FAMILY DETERMINANTS OF TRANSITION
FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
MBOONI EAST DISTRICT, MAKUENI COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract:

Makueni County is affected by low transition rates, poor participation and completion rates. Access to secondary education in Mbooni-East district is also poor. The government of Kenya set a target of transition rate of 70% from primary to secondary schools from the current rate of 47%, and this is not achieved yet. The purpose of this study was therefore to investigate the family determinants of transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district. Specifically this study sought to attain the following objectives: to establish the relationship between educational level of parents with transitions; determine the influence of parental income and transition; describe how the sibling position influenced transition and establish the measures which could be taken to enhance transition in the district. The results of this research were to generate useful information which would be used by educational planners and educational administrators to maintain efficient transitions in the district. Classical liberalism theory was used for the study. Descriptive survey research design was also used for this research as it was the most used method for collecting information on people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of educational or social issues. The study was conducted in secondary schools, in Kalawa division, Mbooni-East district, Makueni County. The target population was head teachers; Parents Teachers Association's representatives (PTA's) and all boys and girls in form one, in Kalawa division in the sampled schools. Probability sampling technique (systematic or interval sampling) was used because it removed the possibility of investigator bias. A sampling interval (k) and a random start were used to choose the sample. Research instruments were questionnaires for the head teachers, PTA's and form ones and interview schedules for the PTA and the form ones in the division. Validity was done to check the accuracy of various skills and reliability done to determine the degree of coefficient of the theoretical concept. Piloting was done to check the accuracy of the research instruments. The questionnaires were filled and interview conducted in presence of the

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researcher at various different times. The data collected from the specific schools were analyzed through descriptive statistics. These are measures of central tendency such as the mean and percentages. The dependent variable was transition and the independent variables were parental level of education, parental income and sibling position on transition in Mbooni-East district. The findings showed a 45.6 percent of fathers' who had reached form four and had a mean transition of 2.8 transition. Mothers' who earned Kenya shillings 7500 formed 12.8 percent and a mean transition of 3.47. The results showed that transition was high to educated parents and low to illiterate parents, the sibling position favoured by transition were fifth borns who formed 20 percent and a mean transition of 2.8. Therefore, education is very necessary for the parents in order for them to educate their children; too, earning is also important for the parents in order to get money to educate their children. Lastly, every child should have equal opportunities to access secondary education, regardless of sibling position. Some measures which could be used to enhance transition in the district included building new schools and improving the existing ones, reduction of school fees and then government's effort to sensitize the parents on the need and importance of supporting transition to all secondary schools in order to improve access to education in the district.

Keywords: transition, participation, family determinants, drop-out, level of education

1. Background to the problem

African governments had continuously emphasized on the role of education for its citizenry as a means to social and economic development. From studies conducted by Psaccharopoulos (1994), returns of education in Africa were higher than other regions Returns on education had been measured in a number of ways, economically, it was viewed as an investment in human capital and seen to have a strong link to employment. Education provided the skills and competences that would allow individuals to perform productive roles; a more literate and skilled labor force was likely to yield more returns on investment. Education promoted social equality and had a strong link to reduction of poverty; it produced a more informed citizenry, it empowered individuals, enabled them to become more proactive, gain control over their lives, and broadened the range of available options (UNESCO, 1997). Education was not just knowledge and skills alone, it imparted values, attitudes as well as creative and emotional development, it improved physical quality of life; this it achieved through creating healthier families, lower child mortality, fertility and improved environmental health of communities.

The education system in Kenya prior to independence was under colonial government and missionaries. Reading was introduced to spread Christianity and practical subjects meant to prepare the indigenous African communities for blue and technical jobs. The colonial education system was based on a model of segregation. This saw the establishment of separate education system for Europeans, Asians and for

Africans, a factor that perpetuated inequalities in accessing education more so for the African population. After independence in 1963, the African post-independent government sought to rectify the anomalies increasing opportunities for the Kenyan government. Since that time tangible landmark, reforms including several presidential decrees had been implemented in the Kenyan education in order to increase enrollments in primary and secondary schools, improve access and transition rates at all levels in education, meet the commitment to achieve UPE, EFA and MGD by 2015 and achieve educational goals in vision 2030.

Transition rate from primary to secondary schools in Kenya was low, less than 50 percent of primary school graduates did not enter secondary schools due to some factors among them limited places in secondary schools and poverty, leading to many dropouts. Out of 727054 candidates who had sat KCPE in 2009, close to half were expected to miss form one space (Daily Nation February 2010). Out of the more than 750000 candidates who sat their KCPE in 2011 only slightly above 360000 would join high school, this was about 48 percent, so the disturbed close to 380000 could not find places in form one (Daily Nation, January 2012).

The 8-4-4 system had been criticized as being a wasteful system, even with the introduction of FPE in 2003, an initiative that saw more children go to school, not all school going children had been able to access education. At secondary level, cost sharing which forced parents pay for uniform and utilities had raised the cost of hiring teachers and recurrent and capital expenditure (GOK 1999). Access to secondary education still remained limited despite the rapid expansion of the sector, with only 47 percent of pupils securing entry into secondary level; this percentage represented only 27 percent of those eligible (Republic of Kenya, 2003). Secondary education is characterized by dropout rates, ranging from 10 to 50 percent and factors such as poverty, insecurity and geographical disparities had been attributed to this end (Achoka et al 2007). Free secondary education was introduced in 2008, this directive though, was limited in its capacity to ensure that all students had access to secondary education, as beneficiaries were few.

Secondary school enrollment is an important sector in national and individual development for many reasons; first, at the end of four years of learning, selection for university or middle level colleges and professional training takes place; secondly, secondary education plays an important role in creating the country's human resource base at a higher level than primary education. It also has a strong link to higher education, thus a key determinant in poverty reduction and sustainable development.

According to Kenya decides 2012, Education in Makueni county as at 2007 was as follows: There were 901 public primary schools, with a total enrolment of 293801 pupils and teacher to pupil ratio being 1:39.7. Public secondary schools were 253 with a total enrolment of 19857 students, teacher to student ratio being 1:19.5. The number of tertially institutions polytechnics and colleges were only 38 and adult literacy classes had a total enrolment of 231 people.

Table 1: Public secondary enrolment Makueni district up to 2009

2005	2006	2008	2009
Boys/Girls	**Boys/Girls**	**Boys/Girls**	**Boys/Girls**
24169/22640	26394/24176	28161/27099	33410/30921

Source: Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Kenya decides 2012

From 2009, Makueni district then split into two districts, Mbooni-East and Mbooni - west, which are part of the five districts of Makueni County. There was high increase in enrolment after introduction of Free Secondary Education in 2008.

Table 2: Transition profiles in Mbooni-east district

Year in Class 8	Enrolment in Class 8	Year in Form 1	Enrolment in Form 1
2007	3657	2008	2190
2008	3435	2009	2535
2009	3567	2010	2679
2010	3671	2011	2572
2011	3667	2012	2806

Source: Statistics and (EMIS) MOE Mbooni-East District, Kenya decides 2012

Transition profiles in Mbooni-East were very low, but an increase and then decrease was noted from 2009 to 2012. Therefore, a growing concern existed to investigate reasons behind the low transition rates, high dropout rates and poor participation rates in Mbooni-East district.

2. Statement of the problem

Due to the fact that Kenya had signed the chatter of UN to achieve Education For All, this might not be achieved in Mbooni-East district until the measures to improve transition to secondary schools were addressed to. The GOK set a target of transition rate of 70 percent from primary to secondary from the current 47 percent (MoEST 2005 P xii). Showing that, there is a poor transition and participation rates in secondary schools. Despite all the efforts, the education sector in Mbooni-East is faced by challenges of which unless they are addressed to, the vision to improve its standards would remain a dream. The income levels of the people in Mbooni-East district was generally low as was indicated by the poverty index of 58 percent (CBS 2007). Also Kenya decides 2012, Makueni county, poverty level, urban 34 percent and rural 67 percent of population who live below poverty line. The climate and weather of Makueni county 2010, temperatures range from minimum of between 12°c to maximum of 28°c. Rainfall ranges from 150mm to 650mm per annum, typical of ASALS in Kenya. This implied that most people and their families do not enjoy the essential services as they should; such as education, medical services, balanced diet; recreational facilities among others. Therefore, poverty has a direct effect on their education and that of their families. The main problem was to investigate how parental education, income, and sibling position affected transition rates in Mbooni-east district. Galton, Gray and

Ruddock (2000), did a study on factors that affected pupils progress between the ages 7 and 14, in particular transition from primary to secondary schools in London and East Angalia. It showed that those who learned well and transited to higher levels came from wealthy and educated families.

2.1 Purpose of the study

Due to the fact that the Kenyan government had tried to provide access and equity of education to every child through FPE, subsidized secondary education, bursaries, and community, there had been declining enrollments at primary and secondary schools, and especially in the ASALS like Mbooni-East district. The main purpose of the study was to isolate the family determinants of transition from primary to secondary school in this order; parental level of education, their income, sibling position and establish the measures which could enhance transition rates in the district. Thus there was need to facilitate the individuals' possibilities to enter, and complete secondary education.

2.2 Objectives of the study

Specifically this study sought to;
1. Establish the relationship between the level of education of parents and transition from primary to secondary school in Mbooni-East district.
2. Determine the influence of parental income on transition from primary to secondary school in Mbooni-East.
3. Establish how sibling position influences transition from primary to school in Mbooni-East district
4. Determine the measures which could be taken to enhance transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district.

2.3 Research questions

The following questions would be answered by the end of the study;
1. Could there be a relationship between education of parents and transitions from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district?
2. How does the income of parents influence transitions from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district?
3. Was there any influence of sibling position with transition from primary to secondary of the children in Mbooni-East district?
4. What measures could be taken to enhance transition rates in Mbooni-East district?

2.4 Assumptions

During the study the following assumptions would be put in place;
1. There was a way of survival in Mbooni-East district and so there was a source of income for the people.
2. There was some degree of literacy in the area, some people were highly educated others moderately educated, then, some were illiterate.

2.5 Significance of the study

A school, just like a family are social organizations with goals and objectives which must be achieved at a certain specified period of time, some of which were to educate their children, to gain skills and knowledge which would enable them to get the best jobs in the job market. We assumed that all the parents in Mbooni-East district, despite their different levels of education and different socio-economic backgrounds, would educate all their children sufficiently.

The research findings would therefore help to improve transition from primary to secondary in the area. The results of the study would generate useful information necessary for educational planners, educational administrators and policy makers to maintain transitions in schools, in the district and the country as a whole.

3. Theoretical framework

Classical Liberalism which was related to social liberalism or modern/welfare liberalism was used in this study. It held that individuals were natural, inherent, or inalienable and existed independently of others. It also held that individuals had the right to be provided with certain benefits or services like education by others. Joseph A Schumpeter attributed this supposed shift in liberal philosophy to the 19th century expansion of the franchise to include the working class. Rising literacy rates and the spread of knowledge led social activism in a variety of forms. Social liberals called for laws against child labor. According to Anthony Quinton, classical liberals believed that 'an unfettered market' was the most efficient mechanism to satisfy human needs and channel resources to their most productive uses. This theory demanded for further going through education to which access would be determined on the basis of individuals merit and on social backgrounds. By providing educational services available to all children, regardless of their social classes, it was hoped that handicaps that were inherited in being illiterate or poor had been removed on the level of educational policy. The government should ensure that every child is open to all educational opportunities by providing bursaries, Free Primary Education, free day secondary education, and other forms of government funding, helping to enhance transitions from primary to secondary schools in Kenya. If the government provided education without charge, these individuals would not have been denied the opportunity to advance in learning at any level.

There was a widespread belief that by removing economic barriers and creating more places available in both primary and secondary schools, ideal condition could be created to implement the vision of equal opportunity, where everybody should have access to the right kind and amount of education that suited his/her inherited capacity. Therefore, children from low socio-economic backgrounds should always get a chance, not to dropout, but to move to secondary schools and get education, an advantage to school children in the ASALS. This theory was relevant to this proposed study because the high cost on education discriminated poor families who could not afford to keep

their children in school due to poverty, high fees and hence withdrew them prematurely.

3.1 Conceptual framework

Figure 1: Effects of family determinants on transition
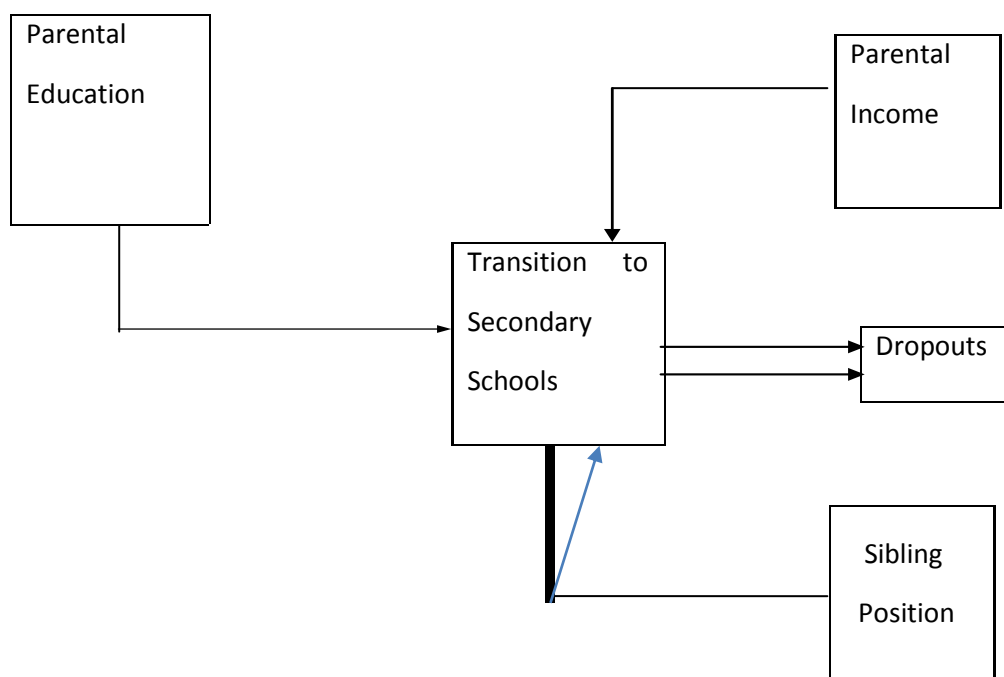
Source: Authors Conceptualization

Parental education, parental income, sibling position might be affecting transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East because there are many class eight dropouts and mostly may be for parents with low income, illiterate parents, and families with low socio-economic backgrounds.

3.2 Review of Related Literature

The study was attempted to determine the family determinants of transition from primary to secondary in Mbooni-East district Makueni county in the following order; First, to establish the relationship between the level of education of the parents and transitions from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district, secondly, to determine the influence of parental income and transitions from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district, then to describe the influence of the sibling position and transition and lastly to establish the measures which could enhance transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district. Statistics had shown that there are low rates of transition in the district.

Table 3: Students who transited from primary to secondary schools
from 2007-2012 in Mbooni-east district

2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
2190	2535	2679	2572	2806

Source: Statistics and (EMIS) Mbooni-East district

This study was therefore to analyze the national and local measures that could lead to more ''efficient and seamless transitions'' between post-primary education pathways. In most African countries student transitions from primary to secondary were still accompanied by significant repetition and dropouts.

According to international trends, Africa and even in Kenya, needed to re-visit its post-primary structures in order to provide a more diversified (academic and non-academic) pathways of learning which should respond to better the continents present economic and social needs for the growth and competitiveness (SEIA synthesis report 2007)

Many studies had been done on transition in different levels; on cultural factors, on poverty and even on socio-economic factors but in other areas. For example, there was a report by Maria, E. Breda, T. Kathy, S. Edward, M. (2008) which presented the findings of a sub- study on transition undertaken as part of effective pre-school, primary school and secondary education (EPPSE 3-14 Project) in England.

A major longitudinal study was done on the influence of pre-school, primary and secondary school on children's cognitive and behavioral development in England. The transitions of more than 500 children and families shed light on then the current transition practices and highlighted on what helped and hindered a successful transition. It took into account the influence of child and family background characteristics such as Socio-Economic Statuses (SES) and gender. It suggested how transition experience could be improved to enhance the smooth continuity between primary and secondary education. They used a case study, questionnaires and an interview for the research.

Galton, Gray, and Ruddock (2000), also carried a case study on nine (London and East Anglia) LEA's area, interviewed 50 primary school heads, analyzed data for 3000 pupils and studied in 25 schools. The study was concerned with factors that affected pupils progress between the ages of 7-14, in particular transition. Therefore, there was need to carry out a research to investigate how the family determinants influenced transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district and how the vice can be enhanced.

This study was therefore carried out by looking at the family determinants such as parental level of education, parental income and sibling position of the children, and their influence on transition, and then measures which could be used to enhance transitions from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district.

3.3 Relationship between parental level of education and transitions

Besides household wealth, the educational and labor market position of the parents was expected to play a role. There was ample evidence that children from better educated parents moved more often to schools and tended to drop less (UNESCO, 2010, Huisman and Smits, 2009, Ersado, 2005), and therefore transited to the next grade. Parents who had reached a certain educational level wanted their children to achieve at least that level (Breen and Goldthorpe, 1997). For educational enrollments of girls, education of the mother was especially important (Emerson and Souza, 2007). Mothers who had succeeded in completing a certain level of education had experienced its value and knew it was within the reach of their girls to complete at least that level. Therefore they use the power and insights derived from higher education to make sure that their daughters were educated too (Smits and Gunduz-Hosger, 2006). Women with secondary education level registered low fertility rates compared to those without education. The higher the level of education, the fewer the number of children their better health and education. Spending more years in school and more exposure to mass media provided more information on modern methods of family planning fertility levels. Also, late age at marriage was related to less number of children (KNBS, 2010).

All learned women recorded very few number of children who usually got the right kind of education they wanted (NCAPD, 2006). Mothers work status exercised an independent influence over her children's educational chances especially those of her daughters. According to the resource theory conjugal power (Smits, Mulder and Hooimeijer, 2003), the degree to which partners could influence important household decisions depended on the extent to which they brought valued resources into the marriage including education. This implied that mothers who were educated and gainfully employed and contributed to the household income had more influence on family decisions than women who were not educated and employed (Lakwa, 2007). More independent women created better possibilities for their children and especially their daughters to go to school. On the other hand, when the mother was forced to work because of poverty, the daughters took over her household tasks and, therefore had fewer chances to go to school, high chances of unplanned pregnancies and early marriages.

Availability and quality of schools were an important determinant of educational participation and transition to the next level; particularly for specific groups like the poor and girls (Ersado, 2005, Buchman and Hannun, 2001). There was evidence that in poorer countries school characteristics were more important for education achievement than in richer ones (Long, 2006). The case for resource availability seemed obvious; when there were no schools or teachers, Children were not able to obtain an education. Also, the way schools were distributed across the country played a role, because it determined the distance children had to travel to school (Mingat, 2007)

Schools were mostly attended by children living in the vicinity. (Colclough, Rose, and Tembon, 2000) found for Madagascar, that children who lived further away from school were less likely to be enrolled and transited less to secondary schools. School quality determined, to a large extent, whether children benefitted from going to school

or not. For developing countries a so-called push out effect had been found, meaning that children had a higher probability of dropping out if school quality was low (for example, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Tanzania (Bergmann, 1996), China (Brown and Park, 2002), Bolivia (Punch, 2004). Parents often realized that their children gained more from higher quality education and were therefore, more willing to send them to school when they perceived the quality of education to be better (Colclough, Rose and Tembon, 2000, Buchmann and Brakehood, 2000).

The literature on social class and education suggested that parents who themselves left school without completing secondary level, did not have the same 'cultural capital' as parents with more formal qualifications and therefore could not engage with the system (Bourdieu, 1984). Children were at a disadvantage when their parents were not familiar with more specialized and technical knowledge of secondary schooling and even more so when their parents were also unfamiliar with the system and culture at secondary schools (Bourdieu, 1986).

3.4 Parental income and transitions

Looking at a case in India, the socio-economic backgrounds and education both in developed and developing countries, showed that children from families with more economic resources were more often enrolled in school (Huisman and Smits, 2009, Mingat, 2007) and transited more to secondary schools. For wealthier families direct costs associated with education, such as fees, books and uniforms were less likely to be an obstacle. Opportunity costs of children not being able to help at home, at the family far or by earning additional income through child labor, were also less important to them (Evangelista de Carvalho, 2008, Basu, 1990). School transfer was a complex process and was mediated by the students individuality, their social class, the resources of their families and factors that related to the secondary schooling system in general as well as by the characteristics of individual secondary schools (O 'Brien, 2004).

The relationship between socio-economic backgrounds and educational outcomes had been documented internationally, pupils from lower income and minority ethnic groups had been found to be potentially more at risk of not making a successful transition to post-primary schools (Gutman and Ridgley, 2000). Apart from socio-economic characteristics, parental support had been found to be a crucial factor in facilitating young people's successful integration into post-primary education (Anderson et al, 2000). The nature of authority within the family also influenced the transition process.

Regarding the fathers labor market position, we expected fathers who were salaried employed to be more aware of the importance of education and hence invested more in their children's education (Breen and Goldhorpe, 1997). The children themselves were more aware of the benefits of education and had higher interest in learning. On the other hand unemployed parents were less likely to invest in their children's education when direct occupational transmission or transference of capital is a viable option to obtain a good position in society for their children (Treiman and Ganzeboom, 1990; Blau and Dancan, 1967. Hence, farmers and small business owners

felt less need to invest in their children's education than people in depended employment. Also for small farmers the opportunity cost of sending their children to school was high, since they were more likely to expect their children to help out tending the land and rearing livestock, especially during peak harvest working times (Bhalotra and Heady, 2003 Bas, Das, and Dutta, 2003).

3.6 Sibling position and transitions

Correlation between siblings' position and psychological position and socioeconomic outcomes were spurious. Popular explanations for birth order effects often resulted to images of differential parental treatment by ordinal position, for example, the passing down of a farm, would be to the eldest son. These had not been absent from scholarly analysis (Hilton, 1967), and studies had found that children themselves often claimed differential treatment (Rhode et al, 2003). However, birth order effects appeared even without favoritism if parents shared equally their time and other resources between the children present in the family at any given time (Herwig, Davis and Sulloway, 2002). Since older children benefited from less competition for a long time. Birth order effects could appear through differential access to resources during the sensitive early years and through their accumulation over the childhood. However, uneven distribution of parental resources by ordinal position could favor later-bornes, specifically, last born children in larger families were often regarded as parents favorites (Rohde et al, 2003) and benefitted from being the only children for a longer time (Lindert, 1977). Furthermore, they could receive more parental investments' (such as financing for education) that require economic resources that typically increased along the life course of the parents (Powell and Steelman 1995). In addition to benefiting from being born to older and more experienced parents (Powell, Steelman, and Carini, 2005). Dynamics between siblings were emphasized by (Sulloways, 1996), He stressed that according to him younger siblings had more open, innovative and ''rebellious'' personalities as a result of their disadvantaged position within the family, competition of family resources and even education. First-borns, on the other hand, were served better by preserving this status-quo, and consequently likely to develop more conservative views of the world.

3.7 Ways of enhancing transition in Mbooni-East district

From the low rates of transition in Mbooni-east district, some measures should be taken in order to improve educational standards in the district. This included:

One: The government should sensitize the parents on the need and importance of supporting transition in order to improve and better performance of education in the district. The society should be encouraged to develop revolving funds for education.

Two: Upgrading of school infrastructure more so in the rural and informal settlements. Lack of schools within a reasonable distance is a serious problem in the rural, often marginalized and remote parts of Mbooni-East district. This limitation is shared with urban slums that are neglected in the provision of basic infrastructure. Government to reduce the high school fees charged in county and national schools. The

rural and urban poor share a problem, common characteristic in constituting majority of the poor who cannot not afford good secondary schooling because of high fees. Therefore, in order to significantly improve transition to secondary school in this region, these segments of the population should be targeted.

Three: Proper consideration in allocating bursaries and other government spending directed on education to the right needy students. Higher allocations of the government funding to go to secondary schooling than to primary education.

3.8 Summary of the literature review

Many studies had been done on transition, like a report by Maria, Breda, Kathy, and Melhuis, (2008) revealed that there was influence of family background characteristics and transition in England. Galton, Gray and Ruddock, (2000) also did a case study on factors that affected pupils' progress between the ages of 7 and 14, in particular transition from primary to secondary schools in London and East Anglia. It showed that those who learned well and transited to higher levels came from wealthy and educated families. Coleman, (1964) presented arguments that school funding had little effect on students achievement and that student backgrounds and socioeconomic status were much more important in determining educational outcomes that had measured differences in school resources. Many other studies had shown how socioeconomic factors, family determinants, school factors had influenced education differently, but few studies had been done on the influence of the parental education, their income and sibling position in Mbooni-east district. This study is very significant in Mbooni-east district because many transit, but still there are many drop outs after class eight, both boys and girls and the reason for researching on whether there is an effect of parental education, parental income and sibling position on transition.

4. Design and Methodology

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the family determinants of transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district, Makueni County. The family determinants of the people of Mbooni-East affected transition in different ways. The climatic conditions of the region is very dry, receiving very unreliable rains, the area residents almost wholly depended on relief food. All these factors affect transition from primary to secondary schools negatively. This had lowered the standards of education in the region.

The study therefore investigated the influence of family determinants on transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district. The researcher should bring out useful information which would be used to improve transition to secondary schools in the district.

4.1 Research design

This study employed descriptive survey design, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), on the assumption that it could help reveal the contribution of the project to the family determinants towards transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East

district. The descriptive survey research design was a self-study and most frequently used for collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues. It also dealt with incidences, distributions and correlations of educational variables. This research design described the nature of the existing conditions and also used as benchmarks for starting points in different conditions. The research brought out the necessary information on the relationship of parental level of education and transition, influence of parental income on transition, and determine the effect of sibling position on transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district. During the study, the dependent variable was the transition to secondary schools and the independent variables were the family determinants of the people in the area. The study dealt with open realities in the schools and therefore provided the first hand information on family determinants on transition from primary to secondary schools in the selected area.

4.2 Locale

The research was done in Kalawa division, Mbooni-East district, Makueni County. Mbooni-East district had only one recently upgraded national school, five provincial schools and the rest are district day schools. The researcher collected information from eight secondary schools in Kalawa division, Mbooni-East district. The schools were selected using probability sampling (systematic or interval sampling) because it removed the possibility of investigator bias and the law of mathematical probability was applied to estimate the accuracy of the number of secondary schools which were sampled. A sampling interval (k) and a random start were used in systematic or interval sampling.

The climate surrounding these schools is quite hostile, being very hot and dry and rainfall very unreliable. The area is hence hit by shortage of food due to prolonged drought. Most of the time, the natives survive on relief food. There is a high level of illiteracy in the area and high poverty levels as indicated by CBS (2007) and a good number of children did not make to secondary schools and those who did, were never retained up to form four.

4.3 Target population

The target population were 8 head teachers, 24 Parents Teachers Association representatives and 30 students in form one in the sampled secondary schools in Kalawa division. There questionnaires were administered to them accompanied by an oral interview. There was a familiarization tour before the actual visit, the questionnaires and interview schedules were issued in time. Time for the administration of the questionnaires and the interview was agreed upon and then later their collection.

4.4 Sampling

The division has fifteen schools, eight school had been selected using probability sampling, (systematic or interval sampling). This was because it removed the possibility

of investigator bias and the law of mathematical probability was applied to estimate the accuracy on the number of sampled schools. The procedure required a sampling constant K, a sampling interval and a random start. Here, the investigator sought information about the whole population, by observing the sample and extending the finding to the entire population. For the 8 schools, this is what I did:

Sampling constant K = Population
$$K = \frac{15}{8} = 1.8 \text{ approximately } \underline{2}$$

Sampling interval = 2. Thus starting from a list of 15 schools obtained from the divisional office, schools 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 were sampled, which were: Ititu girls, Matulani secondary school, Miangeni secondary school, Ndauni secondary schools, Ngungi secondary school, Ngunini secondary school, Kalawa girls, and Kavumbu secondary school.

As for the form one students, I got a sampling constant, a sampling interval and a random start, and then from the class list given by the respective class teachers, I chose my sample very comfortably. I chose and met the selected sample before and arranged for the actual day for the interview and filling of the questionnaires. Total number who filled the questionnaires was 250 and those interviewed were 232.

For the Parents Teachers Representatives' (PTA's), the principal had to assist me on the 3 parents who were available and could assist in filling the questionnaires and answering questions for the interview. All the subjects were met and we shared on my mission before the material day. The required information was collected in respect to the objectives of the study.

4.5 Research instruments

Questionnaires and an interview schedule were used to gather information. The questionnaires were administered to the head teachers, the Parents Teachers Association's representatives and form one students in 8 secondary schools in Kalawa division. In the questionnaires for head teachers, section A had questions on demographic information, section B had questions on the level of education, section C had questions on parental income, section D had questions on sibling position. The questionnaire for PTA's, section A had questions on demographic information, section B had questions on the level of education, section C had questions on parental income, section D had information on sibling position. In the questionnaires for form one students, section A had questions on demographic information, section B had questions on level of education of the parents, section C had questions on parental income, section D had questions on sibling position and transition.

4.6 Validity

Validity measured the degree to which the results obtained from the instruments, actually represented the phenomenon under investigation, and accuracy of the concept,

or of the instruments (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). It also showed how accurately the data obtained in the study represented the variables. Content validity was important in achieving testing and various skills and proficiency and face validity in giving subjective judgment, so both were used to verify the research instrument in the study. The test covers a representative sample of the content. Therefore, the whole content area was fully represented by the items.

4.7 Reliability

Reliability focused on the degree to which empirical indicators were consistent across two or more attempts to measure the theoretical concept (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003 and Orodho, 2009). Test re-test method was used for 20 students to test the reliability. Spearman rank order was employed to compute the correlation coefficient in order to establish the extent to which the contents of the questionnaires are consistent in eliciting the same responses every time the instrument is administered.

$$Rho(r) = 1 - 1 - (6\sum d2)/n(n^2-1)$$

$$N = 20$$

$$Rho\ (r) = \left\{ \frac{1 - 6\times20}{20(400-1)} \right\}$$

$$Rho\ (r) = \left\{ \frac{1 - 120}{7980} \right\}$$

Rho (r) = 1-{0.015038} = 1-0.015038 = 0.984962
Rho (r) = 0.98

Therefore, a coefficient of 0.98 was considered high enough to judge the reliability of the instruments.

4.8 Piloting

Piloting was done in two schools, so as to give base for the preparation of the final questionnaire. Piloting was done to check if the questions were measuring what they were supposed to measure or if the wording was correct. Piloting helped structuring of the questionnaire format, content and administration of the actual survey. Results from piloting were used to adjust the instruments accordingly.

4.9 Data collection procedures

The researcher sought permission from the relevant authorities and then visited the specific schools to collect information the date and time of the administration of the instruments was agreed upon by the researcher and authorities in different respective

schools. The questionnaires were filled with the assistance of the researcher, and the interview conducted by both the researcher and the interview assistants, then collection was immediate.

4.10 Data analysis

The data collected through the above mentioned instruments was organized and analyzed by using descriptive statistical tools, such as percentage and mean. Percentages were important especially if there was need to compare groups that differed in size. Descriptive statistical tools were employed in considering the data for the purpose of analysis and interpretation; too, they enabled one to use one or more numbers and calculated the required information.

5. Data Analysis, Results and Discussions

This research project investigated the family determinants on transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district, Makueni County, in relation to the following objectives;

1. To establish the relationship between parental level of education and transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district;
2. To determine the influence of parental income and transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district;
3. To describe how the sibling position influence transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district;
4. To establish the measures which could be used to enhance transitions in Mbooni-East district.

The research was carried out in Kalawa Division, Mbooni-East District. The target population was the principals, Parents Teachers Associations representatives; all boys and girls in form one in the sampled secondary schools. Research instruments were questionnaires for the principals, PTA's, and all the boys and girls in form one and an interview schedule for the PTA's and for the form ones.

A familiarization tour was made before the actual day in which the administration of the instruments was done, the interview was done face to face and responses given immediately. The questionnaires were also administered in presence of the researcher. The findings were presented and discussed according to the objectives.

5.1 Relationship between parental level of education and transition from primary to secondary schools

The first objective of this study was to establish the relationship between parental level of education and transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district. Respondents were asked to provide information relating to their father's and mother's level of education. Responses were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis mainly using frequencies and means and further subjected to inferential statistical analysis to determine the nature and relationship between parental level of education and

transition in the division. Results were summarized and presented in tables 4, 5 and figures 2, and 3,

Table 4: Father's level of education and transition

Mothers level of education	Mean	N	Percentage
0 Years	*1.56*	9	3.6%
8 years	1.80	90	36%
12 Years	2.72	114	45.6%
14 Years	4.33	27	10.8%
18 Years	5.20	10	4%
Total	**2.62**	**250**	**100%**

Key: 0-Never went to school, 8-Have gone only up to class 8, 12-Have gone up to form 4, 14-have attended a course after form 4, 18-Graduates.

Responses given by 250 form one students on fathers' education.
Table 4 showed that from the responses given, fathers who had reached form 4, formed 45.6 percent and a mean transition of 2.72 while those who had not gone to school formed 3.6 percent and a mean transition of 1.56. Fathers with very high education formed 4 percent and a mean transition of 5.2.

Figure 2: Relationship between father's level of education and transition
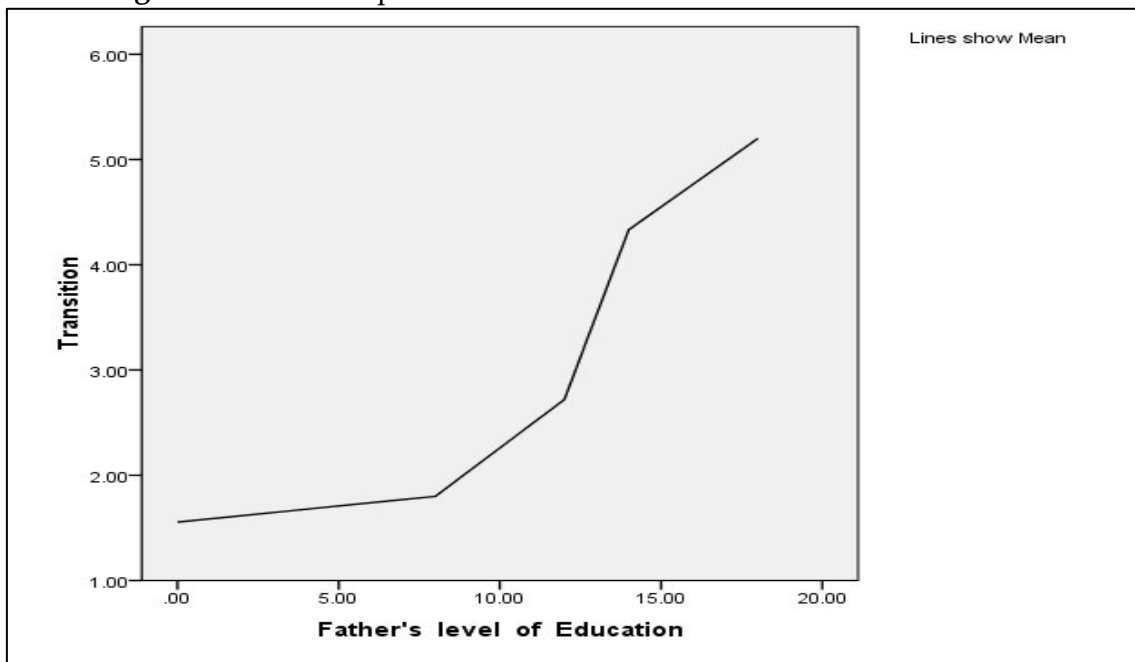
Figure 2 showed that transition increased positively with fathers' level of Education. The graph is formed from responses of 250 form one students on fathers' education.

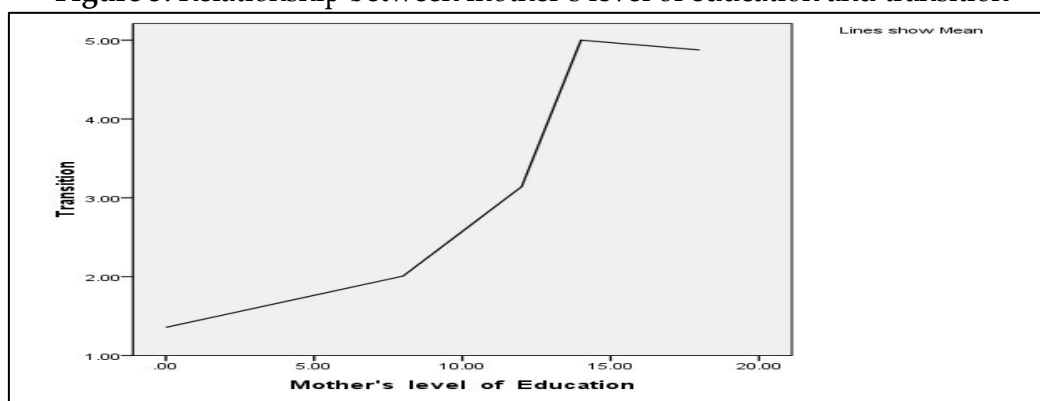**Table 5:** Mother's level of education and transition

Mothers level of education	Mean	N	Percentage
0 Years	*1.30*	14	5.6%
8 years	2.00	125	50%
12 Years	3.15	91	36.4%
14 Years	5.06	13	5.2%
18 Years	4.86	7	2.8%
Total	**2.62**	**250**	**100%**

Source: Field data

Key: 0-Never went to school, 8-Gone up to class eight, 12- Has gone up to form 4, 14-Has attended a course after form 4, 18-Graduate.

From Table 5, mothers who had reached class eight formed the highest 50 percent and a mean of 2 while the lowest was those who had reached the university forming 2.8 percent and a mean of 4.86.

Figure 3: Relationship between mother's level of education and transition

From Figure 3, transition increased directly with mothers' level of education. Tables 4 and 5 showed that transition of the children increased with the level of education of the parents'. Fathers with majority learned had reached form four forming 45.6 percent and that of mothers' was class eight forming 50 percent. The more the parents' were learned, the more the number of children who transited to secondary schools, as figure 3 and 4 had shown.

Both fathers' and mothers' level of education had a positive direct effect on transition because the number of children who had transited in a family increased with parental level of education.

There was ample evidence that children from better educated parents move more often to school and tended to drop less (UNESCO 2010, Huisman and Smits 2009, Ersado 2005) and therefore transited more to the next grade. The literature on social class and education suggested that parents who themselves left school without completing secondary level did not have the same cultural capital as parents with more formal qualifications and therefore could not engage with the system (Bourdieu 1984).

5.2 The influence of parental income and transition from primary to secondary schools

The second objective of this study was to determine the influence of parental income and transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district. Respondents were asked to provide information relating to parental income.

Responses were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis mainly using frequencies and means to determine the nature and influence of parental income and transition in the district. Results were summarized and presented in tables 6, 7, 8 and figures 4, 5, and 6.

Table 6: Fathers' income and transition

Fathers Income	Mean	N	Percentage
Ksh. 3500	2.23	182	72.8%
KSH. 7500	2.94	32	12.8%
Ksh. 15500	3.85	21	8.4%
Ksh. 30500	4.5	8	3.2%
Ksh. 50500	5.57	7	2.85%
Total	**2.62**	**250**	**100%**

Source: Field Data

From the responses of 250 form ones on fathers' income, table 6 showed fathers' income of Kenya shillings 3500 per month formed 72.8 percent which was the highest and a mean transition of 2.23. The lowest 2.8 percent formed was for fathers who earned Kenya shillings 50500 per month and a mean transition of 5.57.

Figure 4: Fathers' income and transition
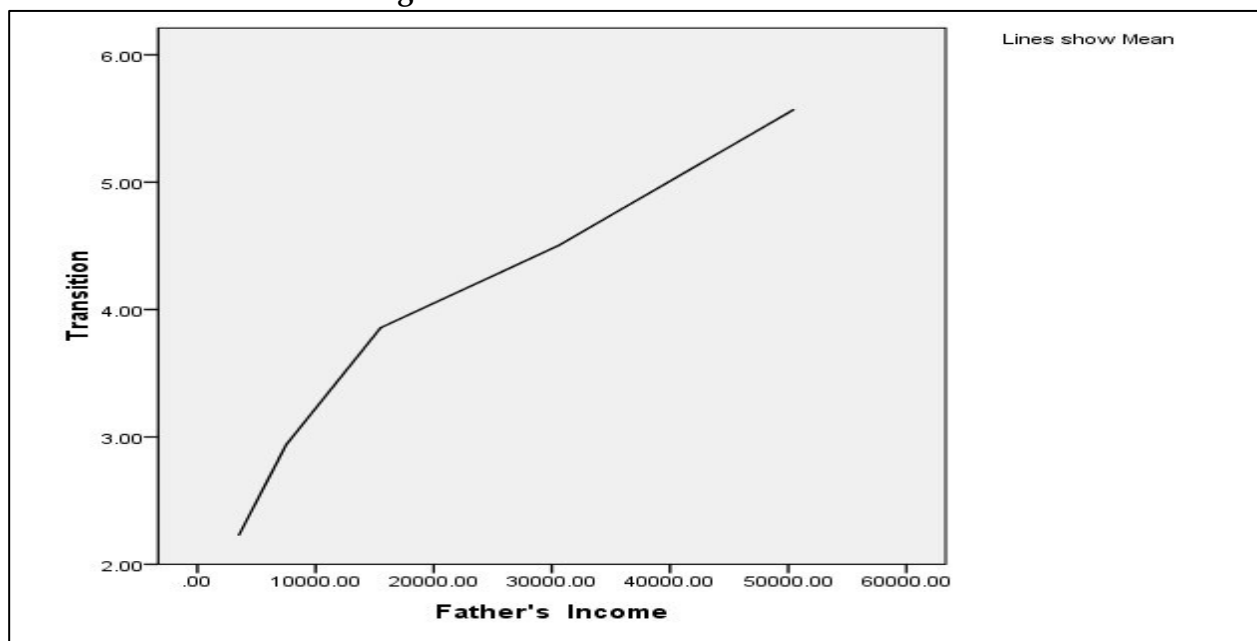
From figure 4, transition increased with fathers' income. The graph was formed from the responses of 250 form one students.

Table 7: Mothers' income and transition

Fathers Income	Mean	N	Percentage
Ksh. 3500	2.28	196	78.4%
KSH. 7500	3.47	32	12.8%
Ksh. 15500	4.33	15	6%
Ksh. 30500	5.27	7	2.8%
Total	2.62	250	100%

Table 7 showed mothers' who earned Kenya shillings' 3500 per month formed the highest percent of 78.4 while those who earned Kenya shillings of 15500 per month formed 6 percent and a mean transition of 4.33.

Figure 5: Mothers' level of income on transition
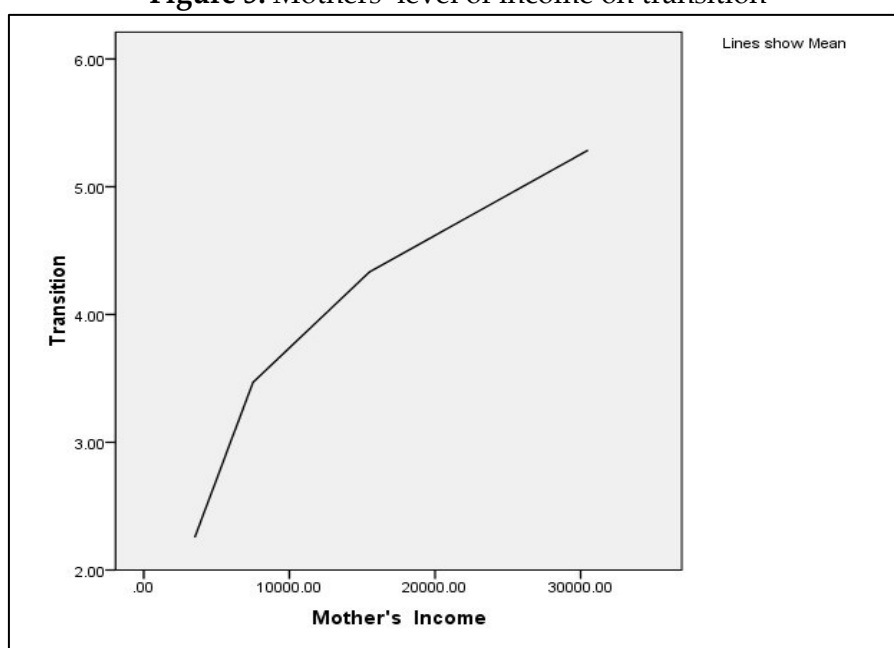
Figure 5 showed transition increased with mothers' income.

Table 8: Average level of education of the parents of school

Income Per Month	F1	Percentage
Ksh. 4000	1	12.5%
Ksh. 5000	3	37.5%
Ksh.7500	1	12.5%
Ksh.8000	2	25%
Ksh.8500	1	12.5%
Total	**8**	**100%**

Source: Field Data

From principal's questionnaires, most parents earned an average of Kenya shillings 5000 per month forming 37.5 percent.

Figure 6: Benefits the wealthy parents bring to the school
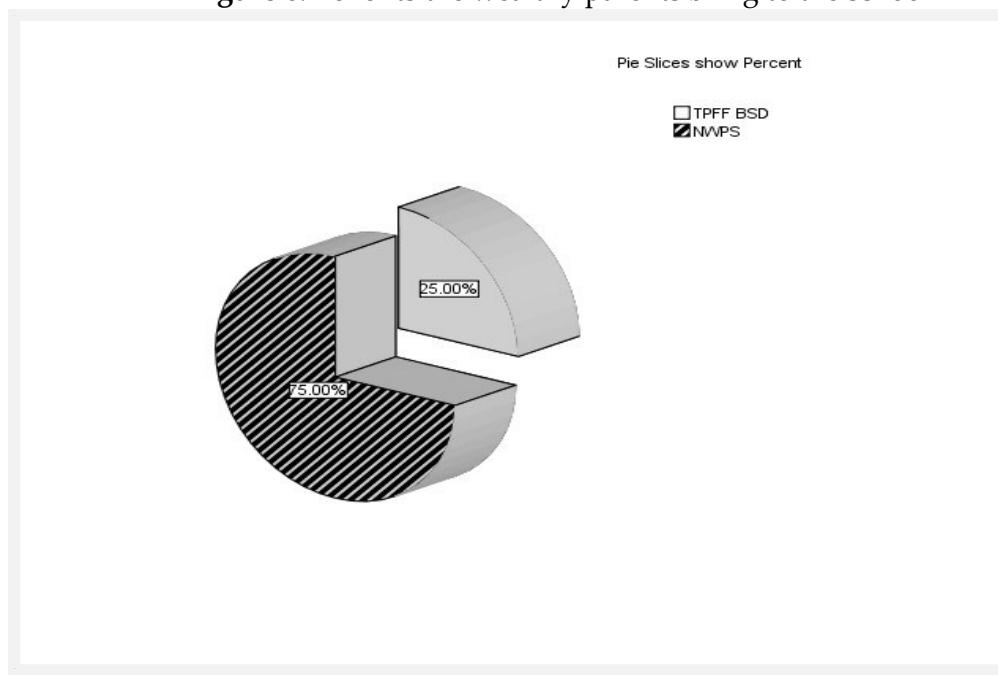
Key: NWPS - No Wealthy Parents in the school, TPFF - Timely Payment of Full Fees, BSD - Big School Donations.

The school had got very few wealthy parents 25 percent cited from 8 principals' questionnaires, so there was little benefit.

The findings showed more income was related to improved transition. Tables 6 and 7 showed that both fathers' and mothers' income had majority of them earning Kenya shillings 3500 per month. Fathers' income of Kenya shillings 3500 per month formed 72.8 percent and those earning Kenya shillings 15500 per month formed 8.4 percent. Mothers who were earning Kenya shillings 3500 too formed 78.4 percent. The relationship between socio-economic backgrounds and education had been documented internationally, pupils from lower income and minority ethnic groups had been found to be potentially more at risk of not making a successful transition to post primary schools (Gutman and Ridgley, 2000). Regarding fathers labor market position, the salaried employed to be more aware of the importance of education and hence invested more in their children's education (Breen and Goldhorpe, 1997) for the unemployed and small-scale farmers, they were less likely to invest in their children's education. The opportunity cost of sending their children to school was high since they expected their children to help in tending the land and harvesting especially during the peak times and even rearing livestock (Bhalotra and Heady, 2003, Bas, Das, and Dutta, 2003). From the form ones interview, most students complained of child labor, forming 49 percent working very hard to get money for their basic needs and pay for their education especially the boys. Principals also cited the benefit of wealthy parents in the schools, as being timely payment of school fees, giving big school donations, volunteered to help the needy students and pay extra fees, forming 25 percent.

## 5.3 The sibling position and transition from primary to secondary schools

The third objective of this study was to describe the influence of sibling position and transition in Mbooni-East district. Respondents were asked to provide information relating to the influence of sibling position on transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district. Responses were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis mainly using frequencies and means to determine the nature and influence of sibling position on transition. Results were summarized and presented in table 9 and figure 7.

Table 9: Sibling position and transition

Siblings Position	Mean	N	Percentage
1st borne	1	22	8.8%
2nd borne	1.62	21	8.4
3rd borne	2.26	43	17.2
4th borne	2.50	42	16.8
5th borne	2.8	50	20
6th borne	3.69	48	19.2
7th borne	3.33	24	9.6

Table 9 showed the sibling position most favoured by transition was fifth bornes as it formed 20 percent. Most first and second bornes were not favoured by transition as they only formed 8.8 percent and 8.4 percent respectively.

Figure 7: Sibling position and transition
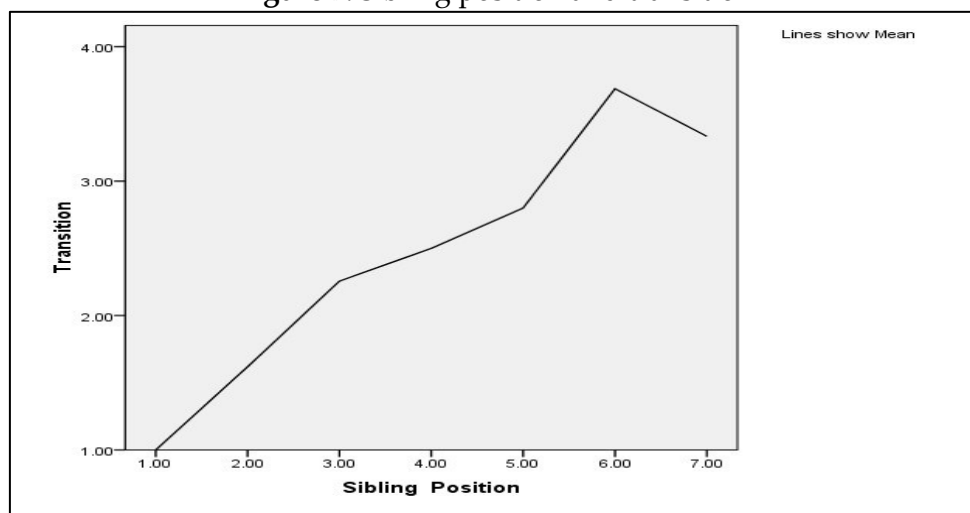
The sibling position mostly favoured by transition was third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh bornes as they formed above the mean transition of two as figure 7 has shown.

Table 9 and figure 7 have shown the sibling positions favoured by transitions were third to seventh borne children. Most first and second bornes were not favoured by transition. Fourth to seventh bornes were probably the last bornes in their families. Therefore, uneven distribution of parental resources by ordinal position could favor last bornes, specifically, last born children in larger families were often regarded as parents'

favorites (Rhode et al, 2003) and could benefit for being the only children for a long time (Lindert, 1977). Furthermore, they could receive more parental investments' (such as financing for education) that required economic resources that typically increased along in life course of the parents (Powell and Steelman, 1995). In addition to benefiting from being born to older, more mature and experienced parents (Powell and Steelman, and Carini 2005). In the other hand, first bornes could benefit for being the only children in a family for a long time and could get the family resources adequately including education (Herwig, Davis and Sulloway, 2002).

5.4 Measures to enhance transition from primary to secondary schools

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the measures which could be taken to enhance transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district. Respondents were asked to provide information relating to measures which could be taken to enhance transition in Mbooni-East disrtict

Responses were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis mainly using frequencies and means to determine the nature and ways which could be used to enhance transition from primary to secondary schools in the district. Results were summarized and presented tables 10 and figure 8.

Table 10: Problems faced by secondary school students

Problems	F1	Percentage
AD	13	5.6%
FC	117	50.4%
FC.LPS	28	12%
FC.MS	17	7.4%
FC.NI	34	14.7%
FC.P	17	7.3%
NONE	6	2.6%

Key: FC - Fees challenge, LLPS - Lack of parental, NI - No infrastructure, P - Punishments, AD - Abuse of drugs, NONE - No problem, MS - Many subjects

Table 11 was formed from responses given by the 8 principals' on how to improve transition

Table 11: Hints to improve transition

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	ADPE	3	37.5
	F/MS	1	12.5
	F/MS mS	1	12.5
	PF	2	25.0
	PF SSD	1	12.5
	Total	8	100.0

Key: F/MS - Financial/Material Support, PF - Provide physical Facilities in all schools, MS - Moral support, SSD - Support Students Discipline ADPE - Advise to Parents to Plan early for their children education

Majority of the students were challenged by fees forming 50.4 percent, The other problem they faced was fees problems together with lack of enough infrastructure in schools with 14.7 percent, few classes, no laboratories, few teachers, books. The third problem was fees challenge accompanied by lack of enough support from parents forming 12 percent.

Table 11 showed ADPE-Advise to Parents to plan Early for their children's education, which formed 37.5 percent followed by providing enough physical facilities including building new schools and employing qualified teachers, which could enhance transitions as it forms 25 percent as it is pictorially shown by figure 8.

Figure 8: Contribution brought by parents regarding transition
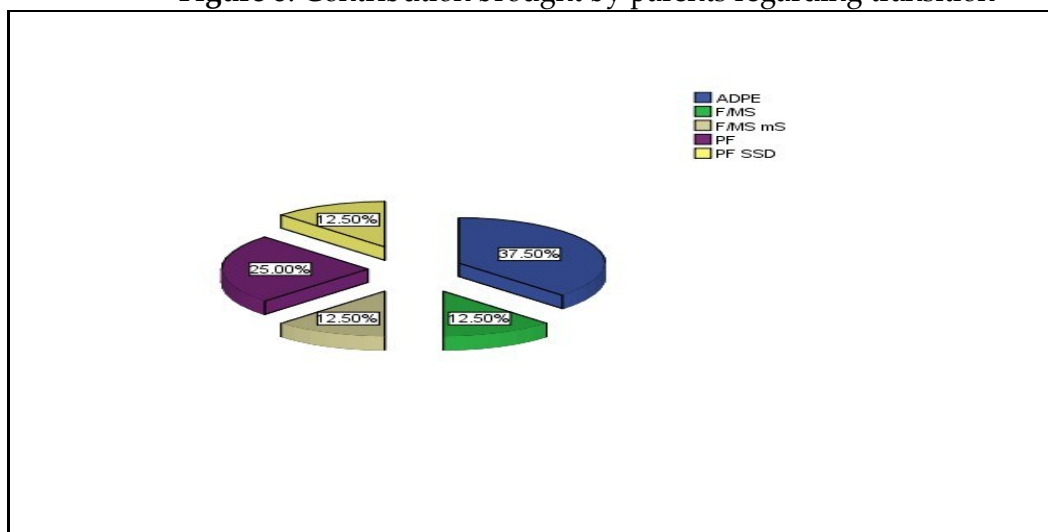
Figure 8 showed advising the parents on the importance of education was given a lot of weight and parents' full payment of fees; this would enhance transition from primary to secondary schools.

Table 12: Support towards schooling and transition

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	FS	13	54.2
	FSAD	7	29.2
	M/FS	4	16.7
	Total	24	100.0

Key: FS - Paying School fees, FSAD - School Fees and Advise to parents, M / FS Material / Financial Support.

Table 12 which represented the responses given in questionnaires by 24 PTA representatives showed that paying school fees formed the highest percent, 54.2 followed by paying school fees and advise to parents on the importance of educating one's children, which formed 29.2 percent.

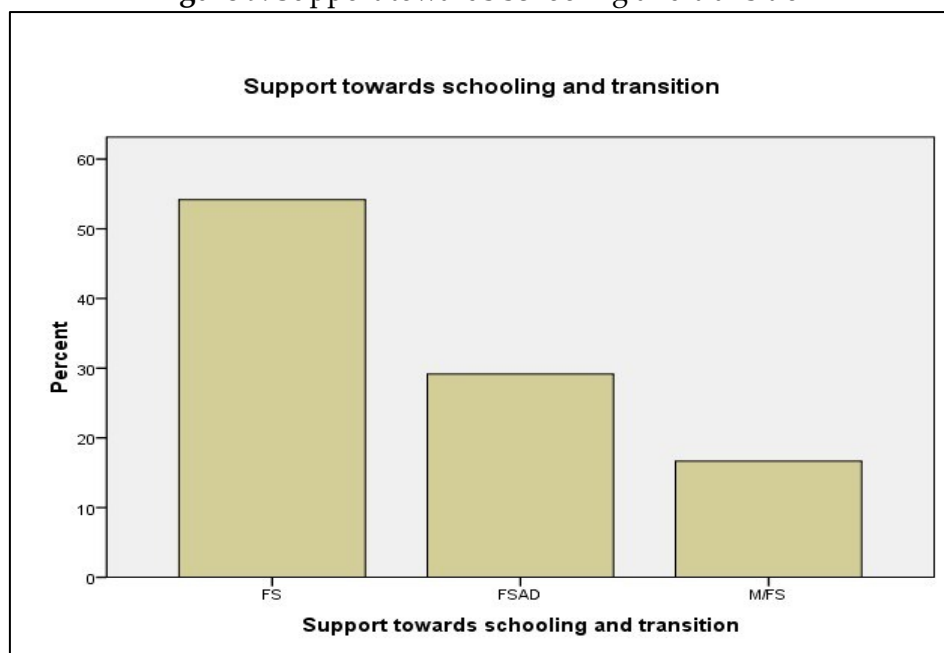**Figure 9**: Support towards schooling and transition

Figure 9 showed that many parents supported paying school fees to support transition.

Table 12: PTAs' children who have transited to secondary schools

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	6	25.0
	2	7	29.2
	3	6	25.0
	4	3	12.5
	5	2	8.3
	Total	24	100.0

Table 12 showed that the PTAs' had majority of two children who had transited to secondary schools which formed 29.2 percent. The PTAs' acted as role models to other parents.

There were many factors which should be put into consideration if transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district was to be enhanced, some of them being governments total support to secondary education, building more schools, employing more qualified teachers and giving sponsorships to pupils who performed best in K.C.P.E. They also advocated for those parents who never took their children to secondary schools to be advised on the importance of secondary education so as to be encouraged to educate all their children. Parents' good role models act as good examples and encourage the others. Parents often realized that they gained more from higher quality education and were therefore more willing to send them to school when they perceived the quality of education to be better (Colclough, Rose and Tembon, 2000, Buchmann and Brakehood, 2000).

Availability and quality of schools were an important determinant of educational participation and transition to the next level; particularly for specific groups like the poor and girls (Ersado, 2005, Buchman and Hannun, 2001).

Also, the way schools were distributed across a country played an important role in transition because it determined the distance children had to travel to school (Mingat, 2007), schools were mostly attended by children living within the vicinity (Colclough, Rose, and Tembon, 2000).

6. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The research project was meant to investigate the family determinants of transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district Makueni County. The research was carried out in Kalawa division, Mbooni-East district. The target population was the principals; Parents Teachers, Association representatives, all boys and girls in form one in the sampled schools. Research instruments were questionnaires and interview schedules. The summary, conclusions and the recommendations were given according to the research objectives which were;

a) To establish the relationship between the level of education and transition from primary to secondary schools in Mbooni-East district;
b) To determine the influence of parental income and transition in the district;
c) To describe how sibling position influenced transitions in Mbooni-East district;
d) To establish the measures which could be used to enhance transitions in Mbooni East district.

6.1 Summary of findings

From the responses which were given by the respondents, the following findings were summarized.

The relationship between parental level of education and transition from primary to secondary schools showed parents who had reached higher levels of education had more children who had transited. Fathers who had twelve years of schooling formed 45.6 percent which was the highest and had a mean transition of 2. The lowest was those who had never gone to school with 3.6 percent. Mothers with the highest level of education were those who had eight years of schooling with 50 percent and a mean transition of 2. Both fathers and mothers with 14 years of schooling formed mean transition of 4.3 and 5 respectively as shown by tables 4.1, 4.2 and figures 2 and 3.

Parental income and transition Showed that majority of the parents earned Kenya shillings 3500 per month. Fathers and Mothers who earned this amount formed 72.8 and 78.4 percent respectively with a mean transition of 2.2. Fathers income of Kenya shillings 30500 per month has a mean transition of 4.5 and those of the mothers earning the same amount was 5.2 as shown by tables 4.3, 4.4 and figures 4 and 5. Principals cited the benefit of wealthy parents as timely payment of school fees gave big donations and volunteered pay to extra fees for needy students forming 25 percent.

The sibling position and transition showed that most of the students who had transited were fifth bornes forming 20 percent and a mean transition of 2.8. Sixth and seventh sibling position both had a mean transition of 3 and above.

For the ways of enhancing transitions in Mbooni-East district, the findings showed that parents should be advised to plan early for their children secondary education 37.5 percent, the government should also build more schools in all regions and equip them with the necessary facilities, employ more qualified teachers, 25 percent and reduce school fees 11.2 percent. Parents were also advised to take their children to any secondary school, even day schools which were available almost in every area, if they could not afford the expensive private and boarding schools. Parents too, were to be made aware of the importance of secondary education, and support their children financially, materially, and spiritually forming 12.5 percent.

6.2 Conclusions

Based on the summary of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

In the relationship between parental level of education and transitions, increment in the level of education of both fathers and mothers was related to improved transitions, that parents who were highly educated had more children who had transited to secondary schools in the district There was a positive correlation between parental level of education and transition. Those parents, who were not well learned, educated few of their children. while those who had achieved a certain level of education ensured their children achieved that level or even higher.

The parental income and transitions, had a lot of influence of both fathers and mothers income on transition. Parents with low income had fewer children who had transited while parents with high income educated many of their children and took them to best schools with all the best learning facilities.

The sibling position and transition showed the birth orders fifth, sixth and seventh bornes, were highly favoured by transition. First and second bornes were less favoured by transition especially for those parents who had never gone to school. Many first bornes dropped out due to lack of fees, little parents support to their education and lack of parents' initiatives in education.

Some of the ways of enhancing transition in the district are, government building more new schools to give chance to every child who passes K.C.P.E, supply all schools with qualified teachers and equipment, reduce secondary school fees, impose laws supporting transition to every children. Parents should be enlightened on the importance of secondary education; they should also support their children financially, materially, and spiritually. Parents should also realize that their children gain more from higher education and should therefore be willing to send them to secondary schools.

6.3 Recommendations

1. The summary of the findings and conclusions brings me to recommend that: It is very important for the parents to be educated in order for them to take their

children to secondary schools and educate them to higher levels. Parents should be sensitized on the importance of secondary education. They should fully support their children's education. Also, highly educated parents acted as role models to the school and really encouraged students to work very hard. Primary schools should organize a transition team which should make sure all class eight graduates transited regardless of all their barriers, too, all parents and families to be involved in the transition process. Special programs and initiatives should be created to prepare students and their families for the transition process and develop a counseling team which could help students settle comfortably in secondary schools. Collaboration among primary school heads and principals should be promoted so as to support the transition process and increase the awareness of academic programs offered at high school level. Comfort should be increased and anxiety reduced through orientation activities and resources provided, designed to make the transition process easier and successful.

2. For parental income and transition, parents should educate all their children, increase all their income levels, by looking for means and ways of starting income generating activities. More funds, improved transitions, quality learning and higher advanced levels of learning.

3. For the sibling position and transition, all children should be treated equally when we come to education. Resources in all the families should be shared equally to the number of children each family had regardless of their sibling positions.

4. Transition in Mbooni-East district should be enhanced by building schools within the locality; all children living near could attend them without walking for long distances and thus enhance transitions. The government should reduce school fees; increase funds for employment of more qualified teachers in order to improve the teacher student ratio, parents should support their children fully in all ways so that transition and learning in secondary schools was effective.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

1. More research should be intensified in the whole of Mbooni-East district, using interviews as they brought out more crucial hidden information on transition.

2. All types of schools should be included in the study, including private schools, national schools, county schools, and even day schools so as to get every necessary information on transition from all classes of people.

3. A similar research on transition from primary to secondary schools could be done in another district then, findings compared to the findings of Mbooni-East district.

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