnaire and attitudes
- d) Students' response to the questionnaire
- e) Summary and the observation

#### 4.2 a) GENERAL COMMENT ON THE RESPONDENTS

There were six schools that were in the sample. The researcher used 90 teachers in total. Sixty teachers were for the attitude scale, so ten were from each school while five teachers from each school were for the interview schedule. There was students' questionnaires that were given to 120 students, that is 20 from each school. Among the students in the sample were from form two and

three as it had been planned in chapter three in this project.

#### 4.2 b) **ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHERS' RESPONSES**

##### **DURING THE INTERVIEW**

In order to achieve the objective of the research the researcher managed to interview 30 teachers, five from each school. The interview had 19 items which were intended to assist in getting data for the project. The following are the teachers' responses to the items in the interview schedule.

##### **4.2.1 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TEACHER INTERVIEWED**

In the interview schedule five class teachers were interviewed from each school. In question two they were asked about their age and the following table shows their responses.

**Table IV. 1. Agewise distributions of respondents**

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
20-24	1	3.3
25-29	6	20
30-34	10	33.3

35-39	10	33.3
40-44	2	7
45 <	1	3.3
TOTAL	30	100.2
Mean	33.5	

Looking from the above table it seems that the teachers who were interviewed were mature. As it can be seen  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the teachers are in the age of 30-39. This then shows that the data collected from them was most likely valid as they are mature. From the figures above it remarks that there are very few young teachers and very old teachers in the sample secondary schools.

#### **4.2.2 QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS**

There were 18 females teachers that were interviewed and 12 males teachers in the six schools. Different teachers were interviewed with different qualifications. They were asked about their qualifications and the following is their responses.

**Table IV. 2. Qualifications of the teachers**

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Trained graduate teacher	19	63.3

Untrained graduate	1	3.3
Diploma teacher	9	30
S1 teacher	1	3.3
Untrained teacher	0	0
TOTAL	30	100

It looks from the above table that there are hardly untrained teachers in the selected secondary schools. The findings tend to point to the fact that most teachers teaching secondary schools are trained graduates. The table shows that 9(30%) teachers are diploma teachers while 19(63.3%) teachers are graduates. This findings therefore indicate that the teachers interviewed most likely gave valid data as the majority of them are trained teachers.

#### **4.2.3 FORMS THE RESPONDENTS TAUGHT**

The researcher intended to know what forms the teachers taught in order to be certain that the teachers knew the students well. This was to assist the researcher appropriately in the research. So the teachers interviewed were asked which form they taught. The table below indicate their responses.

**Table IV.3. The forms the respondents teach**

Forms taught	Frequency	Percentage
Form 1	29	27
Form 2	25	23
Form 3	28	26
Form 4	26	24
TOTAL	108	100

The teachers were asked to say which forms they taught so some of them had more than one form that they taught, that is why the frequency goes to 108 instead of 30. From the table above, teaches interviewed teach all the forms starting from form one to form four. This therefore indicates that the teachers interviewed most likely knew all the students from their schools thus giving the correct data.

#### **4.2.4 WORKLOAD OF THE TEACHERS**

The seventh item in the interview schedule was enquiring how many periods the teachers taught per week so that it could be known whether they had enough time to talk to the absentees. A close look at the following table will show you their workload.

**Table IV.4. Periods the respondents teach per week**

Periods	Frequency	Percentage
10-14	2	7
15-19	5	17
20-24	16	53
25 <	7	23
TOTAL	30	100
Mean	21.6	

The above findings show that more than half of the teachers interviewed teach between 20 to 24(53%) lessons per week. Two(7%) teachers teach 10-14 lessons while 7(23%) teachers teach more than 25 lessons per week. The above indicates that there is an average of 21 lessons for a teacher per week. It seems that the majority of the teachers don't have overload therefore they can be able to have free time to deal and talk to the absentees.

#### **4.2.5 EVIDENCE OF ABSENTEEISM**

One of the objective of using the interview schedule was to find out which schools had identified absenteeism as a problem. So all the teachers interviewed, were asked whether they had

noticed any absenteeism in their schools. They responded as follows. Check the table below.

**Table IV. 5. Showing whether there is absenteeism or not in the sample schools**

Notice of absenteeism	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	30	100
No	0	0
TOTAL	30	100

The above table reveals that students' absenteeism is a problem affecting all the selected six schools. All the thirty teachers (100%) indicated that there were cases of absenteeism in their schools as shown above. This findings answers the research question which sought to know whether the problem of students absenteeism existed in the selected secondary schools.

#### **4.2.6 TEACHERS' PERCEIVED REASONS FOR STUDENTS**

##### **ABSENTEEISM**

An enquiry was made from the 30 teachers from the six selected schools, the reasons they thought caused absenteeism among students and the reasons that students gave them for failing to attend school. Some teachers gave more than one reason, that

is why the frequency in the table below is more than the number of teachers. A look at the table of reasons given by teachers and students will give a clue as to why students don't come to school everyday as expected.

**Table IV.6. Shows teachers' perception on reasons of students' absenteeism and the actual reasons the students gave**

Reasons	According to teachers		According to students	
	F	%	F	%
Fees	30	33	28	32
Sickness	17	19	24	27.2
Lack of interest	9	10	5	6
Family problems	9	10	12	13.6
School based reasons	5	6	1	1
Bad company	5	6	1	1
Drugs/hangovers	5	6	1	1
Circumcision	3	3	2	2.2
Withholding by parents	3	3	8	9
School phobia	3	3	5	6
Distance from school	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	90	100	88	100

From the responses in table IV.6 it is quite clear that the factors teachers perceived for absenteeism were confirmed by what the students gave as to why they were not able to attend school everyday. The above table shows that the two main reasons the teachers perceived for absenteeism that is fees and sickness were also the major actual reasons students gave when asked why they were absent from school. The above findings are in agreement with other researchers who found out that absence from school depended on socio-economic status of the child's parents. Tyerman found out that absence on the whole was twice as high among children of unskilled fathers compared with those of professional fathers. The finding of sickness is consistent with Harbison and Caren(1977) in Northern Island who showed that 47 percent of absenteeism could have been attributed to medical reasons.

Most of the respondents infact stressed that school fees and sickness had greatly affected school attendance. It seems from the findings that poverty is the main reason for absenteeism. Most parents seem not to be having enough money for fees and even to take their children to hospital for treatment. This likely forces them to withdraw their children from school. It looks like children from poor parents and unenlightened homes are

persistently absent and therefore they most likely drop out of school. This trend has been established by previous researchers (Liondo, 1987; Sago, 1984; Eshiwani, 1984; Mbunda (1983; Waka, 1980). Introduction of cost-sharing at all levels of education has increased the problem of absenteeism since students are sent home to collect school fees.

From the table above it was noted that school based reason was one factor that contributed to students absenteeism. This included lack of school requirement for example text books, uniform and being suspended or chased from school. 5 teachers that is six percent when interviewed said that the above were some of the reasons they perceived for students' absence from school while according to what the students said it is only one (1%) teacher who said that students gave the above reasons. The burden of providing books seems to have been placed on the parents. It also looks like some parents from Ruiru Division have unstable incomes. Parents seem to be buying basic necessities like food if confronted with a financial crisis. Students seems to be sent home to bring textbooks to school which lead to absenteeism. This likely leads to poor performance in schools. Lack of school uniform could be attributed to parental poverty. Another reason in connection to

this was suspensions. Few students were however absent due to these factors.

Family problems was noted to be another factor that teachers perceived for students absenteeism. This was in agreement with what the students gave out. The frequency according to the teachers was 9 out of 30 teachers perceived the above factor and 12 out of the same 30 teachers said that the students gave family problem as one of the reasons why they don't attend school everyday. The major family problems listed by the respondents included lack of food, sickness of parents and attending burials and court cases. This finding especially on the point of lack of food agrees with the report of the then Kenya's Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, Professor Paul Sumbi who is said to have reported that due to drought in some parts of Ukambani.

“School children are slowly giving up attending classes because they just cannot learn on empty stomachs”.

Closely related to this factor was the problem of withholding by parents, which was indicated by 3 teachers in their perception and this was confirmed by 8 teachers on what students told them as reasons for not being able to attend school daily. The above teachers said when interviewed that many students told

them they missed school because they were withheld at home to help in looking after cattle, babysitting, selling in the market, cultivating and helping with household chores. This finding is consistency with (Kirui 9182) who found out that some children are withdrawn from school so that they can help earn money for the family. Some become housegirls and houseboys or even help in other activities at home which contribute to family income (Nderitu 1987). A look at table IV.6 shows that 3 teachers (3%) had perceived that circumcision is one factor why students don't come to school daily. This was confirmed by 2 teachers (2.2%) saying that some students gave out this reason for failing to attend school when asked. When the teachers were interviewed they said that this took place in the month of August and December thus affecting school attendance in third and first term.

Distance from school was also perceived as a factor affecting student attendance. This was confirmed by one teacher out of 30 saying that some students give this reason for not coming to school everyday. This finding is consistent with that of Raju(1973) in her research already discussed in chapter two of this report. She says that many students drop out of school because of long distances they have to travel everyday. It seems

that many of the students travel far thus using buses and due to lack of fare or distance they fail to go to school daily. From the table it was also seen that bad company, school phobia and taking of drugs were perceived by teachers and some of the teachers confirmed that some students gave the very reasons for absenteeism.

**4.2.7 MEASURES TAKEN ON ABSENTEES**

It was important to know what the teachers do to those students who fail to attend school. This information could assist in getting recommendations. So the teachers were asked what was done to students who came late at any part of the day, the whole day, several days and weeks. The following table indicates their responses.

**Table IV. 7. Showing measures taken on the students who fail to attend school at different times**

Action	Late		The whole day		Several days		Weeks	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Punishment	20	67	19	63	15	50	0	0
Talking to students	6	20	2	7	1	3	1	3

Nothing	4	13	4	13	1	3	1	3
Suspension	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	33
Bring parent	0	0	5	17	13	43	18	60
TOTAL	30	100	30	100	30	100	30	100

From the above table IV. 7 it was clearly noted that punishment was the most commonly used by many teachers in the selected schools. As for the students who come late at any part of the day, miss school the whole day or several days 20 teachers (67%) 19 teachers 63% and 15 teachers (50%) said they use punishment. For those who stay out of school weeks, 10 teachers 33% said the students are suspended and 18 teachers 60% said they send away the students to bring their parents. Some of the teachers talk to the students while others don't do anything at all. It looks like those teachers who do nothing seem to influence the students to fail to attend school everyday because they know nothing will be done even if they don't go to school.

#### **4.2.8 PARENTS' ROLES ON ABSENTEEISM**

During the interview it was important to know whether parents contributed to students' absenteeism and in order to get this information the class teachers were asked the role that parents

played in contributing to absenteeism. The table below can give a clue on how the parents influence students' absenteeism.

**Table IV. 8. Showing parents roles in contributing to students' absenteeism**

Role played by parents	Frequency
Not paying fees in time	20
Giving children heavy duties at home	5
Not providing fare	1
Lack of interest in their children	18
Not taking children to hospital	4
TOTAL	48

The frequency (total) is more than the teachers interviewed (30) because they were asked to say more than one role. The table brings out the fact that the major role parents play in contributing to absenteeism is not paying fees in time. This finding confirms one reason the teachers perceived and the students gave for absenteeism in table IV.6. It was noted that out of 30 teachers 20 teachers indicated the above role of not paying fees in time. Eleven teachers pointed out the role of lack of parents' interest in their children. This seems to be the reason why some of the students don't go to school everyday because the parents don't care about them. This lack of interest

also seem to result to lack of commitment of parents in buying their children school requirements, which in turn may lead to students being chased away from school. Giving heavy duties and not taking the children to hospital confirms the reason given in table IV.6 that students don't go to school because of withholding by parents and sickness. It looks like many illiterate parents don't attach a lot of importance to their children's education.

#### **4.2.9 PRINCIPAL'S ROLES ON ABSENTEEISM**

In order to know whether the principals played a role in contributing to students not coming to school everyday, the teachers interviewed from the sample schools were asked if their principals contributed to students' absenteeism. The following table shows what their responses were.

**Table IV.9. Showing the role played by principals in contributing to absenteeism**

Role played by principal	Frequency
Send them for fees	24
Suspends the students	12
Delegates to classteachers	5
TOTAL	41

The above table shows total of the frequency of 41 which is more than the 30 teachers interviewed, because they were requested to say more than one role that they thought the principal played. Out of 30 teachers, 24 of them pointed out that one major role the principal played in contributing to absenteeism was sending away students for school fees. This finding is consistent with what was noted in table IV.6 where teachers perceived school fees as being one major reason for absenteeism of students. This was in agreement with what some of the students told teachers when they were asked why they were not able to be in school everyday. A few teachers delegated to classteachers the problem of absenteeism. It seems that the delegation brings out the point of the principal not following the absentees. This probably is confirmed in table IV.7 where it was noted that some schools nothing is done to the students who fail to come to school. The students therefore seem to be taking advantage and staying home as they know nothing will be done even if they don't attend school.

#### **4.2.10 DISCUSSION ON THE ISSUE OF STUDENTS' ABSENTEEISM AND THE ASSISTANCE GIVEN**

The researcher wanted to know whether the principal discusses the problem of absenteeism with teachers and the

assistance given so she asked them this. When asked whether the principal discussed the problem of absenteeism in the staff meeting 25 teachers(83%) out of 30 said that their principals discussed the issue. The remaining 5 teachers (17%) said their principals didn't. The very teachers were also asked whether they had any assistance to help them with the problem and 3 teachers (43%) out of 30 teachers pointed out that they got assistance while 17 teachers (57%) said no assistance was got from anybody. It was then enquired who provided the assistance and 13 teachers who said Yes, 10 of them said they got assistance from guidance and counselling while 3 teachers said they got assistances from the teachers.

#### **4.2.11 METHODS USED ON ABSENTEES**

During the interview the teachers were required to say the methods they used when dealing with the absentees. The table below clearly indicates their responses.

**Table IV.10. Methods used on absentees**

Method	Frequency
Guidance and counselling	27
Punishment	22
Suspensions	1
TOTAL	50

According to the table above, it was noted that 27 teachers out of 30 indicated that they used guiding and counseling. 22 teachers said they used punishment and 1 teacher indicated that suspension was one method used on absentees. It looks like those teachers who use punishment, they in one way or another contribute to students' absenteeism. A good look of table IV.41 shows very well that fear of punishment was one reasons perceived for students' absenteeism.

#### **4.2.12 MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD WHEN DEALING WITH ABSENTEES**

In order to get some data for recommendation it was enquired from the teachers the most effective method they use when dealing with those students who fail to come to school everyday. Well, their responses are as shown in the table below.

**Table IV.11. Showing the most effective method**

Most effective	Frequency	Percentage
Punishment	11	36
Monitoring and identifying the	3	10

root cause		
None	2	7
Guiding and counselling	9	30
Involving parents	5	17
TOTAL	30	100

The table above brings out the fact that the most effective method used when dealing with absenteeism is punishment. This was indicated by 11 teachers (36%) out of 30 teachers while guiding and counseling was second with 9 teachers (30%) indicating that method. It seems that punishment is the most effective method because many students fear punishment. Once they get to school and they are punished for missing school many of them are likely to go to school so that they don't get punished. Guiding and counselling is second and it looks like knowing their problem then it becomes easier to deal with them. After guiding and counselling most likely teachers are able to assist the absentee students.

#### 4.2.13 **TIME WHEN ATTENDANCE IS LOW**

Finally in the interview schedule the teachers were required to say the time of the week when the attendance was low. The table below shows their responses.

**Table IV.12. Time when there is low attendance**

Time	Frequency	Percentage
Monday	18	38.3
Tuesday	3	6.4
Wednesday	0	0
Thursday	3	6.4
Friday	23	49
TOTAL	47	99.9

There are more responses than the thirty teachers who were interviewed because the respondents were not restricted to one response. The above table indicates that Monday and Friday were the two days with the lowest attendance. This finding confirms the reason the students gave and what the teacher perceived that drugs and hangovers cause absenteeism in table IV.6. 23 teachers (49%) said that on Friday is when the attendance is lowest while 18 teachers 38.2% said that it is on Monday. It seems that on Friday

students go to visit their fiends especially those who have bad company and they go to take drugs. On the other hand, on Monday, it looks like if the students took drugs, went to ceremonies, visited friends, did a lot of household duties they get hangovers thus not attending school on Monday.

#### 4.3 **TEACHERS RESPONSE ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND**

##### **ATTITUDES**

The second instrument was the attitude scale for teachers. Before the teachers gave their opinion on the 20 items, there were some questions they were asked. In the introduction, there were 8 items then followed with the 20 statements. 60 teachers were used from the six selected schools mentioned in the first instrument. Ten teachers were used from each school. The above teachers were used in order to give a picture on what they felt about the students' absenteeism. They are always interacting with the absentees so it was felt that they could be of great assistance. The following were the items in the questionnaire and the responses.

#### 4.3 a) AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TEACHERS

The teachers were requested to write down their age so as to know whether they were mature people or not. The following was their response. Have a look at table. IV.13 below.

**Table IV.13. Showing teachers' age distribution**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-24	3	5
25-29	17	28
30-34	22	36
35-39	10	17
40-44	4	7
45-54	4	7
TOTAL	60	100
Mean	32.5	

The above table brings out clearly the point that half of the teachers were between 30-39. This then indicates that the teachers who filled the scale were mature teachers thus giving accurate or valid data. Their average age distribution was 32.5 and this is a mature teacher who is serious. It was noted from the above table that there were few young teachers and old

teachers. For example, 3 teachers (5%) and 4 teachers (7%) were having years between 20-24 and 45-54 respectively.

#### 4.3 b) QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS

Among the teachers who filled the attitude scale 33 were women while 27 were men. They were asked to give their qualification so as to help the researcher to see whether they were trained or not. The following are their qualifications.

**Table IV.14. Qualifications of the teachers**

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Trained graduate teacher	37	62
Untrained graduate	5	8
Diploma teacher	12	20
S1 teacher	4	7
Untrained teacher	2	3
Other specify	0	0
TOTAL	60	100

From the above table, it looks like most teachers teaching secondary schools are trained teachers. It was noted that 37 teachers (62%) out of 60 teachers were trained graduates that is more than a half. Diploma teachers were 12 teachers (20%) out

of 60 and the remaining few were untrained graduates 5 teachers (8%) and untrained teacher, were 2 teachers (3%). This findings seem to indicate that the teachers who filled the attitude scale gave valid data as the majority of them were trained teachers. As it was seen in table IV.13 they were equally mature, thus combining with their qualifications then the data was quite valid.

### 4.3 c) WORKLOAD

It was important to know how many lessons the teachers had per a week, so they were asked to write down how many periods they taught in a week. The table below indicates their responses.

**Table IV.15. Periods taught per week**

Periods per week	Frequency	Percentage
10-14	6	10
15-19	14	23
20-24	24	40
25 <	16	27
TOTAL	60	100
Mean	21	

From the table above it can be seen that the average periods per a week the teachers teach are 21. It was noted that more than half of the teachers in the sample taught periods between 15 and 24 that is 14 teachers (23%) taught between 15-19 periods while the 24 teachers taught between 20-24. It seems from the table that many teachers have enough time to interact with students and know what they feel about absenteeism.

#### **4.3 TEACHERS' RESPONSE ON THE ATTITUDE**

The teachers were asked to state their feelings on 20 different items based on the objective of this study. In almost each item the teachers were supposed to make a choice from a given number of choices. The teachers' responses to different items are tabled below and observation made on each item.

##### **4.3.1 SYLLABUS COVERAGE**

The teachers were requested to say their opinion towards this statement. "The students who absent themselves from school don't cover the syllabus well".

**Table IV.16. The absentees don't finish the syllabus well**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No. of respondents	38	22	0	0	0	60
%	63	37	0	0	0	100

A look at the above table clearly indicates that all the respondents (100%) felt that the absentees don't finish the syllabus well. This is in consistence with what researchers found out in this report chapter two that absenteeism results to poor performance.

#### **4.3.2 PUNISHMENT**

The second statement was as follows:

“Students who are absent from school should be punished”.

**Table IV. 17. Absentees to be punished**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No. of respondents	11	20	20	8	1	60
%	18.3	33.3	33.3	13.33	2	100

The above table shows that about half of the teachers' opinion was that students who are absent should be punished. However, 20 other teachers were undecided and the remaining 8 teachers

felt that there was no need of punishing the absentees. It seems that the word punishment was loaded as it was not specified what type of punishment thus resulting to 20 teachers being undecided. The undecided might have been due to the density of punishment for example cobra, sending students home etc. This finding of some teachers feeling absentees should be punished is in agreement with what the teachers said in the first instrument of interview schedule in table IV. 11 that punishment is the most effective method of dealing with absenteeism of students.

#### **4.3.3 PARENTS KNOWLEDGE**

The teachers were asked to say how they felt about the following statement.

“Parents should be made aware about the absenteeism of their children”.

**Table IV.18. Parents to know about their children’s absenteeism**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No. of respondents	44	14	0	1	1	60
%	73	23	0	2	2	100

A look at table IV. 18 shows that almost all the teachers (96%) accepted that parents should be told about their children's absenteeism. On the other hand, 2 teachers (4%) were not in agreement thus feeling there was no need of parents knowing about the absenteeism of their children. It seems that the majority of the teachers felt that if the parents are made aware of their students absenteeism then they will be able to assist them or work together with the school staff.

Table IV. 18 Parents not to be informed

#### 4.3.4 Sickness

The following statement equally required the teachers' opinion. "Long absence from school is a result of sickness".

**Table IV.19. Illness causes absenteeism**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No. of respondent	2	3	6	37	12	60
%	3	5	10	62	20	100

The opinion of majority of the teachers 49 out of 60 that is 82% was that long absence from school was not a result of sickness. A few teachers agreed that sickness cause long absence from school, while 6 teachers (10%) were undecided. This finding of the majority of the teachers is contrary to what some

researchers said in this report chapter two that absenteeism is caused by sickness.

#### 4.3.5 Parents contribution

The teachers were asked to say how they felt about the following statement.

“Parents don’t contribute to students’ absenteeism”.

**Table IV.20. Parents not contributing to absenteeism**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No. of respondent	0	9	1	43	7	60
%	0	15	2	71	12	100

The table above brings out the fact that to almost all the teachers 83% parents contribute to students’ absenteeism, while a minority think that parents don’t contribute to students’ absenteeism at all. This finding of the majority of the teachers confirms what had been found out in table IV.8 where the 30 class teachers who were interviewed agreed that parents contribute to students’ absenteeism. A close inspection of table IV.8 can show you how they contribute.

#### **4.3.6 TEACHERS TO TEACH ONLY**

The teachers were asked about their opinion on the following statement.

“Teachers’ job should be to teach only”.

**Table IV.21. Teachers to teach only**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No. of respondent	3	6	3	28	20	60
%	5	10	5	47	33	100

The majority of the teachers (80%) disagreed that teachers should do the job of teaching only. It looks like, they feel if teachers teach only and not do other activities then problems like absenteeism can never be reduced.

#### **4.3.7 ABSENTEEISM AFFECTS PERFORMANCE**

The teachers were asked on how they felt about the following statement.

“Absenteeism affects students’ performance in exams”.

**Table IV.22. Absenteeism causes poor performance**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No. of respondents	47	11	0	0	2	60
%	78	18	0	0	4	100

Almost all teachers about 58 that is (96%) believe that absenteeism causes poor performance, while only 2 teachers (4%) feel that absenteeism does not affect performance. This is in consistent to what was discussed in chapter two of this report that absenteeism affects students' performance. It looks like the teachers feel that absentee students don't cover the syllabus well thus having poor performance.

#### **4.3.8 ORGANIZATION OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS**

The respondents were asked on what they believed on the following statement.

“Schools should organize co-curricular activities such as drama, debate, sports day, school project, parents day etc”.

**Table IV.23. Schools to provide co-curricular activities**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No. of respondents	41	19	0	0	0	60
%	68	32	0	0	0	100

All the teachers agreed that schools should organize co-curricular activities. The teachers' feelings seem to confirm one of the reasons the students gave in table IV.6 that they fail to attend school because of lack of interest. It looks like if the school organizes these activities the students will have interest to go to school daily.

#### **4.3.9 HIGH ABSENTEEISM IN THE MORNING SESSION**

The respondents were requested to say how they felt about the following statement.

“The frequency of absenteeism is high in the morning session”.

**Table IV. 24. Absenteeism is high in the morning**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No. of respondents	3	12	11	31	3	60
%	5	20	18	52	5	100

Quite a number of teachers disagreed with the content of the statement that absenteeism is high in the morning, while a relatively big number of teachers felt that the frequency of absenteeism is high in the morning. However, a close look of the table IV.43 shows the session the students find difficult to attend.

#### 4.3.10 Records to be maintained

The teachers were asked on what they believed on the following statement.

“Records for students absenteeism should be maintained”.

**Table IV.25. Records to be maintained**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	44	16	0	0	0	60
%	73	27	0	0	0	100

All the teachers believed that records for students' absenteeism should be maintained. This is in agreement with what the interviewed teachers said that they have registers to maintain the record of absenteeism.

#### **4.3.11 HEADTEACHER SHOULD REDUCE ABSENTEEISM**

The respondents were required to say what they thought about the following statement.

“The headteachers should look for a way of reducing absenteeism”.

**Table IV. 26. Headteacher to reduce absenteeism**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	36	21	2	1	0	60
%	60	35	3	2	0	100

The majority of teachers 57(95%) agreed that the headteachers should look for a way of reducing absenteeism.

#### **4.3.12 Lack of fees results to absenteeism**

The teachers were asked to say what they felt about the following statement.

“School fees is not a factor for students’ absenteeism”.

**Table IV. 27. School fees does not cause absenteeism**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	0	11	1	32	16	60
%	0	18	2	53	27	100

The majority of teachers 80% disagree that school fees is not a factor for students' absenteeism. They feel that lack of fees causes absenteeism. This finding confirms the major reasons the students gave that fees was the cause for their not attending school. A good look at table IV.40 clearly shows that school fees is the leading cause for absenteeism of most students.

**4.3.13 PARENTS' SENSITIVITY ON THEIR CHILDREN'S**

**PROBLEMS**

The teachers were asked on how they felt about the following statement.

“Parents should be sensitive about problems affecting their children”.

**Table IV. 28. Parents to be sensitive**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	53	7	0	0	0	60
%	88	12	0	0	0	100

All the 60 teachers (100%) believe that parents should be sensitive about problems affecting their children.

**4.3.14 HEADTEACHER’S DISCUSSION ON ABSENTEEISM**

Once a problem is discussed a solution is got so the teachers who participated were asked how they felt about the following statement.

“Headteachers should discuss absenteeism in staff meetings”.

**Table IV. 29. Headteacher to discuss absenteeism**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	26	32	0	2	0	60
%	43.3	53.3	0	3.3	0	100

Almost all, 58 teachers (96.6%) had the opinion that headteachers should discuss absenteeism in the staff meetings. Only 2 teachers 3.3% disagreed with them thus feeling that there was no need of the headteacher discussing absenteeism during the staff meetings.

**4.3.15 BULLYING AND THREATS**

The teachers were asked to say their opinion on the following statement.

“Bullying and threats from other students don’t cause absenteeism”.

**Table IV. 30. Bullying and threats don't cause absenteeism**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	2	9	3	37	9	60
%	3	15	5	62	15	100

The majority of the teachers (77%) believed that bullying and threats from other students don't cause absenteeism. This is contrary to what students perceived in table IV. 41 where they felt that some students fear to come to school because of bullying from other students. However from the above table a few teachers (18%) were in agreement with what the students perceived earlier.

#### **4.3.16 HOUSEHOLD CHORES**

The respondents were asked on what they thought about the following statement.

“Helping with household chores by students should be discouraged”.

**Table IV. 31. Household chores to be discouraged**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	2	4	4	37	13	60
%	3	7	7	61	22	100

A few teachers' opinion was that household chores by students should be discouraged, while the majority of teachers 50(83%) believed that household chores by students should not be discouraged. These feelings of teachers are not in agreement with what the students felt in item 20 of the students' questionnaire where they said parents can reduce absenteeism by not giving them a lot of household chores.

#### **4.3.17 SCHOOL RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The respondents were required to say how they felt about the following statement.

“School rules and regulations make students absent themselves from school”.

**Table IV.32. Schools rules and regulations cause absenteeism**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	1	11	7	31	10	60
%	2	18	12	52	16	100

From the above table 68% of the teachers felt that school rules and regulations don't make students absent themselves from school. This is contrary to what a few students perceived in table IV. 41 where they felt that strict rules and regulations cause absenteeism.

#### **4.3.18 TOO MUCH HOMEWORK**

It was important to know what teachers felt about homework given to students, so they were asked what they thought about the following statement.

“Too much homework from teachers cause absenteeism”.

**Table IV. 33. Too much homework results to absenteeism**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	0	16	6	29	9	60
%	0	27	10	48	15	100

63% of the teachers believed that too much homework from teachers does not cause absenteeism. This is contrary to what a few students perceived in table 40. However, quite a number of teachers agreed that it does while 10% of teachers were undecided.

#### 4.3.19 **TEACHERS' SENSITIVITY**

The respondents were asked on how they felt about the following statement.

“Teachers must be sensitive about problems affecting their students”.

**Table IV. 34. Teachers to be sensitive**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	29	29	1	0	1	60
%	48	48	2	0	2	100

68 teachers 96% agreed that teachers should be sensitive about problems affecting their students. On the other hand, 4% of teachers saw no need of teachers being sensitive about students' problems.

#### 4.3.20 SCHOOL LIFE

The teachers were asked about their opinion on “School life should be made enjoyable”.

**Table IV. 35. School life to be enjoyable**

	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
No of respondents	31	26	2	0	1	60
%	52	43	3	0	2	100

Almost all teachers felt that school life should be made enjoyable. Only 3 teachers (5%) disagreed feeling that school life shouldn't be enjoyable.

#### 4.4 STUDENTS RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The third but major instrument for collecting data was a questionnaire for students. There were 120 students selected purposively from the aforesaid six schools. 20 students were used from each school. The students used were 62 from form two and 58 from form three. Among the students used in the sample were 55 boys and 65 girls. The questionnaire had 20 items.

#### **4.4.1 STUDENTS AGE DISTRIBUTION**

It was important to know the age of the students participating so they were requested to say their age. The following table shows their age.

**Table IV. 36. Students age distribution**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19-01 to 20-00	9	7.5
18-01 to 19-00	22	18
17-01 to 18-00	33	27.5
16-01 to 17-00	38	32
15-01 to 16-00	18	15
TOTAL	120	100
Mean	17.3	

The above table shows clearly that the average age of the students was 17 years old and 3 months. Most of the students were between 16 years to 17 years old. It seems that most of them are not mature enough that is why they are not so serious with attending school everyday.

#### **4.4.2 STUDENTS' PLACE OF RESIDENCE**

The students were asked where they stay and from their responses they seemed to stay far from school. This was indicated from the responses given in answering the time they spend to reach school. The following table shows their responses.

**Table IV. 37. Time spent to reach school**

Time taken	Frequency	Percentage
31 minutes <	46	38
21-30 minutes	41	34
11-20 minutes	20	17
0-10 minutes	13	11
TOTAL	120	100

The above table clearly indicates that three quarters of the students spend 20 minutes and above. It seems that most of them don't stay near the school. This confirms one of the reasons they gave for failing to come to school everyday in table IV. 6. It looks like those who come from far probably lack fare to come to school or they fear the distance thus deciding to stay home.

#### 4.4.3 Occupation of parents

Students were required to write down the occupation of their parents. This was to assist in getting information about their economic status. The table below shows their responses.

**Table IV. 38. Occupations of parents**

Occupation	Father		Mother	
	F	%	F	%
Self-employed	54	54	62	61
Employed	40	40	14	14
Unemployed	6	6	26	25
TOTAL	100	100	102	100

A close look at table IV. 38 above shows that most of the students' parents are self employed. The above occupations were clustered into three categories. For example, under self-employed there were some students who had written businessman, businesswoman, farmer, general worker etc. Under employed, students wrote different things like soldier, Driver, mason, civil servant, teacher, manager, secretary, store keeper, policeman/women etc. The table shows that 40 parents of the students' fathers in the sample and 14 mothers are equally employed. As for the unemployment 6 fathers and 26

mothers were brought out as unemployed. It looks like most of the parents are not able to pay school fees as seen in table IV. 6 that one of the major reason for absenteeism is fees. This might be due to the kind of jobs the parents have. Quite a number are unemployed and the ones for self-employed it is most likely not well paying work.

#### **4.4.4 DAYS SCHOOL NOT ATTENDED**

The students were asked how many days they had failed to attend school and the table below indicates their response.

**Table IV. 39. Days not attended school**

Days	Frequency	Percentage
0-10	55	46
11-20	50	42
21-30	12	10
31 →	3	2
TOTAL	120	100

The table above brings out the fact that 105 students (88%) were not able to attend school for between 0-20 days. This finding seems to imply that some of the above students when for instance are sent home for fees, school requirement or they are

sick they stay home for a long time. It seems that they don't return to school immediately or they keep on absenting themselves from school. This could be most likely if they are not punished when they return to school, as was seen in table IV.7 where one of the measures taken on the absent student was nothing is done.

**4.4.5 REASONS FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL**

In order to achieve the objective of the research it was vital to know why the students don't attend school daily. The students therefore were told to write down reasons why they failed to attend school on the aforesaid days and the following table shows their responses.

**Table IV. 40. Actual reasons for students' absenteeism (N 120)**

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of fees	97	39
Sickness	79	31
Family problem	23	9
School based reasons	17	7
Parent condoned	15	6
Lack of interest in school	11	4.4

Drugs/Hangovers	4	2
Oversleeping	3	1
Temporary employed	1	0.3
No learning 1 <sup>st</sup> week	1	0.3
TOTAL	251	100

A comparison between table IV.6 and IV.40 shows that the actual reasons and the perceived reasons given early are almost similar. All the 30 teachers perceived school fees to be a major factor for students' absenteeism. This is in agreement with the above actual reasons given by students. 97 students out of 120 agreed that they don't attend school everyday because of lack of school fees. This finding confirms the fact found out on table IV. 38 that most of the students' parents are self employed and unemployed. This seems to be the reason why they are not able to pay school fees in time thus students being chased home. Just as perceived earlier during the interview schedule with class teachers the second leading reason for student's absenteeism was sickness. 79 students in the above table (31%) out of 120 students equally gave sickness as their reason for their not being able to attend school daily. These two factors seem to lead to poverty as it was evidenced in the occupation of the parents. It looks like once the children go home for fees or

they are sick they overstay at home because of lack of enough money. Under the school based reasons, students gave reasons like suspension, lack of school requirement, fear of punishment and too much homework. On the other hand, parental condoned and family problems there were different reasons like household chores, looking after the young or sick ones, attend burial, lack of fare, domestic problem etc. Drugs and hangovers was also given as it can be noted from table IV. 40. This could be the reason for students' time of attendance being low on Monday and Friday as it was seen in table IV. 12.

#### **4.4.6 COMPARISON BETWEEN ACTUAL AND PERCEIVED**

##### **REASONS FOR STUDENTS ABSENTEEISM**

To compare actual and perceived reasons of absenteeism, item 11 on the student's questionnaire probed into students perceptions on what caused absenteeism among their peers. Six main reasons of absenteeism had been provided in the questionnaire. They were as follows: lack of fees, illness, too much homework from teachers, lack of interest in school work, bullying and threats from the pupils/students, lack of exercise and text books and other specify. In the other specify other factors were mentioned like attending ceremonies, household chores, domestic problem, hangovers/drugs/peer group, fear of

punishment, lack of school requirement, suspensions and marriage. Table IV. 41 presents perceived reasons of peer's absenteeism from school in both frequency and percentage.

**Table IV. 41. Perceived reasons of absence from school**

Reasons of absence	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of fees	111	41
Illness	83	30.2
Lack of interest in school work	13	5
Too much homework from teachers	12	4
Lack of requirement	11	4
Lack of exercise & text books	10	3.6
Hangovers/drugs/peer groups	10	3.6
Bullying and threats from other students	7	2.6
Attending ceremonies	4	1.5
Suspension	4	1.5
Domestic problems	3	1
Getting married	3	1
Fear of punishment	2	0.7
Household chores	1	0.3
TOTAL	274	100

A comparison was again taken this time between the actual reasons students gave and the perceived reasons of peer's absenteeism. It was noted that comparison between table IV. 40 and table IV. 41 indicated that the order of importance for actual and perceived reasons of absenteeism was almost the same. Both tables show that fees and illness are the two leading reasons. 111 students out of 120 perceived school fees to be the main reason and this was confirmed by 97 students out of 120 saying they stayed out of school because of lack of fees. Similarly, the second actual reason was illness with 79 students giving it as the factor for their absenteeism and likewise it was perceived by 83 students to be the second reasons for students failing to attend school everyday. Bullying and threats by other students was one reason perceived by 7 students (2.6%) but this was contrary with the actual reasons given. No one in the actual reasons gave bullying and threats as a reason for absenteeism. Many girls expressed the opinion that their peers were absent because of helping with various household chores. They also expressed that their peers were absent from school occasionally because they got married temporarily. Table IV.41 highlights certain school based factors which students perceived contributed to their peers' absence from school. These were fear of punishment, too much homework from teachers, suspension

etc. The above table IV.41 also brought out the fact that some students felt that their peers missed school because they went to take drugs and visit their peer group thus having hangovers which at the end of the day resulted to absenteeism.

#### **4.4.7 PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING SCHOOL FEES**

One of the question in the students' questionnaire was enquiring from students who paid their fees. Have a look at table IV. 42 and see their responses.

**Table IV. 42. Showing who pays students' school fees**

Who pays fees	Frequency	Percentage
Father	54	45
Mother	39	33
Elder brother	5	4
Relative	9	8
Bursary	6	5
Sister	4	3
Guardian	3	2
TOTAL	120	100

The above table seem to indicate that both parents are responsible for paying schools fees. 54 students (45%) said that

their fathers pay school fees while 39 students (33%) said their mothers paid the fees. However, quite a number admitted that they get assistance from their elder brothers, relative, bursary, sisters and guardian. It looks like these students who get help from the above people are at their mercy. If they haven't gotten money for their fees then they are forced to stay home until they get assistance. This finding is consistent with what was found in the occupation of their parents. Have a close look at table IV. 38 where it was noted that many parents were self-employed and unemployed. This then implies that they depend on the assistance from other people for fees.

**4.4.8 THE MOST DIFFICULT SESSION TO ATTEND**

It was important to know whether the students find morning or afternoon session difficult to attend. So one item in the questionnaire asked the students the session that they found most difficult to attend and the following table shows their response.

**Table IV. 43. Shows the most difficulty session to attend**

Difficult session to attend	Frequency	Percentage
Morning sessions	4	3

Afternoon sessions	97	81
All sessions	1	1
None	18	15
TOTAL	120	100

The above table brings out the fact that almost all students found afternoon sessions difficult. The findings contradicts some teachers in the attitude scale who had felt that the frequency of absenteeism is high in the morning session. From the above table it can be noted that (15%) of the students said that they found no session difficult to attend.

#### **4.4.9 Reasons for finding a session difficult to attend**

The students were required to write down the reasons for finding morning session or afternoon session difficult to attend. The table below shows their responses.

**Table IV. 44. Reasons for finding morning or afternoon session difficult to attend**

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Fatigue	57	47
Hard subject	20	17
Lack of interest	17	14

Food	12	10
Double lesson	10	8
Complete home duty	2	2
Hangovers	2	2
TOTAL	120	100

From the above table it was clearly noted that almost all students found afternoon session difficult to attend that is 116 students (96%). These very students had different reasons such as fatigue, hard subject, food etc. On the other hand, 4 students (4%) said that they found morning session difficulty to attend, because of completing home duty given by parents and hangovers. The majority of the students gave the reason of fatigue that is 57 students out of 120 students (47%). This finding confirms what was noted earlier in table IV.37 where most students were taking 30 minutes and above. This implies that some of the students walk a long distance thus getting tired. By lunch time, if they have not taken any food then it looks like they get so tired and hungry thus wanting to go home or sneak out of school. The reasons they gave for food, some said that they had no food to eat while others said they were eating food like ugali thus making them to be sleepy in the afternoon.

#### **4.4.10 ENGAGING IN ANY KIND OF WORK BESIDE GOING TO SCHOOL**

The respondents were asked whether they engage in any work/business besides going to school. 39 students admitted engaging themselves in some work besides going to school and 81 students agreed that they don't engage themselves in any work. Under this number they were required to write down what type of work they did. The table below shows the responses of the above 39 students who engage in some business/work.

**Table IV. 45. Type of work done besides going to school**

Type of work	Frequency	Percentage
Sell in the market/grocery	23	59
Work in the workshop/bookshop/posh mill	6	15
Work as makanga	3	8
Repairing electrical appliances	2	5
Work as housegirl	2	5
Take part in church activities	1	3
Fetch water from borehole	1	3
Farm work	1	3
TOTAL	39	100

Table IV. 45 above brings out the point that some students do work when they are supposed to be in school. From the above table it was noted that 23 students out of 39 (59%) sell in the market or grocery. The table also indicates that 6 students (15%) work in the workshop, bookshop and posho mill. The remaining as seen in the table gave different types of work like working as a makanga, housegirl, repairing electrical appliances and farm work. When the respondents were required to write down the reasons why they did the above work, the majority of them 16 out of 39 said they worked so as to raise school fees. 12 students said they worked to raise pocket money for their needs while 6 students said their parents asked them to remain home and do the work. The remaining 5 students said they worked to raise bus fare. This finding is consistent with what was noted in table IV.6 where parents withheld students to work at home instead of going to school

#### **4.4.11 WORK DONE BY STUDENTS**

The students were required to say if they do different activities. When they were asked whether their parents required them to do different activities 108 said Yes and 12 said their parents don't require them to do anything. The

following are the types of activities that the above 108 students wrote down.

**Table IV. 46. Types of work the students do**

Type of work	Frequency	Percentage
Household chores	81	75
Digging	25	23
Sell in the shop	2	2
TOTAL	108	100

The above table highlights the type of work the students did when not in school. 81 students 75% from the above table indicated that they were given household chores to perform, while 25 students (23%) did digging. This seems to be the reason why the students are not able to finish homework from school. A look at table IV.41, it clearly shows that one reason perceived by students why their peers don't attend school everyday is because of too much homework given in school. So those who do heavy duties at home seem to avoid to go to school to avoid getting more work. Under this item the students were required to write down when they did the above jobs. The following table shows their response.

**Table IV. 47. When the work is done**

When done	Frequency	Percentage
After school	46	38
Weekends	32	27
Morning and evening	15	12
Holidays	14	12
Anytime	8	7
During school time	5	4
TOTAL	120	100

It was noted that 46 students out of 120 (38%) help their parents with the duties or work after school. This probably could be the reason why some students get so tired during school time. As it was noted in table IV. 44 where the students said in the afternoon they are tired and suffer from fatigue. It looks like if they do the work after school then it will mean sleeping late because they also have homework to do. At the same time 15 students who do their work in the morning probably get tired so when they reach school you get they are not able to wait till five o'clock so they sneak out thus missing school. It was also seen that some students do the work during school time 4%, anytime 7% and morning an evening 12%.

#### 4.4.12 Whether students enjoyed going to school or not

The students were asked whether they enjoyed going to school and 118 responded by saying they enjoyed while two students said they didn't enjoy going to school. They were required to give reasons for their answer above and they responded this way. Check the table that follows.

**Table IV. 48. Reasons for enjoying school or not**

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Acquire knowledge	62	51.6
Want to be successful	27	23
To socialize	9	7.5
To be responsible	6	5
Find home boring	5	4
Fear work at home	4	3
To avoid bad company	3	2.5
To get employed	2	1.6
Fear of punishment	1	1
Hard subjects & strict teachers	1	1
TOTAL	120	100.2

The above table IV. 48 indicates clearly that many students enjoy going to school because of acquiring knowledge, this was

given as the major reason for enjoying school with 51.6%. However, 27 students out of 120 said they enjoy going to school because they want to be successful. The above table highlighted reasons such as to socialize, home is boring and fear work at home. On the other hand, 2 students (2%) said that they don't enjoy going to school because they fear punishment and they find some subjects very hard and strict teachers.

#### **4.4.13 WAYS OF HELPING THE ABSENTEES COVER MISSED CONTENT**

The last section had three items that were open end questions. The students were to write down their opinions or what they thought. They were asked to write ways in which students absent from school can be helped to cover the content missed. The following is their responses.

**Table IV. 49. Ways of covering the missed content**

Helping the absentees to cover the missed content	Frequency	Percentage
Seeking assistance from teachers	44	27
Copying and reviewing	39	23.7
Seeking assistance from students	24	14.6

Teachers guiding students	13	7.9
Coaching	13	7.9
Being attentive when learning the missed content	12	7.3
Getting extra work to do	8	4.8
Reteaching the lesson	7	4.2
Involving in group discussion	3	2
Giving missed cats	1	0.6
TOTAL	164	100

Table IV. 49 highlights different ways brought forward by students that can be done to help students cover the missed content. The leading point given as a recommendation was seeking assistance from teachers. 44 students out of 120 said the above while 39 students 22.7% felt that those who have missed the content should copy notes from fellow students and review. The third recommendation given was getting assistance from other students. This was said by 24 students (14.6%). It was also noted from the table that coaching and teachers guiding students was given by 13 students (7.9%) each. Other ways were getting extra work to do, teachers reteaching lessons and involving group discussion. It seems that teachers guiding the students can help them see the

disadvantages of missing school or knowing their problems and guiding them on what to do.

#### 4.4.14 **HOW SCHOOL CAN REDUCE STUDENTS' ABSENTEEISM**

In order to get some information to help in the recommendation, the students were asked how the school can reduce the problem of absenteeism. They came up with many suggestions. The following are the suggestions they gave. Check the table below.

**Table IV.50. Suggestions on how the school can reduce absenteeism**

Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
Punish the absentees with no good reason	48	25
Doing guiding and counseling to the absentees	30	16
Ensuring parents pay school fees in time	23	12.3
Informing the parents about their children's absenteeism	20	11
Reduce indiscipline cases to avoid suspension	10	5.4
Make learning interesting and conducive	10	5.4
Punish the bully severely	8	4.3
Class teachers being keen with calling the roll call	8	4.3
Provide medial services and bursaries	7	4
Fund raise to buy a bus for transport services	6	3.2

Teachers to be good modes by not being absent themselves	6	3.2
Teachers to stop giving too much homework	5	3
Change hard subjects form afternoon to morning	5	3
TOTAL	186	100.1

The above table clearly shows different suggestions given by the students for the school to do to reduce absenteeism. The leading suggestion was punishing the absentees with no good reason. 48 students out of 120 (25%) suggested the above. This is consistent with what had been given earlier on by half of the teaches in the attitude scale. Check table IV. 17 where 31 teachers out of 60 had felt that absent students should be punished. It was also noted that this suggestion is in agreement with what the teachers in the interview schedule said in table IV. 11 that punishment is the most effective method of dealing with absentees. Guiding and counselling was given as the second suggestion by 30 students (16%). This is in agreement with what the above teachers said, it was also the second method after punishment. It looks like after the teachers have talked to the students, they are able to know their problems thus being able to counsel and guide them. Table IV. 50 pointed out the fact that the school should ensure that parents /guardian pay school fees in time. This was

suggested by 23 students (12.3%). It was also noted from the same table that 20 students (11%) suggested that for the school to reduce absenteeism then it should inform the parents about their children's absenteeism. This is consistent with the teachers' feelings in the attitude scale table IV. 18 where 58 teachers out of 60 agreed that parents should know about their children's absenteeism. It seems that both the students and teachers feel that if the parents are made aware about their children's absenteeism then they can work together with teachers. Other suggestions that were given by students as the above table indicates are teachers stopping giving too much homework and changing hard subjects to morning session. This confirms the reason the students gave in table IV. 44 that hard subjects make them find it difficult to attend afternoon session. From the above table, it was also noted that providing medical services and bursaries were suggested. Finally students expressed the opinion that in some schools, roll calls are not taken on daily basis as the policy states, hence calling roll call more often would help in curbing the problem of student's absenteeism.

#### 4.4.15 WAYS OF PARENTS REDUCING STUDENTS'

##### ABSENTEEISM

The respondents were asked the ways in which parents can do to reduce absenteeism. They gave many different suggestions. The following table shows what they wrote down.

**Table IV.51. Suggestions on how parents can reduce absenteeism**

Suggestion	Frequency	Percentage
Paying school fees in time	85	39
Being strict and making sure they go to school	28	13
Avoid giving them a lot of duties at home	20	9
Guiding and counseling their children	18	8.2
Provide their children with school requirement	17	8
Having interest in their children	13	6
Keeping contact with teachers over the children	12	5.5
Take them to hospital for treatment	9	4
Having conducive environment at home	9	4
Providing fare	3	1.4
Punish the children who deliberately refuse to go to school	3	1.4
Constructing the bridges where necessary	1	0.5
TOTAL	218	100

The above table clearly brings out the fact that the major way that parents can do to reduce the problem of absenteeism is to pay fees in time. This was suggested as seen in the above table by 85 students out of 120(39%). This is in consistent with what was noted in tables IV. 6, IV.41 that school fees is the main reason perceived and given as actual reason for students failing to attend school everyday. This was followed by 28 students (13%) saying that parents should be strict with their children and making sure they go to school. It seems that some parents don't bother whether their children go to school or not. This probably is the reason why some give their children work to do instead of leaving them to go to school. Connected to this, 20 students suggested that parents should avoid giving their children a lot of home duties to do. This is in agreement with what was indicated in table IV. 40 where it was given as one of the reason for students' absenteeism, under parent condoned. Besides this, other suggestions were like parents having interest in their children, having conducive environment and providing fare.

#### **4.5 SUMMARY AND THE OBSERVATION**

This chapter presented the results and discussion of the findings. Data on absenteeism was collected for a period of two school terms from the daily register and the three instruments mentioned in chapter three of this project. This data was analysed using frequency distribution and percentages. First, there was interview schedule for class teacher. This was used to get the schools that had noticed the problem of absenteeism, which class had most absentees and what was done with the absentees. Perceived reasons that the teachers had for students' absenteeism were got during this time and even what the students gave when they were asked why they didn't attend school daily was noted. The second one was the attitude scale for teachers to bring out their feelings about students' absenteeism. Finally, there was the questionnaire for students that was enquiring reasons for students absenteeism and measures that should be taken to curb this problem. The following is what was observed:

##### **4.5.1 OBSERVATION ON THE CLASS TEACHERS' RESPONSE DURING THE INTERVIEW**

According to the opinion of the class teachers who participated in the interview schedule, many things came out. It was

observed that almost all of them felt that the main reasons of students for both girls and boys were school fees, sickness, lack of interest, drugs, bad company, circumcision, lack of food, withholding by parents and distance from school. It was also observed that punishment and talking to students were the most popular methods of dealing with absentees.

#### **4.5.2 OBSERVATION ON TEACHERS' FEELINGS ON STUDENTS**

##### **ABSENTEEISM**

It was observed that some teachers felt that absenteeism is caused by long absence from school. They also had feelings like the headteacher should look for ways of reducing absenteeism. Some teachers felt that records of students absenteeism should be maintained.

The majority of the teachers thought that school fees is a factor for students absenteeism. They equally felt that parents and teachers should be sensitive about problems affecting their children and students. It was also observed that the teachers believed that headteachers should discuss absenteeism in the staff meeting. In connection to household chores it was seen that the majority of the teachers believed that helping with household chores by students should not be discouraged. Some

of the teachers thought that school rules and regulations make students absent themselves from schools, while others disagreed with them. It was observed that half of the teachers felt that too much homework results to absenteeism. On the other hand, all the teachers were seen to agree that school life should be made enjoyable. All the teachers were observed to express that absenteeism affects student's performance in exams. Finally, they felt that teachers jobs should not be to teach only.

#### **4.5.3 OBSERVATION ON STUDENTS' RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

According to the opinion of the students who participated in the study the main reasons of absenteeism for both girls and boys were observed to be lack of school fees, illness, lack of learning materials or school requirements, excessive punishment, temporary employment, lack of learning the first week, bullying from students and attending ceremonies.

The most important suggestions given for dealing with the problem of absenteeism were provision of financial assistance to needy students, provision of learning materials. Having parents discuss with teachers. The implications and recommendations from these results are presented in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the preceding chapters, there are many things that were covered like; the introduction, the review of related literature, methodology and data analysis. This chapter presents summary, the conclusion, implication and recommendations of the study.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS**

The researcher collected data to achieve the following objectives. To find out the severity of the problem of absenteeism in secondary schools. Secondly, the other main objective of this study was to investigate the factors that contribute to students' absenteeism in Ruiru Division, Thika District. Finally, it sought to provide some possible solutions to the problem of absenteeism. It was realized that many schools as was seen in the sample schools, were really affected by this issue of students' absenteeism. Some students miss school very often as table IV. 39 illustrates. There arose many factors that influence students' absenteeism as was indicated in chapter

four. To eradicate this problem of students' absenteeism the school can not do it alone but there is a need to involve the schools' stakeholders like parents, counselors, the curriculum developers etc. The review of related literature gave a guideline on how to approach the present study. It provided some insight on the theoretical basis of this project.

The sample was 120 students and 90 teachers from six secondary day schools located in Ruiru Division, Thika District.

The data obtained from the respondents were analysed and according to the opinions of the students sampled, the main reasons for absenteeism from school were school fees, illness, lack of learning materials, withholding by parents, excessive punishment, homework from teachers, lack of interest, anxiety and attending ceremonies. In connection to the teachers sampled, the most important reasons which contributed to students absence from school were almost the same with those of the students, for example, school fees, illness, parental withholding, lack of interest, circumcision, bad company and distance from school.

The instruments were as follows, interview schedule, scale for teachers and anonymous questionnaire. The questionnaire had both open-ended and closed items, which gave the respondents flexibility in response to what was required. The students were required to give their own suggestions, comments and recommendations regarding ways of solving the problem of students' absenteeism. They also gave the factors that contribute to absenteeism of students. The scale for teachers, beside the introductory part, it had 20 statements where the teachers gave their feelings on how they felt about them. The data collected were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

The following are the conclusion and implications which emerged from the data analysis.

- Students' pattern of absenteeism is not uniform throughout a schooling term. The rate of absenteeism is higher in the first and second week of every term. The above findings imply that some parents may be keeping their children at home to help in various house and farm duties during the first and second week. There is no much leaning during the first week so some students decide to stay at home. On the other hand, school dues are

collected in first term so most parents retain their children at home due to lack of school fees.

- Students who are persistently absent from school don't perform well in their academics. This implies that students who are always away from school are not helped to make up for what was covered during their absence. Usually, most of these students become educationally retarded thus become under-achievers.
- This consistent pattern of under-achievement can lead to development of a low self concept of academic ability with time and may lead to the student dropping out of school in search of more attractive life outcomes.
- Persistent school absenteeism may be an early indicator of subsequent school drop out. It is very possible that students who are naturally under-achievers may absent themselves from school deliberately to avoid the frustrating school environment. Normally, school absenteeism has very negative repercussions on students' academic achievement.
- Certain make-up programmes should be used to assist students learn what they have not covered. These programmes include copying notes, students discussion

with parents, teachers, other students and having extra work to do.

- The main reasons for students absence from school can be classified into three broad categories, these are: family related factors which include lack of school dues, non provision of learning materials to students, withdrawal of students from school to help in household chores or with farm work and negative parental attitude towards their children's education. When a parent keeps the child home to do household chores instead of going to school then it implies that the parent doesn't have enough money to employ a house girl or houseboy to do the work. So most of the above factors point to poverty as being the cause of students' absenteeism.
- The second category that is school related factors include situations where students are absent because of excessive punishment. In connection to punishment, the present study has shown that in order to solve the problem of absenteeism, teachers usually give punishment to those who absentee themselves without good explanation. The fact that some students avoid school because of fear of punishment then it implies that giving punishment has not solved the problem. In order to be effective, there is

need to study each absentee case carefully. Every absentee should be considered as an individual and given the help his own particular circumstances demand. It actually sounds awkward to give same kind of punishment to all absentees as some punishment can be irrelevant, depending on the reasons for absentee. On the other hand, other punishments are too light to be effective and instead, the offenders enjoy them thus making them miss school.

- Students also miss school because of bad relationship of teacher-student and excessive homework. This implies that the teachers give a lot of homework and when the students reach home they also have a lot of work to perform. So they are not able to finish their school homework thus when they go to school they are punished. Several cases of punishment usually lead to bad relationships. Contrary, some may fear to go to school because they didn't finish the work. However, when they finally go back to school they are punished thus not being friendly to the teachers.
- The third category is personal reasons which include lack of interest in school work. Well, a child who enjoys school is unlikely to absent himself without a good reason. This

implies that the schools don't make school life interesting. The school should ensure that the child gains by being at school, by making sure that the curriculum and teaching methods used are interesting and appropriate to a student's ability and are related to his needs and interests.

- Under this category some students don't attend school because they engage in paid temporary employment. When a student avoids to go to school and goes to get employed temporarily then it means there is poverty, so he is working in order to raise school fees, pocket money or provide income to the family.
- Absenteeism is equally caused by sickness. This implies that some parents are not able to take their children to hospital for treatment. This results to students overstaying home for a long time before getting back to school. This probably points to poverty as was seen earlier.
- Family related reasons contributed the highest proportion of absenteeism among students followed by school based factors then personal reasons.
- Help can be given to students by having intervention programmes to help students cover what has been missed.

Other things can be done like providing financial assistance to needy students, providing learning materials, improving methods of teaching and introducing boarding facilities in schools.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The above conclusion and implication lead to different recommendations for schools, policy markers, parents and researchers.

### **5.4.1 TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS**

There should be counseling programmes in all secondary schools. These programmes should emphasize the benefits of education to both students and their parents. These programmes should be aimed at helping students who stay away either because of sickness, lack of school fees or parental demands.

Teachers should create an environment attractive and stimulating enough to retain the interest and loyalty of students who might otherwise drift away. As it has been seen a major recurring theme throughout the previous chapter has been that students stay away from school because they feel that they lack

any worthwhile incentive to attend. What usually happens is that, the students stay away from school because the school fail to compete with the more powerful attractions at home or in the environment. So the teachers and the school as a whole should make sure school life is interesting. Besides, teachers should justify their awares in the light of more immediate and tangible benefits. They have to persuade reluctant or apathetic students that attending schools is worthwhile for what it offers now, not what it many offer in the future. Therefore, the explanation should be based on actual current rather than possible future benefit. Students should actually be made to feel that attendance brings greater personal and social benefit than absence. One of the reasons given in the previous chapter was students not attending school because there is no learning the first week. So teachers should make sure that they start teaching immediately the schools open.

In connection to under-achievement among students who are absentees that was established then students with special needs is to provide remedial classes. Students with low self-concept should be helped encourage students to take pride in their conscientious efforts irrespective of their absolute level of achievement. Schools should emphasize rewards rather than

punishments. Frequent achievements and providing rewards for good grades or behaviour generates a pro-school or pro-social peer culture

There should be consistency in application of rewards and punishments according to established rules and a clear cut policy direction on which areas of school life are rule-bound. There should be rules that will not provide rebellion and an attempt to reward good behaviour rather than punishing bad behaviour.

The parents should be involved in the life of the school both in academic areas relating to their children and in more general activities for example fund raising. Schools should have informal open-door policy which encourages parents to become involved in education of their children. Parents' positive involvement is a source of great strength to the school in their desire to understand students to link with their community and to establish a sort of partnership recognized as of benefit to all concerned.

#### **5.4.2 POLICY MAKERS**

Certain students are absent from school because of excessive homework. The curriculum should therefore be sufficiently flexible to demonstrate to each student the school valuing of the particular student and create regular opportunities of each student to achieve success.

The school work should be designed to meet the needs of wide range of students rather than those students having to fit a uniform curriculum, uniformly presented. This implies valuing the individual student and an acceptance that the curriculum must meet the needs not just of the students generally but of the individual student.

The process of education should allow students to make choices, to participate in discussions, to engage in problem solving both in individual and group work to receive practical and creative experiences. This allows students to experience and develop a wide range of skills.

#### **5.4.3 SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER TRAINERS**

The initial teacher training programmes should be modified and there should be relevant programme of on going in-service

training for tutoring. Both school based and externally based, becomes an essential strategy if school absenteeism is to be tackled effectively. The topic of school absenteeism should be covered in all teacher training programme from multi-disciplinary approach. For untrained teachers the topic should be incorporated into in-service programmes. Teachers therefore should be trained on homework policy to avoid excessive homework given to students. If the above is done then, teachers will be able to know how to deal with the problem of students' absenteeism.

#### **5.4.4 PARENTS**

Parents should provide their children with appropriate learning materials like books and school uniform. This will assist in raising the level of school attendance and academic achievement. Parents should provide conducive environment at home where students can be able to do their homework. They should also check and ensure that students have finished their homework. The parents should equally ensure that their children go to school and interact with the teachers often.

The parents should pay schools fees on time so that their children are not chased away to collect the money. Parents

should also ensure that they don't give their children excessive household duties especially girls to allow them to attend school. Besides this, parents should make sure that they provide basic needs to their children like food and shelter. This can help in curbing absenteeism due to medical reason. However, in case their children are sick they should ensure that they take them to hospital. The parents should also provide fare for those who travel by bus or matatu so that they don't have to walk the long distances. Discipline of children should be a duty of the parents as much as it is for the teachers. So those taking drugs should be disciplined. Finally, those parents who circumcise their children should do it in the proper time so that the children don't miss going to school.

## **5.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

This study was actually limited in scope in that it was confined to six secondary day schools in Ruiru Division, Thika district. Further and related studies are recommended in other districts and provinces of Kenya with at least the view of establishing the extent the present findings and similar ones can be generalized throughout the country. So there is really need for more research to be carried out with larger samples of students so that validity of the findings of this study can be established.

An investigation should be made to determine the relationship between student absenteeism and drop-out.

Further research should be conducted to establish whether there is any relationship between counselling unit and student absenteeism.

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## APPENDIX 1

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE TEACHERS

1. Name of School .....
2. Age .....
3. Gender. Female/Male .....
4. Qualification?
  - i) Which College .....
  - ii) Done an in service Programme(s) .....
  - iii) Name .....
5. Teaching subjects .....
6. Teaching forms .....
7. Periods per a week .....
8. Noticed absenteeism with your class? .....
9. Reasons for absenteeism .....
10. Class with a lot of absenteeism .....
11. Any records .....
12. Reasons students give for not coming to school everyday  
.....
13. (a) What is done to a late comer any part of the day?  
.....
  - (b) What about the following?
    - i) The whole day .....
    - ii) Several days in a week .....
    - iii) Weeks .....
14. a) Role played by parents in connection to absenteeism?  
.....
  - b) What about the Principal? .....

15. Does he/she discuss this issue of absenteeism in the staff meetings? .....
16. Any assistance from anybody? .....
17. Methods used when dealing with absenteeism .....
- .....
18. The most effective method. ....
19. Time of the week when attendance is low?
- a) Monday .....
  - b) Tuesday .....
  - c) Wednesday .....
  - d) Thursday .....
  - e) Friday .....

## APPENDIX II

### SCALE FOR TEACHERS

1. Name of school .....
2. Age (Tick where appropriate)
  - a) 20 – 25 years
  - b) 25 – 30 years
  - c) 30 – 35 years
  - d) 35 - 40 years
  - e) 40 – 45 years
  - f) 45 – 55 years
3. Gender. Female/Male
4. Qualifications (Tick where appropriate)
  - a) Trained graduate teacher
  - b) Untrained graduate
  - c) Diploma teacher
  - d) S1 teacher
  - e) Untrained teacher
  - f) Other specify
5. a) Any in-service programme(s) Yes/No  
Name .....
6. Teaching Subjects (1) ..... (2) ..... (3) .....
7. Teaching form(s) .....
8. Periods per week .....

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

Please circle the most appropriate word which expresses your opinion best.

- 1. Strongly Agree = SA
- 2. Agree = A
- 3. Undecided = UD
- 4. Strongly Disagree = SD
- 5. Disagree = D

NO	<u>STATEMENT</u>	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1.	The students who absent themselves from school don't cover the syllabus well.	SA	A	U	D	SD
2.	Students who are absent from school should be punished.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
3.	Parents should be made aware about the absenteeism of their children.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
4.	Long absence from school is a result of sickness.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
5.	Parents don't contribute to students' absenteeism.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
6.	Teachers' job should be to teach only.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
7.	Absenteeism affects students' performance in exams.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
8.	School should organise co-curricular activities such as drama, debate, sportsday, school project, parents day etc.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
9.	The frequency of absenteeism is high in the morning session.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
10	Records for students' absenteeism should be maintained.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
11.	The Headteacher should look for a way of reducing absenteeism.	SA	A	UD	D	SD

12.	School fees is not a factor for students' absenteeism.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
13.	Parents should be sensitive about problems affecting their children.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
14.	Headteacher should discuss absenteeism in the staff meetings.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
15.	Bullying and threats from other students don't cause absenteeism.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
16.	Helping with household chores by students should be discouraged.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
17.	School rules and regulations make students to absent themselves from school.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
18.	Too much homework from teachers cause absenteeism.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
19.	Teachers must be sensitive about problems affecting their students.	SA	A	UD	D	SD
20.	School life should be made enjoyable and interesting.	SA	A	UD	D	SD

Thank you very much for your time.

## APPENDIX III

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Please fill in this form to the best of your ability. Your response will be treated with strict confidence and will not be used for any other purpose apart from the current research.

#### SECTION A

1. Name of your school .....
2. Class .....
3. Gender. Male/Female .....
4. Age .....
5. Name the place or estate where you live .....
6. How much time do you take to reach school? .....
7. Whom do you live with (Tick where appropriate)
  - i) Mother
  - ii) Father
  - iii) Relative
  - iv) Brother
  - v) Sister
  - vi) Other (specify) .....
8. Occupation of your parents
  - a) Father .....
  - b) Mother .....

**SECTION B**

9. How many days did you fail to attend school last term?

.....

10. Give reasons for your absence this term and last term.

i) .....

ii) .....

iii) .....

iv) .....

v) .....

11. Below is a list of probable reasons which cause absenteeism among your classmate

(Tick whichever is applicable)

a) Lack of school fees

b) Illness

c) Too much homework from teachers

d) Lack of interest in school work

e) Bullying and threats from other pupils

f) Lack of exercise and textbooks

g) Other specify

.....

12. Who paid your school fees this term (Tick where appropriate)

a) Father

b) Mother

c) Elder brother

d) Relative

e) Other specify

13. What sessions do you find most difficult to attend?

i) Morning sessions

ii) Afternoon sessions

iii) All sessions

14. If you find morning sessions or afternoon sessions difficult, what are the reasons?

.....  
.....  
.....

15. Do you engage in any work/business besides going to school?

..... Yes/No

If yes i) Which one? .....

ii) Why? .....

16. Do your parents require you to help them in different activities

..... Yes/No

If yes i) In what activities or work? .....

ii) When? .....

17. a) Do you enjoy going to school? Yes/No

b) Give reasons for your answer to 17 (a) .....

.....  
.....

**SECTION C**

18. List down the main ways that students absent from school could be helped learn the missed content.

i) .....

ii) .....

iii) .....

iv) .....

19. Suggest the main ways your school can help to reduce the problem of absenteeism?

- i) .....
- ii) .....
- iii) .....
- iv) .....

20. List down ways in which your parents can help to reduce absenteeism.

- i) .....
- ii) .....
- iii) .....
- iv) .....

Thank you for the information you have given me.

Date 04/09/2001

PERMISSION TO VISIT YOUR SCHOOL

PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR

EDUCATION

APPENDIX IV



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

SCHOOL FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION (SCE)

P.O. Box 43844  
Nairobi, KENYA  
Telephone: 810901-12

Our Ref.....

Your Ref.....

Date: 04/09/2001

**TO: Headteacher**

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**SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO VISIT YOUR SCHOOL**

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Sir/Madam,

Mr/Miss/Mrs \_\_\_\_\_ is a bonafide student of Kenyatta University doing his/her Master of Education. As a partial fulfillment of the program he/she is expected to carry out a small scale research project. He/she may need some data from your school. So, please assist him/her. Data will be used just for academic purpose.

Thank you for co-operation.

Yours truly,

**PROF. M. M. PATEL,**  
**DEPUTY DIRECTOR, & PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR**  
**SCHOOL FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION**