HOUSEHOLD EDUCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING IN LOW-FEE PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA: AN EXPLORATORY MIXED METHODS STUDY

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Doctor of Philosophy, 2014
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Abstract

Despite the pronouncement of Free Primary Education (FPE) made by the Government of Kenya in 2003, not all households have equally benefitted from its implementation. Children from many poor households, particularly in urban informal settlements, continue to attend fee-charging private schools which have continued to grow exponentially and to figure prominently on Kenya’s educational landscape. To address this conundrum as to why poor Kenyan households are using low-fee private schools (LFP) when there is free primary education in the public schools, I apply notions of social capital and habitus to examine household decision-making pathways. Specifically, I ask which households are using low-fee schools, why, and how do these households navigate and negotiate this emerging educational market.

In this study I problematize choice processes as a complex interaction between macro-level institutional policy frameworks, meso-level organizational practices, and micro-level household decisions. This mixed methods multilevel study was based on a survey of 209 households from one village in Kibera, and involved one public and four low-fee schools. Qualitative in-depth interviews at the state-level with Ministry of Education officials, donors, and civil society organizations, and school-level interviews with school proprietors, teachers, pupils and school management committee (SMC) members, as well as household-level interviews with a smaller set of parents were used to triangulate and to complement findings from the household survey.
Overall the study found that decision-making for households in this study was differentiated by social, cultural, and economic capital. However, as households navigate between public and LFP schools, the results from this study also suggest that choice is not equitable as not all households are able to fully exercise their right to choose nor, do they have agency. Based on these findings, I propose a categorization of households into two groups; default decision-makers and strategic decision-makers. Mediated by their habitus, both groups display divergences in their social positioning and trajectories, and mobilize capital differently. Furthermore, the analysis reveals household reliance on social networks, and ethnicity considerations being important motivations in school decisions. These decisions however, appear to be reinforcing existing boundaries of social class and exacerbating stratification within and between the schools.
Acknowledgements

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9 (New International Version)

The PhD journey is a curious one. In many ways it is a long, solitary endeavour. Yet, at the same time, it is a journey that cannot be completed without the help of a community of scholars and the support of friends and family. I am so blessed to have had the support of so many people throughout this process.

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With love and appreciation. I could not have done this without you.

To Davina, Murray, and Nathan.
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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APHRC</td>
<td>African Population Health Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community-based Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil society Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEO</td>
<td>District Education Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EYC</td>
<td>Elimu Yetu Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBO</td>
<td>Faith-based Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPE</td>
<td>Free Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GER</td>
<td>Gross Enrollment Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHEDM</td>
<td>Household educational decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFC</td>
<td>International Finance Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KESSP</td>
<td>Kenya Education Sector Support Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KCPE</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate of Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KISA</td>
<td>Kenya Independent School Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSh</td>
<td>Kenyan Shillings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFPS</td>
<td>Low-fee Private Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFE</td>
<td>Non-formal Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>Non-formal Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVC</td>
<td>Orphans and Vulnerable Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parent-Teacher Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMC</td>
<td>School Management Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAp</td>
<td>Sector Wide Approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPE</td>
<td>Universal Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Program</td>
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At the time of research, the exchange rate was: 1CAD = 62.3 KSh
Prologue

Sandwiched between grand mansions on one side and a huge golf course on the other, Kibera is a sprawling maze of corrugated, overlapping tin rooftops. In a forgotten enclave where government officials descend largely only to ply for votes, basic services are mostly absent. With no running water, sewage pipes, roads or toilets, essential services are paid commodities here. Everything is for a fee. Women and children carry water in yellow jerry cans. It costs three shillings to fill a jerry can, and although the cost is almost eight times more than what people living in the city pay for water, business is brisk. With an unrelenting queue of customers; it is indeed a lucrative business for entrepreneurs. Then there is the four shilling fee to use a poorly maintained, overflowing latrine. There are often long waits during peak times. Many who can’t afford the fee resort to defecating in public. This is Kibera.

The hot African sun beats down on Kibera. There is a nauseating stench in the air; a mix of smoky wood fires, excrement, and rotting food. Yet, Kibera is a pulsating hive of activity. Commerce and the entrepreneurial spirit seem all pervasive. Kibera’s narrow alleys are lined with vendors in tiny kiosks who sell everything from clothing to cell phones. Some even brew chang’a¹ and still others sell fresh meat. Unperturbed by the black flies that hover tirelessly over almost everything, several people wait to buy freshly fried mandazis² from one of the many food stalls found here. Music blares from several others. Its piercing decibels are drowned out only by the loud roaring of the Kenyan Railway trains that plow through this shanty twice daily ferrying passengers and goods. Not far in the distance colorfully veneered noisy matuts³ ply the

¹ Chang’a is a cheaply brewed alcohol distilled from maize. It is an illegal business.
² Mandazis are a kind of sweet, fried bread that are eaten as a snack.
³ Matutus are the local public transportation in the form of privately owned mini-busses. They are notorious for their reckless disregard for safety on the roads.
main roads, but no public transportation is present here. There are signs of poverty and impoverishment everywhere. Yet, amidst the mud and squalor, many people are immaculately dressed -- shirts neatly pressed and tucked, blouses freshly washed and hair impeccably coiffured.

This day I am following *Winston to his school, a low-fee private school located deep in the heart of Kibera. He wants me to see the school and to meet the staff and pupils. Carefully he guides me through the stream of mud and slurry of raw sewage that runs between houses as we climb through a narrow winding path to his school. The ground is littered with mounds of red and blue decaying plastic bags that have been picked at by goats and chickens. “Don’t step on the plastic bags,” he tells me. “They're called flying toilets. At night, when it's too dangerous to leave your home, some people do their business in bags, and fling them out the door. Many land on our roof.”

The trek is slow. Along the way I cannot help but notice the countless churches and private schools that dot the narrow alleys in Kibera. Large, metal signboards welcome visitors to these schools and churches alike, both booming businesses here. Our trek continues down a winding path where we come upon a large, white, brick-walled, gated school. Grand and stately, it looks conspicuously misplaced in this slum community surrounded by crumbling make-shift structures. Understandably then, I am quite surprised to hear from Winston that it is a low-fee private school. I detect a hint of envy in his voice as he tells me about how the school had successfully attracted several external donors who have helped with construction costs. It is still unclear to me how donors choose schools to support. But more importantly, I am curious to know how expensive the fees are, and which households from this slum can even afford this
school? These unanswered questions remain as we continue on our trek to Winston’s school. We pass by several other low-fee private schools - some large, some small, some with brick walls, and others with mud-walls and mabati,\(^4\) some well-built and many others in varying degrees of dilapidation and decay. Many schools don’t look much different than the corrugated iron and mud-walled homes in this densely packed shanty. Children in faded uniforms spill out into the open dirt grounds outside their schools. In these schools that lack open spaces, children spontaneously create make-shift playgrounds during their recess and play quite happily, oblivious to the stream of sewage around them.

After a long walk we finally arrive at *St. Mathias, a medium-sized school perched on top of a hill overlooking an expansive sea of dense and corrugated roofs. Started in 2000 as a community-based organization, it has six classrooms and a small staffroom. There are four toilets but only one has a door. I am told that there was no money to finish the construction. Unlike some other schools in the area that have qualified for the World Food Program school meals, there is no lunch offered to the pupils at this school as there is no money to build a kitchen – unfortunately one of the requirements to qualify. I am told the school has started a women’s self-help group that makes handicraft items and trinkets for sale to raise money for school and exam fees. Winston shows me the crafts. He wants me to take the items to Canada, to try and sell them or to find potential buyers for them. “The mothers are trying to raise fees for school through these small-scale income generating activities. Maybe you can help.” he tells me, with great expectation. The crafts are delicate and obviously of skilled craftsmanship. I am not sure how I will sell them, but I reluctantly agree to take them with me. In its dark and tightly spaced staffroom, I also chat with a few of the teachers. Earnest and young, many are recent

\(^4\) Mabati is a form of corrugated galvanized iron sheets used for roofs. It is a cheap form of construction material.
school leavers who have not been teaching at the school for very long. The staffroom is sparse, with only two medium-sized desks to be shared between all the staff. There are very few teaching resources.

The classrooms at St.Mathias are small and dark. They have long wooden tables and benches which sit on dirt floors. Weathered-looking chalkboards are mounted precariously onto wooden beams in the front of the room. I notice no more than one or two textbooks per row. Alongside them dog-eared, dusty exercise books sit open, their pages filled with carefully copied handwritten work. There is evidence of learning.

Pupils peer out curiously at me from their tin-roofed, mud-walled classrooms. Some are in bright red sweaters worn over red soil-stained white shirts, some are in mismatched uniforms and still others are without uniforms. Winston shows me around the school, takes me to several classrooms and introduces me to the pupils as the visitor from Canada. As if on cue, in each class the pupils stand up and in unison respond with a chorus of, “Good morning, Miss. Welcome to our school.” Upon sitting down, several of them unabashedly ask me, “Where is Canada?” followed unhesitatingly by, “Is it in America?” Laughter erupts as I correct them. As the pupils interact with me, I sense a quiet reserve, a guarded curiosity and an unspoken expectation. Courteous and respectful, they seem unsure as to why I am there and why I might be interested in private schools. I wonder if some of them may be thinking that perhaps I have come to alleviate some of their financial burdens. Perhaps now some of them may have sponsors who will help with school expenses and help alleviate the financial burdens their parents carry; perhaps now there may be more textbooks or desks in their red mud-walled classrooms; perhaps now some of them may actually be able to go to secondary school; and finally perhaps now, the toilets without doors will be finished. Every visitor is a potential donor.
Before I leave Winston insists we take a large group picture with the entire school—all 148 pupils and 10 teachers. Pupils enthusiastically pose for the picture and the group gets into position very quickly, as if rehearsed many times before with other visitors. There is much laughter as the camera clicks. I am finally ready to bid farewell. As I am leaving, I feel a tug on my arm, “Can you find us sponsors?” asks one of the girls who is dressed in a faded blue sweater. I am never sure how to respond to that plea – a plea I have repeatedly heard from parents I have met in this slum. It is a plea that is both urgent and desperate. It is a plea that can alter life’s trajectories here. Understandably, in a country where school completion and transition rates are so dependent on the availability of funding, financing education is a perennial worry for parents, guardians, and pupils themselves. I don’t have a response. Perhaps she understands.

The entrepreneurial spirit that has arisen to meet the challenges of a lack of goods and services here is also evident in the provision of schooling which has resulted in the mushrooming of low-fee private schools in this slum, and many others like it. Education that is supposedly free for children in the country is not so for many families in this shanty. Given the lack of state schools, or the lack of access to some schools, many parents pay for education here as they do for other essential services - everything for a fee. This is Kibera.

*Throughout the dissertation to preserve confidentiality, the names of all schools and individuals have been changed. St. Mathias was not one of the five schools in my research but I had met its proprietor while I was at another school and he had invited me to visit his school. This vignette is included here as it provides a snapshot of low-fee private schools in Kibera and contextualizes the research.
Chapter One

Defining the Problem

*Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages... Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.*

*Article 26(1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948)*

**Statement of Problem**

Global educational commitments articulated in the goals of Education for All (EFA) as stated in the 1990 Jomtien and 2000 Dakar Conferences and incorporated into the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) all position education as an international public good. Consequently, this EFA commitment is often framed in terms of state provision of public education and has seen many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly in East Africa introduce major reforms to their education systems that include (re)introducing free primary education (FPE) (e.g., Tanzania in 1999, Uganda in 1997, and Kenya in 2003).

In Kenya, the pronouncement of FPE triggered a surge in enrollment that saw 1 million children entering the public school system in 2003. Yet despite this laudable success of and expanded access to state schooling, large numbers of school-going children, particularly those from urban informal settlements continue to be excluded from public schools (Mugisha, 2006; Oketch, Mutisya, Ngware & Ezeh, 2009). To the contrary, several researchers have shown that in spite of FPE, children in urban slums are still enrolled in fee-paying private schools or what has come to be termed in the literature as “low-fee private” or “low-cost private”^5^ schools in Kenya as well as in other developing countries (Adelabu & Rose, 2004; Oketch et al., 2010; Oketch & Ngware, 2011; Rose, 2002; Srivastava, 2006, 2007, 2008; Tooley & Dixon, 2005). No longer the

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^5^ Although the term “low-fee private school” is more recognized in the literature when referring to these types of schools, in this study I also use the term “non-formal schools” because of their wide acceptance and use in Kenya. Both terms are used interchangeably throughout this document.
purview of the middle-class and the elite, these private schools cater specifically to poorer households. In fact, a recent research study showed that up to 43% of children in the two urban Nairobi informal settlements of Korogocho and Viwandani were enrolled in these private low-fee schools (Oketch et al., 2010). Likewise, the World Bank (2010) reported that for Kenya, private enrollment as a percentage of total primary enrollments increased from 4% in 2005 to 11% in 2008. Similarly, Tooley’s 2004 study in Kibera, the largest slum in Africa, revealed that there were 76 non-formal schools (or what he terms “private schools for the poor”) catering to 12,000 slum children, while the five public schools in the vicinity only served about 8,500 students who were mostly from middle-class suburbs. He concluded that private schools were still serving a large majority of the poor slum children even after FPE. In a recent update to this study, Dixon, Tooley and Schagen (2013) found 116 low-fee schools operating in Kibera, an increase of 130% from the time of their original study in 2007.

This exponential growth in low-fee private schools even with FPE has clearly impacted the educational landscape in Kenya and the provision of basic education in terms of issues of access, and equity in meeting global educational agendas. Nonetheless, the debate around the reasons for this surge in the demand for alternative education despite free public education is sharply divided. A number of recent studies have attempted to address this conundrum of why poor households are paying for education in low-fee schools when there is free provision in the government sector (see e.g., Oketch et al., 2010; Rose, 2002; Tooley et al., 2008). Some scholars claim that “…[an] unacceptable proportion of the poor still utilize private schools, not necessarily because they prefer to use them, but because they have not been included in the state system by a lack of supply” (Oketch et al., 2010, p. 9). Others argue that “private schools for the poor” are a solution to the perceived failure of state provision of education (Tooley 2001;
Andrabi et al., 2008). Central to the debate on this marketization of primary education is the question around parental school choice, and in this study particularly choices made by low-income households. Advocates for expanding parental choice extol the virtues of market-based competition as a means to improving school quality (Andrabi et al., 2008; Kingdon, 1996; Tooley & Dixon, 2006; Willmore, 2002) while critics argue that market-based competition may exacerbate inequalities (Colclough, 1996; Rose 2002; Watkins, 2000). Yet, more crucially, what needs to be examined is if all parents have the ability to exercise choice, and which households are excluded from the choice-making process. As Ball et al., (2002) caution, “…cultural and social capital, material constraints (see Reay, 2000) social perceptions and distinctions, and forms of self-exclusion (Bourdieu, 1990) are all at work in the processes of choice” (p. 54). Further, “…because of the differences in social and cultural capital among parents-as-consumers, free market-based parental choice is a class strategy... [not] all parents have equal [or] genuine power to choose” (Robenstine, 2001, p. 243). This relationship between choice-making and social class issues needs to be interrogated, particularly with slum households using low-fee private schools in order to understand “the larger canvas of contemporary politics”, and the “extent to which choice interrupts or exacerbates established patterns of inequity in education” (Gewirtz, Ball & Bowe, 1995, p. 7).

While there is a significant amount of literature examining parental decision making around school choice, this body of work has been primarily focused on choice in developed countries. Little research exists that examines the ways in which low-income households in developing countries negotiate and navigate LFPS; notable exceptions include Antze (2011), Srivastava (2006, 2008) and Härmä (2009, 2010). Furthermore, few studies to date have examined this decision-making of slum households around low-fee private schools through a
social capital and habitus lens. There is clearly a scarcity of literature asking why and how low-income parents choose private low-cost schools, and how social capital variables may frame and constrain their decision, and perhaps more crucially, if low-income households are able to make decisions that improve the quality of schools. This study is intended to fill that gap and contributes to this broader debate by exploring household decision-making pathways of slum households in one village in Kibera. Using Bourdieu’s notions of capital, field and habitus as conceptual tools, it asks who chooses low-fee schools, and why and how they are chosen.

**Purpose and Research Questions**

Despite the proliferation of low-fee private schools, not all urban poor families send their children to these schools, nor is it clear how households choose amongst competing low-fee private schools. Drawing upon the work of Ferguson (2003) with street children in Mexico where she examined the role of family and community social capital in determining variance between families with street-working children, and those without, I posit that state, school and family interaction and relationships may play an important role in household schooling decisions. In this study I draw on both Bourdieu’s (1986) and Coleman’s (1990) conceptualizations of capital, and investigate whether or not five dimensions of capital (financial, human, family, spiritual and community social capital) comprised of a specific set of indicators will be differentiated between families with children in public schools, and those in low-fee private schools. The conceptual and operational definitions of these five dimensions of capital are explained in detail in the conceptual framework section in Chapter 3.

While the question of why slum parents choose LFP schools over public schools has been examined by other researchers, less is known about how these parents choose, and about the criteria they base their decisions upon. Research points to the idea that social capital including
social networks play a role in how households gain information about schools (Ball & Gewirtz, 2003; Reay et al., 2001; Thomas, 2002). This “grapevine knowledge” (Ball et al., 2003) can be instrumental in how households make decisions about schools. To understand what Gewirtz et al., (1995) term “…the messy, multi-dimensional, intuitive and seemingly irrational and non-rational elements of choice” (p. 6), I deploy the notion of ‘habitus’ to understand how wider social processes impact household decision-making. Habitus is particularly useful in this regard because Bourdieu defines habitus as “A property of social agents (whether individuals, groups or institutions) that comprises a “structured and structuring structure” (1994, p. 170 as cited in Maton, 2008, p. 51). It is “structured” by one’s past and present circumstances such as family upbringing and educational experiences. It is “structuring” in that one’s habitus helps to shape one’s present and future experiences. It is a “structure” in that it is systematically ordered rather than being random or unpatterned. This “structure” comprises “a system of dispositions which generate perceptions, appreciations and practices” (Bourdieu, 1990 as cited in Maton, 2008, p. 51). Similarly, McDonough shows how “Bourdieu uses the concept habitus to refer to a deeply internalized, permanent system of outlooks, experiences and beliefs about the social world that an individual gets from his or her immediate environment” (p. 7). Habitus is a useful tool in decoding power differentials in society as it enables an “[analysis of] the dominance of dominant groups in society and the domination of subordinate groups” (Reay, 2004, p. 436). In this study in particular with slum households and school decision-making, it would be important to establish whether the institutional and organizational habitus of the state and schools are pushing households out of the public system, or if these households are indeed exercising choice in selecting low-fee schools and choosing to exit the state system.
Utilizing a mixed methods approach, this thesis is informed by field work carried out in Kenya over four months from January 2007. Given that decision making is contextually driven, and is constrained by factors both within the family and the factors external to it, I examine this sociological dynamic through the interrelatedness of family-level decision-making, school level differences, and state level policies and collect data at three interrelated analytical levels: micro (household), meso (school), and macro (state). To understand the complex ways in which these three analytical levels interact with household decision-making, Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, field and capital are particularly useful analytical tools. In a country where ethnic divisions are central (Kibaba, 2004; Miguel, 2004), Bourdieu’s theory “introduces a cultural dimension of stratification that can apply to ethnic-group conflict as well” (Wells, 1996, p. 27) and shows how ethnic identity may impact household decision-making. Further to Bourdieu’s theory, I also utilize Coleman’s (1988) conceptualization of community social capital to understand household decision-making. Additionally, I draw on the work of Reay (2001) and McDonough (1997) who extend the theoretical notions of Bourdieu’s original ideas of habitus to that of institutional, organizational and familial habitus to examine state and school policies and practices which may result in increased social segregation (Gewirtz, Ball & Bowe, 1995).

The purpose of this study is to understand the educational decision-making pathways of slum households. Specifically, I ask which slum households are using low-fee private schools (LFPS), why, and to what extent notions of field, capital and habitus at the state, school and family level impact how households navigate and negotiate this emerging educational market.

I examine this main question through the following sub-questions at three interrelated analytical levels:
State (Macro)
- To what extent does institutional habitus shape, constrain and inform school decision-making for slum households in this study?

School (Meso)
- To what extent does organizational habitus shape, constrain and inform school decision-making for slum households in this study?

Household (Micro)
- To what extent does familial habitus shape, constrain and inform school decision-making for slum households in this study?
- How do households with children in the public school and households with children in low-fee private schools in this study differ in terms of their habitus and social capital?

Kenya: A Brief Introduction

Kenya, which became independent from British rule in 1963, is one of East Africa’s more politically-stable countries (Figures 1 and 2 provide maps of Africa locating Kenya within East Africa, and a map of Kenya). The election of Mwai Kibaki’s multiethnic National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) in 2002 ended nearly 40 years of KANU (Kenya Africa National Union) rule and marked an important transition in Kenyan politics. The post-2002 political landscape created greater space for the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) and has led to the emergence of a stronger civil society (Bujra, 2005). Nonetheless, as in many other African contexts, the shift to participatory democracy and political pluralism in Kenya has been problematic because ethnic and class cleavages continue to dominate political parties (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2003; Orvis, 2001). Political stability has continued to be fragile. In fact the elections in 2007 witnessed widespread ethnic and tribal violence and political instability in the country. The Office of the Prime Minister was established as a result of a power sharing
agreement that finally ended the violence and restored peace. In August 2010 a new constitution was approved with a two-thirds majority.

Figure 1. Map of Africa. Source: http://www.worldatlas.com.
Several pressing challenges continue to plague the country, in particular that of poverty and corruption. About 57% of the population lives at or below the poverty level on less than $1 per day, and Kenya’s GINI index is 44.9 (World Bank, 2005), whereas its GNI per capita is US $460 (World Bank, 2005). Kenya’s Human Development Index (HDI) ranking is 154th of 177 countries (HDR, 2005). Corruption is another constraining factor in Kenya’s growth and development. In 2010, Kenya ranked 154 out of 178 countries in Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index. Recent corruption involving the disbursement of FPE funds in 2010 resulted in donors suspending funding, and jeopardizing the sustainability of FPE in the country (The Daily Nation, 2010). Table 1 provides a summary of Kenya’s basic statistics.
Table 1
Kenya Basic Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Republic</th>
<th>Multi-party democracy</th>
<th>1992</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (million)</td>
<td>40,046,566</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population age 0-14 (% of total)</td>
<td>42.81%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age (years)</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of urbanization</td>
<td>4% annual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Area (sq.km)</td>
<td>580,367</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP (per capita)</td>
<td>$1600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population on less than $2/day*</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy</td>
<td>58.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross enrollment rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>112%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary completion rates</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil to teacher ratio primary</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid to basic education/child</td>
<td>$12.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult literacy rate</td>
<td>85.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure per student primary % of GDP</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public expenditure on education As % of GDP</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As % of total government expenditure</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Kenya is divided into eight administrative regions or provinces: Coast, Central, Eastern, Nairobi, Rift Valley, Western and North Eastern. While there are widespread inequalities within regions, poverty is predominantly concentrated in rural areas and arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) and urban slums. This pattern of poverty also mirrors the inequitable provision and access to education facing Kenyans. Two areas warrant particular attention. First, 80% of the country, mainly in the northern and eastern regions has been classified as ASAL, and this region is largely inhabited by pastoralist communities. These pastoralist communities’ traditional, nomadic practices are often incongruent with centralized schooling systems, and consequently they are least served by the formal education system (Ruto, 2004). Second, like most of Africa,
Kenya is characterized by high rates of urban growth and rapid urbanization. One out of every five Kenyans currently lives in an urban area, and more than 50% of the urban population lives in slums or informal settlements (Hope, 2012). Kenya’s urban growth is the highest in Africa and one of the highest in the world. Kenya’s urbanization is at an estimated rate of 4 percent per annum, with the average for African cities at 4.37% and 2.57% for the world (UNDP, 2005). In fact, 60% of Nairobi’s two million inhabitants live in informal slum settlements (Oxfam, 2006). This rapid urban growth, which is due to both natural population growth and rural-urban migration, has resulted in urban segregation and has placed tremendous pressure on provision for housing, health, and educational services. Conditions in these settlements are pitiable and deteriorating. Access to water, electricity, sewerage and solid waste collection are denied, and churches and NGOs provide the few available educational and health services. As a result, both slum residents and ASAL communities are particularly disadvantaged in their access to education. For example, the site for this study, Kibera is considered to be one of the largest slum settlements in sub-Saharan Africa with its median age group being the school-age population. Nonetheless, it is estimated that urban slums like Kibera are usually underserved by public schools. A recent report contends that in urban slums in Kenya, one public school serves 10,000 students in a five km radius (Musani, 2008).

In contrast to the war and unrest that has plagued many other African countries, Kenya has enjoyed a relatively stable political economy. Kenya’s liberal approach to economic development, unlike neighbouring Tanzania has encouraged a rise in free market sector development since independence. Kenya’s education sector is no exception. Choice and neo-liberal market principles are evident in its educational market place and this has led to the emergence of a significant number of non-state actors including venture capitalists, and private
organizations in the provision of alternative education options. The growing number of low-fee schools, as well as the number of non-state players in the provision of alternative education (both for profit and not-for-profit) is testament to this.

Consequently, Kenya provides a suitable context for studying the question of parental decision making around low-fee private schools because it offers some important features. These include the expansion of a marketized and privatized economy; the mushrooming of a low-fee private sector amidst the expansion of FPE; the effects of urbanization and a large school-age population; and the presence of large cultural and ethnic diversity. In addition, my prior research experience in Kenya helped to facilitate entry for negotiating field work. As well linkages between faculty at OISE and the University of Nairobi aided in institutional support.

**Significance of the Study**

The paradox of why do poor parents send their children to fee-paying schools when primary schooling is ostensibly free continues to perplex policy makers and researchers. The introduction of FPE policies which are intended to increase access to schooling, particularly for children from low-income households continues to be challenged with the concomitant growth of a private low-fee school sector. This study focuses on the case of Kenya in order to generate findings that can provide insights relevant to other contexts in order to understand household decision making around low-fee private schools. Much of the research on parental choice in schools has focused on Western industrialized societies. Far fewer studies have investigated the educational decision making process of poor parents in non-Western contexts, and fewer still have examined these choices from a social capital and habitus framework. This paucity of research is unfortunate. Greater attention to how low-income households make decisions around schools and how notions of capital and habitus may influence these decisions is critical to
understanding this paradox. Furthermore, understanding how households may utilize social networks to gain information and make decisions around schools is important in finding ways to meet the needs of low-income households.

I hope the results of my dissertation will improve our understanding of household decision-making structures of slum households by offering a more nuanced understanding of their decision-making pathways. In an increasingly marketized schooling arena targeting lower income households, the commoditization of basic education for the poorest clearly raises equity issues around choice. I hope that the findings from this study will be able to contribute to the larger debate about the creation of markets for basic education, and policy debates about the privatization and marketization of school choice for poor families. By asking which households are using these low-fee schools, the study sets out to understand if choice is equitable in the context of low-fee schools. The study also offers possible policy implications for practice of school choice among poorer households in Kenya, in particular, and in other less economically developed countries in general.

**Mapping the Dissertation**

This thesis is organized into nine chapters. In Chapter 1, I provide an overview of the context of the thesis and explain the research questions posed. I also explain the significance of the study and situate the work within the broader theoretical issues of the field. In this chapter I also provide a socio-political overview of Kenya. Finally, I provide the context for the research by explaining why Kenya makes an interesting site for this study.

In Chapter 2, I examine the literature around the rise in private schooling for the poor, and present some of the arguments for state and non-state provision of education particularly for low-income households. The marketization of education for the poor continues to be a
controversial and conflicting debate. This chapter aims to synthesize some of the key arguments in the discourse.

In Chapter 3, I examine parental incentives and decision making around schooling as well as the school choice debate as it informs household decision-making structures. In this chapter I also provide a conceptualization of choice utilizing Bourdieu’s theoretical framework of habitus, field and capital, and Coleman’s conceptualization of social capital. I also present my conceptual framework for the study where I conceptualize choice as interplay of macro, meso and micro-level factors.

In Chapter 4, I present my discussion of the research design and methodology, and I explain my rationale for using a mixed methods approach in this study and describe how data is collected, analyzed and mixed. In this chapter I also provide information on ethical considerations of the study, how I negotiated access to research participants, and a review of my main data sources, and sampling procedures. As well I analyze both the qualitative and quantitative data and address issues of validity and generalizability.

The focus of Chapter 5, which is the first findings chapter, is to understand how institutional habitus, in terms of state policies and practices, has impacted household decision making, and why some households are not able to access public schools. This chapter also introduces low-fee private schools, particularly in the context of the Kenyan educational landscape, including the current policy status of these schools.

In Chapter 6, I introduce the five schools that were the focus of this study through school portraits, and I compare and characterize the schools in order to understand the roles they are playing and what they are offering. This chapter examines how the habitus of the schools impacts household decision-making.
In Chapter 7, I introduce the households in the study and present results from descriptive
statistics and logistic regression analysis classifying households into those with children in public
and low-fee private schools.

Chapter 8 continues from the previous chapter and looks at how familial habitus and
capital impact household decision-making. I present findings from the household survey and also
triangulate the findings with data from school and household level interviews.

And finally in Chapter 9, I summarize the main findings of the thesis by revisiting each
of the subquestions posed in the study, and aligning them to the conceptual framework presented
in Chapter 3. I link state (institutional habitus) and school (organizational habitus) with
household decision making (familial habitus) and show how differential stocks of cultural and
social capital intersect with habitus to produce different alignments in the field of education. In
this chapter I also discuss the limitations of the study and conclude with suggestions for further
research.
Chapter Two
Low-Fee Private Schooling:
Examining Issues and Concerns

“If there is poor quality meat sold at USh 1,000 a kilo and in the neighboring market stall there is better meat sold at USh 3,000 a kilo, I would rather take the latter even if I will have it for once and take ages without having meat again!” (Kisira, 2008, p. 147 [citing a parent’s reason for choosing a low-cost private school in Uganda])

Introduction

In this chapter I describe and evaluate some of the literature around low-fee private schooling, particularly the contentious debates around the role, function and future of this controversial sector. After presenting some of the definitional debates around what is termed low-fee or low-cost schools or what has now also come to be known as “private schools for the poor,” I examine the reasons for the unprecedented growth in this sector, along with the rise in the number of non-state providers in the provision of education in developing countries. I also highlight evidence around national policy contexts that nurture the emerging market of low-fee private schools in the developing country contexts, and discuss the ongoing debate around this private provision of public education. The final section details the key defining issues and concerns around this educational sector particularly within the Kenyan context.

Non-State Providers in Education

Privatization in education, particularly in less-developed countries, is highly controversial. Yet, it has been strongly promoted by International Finance Corporation (IFCs) and multi and bilateral organizations (Mundy & Menashy, 2012). In recent times there has been a surge in the privatization of education and in education. Consequently, there has been a sharp rise in the number of non-state providers active in this provision of education. These non-state
providers “may include NGOs, faith-based organizations, communities and commercially-oriented private entrepreneurs (‘edupreneurs’), each with different motives for their involvement in education” (Rose, 2007, p. 2). Table 2 summarizes the main differences between these different actors, their motivations, and their intended beneficiaries. Although the provision of education in low-fee schools is largely undertaken by private for-profit NSPs, there are also not-for-profit low-fee schools run by faith-based organizations and NGOs. At the same time it must be stressed that low-fee schools are not necessarily community schools or schools that are acting as subcontractors for the government. The complexity of delineating these non-state providers as in the case of low-fee private schools in Kenya makes this typology by Rose (2007) a little problematic and is further evidence of the imprecision and murkiness reflecting the dynamics of the sector.
## Table 2

### Forms of Exclusion Addressed by Non-State Providers (NSPs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSPs</th>
<th>Exclusion addressed</th>
<th>Government recognition</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Low-income groups in urban and peri-urban areas, supporting excess demand in context of perceived low quality government provision. Do not address exclusion of poorest, or non-income exclusion, e.g., gender, caste</td>
<td>Include registered and unregistered schools – unregistered schools do not receive state support. Contribution is often not explicitly recognized in government policy.</td>
<td>Private entrepreneurs Re-invested profit from fees Household contributions</td>
<td>Low-budget private schools in many countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Hard-to-reach groups requiring alternative service delivery models, adopting small-scale innovative approaches – e.g., pastoralists, street children, language minority groups, refugees etc.</td>
<td>Registration often not on education-related criteria. Usually do not receive state support. May or may not be explicitly recognized in government policy</td>
<td>Donors Charities (e.g., Comic Relief) Individual/ corporate sponsorship</td>
<td>INGOs, e.g., Save the Children BRAC, Bangladesh Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith-based organizations</td>
<td>Responsive to differentiated demand, and may include moral obligation to cater for the poor</td>
<td>Some registered (particularly if grant-aided), and recognized in government policy Others choose to avoid government interference</td>
<td>Religious associations/ missionaries Individual/ corporate sponsorship</td>
<td>Madrasahs in India and Pakistan Church-owned schools, Malawi and Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous community approaches</td>
<td>Demand-driven provision often in rural areas</td>
<td>Often undergo process of registration to gain government support</td>
<td>Community Government</td>
<td>Registered Non-Government Primary schools, Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropic associations</td>
<td>Focus on poorest</td>
<td>Often seek government recognition</td>
<td>Individual/ corporate sponsorship</td>
<td>CARE, Pakistan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Source: Rose (2007, p. 18)*
Low-fee private schools in Kenya are not homogenous. NFS or LFPS are often established by individual “edupreneurs” or educational entrepreneurs (Kunth-Symons, 2010) or community members who live in the community themselves and see a need for educational opportunity for children in the slums. But they can also be set up by faith-based groups or NGOs. In Tooley et. al.’s study (Tooley, Dixon & Stanfield, 2008), of the 76 LFPs schools they identified in Kibera 30% were run by individual proprietors, 26% were managed by religious organizations, 38% were run by community groups and one was managed by a charitable trust. However in an earlier study by ELKW (2004) examining LFPS in Nairobi, it was reported that 67% of schools were managed by individual proprietors, 15% by faith-based organizations and the remaining 18% by community groups. Another study examining LFPS in the slums of Kariobangi and Korogocho (2008) once again seem to indicate that the majority of the schools are community owned. More recently, Stern and Heyneman (2013, p. 123) in a USAID study examining the low-fee sector in six countries, including Kenya, propose the following categorization of low-fee schools. They note that currently in Kenya, schools in Categories A-E exists, but not those in Category F. They include it here as future recommendations so that low-fee schools that are currently operating without any registration can be given a temporary license to enable them to be registered.

Category A: operated by the Ministry of Education or Municipal Councils
Category B: operated by churches or mosques
Category C: operated by private proprietors
Category D: operated by NGOs (including informal organization)
Category E: operated by the Ministry of Education Directorate for Non-formal education
Category F: temporary or provisional license

The rise in the numbers of these private actors, particularly in the case of low–fee schools challenges traditional notions of state delivered basic provision of education. To
compound matters, there has also been a rapid rise in the number of transnational actors who have entered the field of non-state provision in recent times. Since the time I carried out field work for this study in 2007, a number of new non-state players including transnational venture capitalists have entered the field of private education for the poor in Kenya aiming to support scalable, high quality low-cost schools for the poor.

One such venture is the Kenya Private Schools Support Program (KPSSP), a project of the World Bank’s International Finance Corporation (IFC), which provides financing and advisory services to the private school sector in Kenya, particularly to schools meeting the needs of the low and middle income families (Barrera-Osario & Zable, 2011). In 2006, the IFC through a partnership with Kenya’s K-Rep Bank signed a risk participation agreement to provide loans up to 120 million KSh (US 1.7 million) to eligible private schools to support lending to private primary and secondary schools in the country. Eligible schools will be able to use the money to finance construction, to purchase educational materials, and invest in other capital expenditures.

One other key player to enter the LFPS sector is Bridge International Academies (BIA) which set up its base in Nairobi in 2009 offering franchise type LFP “schools-in-a-box” purportedly offering education at a fraction of the public school cost at US4 dollars per child per month. This cost is estimated to be at one-fifth of the total combined cost from parents and the state in the public system. As part of the larger philanthropic efforts of the Omidyar Network, Bridge International has opened several schools in the Nairobi area and has plans in place for greater expansion over the next few years (Bridge International Academies, 2011). Tooley and Dixon (2002) report on other new social investors who have entered the low-fee private sector in Kenya, particularly New Globe Schools that has created an “embryonic chain of schools and a
school in a box model incorporating teacher training, mentoring, and curriculum improvements” (p. 703).

Similarly, Grey Matters Capital has provided funding to KISA, the CSO representing LFP schools in Kenya to support capacity development activities of these schools (Musani, 2008). Also, Paul Norman and the Orient Global Foundations have also provided funding for a Scholarship program for pupils in LFP schools administered through KISA, where Scholarships for Kids has designated 1000 scholarships targeting the “poorest of the poor” in Nairobi slums to enable them to attend low-fee private schools (Tooley & Dixon, 2012). Finally, Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation, a global investment bank has committed 8 million to finance LFP schools in Kenya and India in partnership with the NewGlobe Schools, Gray Ghost Ventures, and The Kellogg Foundation as part of its larger effort to support quality education in low-income communities. The rapid rise in the number of for-profit players in the educational market targeting poorer households continues to attract much debate. In examining these franchise providers and funding networks, Nambissan and Ball (2010) show how in the case of India that these advocacy networks are in fact largely comprised of closed ties with only a few key players dominating the field and contributing to a monopoly of self-interests.
Definitional Debates around Low-Fee Schools

The burgeoning growth of what has now come to be termed as “low-fee private schools.” “low-cost private schools.” “budget schools.” “private schools for the poor.” has been the focus of much recent research and debate (Akaguri, 2011; Cameron, 2011; Härmä, 2009, 2010; Ohba, 2011; Oketch et al., 2010, 2012; Rose & Adelabu, 2007; Srivastava, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2012; Stern & Heyneman, 2013; Tooley & Dixon, 2012; Tooley, Dixon & Stanfield, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008; Walford, 2011, 2012). While the term “low-fee” private schools was originally coined by Srivastava (2006) referring to unregulated, unregistered and unrecognized private schools in India, the term has gained much currency and is widely used interchangeably with “low-cost” private schools to loosely describe these schools which charge minimal fees, cater to the poorer households in society, and are not managed by the government.

However, as Srivastava (2013) rightly points out, low-fee schools are problematic to analyze because they are heterogeneous. Undoubtedly this heterogeneity has given rise to definitional debates around what constitutes low-fee schooling that sufficiently addresses the complexity of its management, financing, ownership and regulatory arrangements. Several research studies have provided definitions to address this complexity of classifying low-fee schools. Kitaev (as cited in Srivastava, 2013, p. 11) offers one such definition:

Private education is...all formal schools that are not public, and may be founded, owned, managed, and financed by actors other than the state, even in cases where the state provides most of the funding and has considerable control over these schools.

In the case of Kenya, this definition can be problematic because while the state does provide funding for textbooks and instructional material to low-fee schools, it is only some
schools that have qualified based on specific criteria established for funding. Further the state
does not have full control over these schools which are primarily located in peri-urban
settlements. Phillipson (2008), on the other hand contends that LFPS are, “All fee-paying
schools/educational establishments offering basic/primary education independent of the
government educational system” (p. 7). Once again in the Kenyan context this definition is
problematic. In Kenya, LFP schools are termed non-formal schools (NFS) at the Ministry of
Education and are classified under the broader term non-formal education (NFE). This
terminology is a bit of a misnomer as the schools more closely resemble formal schools. These
schools are more accurately as Wildish (2011) describes them, “…poorly resourced, fee-
charging, para-formal schools established and run by non-state providers (NSPs) and with
limited engagement with the government” (p. 97).

While LFPS include not only for-profit schools, but also community schools, the
operational definition used at the Ministry level in Kenya that encompasses both NFE and NFS
is quite unhelpful in clearly capturing what these schools are or offer. The Ministry definition is
as follows (MOE, 2005):

NFE is any organized, systematic and quality education and training programs,
outside the formal system, that are consciously aimed at meeting specific learning
needs of children, youth and adults. (Ministry of Education, 2005)

On the other hand, Ruto (2004) defines NFS as:

“...belonging to the broader umbrella of NFE, NFS are institutions that resemble
formal schools in that they aim at transmitting basic education aptitudes and
skills. However, NFS differ in their organization, financing, and programmes they
offer and the clientele they target” (p. 9).
In the case of Kenya once again, this definition by Ruto also becomes a little problematic because the NFS offer the same programmes as the formal school and they also target the same clientele, children living within the slum settlement.

Even the notion of what is “low-fee” has been controversial. Some (Muralidharan & Kremer, 2006) have used the reference point of a day’s wage but as Shukla and Joshi (2008) note, the heterogeneity of the sector is so vast that similar reference points lack the precision required. On the other hand, Shukla and Joshi (2008, p. 41) suggest the following two ways of defining low-fee schools. (p. 41): One, “[l]ow-fee may be seen as a range where the lower-middle to lower-income groups (almost up to those bordering the poverty line) send their children”; Two “low-fee private schools are typically used by the poorest fee-paying population in any area where those poorer than these groups will be able to send their children only to government schools, or not educate them all”. These characterizations offer more elasticity in defining this sector in Kenya as there is definitely a range of fee points with corresponding range in the quality of offering. LFPS in Kenya are typically schools that charge relatively low fees at an average of 3-5 USD per month (GOK, 2009), and cater especially to the educational needs of low-income and disadvantaged households. In Stern and Heyneman’s (2013) study of low-fee schools in Nairobi slums, they noted that tuition fees were at or below KSh 600, which was about 9% of the minimum monthly wage for a general labourer.

Although LFPS are present in both urban and rural areas, they are predominantly located in urban slums where the general population is underserved by the public provision of services. Kibera, one of the largest informal settlements in the Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, only has five public schools serving its school population. Understandably then, in the slums, more
children are enrolled in these LFPS than in the public schools (Oketch et al., 2010; Tooley & Dixon 2004, 2005).

The Growth of the Low-Fee Schooling Sector

Several studies point out that private fee-charging schools are a growing phenomenon throughout the developing world and that these schools are increasingly catering to the educational needs of poor, primary school children in marginalized areas (Kingdon, 1996; Muralidharan & Kremer, 2006; Rose, 2002; Tooley & Dixon, 2003, 2005; Watkins, 2000;). This mushrooming of private schools for the poor is attributed to the low quality of government schools, including problems with teacher absenteeism and a lack of teacher commitment (Tooley, Dixon, & Olaniyan, 2005; Watkins, 2000). Phillipson (2008, p. 16) points to the following factors as driving the market demand for low-fee schools: an oversupply of teachers, high hidden costs of government schooling, private tuition costs, language of instruction; and poor performance of the public sector.

In the context of parental decision-making in “private schools for the poor” several ideas warrant closer scrutiny. First, inherent in this discourse of choice is the assumption that poor parents not only have the ability to choose well, but also have an array of equal options from which to choose from. However, this may not always be the case. Henig (1994) warns that, “The word ‘choice’ is a potent political symbol. Choice and its connotations of personal freedom and abundance of opportunities make it a slogan that is easy to rally around (p. 21).” This warning is particularly relevant in the case of poor households where their choices may be severely constrained. Härmä’s (2010) work examining parental choice and poverty in rural Uttar Pradesh points to such evidence where she found that there was a clear demarcation between those who could and could not afford LFP schools. Ultimately, it was only children who were in the third to
fourth quintiles of socioeconomic status (or about 60% of the sample population) who were more likely to attend these schools. Similarly, Lewin (2007) argues that, “Household income and income distribution between households is such that few of those in the lowest two quintiles could afford the full economic cost of unsubsidized schools at prevailing fee rates” (p. 60). The fact that LFP schooling is not accessible to the “poorest of the poor” points to why parental choice in LFP schools needs to be reframed as a social class issue because currently the “normative constructions of parental choice… are based on middle-class, not working class, choice making” (Ball, 1995, p. x). It is questionable who has choice and who exercises choice as the following quote demonstrates:

> It is sometimes argued that many of the lowest-cost private schools provide a very low-quality education and, consequently, poor parents are defrauded by such disreputable schools…Nonetheless, a strong case can be made that a wide quality-price range is efficient and responsive to the variety of felt needs…*Attendance in low cost, low quality private schools is a result of free choice.* Consequently, there is no a priori reason to believe that consumers are not making a rational benefit/cost/risk calculation when they decide to enroll and re-enroll their children or themselves in such schools, given that they have the public school option available to them. *It makes little sense to deny lower income groups such choices, simply because educational standards in some inexpensive schools have lower quality standards than more expensive schools patronized by higher-income groups.*’ (Karmokolias & van Lutsenburg Maas (1997, 1, 12, emphasis added [in original]). as cited in Rose 2007, p. 20)

Second, the neoliberal view of parental incentives for investing in education suggests that families will invest in education only insofar as the private benefit exceeds the private cost (Clemens, 2004). Variance in enrollment decisions therefore depends less on the supply-side
education sector interventions and more on anticipated economic returns to schooling. Policy interventions are not the primary determinants of enrollment as Clemens (2004, p. 36) argues:

Abundant evidence suggests that families in poor countries often realize their desired level of human capital investment in their children, and this desire is shaped by many complex and interacting factors of which the existence of a nearby school or even quality of the teacher therein may not be the most important.

Instead he contends that household income and parental education levels are the strongest predictors of enrollment. While Clemens’ contention may bear some merit, what is less discussed in the literature is the non-economic aspirations that might guide parental decisions and if these decisions are gendered. For example, Stambach and David (2005) suggest that “mothers’ criteria for selecting schools may be different from the economic rationalist policy image of school choice” (p. 1636). This suggestion resonates with the idea of parental choice decisions based on “hot” knowledge or knowledge from the grapevine (Ball et. al, 1999). For example, parents may choose schools not solely on the basis of quality indicators but also because of social capital kinship networks and ties.

Third, several researchers (Fennel, 2010; Härmä, 2009; Srivastava, 2007) using Hirschman’s exit, voice and loyalty framework to explain parental decision-making point out that when parents are dissatisfied with the school they are currently in they have two options: one is to exit to another school in a free market competition model, and the second is to stay and exercise voice to demand improvement at the current school. Parents, however, may choose to stay or even exit for a range of reasons. For example, in Srivastava’s study (2007) fee-jumping was one form of exit, where parents would leave a school because they were unable to pay fees.
Without a more nuanced understanding of school choice processes, particularly of poor parents choosing low-fee private schools, the contention that choice leads to competition and improved quality of schools may be contested. If parental decision making is guided by the perception of quality of low-fees schools or other social capital variables, then choice in itself does not necessarily force improvements in quality of the public sector. In this instance, choice may lead to the closure of schools instead of improved performance as schools would not be economically viable.

Also and more importantly, it is not clear if it is indeed parents choosing the schools or if the schools are selecting the parents and the sorting this implies. If parents are choosing schools based on social capital variables of kinship and familiar networks, it is not clear if LFP schools are becoming ethnically or spiritually segregated. Some researchers (Ascher et al., 1996) also suggest that parents, and particularly disadvantaged parents may choose schools for non-quality reasons, and they further posit that “…disadvantaged parents do not have the time, ability or resources to make good choices” (p. 9). Several researchers have expressed concern along similar lines that when choice can potentially exacerbate stratification by race and social class (Elacqua, 2012; Henig, 1994; Levin, 1998)

Furthermore, some researchers argue that parents who have children in private schools take more interest in school activities and there is more accountability and thus better performance as parents exercise their voice and demand more from the teachers (Umar, 2008). Cox and Witko (2008) likewise claim that when parents actively choose schools, their participation and social capital increases. In other words, active choosers participate more than non-choosers. Whether or not this is true of parents choosing low-fee schools is yet unclear.
Arguments for and against Low-Fee Schools and Public Education

An important aspect of the debate on the quality of schooling is the private versus public provision of basic education. However, the debate involving the role of private school provision for the poor is relatively new. While there is agreement that state education systems may be failing due to the pressures of fiscal demands, there is less agreement on what the correct solution is. Watkins (2004) and Rose (2002) recommend that state system should be improved and there should be increased aid to accomplish this. Tooley (2006), on the other hand contends that if countries are concerned with meeting the 2015 target of the EFA agenda, then private schools for the poor, or NFS, should be viewed as potential partners for achieving these goals. As he asserts, “The existence of private schools for the poor provides a grassroots solution to the problem of achieving universal basic education by 2015—without the huge dollops of aid supposedly required” (2006, p. 13). Extolling the virtues of the market based on a two year study of slum schools in India, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya and China, Tooley (2005) argues that the private sector is playing an important role in meeting the educational needs of the poor and that they are doing it far more effectively than the state. The contention is that majority of poor children attend private schools that outperform the public school and cost less in terms of teacher-salaries (Tooley, 2006).

There is some consensus that these private schools are serving the poor. For instance a DFID report on the role of non-state provision in meeting the needs of the poor in Nigeria posits that private unregistered schools are “filling an important gap in provision” (Adelabu & Rose, 2004, p. 48). Similarly Watkins (2000) in the Oxfam Education Report suggests that “…a lower cost private sector has emerged to meet the demands of poor households” (p. 230). Nonetheless there is less agreement about whether these schools can potentially help meet the EFA goals.
Issues of financing, scaling up and sustainability of services remain determining challenges. In recent times, there have been some initiatives of government partnering with these low-fee schools in an effort to reach global educational agendas. One such example is the recently introduced Right to Education Act Clause 12 which makes it compulsory for every low-fee school in India to admit at least 25% of its pupils from poor and low-income families. The state government will in turn reimburse the schools for the fees.

Advocates for privatization of education often point to the superior efficiency of these private schools. The neoliberal agenda which calls for an expanded role for civil society and diminished role for the state has seen a sharp rise in the role of NGOs in the provision of education (Sutton & Arnove, 2004). Neoliberal reforms argue that market mechanisms such as choice, competition and deregulation improve the provision of educational services (Lubienski, 2006). The central argument to this neoliberal case for private schools is that these schools are more cost effective. Additionally, they offer greater accountability to parents who pay fees (Kingdon, 1996) as well as competition among providers improving quality by giving parents better choices (Kingdon, 1996). Several empirical studies also demonstrate that performance in private schools is better than public schools. Muralidharan and Kramer (2006) in their study of private and public schools in 20 states in rural India find that children in private schools have higher attendance rates and test scores. Kingdon’s (1996) study found that controlling for family background variables, students in private school performed up to 3 times better on standardized tests in mathematics. There has been sharp debate around the quality of schooling these low-fee schools provide. Tooley and Dixon (2007) based on their testing of these students in Kibera on standardized tests in Maths, English and Kiswahili report that students from these schools outperform their counterparts in the public schools even when results were controlled for several
background variables. Similarly, research by Bold, Kimenyi, Mwabu and Sanderfur (2011) and Lucas and Mbiti (2011) point to differences in test scores of pupils in public and LFPS with students in LFPS outperforming their peers in public schools on several indicators.

Advocates also claim that low-fee schools show ‘concern for the poor’ through philanthropic provision of free or subsidized places. While, Rose (2002) posits that motivations of commercial gain and concern for the poor are potentially in conflict, Tooley and Dixon (2005) suggest a contrary conclusion. Demonstrating from their research in India how 15% of all places in 14 case study schools in Hyderabad were free or subsidized, they suggest that it is only because these schools, which are run on a commercial basis, have a financial surplus that they are able to offer fee concessions. Commercial gain and philanthropy are thus not in conflict in these schools, making them viable options even for the poorest of the poor. Tooley et al., (2004) suggest creating state and/or donor funded targeted vouchers for the poorest, or for girls to use at private schools. This would enable the poorest to access private schools, in addition to the measures already being taken by these schools themselves to subsidize the poorest through philanthropy.

On the other hand, critics of educational privatization contend that education is a public good and thus should be provided by the state. To allow markets to displace the state in the provision of basic education would promote inequality (Bringhouse, 2004) and negatively impact equality of opportunity (Colclough, 1996). Watkins (2004) argues against private provision of basic education on two points. First, that financing will have negative consequences especially for girls as costs to schooling is one of the major barriers to school enrollment. This argument is difficult to maintain in the case of Kenya since FPE was introduced in 2003. Secondly, that
enabling parents to exit the state system in favour of private provision “reduces parental pressure to improve government schools” (Watkins, 2004, p. 11).

The dramatic growth of low-fee schools is now accepted as a new phenomenon, but there is far less agreement on the role these schools are playing in meeting EFA and MDG goals. Even more questionable is the quality of provision of education in these schools. For example, Okwany (2004) in her study on non-formal schools in Kibera contends that since these NFS are not registered with the Ministry of Education or the City Department of Education, there is no monitoring of quality to ensure that they are offering education of acceptable quality. She points out “In this context, many fraudulent organizations are preying on poor parents’ desperation to educate their children, while others are exploiting foreign donors’ sympathy with the plight of disadvantaged children” (Okwany, 2004, p. 190). To determine if economically disadvantaged parents are making active school choices or if they are being duped by schools focused on profit requires a more nuanced understanding of parental decision–making structures in these schools and contexts. Examining the household decision-making of urban poor households may help unravel these complexities.

**Contextualizing Education in Kenya**

In order to understand the provision and problems of the public education system in Kenya, in this section I provide a brief history of educational expansion in the country. Missionaries along the coast established the first official educational institutions in Kenya in the mid 1800s (Eshwani, 1993). Education followed a 7-4-3-2 (7 years primary, 4 years lower secondary, 2 years upper secondary, and 3 years of university), until independence in 1963. After independence there was considerable importance placed on the role of education in promoting economic and social development. Rapid expansion of the education system followed to meet
national development needs. Buchmann (2000) points out that this promotion of school expansion also served to legitimize Kenya as a modern nation State. The First National Development Plan (1964-1969) outlined the needs for educational expansion to fulfill national aspirations (Somerset, 2010). The current Kenyan education system follows the 8-4-4 system (eight years of primary, four years of secondary and four years of university education). The official medium of instruction in schools is English although Kiswahili along with local languages is widely used in the lower grades (Hungi & Thuku, 2010).

Since independence there have been several attempts at universalizing access to primary education. The first was in 1974 when school fees were abolished in two key stages: 1) semi-arid areas and needy cases throughout the country and 2) for the first 4 years in 1974 (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). However this loss of revenue meant schools resorted to collecting building levies (which were higher than fees). Still, there were impressive gains in primary school enrollment rates. By 1978, enrollment rates had grown from less than 50% at independence in 1963 to about 85% by 1978 (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007).

The second attempt at FPE was in 1979 under President Moi’s leadership. Building levies and tuition fees were abolished and there was a surge in school enrollment once again. By the 1990s Kenya had achieved near universal primary education with enrollment. However as many scholars point out (Buchmann, 2000; Nkinyangi, 1982; Somerset, 2010) these gains were very quickly eroded with the introduction of cost sharing measures (through the collection of user fees) in the 1990s made necessary by Structural Adjustment Plans, overall economic decline and rising poverty rates. Consequently enrollment rates at the primary level declined, and completion and transition rates stagnated between 1990 and 2000 (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007).
One of the key pre-election promises that brought the ruling party NARC to power in December 2002 was the provision of free and compulsory primary education (FPE) for Kenyan children. In January 2003, NARC delivered on its election promise and waived user fees for primary education. Following the implementation of FPE, 1.3 million out-of-school children were absorbed in formal primary schools and the government has increased its education recurrent budget to almost 40% of total government spending. There are about 18,500 primary schools in the country and Kenya’s gross enrollment ratio for the primary level rose from 88.2% in 2002 to 104.8% in 2004 with the introduction of FPE, and Secondary level enrollment is 38.3% (Ministry of Education, Public Expenditure Review and Medium Term Expenditure Framework, MOEST 2006). Table 3 provides the Primary Schools Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) and Net Enrolment Rate (NER) nationally from 1991-2011.

**Table 3**

*Primary Enrollment (1991-2011)*

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<tr>
<td>GER (%)</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>101</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>105</td>
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<td>97</td>
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<td>NER (%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>75</td>
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The Government of Kenya implemented Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003, and while this policy initiative saw massive increases in net enrollment ratios from 76 % to 80 %, and gross enrollment ratios from 88% in 2002 to 103 % in 2003 (Government of Kenya, 2005), large numbers of children, particularly from marginalized areas and groups continue to be excluded from this provision of state education.
Challenges of free primary education.

The expansion of FPE in Kenya has been problematic (Alubisia, 2004; Oketch & Rolleston, 2007; Riechi, 2006; Somerset, 2010). Deteriorating standards in the quality of public schooling as a result of overcrowding (Oketch, 2010; Peano, 2011; Somerset, 2009; Wiener, 2010), acute levels of urbanization resulting in unmet demands for schooling in urban slums (Oketch, 2008), teacher absenteeism (Tooley & Dixon, 2006), and high pupil-teacher ratios (Weiner, 2010) have created demands for alternative provisions to the public system. Increasingly, given the widespread perception of poor public school performance, poor households in many countries are opting for alternatives to the public school system for the education of their children (Andrabi et al., 2008; Härmä, 2009; Heyneman, 2010; Srivastava, 2008, 2009; Tooley & Dixon, 2007, 2008). As a result many non-state providers are entering the education market to provide basic schooling for low-income families (Heyneman, 2010; Rose, 2007, 2008) and in many countries the expansion of the private sector is more rapid than the public (UNESCO, 2011).

Mukundi (2004) points out the 2003 implementation of FPE has been problematic because “The implementation of the UPE program in Kenya was a matter of political expediency rather than planned education reform. No situation analysis and evaluation of both the quality and extent of primary education preceded its implementation” (p. 239). This has meant that the government has had to rely on external donor funding to support the primary education sector. Additionally, the increased fiscal burden has also placed constraints on public funding provision in areas such as post-secondary education and health services.

More importantly, even with the provision of FPE, there are still an estimated 1 million children in Kenya (mostly from arid and semi-arid areas and urban slums, girls, children in
difficult circumstances, and those from marginalized/vulnerable groups) who are not in school (UNESCO, 2013). Non-formal schools therefore seek to reach some of these out-of-school children, and it is estimated by the Ministry of Education in 2006 that about 350,000 children are currently enrolled in Non-formal Schools (NFS) and NFE institutions (MOEST, 2006). International and local NGOs are particularly active in the development of Non-Formal Education (NFE) centers in Kenya, and they also provide facilities and resources to primary schools in poor or marginalized areas of the country. Much of their work is done in partnership with local communities. For example, Action-Aid Kenya provides school facilities and learning materials to four primary schools within the Kariobangi slums, the Christian Children’s Fund has similar projects in Samburu and Oxfam in Kenya supports the non-formal education system enabling the children of nomadic herders to attend school (Oxfam, 2005).

Despite the introduction of FPE, the education sector continues to be challenged in many ways. Several studies (Alubisia, 2004; Oketch et al., 2010; Sawamura & Sifuna, 2008, Somerset, 2009,) have pointed to some of the constraints to achieving the UPE objectives. These constraints include the fact that a significant number of children still remain outside the school system, drop-out rates continue to be high because of the hidden costs; ineffective teaching, poor disciplinary methods, hostile learning environments all contribute to thwarted progress of the UPE objectives. The issue of user fees or levies required even after FPE continues to be the biggest obstacle for access for many households, particularly those in urban slums. FPE offers a capitation grant of 1020 KSh/per pupil/per year. Table 4 provides the Ministry guidelines as to how this money is to be spent. The categories are very prescriptive but, as some researchers point out, by making the categories uniform across all schools, the categories may not be best meeting the actual needs of individual schools (Somerset, 2009).
Table 4

Components Funded Under the 2003 FPE Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The School Instructional Materials account (SIMBA) to cover Ksh.650 per pupil per year</th>
<th>Ksh</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i) Text books (2 books)</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Exercise Books (21 exercise books)</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) Pens and Pencils (3 pencils)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) Supplementary and reference books</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v) Dusters, white board and registers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi) Charts and Wall Maps</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>General Purpose Account (GPA) Ksh. 370 per pupil per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i) Support staff wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Repairs, maintenance, and improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) Quality assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) Local travel and transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v) Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi) Electricity, water and conservancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii) Telephone. Box rental and postage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii) Contingencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


What is problematic with this funding is, as Sawamura and Sifuna (2008) and others (Bold et al., 2011; Ohba, 2009, 2010) point out; families are still required to shoulder some of the costs. Sawamura and Sifuna (2008) provide a list of all the additional costs that must be borne by families (see Table 5) as well as additional costs that high, medium and low-cost schools may impose on households (see Table 6). For families living in slums these costs can be prohibitive.
Table 5

Estimated Expenditure on School Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uniforms</td>
<td>Shirt/Pants/Skirt KSh 520-800; Shoes KSh 1300-1780; Sweater KSh 680; Socks KSh 120</td>
<td>Sports clothes for physical education also required and cost KSh 720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>KSh 290-380 per book</td>
<td>The grant is not sufficient enough to purchase textbooks for all pupils. Good performing schools request each pupil to buy his/her own textbooks and other learning materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise Books</td>
<td>KSh 30-120 per book</td>
<td>Parents are expected to supply exercise books and other materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationery</td>
<td>Pencils KSh 3, Eraser KSh 5, Pen KSh 7</td>
<td>Parents are expected to supplement inadequate stationery supplies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desk</td>
<td>KSh 400-2500</td>
<td>In some schools, children are required to get their own desk when they enrol in first grade. In many cases, this takes the form of a &quot;desk charge&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>KSh 1200-4000</td>
<td>This is usually for middle-class parents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 6

Examples of Primary School Fees and Levies Collected Under FPE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Compulsory Payments</th>
<th>Optional Payments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-cost schools</td>
<td>- School fees/child support fund: KSh 2500-6000 per child/per term</td>
<td>- Extra/evening/Saturday tuition: KSh 2000-4000 per child/per term (Since all pupils are expected to attend such sessions, the payment of these funds is practically compulsory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Furniture replacement: KSh 550 per child per year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bus Maintenance and repair: KSh 650 per child per year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Swimming pool maintenance: KSh 350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-cost schools</td>
<td>- School fees/child support fund: KSh 300-600 per child per month</td>
<td>- Extra evening/Saturday tuition: KSh 100-500 (same as above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-cost schools</td>
<td>- School fees/child support fund: KSh 50-200 per child/per term</td>
<td>- Extra/Evening/Saturday tuition: KSh 20-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mid term/final tests: KSh 20-50 per pupil per term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Oketch et al. (2010; see Figure 3) find that based on their research in two slums in Nairobi that while enrollment of children from slum households into government schools peaked
with the introduction of FPE in 2003 and 2004, dissatisfaction with the public schools, as well as issues with cost has seen a return to low-fee schools for many of these children. Low-fee schools are continuing to serve large numbers of children in urban poor settlements even with FPE.

Figure 3. Trends in public and low-fee private school enrollment by year in the slums of Korogocho and Viwandani.

There are two key issues in the discussion around educational provision in Kenya that warrant closer scrutiny. The first is urbanization. According to an Oxfam report “Rapid urbanization is changing the face of poverty in Kenya. Nairobi’s population is set to nearly double to almost six million by 2025, and 60% of residents live in slums with no or limited access to even the most basic services such as clean water, sanitation, housing, education and healthcare” (2009). This rapid urbanization will undoubtedly increase pressure on an already underserved sector in the provision of basic education in slums where demand will outstrip the
supply of schools unless government spending in this area is increased. Second, is that of ethnic inequality. Several studies point to the prominence of ethnic and tribal patronage in Kenya and how this impacts the provision of basic services including education. Miguel and Gugerty (2004) report on how ethnic diversity in rural Western Kenya is associated with lower primary school funding and worse school facilities. Similarly, research documents how ethnic favoritism is shown to influence the allocation of public goods in Kenya (Miguel, 2004). Moreover, Alwy and Schech (2004) suggest a close correspondence of differentials between inequalities in education and ethnic affiliation of the ruling elite. They claim, “Ethnicity should be placed at the forefront of analyses of educational development in Kenya, as well as in policy efforts to reduce inequalities in education” (Alwy & Schech 2004, p. 273)

**Low-Fee Private Schools in the Kenyan Context: Emerging Issues**

Similar to findings from other developing countries that have a mushrooming LFPS sector, the Kenyan government has limited information on the total numbers of LFP schools in existence or their locations. This is because there is no comprehensive database of the schools, nor are LFP schools included in official enrollment numbers. LFPs are also notoriously difficult to track as they may be able to function for quite a period of time without official registration as long as they remain undetected. Many schools are also known to open and close quite frequently in different parts of the slums or in different slums under different names. Further, it was only in 2005 that the first ever census of LFP schools was carried out in Nairobi, where 547 NFS were identified in the informal settlements in Nairobi (EKWC, 2004). The Ministry of Education with funding from UNICEF in 2005 carried out the first census of all NFEs in Nairobi and produced the first directory of non-formal education in Nairobi province.
According to research by Tooley and Dixon (2009), their team of researchers found 76 private primary schools serving 12,132 students in Kibera slum in 2003. A more recent independent research report by Grey Matters Capital estimates that about 5000 LFP schools are serving about 500,000 pupils in the country with many of the schools serving orphans and vulnerable children (Musani, 2008). Even more recently, longitudinal data from the research at African Population Health Research Council (APHRC) indicates that almost 40% of children in the slums of Korogocho and Viwandani attend LFPS (Oketch et al., 2010). Official MOE statistics however continue to be more conservative. It is estimated that in 2008, 924,192 primary school children representing 10.8% of total primary education enrolment were in private schools (MOE, 2012). While this data points to some indication of numbers, the actual numbers of LFP schools serving low-income families continues to be an unreliable statistic in the official data.

A number of studies have considered reasons for the expansion of the low-fee private sector in Kenya (Musani, 2008; Sawamura & Sifuna, 2008; Somerset, 2008; Stern & Heyneman, 2013; Tooley & Dixon, 2006, 2008 2013), as well as parental motivations for choosing these schools even after the availability of Free Primary Education (Ngware et al., 2009; Oketch et al., 2010; Oketch, Mutisya & Sagwe, 2012). There is some agreement on some of the common reasons cited for the exponential growth of the sector which include: the hidden costs of schooling in the public schools (for e.g., requirements for uniforms, desk charges etc), the perception of poor quality in the public sector with the large class sizes and questionable teacher accountability and commitment, as well as insufficient supply of public schools to meet growing demands for schooling.

On the contrary, there is less agreement on the quality of provision in the private sector as well as parental motivation for choosing these low-fee schools. Oketch et al., (2010) based on
their study in the slums of Korogocho and Viwandani contend that parents are sending their children to low-fee schools out of necessity and not of out choice. They conclude:

> It is because of excess demand as result of low public expenditure in education in the slums. In the slums those who utilize private sector are those who have been involuntarily excluded from the state system. Whereas in the non-slums, those utilizing the private sector are those with preferences for the private sector over the state system. (Oketch et al., 2010, p. 31)

In other words, parents are choosing low-fee schools because of a lack of the supply of public schools and not because these schools offer better quality. While Oketch et al., (2010) do not provide any evidence to show quality differences between the public and low-fee private schools; their data does confirm patterns of private school utilization by the poorest quintiles and public school utilization by higher wealth quintiles in the slums. Ngware et al., (2009) similarly conclude when considering household characteristics of those utilizing low-fee schools that it is the poorer households who are in the low-fee schools and it is the better-off households that have benefitted from FPE. Oketch, Mutisya and Sagwe (2012) hypothesize that poverty dynamics may play a role in explaining why poor households choose to pay for private schools. They explain that moving in and out of poverty affects household schooling decisions and their data shows that up to a quarter of households who moved out of poverty also shifted schools. While they conclude that some parents who are dissatisfied with FPE cite reasons of affordability and quality as motivation for shifting schools, what is more telling from the findings is that “there is both willingness and ability to pay by the slum residents that is driving the utilization of the private schools” (Oketch et al., 2012, p. 3). What this suggests then is that notions of insufficient supply or excess demand alone do not fully capture household motivations for choosing low-fee schools in the slums. A better explanation is perhaps one offered by Stern and Heyneman (2013)
whose conclusion recognizes quality differentiation as a factor in choice, “Ultimately, insufficient supply (in quantity and quality) of public schools seem to be the overriding reason for the rise in low-fee private schooling in Kenya” (p. 125). Nonetheless, what these interrogations of choice seem to lack is an understanding of the non-economic rationale for choice and how household decision-making can and is influenced by notions of social networks and capital.

The work of Dixon, Tooley and Schagen (2013) and earlier work by Tooley, Dixon and Stanfield (2008) provide a counter to the quality argument. Based on a stratified sample of 3300 pupils from three slums (Kibera, Mukuru and Kawanagware), they tested students on three subjects (Math, Kiswahili and English) and found that after controlling for background variables, those in the low-fee schools outperformed the students in the government schools in Math and Kiswahili but not in English. They conclude that “Coupled with other findings showing smaller class sizes in private than public schools and [the presence] of more committed teachers, this suggests that the choices favoring low-cost private schools made by parents in the slums are based on quality considerations like those made by wealthier parents” (Dixon et al., 2013, p. 102).

Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided the background context to understand the key issues, debates and controversies surrounding low-fee private schools in general and in Kenya, in particular.

Challenges with the implementation of FPE have not sufficiently met the demands for schooling by slum households. Underserved by the state schools and dissatisfied with what is perceived by many as deterioration in quality as a result of large class sizes and lowered teacher
accountability and motivation, some slum households are choosing to exit the public system for an expanding low-fee private school sector. While low-fee private schools are a burgeoning sector in Kenya, it is also a complex sub-sector where subtleties, lack of clear policy and direction compound the murkiness of its existence. Low-fee schools are often run by individuals, community based organizations, religious organizations or NGOs and charge minimal fees catering to poor households. However, government and official statistics do not always capture the full range of these schools as many officials are not aware of their actual locations or numbers. These inconsistencies make it difficult to monitor and regulate this growing sector. Finally, the increased involvement of philanthropists and private investors in the low-fee private sector raises questions over the emerging tension around the role of non-state providers in the provision of basic education, as well as questionable profit and philanthropy motivations.

Additionally, what is also troubling about this expansion of the low-fee private schooling sector is that there is little agreement on which households are actually able to access them and their motivations for doing so and the potential equity implications this may have. Furthermore, there is also little agreement on the quality of offering at these low-fee schools with some research claiming that students at these schools outperform those in the public schools. In the next chapter I discuss some of the theories of decision-making around school choice and map out my conceptual framework for this study.
Chapter Three
Household Decision-Making, School Choice and Social Equity:
Developing a Framework

And when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it is like a ‘fish in water’: it does not feel the weight of the water and it takes the world about itself for granted. (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 127)

Introduction

This chapter presents the conceptualization of this study and proceeds as follows. In the first section I examine the literature around school choice, in particular which households choose, how households choose and why. Next, I present the section on Bourdieu’s theory of habitus and capital and suggest how these constructs provide a useful lens to understand decision-making in this study. I also show some of the challenges of operationalizing these constructs in empirical research and show how I operationalize these constructs in this study. Finally I conclude by introducing the conceptual framework for this study. To develop the conceptual framework for this study, I draw upon strands from several theoretical frameworks including rational choice theory, social exclusion and social capital theory, Hirschman’s exit, voice and loyalty theory as well as the literature on choice and decision-making that previous research has identified as determinants in household decision-making. The conceptual framework for this study was also informed by the works of Perna and Titus (2005), Reay (2004, 2005) and McDonough (1997) who use measures of capital and habitus to examine choice and enrollment at the postsecondary level.

Parental Choice of Schools

The marketization of education has become a global phenomenon (Plank & Sykes, 2003). The neo-liberal approach that underpins these market orientated reforms positions parents and
households as consumers and valorizes the rhetoric of choice. However, choice is not a neutral concept. Rather, it is embedded within social and structural constraints. A significant body of literature (Ball et al., 1996; Gewirtz, Ball & Rowe, 1995; Goldring & Hausman, 1999; Goldring & Phillips, 2008; Reay & Ball, 1997; Reay & Lucy, 2000) has addressed some of these patterns of privilege and disadvantage related to parental choice.

Nonetheless, school choice continues to be both promoted and debated vigorously. Concomitantly, quasi-markets in education have emerged. Advocates have argued that giving parents the choice to choose the schools they want for their children will result in, among others, increased competition and pressure on public systems of education, leading in turn to increased efficiency and quality and therefore better schools (Hoxby, 1994), higher satisfaction with schools (Goldring & Shapira, 1993), greater parental involvement in schools (Bauch, 1991; Bauch & Goldring, 1995) and, better equitable outcomes for disadvantaged students (Coleman et al., 1982; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Goldhaber, 1999). Critics have countered that parental choice may risk exacerbating class and race differences by increasingly stratifying schools when parents base their choice on non-academic reasons (Ascher et al., 1996; Elacqua, Schneider & Buckley, 2006; Henig, 1994), and may result in even more poorly performing schools as better-able students exit the school system and are “cream skimmed” into better performing schools (Ball, 2005; Gewirtz et al., 1995).

While much of this literature on school choice is based on empirical research and evidence from developed countries, there have been a number of notable studies examining parental choice in the emerging educational markets for the poor in developing countries (Alderman et al., 2001; Bold et al., 2011; Härmä, 2009; Iram et al., 2008; Oketch et al., 2010; Srivastava, 2005, 2006). Some of the considerations that are important in the choice-process for
low-income parents choosing private schools are fee level, school proximity and quality (Alderman et al., as cited in Srivastava, 2005), and proximity and affordability (Kitaev, 1999).

Yet, central to the debate on choice, it is unclear if parents will make decisions based on “educationally sound dimensions or non educational factors” (Schneider & Buckley, 2002, p. 133). Maddaus (1990) contends:

If parents are choosing for academic reasons, then choice may provide the impetus for changes in teaching and learning. If, on the other hand, parents are choosing because of convenience/proximity, it is unlikely that choice will be a driving force for school improvement. Existing evidence has led to no clear consensus” (cited in Goldring & Hausman p. 472).

While Elacqua, Schneider and Buckley (2006) caution that “…the tendency to make ill-informed choices is stronger among low-income parents” (p. 581), perhaps a more important consideration is that not all parents may be able to exercise choice. Bosetti’s (2007) research on choice in her study for example concludes that economically and socially disadvantaged groups do not seem to be exercising choice. In the case of low-income households choosing low-fee private schools, little research exists on their perceptions of quality considerations.

**How households choose: theories of decision-making.**

Underlying choice processes is the logic of rational choice. From this perspective, household decision-making reflects an assessment of the relative costs and benefits associated with different options and rational calculations of economic returns (Bosetti, 2007). Decision-making is assumed to be a reflection of this assessment and is purely rational. While many parental choice debates assume rational choice deliberations, clearly decision-making is complex and confounding. Reay et al., (2005) in citing Hatcher (1998, p. 16) posit that “rational
choice…is a significant element in many…decisions, but it is neither a necessary nor a sufficient one” (p. 32). Choice, according to Lauder and Hughes (1990), is based on class, gender and ethnicity.

Rational choice has been criticized because parents simply do not always base decisions on rational calculations (Sullivan, 2001). Several researchers go further to contend that parents “have neither the skills nor the information about schools necessary to act in a rational way” (Martin, 1995 as cited in White, 2008, p. 36). Similarly, several studies have demonstrated that race, social class, and education levels impact how parents choose schools (see, e.g., Ball & Vincent 1998; Elacqua et al., 2006. 2012; Lareau 1987, 2003; Schneider & Buckley, 2002). More accurately, Ball (2003) postulates household decision-making is complex and involves “a mixture of rationalities” (as cited in Bosetti, 2007).

Another framework that is used to understand decision-making is Albert Hirschman’s work, which is captured in his 1978 book Exit, Voice and Loyalty. Hirschman’s theory has exerted significant impact on the parental choice debate. Hirschman’s theory of how users express dissatisfaction through his exit, voice and loyalty models has been used as a framework to understand choice measures used by households. Fennel (2013) uses this framework in examining household responses to deteriorating public schools in Pakistan in the context of an emerging low-fee market and Srivastava, (2006) similarly uses Hirschman’s framework to show how marginalized households in India respond to low-fee schools. Exit is when dissatisfied users vote with their feet and leave the public system. Voice is a political response when users demand improvement of the current system and loyalty is when users continue to stay even when they may be dissatisfied with the anticipation of improvement over time. In the context of school choice the mechanism of exit, without the counterbalance of voice, may lead to a ghettoization of
low-performing schools where households with more influence and capital exit the system leaving behind those with less capital or ability to exercise voice to demand for improvement.

Social capital theory is another framework that is used to understand decision making around schools. Originally evident in the writings of Adam Smith, de Tocqueville and Durkheim, social capital research has continued to dominate contemporary thinking in policy and social sciences. In contemporary literature, the origins of the concept are often attributed to sociologists James Coleman (1988) and Pierre Bourdieu (1986). More recently political scientist Robert Putnam (1995) has done much to popularize the concept. As an analytical and conceptual tool, social capital is useful in understanding how dense interlocking networks of relationships can serve as a resource, and why these networks matter. Communities with a rich endowment of social capital are better able to deal with poverty (Narayan & Woolcock, 2000), and combat community violence (Colletta & Cullen, 2000). Families with more cultural capital may have better access to information that is typically unavailable to their working and lower class counterparts due to professional and social networks. On the other hand, a lack of social capital has been linked to reduced access to education (Coleman, 1988), and social fragmentation and isolation (Flora & Flora, 1993).

Coleman (1988) posits that social capital is a useful construct to understand both interactions within families as well as between families and their communities, and how this impacts the child’s wellbeing. The social capital literature suggests that four micro- and meso-level variables can influence children’s academic success: human capital, family financial capital, family social capital and community social capital (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Runyan et.al 1998; Stevenson, 1998). Schneider et al., (2000) also stress the importance of the social context of school decision-making because parents are not autonomous actors making
decisions about schools independent of their social network. These social networks can include, but are not limited to family, extended family, community and kinship networks etc.

According to Coleman (1988) social capital is comprised of three components: (a) obligations and expectations of reciprocity in relationships, (b) information channels and (c) social norms and social control. Coleman’s broad definition of social capital includes the following:

Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors—whether persons or corporate actors—within that structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible. (p. 96)

This definition points to Coleman’s view that social capital is derived from social interactions and facilitates certain actions. For example, parents may obtain information about schools from other parents in their interactions with them and use this to facilitate action to choose a school. Further, Coleman also argued that norms are much more effectively maintained when there is a high degree of intergenerational closure, that is, children are a part of peer networks and are exposed to adults who share the same values as their parents.

Coleman’s notion of social capital which aligns itself closely to that of rational choice theory becomes problematic in the context of examining household decision-making around low-fee schools in this study. Such a benign position of the household as a free agent acting rationally and purposely to maximize utility does not adequately address the socioeconomic or cultural constraints that impact household decision-making. Further an uncritical notion of choice and decision-making does not take into consideration the mental structures of the actors and their dispositions, their social location or how they interpret social reality. Bourdieu’s Theory of
Practice, on the other hand provides the conceptual tools to interrogate some of these constraints, particularly through the notion of habitus.

**Drawing from Bourdieu’s Theory of Practice**

Bourdieu identifies three dimensions of capital that are interrelated: capital, habitus and field. In *Distinction* Bourdieu (1984) sums up the relationship among these elements as follows: 

\[(\text{habitus} \ (\text{capital})) + \text{field} = \text{practice}\]

and points out that capital, habitus and field interact to collectively generate practice or social action. This theoretical model points to why it is necessary to consider not just capital but also habitus in deriving an understanding of its practical application in the education field. Bourdieu (1996) considers the family a field where “the accumulation and transmission of economic, cultural, and symbolic privileges” (p.23) occurs and through which social order is maintained.

Capital for Bourdieu is “a set of actually usable resources and powers” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 114, as cited in Bellamy, 1994, p. 121). Capital exists in different forms: economic, cultural, social, and symbolic. For Bourdieu, economic capital not only underpins the other forms of capitals but also interacts with the other forms of capital to reproduce social inequalities (Jenkins, 1992; Morrow, 1999). Cultural capital exists in three forms: institutional cultural capital (for example academic qualifications and credentials), objectified cultural capital (material goods, writings, books, art form and so on), and embodied cultural capital (particular styles of being, social norms, values and attitudes). Embodied cultural capital is best understood through the framing of habitus. Bourdieu’s theory of social reproduction contends that the cultural capital of the dominant class is what is valorized and promoted within the education system thus reinforcing and reproducing class-based hierarchies. On the other hand, social capital consists of social networks and connections “contacts and group memberships which,
through the accumulation of exchanges, obligations and shared identities provide actual or potential support and access to valued resources” (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 143 as cited in Morrow, 1999, p. 755).

Bourdieu also identifies four major forms of exclusion in relation to capital and habitus. These are as summarized by Bellamy (1994) as self-elimination, when individuals preclude themselves from situations or academic settings and challenges where the cultural norms are unfamiliar to them. Overselection results when individuals with less capital are forced to compete with individuals with more capital on equal footing. Relegation occurs when an individual who has less valued capital or resources is demoted to equally less valued positions resulting in them getting less out of their investment, and finally direct exclusion when individuals are pushed out for lacking the pre-requisites. While there may be fewer instances of direct exclusion, perhaps what is more probable, as Bellamy (1994) points out, is the existence and occurrences of indirect forms of exclusion. Table 7 summarizes this relationship between capital, habitus and the different forms of exclusion. I have adapted these four forms of exclusion to show how they may apply to household decision-making in the low-fee schooling context in this study.

**Table 7**

*Forms of Exclusion in Relation to Capital and Habitus*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-elimination</th>
<th>Overselection</th>
<th>Relegation</th>
<th>Direct Exclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Capital</td>
<td>Presence of a relationship between parents’ social background and the educational capital of the child.</td>
<td>Association between curricular differentiation of student and social class of parent.</td>
<td>In the form of lacking the requirements i.e., school certificate, parent’s death certificate, desks, uniforms/shoes/stationary to meet criteria for admission.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-elimination</th>
<th>Overselection</th>
<th>Relegation</th>
<th>Direct Exclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships between information channels, “connections”, influence of significant others, presence of educational norms, and parental social class.</td>
<td>Knowledgibility of households about different school requirements and options.</td>
<td>Not having social networks to draw from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Capital</strong></td>
<td>Ability to afford fees.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitus</strong></td>
<td>Dispositions toward the school e.g., “it’s not for me” Acceptance of academic ability or social status as defined by the dominant culture.</td>
<td>Acceptance of the need to go to a lower performing low-fee or public school when desires, beliefs, and abilities indicate that a higher performing school would be a better choice.</td>
<td>Acceptance of one’s place in the educational hierarchy, i.e., satisfaction with curricular or school choices, limitations.</td>
<td>Lack of money to pay fees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Source: Adapted from Bellamy, 1994, p. 131

There have been a plethora of studies examining Bourdieu’s notions of cultural capital and habitus and its influence on educational inequality (see e.g., Carter, 2003; Dumais, 2002; Horvat, Weininger & Lareau, 2003; Lareau, 1987; Reay 2005, 2007, 2008). However, Bourdieu’s work has also attracted considerable criticism. These criticisms are primarily directed at the ambiguity and circularity of Bourdieu’s concepts (Jenkins, 1992; Sullivan, 2002); the overly-deterministic nature of his concepts (DiMaggio, 1979; Jenkins, 1992 ;); and the neglect of gender issues (Reay, 1991).

Nonetheless, Reay (1995) considers this conceptual looseness of Bourdieu’s concept of habitus an advantage. She points out:

Paradoxically, the conceptual looseness of habitus also constitutes a potential strength. It makes possible adaptation rather than the more constricting straightforward adoption of the concept within empirical work. There is
‘messiness’ about the concept that fits in well with the complex messiness of the real world. (p. 357)

**Deriving a Conceptual and Theoretical Understanding of Household Decision-Making**

In this study I draw on both Coleman’s (1988) conceptualization of social capital and Bourdieu’s (1994) conceptualizations of economic capital, cultural capital and social capital. Coleman and Bourdieu’s conceptualization of social capital share some commonality, as Lin (2001, p. 24) contends because both theorists suggest “Social capital consists of resources embedded in social relations and social structures, which can be mobilized when an actor wishes to increase the likelihood of success in a purposive action”.

However, it is also important to acknowledge some of the sharp divergences and tensions between Bourdieu’s and Coleman’s conceptualizations of social capital owing to their distinct epistemologies. For Coleman, social capital is a tool for social mobility and is distributed equally in society. Bourdieu, on the other hand sees capital in a more contentious way and views the accumulation of capital as form of legitimization of social structures that are deeply divided along class lines. For Bourdieu capital is highly individualistic and is only meaningful within a particular field. While Coleman’s view of social capital has been criticized for not taking power differentials into consideration (Portes, 1990), admittedly his conceptualization of capital is still easier to operationalize in an empirical investigation compared to Bourdieu (Silva and Edwards, 2003).

Nevertheless Coleman provides an important counterpoint to Bourdieu’s understanding of social capital. Bourdieu’s capital has been criticized for being “implicitly elitist” as well as lacking a focus on “community” (Morrow, 1999). On the other hand, Perna and Titus (2005) note that Coleman focuses on identifying “ways in which parental involvement can build social
capital” (p. 488). Coupling both these perspectives, as several studies that have applied both Coleman’s theory of social capital and Bourdieu’s theory of practice have done, may be a way forward (Forde, 2010; Komba, 2011; Perna & Titus, 2005). Gurmundsson and Miliewocz (2006) similarly suggest studies could benefit from using both conceptualizations of social capital and asking for example, “Are we talking about win-only situations or are the winners benefitting at the cost of others? Do the mechanisms that produce social mobility for the few also contribute to the reproduction for many?” (p. 29).

Bourdieu (1994) claims families vary in terms of their capital and habitus. As households are positioned differently in the social field, their stock of capital will vary. Capital becomes capital only because it is legitimized by the dominant groups in a society (Grenfell & James, 1998). Household differences in capital may impact their decision-making around schools as some households may have more of a social advantage as a result of this differential possession of capitals. On the basis of Bourdieu’s theory this capital is also structured by their habitus and in this study can be useful in potentially understanding which households use low-fee and public schools and why. Congruence between the education field and familial, organizational and institutional habitus results in household decision-making.

To understand household decision-making, in this study I problematize choice processes as a complex interaction between macro-level policy frameworks, meso-level institutions, and micro-level decisions. In particular, I examine the interaction and impact of habitus at these levels following Bourdieu (1996) that habitus has both individual and collective properties and Maton (2008) who contends that habitus can be applied at the macro, meso and micro levels. Drawing on the existing theoretical literature regarding parental choice, social and cultural
capital and habitus this conceptual framework has been derived to assess habitus and capital and their possible influence on household schooling choice decisions (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Conceptual framework.**

In this conceptual framework, I draw inspiration loosely from Laura Perna’s (2006a) model of college decision-making which uses nested contexts for decision-making, and assumes that decisions are shaped by four contextual layers: (a) the individual’s habitus, (b) school and community contexts, (c) the higher education context; and (d) the broader social, economic and policy context. Although Perna’s framework was developed for the study of college enrollment
and choice, I posit that her model has applicability to other contexts of school decision-making outside the realm of higher education. Several of the concepts used have not been examined in the context of choice making in LFPS, particularly that of habitus. The conceptual framework for this study uses the idea of Perna’s (2006a) layered contextual factors in the household decision-making model, and builds on it by examining how the combination of the multiple contextual layers have empowering or disempowering consequences for choice. It asks in this study “How do the layers work to either push or pull households into choosing public or LFPS?”

In this framework, these concentric circles represent the macro, meso and micro environments that may shape and constrain household decision-making. In particular the concept of habitus is a useful starting point as it represents “a matrix of influences” that are represented by overlapping circles of individual, family, friends and institution” (Reay, 2005, p. 36). Households are embedded within the state and school “matrix of influences”. The macro context includes state policies and practices which represent the institutional habitus, including perspectives and attitudes towards the provision of education to marginalized households, the state’s own fiscal limitations and the broader global context that exerts pressure on state policies. The meso context is where the schools in this study operate and their habitus exerts influence on household decision-making through their practices and interaction with the households, and finally households themselves embody familial habitus that mediates how they respond to the macro and meso contexts. Likely this response is also impacted by their economic, cultural and social capital as well as social class and ethnicity (Ascher et al., 1996; Levin, 1998; Henig, 1994; Wells, 1996).
Theoretical Constructs

In this section I describe how the key theoretical constructs used in this study have been operationalized.

**Household decision-making.**

In this study I use household as the main unit of analysis. I employ the term household rather than family or parent (although I do use these terms interchangeably) because of the changing dynamics of household composition in Kenya in general, and in this study, in particular. Largely due to the epidemic of AIDS, many orphaned children live with grandparents or other extended family members. Urban slums that serve as the repository for migrants from rural parts of the country also have non-traditional household dynamics where some children may live with their relatives while their parents are preparing to migrate to the city. In this study, the term ‘households’, more accurately captures the decision-making dynamic. Additionally, following Ball et al., (2002) I use the term decision-making rather than choice because “Where choice suggests openness in relation to a psychology of preferences, decision-making alludes to both power and constraint” (p. 51). Decision –making in this context is an understanding of not only how households negotiate, navigate and decide between schools, but also how they may be constrained in their decisions on the basis of their capital and habitus.

**Habitus.**

According to Bourdieu (1990), people’s habitus reproduces inequities in the social structure. Habitus is defined as “a system of lasting and transposable dispositions that, integrating past experiences constantly functions as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 82–83).
Habitus therefore not only links the past, present and future, but also serves to bridge the distance between the individual and the social, the objective and the subjective, and structure and agency (Maton, 2008). It is both “structured and structuring” (Bourdieu, 1994) in that it is “structured” by one’s past and present circumstances, such as family upbringing and educational experiences. It is structuring in that one’s habitus helps to shape one’s present and future practices” (Maton, 2008, p. 51). Habitus is a relational concept and according to Reay (2004, p. 435), habitus can be “viewed as a complex internalized core from which everyday experiences emanate”. Habitus in this study is a useful analytical tool as it provides a framework for interrogating the dispositions, mental structures, perceptions and values of households around education in their decision-making pathways and processes. By doing so, it will allow for the deciphering of how habitus “generates practices, beliefs, perceptions, feelings and so forth in accordance with its own structure” (Maton, 2008, p. 51).

In the same way, Dumais (2002) asserts that “Habitus or one’s view of the world and one’s place in it is an important consideration in trying to understand how students navigate their way through the educational system” (p. 45) and in this study I use habitus to explore a similar decision-making trajectory of the households navigating and negotiating the emerging low-fee private market.

**Institutional and organizational habitus.**

Habitus exists not only in families and communities but also in organizational contexts (Masson, 2008; McDonough, 1997; Reay, 1998 ;). Extending Bourdieu’s analytical tool of habitus, McDonough (1997) and Reay (1998) use the concept institutional habitus to illustrate how institutions or schools influence the behavior of individuals. Central to this concept is the
manner in which institutions select participants on the basis of capital, contribute to the accumulation of capital, and reinforce positions of advantage.

While Reay uses the term ‘institutional habitus’, McDonough (1997) uses the term ‘organizational habitus’ to refer to this organizational context and as a “…way to understand schools’ roles in reproducing social inequalities. Organizational habitus refers to the impact of a social class culture on individual behaviour through an intermediate organization…” (p. 156). To differentiate the impact of habitus at the macro and meso contexts in this study, I use the term institutional habitus in discussing the state, and organizational habitus in discussing the schools.

**Familial habitus.**

Reay et al., (2005) describe familial habitus as “the deeply ingrained system of perspectives, experiences and predispositions family members share” (p. 61). Familial habitus results in the tendency to acquire expectations that are adjusted to what is acceptable ‘for people like us’ (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 64-65, as cited in Reay et al., 2005). Another important aspect of familial habitus is the “values, attitudes and knowledge base” those families possess that is impacted by their own educational experience, and in turn influences how they make decisions around schools (Reay et al., 2005). However familial habitus does have its conceptual limitations. Feminist economists, anthropologists and researchers have raised objections to treating the household as single unit of analysis as it ignores the gendered relations of power within the household and in the decision-making process (Beneria, 1995; Boserup, 1970; Brown, 2006; Reay & Ball, 1998, 2005). Additionally some researchers also suggest there is a gendered difference in the types of decisions made around school choice and parental involvement in education. For example, Stambach and David (2005) note, “Understanding the expressed as well as unarticulated gendered dynamics of parental involvement in education is the first step toward
transforming old dichotomies” (p. 1652). Using notions of social capital and habitus to understand decision-making in this study may allow for some of these more nuanced and gendered dimensions of decision-making to emerge.

**Capital.**

In this study, the household survey instrument used was modified from that created by Ferguson (2003). The original survey instrument was used to assess four dimensions of capital (human, financial, family and community) as potential predictor variables that distinguish between street-working and non-working children in Monterrey, Mexico. For the purpose of this study, a fifth predictor variable, spiritual capital is also considered. I was interested in whether a household’s spiritual capital played a role in their choice of school. Given that there are a large number of faith-based organizations offering schooling options in the LFP sector, this was an important consideration in understanding household decision making. Additionally, there has been a significant rise in Pentecostalism in urban slums in Kenya (Deacon, 2012). Therefore given these two events, I wanted to know what role spiritual capital played in a household’s decision-making around schools. Here I draw from Verter (2002) who suggests that “[s]piritual dispositions may be regarded as a form of cultural capital” (p. 152) and he further notes that as a form of capital, spiritual capital may serve to enhance social mobility. In this study, I use the term spiritual capital as a distinct category in my analysis of capitals to distinguish it from Bourdieu’s (1991) use of the term “religious capital” which he associates with cultural capital. Bourdieu’s use of religious capital is particular to the religious field and he uses the term in a rather narrow sense, confined to its institutionalized structure and ways in which it is employed as a tool of symbolic violence to perpetuate social and class inequalities. Some criticism of this narrow conceptualization of religious capital is that it does not acknowledge laypeople may also
accumulate and use religious capital, or that laypeople are able to exercise agency in resisting religious domination (Rey, 2007; Verter, 2002). In examining household decision-making pathways, I am less interested in the institution of religion, but more in the personal engagement and interaction households have with this form of capital and how it impacts their decisions around schools. For example, how do particular religious affiliations or social networks within the religious institution inform their decision-making?

In this study, I use Bourdieu’s cultural capital in its institutionalized state, which he terms “…the objectification of cultural capital in the form of academic qualifications…” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 247). This form of cultural capital can be transmitted by the family resulting in families with a higher status better positioning their children for success as they are able to transmit the dominant form of culture that is more privileged. For the purpose of this study this is operationalized as human capital in terms of the educational level of the parents, and if the child is enrolled in an appropriate grade level corresponding to the age of the child.

Next I also use the embodied state of cultural capital. This embodied capital, claims Bourdieu (1996) is a core internalized part of a person or their habitus. This cultural capital is “acquired to a varying extent, depending on the period, the society, and the social class, in the absence of any deliberate inculcation, and therefore quite unconsciously” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 245). This embodied form of capital includes attitudes and dispositions and as such “does not have material existence in itself in the world” (Moore, 2008, p. 105). It is this “structuring and structured predispositions” that households hold as they navigate and negotiate the state and school level factors in deciding between and on low-fee schools. (Moore, 2008, p.105). This capital is not directly measurable and is instead uncovered through a close reading of the emerging themes in the transcripts.
Additionally, I also draw on Bourdieu’s (1986, p. 248) notion of social capital which he defines as follows:

the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition-or in other words, to memberships in a group-which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a “credential” which entitles them to credit, in the various sense of the word.

Social capital is not owned by any individual but accrues benefits to a group (Halpern, 2005). Coleman (1988) on the other hand offers a broad definition of social capital that promotes the idea that social capital is inherently relational. He offers the following definition:

Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors - whether persons or corporate actors - within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible. (Coleman, 1988, p. 96)

For Coleman (1988) social capital exists in three forms: obligations and expectations, information channels, and effective norms and sanctions. In this study, I examine the first two forms. Obligations and expectations suggest reciprocity in terms of help received within a social network. Information channels once again draw upon social networks “for information that may form the important basis for action” (Bellamy, 1994, p. 124) When households draw from their social networks information they need about accessing schools, they are utilizing their information channels as a form of social capital. Nonetheless as one study found the volume and
quality of social capital in this context is constrained by the cultural capital of the parents especially in their level of education (Bellamy, 1994).

Social capital in this study is operationalized as family social capital, and community social capital. Family social capital, which is the relationship between parents and their children as well as other family members living in the same home, includes the level of time, effort, resources and energy that parents and other adult members in the household devote to their children (Coleman, 1988). Research shows that families with high social capital are more likely to transmit this capital in enabling their children to perform better educationally, and in other areas of well-being. Community social capital on the other hand consists of the “quality, structure and density of social relationships and interactions between and among parents and families, as well as the collective social relationships between parents and local community institutions, for instance schools” (Ferguson, 2006, p. 323).

**Summary and Conclusion**

In this chapter I have presented the theoretical literature around capital and habitus as well as key ideas from the parental choice literature, and I have delineated how they inform the conceptual framework for this study. In the next chapter I will present the research design and methodology used in this study.
Chapter Four
Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This study problematizes the household educational decision-making process as a complex interaction between macro-level policy frameworks, meso-level organizational practices, and micro-level household decisions. To understand this complex interaction at the macro, meso and micro levels, I use Bourdieu’s (1987) notions of habitus and capital as well as Coleman’s (1988) conceptualization of social capital as conceptual tools to try and understand these household decision-making pathways. In this study I examine the interrelatedness of the three levels (macro, meso and micro) by expanding on the notions of habitus and capital at both the institutional/organizational and household levels. I do this by linking institutional habitus with organizational and familial habitus using a multi-level triangulation design.

The purpose of this study was to understand the educational decision-making pathways of slum households by investigating which households were sending their children to low-fee private schools, as well as why and how they chose the schools.

I examine this through the following sub-questions at three interrelated levels:

State (Macro)
- To what extent does institutional habitus shape, inform and constrain household educational decision-making for slum households in this study?

School (Meso)
- To what extent does organizational habitus shape, inform and constrain household educational decision-making for slum households in this study?

Household (Micro)
- What are the meaningful financial, human, family, spiritual and community level social capital predictor variables that differentiated
between households with children in the public school and households with children in the low-fee private schools?

- To what extent does familial habitus shape, inform and constrain household educational decision-making for slum households in this study?

In this chapter I connect my research questions, the review of literature and conceptual framework to the methodological design of the research. First I describe my rationale for using a mixed-methods design to address the research questions I have posed. Then I present my research design, sampling procedures, data collection methods and explain how I analyzed the data. Finally I address issues of validity and rigor in conducting this multi-level study.

**Research Setting**

Field work for this study was carried out in Nairobi, Kenya. As part of the first phase of research a preliminary mapping exercise was carried out in two informal slum settlements: Kibera and Mukuru Kwa-Njenga. Kibera was later selected as the main research site. This process of selection is described in greater detail on p. 72-74 in this chapter.

Nairobi, with an estimated population of 3,138,369 (Kenya National Census, 2009) is Kenya’s capital and largest city. As one of the fastest growing cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, Nairobi is experiencing rapid rates of urbanization. Consequently, urban informal settlements or slums are a new reality in Nairobi as in many fast growing cities in the developing world. Some reports estimate that slums in Nairobi house over half of the city’s more than 3 million population (UN-Habitat, 2008), more than 50% of this slum population constitutes children and adolescents aged 24 years and younger (UN-Habitat, 2008). It is estimated there are about 66 slums or informal settlements in Nairobi (Werlin, 2006). Archambault et al., (2012) cite an African Population Health Research Council survey carried out in 2000 that showed that the
largest ethnic groups in Nairobi’s informal settlements are Kamba (16%), Luhya (25%), Kikuyu (25%) and Luo (22%).

Nairobi is divided into eight divisions of which Kibera division houses Kibera, one of the largest slums in sub-Saharan Africa. It is located in the southwest of Nairobi's city center, occupying approximately 1.5 sq. miles of terrain. Kibera was established in 1912, to accommodate Sudanese (also referred to as Nubians) soldiers from the King’s African Rifles (KAR), a part of the British colonial army (Marx, Stoker & Suri, 2013). In exchange for their services, the Nubians were given permits for the land (Hagen, 2010). However as part of rural–urban migration, the population in Kibera quickly multiplied and Nubians as the long-standing residents largely became landlords, renting out premises since they were the only tribe with legal rights to build on the land. However land issues have continued to be disputed since independence in 1963, when the Kenyan government reclaimed the land and revoked all permits and claims to the land. Kibera is, even till today, regarded as an illegal settlement and is consequently ill-served by the Government in terms of the provision of basic services.

Marx, Stoker and Suri (2013) in their survey show that currently the three main tribes in Kibera are Luo (36%), Luhya (27%) and Kamba (15%). However they contend that this ethnic composition of the slum is not reflective of that of Kenya as the Kikuyus, who are the most prevalent tribe in the country only represent 6% of the slum population. Additionally while Kenyans of Nubian origin make up only a small percentage of Kibera’s population, they are “well represented amongst the local administrators and land title holders” (Marx, Stoker & Suri, 2013, p. 5). Population estimates in Kibera have been notoriously inaccurate with no proper census data, and thus have been overinflated for strategic purposes by different groups (Warah, 2002). The 2009 Kenya Population and Housing census estimates the population at 170,000.
However, other sources claim that up to one million people live in Kibera (Map Kibera Project 2008). Kibera settlement is located on two Nairobi divisional administrative areas: - Dagorett and Lang’ata divisions. The slum is divided into 14 villages with varying populations - Kianda, Olympic, Soweto West, Gatwekera, Raila, Karanja, Kisumu Ndogo, Makina, Kambi Muru, Mashimoni, Lindi, Laini Saba, Silanga and Soweto East (Mutisya & Yarime, 2011).

Living conditions in Kibera are difficult, with most people living in one-room houses made of mud and tin roofs, with a typical room size of 9 feet by 9 feet. Average monthly rent is about USD 15, and the majority of people rent or sub rent the premises (Warah, 2002). Kibera, like other urban informal settlements, is characterized by poor living conditions which include poor housing, lack of or limited access to basic services such as education, health care, sanitation, sewage and garbage disposal, electricity, water and roads. Houses are typically built with mud-walls and corrugated iron sheets for roofing. Residents here have no personal access to piped water and have to purchase their water from private vendors or collect it at public taps. A lack of sewage and garbage disposal has resulted in unsanitary living conditions with raw sewage flowing through the mud pathways throughout the settlement. African population health research council (APHRC) data (2006) suggests that less than 3% of households had access to private latrines. With no running water, little to no access to electricity and no proper toilets, open sewers and garbage dumps are a mainstay, resulting in rampant disease being prevalent. High levels of HIV/AIDS incidence and youth unemployment further exacerbate living conditions here (Davis, 2006).

There is also widespread unemployment in Kibera with 60% of the population living on less than $1 a day. According to an Oxfam Report (2009) based on an expenditure-based poverty line of KSh 3174 per adult, per month excluding rent, nearly three-quarters or 73% of
households in slums are considered poor. Nonetheless, Kibera is not only ethnically heterogeneous but also diverse in terms of social classes. It is therefore not uncommon to see pockets of wealthier households living within the slums. There are also a large number of NGOs working in Kibera. For example, Muchiri Karanja (2010) found that there are between 6,000 and 15,000 NGOs working in Kibera alone.

In terms of demographics, as one of the older slums in Nairobi, Kibera has a much more settled population than some of the other slums. Residents here are considerably diverse in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic and demographic characteristics. However Bodewes (2012) also points out the residents of Kibera are also polarized at many levels including ethnically, religiously, economically and politically. In Kibera, which is the slum that is the setting for this study the two largest ethnic groups are Luhya and Luo (APHRC, 2008). Nonetheless, the abject poverty and depravation that characterizes slum living makes living here a challenging context. As Bodewes describes it, “The citizens of Kibera are not recognized as human beings, we live like animals and the ones we vote for never remember us” (Bodewes, p. 56). Ethnic tensions run high here, exacerbated by poor economic conditions and there have been many episodes of ethnic violence, the most recent being the post-election violence in 2008.

**Methodological Considerations**

In this study I use mixed methods as a methodological framework. A mixed methods design combines collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data within a single study. Traditionally, qualitative research is considered to have its roots in naturalistic philosophies, while quantitative research is rooted in positivistic paradigms. A quantitative or positivist research paradigm therefore adopts a deductive approach to research working from a theory or hypothesis and collects data, either to verify or disprove the theory. In this paradigm, it is
conceived ontologically that there is a single, objective reality and the researcher is able to without impartiality observe and collect data that informs this reality. On the other hand, a qualitative or constructivist approach to research uses inductive reasoning where participant’s views are used to build and generate theory through thematic development of schematas and ideas. In this paradigm, ontologically, the existence of multiple realities is adopted, where reality is conceived as being co-constructed in the engagement and interaction between the researcher and participants. Although there has been much debate in the literature about the incompatibility of mixing these two research paradigms because of the inherent tensions embedded in their distinct ontologies and epistemologies, there has also been a growing awareness of the limitations of being bound by paradigmatic incommensurability (Creswell, 1994; Green & Caracelli, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Newman and Benz (1998) for example, consider the qualitative/quantitative dichotomy as false and suggest that these approaches should be viewed as an interactive continuum instead because they contend:

If we accept the premise that scientific knowledge is based upon verification methods, the contributions of information derived from a qualitative (inductive) or quantitative (deductive) perspective can be assessed. It then becomes clear how each approach adds to our body of knowledge by building on the information derived from the other approach. This is the premise of the interactive continuum. (p. 20)

As part of this interactive continuum, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) call mixed methods research the “third methodological movement” (p. ix). The emerging literature on mixed methods suggest that it is better situated to address complex research problems than traditional quantitative or qualitative studies alone as Creswell and Clark (2006) suggest, “mixed methods offers strengths that offset the weaknesses of separately applied quantitative and qualitative
research methods” (p. 18). Several other researchers similarly suggest that mixed methods may be better suited to address research questions than any one single method, as the researcher can examine different levels and types of data (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Howe, 1988; Newman & DeMarco, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Similarly, Newman et al., (2003) point out that this combination of different kinds and levels of data may offer multiple viewpoints for the researcher to understand the research question being examined.

Green, Caracelli and Graham (1989) in their extensive review of the literature point to five purposes for using mixed methods designs. These are -

1. Triangulation, or seeking convergence of results
2. Complementarity, or examining overlapping and different facets of a phenomenon
3. Initiation, or discovering paradoxes, contradictions, fresh perspectives
4. Development or using the methods sequentially, such as the results from the first method informing the use of the second method.
5. Expansion, or mixed methods adding breadth and scope to a project

In this study, my main rationale for using this mixed methods design is for triangulation or convergence of results from the different levels in order to maximize my interpretation of the data and to increase the validity of the findings. Therefore, I triangulate data from state level interviews, with school level interviews and ethnographic data, as well as household survey data and interviews in order to better understand why low-income families are choosing to pay for schooling in low-cost private schools instead of using the free State provided schooling alternative.

Another reason why mixed methods is useful in this study is for the purpose of complementarity, as I am able to use different levels of data to assess the same phenomenon, in this case collecting data at the macro, meso and micro-levels in order to understand households decision-making. Further, as this is an exploratory study, a mixed methods approach will allow
for the emergence of unexpected constructs or paradoxes and contradictions that contribute to understanding the research problem. Such a development might not be possible or appropriate with the use of just a single method.

Finally, a mixed methods approach also complements my use of Bourdieu’s notions of capital and habitus that inform my conceptual framework for this study. Bourdieu’s rejection of false dichotomies inherent in “competing approaches such as objectivism and subjectivism, theory and empiricism, quantitative and qualitative methods, macro- and micro-analysis, and structure and agency...[advances] a “reflexive” approach to the study of sociology.” (Bellamy, 1994, p. 120). Such a “reflexive” approach corresponds to the complementarity purpose of mixed methods research as advanced above and invites a “dialectical analysis [which] examines the interrelations, contradictions, and tensions among biological and mental structures of individuals, objective conditions, and the history of social structures” (Bourdieu, as cited in Bellamy, 1994, p. 120).

Mixed methods as a research design then has both a methodology and methods. The worldview most typically associated with mixed methods research is pragmatism because it is pluralistic, focuses on the consequences of the research rather than methods, and is guided by a practical and applied research philosophy (Creswell & Clark, 2006). Pragmatism as a worldview is a set of ideas articulated by Charles Pierce, William James and John Dewey and is centered on linking theory to practice, drawing on many ideas and approaches and primarily valuing both objective and subjective knowledge. Consequently, mixed methods advocates favour this paradigm because it uses multiple methods of data collection to inform the problem under study and is oriented towards a “what works” practice in the results (Crewell & Clark, 2006). Although some mixed methods researchers consider pragmatism as the “best” paradigm that fits mixed
methods design (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) there are also other researchers who argue for a
dialectical perspective that uses multiple paradigms within a single study (e.g., Greene &
Caracelli, 2003).

Since in this study to answer my research questions, I examine multiple perspectives,
collect data at multiple levels using multiple methods including quantitative and qualitative data.
This approach requires that I adopt a very practical epistemological position, in which
pragmatism is ideally suited to inform my research design. I also contend that the complexity and
pluralism evident in researching across cultures necessitates the use of multiple research methods
and perspectives to gain a fuller, more contextualized understanding of the problem being
studied.

While I contend that there are some distinct benefits to using a mixed methods approach
in this study, nonetheless, I also want to recognize some of clearly irreconcilable epistemological
tensions it poses. For example, ontologically, pragmatism embraces both singular and multiple
realities, and seeks to maintain both objectivity and subjectivity in addressing the research
questions. Negotiating these epistemological and ontological dichotomies in mixed methods
research is clearly challenging. Embracing both positivist and constructivist stances on reality
and neutrality, and transforming qualitative data into quantitative data, or conversely quantitative
data into qualitative data in the analysis, particularly brings to fore some of these tensions. In
responding to some of these contradictions, in this study I concur with Sale, Lohfield and Brazil
(2002) who propose each method in a mixed methods study, owing to their distinct paradigms
studies a different phenomenon, and suggest seeking complementarity between the two
paradigms as the best philosophical position to understand the research question. To preserve the
integrity of the distinct paradigm of each method, in this study, quantitative data and qualitative
data is collected and analyzed separately and the results merged only in the final analysis. This way research methods are not mixed across paradigms and does not “diminish [] the value of both methods” (Sale et al., 2002, p. 50).

**Research Design**

This mixed methods study asks which households send their children to low-fee private schools, along with why and how they make decisions about schools. To answer this question, I examine the problem from multiple perspectives and use multilevel questions related to macro (state), meso (school), and micro (household) level factors to understand their interaction and impact on household decision-making. At each level data was collected to gain an understanding of the interplay between household decision-making and the notions of habitus and capital.

In this study to address this question, a triangulation multilevel mixed methods design (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 48 as cited in Creswell & Clark, 2007) is used as it allows me to address different levels within the same system. Figure 5 presents the multi-level triangulation design used in this study.

In a multilevel design, different quantitative (QUAN) and qualitative (QUAL) methods are used to address different levels within the same system. Data is collected and analyzed separately and these findings are merged at the end for an overall interpretation. In this study the QUAN and QUAL data were collected concurrently, analyzed separately and then merged for final analysis and interpretation. Correspondingly then, I collected data at three interrelated analytical levels: the individual (household), organizational (schools), and institutional (state). These three levels also correspond to Halpern’s (2005) micro, meso and macro social capital framework. These three analytical levels were similarly used by Prachi Srivastava to collect data in her study of low-fee private schools in Uttar Pradesh, India (2005,
cited in Srivastava, 2009). This research design, which frames the different levels as a whole system, “necessitated that data from one subunit of the case inform analysis at a connected subunit” (Srivastava, 2009, p. 79). For example, data from the household level decision-making survey also informs school level data, and similarly data from state level interviews informs school level data.

At the macro level, I interviewed an official at the Non-formal education (NFE) section at the Ministry of Education. The NFE is the arm of the MOE that oversees both non-formal education and LFP schools. I also had informal discussions with three other Ministry of Education officials. As part of the research three key civil society actors were also interviewed. These were: KISA (Kenya Independent School Association) which is the umbrella CSO representing LFP schools and OXFAM as they are one of the main donors that fund KISA and support other LFP school initiatives. Additionally, I carried out a focus group discussion with KISEP (Kibera Slum Education Program) which is a coalition of five LFP schools offering private education in Kibera. This organization is one of the initiatives funded by OXFAM. Further, I was also able to interview an international bilateral donor on their perspective on LFP schools, as well as several academics at the University of Nairobi for their understanding of LFP schools and parents’ decision-making processes.

At the meso level, I interviewed school proprietors or head teachers at the five study sample schools. At each school I also carried out focus group discussions with teachers, school management committee members and pupils in Classes 6 and 7. In addition, I also had numerous other informal discussions with parents, officials, and school personnel about LFP schools. Further I also examined school documents, visited classrooms and observed classroom instruction and interaction between teachers and pupils.
At the micro level, I surveyed households who had children enrolled in classes 6 and 7 at the five study sample schools. In all, I administered 209 surveys, 109 in the public school and 100 in the remaining four low-fee private schools. I was also able to interview 21 households who had either moved their children from public to low-fee private schools or from low-fee private to public schools.

Figure 5. Multilevel triangulation design.

Data Collection

Through my affiliation with the University of Nairobi as a research associate in the Department of Sociology, I hired four research assistants who were graduate students at the University of Nairobi to assist me with data collection and translation. Three of the graduate students were completing their Masters degree in Sociology and the forth was completing a Masters degree in Public Health and Policy Studies. The research assistants were selected
primarily because they all had prior field work experience of collecting data in Kibera, having worked on other research projects and so they were familiar with Kibera and the challenges of working at the site. Additionally all the research assistants were also familiar with both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The research assistants were primarily tasked with helping me with data collection using the household survey instrument, assisting with parent interviews and focus groups with teachers and pupils, and translation of and during interviews. These four research assistants worked with me for the entire duration of the research project. Throughout the field work period the research assistants and I met as a team once a week to debrief and troubleshoot. Additionally, I would also accompany different research assistants to ensure research protocol was being observed.

Over the first few weeks, I trained the research assistants in data collection, interview protocol and processes and survey administration before we carried out a piloting of the survey instrument and data collection. Although much of this material was familiar to the research assistants given their prior field work experience, this training process was primarily to ensure consistency in data collection and to ensure a higher level of reliability of data collection. During this time we also translated the survey from English into Kiswahili and used back-translation to ensure accuracy of the translation (Creswell, 2002). Given the ethnic and language diversity present in Kibera the decision to use Kiswahili was prompted by the fact that it was the national language and most people were conversant in it. Additionally, all the research assistants were not only conversant in Kiswahili and but were also able to converse in a few of the local languages widely used in Kibera.
Phases of Research

This study was carried out in two phases. In the first phase I carried out a preliminary mapping of LFP schools in two slum communities: Mukuru Kwa-Njenga and Kibera. The purpose of this exercise was twofold: first, to determine the characteristics of LFP schools in these two slum communities, and second to identify a suitable site for a more detailed case study analysis to examine parental decision-making structures and participation.

The two sites were selected for several reasons: first, the sites were selected for their geographical convenience. Given that I had limited time and budget, my site selection was constrained by these two factors and had to be strategic. While there is evidence of the existence of LFP schools in rural areas as well as urban slum sites (Oketch, 2007), my study was urban focused and therefore I did not try and locate LFP schools outside of Nairobi. Consequently, two slum sites that were urban and easily accessible from Nairobi were selected. Second, I also wanted two sites that offered maximum variation in terms of types of informal settlements. These two sites were vastly different in their history and density. Kibera began in 1912 and has an estimated population of 950,000; whereas Mukuru Kwa Ngenga began in 1958 and has an estimated population of 100,000 (Umande Trust, 2007 cited in Mutisya & Yarime, 2011). Thirdly, safety concerns prompted the choice of these two sites because they were reportedly safer than some of the other slum settlements in Nairobi.

Once preliminary mapping of schools was completed, I focused on Kibera for a more detailed case study of LFP schools and in particular household interviews for data on parental decision making processes. Kibera was selected over Mukuru Kwa-Njenga as it was more readily accessible by public transportation. It was also a more pragmatic option given my time constraints as it was more densely populated and as such the research assistants and I did not
need to spend a lot of time walking from home to home to administer the survey questionnaires, unlike in the slums of Mukuru. An additional motivation was that in Kibera the location of the public school made it a more suitable site to carry out this study allowing me to better access both types of schools, public and low-fee private within a smaller area.

In the second phase, after I had identified Kibera as the suitable site for further study, I selected five focus schools (one public and four LFP). This selection process is described in more detail in the next section. A summary of the research phases and data collection process and products is given in Table 8. A breakdown of the number of surveys and interviews at each school is given in Table 9.
Table 8

**Summary of Data Collection, Products and Questions Answered at Each Phase and Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Method of Data Collection</th>
<th>Objectives of Data Collection</th>
<th>Products/Sample size</th>
<th>Research Question Answered at Each Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase One</strong></td>
<td>Preliminary mapping of LFP schools in the slums of Kibera and Mukuru Kwa-Njenga</td>
<td>Survey interview with school head teachers or proprietors</td>
<td>To obtain basic information about LFP school structure, history and organization, as well challenges faced by schools. This was necessary to map out and gain a preliminary understanding of the nature of these LFP schools and what was being offered.</td>
<td>Surveys Kibera N= 21 Mukuru N=14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase Two</strong></td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews with key state and non-state actors involved in LFPS sector</td>
<td>To obtain data from Ministry level as well as CSO’s and donors on their perspectives on the role and function of LFPs as well as choice</td>
<td>Interviews N=19</td>
<td>To what extent does institutional habitus shape and constrain household decision-making?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Level 1: State and civil society level data collection</td>
<td>Review of policy documents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Level 2: School level data collection at the 5 schools (1 public, 4 LFP)</td>
<td>Interviews with school proprietors or head teachers</td>
<td>To obtain data about history and background of school, school practices, enrolment, funding, policy constraints and challenges</td>
<td>Interviews N=5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGDs with teachers</td>
<td>To obtain and triangulate data about parental decision-making and parental participation</td>
<td>Total FGDs Teachers N=5 Pupils Class six N=5 Pupils Class seven N=4 SMC N=4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGDs with pupils in Class six and seven</td>
<td></td>
<td>To what extent does organizational habitus shape and constrain household decision-making?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGDs with School Management Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School documents analysis Asset mapping at the schools Observation at the school Field notes</td>
<td>To obtain school level ethnographic data To obtain school level data on key enrolment and performance figures</td>
<td>Surveys N=209</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase | Method of Data Collection | Objectives of Data Collection | Products/Sample size | Research Question Answered at Each Level
---|---|---|---|---
c) **Level 3:** Household level data collection | Face-to-face survey interviews with parents or caregivers 109 interviews with public school households 100 interviews with LFPS households  Semi-structured interview with smaller subset of parents (N=21) | with children in public and LFPS To obtain more detailed data from households about reasons for moving between public and LFPS or between LFPS and public school. | Interviews N=21 | *To what extent does familial habitus shape and constrain household decision-making?*  
*Who chooses LFPS, how and why?*

**Table 9**

*Breakdown of the Number of Surveys, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Interviews at Each School*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School*</th>
<th>Number of FGDs with Pupils (Number of respondents)</th>
<th>Number of FGDs with Teachers (number of respondents)</th>
<th>Number of FGDs with SMCs (number of respondents)</th>
<th>Number of Interviews with School proprietors/Head teachers</th>
<th>Number of Parent Interviews</th>
<th>Number of Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Karuthi Primary School, Public School | Class 6 (1) (7)  
Class 7 (1) (6) | 1 (8) | 1(7) | 2 | 3 | 109 |
| Three Bells, LFPS | Class 6 (1) (4)  
Class 7 (0) | 1 (4) | 1(4) | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Watoto Centre, LFPS | Class 6 (1) (8)  
Class 7 (1) (10) | 1 (8) | 1(5) | 1 | 11 | 48 |
| St. Augustus, LFPS | Class 6 (1) (11)  
Class 7 (1) (12) | 1 (6) | 1(5) | 1 | 4 | 20 |
| Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS | Class 6 (1) (8)  
Class 7 (1) (8) | 1 (6) | 0 | 2 | 2 | 28 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School*</th>
<th>Number of FGDs with Pupils (Number of respondents)</th>
<th>Number of FGDs with Teachers (number of respondents)</th>
<th>Number of FGDs with SMCs (number of respondents)</th>
<th>Number of Interviews with School proprietors/Head teachers</th>
<th>Number of Parent Interviews</th>
<th>Number of Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Class 6 (5) (38)</td>
<td>5 (32)</td>
<td>4 (21)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class 7 (4) (36)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All school names are pseudonyms.*
A number of comments need to be made about this distribution. First, the type of schools. There was only one public school situated in the study sample area near these four low-fee private schools. While this was a limitation in terms of comparison to the private schools, it also reflected the reality in the provision of state schooling in the area. However, the location of the schools was such that pupils had equal access to all schools. Second, the LFPS varied in terms of classes offered and number of pupils. Of the four LFPS in this study, “Three Bells” was the smallest in terms of number of classes offered and number of pupils per class. The school did not offer Class 7 and there were only six pupils enrolled in Class 6. As such only one pupil focus group was carried out and of the six households only four parents were available to be surveyed. Of these four parents only one parent met the criteria of having moved their child from public to private schooling or from private to public school. This parent was invited for a focussed interview. On the other hand, Watoto Centre had the largest number of pupils per class for Classes 6 and 7 of all the LFPS in the sample, and this then increased the pool of respondents available to be interviewed and surveyed.

I also interviewed respondents including a Ministry of Education Official, local and international civil society organizations working with LFPS in Kibera, as well as a bilateral donor. A breakdown of the number of non-school level informants is given in Table 10.
Table 10

Breakdown of Non-School Level Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Interview</th>
<th>Number of Informants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilateral Donors</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Institutions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Civil Society Organizations</td>
<td>10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Civil Society Organizations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One of these interviews was carried out as a focus group with eight respondents.

Sampling Design

I employed nonprobability purposive sampling in the sample selection. In purposive nonprobability sampling the researcher selects samples based on a specific identified criterion or purpose. Patton (1990) points out that “The logic and power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth” (p. 169). In the following section I describe how schools and participants were identified and selected.

Selecting schools

I used a geographical cluster sampling approach in choosing schools for this study. I first identified a public school in Kibera, and then identified the nearest LFP schools surrounding this public school. In all, I located four LFP schools within a 0.3 km radius of the public school. I did not designate a specific radius; instead I selected the LFPS that were in closest proximity to the public school. These five schools (one public and four LFP) were then designated as the cluster sample for the study. Figure 6 maps the location of these schools as well as the location of other low-fee private schools nearby. Although the focus of this study is on decision-making in LFP schools, the public school served as a point of comparison to understand if and how parents in
both types of schools (public and LFP) differ in their social capital and decision-making processes as well as participation at the school level.

Figure 6. Map of one of the villages in Kibera showing location of public and low-fee private schools in the study as well as other low-fee schools in the vicinity.

Fieldwork data

Selecting pupils

I focussed on pupils in Class 6 and 7 rather than a younger age group for the FGDs for several reasons. First, as they were older and they were mature enough to participate meaningfully in the FGDs compared to a younger age group. They were able to give reasoned and informed accounts of their parents’ decision-making and reflect on possible peer influence in
school choice decisions. This data was valuable in triangulating information from their parents and from the teachers. An added advantage of working with these older pupils was that they were able to help their parents navigate my requests for research permission.

Second, pupils in Class 6 and 7 had been in the school system for a number of years and this allowed for the possibility of exploring with them issues of movement or non-movement between public and private schools, particularly with the introduction of FPE in 2003 when they would have just enrolled in school. As the pupils were in the higher classes they were also more aware of the differences between LFP and public schools and had friends in both types of schools. This vantage point gave them a unique perspective on parental decision-making processes and the role they played in the decision-making process.

Third, pupils in Class 6 and 7 would have been in the school system for several years and thus their families would have had more opportunity to accumulate and display social capital through participation at the school level and interaction with other parents etc.

Finally, the problem of overcrowding was most acute in the early classes of the public school (i.e., Class 1 and 2), where the pull to move to a private school perhaps was the strongest and perhaps more obvious. I was interested in understanding the less explored reasons for choosing LFP schools at the higher grades where overcrowding was less of an issue.

Both boys and girls were included in the FGDs. The Class 6 and 7 pupils who participated in the FGDs were the pupils whose parents or caregivers had participated in the household surveys. This purposeful sampling selection enabled me to triangulate data from the pupils with that of their parents/caregivers.
However, the disadvantage of choosing pupils in Class 6 and 7 also needs to be highlighted here. Focusing on these higher grade levels may have biased the sample in terms of households in the public school who may have moved their children from LFP to public, as previous research indicates that households may prefer the public school for the higher levels. Similarly then for those in the LFPS, the sample may be biased towards households who may have chosen not to move their children to the public school. Another consideration is that the sample may also be biased in terms of households who may be more motivated to keep their children enrolled in school given relatively high dropout rates within the school system for slum households (Abuya et.al. 2012)

**Selecting teachers**

As for the selection of the teachers, all teachers were invited to participate. I was purposeful in my selection, ensuring the inclusion of Class 6 and Class 7 teachers. This once again was to ensure that I was able to triangulate the data that I obtained from the pupils and households with that of the teachers. In each of the schools there were about 8-10 teachers who participated in the focus groups. Both male and female teachers were represented in these discussions.

**Selecting households**

Pupils in Class 6 and 7 who lived closest to the school were identified from the class register. This selection was guided by several concerns. One, to control for distance in the sampling. It was necessary to ensure that all the families in this sample (N=209) had easy access to this public school. Two, given that Kibera has thirteen villages that are socio-demographically stratified, I speculated that families living in the same village or in the same area would share similar characteristics related to household income, education levels, employment etc. Therefore
to determine the correlates of decision-making in terms of who chooses LFP and public schools, it was important to have a pool of families with similar backgrounds. Third, in order to facilitate easier access to homes. As Kibera is a massive sprawl with dense networks of homes and difficult terrain, given my limited time and budget and the nature of the face-to-face interviewing process it was necessary to be able to locate homes without much hardship and time expenditure. In addition, selection of households was guided by the availability of parents/caregivers who were available to be interviewed during the day. While this selection process does introduce a bias towards those who are were available to be interviewed during the day, this bias was unavoidable because of safety concerns in the slums, and interviews had to be carried out during the day. It was necessary to carry out face-to-face survey interviews because of the literacy level of the respondents. Neither was it feasible to mail out the surveys or to do phone interviews in a slum setting like Kibera. Therefore given the complexity of the social capital questionnaire, this was the most suitable method to obtain the most complete responses.

Once this list of students whose parents would be surveyed was identified, students were asked to notify their parents that the researchers would be calling on them at a specific date and time, and to inform their parents of the purpose of the research. With the class teacher’s permission, each day during the lunch hour selected students led researchers to their home. The teachers had a list of this group of students who were leaving the school premise during the lunch hour, and I did as well for safety and accountability reasons. Upon returning to the classroom, the student had to sign in with the teacher to notify the teacher that they had returned.

The student’s help in finding their homes was necessary given the complexity of the layout of slums, and there being no road signage or maps to locate homes. In some instances, students led us to their parent’s business within Kibera and the interview was carried out while
the parent worked so as not to disrupt their livelihood. When pupils led us to their homes, research assistants and I would call on the parent or caregiver in the home, introduce ourselves by showing them our letters of introduction and research permit, explain the purpose of the research and answer any questions they had about the purpose of the research. We would then seek consent for them to participate in the research process. Once this initial process was completed, the survey would begin. If the parent or caregiver did not have time to complete the survey at that time, arrangements would be made for a return visit at a mutually agreed time. While most surveys were carried out in their homes, there were also a number that were carried out at the parent’s place of work, particularly those that ran small businesses in Kibera.

While I had initially proposed to survey only mothers as the primary respondents and providers of information on parental decision-making processes, this plan had to be altered. Once field work was underway, it became increasingly difficult to only speak to mothers for several reasons. When we called on homes, if the father was present as well, he often offered most of the information. Also there were many cases where children were not living with their parents, but rather with caregivers or grandparents. Particularly given the high level of HIV AIDS orphans, this alternative family configuration was a reality in the slums. It became increasingly evident as field work progressed that it would be better to interview primary caregivers, so as not to limit my pool of respondents. Nonetheless, data from this study provides evidence that mothers were still the primary decision makers when it came to making school choice decisions.

After initial analysis of the parent survey questionnaires, I identified two select categories of parents. These were parents who had moved their children between public and private schools at least once, as well as those who currently had some children enrolled in the public school and some in private school. These parents were contacted for a follow-up semi-structured interview.
However due to time constraints I was only able to interview a combined total of 21 parents in both of these categories. The intent here was to understand reasons for their movement between schools as well as to better understand how their school decisions were influenced by institutional and organizational habitus.

**Research Instruments**

In order to collect data needed to answer the research questions, I used several different research instruments. These are - household survey containing both open and close ended questions, semi-structured interview guides, focus group discussion guides, and field note guide and observation protocols.

**Household survey.**

In this study, I adapted Ferguson’s (2003) social capital survey to explore household educational decision-making pathways. In this study I ask who uses low-fee private schools, why and how and also whether families with children in LFP and public schools differ in their stock of social capital (human, financial, spiritual, community social capital and family social capital).

A total of 209 household surveys were completed by parents and caregivers: 100 households in the four LFP schools and 109 households in the public school. The household survey instrument used in this study was modified from that created by Ferguson (2003) as its validity had already been established. The original survey instrument was used to assess four dimensions of capital (human, financial, family and community) as potential predictor variables that distinguish between street-working and non-working children in Monterrey, Mexico. In this study, Ferguson’s (2003) survey had to be adapted to be culturally appropriate for a Kenyan context. In adapting this existing social capital survey instrument for my study, I heeded
Buchmann’s (2002) caution that researchers “must be careful to conceptualize social capital in ways that are sensitive to the contexts they are studying” (p. 137). Therefore in using this survey instrument to explore the effects of social capital predictor variables on parental decision-making and participation structures core, I not only modified sections of the survey to ensure that the questions were more relevant to the research questions being examined, but I also modified the wording of many of the questions to ensure that the questions were culturally appropriate to the Kenyan context. The survey was also translated into Kiswahili. The complete survey in English as well as the translated version can be found in Appendix A and B.

Prior to administering the survey, I piloted the survey at one non-sample LFP school in the same village with 25 households. The selection of participants from the same village ensured that the respondents shared similar characteristics with the study participants. This piloting process enabled me to make the necessary changes to improve the clarity of the survey questions and for the research assistants to gain familiarity with the survey and interviewing processes.

Following Ferguson (2002), to determine the adequate sample size for the household survey questionnaires at the five schools, I used a power analysis method. Power analysis is a statistical method that, as Creswell (2005) points out, is “a means for identifying an appropriate sample size for group comparisons by taking into consideration the level of statistical significance (alpha), the amount of power desired in a study, and the effect size” (p. 583). As this study uses an adapted version of the survey designed by Ferguson (2003), I similarly follow similar guidelines used in that study to determine sample size. According to Ferguson (2002) using a medium effect size of 0.4, an alpha level (α) of 0.05, and a power level of 0.80, Cohen’s table’s shows that a total of 198 subjects would be required for each comparison group.
The respondents in this study were divided into two groups: those who had a child in either Class 6 or Class 7 in a public school and those who had a child in either Class 6 or Class 7 in a LFP school. In all I collected data from 209 households using survey instruments: 100 surveys in the four LFP schools and 109 surveys in the public school.

In the following sections, I describe the specific changes I introduced to Ferguson’s (2002) original survey instrument. The first significant change was introducing a fifth predictor variable, spiritual capital. The reason for the introduction of spiritual capital as a separate category was explained in Chapter 3. Spiritual capital was measured through the following seven factors: Religion, denomination, attendance at local church or spiritual community, membership at local church or religious community, frequency of attendance at religious services, excluding weddings and funerals, level of involvement in religious activities, as well as frequency of attendance at religious activities.

Seven preliminary questions were also included in the survey. The first of these was a screening question to confirm that the household was a suitable sample to be included in the study. The first screening question asked “Do you have a child in Class 6 or 7?” If the response was no, then the respondent was deemed not suitable and the survey was terminated. This procedure was followed as I was only interested in households that had children enrolled in Class 6 or 7 in the sample schools (see sampling section for more detailed discussion of sampling decisions). The other screening questions included were intended to better understand student mobility across public and LFP schools as well as household motivations for choosing their current school. Households were asked: (a) if they had moved between public and low-fee schools, or conversely between low-fee private and public school, as well as their reasons for
moving schools. (b) If they had some children enrolled in public and some in low-fee private schools? (c) Why did they choose the current school?

Several demographic questions were also added to this survey. One question on ethnicity asking them what is their ethnic group was added. As ethnic demarcations are significant in Kenyan society, this was an important question to ask. I also added two questions related to the households’ school-going children. These were (a) number of children in the household who were still attending school, and (b) number of children in the household who were in primary school.

I introduced two other sets of questions: one to understand school choice decisions and the other to understand school-related expenses. The first set on school choice processes includes 4 subfactors: key decision-makers, school choices processes, choice preferences, and school satisfaction. The first subfactor key decision-makers include two items: (a) whose advice was sought for school choice, and (b) who made the final decision. These two items consisted of similar categories of possible people who could have been consulted or who made the final decision. A value of 0 was inserted in each category in which there was no mention and a value of 1 was inserted in each category that was mentioned. A final composite score variable was created by summing the total number of mentions across all categories. The second subfactor on school choice processes includes two items: (a) Steps taken in choosing a school, and (b) Which school choice considerations were important. The third subfactor on choice preferences includes three items: (a) if current school was first choice, (b) if not what was, and (c) why they could not get into current school. The final subfactor on school satisfaction adds two items to an existing question about how well households think their school is doing on a number of items. I added two items here: (a) If they thought the school was providing quality education and (b) if they
thought their school helped students make connections to succeed. Lastly, I added to the existing question on neighbourhood problems an item that asks them if they thought a lack of public schools in the neighbourhood was a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem.

Next, I also introduced a set of questions to try and understand school-related expenses. These were captured by three subfactors: (a) Expenses per month for school fees for index child and for all school going children, (b) Expenses per year for school-related expenses (excluding fees) for index child and all school-going children, and (c) to an existing question on how much trouble a household has paying certain kinds of expenses, I added two items: (a) school fees and (b) other school expenses.

Finally I also included several open-ended questions in the survey that allowed me to capture household responses to questions such as why they selected the current school, why they may have moved between schools, and any other additional comments they wanted to make. These responses were treated qualitatively and coded separately from the other survey questions. Table 11 provides a summary of the indicators used in the survey to measure human, family, community, spiritual and family capital.

Table 11

**Summary of Indicators Used in the Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Capital</th>
<th>In this study I operationalized this capital as</th>
<th>Indicators used to measure this capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bourdieu’s Cultural Capital.           | Human Capital                                   | 1) Mother’s educational level  
                                          |                                                           | 2) Father’s educational level                  |
| Coleman’s Social Capital.              | Family Capital                                  | 3) Child’s current school status (if enrolled in correct class/grade level for age)                      |
| Coleman’s Social Capital               | Family Capital                                  | 1) Family structure                                                                                     |
|                                        |                                                 | 2) Quality of parent-child relationship                                                                 |
|                                        |                                                 | 3) Adult’s interest in child                                                                             |
|                                        |                                                 | 4) Parent’s monitoring of child’s activities                                                             |
| Coleman's Social Capital | Community Capital | 1) Perception of the quality of the neighbourhood  
2) Social support networks  
3) Civic engagement  
4) Trust and safety  
5) Group membership  
6) School satisfaction  
7) School choice processes  
8) Considerations for school choice |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bourdieu's Social Capital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Bourdieu's Cultural Capital | Spiritual Capital | 1) Degree of religiosity  
2) Level of church or spiritual community involvement  
3) Church or religious community membership  
4) Identified religion  
5) Level of church or spiritual community activities involvement |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Bourdieu's Economic Capital | Financial Capital | 1) Total household income  
2) Public assistance  
3) Kin financial help  
4) Financial support networks  
5) Economic hardship  
6) Perceived financial need  
7) School-related expenses |

These five types of capital and their corresponding indicators were largely adapted from Ferguson’s (2003, 2006a, 2006b) original social capital survey. These capitals broadly correspond to Bourdieu’s economic, cultural and social capital and Coleman’s social capital. As previously noted, the original survey instrument (Ferguson, 2003) was used to assess four dimensions of capital (human, financial, family and community) as potential predictor variables that distinguish between street-working and non-working children in Monterrey, Mexico.

In this section I identify the indicators I have introduced that are specific to school decision-making. These indicators can be broadly grouped into three categories: (a) those related to school expenses, (b) those related to school satisfaction, and (c) those related the process of decision –making especially school choice processes and considerations for school choice.
One limitation of these measures must be acknowledged here especially that pertaining to family capital. Some of the measures make certain assumptions about family structures which are more ethnocentric and may not fully reflect the cultural conceptualizations of family management in the Kenyan context that are more ‘sociocentric’ (Weisner, 1989, p. 172 as cited in Morrow, 1999). For example measures such as “adult’s interest in child” and “parent’s monitoring of child’s activities” subscribe to a very narrow definition of family. To address this shortcoming, I have included what Morrow (1999) terms “different conceptualizations of parenthood” (p. 754) by considering extended family involvement in financial help through “kin financial help” as well as non-parent involvement in child’s education through the “degree of extended family exchange and support” variable. Finally, in this study the unit of analysis is operationalized as the “household” rather than “parent”. This broader conceptualization of family allows for the inclusion of primary caregivers in non-nuclear households.

**Interview guide.**

I used semi-structured interviews to collect data from school headteachers and proprietors, parents, and state and civil society actors. All interviews were in English, except for interviews with parents which were in Kiswahili. These interviews with parents were translated into English. All interviews were audiotaped with the permission of the participant and later transcribed. I also made extensive notes during each of the interviews. The interview guide consisted of semi-structured open-ended questions, and participant responses which were also used as probes for further follow-up questions. Interview questions can be found in Appendix C.

**Focus group discussion guide.**

At the schools I used focus group discussions to collect data from teachers, pupils and school management committees. These FGDs were carried out primarily in Kiswahili and lasted
about 60-minutes each. Interviews were audiotaped with the permission of the respondents and were later translated into English and transcribed. The focus group discussion guide explored issues of access, participation, and decision-making. This guide can be found in Appendix D.

**Field notes and observations.**

Field notes are one of the mainstays of field work. Mine, which I maintained during the entire course of the fieldwork, incorporated the four aspects proposed by Patton (1987, p. 95), in that they are (a) descriptive, (b) include direct quotations, (c) contain my own feelings, and reactions to the experience as well as reflections about the meaning and significance of what has occurred, and (d) record my insights, interpretations and beginning analyses about what has happened. Brewer (2000, p. 111) in citing Lofland further clarifies that the field researcher’s central task is to describe and explain the following six areas of observation: acts, activities, meanings, participation, relationships and setting. In my field notes, these six identified areas further served to guide what I described and recorded.

**Research permits and ethical considerations.**

This study followed the procedures outlined by the University of Toronto Ethical Review Process. As part of the ethical consideration process, participants were informed of the purpose of the study, how the research will proceed, the feedback process and how results will be used. Further, interviews and questionnaires only contained questions relating to the research objectives. All participants were volunteers and signed letters of informed consent prior to their participation. In cases where participants were illiterate, verbal consent was obtained. Participants were also made aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence and that all their responses would remain confidential and anonymous. Data
was stored in a safe, confidential location, not accessible to others. All research assistants were also required to sign a confidentiality agreement form.

In Kenya, I also sought research approval from the Government of Kenya for a research clearance permit to work in the slums of Kibera and Mukuru Kwa-Jenga and from the Nairobi City Council for permission to carry out research at Nairobi public schools.

**Gaining entry and gatekeepers.**

As part of protocol of gaining entry into the two research sites, in addition to the official Government of Kenya research permits, I also called on the Chiefs for both Kibera and Mukuru. This meeting was necessary not only to introduce myself and the research assistants, but also to gain their support in carrying out the research in their jurisdiction. In both communities, the Chiefs provided me with a letter of introduction to facilitate my entry into the community and even offered to provide me with body guards if I required them. I elected not to use body guards as I felt it would draw further unwanted attention to me and the research assistants.

In order to gain access to household respondents, the research assistants and I carried with us a letter from the Chief, a letter of introduction from me, and a copy of the letter of the research permit from the Government of Kenya. At the school level, prior to interviewing parents, teachers or pupils, I sought written permission from the school head teacher or school proprietor. Generally, head teachers/proprietors were amenable to the research process as long as it posed minimal disruption. However, at one of the LFPS the head teacher was reluctant to give me permission to interview the parents, despite being briefed and having the process explained as to what would be required of the parents. I also left the particular proprietor a copy of the survey questions for perusal and welcomed any questions the proprietor may have. Ironically when I was interviewing a Ministry official on, I mentioned my challenges with this one
particular school. The Ministry official was not pleased with the LFPS’s reluctance to give me access to the parents at the school as I had received an official research clearance and permit from the Government of Kenya. The official at the Ministry of Education reasoned that the low-fee school should have nothing to fear or hide and immediately on the official’s own initiative called the LFPS and spoke to the Head. Thereafter, the Head relented. This interaction between the Ministry of Education official and the low-fee school proprietor suggested to me that government officials at the Ministry wielded some measure of power over low-fee schools in the slums.

In terms of locating the LFP schools themselves, I relied on KISA (Kenya Independent School Association). As the umbrella association representing LFP schools in Nairobi, they were very familiar with the nature and location of the schools. In fact, even the MOE relied on them for help in locating the low-fee schools. Ely (1991) introduces the idea of a “gatekeeper”: a person who facilitates entry into the field. In this research, KISA served as my “gatekeeper”. They facilitated my entry into the community by introducing me to the school head teachers and accompanying me initially on my visits during the preliminary mapping phase. They also assisted in facilitating some meetings, and provided translation help during some interviews.

Data Analysis

As this was a mixed methods study, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently in a triangulation design, multilevel model (Creswell & Plank, 2007), where different methods were used to collect the data at the different levels (state, school and household). In this model, data at each level is collected and analyzed separately and the results merged in the overall interpretation. In the next section I explain how I analyzed both QUAL and QUAN data.
**Quantitative data.**

QUAN data were entered using standard statistical software and thereafter the data were cleaned and checked for accuracy. Initial analyses were performed using SPSS v.16.

To examine the quantitative data, the first level of analysis I performed was univariate. I ran descriptive statistics for all categorical and continuous variables in order to understand how they were distributed. This exercise was useful in developing an understanding of the descriptive characteristics of the households and children in the study. In addition, this step forced me to modify some of the variables that did not have good distributional properties or were not applicable for a large part of the sample. For example, sparse categories were combined for some categorical variables and some continuous variables with highly skewed distributions were dichotomized.

The second level of analysis was bivariate where I examined relationships between pairs of variables. I conducted independent sample t-tests as well as chi-square tests to examine relationships between the dependent variable, school enrollment in either public or low-fee private school, and other independent social capital variables. These bivariate analyses not only helped to identify which variables were significantly different between the households with children in public school and those with children in LFP school, but also helped to serve as a data reduction strategy, as only variables with significant relationships with the dependent variable of interest were then used in the next step.

Additionally at this second level of analysis, as part of the data reduction step for the scaled survey questions, and to establish the reliability of the scaled items on the survey questionnaire, Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient was calculated for all survey questions that had scaled responses. Generally, Cronbach’s alpha greater than .70 indicates acceptable
reliable composite scores (Traub, 1994). Following the accepted convention criterion for high reliability, only items within a scale that were 0.70 or higher were retained and summed. The survey questions which were summed are listed in Table 12.

Table 12

*Reliability Analysis Scale (Alpha)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variable and item</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of empathy for child’s needs</td>
<td>6 (Question 45)</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of School</td>
<td>10 (Question 71)</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood problems</td>
<td>16 (Question 76)</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Engagement</td>
<td>7 (Question 86)</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust and Safety</td>
<td>4 (Question 85)</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School choice Processes</td>
<td>6 (Question 40)</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerations for choice</td>
<td>10 (Question 44)</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Hardship</td>
<td>4 (Question 52)</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a further data reduction process, scaled survey questions where the households were asked to list the number of times they did a certain activity with their child, or the number of people they talked to in making a school decision was all treated in the following manner. Following Ferguson (2002), ratio-level composite sum score variables were created by summing the total number of items mentioned for these questions. Ten questions were subject to this treatment of data reduction.

The third level of analysis was multivariate. This non-experimental study was conceptualized as a binary logistic regression problem. Binary logistic regression is a data
analytic technique to identify social capital variables that best predict parental decisions on whether to enroll in a LFP or a public school. I used logistic regression to determine if human, family, community, financial and spiritual social capital variables are able to predict the dependent variable as to whether a child is enrolled in public or low-fee private school. By creating a model using the significant variables from the bivariate analysis, it is possible to predict characteristics of families with children enrolled in public and children in LFP schools.

**Qualitative data.**

Qualitative data consisted of interviews, observations, school-level ethnographic data, focus group interviews, policy documents, open-ended survey questions, and field notes. These data were firstly transcribed, and then I read through the data several times for familiarity and understanding. I analyzed the data by hand using Microsoft Word to type up responses that I could search and group and also cut and paste. While reading through the transcripts, I made margin notes and wrote analytical memos (Miles & Huberman, 1994) noting points of interest and significant themes as they emerged, and noting how they answered the research questions and any issues they raised. I was also careful to be attentive to allowing unintended codes to emerge. The next stage involved coding the data and then using a thematic analysis approach to identify themes and relationships between coded chunks of data. In this next stage I compared and contrasted the themes, checked frequency of themes, and looked for areas where themes overlapped. At this point I was able to aggregate some of the themes into broader thematic categories, and to determine main themes and sub-themes.

Finally the themes from the qualitative data were integrated with the themes from the quantitative data for an overall interpretation of findings and to determine what similarities and
differences exist across the levels of analysis, and to determine if the quantitative and qualitative findings converge and also to triangulate the findings (Creswell & Plank, 2007).

Validity, Reliability and Generalizability

Questions of validity, reliability and generalizability all refer to the issue of rigor in research. While validity differs in Quantitative and Qualitative research, in both approaches it serves to check the quality of data and results. Mixed methods researchers use the term inference quality to refer to validity procedures. Basically, validity is “the ability of the researcher to draw meaningful and accurate conclusions from all of the data in the study” (Creswell & Clark, 2006, p. 146).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed a set of qualitative criteria (credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability) to parallel the corresponding quantitative criteria (internal validity, external validity, reliability, objectivity). Creswell and Clark (2006) caution that combining qualitative and quantitative approaches may raise other validity issues. Validity has been identified as one of the six major issues in mixed methods research as well as one of the most important (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). In order to minimize threats to validity in this study, I was attentive to the following.

During data collection I drew QUAN and QUAL samples from the same community. I also used large QUAL samples. Any contradictory results were reexamined and I tried to reduce potential bias through data collection by using unobtrusive data collection procedures (observation, semi-structured interviews, surveys and focus group discussions).

During the data analysis phase, I kept any data transformation simple. To ensure adequate converging, I developed a matrix with quantitative categorical data and qualitative themes. I also
addressed any potential validity issues by addressing the same question in both QUAN and QUAL approaches.

In addition, both Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Miles and Huberman (1984) recommend keeping an “audit trail” so that all the steps in the research process are documented, ensuring transparency. I did this through field notes as well as the process of memoing. Field notes are one of the mainstays of field work. Patton (1987, p. 95) recommends that they be (a) descriptive, (b) include direct quotations, (c) contain my own feelings, reactions to the experience and reflections about the meaning and significance of what has occurred, and (d) record my insights, interpretations and beginning analyses about what is happening. Thus field notes built into the process of researcher reflexivity.

QUAL studies often have limited generalizability; Punch (2005) suggests that some QUAL studies can produce something that is generalizable. However as this study combined both QUAL and QUAN methods, this improves the rigor of the study and there is the possibility for applicability and transferability to other contexts. However, as the overall sample size is still relatively small, it may be more applicable to discern the emerging patterns from this study for other slum communities in Kenya and other developing country contexts.

**Summary and Conclusion**

In this chapter I have presented the research design for the study including how I selected the schools in the study as well as participants for interviews, focus groups and surveys. I have provided my rationale for using a mixed methods design in this study as well as how I analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data. In the next chapter, I examine the impact and influence of institutional habitus on household decision-making.
Chapter Five
Macro Institutional Habitus and Household Decision-making

Institutional habitus should be understood as more than the culture of the educational institution; it refers to relational issues and priorities, which are deeply embedded and sub-consciously informing practice. (Thomas, 2002, p. 431)

Introduction

In this chapter I examine how state and civil society actors in this study may impact household educational decision-making. To examine this macro level effect on households, I deploy the concept of institutional habitus, drawing particularly on the work of Reay et al., (2001) and McDonough (1996). Habitus as a mediating variable allows for a deeper examination of social class, ethnicity and gendered processes as they intersect with household decision-making pathways.

This chapter unfolds as follows. First, I will present the regulatory framework within which low-fee private schools in Kenya exist. Then I draw from interviews with Ministry officials as well as donors and civil society organizations to try and formulate an understanding of state level policy and actions, particularly the introduction of FPE as well as CSO and donor practices that may shape household decision-making. Next, I examine the implications of these policies and practices on household decision-making. In particular, this discussion is framed in terms of how the institutional habitus manifested through policies and practices influences decision-making, and how it impacts upon the degree to which households feel accepted within the public school system.

Guiding this chapter is the following question:

1. To what extent does the state and non-state institutional habitus shape, inform and constrain decision-making for slum households in this study?
Low-Fee Private Schools in Kenya: Registration and Financing

Private schools have long existed in Kenya. These schools have largely catered to higher income households and have been registered with the Ministry of Education and recognized as educational establishments. On the other hand, the rise in low-fee private schools targeting low-income households, as discussed earlier is a relatively recent phenomenon. These LFPS are not registered with the Ministry of Education because they often do not meet the minimum institutional requirements to operate legally, particularly the land requirement (Ohba, 2012; Stern & Heyneman, 2013). This stems largely from the fact that many of these schools are located on illegal settlements in slums and have no rights to the land nor have the ability to own or purchase it. Consequently, LFPS are not recognized by the Ministry of Education as educational institutions and they are largely registered as self-help groups or community-based organizations with the Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services. This designates them as non-profit schools rather than a for-profit run school, even though many are operated as businesses and do take in a profit. This practice is similar to that observed in other countries, as Srivastava (2006, p. X) notes in India, “schools cloak their activities as social service”. Given this designation of a non-educational institution, low-fee schools until recently have not been able to benefit from FPE. However, it is also important to point out that there are also LFPS who are neither registered as private schools nor self-help groups. These LFPS operate below the radar and to avoid penalties and detection may simply move and set up business elsewhere when confronted by the authorities.

Many LFP schools also choose not to be registered as a private school as not only is the registration process more onerous and expensive, but they would also lose their not-for-profit status and be taxed differently. Consequently many schools exist in a precarious and fearful tension with the possibility of closure or being audited. Nonetheless, a small number of schools
try to circumvent these regulations by having dual registration as both private and non-profit schools. Given the lack of enforcement of regulations, these types of inconsistencies are often not easily detected at the Ministry level. To complicate the issue further, often the line of distinction between private and community-based schools continues to be a fuzzy one in Kenya as both types of schools are often started by individuals. This fuzziness is also exploited by LFPs to serve their purposes. At the interview at the MOE, the official talked about some ways in which private schools were trying to benefit from this:

*Private schools don't get money from the government. NFS and public primary schools get money from the government. So what these schools were doing was they were using the certificate from the Social Services to convince us they were NFS, but they were actually private. The ones that received money and were found to be private we had written letters to them asking them to return the money.* (Ministry interview)

The monitoring of LFP schools comes under the auspices of the NFE desk at the Ministry of Education. Given that this is broad categorization that includes vocational and training centres for adults and youth as well, it is challenging to effectively monitor the activities of LFPS because of their numbers.

Until recently, NFS have continued to be largely marginalized within the formal system as these schools operate outside the legal policy framework and are considered illegal. Moreover, since these schools are neither routinely monitored, inspected nor standardized by the Ministry of Education they run the gamut from highly organized schools to those that are primarily poor imitations of the formal school. As Okwany (2004) puts it, “Nationally, there is no implemented policy on non-formal education, no guidelines, no control or framework to provide oversight …consequently a plethora of small, unsustainable organizations have mushroomed and are a patchwork of uncoordinated, overlapping interventions competing for foreign funding” (p. 189).
However, this lack of recognition and monitoring on the part of the government is changing. The newly established Policy on Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training (APBET) in May 2009 replaces the existing NFE policy, which was in place when field work for this study was carried out in 2007. This new policy framework redefines the LFPS sector in some important ways. There is now a clear delineation of the four different categories of alternative educational provision catering for out of school children, youth and adults (see Table 13).

**Table 13**

*Four Categories of Alternative Provision of Basic Education*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>What it Offers</th>
<th>Targeted Age Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NFS primary</td>
<td>Alternative provision of primary education follows national primary curriculum and enrolls school-aged children.</td>
<td>School age children 6-14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-formal educational centre (NFEC)</td>
<td>Alternative provision of basic education and training that covers basic literacy and skills training, flexible and complementary provision of basic education and skills training</td>
<td>Learners aged 11-18 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult and continuing education (ACE)</td>
<td>Alternative provision of continuing adult education and training for out of school youth and adults</td>
<td>Learners aged over 18 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS secondary</td>
<td>Alternative provision of secondary education, offers secondary education curriculum in a flexible manner.</td>
<td>School age children and youth over 14 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Source: Compiled from APBET policy document (MOE, 2009)

Another key improvement provided for in the policy is that it has given the MOE the mandate to register these institutions (MOE, 2012). Unlike previously where NFS were registered at several different government agencies making monitoring and evaluation a challenge, this move towards centralizing the registration process will allow for improved monitoring and coordination of activities as well as increased accuracy of inclusion in national statistics. There is also a greater emphasis on public-private partnerships in order to achieve educational targets of universalizing education and improving access. Finally, the MOE is also
committing to training teachers in the NFS. All these changes signal a new direction for the position and future of NFS within the Kenyan educational landscape.

In terms of voice and advocacy, KISA (Kenya Independent Schools Association) is an umbrella civil society organization representing LFP schools in the country although as Musani (2008) reports their membership and focus is primarily urban based. KISA’s membership dues and external donor funding are used for training, networking and advocacy purposes. With a reported membership of over 1115 members, KISA has been actively representing the needs of the LFPS sector since 1999. Although initially registered as Kenya Non-Formal Schools Association (KENSA), they changed their name in 2006 to KISA to reflect the move away from the negatively perceived “non-formal” label. KISA has successfully lobbied the Ministry on behalf of LFPS. Among notable areas of achievement is the reduction of the national primary exam school fee, where private candidates were previously charged double the amount paid by government school candidates. Finally, KISA has also been instrumental in the development of the independent schools policy (Musani, 2008).

As noted previously, since LFP schools are not recognized as government schools, they have not benefitted from the FPE funding even though they are offering the formal curriculum. As such, LFPS have been largely excluded from the benefits of FPE experienced by public schools. Widespread dissatisfaction with this status on the part of the schools has led the Ministry to begin to engage with LFPS through the provision of funding. The MOE first started extending financial support to LFPS in 2004 in the form of Instructional Materials Grants, a year after the introduction of FPE. Schools were funded from money from the World Bank and it was primarily schools in the Nairobi area that benefitted from this exercise. Criteria for selection include: (a) legal registration with a government department, 2) school management committee
overseeing the accountability for the funds 3) offering the 8-4-4 curriculum, 4) have rental status on a minimum 5-year lease, 5) schools must be community– based, and 6) schools do not charge fees in excess of KSh 5000/year. Table 14 shows the amount disbursed to low-fee schools from 2004-2009.

**Table 14**

*Ministry of Education Disbursement to NFS for Instructional Materials Grant*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>NFS Validated (Eligible)</th>
<th>NFS Funded</th>
<th>KSh</th>
<th>USD</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
<td>81,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05-06</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>42,000,000</td>
<td>580,000</td>
<td>41,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06-07</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>46,000,000</td>
<td>630,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07-08</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>38,000,000</td>
<td>525,000</td>
<td>35,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 08</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>62,000,000</td>
<td>843,000</td>
<td>47,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 08</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>50,000,000</td>
<td>685,000</td>
<td>45,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 09</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>22,000,000</td>
<td>303,000</td>
<td>33,988</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

266,000,000 3,647,000

*Note. Source. Wildish (2011, p. 186)*

Not all LFPS have benefitted from this funding, nor has the distribution of funding been unproblematic. About 30 non-formal schools that received the disbursement of funds were asked to return the money (Reach, Feb 14th 2007) for alleged misuse of funds, and in a few cases for providing false information about the status of the school. Monitoring the use of funds continues to be a challenge. Another issue with the allocation of funding is that while public schools are allocated 1020 KSh per child under the IM grants program (650 KSh for books, and 370 KSh for supplies), this amount is not consistently applied to LFPS. Clearly there are differences in the level of government support received by pupils in LFPS and public schools. As Wildish (2011) points out from her research, the allocated per capita amount has changed over time, starting at 1020KSh and being reduced to 650KSh by 2009. Other reports (e.g., Hakijamii Trust, 2010)
show that in some slums such as Mukuru Lunga Lunga this allocation is even lower, with low-fee school pupils receiving only 260KSh per child. This disparity represents a huge inequity in terms of funding between public and LFPS as those enrolled in low-fee schools received a smaller amount than those enrolled in the public school. The positioning of LFPS in this case within the field is influenced by the institutional habitus of the state. LFPS and concomitantly the households accessing them are clearly ‘differentially positioned’ as they experience ‘degrees of exclusion’ (Reay, 2006) compared to households in the public schools in terms of accessing state funding for education.

Policy Paradoxes

Some of the challenges associated with the implementation of FPE, particularly in slum communities, were raised in Chapter 2. While FPE was intended to expand access to basic education especially for marginalized groups such as those living in urban poor settlements, interview data from this study further supports other research (Ngware et al., 2009; Oketch et al., 2010) that shows that urban poor households in Nairobi continue to be socially excluded from this policy initiative. On the contrary, the implementation and impact of the FPE policy on households living in Kibera raises some interesting policy paradoxes. This section highlights some of the themes that emerge from the data.

“Necessary evil”.

One of the first policy paradoxes that emerges from the interviews is that even with the implementation of the Free Primary Education policy which was intended to widen access for marginalized communities in urban slums, there continues to be a large unmet need for schooling in these slums. Low-fee private schools profess to be meeting this need. However as the Ministry officials’ quotations below exemplify, low-fee schools are serving a need in the provision of
basic education in slums, even though the comments also suggest that the working relationship between the Government and low-fee schools is somewhat strained:

I would say NFS are a necessary evil because whether you want it or not, we do not have any alternatives. (Ministry interview)

In Kibera, yes, there are not enough public schools and yes that is why we sometimes close one eye and let the NFS continue because we want to enhance access. They are serving a need but they are going about it in the wrong way. When we tell them that, they tell us to come up with a solution. They are getting very smart. (Ministry interview)

There was more agreement that low-fee schools are meeting a need from civil society actors, who observed, for example that “Government services don’t reach children in the slums” (CSO3), “These schools are there out of need” (CSO 2), and the acknowledgement that “There are too few primary schools in Kibera, and are too far. These schools cannot meet the capacity and need of the many children in the slums” (CSO 1). However there was less agreement on how far these schools should be emphasized. The Ministry’s position seems to suggest that low-fee private schools are to be tolerated as a temporary solution in the provision of education to those underserved, as conveyed in the following way:

Yes, there are not enough public schools. These schools are playing a complementary role to the public schools. Yes, and that is why we sometimes close one eye and let the NFS continue because we want to enhance access. They are serving a need but they are going about it the wrong way. When we tell them that, they tell us then to come up with a solution. They are getting very smart.

Civil society organizations working in Kibera suggest a more favorable view of the role low-fee private schools are playing:

I think [they] have done a good job in getting children into schools. You can’t see as many children running into dustbins because of these NFS (CSO 2).
What these viewpoints suggest is that there is a lack of clarity and consensus on the role of LFPS. While the Ministry, donors and INGOs seem to regard LFPS as playing a more temporarily complementary role to the public schools, the LFPS themselves as well as local CSOs involved in the provision of education through LFPS see themselves as playing a more essential and enduring role in the provision of education in the country.

“Where the parents don’t pay...the standard has gone down”.

While the implementation of FPE is often heralded as a major step forward increasing educational access, one of the first things that struck me was the admission by the Ministry official that the capitation grant allocated as part of FPE was insufficient to meet the educational needs of the pupils:

*Though we have tried to provide the money for facilities, the 1020 KSh capitation grant per child/per year is not enough to procure all the materials needed. When you say 1 or 2 pencils per child per year, what are you saying? They are not enough. We talk of 12 exercise books per year. It is also not enough. We need to increase the government allocation for per child per year. It needs to be increased for the FPE program to be beneficial.* (Ministry official)

This contention that the capitation grant needs be increased is also echoed by several research studies from Kenya, particularly Omwami and Omwami (2010) who argue that the capitation grant allocation does not adequately account for the rate of inflation in the country, and using econometric analysis show that the grant assumes parents will continue to shoulder almost 50% of the total cost of primary education in order to sustain UPE through to 2015. A more recent task force on education at the MOE also arrived at similar conclusions (2012). The implication this has for poor households in the slums is that FPE has not made schools more accessible for them if cost is still a barrier. Additionally, the Ministry official agreed with me that indirect costs even with FPE do make it difficult for some families to attend the public school.
However the impact of FPE is not uniformly experienced by all public schools. The comments from the Ministry seem to suggest and to condone the existence of a 2-tier system of public schools. Public schools that are able to exercise cost-sharing measures by collecting funds from parents do not seem to be suffering as much as they are able to hire teaching assistants and provide more resources.

There are two categories of public schools. Those that have facilities and the teachers are teaching. Those ones you find that the parents pay some money to make sure their children are taught well. Then there is the next category where there is a lot of laxity and the parents are opposed to paying any money because they feel that education is free so they don’t want to contribute anything for the upkeep of the school. So as far as that one is concerned it depends on which category. For me, I will take my child to the public school and when I am asked to pay some money I will because I know it is for the benefit of my children. You find in schools where the parents don’t pay because of FPE, the standard has gone down. So these ones they take their children to NFS because they feel there is more quality education. (Ministry interview)

The official goes on to explain:

Mores primary public school charges 4000/year and you will find there are school trips; the school has a swimming pool and other facilities. But you go to a shanty where a NFS is charging 9000/year, you find in these public schools it is hard to get in; it is full. In schools where parents don’t want to pay anything because the government said it is free, you find the quality poorer. (Ministry interview)

To suggest that parents’ reluctance rather than their inability to pay user fees has led to the decline in quality in the public schools raises some troubling concerns in ensuring equitable provision of education, particularly to its most vulnerable populations. This practice of user fees further supports Bourdieu’s (1990) contention that cultural capital is used to maintain social-class differentiations within the schooling system. The resulting bifurcated or 2-tier public system as a result of this class differentiation privileges wealthier households, and relegates poorer households to poorer quality schools as evidenced in the slum of Kibera.
Conflicting Practices

My interviews at the Ministry level and with several CSOs helped to shed light on the impact and challenges brought on by the implementation of FPE particularly for households in the slum. The transcripts highlight some conflicting practices that exacerbate the exclusion of slum households from public schools.

“Going to kill our public primary schools”.

A second policy paradox is the funding of low-fee schools by the Government. While the Government has started providing textbook funding to certain low-fee schools that qualify and are offering the 8-4-4 curriculum, there is an uncomfortable acceptance of this policy position as evidenced in the following statement: “The other thing is that these NFS are basically private, so as we continue to fund them we are cognizant of that fact that they are private.” Paradoxically, while the Ministry of Education does not fund teacher salary and infrastructure costs, it does fund textbooks and supplies under its Instructional Materials Grant program in a number of low-fee schools that meet certain established criteria.

Second there is recognition that this funding may well trigger a surge in the already growing number of low-fee schools. As the Ministry official commented:

*We feel there are too many NFS that are mushrooming. So any more new centres that come up we are not going to recognize them, such that we try and discourage the mushrooming because it is going to kill our public schools. In Nairobi there are about 1000 NFS and 230 public schools. So you find that the public schools are around a fifth of the NFS. Personally I am not comfortable with the mushrooming of these schools and if I had the power, I would close all of them. But now you can’t because you have to seek advice from higher authorities.* (Ministry Interview)

Ironically, while not wanting the numbers of low-fee schools to increase, there is also contention on the part of the Ministry that competition may improve the quality of provision in
the public schools, “The idea of competition is good because it also makes the public schools pull up their socks, which also increases choices for parents and maybe even the fees will go down” (Ministry Interview). However the rhetoric of choice potentially can reproduce existing differentials of class and race (Whitty, 2001) and it is not clear if choice will be positive. These conflicting policy positions speak to the problematic position that low-fee schools occupy within the education landscape in Kenya.

“Doing our part”.

There was also recognition at the Ministry that FPE has resulted in the deterioration of quality in some public schools as well as a dampening of teacher morale which may be contributing to the movement of slum households from the public to the low-fee sector. As one Ministry official describes, the public schools located in the periphery of the slum:

For e.g., Aioli, it used to be tops in KCPE, but now it has declined. Nowadays, teachers’ morale has gone down and they do not do their best in teaching. So that one we find that the teachers have very large class sizes. Previously it used to be 40, but now it is so large at 80-100 that the teacher finds it hard to even just stand in front of the class and to control the noise level. But she is not doing any instructional teaching. So we sympathize with these teachers. The teacher-pupil ratio is a definite mitigating factor.” (Ministry official interview)

This deterioration in quality may have led slum households to hold the perception of quality as being higher in low-fee schools with their smaller class sizes. This perception was echoed by several other civil society actors:

Public schools crowded. Parents compare between schools. Parents want what is better. (CSO 2)

There is perception of better quality in NFS. Some public schools are overcrowded. There are fewer children in NFS so parents think there is better learning with smaller classes. (CSO 3)
Parents view NFS having come to save their situation because they are not able to
take their children out to public schools. They look at NFS as some kind of
saviour that has come to help them in their situation. They are lost without these
schools. Public schools are congested. Parents consider NFS an “emergency
school” which is easily available to them because it is not easy to get into
government school. And this one is available to them because those who run it are
your neighbor. I am their neighbor; they choose me to run it as a leader. So you
know they have faith in these schools because it is their schools. They are the ones
who have formed it as a community. All what we need is just support. If we are
supported it is very acceptable to the community. (CSO 1)

The government should take over and reclassify NFS if necessary. We work very
closely with the government; we critique government positively and support the
government. There needs to be a clear policy on NFS so that even people in the
slums understand which schools they are sending their children to. (CSO 3)

It is the situation in Kibera that these schools look the way they do. So the
government should not discriminate. (CSO 1)

While the LFP sector continues to grow and attract considerable attention, there were also
conflicting views about the role of LFPS expressed by the different stakeholders.

“Exploiting the poor”.

There seems to be a perception as expressed by several actors interviewed in this study
that some LFPS are exploiting the poor. The following comments are illustrative of this.

NFS are reluctant to be registered because they don’t want to be taxed. Many are
just businesses exploiting poor parents. (Donor 1)

Not all NFS are good. 75% doing a good job. Some hiding. No learning taking
place in some multi-grade classrooms. (CSO 1)

At the Ministry, there was dissatisfaction that some low-fee schools are exploiting the poor. The
official noted that:

Some schools are charging up to 6000/year for tuition and on top of that they are
charging money for feeding and coaching and they are saying they are there for
the poor children. You are in the slums but you are exploiting the parents, children and their ignorance.

The exploitative potential of some LFPS was also commented upon by members of the School Management Committee at the Karuthi Public School.

NFS are money making institutions. They are just like a business and they employ poorly trained teachers. They don’t pay them well. These schools are important because the government cannot accommodate all the children in Kibera. We should ask the government to build more public schools. If there are more public schools then those schools will just die off. (Karuthi School. Public school SMC FGD, Public School)

Yet, and curiously, the LFP sector is supported both by International donors as well as the Government itself. While the donor I spoke with claimed that NFS were exploiting poor parents and on principle should not be supported, paradoxically, he agreed that NFS were supported through pooled funding of donor aid to the education sector:

We do not support NFS directly, but indirectly through the pooled funds. In the education SWAps money is being given for instructional material. (Donor interview)

Similarly, the Ministry official contended that “There is a lot of fishiness in the NFS”, yet he felt that the free market competition as a result from these emerging schools may serve as a catalyst to improve performance in the public schools:

What we are looking for we want to enhance access and also provide quality education. If the NFS are able to start and perform well I would not have a problem with them. The idea of competition is good because it also makes the public schools pull up their socks, which then also increases choices for parents and maybe even the fees will go down. (Ministry Interview)
Problematic Perceptions

“Social stigma”.

According to Bourdieu, it is through habitus that social reproduction is maintained (Webb, Schirato & Danaher, 2002). This social reproduction acts to alienate some households from participation in the state school system. Evidence of how the dissonance between the habitus of the families in Kibera and the institutional habitus of the state is further contributing to the exclusion of the urban poor from the state school system. This is illustrated in the following comment by a Ministry Official. “School uniforms are a factor. Although it is not mandatory if your child is not in school uniform and the others are, they will feel isolated. So that kind of stigma associated with this makes parents shy away from taking their child to a public school.” Uniforms in this case become a form of social demarcation tool as those households without the necessary economic capital are unable to acquire them, and without them, the households are passively denied access into schools. This form of passive deprivation (Sen, 2000) is one way in which certain groups are socially excluded.

Further exploring this dissonance between familial habitus and institutional habitus, Reay et al., (2005) point out that it often culminates in what Bourdieu terms ‘not for the likes of us’ (p. 42). In this context, the following quotations are illustrative of how slum families may be perceived by the public school and how the families may then internalize these exclusionary messages and respond by choosing LFPS whose institutional habitus may seem more aligned with their own:

*Children from slum schools not very clean. They may feel out of place in public schools. They think they belong more in NFS. (CSO1)*
One of them is the social status of the parents. These parents are in the slums and even where they live is no better than the NFS they are taking their child to. So to them it is not an issue. (Ministry interview)

These comments also lend further support to the idea that school habituses tend to establish, reproduce and entrench power relations by validating certain forms of cultural capital that pupils bring with them and not others. So by communicating to LFP households that slums schools are more appropriate for their social class, public schools are in fact validating a certain form of cultural capital that further marginalizes pupils in LFPS.

**Summary and Conclusion**

Tensions between educational expansion and quality imperatives continue to dominate FPE discussions in Kenya. Issues of educational quality are a major contention after the expansion of access with FPE. Overcrowding and the inability of teachers to offer individualized instructions has led to a perception of the deterioration of educational quality in many public schools, particularly those in urban settlements serving low-income families. Consequently, drop-out rates continue to be high and transition and completion rates continue to be low. For example, Abuya et al., (2012) cite a Daily Nation report noting that almost 400,000 children, who started in Class 1 in 2003, after the introduction of FPE, did not complete their primary school cycle in 2010. However, public schools that are able to exercise cost-sharing measures by collecting funds from parents do not seem to be suffering as much as they are able to hire teaching assistants and provide more resources. This bifurcated educational system raises serious equity issues in the provision of public education where social, cultural and economic capital play a segregating role with some public schools catering for those more privileged, while schools in urban poor settlements, particularly are relegated to the poorer of the poor. Data from this study also indicates that this segregation by social class also occurs in public schools serving
the slum population, with the more desirable schools charging parents higher fees, thus making it inaccessible to a large segment of the slum population. Clearly “An education system that entrenches user fees and consumer-driven principles without a safety net for vulnerable populations will contribute to further stratification of society. It will not allow education to narrow differences in socioeconomic status through academic merit and corresponding rewards in the labour market” (Mukudi, 2004, p. 459).

Another important consideration is that Kenya’s recently reformed constitution in 2010, posits education as a right. Article 53 states that “Every child has the right to free and compulsory education.” While FPE is a laudable initiative towards this end, the fact that so many children are still out of school, or that there are in fact more children enrolled in fee-paying low-cost schools instead of the public schools in the urban slums brings into question whether or not the rights of Kenyan children and families are being upheld.

When the shortcomings of FPE are not addressed, but instead the fee-paying low-cost sector is encouraged as a parallel, complementary alternative for some segments of the population, how are the rights of every child to free and compulsory education being protected? The contradictions in terms of expressed commitment to widening access for urban poor schooling, and the perpetuation of certain practices that have exclusionary repercussions such as indirect costs to schooling continue to marginalize some households in slums who lack the cultural, economic and social capital to navigate the institutional habitus.

In this chapter I have examined how institutional habitus in terms of policy and practices of the state impact slum households. The findings from this chapter suggest that students in urban poor settlements are disadvantaged in their access to the free provision of schooling in public schools, because their habitus or sociocultural environment may not provide the types of
cultural capital or habitus required for successful access to public schools. When students are pushed out of schools because they lack the economic, cultural, social capital and habitus required to navigate the system, it results in what Lamont and Lareau (1988) term, “social and cultural exclusion” (p. 156). This corresponds with Bourdieu’s caution that schools reproduce existing inequalities and make it “difficult to break the cycle in which cultural capital is added to cultural capital” (Bourdieu & Passeron. 1977, p. 493). In the next chapter I will introduce the schools in the study and examine the school’s organizational habitus, and how it may serve to reinforce these existing inequalities between households.
Chapter Six
Meso Organizational Habitus and Household Decision-Making

Habitus is a way of looking at data which renders the 'taken-for-granted' problematic. (Reay, 1995, p. 369)

Introduction

This chapter utilizes the concept of organizational habitus to examine the impact of schools on the decision-making processes of households. More specifically I investigate the organizational practices that inform parents’ mental nodes for choice, or in other words a school culture’s “complex patterns of norms, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours and values...that are deeply ingrained in the very core of the organization” (Barth, 2002, p. 7) and how this school habitus promotes or constrains household decision-making.

Habitus is “a common set of subjective perceptions which individuals receive from their immediate environment and which are shared by all members of the same social class” (McDonough, 1997, p. 107). She goes on to point out that these shared perceptions frame individual aspirations and are presented to students in the form of the opportunity structure of the institution (McDonough, 1997) In other words, these normative and actual components represent a particular institutional habitus or “the impact of a cultural group or social class on an individual’s behaviour through an intermediate organization” (p. 107). Thomas (2002) also contends that “institutional habitus is more than the culture of the educational institution; it refers to relational issues and priorities, which are deeply embedded and sub-consciously informing, practice” (p. 431). Each of five schools in this study offers five distinct habitu in which household decision-making occurs. I examine this habitus by drawing on interview, survey and observational data to look at the way the values and practices of the institution as well as the
relations between staff, students, and parents, and the social experiences and networks shape decision-making.

Guiding this chapter is the following sub-research question:

- *To what extent does a school’s organizational habitus shape, inform and constrain household decision-making for slum households?*

This chapter proceeds as follows. In the first section, I introduce the five schools specific to this study (one public and four LFPS). This introduction to the schools is drawn from the analysis of ethnographic data gathered from school visits, examination of school documents, interviews with school proprietors and head teachers, observations at the schools, as well as numerous informal conversations with school owners, teachers and parents. The intent is to give the reader the contextual understanding necessary to understand and to assess what LFPS offer households in terms of choice; the policy context within which LFPS operate; as well as an overview of how they are funded and how they function including their interaction with the Ministry of Education. This section will conclude with my summary comparing and characterizing the schools to further examine and understand the dependent variables in this study: both public and LFP. In the second section I examine the impact Free Primary Education has had on the schools, both the public and the low-fee private schools. Next, in order to understand the organizational habitus of the schools as it is manifest though the values and practices of the institutions and how this impacts household decision-making, I examine the interaction between the proprietors and the households, the teachers and the households and ultimately the relationship between teachers and the pupils.
A Tale of Five Schools

Five schools (one public and four low-fee private) are the focus of this study and I describe the schools through detailed portraits to capture what Loftland (1971) argues is important in ethnography “A field researcher’s central task is to describe and explain that which had been observed … [in] six areas in the field identified for description: acts, activities, meanings, participation, relationships, and setting.” (p. 7). Each portrait addresses these six areas and also consists of data about the school, its governance structure, and its history and mission along with challenges faced by the school. This data is compiled from my school observations, field notes, and informal conversations with parents, teachers and other staff, as well as school documents, and interviews with school proprietors.

Karuthi Primary School, public school portrait

Unlike several other low-fee private schools in the area, there is no opulent sign board welcoming visitors to this government school. Instead, a large imposing iron gate, with the name of the school sprawled across it in bold lettering corrals the school within a spacious compound. Vehicles need to be inspected before they are allowed entrance by a uniformed security guard, and there is a small, narrow gate for pupils to walk in and out. The school which has been in existence since colonial times dates back to 1953. It is reasonably maintained with some obvious sign of aging and disrepair. Some window shutters are broken, and on some there are plastic sheets covering the windows. Still, there is a sense of formality and orderliness about the school.

Karuthi Primary is a large brick school which has over 2500 pupils from Classes 1-8 who come not only from Kibera but also the neighboring housing area just outside Kibera. The school has several blocks, each about two storeys high and has 36 classrooms to house its many students and their learning needs, including a separate office block, a kitchen, a library and a
large playing field. There is a lot of movement of students, who seem to be continuously busy running various errands for their teachers. All of the pupils are attired in their uniforms: navy blue sweaters, white shirts and skirts for the girls, and navy blue sweaters, white shirt and short pants and black shoes for the boys. Within some of the lower grade classrooms, pupils can be seen literally spilling out the room as the class is packed to its capacity with eager faced pupils. In some of the other classrooms, several students can been seen sitting on the cement floor as there is clearly no more space to put in extra desks, and in yet others there are up to three students sharing a desk, and hovering over one textbook.

As I walk along the corridors, I notice a number of pupils squatting on the floor outside their classroom in the narrow corridor while instruction is going on inside. Upon inquiring, I learn that these students are being disciplined by the class teacher. Harsh, punitive disciplinary measures are still upheld and widely used in the school system here. As I step in to observe one of the classes in session, I am struck by how uncomfortably crammed the students seem. Wooden desks are lined from wall to wall with barely any walking room. Noise from the student chatter seems to drown out the teacher’s voice as she tries to teach them about Triangles. I am amazed that anything could be heard over the noise and she clearly seems overwhelmed with trying to manage a class of 85 pupils. Her strained voice and fatigued face are matched only by looks of sheer boredom on the faces of the pupils. The few who are trying to take notes are clearly distracted by the chatter from the mostly rowdy, boisterous pupils. On her desk, an overflowing pile of exercise books wait to be marked.

Outside the humidity is thick. A faint breeze carries with it a noisome stench from the open pit latrines. There are too few toilets and they are too poorly maintained. The office block houses the head teacher’s office as well the offices for the three deputy head teachers and a staff
room. There is also an office space for two school clerks who seem busy with the constant flow of students and parents. The clerks are keeping student attendance and enrollment records as well as collecting fee payments and typing up notes on their rickety typewriters. At the office, I speak with the two Deputy Head teachers. One of them is Mr. Ochieng, who is relatively new to the school. The other is Mrs. Opiyo who is in charge of the stores, the lower primary classes, discipline in the school, and the support staff. Proudly, in a matter of fact manner she states that she has been there for 24 years. She tells me that the school was started by the colonial government primarily to cater for the children of the Nubian community who were brought in from Sudan to serve as soldiers. The school is one of the oldest and largest in Nairobi and is managed by the City Council of Nairobi, as are all public schools in the city.

There are 33 teachers in the school, all of them trained and hired by the Teacher’s Service Commission, although Mrs. Opiyo says this number is inadequate given the large number of pupils they have. There is a feeding program at the school with food provided by the World Food Program, and pupils are required to pay 150KSh/term for the cook and firewood. Not all pupils are able to pay this, and the school does make exemptions for orphans. However, according to Mrs. Opiyo there is still much resistance from most parents to pay for anything as they insist that school should be free under FPE.

When asked about the impact of FPE, Mrs. Opiyo admits that while it is a “good thing,” classes are now too big as it is the government mandate that the school has to admit all who come. It is a huge challenge for the teachers. She observes, “The challenges are the large number of children and because of that the class control is poor. Even marking of books is difficult. Also because we have a time limit of 35 minutes per lesson, we find that in that time we are not able to reach all the children, especially compositions. Even general discipline has gone
down because they influence one another; even those who are highly disciplined are influenced by those newcomers. They pick up wrong habits and discipline can be bad. Some of these children cannot cope with the regular classes. For example we find a child of 14 in class 2. So all the children in the class are younger than him or her. And this older student will tend to feel shy and the others also. We find them laughing so there is that feeling of being left out. They feel that the class is not the right one for them as the others are younger and he or she is older.”

However, when asked about LFPS, she seemed rather ambivalent about their existence but quite candidly admitted that were it not for the low-fee schools in the area, there may be even more children on the streets.

**Three Bells, LFPS portrait**

One of the first things that strikes a visitor to Three Bells is how alarmingly close it is situated to the railway line that weaves its way around Kibera. The loud deafening roar of the diesel locomotive interrupts classes here several times a day for its 200 students and five teachers. While they seem nonplussed by its intrusion into their learning environment, one cannot help but wonder what effect the constant interruption was having on the pupils and staff. The audible intrusion along with the onslaught of dust that swirls and settles after each train passes is very much a daily occurrence here. Inches away, a steady stream of slush and sewage flows, a common sight in the slum. As with the many low-cost schools here, its inconspicuous presence is offset by a bold, ostentatious, corrugated, blue signboard proudly announcing its presence and welcoming visitors to its premises.

All the rooms in this school appear to be poorly lit and the whole building is very much in need of repair. Pupils are crammed onto long benches in its tiny, dark, windowless mud-walled
classrooms. Very few students are in uniform, and even the clothes that many of them are wearing are slightly torn and tattered. I watch a young female teacher teaching the class Science. She reads from the textbook and the students repeat after her in unison. I watch her as she writes on the worn out chalk board but has no duster, so has to look for a cloth to clean the board. Students dutifully copy down what she writes in their notebooks. Students huddle over their notebooks, clutching their pencils as they write, guided by the little natural light that manages to creep through the narrow crevices in the room. In this Class 6 Science Class, none of the students have a textbook. The teacher holds the only copy the school owns. I am told it is very difficult assigning homework, and students need to copy down everything.

Three Bells is a small school of 4 rooms that it rents from a Church. The school offers classes from Nursery to Class 7 and parents pay about KSh 150/month to send their children here. The school is housed in a dilapidated mud structure. Movement from its dirt floors leaves a thin film of red soil on everything on the premise. Sitting in the office that opens into the kitchen I find myself choking from the fumes from the stoked wood fire. I can see the cook busy in the kitchen preparing the day’s lunch with food from the World Food Program. Big beads of perspiration sit on the brow of the cook as she stirs a huge aluminum pot of Ugali, a staple here. I am told that for many this may well be their only meal for the day and the meal also provides them with motivation to come to school.

In the office I meet with the proprietor, a tall man who proudly declares he is Kamba, one of the many ethnic groups of the country. In a country deeply divided along ethnic lines, his pronunciation does not surprise me. He is joined in our meeting by the school head teacher, a young man who looks like he is in his 20s, and also the Chairman of the School Management Committee. He does not speak English and has noticeably tobacco stained teeth. Their
hospitality is very warm but I sense there is also an air of expectation that I am somehow perhaps able to help alleviate some of their challenges as a low-fee private school in the slums of Kibera. Mr. Navisi starts by telling me about the history of the school. The school was started by the Orthodox Church members in 1994 with a baby class and nursery. In 1995 they introduced preunit (nursery class) but parents still had to move their children to different schools to start Class 1. After a few years in 1998 with demand from parents that they offer Class 1, the school decided to bring together the parents and Orthodox Church members to run the school and introduce Class 1 onwards. However they soon realized that the Church members were not contributing much to the school, so they decided to make the school a self-help group. They registered the school as a community self-help group in 1998. He showed me the stamped, official certificate from the Ministry of Social Services. Later they had to change the name of the school because the Government insisted the name of the self-help group should correspond with the name of the school. So the group that started it and the school shared the same name so it is easier to open an account.

Mr. Navisi then speaks at length about the challenges facing the school. They have not received any textbook funding from the Ministry. He attributes this omission by the Ministry to his ethnicity and feels very strongly that he has been the victim of ethnic patronage. He says, “We were very much frustrated because we were no. 35 on the list. The officers only help those schools run by those of the same tribe as them. Because I am Kamba we have been very much ignored. The officers, they help their relatives, friends, church members and those of the same tribe as them. The government has never assisted us in a good way. Unless they remove those people in that office, nothing can happen and we will not be helped.”
The school faces a huge textbook shortage. They have had to buy textbooks from the street to supplement the few that were donated by some well-wishers who visited the school in previous years. Coupled with this shortage is the burden of not having enough classrooms and toilets or even water. In fact as part of their daily routine, teachers need to collect water from the nearest supply stand. His biggest challenge however (and he sighs as he says it) is the challenge of paying his teachers. Teachers consequently don’t stay around too long, as they are looking for a school that can pay them. Here “we almost work as volunteers” he says. In fact he himself works part time as a security guard several nights a week to be able to support his family.

I then ask my usual question of “Why do you go on?” He looks at me unperturbed by the question and narrates the following, “One day I called the parents and gave them letters and told them I am not able to pay my teachers or house rent or feed my family. So I asked them to take their children elsewhere for school. It is not good to have a teacher who has only one pair of shoes or pants. The children call me the “one trouser man” because I only can afford one pair of trousers. But the parents refused. They wanted their children to be here, so we have to continue. And they say let those who are paying pay for those who cannot pay.”

Watoto Centre, LFPS portrait

This medium-sized 9 room, 5 toilet school is relatively well-built. Classrooms are made of a combination of brick, mud-wall, iron sheets and have cemented floors. The school offers instruction from Classes 1-7. Presently they do not have a Class 8. There is an iron sheeted fence around the school and the school is situated within a contained compound. The school calls itself a rescue centre catering primarily to meeting the needs of HIV AIDS orphans.
While there are no school fees, this school receives donor funding from an International NGO from Germany and there is an admission fee of 300KSh which pays for things such as firewood, charcoal and other small things. Guardians are supposed to buy uniforms for their children, but not all are able to buy them so they just accept the children without uniforms. Understandably, being free, they have very strict criteria for admission. To be admitted, orphans are required to produce a death certificate of their parents. Additionally, admission is restricted to 70% for total orphans and the remaining 30% of spaces are reserved for partial orphans (15% neglected and abused, 10% single parents, and 5% from very poor families).

At the school I chat with the assistant head teacher in her classroom. She is in the midst of teaching her class and takes time to talk to me as the pupils work independently. The noise level is at times quite high in the room as her class of 54 pupils work on their tasks. Many pupils are in fact in uniform, and there seem very few who are not in uniform. The classroom is not very large and pupils are huddled together at shared desks. Iron sheets, while a form of cheap building material unfortunately traps in a lot of heat and the sweltering afternoon sun makes the classroom quite unbearably hot.

Mrs. Kameni who joined the school in 2000 starts off by telling me about how the school started. “It started in 1999 as a women’s Merry-go-round group." As time went by some of these women contracted AIDS and died. Around 6 died in a year leaving behind orphans. These children would come to the other women begging for food. These women saw this as a burden and said can’t we start something to help these children. So they came together and started a

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6 Merry-go-round is an informal women’s group usually formed between friends. Each month each member of the group contributes fixed financial amount to a general pool of funds. Members then take turns taking home the full amount in the pooled fund on a rotating basis.
school. We called it a rescue centre. Some women who saw it as a challenge took up the initiative and started sourcing for a donor. At that time they were borrowing money from Feed the Children (microcredit loan). So they approached Feed the Children and told them about their plans to start a school and asked them if they could find them a sponsor. Feed the Children was networking with this particular NGO in Germany and gave these women the name of the contact person, Pauline Strauss. She then visited the school before deciding to fund us and started the nursery class in 2000 and started funding for food, allowance for teachers and put up classrooms”. The school started with 6 children in 2000. In 2003, the World Food Program came on board to help them and now they feed 530 children. The NGO comes yearly to visit. There is an auditor in Kenya who does their books and financial support is given quarterly. The money, however Mrs. Kameni says is not enough for books and other resources. The school has recently received textbook money from the government.

I asked her why was it called a rescue centre and who were they rescuing. She said, “We have rescued a lot of children out of danger. We bring them here and follow-up. Many are also ignorant. So far we have confirmed 30 children to be HIV+. Once we confirm they have HIV+ we give them medication and food. With time they recover. We are given free medication and the pupils get a referral letter to the hospital. We have our own support workers; we have 2 social workers here.”

The school is on the UNICEF and UN network list as recommended by Feed the Children. Consequently they have been able to attract a number of high profile personalities who have come to visit the school such as most recently in the week before I was there, the actress Drew Barrymore was there for a visit, along with the long distance runner Paul Therugad.
Moved by the lack they witnessed, both of these high profile personalities had made a commitment to buy the school more desks.

I ask if there are long waitlists for admission. She agrees. She says, “It is not our method to turn people away”, but the school is limited by the capacity the donor can feed. The donor tells them how many she can feed or sponsor. So this year, the donor told them to take 30, and so they only recruited 30 new pupils.

When asked about the challenges of working in the school, she says, ”I have no option but to work here. If the government would train us to teach in the public school, that would be good. But right now I have no option. I have a family to feed. My husband died in 2002, and I am a single mother. I give tuition for 4 kids at home. I would prefer to work in the public schools; they pay better and give you housing allowance. It is a better option. Here you have to go to people and beg. It is horrible.”

St. Augustus, LFPS portrait

Situated close to the railway line that snakes through Kibera, St.Augustus is a small, low-fee private, faith-based school. The school does not have an enclosed compound or a playground and could quite easily be mistaken for any other mud hut in this shanty town if it were not for the huge signboard, in bold lettering, at the entrance announcing its existence and welcoming visitors to its premises. Several yards away from the entrance, chickens can be seen picking at the scraps from the mound of trash piled on the ground along the narrow alley that leads to the school. The litter is teeming with flies.

St.Augustus’s five rented mud-walled rooms are school to its almost 300 pupils. One of these five rooms is a largish hall that is shared by pupils from classes one to four. Each grade
level occupies one corner of the dirt-floored hall. As the teachers and pupils from the different classes try to engage in a teaching-learning environment of some decorum, they have to contend with having their interaction interrupted or drowned out by the crescendo of competing voices in the room. This multi-purpose hall also serves as the dining room for the school. On Sundays a local church uses the hall to hold its church service. In the higher grades, in classes 6-8, pupils are crammed into individual classrooms. In these 4 by 4 rooms light from the outside tries to penetrate the tiny slits found in the mud walls. Pupils sit in rows at long, wooden desks, often sharing one textbook between every three students while the teacher stands in the front of the classroom writing on a worn out chalkboard.

On one of the days I visit, in a grade 6 class, there is a Math lesson going on. Most of the 33 pupils seem to be engaged, learning, and intent. Many are not in uniform, while the few that are in some kind of uniform seem to have pieced together the outfit with mismatched pieces possibly from the Mitumba. In the Grade 7 class next door, I notice a young, male Caucasian teacher exuberantly teaching the 14 students Social Studies, a lesson which he also integrates with English language instruction and punctuates his sentences every now again with a Kiswahili word--sendio, sawa sawa. The students burst into laughter as he makes reference to Kenyan idiosyncrasies in illustrating his teaching point. I later learn from the proprietor that he is from a church in the United States and will be volunteering at the school for a few months.

Parents pay 150KSh per month to send their children here, where the children are fed lunch with food supplies from the World Food Program and taught by a total of 10 teachers. The last of the five rented rooms is a common room that serves both as the staffroom and the office, and opens into the kitchen where daily meals are prepared over a stoked wood fire.

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7 The street market selling clothes
At the school, I meet with the proprietor, Mrs. Manga; a rotund woman in her 50s who is trained as a nurse and is also a pastor. In addition to running this school, she is also currently a church leader in an Anglican Church. She talked at length about how the school first started. She told me that the school started with a group of Christian women from the Anglican Church taking care of street children in 1994. The organization is registered as the Church Ministries and is registered with the Ministry of Social Services. The women started feeding the street children once a week and then it increased to twice a week. However the women came to realize that just feeding alone was not enough because the children had simply gone back to the streets. Most of the children were orphans and some were from single parent families and some from very poor families. Most of them were being sent to the streets by their parents to beg. Their parents were using begging as a commercial thing. So the women asked the parents if they would allow these children to be in a centre. The parents agreed and the women started a feeding program with help from well-wishers. People were donating food and cash and the women would provide the food. After a time they realized feeding them alone was not enough and decided it was important to give them an education, and that is how they started this school. The women managed to find some people who were willing to give them food and materials for education, and they went on like that until such a time that they got the WFP to help them. Through the feeding program they are able to give the children porridge every day. Although the numbers have dwindled from 10 to about 5 members, the original group of women is still intact and still actively involved in the school, attending school management committee meetings, and overseeing the running of the school.

When asked about her mission for her school, Mrs. Manga’s response was very much tied to her Christian faith. She sees these two roles as inseparable. She says, “We are trying to give
them the hope that they lost. By giving them the hope, we started by sharing the bread with the needy. We are working with them to get the hope back so that they will know they are just like any other child. To me as a Christian I see that the seed is planted.” However, running the school has not been easy. Mrs. Manga talked at some length about the many challenges facing the school, particularly the difficulty of collecting fees from parents, inadequate classrooms and materials as well her inability to adequately pay her teachers. She offers priority places to those from poor families and children orphaned by AIDS. However this also means these pupils are not able to pay fees and she offers them free and concessionary places, further adding to her financial challenges.

“Why do you go on?” I ask her. Her response not surprisingly once again strongly reflects her faith perspective as she sees the running of the school as part of her calling. “It is not me who decided to do this. Sometimes when I become discouraged, I tell God this is your burden and you have to take care of it. I don’t need to carry everything on my shoulders. When I say that I feel He has taken over the burden.”

**Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS portrait**

A visitor to this school cannot help but be struck by how well-built and well-maintained it is compared to its many dilapidated neighboring schools. A uniformed security guard sits at the entrance screening visitors, and the fenced compound is large, spacious, and clean. The school is housed in two separate brick blocks, one for the primary grades and the other for the secondary. When I visited, there was construction going on at the school with primary pupils temporarily housed in classrooms made of iron sheets. The new school block will overlook the
school’s large football field. The school also has its own water tank, and the toilets are clean and apparently maintained by the parents.

*Uhuru Educational Centre* was started in 1998 by the community to accommodate children who could not find spaces in the local public school. The school charges 300KSh/month and has some stringent criteria for admission which includes meeting the age requirement for the class level, interviews, a pass in the written admission exam, and payment of fees.

The school corridors are long and narrow and one cannot help but notice a pervading sense of decorum and order within the school. Many of its pupils are in uniform, and the teachers are in classes teaching. The school gives the visitor every impression of being a “higher-end” low-fee school with facilities and infrastructure that exceed that of other low-fee schools in the area.

At the school, I meet with Mr. Matua, the chairman who is an older, tall, austere looking man. Sitting in his gray-walled office, I notice a large framed picture of the area MP on the wall beside a framed picture of President Kibaki. Mr. Matua sits behind a large wooden desk as we chat. After I explain my purpose for being there, the first question he oddly asks me is if I know who is on the wall, pointing to the picture of the area MP. When I admit that I do, he tells me he knows the area MP very well. I am not entirely surprised by this, as I already knew this and I had also gathered from previous conversations with the school head teacher, and others who were familiar with the school that it was a school with strong political connections. In fact it was one of the few schools in the area to have received Constituency Development Fund (CDF) money.

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8 CDF money is a pool of money available to the area MP to spend at his/her discretion on community development projects in their constituency.
My conversation with Mr. Matua does not really yield much new information. He is rather tight-lipped about the operation of the school and is not very keen on me talking to the parents. I don’t press him for too much more as I have another meeting scheduled with the school head teacher which I am hopeful will be more useful. I nonetheless thank him for his time and decide to walk around the school to see what was happening. I look into classrooms and I notice that almost all pupils are in bright blue uniforms. Pupils, while still sharing desks and textbooks are intently listening, teachers are teaching, and there is a general sense of order in the school.

As expected, my meeting with the head teacher does prove to be more useful. Mr. Ochieng is an amiable young man, a trained teacher from the Nyanza province. He teaches Math, Science and Kiswahili. Mr. Ochieng tells me about the International NGO from the USA that is affiliated with the school. When asked how they found the school, he tells me it was through the area MP. The NGO’s focus is on underprivileged kids in the slums of Nairobi. According to Mr. Ochieng, the INGO works in Kibera as well as in another Nairobi area slum. At Uhuru, the INGO supplements the feeding program offered by the World Food Program, supports in-service teachers’ training by running seminars, and has also helped to build a secondary school. Furthermore, I am told while the INGO sponsors some needy pupils, and assists with some material resource they do not pay the teachers.
Analysis: Comparing and Characterizing the Schools

What the five different portraits of the schools have clearly shown is that the low-fee schools in this study are not homogenous. Instead, given the heterogeneity of the schools, the portraits suggest that the schools can be positioned along a continuum in terms of how they position themselves and what they offer households. In this next section I provide a more detailed comparative analysis of these five schools.

An expanded comparative analysis of the characteristics of the five schools in this study is summarized in Table 15. A number of things are worth pointing out when comparing across the five schools in this study. As the table shows, firstly all of the LFPS in this study were already in existence before the introduction of FPE in 2003. The data shows that the schools appear to have been largely set up between 1994 and 2000. Consequently, all of the LFPS in this study report having some of their students’ exit the private school for the public schools when FPE was first introduced. However, schools also report pupils returning to the LFPS in 2004 and 2005 being dissatisfied with their experience in the public system. What this analysis suggests is that school enrollment numbers in these schools may have potentially been much higher prior to FPE. One low-fee school proprietor summed it up this way:

*When it [FPE] started we lost many children to the public schools. But then parents started bringing their children back. The schools are overcrowded and the children are not getting enough attention. When FPE was introduced in 2003 parents left. Yes we take them back when they come back. (Proprietor, St. Augustus, LFPS)*

Other teachers related a similar experience:

*When FPE was introduced most parents flocked to public schools thus classes in the public school are filled, so now classes too big. A parent would prefer classes in the NFS are smaller. In public schools one class has over 100 students. A teacher teaches a manageable number here. (Teacher, Watoto Centre, LFPS)*
### Table 15
Comparing and Categorizing the Five Schools in this Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Karuthi Primary School, Public School</th>
<th>Three Bells, LFPS</th>
<th>Watoto Centre,LFPS</th>
<th>St.Augustus,LFPS</th>
<th>Uhuru Educational Centre,LFPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of years in present premise</strong></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category of school type</strong></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Community-based</td>
<td>Community-based International NGO</td>
<td>Faith-based Local church-based ministry</td>
<td>Community-based International NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partners</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registered with</strong></td>
<td>City Council of Nairobi</td>
<td>Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services</td>
<td>Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services</td>
<td>Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services</td>
<td>Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grades offered</strong></td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>Nursery, 1-7</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>1-8, secondary 1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reported total enrolment</strong></td>
<td>2233</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher-student ratio</strong></td>
<td>1:67</td>
<td>1:22</td>
<td>1:45</td>
<td>1:26</td>
<td>1:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of teachers (no. Female)</strong></td>
<td>33(27)</td>
<td>6(3)</td>
<td>12 (5)</td>
<td>10 (6)</td>
<td>14 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of trained teachers</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of support staff</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fee collected/month(KSh)</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fee concessions</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sponsored pupils</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reported no. of free and concessionary places</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KCPE score highest (average)</strong></td>
<td>400(262)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>274 (150)</td>
<td>325 (247)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Classrooms</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electricity</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of toilets</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Playground</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School feeding program</strong></td>
<td>Yes, World Food Program</td>
<td>Yes, Feed the Children</td>
<td>Yes, World Food Program</td>
<td>Yes, World Food Program</td>
<td>Yes, World Food Program and International NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karuthi Primary School, Public School</td>
<td>Three Bells, LFPS</td>
<td>Watoto Centre,LFPS</td>
<td>St.Augustus,LFPS</td>
<td>Uhuru Educational Centre,LFPS</td>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math textbook ratio in Class 1</strong></td>
<td>children 1:2</td>
<td>1:19</td>
<td>1:6</td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math textbook ratio in Class 8</strong></td>
<td>children 1:1</td>
<td>1:6^</td>
<td>1:4^</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>1:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Textbook funding received from Ministry</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom construction material</strong></td>
<td>Brick, concrete floors</td>
<td>Mud-walled, dirt floor</td>
<td>Part brick/part mud-walled iron sheets, concrete floors</td>
<td>Mud-walled, dirt floor</td>
<td>Brick, concrete floors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Source: Field Data *as of 2007

^no class 8, so data for Class seven

^^ These were as reported by the school proprietor
Growth. From my discussion with schools in this study I am told that these schools usually begin with preschool classes and as the children progress through the classes their parents or guardians will place increased demands on the proprietors to expand their offering. Schools then start expanding and slowly add to their existing infrastructure to accommodate their growing numbers.

Ownership. Secondly, with regards to school ownership, one school was a government school, while three of the LFPS were community-run and one LFPS was run by a religious organization. While the majority of the schools identified themselves as being registered as community-based organizations or self-help groups, in some schools, particularly two of the sample schools (Three Bells and St. Augustus) it was difficult to distinguish between a community-based school and that which was run by an individual entrepreneur. This murkiness was because the school proprietor was part of the community-based organization and also served as the school principal. The lines of accountability were not clearly delineated. It was difficult to determine whether or not the school proprietor was answerable to the community group for the management of the school and its finances. Similarly, some schools have double registered both as a NFS and a private school for the purpose of attracting funding.

Furthermore, there were dissenting voices even within the LFPS community as to the motives of some schools. As the following quotation from one of the proprietors I spoke with demonstrates:

Some NFS are a business. They just want to make money out of the pupils. They don’t care about the well-being of the child. In those cases, you find the administrators lying about the number of pupils. So in such cases, the government should come in and inspect for themselves. Our school has been inspected many times. You find in the slums, many schools. A house like this is a school. They give false figures to get money. They might say they have 300 children when in fact
that person has only 20 children. These are the schools that are spoiling the good name of NFS. They want to make money out of the pretext of serving the kids. They are not taught the correct curriculum and the teachers are not qualified. And they also demand money from the parents. (Proprietor, Watoto Centre, LFPS)

This assertion raises some interesting contradictions within the LFPS sector. It confirms an earlier observation that there is a wide variety of LFPS. Secondly given the vastness of the sector, it may very well be difficult to discern good schools in terms of their ethical practices from those who are merely exploiting households in the slums because schools may couch their habitus in similar conciliatory rhetoric. Another LFPS proprietor echoed a similar concern as the one above:

Some people started NFS not because they wanted to help that child, but it was I am starting this school to gain. If somebody started it as a business they don’t have the interest of the child at heart because it is just a business and they will do all sorts of things to make sure that they get many children. But these children are suffering. They are not getting what they are supposed to get. But then whoever started the school is only looking at money and how much they can get. That is very sad and that is the most common thing in NFS. People start because they want it as a business. I think if people stopped that mentality to know that we have so many children and we know that the government schools cannot accommodate them. That one alone needs to make these people think. If a child is not getting proper education, at the end of the day the child will suffer and it is you who made the foundation of this child shaky and you will be answerable. Though you won’t be there, but then the child is suffering. God will ask you why did you let this child start poorly and he is not stable. Most of the people who started these NFS, if at all they knew they were starting to help that child to be somebody he or she should have been, they would taken the education of the children seriously. (Proprietor, St. Augustus, LFPS)

While this proprietor’s comment seems to suggest that more schools are operated on a business and profit basis, rather than purely from a community-based, philanthropic intent, these comments also raise an important distinction between faith-based and non-faith-based schools, as well as schools that are run for profit, and non-profit schools. Her comment seems to suggest that
perhaps faith-based schools may be less inclined towards a profit model compared to schools started by an individual proprietor or even a community-based school.

**Fees and Fee concessions.** Thirdly, all the schools in this study reported collecting some form of payment from parents. The public school required a charge of KSh 50 per month to pay for the cook and firewood. The four low-fee schools had different fee structures. Uhuru Educational Centre was the most expensive and charged KSh 300/month in fees. Two of the other low-fee schools, Three Bells and St. Augustus charged KSh 150/month in fees, and the last school, Watoto Centre did not charge any fees, other than a one-time admission fee. To understand the relative cost of these school fees as a percentage of family income, I compare them to the average household income of a family living in Kibera. UN-Habitat’s 2003 estimate of household income in Kibera was KSh 2645 per month (as cited in Desgroppes and Taupin, 2011). Based on this estimation, households who send their children to Uhuru Educational Centre use almost 11% of their income on school fees for one child. On the other hand, households who send their children to Three Bells and St. Augustus school fees per child consumes approximately 5.7% of their income.

Further, all of the schools also report offering free and concessionary places to students in high need categories, even in schools that do not receive any external funding. This flexibility may be what makes LFPS affordable and attractive to many low-income households. In this study, all four proprietors of the LFPS reported to even waiving fees entirely for pupils who are orphans or those who are HIV positive.

_Yes we have those. If the parent has 3 children they only pay for 2. If the child does not have any parent, they do not pay at all. They only pay for exams._

*(Proprietor, Three Bells, LFPS)*
However, sometimes this concession was not made known to other parents or households as one proprietor confessed.

*About 40 don’t pay anything at all. I pay for the children’s fees and uniforms. Other parents don’t know these children are exempted, that would cause a lot of problems. (Proprietor, St. Augustus, LFPS).*

This practice provides evidence of what the official at the Ministry of Education termed, “the poor paying for the poorest” (Interview, Ministry of Education). By collecting fees from some better-off slum households, schools are able to offset the fees of those households that may be more financially disadvantaged. Tooley (2001) makes a similar claim in his work extolling the virtues of the markets for the poor. However, this practice or organizational habitus does also highlight some important and conflicting considerations as it also risks increasing social stratification.

These observations are supported by similar findings according to studies by Srivastava (2007) and Tooley and Dixon (2007) that most LFPS operate within a curious paradox of philanthropy and profit, where they profess to offer fee concessions, either in the form of reduced tuition for pupils with high needs, or concessions in terms of offering two paid tuition places for three children of the same household. However, these acts of philanthropy can be motivated by self-interest rather than pure altruism as Tooley, Dixon and Gomathi claim (2007). At the MOE, in discussing these LFPS, the official alluded to similar philanthropy and profit tensions within these schools. He said:

*If they are there for philanthropic work, why should they fear being taken over by the government? It should be a burden taken off their shoulders. I don’t see why they should oppose. But some of them, they have a problem with that. They want to make a profit and that’s why they oppose. (Ministry Interview)*
External funding. Some schools are also able to attract substantial external funding from either local or international organizations or donors as well as visitors through strategic networking or the utilization of social capital ties. For example, one of the schools in this study that has strong connections to the local area MP was able to leverage this connection to secure funding from an external donor agency in the States. Similarly another school in this study was able to secure external funding from an organization in Denmark. Others however are less successful in this endeavour to secure external funding and have to rely solely on fee collection to fund operations. It is in these schools that lack external funding that the quality of resources and infrastructure become problematic. Understandably then, there is fierce competition between schools for these types of external support networks and schools will even resort to manipulative tactics to secure this type of funding. For example I observed that a number of schools professed to be faith-based when they may not actually have a faith persuasion. This practice is followed as the schools are targeting international faith-based organizations for external sponsorship and need to position themselves in a certain way. To do this, schools may use faith inspired names, not because they have a particular faith commitment, but because it is easier to attract faith-based donors as potential funding partners. Low-fee schools in this case are trying to leverage spiritual capital and social capital ties to secure economic capital. A similar observation is reported by Neuwirth (2005), who notes that the church was perceived as a good business in Kibera. Tooley (2009) records a similar observation in his book “The Beautiful Tree”, relating his visit to a LFP school named Makina Baptist Church in Kibera. Tooley writes:

And her school it turned out, just like similar schools elsewhere, had nothing to do with the church, but simply used the name for marketing purposes-- “Church schools have a very good reputation in Kenya.” Jane told me, “So it’s a good name to have for a school.” (Tooley, 2009, p. 107)
As noted previously in Chapter 2, low-fee schools are not homogenous. There is a demarcation between those offering better facilities and quality of instruction and those who are not able to because of fiscal constraints. Schools with external funding partners are often better in their infrastructure and facilities compared to schools without external partners or funding. Ironically these externally funded schools also tend to charge more fees making them less accessible to the poorest of those in the slums. As one teacher noted:

*Most NFS are in business really, not quite interested in imparting knowledge. Some NFS are better than others in terms of their administration and usually the source of funds. Some are heavily funded and thus able to have good facilities unlike others.* (Teacher, Focus group, Karuthi Public School)

Others who were asked were more skeptical of how these externally funded schools were managing their funding. At the public school, the members of the SMC cynically said,

*The NFS will not tell you what they are making or paying their teachers. The sponsorship money mostly goes to those who are managing the schools. There are so many NFS in Kibera. It is just a business. They leave just a small amount of the money with the school and the rest of it goes to their account.* (School Management Committee, FGD, Karuthi Public School)

What this analysis suggests then is that the poorest households can be limited to schools that have inferior facilities, unless the households are sponsored to a better functioning school. Also, it is unclear without external monitoring if indeed externally funded schools are enabling lower income households to benefit from the funding they receive. This is particularly troubling in schools run by individual proprietors as there is no monitoring of this funding. In this study, three of the four low-fee schools had some form of external funding. This differentiation was reflected in the facilities, infrastructure and fees charged at each of the schools. Uhuru Educational Centre, which was able to secure the most external funding offered the best facilities, but was also the most expensive to attend. Three Bells, a very small low-fee school
without any external funding was clearly challenged financially. Correspondingly, Three Bells was the poorest in terms of its facilities and infrastructure, and of all the low-fee schools in this study, along with St. Augustus, it charged the lowest fees.

**Performance.** Fourthly, performance in the public school for the KCPE exam still exceeds that of the LFPS in this study. The average score in the public school was higher than that reported by the three LFPS who offered Class 8. Based on KCPE exam results, data provided by the schools, the highest average for the schools in this study was for the public school with a score of 400, compared to the other two LFP schools which had scores of 274 and 325. The two remaining schools did not offer Class 8 and so did not have KCPE scores available for comparison.

**Curriculum and Exams.** Several reports document that LFP schools offer the formal Kenya National Curriculum (KNC) with an 8-4-4 structure and schools that offer Class 8 prepare students for the Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination (ELKW, 2004; Musani, 2008). All four LFPS in this study reported offering the formal curriculum. However, as many of these schools are not officially recognized by the Ministry as educational institutions they are unable to officially present their students for the KCPE exam. Ironically, LFP schools have circumvented this bureaucratic obstacle by using nearby public schools as exam venues, registering their students as private candidates and paying the public school a fee to have their students take the exams in this manner.

**Teachers and compensation.** Unlike teachers in the public schools in Kenya, who are fully trained, hired by the Teacher’s Service Commission (TSC) and paid by the Ministry of Education, teachers at LFPS are hired and paid by either the school proprietor or the school committee. Another key difference between public and LFPS is that teachers at LFPS generally
tend to be untrained, although some schools do employ trained teachers who have not yet been absorbed into the government service. Given the long wait for trained teachers to be deployed within the public system, there is generally no shortage of trained teachers who may be willing to work at these LFPS. Untrained teachers can range from school leavers who have completed Secondary Form 4 to those with even less formal training, to volunteers. Teachers in these LFPS also tend to live in the same community as the pupils and their families. Consequently, LFPS teachers are paid significantly lower wages than their government counterparts. A recent USAID study on NFS in Kenya estimates that teacher salaries can be as low as KSh 1500/month in private schools and as high in 35,000 KSh/month in a public school (Heynemann & Stern, 2010). As a result of this cost saving LFPS are able to charge low-fees.

On the other hand, data from this study also indicates that schools vary in their ability to compensate their teachers. Schools receiving external funding are in a better position to pay their teachers regularly compared to those relying entirely on fee collection. Some schools report that they are unable to pay their teachers regularly every month, and some months what little fees that are collected have to be evenly distributed between the teachers. As one school proprietor told me:

_The government is sometimes thinking we are making a business. They are paying 150KSh and some don’t even pay. But we know they will lose something if we send them away. Just the way I told you. I am unable to pay my bills and feed my family. It has made me work two days as a watchman for 2 days every week so I can feed my family. Me I don’t drink or smoke. So I think the government should not interfere. We are working just like volunteers. If we get 1000 KSh we divide among ourselves. We buy flour, food and take home about 200KSh. What kind of salary is that? Of course there are other NFS who get external funding who are able to pay their teachers good salary. But here we only have fees. (Proprietor, Three Bells, LFPS).

This sentiment is also expressed by the other low-fee schools in this study.
The good thing is that these teachers understand. When I explain to them they understand. I don’t want to promise I will give 1000/2000 and then at the end cannot deliver. We collect whatever we collect and I give it equally to everybody. If you can comply well and good, if it is hard you can tell me and maybe you should work elsewhere. Some of them have been here for 5 or 6 years teaching. Some give tuition in the evenings in their home. But I thank God for them because they are determined to continue. (Proprietor, St. Augustus, LFPS)

I think the MOE should chip in and pay the teachers because the teachers are paid peanuts in NFS. You find a teacher with family and are paid 3000. The government should pay the teachers better salary. (Teacher, Watoto Educational Centre)

Consequently, it is not surprising that teacher turnover is relatively high within the LFPS sector with teachers moving between schools for better, more stable remuneration once they have acquired some experience at one school.

Supplementary tutoring. Another interesting point to also note is that all the schools reported offering supplementary tutoring or ‘shadow education’ for the pupils after school and on the weekends. The cost for this varied but tutoring was offered by the same teachers who worked at the school.

On Saturdays they come for tuition. Parents pay about KSh 2 to buy vegetables. It is not for the teacher to decide how much, the committee decides how much. So instead of the pupil being at home on Saturday, they come here and pay the teacher something small to learn. (Proprietor, Three Bells, LFPS).

In Watoto Centre, the school that was sponsored and catered primarily to orphans and HIV positive children and families, this supplementary tutoring was offered free of charge.

In Public School, tuition is compulsory from 3.20-5.30 and they charge for it. Here there is tuition but not compulsory, and there is no charge. (Head, Watoto Educational Centre, LFPS)
However in other schools where there was an additional charge for this tutoring, it was questionable if many of the households who were already stretched paying for fees were able to afford this supplementary tutoring. In response to this question, one proprietor said:

*Even if you tell them KSh 1, some will come with less. If you continue asking they will tell you in the morning they did not have any breakfast, then you feel pity for the child. So how can you ask them for money?* (Proprietor, Three Bells, LFPS)

This quote not only confirms the inability of some households to pay for the additional tutoring but also suggests that participation in this form of ‘shadow education’ may likely widen the educational advantage that less poor households may have over poorer households who may not be able to pay for this supplementary tutoring.

In contrast to the parent from Three Bells who was not able to afford tuition, we can see the stark difference in the words of the following parent in St.Augustus:

*My children go for tuition Monday to Friday 4 p.m to 6 p.m and on Saturday from 8 a.m to 4 p.m. I pay KSh200 per month per child for extra tuition. I think tuition is important because it improves the child’s educational performance. It also helps the child not to engage in bad company, too much play or loiter around the slum. With tuition the child is engaged all the time.*

In a Bourdieuan sense, it increases the cultural capital of the dominant group. As this group invests in its cultural and social resources, it may contribute to increased social stratification and exacerbate equity concerns.

*Image.* I also observed that in all the low-fee schools in this study, there was an emphasis and concern with image, and the move towards approximating a ‘real’ school. This practice was enacted through the use of uniforms, emphasising the use of the formal curriculum, and displaying KCPE results, a practice that a Kenyan public school is required to follow. The concern with school image through the use of uniforms is an interesting paradox as the lack of
formal requirement for uniforms in low-fee schools is seen as one its comparative advantages over the public schools for slum households. Several comments point to this practice.

Also in Public School, uniform and shoes are compulsory. The child is sent away if they don't have both. In NFS it is not compulsory, so it is cheaper. (Watoto Educational Centre, LFPS)

What they are doing is like what is done in the public schools, they are following the syllabus and everything. So if at all the government can take care of the teachers there would be more effort on the part of the teachers. Even training the teachers would be a good thing. 5 out of 10 of our teachers are trained. (Proprietor, St. Augustus, LFPS)

This need to appear more like a ‘real’ school suggests, as the following observations attest to, that some households don’t consider low-fee schools as recognized schools.

Parents want their children in recognized schools (Teacher, Three Bells, LFPS)

Stigma associated with NFS. It is only recently that parents started appreciating that learning takes place in NFS. They always looked at the schools as a place where only singing and playing happens. (Teacher, St. Augustus, LFPS).

Part of this re-engineering of the image of low-fee schools may be because some households themselves do not view these schools as “real” schools. As many of these do not “look” like schools, parents may not regard them as formal institutions. The following comment illustrates some of the challenges this presents for the school.

Some view it positively; some view it as a rehabilitation centre. Teachers are not qualified; therefore parents view it as inferior. Majority think poorly [because] with NFS we still have to push parents [to pay] as they don’t think it is a ‘real’ school. In NFS, parents don’t pay, but when they move to public schools they have no problems paying. Teachers view different from parents view. Teachers view it as positive, parents see it less seriously. (Proprietor, Three Bells, LFP school)

A CSO member interviewed expressed it in the following way.
NFS has a lot of negativity in terms of how schools are perceived. Things are currently in transition. Most are changing the system to look like a real school. ...NFS have a negative image...even the chief here referred to NFS as a bogus school. He was not aware of the important role that NFS are playing. (Interview, CSO 2).

This rebranding or reimagining of low-fee schools is part of their “structuring” habitus intended to persuade households to identify them as ‘real school’ but also to target certain households.

Fee Jumping. Finally, low-fee schools in this study also commented on the high incidence of fee-jumping among households. One proprietor said:

In slums you can find some children with more than 6 uniforms. The parents have the mentality that they are poor. Even before FPE started, they wanted their children to learn free of charge. So a child is in this school for a term and when the parent sees that the fees are due, they move their kids to a different school. I have been telling parents that they are messing up the child. When a child goes to a new school by the time the child settles, the time is lost. When the child is starting to pick up the parents move them. (Proprietor, St. Augustus, LFPS)

Similarly another teacher noted, that “Some parents are very poor. When the fee debt grows, they move their children to another school” (Teacher, Focus group, Three Bells, LFPS)

These incidences of fee-jumping accounts for pupil mobility in low-fee schools and in order to counter potential risks from this behavior, some of the low-fee schools have started taking precautionary measures such as asking to see previous school records. The proprietor from St. Augustus told me, “Previously we did not ask to see the child’s records from their previous school, now we do”.

Impact of FPE at the school level

To understand the choice variables, in this case low-fee private and public provision, we need to understand what the public system is offering households especially with the
introduction of FPE. Specifically, to understand if households were pushed out of the public system or pulled by the LFPS, I examine the impact FPE has had on both the public and private schools and how this impact has influenced the choices households make.

Public school: “Most teachers are unable to handle the situation”

Teachers at the public school in this study’s sample noted that FPE was overall a positive initiative as it has increased access for many Kenyan children. As one teacher said in the FGD, “FPE should be applauded as it has helped many kids especially those who would never have made it to get an education with the introduction of FPE” (Teacher FGD, Karuthi Primary School, Public School). Similarly another noted that “FPE has helped Kenyan parents a lot by easing them of the financial burden of paying for primary school education” (Teacher FGD, Karuthi Primary School, Public School).

Nonetheless the teachers also painted a picture of increased challenges and demands placed upon them with the increased number of pupils in the classroom. Classroom management has become a difficult challenge with teachers ill-prepared to handle large classes and a rise in disciplinary issues. Some typical comments from public school teachers were:

*Before FPE was introduced, there were smaller classes, control and teaching was effective. Since FPE came along, we have bigger classes of approximately 87 pupils and this is hard to manage.*

*The increase in the number of pupils did not lead to an increase in the number of teachers. Most teachers are unable to handle the situation. We have few classrooms, which are overcrowded with most classes taking more than 80 pupils.*

*With FPE another challenge faced by the teachers was the increased number of classes with pupils of different age levels, ability and needs. Out of school pupils entering school for the*
first time also posed a unique pedagogical challenge as these pupils would not have acquired the basics or pre-requisites to cope with the academic demands of the current grade level. As teachers said:

*Owing to their age, some are brought straight to higher classes, say class 4. Teaching such children the previous year’s work is hard. The mix up of levels leads to a decline in performance and this has diluted the education offered.* (Teacher Karuthi Primary School, Public School)

*In most public schools there exist no facilities for pre-school. Pupils therefore join the school at Class 1. Performance in classes 1 and 2 is very poor at such schools and usually the teachers there have a lot of work.* (Teacher Karuthi Primary School, Public School)

*With FPE children came in regardless of age, previous learning or enrollment in school, the admission is open and this hinders effective teaching because the class has different children with different experiences and learning needs.* (Teacher, Karuthi Primary School, Public School)

**LFPS: “We are admitting a pupil each day”**

On the other hand, while teachers in LFPS agreed that FPE had helped children who could not have afforded education otherwise, they also felt that FPE had not benefitted them in LFPS at all, nor all the children in slum communities as there were still children who were not enrolled in school. Teachers offered divergent perspectives on how FPE had affected LFPS. A number felt FPE had adversely affected a few schools, as one teacher said, “*Most pupils going to public schools leaving NFS and teachers in the school empty.*” (Teacher, Three Bells, LFPS). Others however felt that FPE was fuelling an increased demand for LFPS, “*It has promoted the learning in the NFS since the performance in public schools has gone down.*” (Teacher, Watoto Centre, LFPS). Similarly, another teacher commented on the pupil mobility between public and private schools:
Because of FPE, the NFS experienced an influx in terms of enrollment. When it was first introduced, many children left the NFS for the public schools. Due to poor performance of the public school, children made their way back to NFS. (Teacher, Watoto Centre, LFPS).

A head teacher at one of the LFPS made a similar comment on school enrollment, “When FPE started we only remained with five pupils, but now there are about 300 pupils. We are admitting a pupil each day.” These comments are consistent with research findings from other contexts that argue that the perceived deterioration in quality of schooling in the public sector with FPE is driving a greater demand for LFPS from households (Rose, 2005, Somerset, 2009).

Public school SMC: “Now you get nothing but stay longer”

Another area I was interested in exploring was how school management committee roles had changed before and after the implementation of FPE. When asked, the SMC at the public school noted that it (their roles) was worse than before as previously there was an allowance for attending meetings and now with FPE these allowances were no longer offered. One member voiced his dissatisfaction this way, “Now you get nothing but stay longer” (SMC member, Karuthi Primary School, Public School). Also the fact that government money has to be spent according to very specifically outlined criteria has increased demands on the role of SMCs in public schools as well as LFPS receiving funding from the Ministry. A SMC member articulated this demand in the following way:

You have to spend the money according to specific criteria. For example, you have salaries and wages, repairs and maintenance, quality assurance, local travel, water, telephone and postage, contingencies. They give you money per child. You are not able to use the money for water for something else without getting permission from the Ministry. It is much more tedious. It is harder now, not like those days. There is more accounting. Previously, the chairman can just say we are going to use a 1000 Ksh for X, but now he cannot.
Another challenge faced by the SMC at the public school was that parents had become reluctant to pay anything because they insisted that education was now free. Consequently SMCs had a more difficult task asking parents for money for auxiliary expenses, for things like paying for the cook or other school expenses not covered by the capitation grant. The committee however claimed that they did offer concessions to orphans.

*The committee’s job is to convince parents to pay a small fee. Some think it is free and don’t want to pay. So the feeding program is stagnant and can’t move. We have class meetings to meet with parents. We follow-up to encourage them to pay. We ask the children to bring the parents to class meetings. We don’t do home visits. It is difficult for some parents to pay 150 KSh, We give concession to OVCs.* (SMC FGD, Karuthi Primary School, Public school)

**LFPS SMC: “Parents have become reluctant in paying school fees”**

Ironically, several SMC members in LFPs said their biggest challenge with the introduction of FPE was convincing parents to pay fees since parents in LFPS also now argued that primary education is free and so were reluctant to pay anything. A typical comment made by a SMC member was:

*It has increased our role since parents have become reluctant in paying school fees for they argue that there is FPE and they should not be paying fees. This makes our work very difficult as the school needs money to run its activities.* (SMC member, Three Bells, LFPS).

Consequently, a common complaint from SMC members in LFPS is that parents misunderstood the FPE initiative and expressed sentiments that LFP schools should be free as well like the public schools. In a similar vein, incidents of fee-jumping were reported as common, as parents move their children to other schools when they are unable to pay fees at one school. As noted by one teacher, *“Some parents are very poor. When the fee debt grows, they move their children to another school”* (Teacher on SMC, St. Augustus, LFPS).
**Values and Practices of the Institutions**

A school’s organizational practices, attitudes and assumptions make up its organizational habitus (Reay, David & Ball, 2001). In this study there was clear evidence of the low-fee schools and public school transmitting and communicating their organizational ethos and culture to households. This in turn influenced the way households perceived and experienced the schools and how it affected their decision-making. There were three key ways in which this organizational influence was evident: the ethic of care communicated to the households by the school proprietors, the relationship between the teachers, pupils and households, instances of self-exclusion, and social networks and experiences. Several sub-themes emerge from the data in these areas and these are explored below.

**Ethic of Care**

There was a sense of a caring communicated by the low-fee schools to the households. This ethic of care was communicated by offering flexible fee payments or fee concessions for households facing difficulty meeting their fee obligations, as well as expressing concern for the family welfare, and showing respect.

**“We make payment flexible”**

Illustrative of this organizational habitus are comments made by school proprietors explaining why and how they were offering flexible fee payments to the households:

*We make payment flexible. We call them and talk to them and they say they are bringing it. I make sure they know I understand what they are going through. I told them in the evening after you finish your business just pass by here. I will open a page in an exercise book and so I write there what they give. They bring me 10KSh, or 20KSh when it reaches the needed amount I give them a receipt. (Head, St. Augustus, LFPS)*
If the parent has 3 children they only pay for 2. If the child does not have any parent, they do not pay at all. They only pay for exams. But guardians are looking for schools that provide more. We only provide education, mattress, shoes, clothes we don’t have. So the parents/guardians move the children to (Watoto Centre, LFPS) because they are getting blankets, mattress etc. We don’t get annoyed because we want to help the child. We don’t get jealous. (Proprietor, Three Bells, LFPS)

Parents in Kibera are very poor. Most of them cannot afford to pay school fees let alone put a meal on the table. In some homes, children would not have eaten for two days. Parents go to the market in the evening and collect stalks thrown away by the vegetable vendors and take that home to make a meal for the family. Another case, the parent was given maize flour but did not have paraffin to cook the meal. So they just poured cold water and were eating it like that. As community leaders, we understand the difficult circumstances of the families. We don’t send children home when they can’t buy uniforms or pay fees. (CSO 2)

A definite recurring theme from parents was their appreciation for this flexibility accorded to them to make fee payments. However, given the proliferation of LFPS in slums, this flexibility on the part of the LFPS also serves as a marketing strategy employed by the low-fee schools to attract and maintain households. Srivastava (2007) in her study of low-fee schools in India makes a similar observation and delineates between fee concessions and flexi-fee discounts. The latter she notes only applied to households that voiced financial concerns and difficulties. On the other hand, fee concessions were inscribed as part of the official school policy and were for a designated fixed amount. In this study both of these practices were observed at the schools. These strategies were vital to the school’s own viability as an affordable alternative to the public school and also helped to positions them as a caring institution with the welfare of the parents’ difficult circumstances at heart. In turn, parents with children in LFPS report that these flexible practices and understanding extended by the school for their financial circumstances, especially the practice of not sending pupils home for lack of fees, as practiced by
the public school has helped shape their positive experience with the school. This positive perception of the school is echoed by the following parent comments:

*NFS also do not chase pupils for fees unnecessarily. They first write a letter to the parents reminding them of their fees arrears. This way the parent prepares herself to come to school and talk to the teacher and to look for money. Again, at least the pupils do not miss out on lessons. I try very hard. The school treats me well so I also work very hard to look for fees.* (Parent, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)

*The school is good overall. The teachers are very good and understanding. The administration is also considerate and always listens to parents even when they do not have enough fees for their children.* (Parent, Watoto Centre, LFPS)

Parents expressed in the following ways how this fee accommodation impacted their choice:

*They are the only ones who listened to me, their fee is low, and they do not send children home for lack of fees.*

*The school was affordable and the headmaster was understanding.*

*The teachers provide quality education and always understand when there is a problem. You can pay fees in small amount.*

*The little money we get from our small business can allow us to cater for his educational needs only in this school since his father belongs to the HIV+ group supported by this school.*

*The head teacher is understanding. She is flexible in that she allows us to pay fees in installments.*

*“We know the problems here”*

Another area in which this ethic of care is communicated to households is through being invested in the welfare of the children. As most low-fee school owners are from the community themselves, they know the families the children are from. In fact, as noted by teachers in two
separate focus groups, “Some of the teachers in NFS have their children in the school” (St. Augustus and Uhuru Educational Centre, Teacher, FGD).

This sense of familiarity with the families translated into an almost missionary zeal and commitment to their education and well-being. The following quotation demonstrates this:

*These schools know the problems here because we are the people who know the people we are helping. It is a kind of caring and helping.* (CSO 1)

and

*We love the community and our children. We don’t want them to be like us. We want to motivate the children so their future will be good.* (CSO 1)

A LFPS proprietor paints a similar picture:

*We are dealing with parentless, street and slum children that the government schools cannot handle. Even I myself, I have walked from door to door inviting kids to school. Can the government teachers do that? No. So in fact when these children go to the government school, the school does not even know where the children are from.* (Proprietor, Three Bells, LFPS)

What is also expressed in this quotation is how LFPS may be better positioned in identifying with the needs of the children than the public schools. While this can be viewed as a point of pride, it also serves as a selling point for many LFPS. For what is communicated to parents and guardians is that LFPS are better able to serve their children as they can identify with and understand their unique needs better than the public schools.

*“Parents are respected, regardless of status”*

In the LFPS, parents also spoke of feeling respected by the school without their social class being an impediment, unlike in the public school.

As one parents explained:
Yes, they allow us to ask questions and they also respond to our questions very clearly and openly. They also treat all parents very well. Parents are respected, regardless of their status—financial or cleanliness. Public schools do not do this. Public school teachers treat parents very harshly, with no respect at all. They even make parents feel un-important or belittled when they go to them. (Parent, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)

While it is important to recognize that “institutional habitus is mobilized differently for different households” (Reay, 1998, p. 524) in that not all households in LFPS may experience this same discrimination, this representative remark does concur with many other parents. A comment made by a parent when asked how they knew about the LFPS their child was attending echoes this contention as well:

*I saw pupils coming from a dirty school then concluded that since my financial ability was low and the school appeared cheap, then my daughter would in all likelihood be offered a chance in this school if I requested for one. (Parent, Watoto Centre, LFPS)*

Bourdieu writes of how objective limits become transformed into a practical anticipation of objective limits; a sense of one’s place which leads one to exclude oneself from places which one is excluded (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 471 as cited in Reay et al., 2005, p. 91). Here parents who felt out of place in the public schools expressed similar sentiments of fitting in better in the LFPS and exhibit a Bourdiesian sense of place of ‘one’s relationship to the world and one’s proper place within it’ (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 474, as cited in Reay et al., 2005, p. 91).

**Self-Exclusion**

Bourdieu (1977) points out dominant groups in society may use indirect mechanisms of reproduction in the form of cultural and social capital. These indirect mechanisms Bellamy (1994) contends “…rather than direct exclusion, which is no longer sanctioned, [take] other forms of exclusion” (p. 129). In the case of the public school in the study, the assistant head
teacher told me, “Anyone who comes we take because everyone is supposed to be admitted, that is a policy of the government.” In other words, there is no sanctioned form of direct exclusion. However, there is evidence of some of the indirect forms of exclusion adopted by the public school. Such exclusion is also present in the low-fee school and is highlighted in the following themes.

“A child stretches his feet like this and steps on the teacher”

In some cases as articulated below, the school does not directly exclude the pupil, but its habitus in the form of its practice creates subtle exclusionary pressure on the pupil. In the case of the public school, the assistant head teacher told me, when asked if they turn students away:

*Yes. I think the difference is because sometimes you find the class is full and there is no place for even an extra desk. Sometimes a child stretches his feet like this and he steps on the teacher. So lack of space might be the reason. We don’t really turn them away because in such a case we can admit but the child would have to sit on the floor. But they choose. A child attends for a week or two and goes home and reports that I don’t have a desk in the classroom. And there is no room to accommodate another desk. The parent then has to choose to decide what to do. (Assistant Head Teacher, Karuthi Public School)*

This form of exclusion is part of what Lamont and Lareau (1988) consider self-elimination, which is the work of habitus. When the public school contends that “We don’t really turn them away...But they [the household] choose”, a household’s continued participation in the school system is being influenced by their social origin (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979)

“Poverty mentality”.

Households are disposed to behave in a certain way as a result of their social class location (Reay et al., 2000). The behaviour of certain households in the low-fee school demonstrates this as noted by one school proprietor:
People living in slums they have a ‘poverty’ mentality. Some of them are not all poor but they have that mentality that they are poor. So if you tell them to give a token to buy chalk or whatever, it is very hard for them. So even if you talk to them and tell them that the teacher has to pay house rent and other bills and food, they don’t understand. (Proprietor, St. Augustus, LFPS).

This ‘poverty’ mentality that the proprietor from this low-fee school alludes to in the statement below corresponds to what Van Heemst terms the “psychology of poverty” that suggests “the poor might perceive they have fewer options than they actually do” (p. 173). In a Bourdiean sense, this household habitus or disposition which may be a result of objective conditions often persists even after the circumstances that generated those conditions have changed (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, p. 161). So, a household’s poverty disposition may lead them to self-exclude from certain schools because of their perceived lack of ability to participate in the cultural norm of the school (in this case, the expectation that households contribute financially in addition to their fees) even when they may no longer be in dire poverty.

“Some appreciate the diversity…others hate it”

The following comment made by a public school teacher demonstrates organizational habitus that may lead to households from lower social classes feeling excluded in the public school system:

We handle different types of pupils from different kinds of homes, different parts and classes of the society. Some are from very poor backgrounds, others middle class and we have learnt to handle all at the same level or as best as we can. Some appreciate the diversities and socialize, meeting all sorts of people, and learning from them, while others, especially those who were here before FPE was introduced hate the changes that have since come with FPE. (Teacher, Focus Group, Karuthi Public School)

This desire to disassociate from households who may be of a different social class or ethnicity results in forms of exclusion which are “assessed consciously or unconsciously”
(Bellamy, 1995, p. 131) by the households and may lead the households to exclude themselves. When we consider the possible stratifying effects of this organizational habitus, it is possible to speculate that in the case of households in the public school who experience this form of exclusion, they may either choose to drop out or move to a low-fee school where they feel they might “fit in” better.

**Relations between Teachers, Parents and Pupils**

The relationship between students, parents and teachers is fundamental to the learning dynamic in schools. Thomas (2002) points out that because this structural relationship between individuals and institutions is mediated by habitus, the relationship particularly between staff and students is an important consideration in understanding institutional habitus. The study’s findings highlight the different ways in which teachers and their habitus mattered in how both households and students perceived and experienced the schools. Several sub-themes emerged in examining this relationship.

*“We simply want to see the children get something”.*

A recurring theme from the transcripts was the notion of accountability. Teachers in the LFPS expressed a strong sense of accountability to the households they were teaching. This horizontal accountability can be attributed to the fact that many of the teachers who taught in the LFPS lived in the community, and so they knew the families of the pupils they taught. The same cannot always be said about teachers in the public schools around Kibera who were largely posted to a school by the Teachers Service Commission and so did not necessarily live in the community. This social capital inherent in the relationship between the teachers and families translated into teachers in LFPS speaking about a “desire for change in the community and for the children”, or of “a commitment that comes deep from the heart” in describing their
motivations for teaching at the school. Many teachers also echoed the following sentiments when asked what motivated them to continue teaching at the school despite its many challenges:

*Because we want the children to benefit. Since most of us are volunteers, we teach for free. We simply want to see the children get something. We want to get them out of illiteracy.* (Teacher, Three Bells, LFPS)

*Most of the pupils are orphans. We volunteer to teach to help them gain something. I know most parents. They are too poor to afford even the basic stationery. We volunteer to teach to keep the kids in school and also to keep them off the streets.* (Teacher, Watoto Centre, LFPS).

These comments from the teachers in low-fee schools indicate several things. First, there is a sense of horizontal accountability to the parents as the teachers are from the community themselves, and know the parents and their problems. This then motivates them to teach the children to keep them off the streets. Second, there is a genuine interest in the well-being of the children that allows the teachers to persist despite the poor monetary compensation at these schools.

*“Contracts depend on performance”.*

Another aspect of accountability evident in the teacher-household relationship is vertical accountability to the school proprietor. As teachers in LFPS have very little or almost no job security, they cannot be lax in their teaching, otherwise they risk losing their jobs. “Private schools have the advantage of being ‘incentive compatible’, in the sense that it is in the interest of the parents to keep an eye on the teacher, and in the interest of teachers to be responsive to parental demands (unlike in the government primary school, where the teacher is paid irrespective of his performance) (Drèze & Saran, 1993, p. 39–40, as cited in Holley, 2012, p. 10). This assertion is corroborated by interview data from teachers teaching in the low-fee schools in this study. As one of the teachers pointed out, *‘In a NFS teachers are committed to ensuring that*
pupils pass otherwise they lose their jobs” (Teacher, Watoto Centre, LFPS). Another teacher echoed a similar comment, “In NFS teachers’ contracts depend on their performance and so they have to work hard. There is competition in NFS while in public schools the teachers are very relaxed” (Teacher, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS).

Parents view this favorably as they feel teachers perform better as a result of this external motivation. Many parents also expressed views that they felt when they paid fees; their children received better education as the teachers would be more motivated to teach:

*It is better to pay fees for the pupil for this motivates the teacher to work hard since they will be given money (Parent 10)*

*Commitment of parents makes teachers committed too. Payment of fees ensures that teachers and the administration have money to buy the necessary school supplies and therefore learning is never disrupted due to lack of materials. Payment of fees also ensures that teachers are paid and thus motivated to teach the pupils. (Parent 5)*

*The way the teachers and administration conduct their affairs matters a lot too. (Parent 6)*

*Yes, children get better education in NFS. This happens because the teachers are motivated through fees. (Parent 9)*

Parents also acknowledged that teachers were more serious about work in the LFPS. Interestingly this point is countered by parents in the public school who feel that because there is such a high turnover of teaching staff in LFPS because of the inconsistency in fee payment, the pupils suffer in the process. As one parent noted:

*Teachers at the public school are paid by the government and therefore do not have to worry about payment, unlike their counterparts in the private schools who always keep moving in pursuit of better pay, and the child loses in the process when the teacher who understood the child’s learning progress and problems*
goes away and the child is left with a new teacher. (Parent 13, Karuthi Primary School, Public School)

Paradoxically, this sense of accountability and familiarity with the households also carries its own burden as it raises the expectations of the parents as to what is required of the teachers. One of the teachers painted this picture:

The attitude towards the school being a community school - the parents expect more than the teachers are able to do. The children are expected to do better than those in public schools and when this does not happen they think the teachers are lazy. (Teacher, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)

“They listen to us”.

Households identified LFPS teacher characteristics that they appreciated. One in particular was the sense of being accepted and listened to. As one parent said, “The teachers listen to us and accept and adopt our ideas and I feel we are influencing our children’s education in this way.” (Parent 12). Interviews with households suggest that in LFPS there was more of an invited space for dialogue with the teachers and the proprietor. This could be attributed to what was identified earlier in terms of the collective identity established as the proprietors and teachers were from the same community as the households.

“Better to do something for nothing than to do nothing for nothing”.

However, focus group interviews with teachers in LFPS also suggested a sense of acquiescence on the part of the teachers in LFPS. A recurring idea expressed by the teachers when asked why they continue working at LFPS when the payment was so paltry, was “better to do something for nothing than to do nothing for nothing”. For some this position gave them something to do while they waited for better opportunities, as noted by the following teacher, “I am educated but I cannot get a regular teaching job elsewhere. I volunteer to keep myself busy”
(Teacher Watoto Centre, LFPS). Similarly, another teacher said, “I am married and need money to help support my family but the salary I get here cannot help me much though it is better than nothing” (Teacher, Three Bells, FGD). A similar observation of the teacher motivation is made by Muralidharan and Kremer (2009) in their research examining low-fee schools in India. In low-fee schools they note that “teaching provides them [the teachers] with both income and respectability while they look at other long-term options” (Muralidharan and Kremer, 2009, p. 103).

“Enabling/Disabling Habitus”.

Equally important in understanding organizational habitus are the intangible ways in which teachers interacted with the pupils. Pupils in both public and the LFP schools were asked in focus groups to identify some enabling teacher habituses and some less favourable classroom dynamics. Table 16 captures these differences between the two types of schools in this study. Although a number of positive teacher characteristics in the LFPS such as ‘teachers care’ and ‘they know their mother’s problems’ correspond with points raised earlier by households about the ethic of care demonstrated by low-fee schools, what is noteworthy from these observations is that the level of disabling habitus in the low-fee schools is also quite significant. Contrary to other research (see e.g., Kingdon, 2009; Tooley & Dixon, 2008) that claim that the quality of teaching in low-fee schools surpasses that of the public schools, pupils in this study claim that negative patterns such as ‘teachers not teaching well’ or ‘not marking books’ exists in low-fee schools as well. These disabling habitus may cause households to move their children from one low-fee school to another in search of better quality schools. This raises issues around households’ perception of quality and calls into question what households base their decision upon.
Table 16
Comparing Positive and Negative Teacher Characteristics as Identified by Pupils in Public and Low-Fee Private Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Teacher Characteristics</th>
<th>Negative Teacher Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are dedicated</td>
<td>Some teachers don’t teach well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers teach well</td>
<td>Some teachers don’t mark pupils’ books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher care</td>
<td>Teachers beat students who do not understand yet they don’t teach well sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are serious about their teaching</td>
<td>Some teachers are bad as they punish pupils without a good reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers know their mother’s problems</td>
<td>Teachers usually move to other schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching is done well compared to public school where teachers are paid even if they do not teach.</td>
<td>Teachers have to go fetching water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are committed to their work</td>
<td>Teacher disturbances like sending them to shop and give them responsibility like fetching water, asking them to help in cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers mark pupils books faster</td>
<td>Teachers ask them for money to buy tea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupils in Public School

- Some teachers in public school are more serious that those in NFS.
- Teachers don’t bother about students
- Sometimes teachers do not attend classes
- Some teachers don’t come to class regularly
- Some teachers don’t mark pupils’ books like they used to

Source: Fieldwork Data

Social Connections

A final area in which the schools’ organizational habitus was communicated was through the density of social capital connections they were able to secure. These connections translated into sponsorship opportunities for the households, and were much sought after by households as avenues to enable them to finance current and future educational needs. Two of the low-fee schools in this study were able to attract substantial external funding, the remaining three schools relied primarily on fee-collection. The following quotation from a parent describes one of these schools:
Other than offering good quality education the pupils in the school are given various gifts by visitors. It is also possible to get a donor/sponsor for the child at this school. Yes, I would recommend the school to other parents for the same reason. (Parent 7)

For a significant number of households these social connections impact on their decision-making as households tend to select schools where their children are likely to be sponsored. However, certain households may be better positioned to negotiate and to engage with this institutional habitus. For example, the following parents noted:

The school provides sponsorship to needy children, mine are already in the process of being considered but are not yet approved. (Parent 17)

My two children are sponsored at Watoto Centre. This reduces the burden of school fees to the family. (Parent 16)

The children are not yet sponsored but the arrangements are taking place. (Parent 15)

Yes, my child is sponsored by Catholic Missions. Sometimes the organization provides school fees and food for the family so we do not struggle as much in trying to get fees for this particular child. (Parent 18)

My children are sponsored and this has enabled me to concentrate on other needs like rent, food. Otherwise this would have been a big responsibility for me. (Parent 20)

Yet what these transcripts also highlight are evidence of forms of exclusion in relation to capital and habitus such as overselection and relegation for those households who are not successful in obtaining sponsorship (Lamont & Lareau, 1988). These households who do not have the appropriate social networks to draw upon are unable to convert social capital into economic capital and cultural capital. We can see this qualitative difference in the following parents’ words:
No, none of the children are sponsored. Given our low income, this means that when the child is sent home for fees I have to borrow from other people or have the child stay home until I am able to raise the fees. If the child was sponsored, fees would not be a problem, and the little money that we get would be used for food. (Parent 11)

None of the children is sponsored. I am the sole decision-maker as far as the children’s education and livelihood is concerned. If I died today that would be the end of the child’s education because no other relative is concerned about his education. (Parent 7)

Not only do these remarks provide evidence of how social disadvantage can be reinforced by institutional and organizational habitus, but they also reveal ways in which even “…within the same institution there is always a degree to which institutional habituses are mobilised differentially for different students” (Reay et al., 2005, p. 60). Thus, not all households in a particular school are able to access this sponsorship.

**Summary and Conclusion**

In this chapter I have presented the background context for understanding LFPS in the Kenyan context, how they operate and navigate the policy environment and also how they engage with the Ministry of Education. I have also focused on the five schools in this study and presented a detailed overview of these schools. Through school portraits and an examination of school documents and field work observation, I have attempted to classify and characterize these schools to show how LFPS can range within a broad spectrum in terms of quality, provision, motivation and offering. This chapter has also examined the organizational habitus of the schools, and in particular how this habitus influences the way schools differentiate and market themselves, as well as how schools may in fact deepen existing inequalities through their exclusionary practices.
Education has traditionally been regarded as a ladder for children to “climb out of one class into another” (Mcgregor, 1997, p. 39). However education can also distort these opportunities by reinforcing rather than challenging class-based and other forms of inequality. The evidence in this chapter supports the view that institutional habitus exists, and following Bourdieu (1977), that social capital operates in these schools as a tool of cultural reproduction in ways that may perpetuate unequal educational achievement.

Firstly the values and practices of the institutions embodied as part of an institution’s habiti communicates to households a sense of acceptance and social inclusion. Households in the slums appear to identify with the LFPS more than the public school simply because of the caring school ethos and respect that was communicated to them. For these households the school also represented a symbol of their community identity (Forsythe, 1984). The fact that the proprietor was “one of them” perhaps bolstered their belief that the school has their welfare at heart. In this instance perhaps we see how a household’s habitus intersects with institutional habitus in the choices that families make.

On the other hand, it is also clear from the data that the way these schools position themselves to attract households is increasingly important for their viability. When schools promote themselves in terms of the ethos, values and practices they communicate to parents it is a large part of their institutional habitus. Discerning the true motives of LFPS then becomes more difficult in some cases and some households and schools themselves expressed a certain ambivalence and distrust towards certain LFPS.

Next, in examining relations between teachers, households and pupils, it was clear from the findings that enabling teacher habituses were evident in the qualities the participants highlighted when discussing teacher characteristics that shaped their positive experiences in
school and in the classroom. These included among others the teachers’ sense of care, teaching quality, and concern for the students. In contrast there were also teacher characteristic that impeded schooling success. These impeding characteristics were present in both the public and low-fee schools and raise questions around how effective households really are in assessing the quality of a school. As a corollary, households were also drawn to school and teacher accountability. Households in the low-fee schools in this study expressed higher confidence in teacher performance when there was stringent vertical accountability to the proprietor, as well as horizontal accountability to the fee-paying households themselves.

Finally social experiences and networks revealed that households were drawn towards LFPS whose institutional habitus extended to fostering and enabling sponsorship networks and connections. In a Bourdieuan sense, households with limited economic capital were relying on social capital in the form of sponsorship which they hoped they would be able to convert into economic capital for furthering the education of their children. Further, there was also evidence of sorting of pupils from different social classes within the schools. By self-selecting schools that had households of similar backgrounds, class patterns were being replicated. These results are in line with Bourdieu’s contention that “social class position and class culture become a form of cultural capital in the school setting” (Bourdieu, as cited in Lareau, 1987, p. 82).

In the next chapter I examine the micro-context of decision-making. In particular, I utilize the concept of familial habitus to explore “how differences in cultural, social and academic capital impact on household decision-making (David et al., 2003 as cited in Reay, 2005, p. 60).
Chapter Seven
Micro Familial Habitus and Household Decision-making

Educational choices are also never innocent of class when choosing either safety or risk. We make the educational choices we do, not despite class but because they express our classed difference from others. The exercise of educational choice is constantly aligning and realigning the boundaries between and within classes (Reay et al., 2005, p. 96).

Introduction

In the previous two chapters I examined how state and school–level factors shape and constrain household decision-making structures. In this chapter and the next I will examine the micro-context for understanding household decision-making around LFP schools, more specifically how familial habitus impacts decision-making. I was interested in learning from the parents, caregivers and pupils themselves as to who chooses, why they choose private over public school in the context of FPE, and how they made decisions between public and private and between different private schools.

This chapter answers the following sub-questions.

1. Household(Micro)
   a) What are the meaningful financial, human, family, spiritual -and community level social capital predictor variables that differentiated between families with children in public and low-fee private schools?
   b) Which households send their children to low-fee private schools?

The micro-context examined in this study includes processes at the household level, as well as pupils’ perception and understanding of the decision-making process. In order to answer these questions, this chapter utilizes data from a household survey with 209 families. Questions on the survey were designed to examine how social capital factors shape household decision-
making around school choice for their children. There were also a few open-ended survey questions that allowed for qualitative data to be collected from households. The QUAN survey data was then triangulated with data that was collected through focus group interviews with Class 6 and 7 pupils in the five sample schools, as well as focus groups discussion with parents on the SMC. Finally, I also interviewed a smaller subset of 21 families who had moved their children either between private and public schools, or between public and private schools.

This chapter proceeds as follows. In the first part of the chapter I present a brief description of the families and children in the study and discuss how parents with children in public or private schools differ on some key demographic characteristics. Next, I will explain how data was reduced and analyzed using bi-variate and multivariate statistical procedures. Finally, the quantitative survey data will be integrated with the qualitative parent interview data to understand emerging patterns and their contribution to the theoretical implications of these findings.

**Describing the Households and Their School Attendance Patterns**

In this dissertation study, survey data was collected from 209 households living in Kibera. To be eligible for inclusion, households had to have a child enrolled in either Class 6 or Class 7 in one of the five case study schools. In all there were 100 households from the four low-fee private schools, and 109 households from the only public school located in the study site. Table 17 presents some key characteristics and percentages associated with households and children in this study differentiated by school type.
### Table 17

**Demographics of Households in the Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Public % (n= 109)</th>
<th>Private % (n= 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (Years)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Status a</strong></td>
<td>Correct class for age</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incorrect class for age</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>74.0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Birth Order</strong></td>
<td>First born</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subsequent</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household Characteristics</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity b</td>
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<td>15.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luhya</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nubian</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others b</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>40.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Muslim</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Variable</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>School Type</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(n=109)</td>
<td>(n=100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Characteristics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years living in Kibera</td>
<td>Less or equal to 5</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between 6 and 11</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between 12 and 20</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21 and above</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years living in current house</td>
<td>Less or equal to 5</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between 6 and 11</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 and above</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent relationship to child</td>
<td>Biological mother</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-biological mother</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female guardian</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biological father</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of mother/female caregiver (Years)</td>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25-29</td>
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<td>11.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>23.9</td>
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<td>35-39</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;50</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Status</td>
<td>Dual Parents</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>63.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single Parent</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level of education completed</td>
<td>No education and primary incomplete</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Primary Complete</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary Incomplete</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary complete and higher</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level of education completed</td>
<td>No education and primary incomplete</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Primary Complete</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary Incomplete</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary complete and higher</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A dummy variable was created to identify pupils who were enrolled at the correct class level (Class six and seven) for their age group. Other ethnicities include Kisi, Boran, Digo, Kipsigis, Kuria, Somali. This variable is included here for reference only. Since I only collected data for father’s education level if the father were living in the same household, there was a very large number of respondents with missing data in this category.

Based on data for child characteristics, it appears that in both public and LFP schools, girls’ enrollment is higher than that for boys at the Class 6 and 7 levels. Data from interviews suggest a slight gender differentiation in the schools with more girls enrolled in NFS than boys. This finding is contrary to Srivastava’s (2006) research with LFP schools in India where she found no gender differences in school enrollment. However, the number of overage children is
more prevalent in LFP schools with more children being enrolled in the incorrect class for their chronological age group (74%) compared to 48.6% in the public school.

As for the 209 households surveyed in this study, the descriptive data suggests that public school households are more likely to be of the following three larger ethnicities; Nubian (17.4%), Kamba (15.6%), and Kikuyu (6.4%), whereas LFP households are from the following larger ethnic groups Luo (41%), Luhya (27%) and other ethnicities (14%). It appears that households also differ on religious affiliation with more Christian Protestant parents enrolling their children in LFP schools (55%) compared to 40.4% in the public school. On the other hand, more Muslim parents enrolled their children in public school (29.4%) compared to 10% in the private schools.

The families with children in public school appear to be those having lived in Kibera for more years than families with children in LFP schools. Of the 109 families in public school, only 11% have lived in Kibera for 5 or less years compared to the 100 families in LFP schools where almost 25% were more recent migrants having lived in Kibera for 5 or less years. It is also notable that when comparing families who have been long-time residents of Kibera having lived there for 21 years or more, there are only 11% of LFP school families in this category compared to 33.9% of public school families.

In comparing age of mothers/female caregivers for both groups of families, the highest percentage is between 30-34 and 35-39 years. Interestingly, in comparing respondent relationship to child, there are more non-biological mothers and female guardians for families with children in LFP school (30%), compared to 13.2% in public schools. It is also observed that overall in both groups there are more dual parent families than single parent families. However, there are more dual parent families with children in public school (72.5%) compared with 63% in LFP schools. The data also shows that more mothers with children in LFP schools reported
having no education or an incomplete primary education (52%), compared to only 35.8% of mothers with children in public school who reported having no education or primary incomplete. In other words, the mothers with children enrolled in public school appear to be more educated.

As there were a large number of respondents without partners, the data for father’s education level needs to be interpreted with caution. However, it does appear that similar trends can be observed in terms of educational levels for fathers as with those of mothers.

In terms of household size, both groups of households appear to have as their highest average between six and seven members, with the majority in both groups not having any extended family members living with them. When comparing employment status of mothers/female caregivers, there are more mothers with children in LFP schools who are working outside the home full-time, part-time or self-employed.

In terms of total number of primary school going children, two is the highest number for public (30.3%), and this is very similar to that of LFP school families (30%). Most (35.8%) of the public school families report having two primary school-going children, whereas most LFP school families report having two (31%) or three (31%) children who are primary school-going. Low-fee school families appear to have a higher number of primary school-going children.

**Bivariate Analyses**

Bivariate analyses were performed to determine if there was a relationship between household decision-making around public and low-fee private schools, and the individual variables for each of the five dimensions of capital used in this study (human, family, community, financial and spiritual). T-tests were used to determine significant mean differences between groups on continuous predictor variables, while chi-square tests were used to determine statistically significant differences for categorical or nominal variables. Prior to conducting the
bivariate analyses, frequency tables and descriptive statistics were run for each of the variables to detect any anomalies or extreme values. In categorical variables with highly unbalanced or skewed distributions with some categories containing only few cases, categories were collapsed and recoded to ensure a more balanced distribution. The dependent variable, enrollment in public or low-fee private school, is coded as 0 for public and 1 for low-fee private. The total sample size included in the analyses was 209 households, where there were 109 households with children enrolled in public school and 100 households with children enrolled LFP schools. A small number of families in this study sample (as indicated in Table 17 previously) had children enrolled in both public and low-fee private schools. However as this number was very small, it was not treated as a separate category in all subsequent statistical analyses. All subsequent analyses grouped households only into those with children in either public or low-fee private school.

**Spiritual capital**

Spiritual capital in this study is a measure of the level of attendance and engagement of the households with religious institutions. Five indicators of spiritual capital were included in this chi-square analysis. Significant differences were detected for two variables: religious community attendance and religious affiliation. Households with children in low-fee private schools were more likely to have higher religious community attendance, compared to households with children in public schools ($\chi^2 = 5.02, p \leq 0.05$). As for religious affiliation, there appear to be more Muslim households with children in public schools than in LFP schools, ($\chi^2 = 14.38, p \leq 0.001$), and conversely there appear to be more households of Christian Protestant background in the LFP schools. None of the other spiritual capital constructs revealed any
significant differences between the two groups. Table 18 presents the results of the bivariate analyses for spiritual capital variables.

Table 18

Comparison of Public and Low-Fee Private Households on Spiritual Capital Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Public (% by category)</th>
<th>Private (% by category)</th>
<th>chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious community attendance</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>5.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership in religious community</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of attendance at religious services</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious affiliations</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>14.38**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in religious events</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p ≤ 0.05, **p ≤ 0.01

Human capital.

Human capital measures the parents’ and child’s level of education. Only two human capital constructs had sufficient amount of data to warrant comparisons: child’s placement in the right class for his/her age, and mother’s level of education. There were too many missing responses for the other constructs. While I have included the data for father’s education level as well in Table 19, due to the fact that there were very many households who did not have fathers, there were 66 cases with missing data for this variable, and so while it appears that fathers who had children in LFP schools had lower level education compared to fathers with children in public school, no claim of significance is made. This data is included here for reference purposes only.
Table 19

Comparison of Public and Low-Fee private households on human capital categorical indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Public (% by category)</th>
<th>Private (% by category)</th>
<th>chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s education level</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>15.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s education level</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>11.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age and Class</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>14.09***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p ≤ 0.05, **p ≤ 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Of the two remaining variables, both were found to be significant. Firstly, children in low-fee private schools were more likely to have mothers with no education/primary incomplete (χ²=15.23, p≤ 0.01) compared to children in public schools. 52% of mothers with children in low-fee private school reported to having no education or primary incomplete compared to 35.8% in the public school. However, when looking at percentage of mothers who had completed secondary education and higher, these numbers were comparable between LFP schools (15%) and the public school (11.9%). Mothers with lower education levels tend to choose low-fee private schools. While this finding might seem counterintuitive at first, when comparing it to the descriptive data, it is not surprising. In the public school 70% of mothers have lower education levels, compared to 30% with higher education. In other words, more mothers choosing public school have lower education levels. Whereas in the LFPS’s, 73% of mothers have lower levels of education compared to 27% who have higher levels of education. In other words, mothers choosing LFPS’s have comparable levels of higher education to those in the public school. However, the overall lower levels of education of mothers’ in low-fee schools may be translated to the higher aspirations they have for their children. As one mother in the LFPS said,
I am the one who looked for this school without consulting anyone. I am the one who is involved in the ongoing decisions about the child’s school. I know the importance of education because I have missed many job opportunities because I did not have basic education, even speaking fluent English and do not want my children to miss out on anything that I can afford to give them now. I wish my parents had taken me up to at least Class 5 then I would get good jobs. (Parent, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)

Evidenced in this quote is a sense of wanting better for their children and not wanting to repeat that cycle of regret that they themselves experienced. Research on parental aspirations by Oketch, Mutisya and Sagwe (2012) in the slums of Korogocho and Viwadani in Kenya supports this observation. They found that while parents in non-slum contexts aspire for their children to attain similar educational levels as them, parents in slums aspired for their children to achieve more education than what they had. Srivastava’s (2006) research on LFPS in India revealed similar findings in terms of parental aspirations for their children. Examining this finding from Bourdieu’s theory of exclusion, it is also possible that mothers who were less educated self-excluded themselves from the public school as a result of a perceived lack of fit between their disposition or habitus and that of the public school. As a result, in this study there were more mothers with lower education levels with children in LFPS and correspondingly fewer mothers with lower education levels with children in the public school. Qualitative data from this study also supports this speculation and illustrates how a school’s organizational habitus reinforces classed fractions. The following mother’s comment highlights this:

This school treats all parents very well. Parents are respected regardless of their status-financial or cleanliness. Public schools don’t do that. Public school teachers treat parents very harshly, with no respect at all. They even make parents feel unimportant or belittled when we go to them. (Parent 7)

Secondly, a higher percentage of children in LFP schools (74%) were in the incorrect class for their age group, compared to children in the public school (48.6%). This difference was
highly significant between the two groups ($\chi^2=14.09, p \leq 0.001$). This finding corresponds with qualitative data that below suggests that low-fee schools are more flexible in their admission process, particularly for girls.

*Girls should finish school fast and LFPS are always open to them regardless of their age and performance so long as they pay the required fee or are part of a program that advocates or supports the education of the girl child unlike in public schools. In public schools only age and availability of space should be a determining factor.* (Parent 13)

Financial capital.

Financial capital measures a household’s stock of economic resources including any financial support systems available to them through kinship or community networks. The results of the bivariate analyses for the seven financial capital correlates in Table 20 represent the household’s financial support systems as well as their expenses.

### Table 20
*Comparison of Public and Low-Fee Private Households on Financial Capital Continuous Indicators*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Public M (SD)</th>
<th>Private M(SD)</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial worry</td>
<td>1.79 (0.90)</td>
<td>1.52 (0.76)</td>
<td>2.34*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial trouble</td>
<td>2.08 (0.89)</td>
<td>1.58 (0.75)</td>
<td>4.37**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. *p* ≤ 0.05; **p* ≤ 0.01*

Independent-samples t-test was conducted on two specific indicators of response to financial circumstances: financial worry and financial trouble. Both the tests were significant. Families with children in public school had more financial trouble than families with children in LFP schools. This was in response to the question, on a scale of “1 (a lot) to 5 (no such expense), how much trouble do you have paying particular expenses”. The mean score for families with children in public school was 2.08 ($t = 4.37, p \leq 0.01$) compared to a mean of 1.58 for families with children in LFP schools. Families were also asked how much they worried about their
income not being enough to meet the family’s expenses and bills on a scale of 1 (all the time) to 5 (never). Families with children in public school reported more worry than families with children in LFP schools ($t = 2.34$, $p \leq 0.05$).

Six other financial capital correlates were tested for significance using chi-square tests. Of these six, four indicators were found to be significant as represented in Table 21. These were total school expenses per child, total school expenses for all children, financial networks to rely on when facing trouble paying bills and financial networks to rely on if they were to lose their jobs. For both these questions respondents were asked to mention networks that they could rely on and these networks included: no one, government agency, local community or neighborhood associations, church or religious group, family member, friend or neighbor, teacher or principal at school, women’s group and others. More families with children in LFP school report having no help, or in other words having fewer financial networks they can rely on to help pay bills and help with expenses if they were to lose their job compared to families with children in public schools who seem to have more financial support networks to rely on ($\chi^2 = 10.47$ and 11.15, $p \leq 0.01$).
Table 21

Comparison of Public and Low-Fee private Households on Financial Capital Categorical Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Public (% by category)</th>
<th>Private (% by category)</th>
<th>chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial assistance from family members</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial networks when facing trouble paying bills</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>10.71**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial networks if lose job</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>11.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total family income</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total school expenditure per child</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25.31**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total school expenditure for all children</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.44***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. **p≤ 0.01

What these findings show is that families with children in the public school report having more financial worry about not being able to pay expenses and bills and also report having more financial trouble paying for expenses than families with children in the LFPS. However this finding seems contradictory to the fact that these families also report having more financial help networks from which they can get help from to help pay expenses or to turn to if they were to lose their jobs. Perhaps this contradiction is easier to understand if we look at the basic demographics of the households as previously described in Table 17. Households with children in the public schools tend to be residents who have lived in Kibera longer compared to households with children in the LFPS who tend to be more recent migrants. Given this background then, it is perhaps more conceivable how the former group may have more financial help networks they feel they could draw from in the community compared to more recently
arrived migrants. However it is also important to recognize that households were self-reporting on these indicators of financial worry and financial trouble, and may have underreported the availability of help networks they could draw on as well as exaggerated the amount of financial worry and trouble they had.

As for total school expenditure, families with children in LFP schools report as having more expenditure per child ($\chi^2 = 25.31, p \leq 0.01$) as well as total school expenditure for all children ($\chi^2 = 22.44, p \leq 0.01$) compared to their counterparts in the public school. The fact that some households in the low-fee schools may be paying more in fees than households in the public school may have contributed to the reported higher expenditure per child. Also in this study households in the low-fee schools also had more children than the households in the public school (see Table 17). This may help explain why these households may also have higher total school expenditure for all children.

**Family social capital.**

Family social capital measures the interactions and relationships in the family. Out of the seven continuous family social capital indicators examined, only two appeared to be significant: the amount of verbal encouragement given to children, and the number of shared activities. Table 22 shows that children in public school reportedly receive more verbal encouragement than children in LFP schools ($t= 2.65, p \leq 0.01$). On the other hand, children in LFP schools report higher number of shared family activities than children in public school. Of the 22 family social capital categorical indicators examined, significant differences were found for seven of the indicators. Table 23 presents the results for these indicators.
Table 22

Comparison of Public and Low-Fee Private Groups on Family Capital Continuous Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Public M (SD)</th>
<th>Private M (SD)</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared activities</td>
<td>2.61(1.82)</td>
<td>3.08(1.57)</td>
<td>-1.97*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time with extended family</td>
<td>13.77(13.12)</td>
<td>13.39(12.67)</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of single parenting</td>
<td>8.93(4.51)</td>
<td>7.50(4.75)</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with homework</td>
<td>2.74(2.56)</td>
<td>3.05(2.69)</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal encouragement</td>
<td>3.29(1.17)</td>
<td>2.83(1.34)</td>
<td>2.65**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of children under age 18</td>
<td>3.68(1.70)</td>
<td>3.79(2.15)</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of school related interactions</td>
<td>14.28(21.43)</td>
<td>10.56 (15.98)</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. *p ≤ 0.05, **p ≤ 0.01
Table 23

Comparison of Public and Low-Fee Private Groups on Family Capital Categorical Indicator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Public % by category</th>
<th>Private % by Category</th>
<th>chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of empathy for child’s needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Child’s health</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Child’s relationship with friends</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Child’s relationship with parent</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Child’s relationship with other parent</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Child’s feelings about himself</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Child’s relationship with siblings</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s place of work</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>10.71*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations for child’s education</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How far child will go academically</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to child</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>12.34*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of time living with child</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>5.38*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of time other parent living with child</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>7.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>13.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people in the house</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years living in current home</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years living in Kibera</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>23.20***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of mother</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>8.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting status</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>3.67*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of school-going children</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of primary school-going children</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of extended family members living in the home</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p ≤ 0.05, **p ≤ 0.01, ***p < 0.001

One, mother’s place of work was significant. Families with children in public school had a higher percentage of mothers who worked from home (62.4%) compared to only 41% of the families with children in LFP schools ($\chi^2 = 10.71$, $p \leq 0.05$). The second construct that was
significant was for the numbers of years the parent/caregiver has been living with the child. Families with children in public school had more parents who had lived with them all their lives (89%) compared to families with children in LFP schools (77%). While this was significant for both primary female caregivers/mothers as well as fathers/male guardians, the results for fathers/male guardians had 71 missing responses for this item, and so needs to be interpreted with caution.

Fourth, there were more children who were going to LFP schools who were living with caregivers, or were orphaned and living with other guardians ($\chi^2 = 5.38, p \leq 0.05$) than those in public schools. Fifth, families with children in public school appear to have been living in Kibera for a longer time than those with children in LFP schools. Only 11% of families with children in public school have been living there for 5 years or less, with most families living there for a longer period. There were more newcomer families compared to 25% of families with children in LFP schools for a similar period ($\chi^2 = 23.30, p \leq 0.001$). Sixth, parenting status differed significantly among the families as well as there were more dual parents (67.9%) in public schools compared to 55.0% in LFP schools ($\chi^2 = 3.67, p \leq 0.05$). Finally, there seemed to be a significant difference in terms of ethnicity of families in the two groups. There were more Nubian parents with children in public school than in LFP school ($\chi^2 = 13.20, p \leq 0.05$).

Community social capital.

Community social capital measures the relationships and interactions of the household members with other residents living in Kibera as well as to local social and community institutions. T-tests were conducted on seven community social capital continuous indicators. However, none of the seven appeared to be significant as reported in Table 24.
Table 24

*Comparison of Public and Low-Fee Private Households on Community Capital Continuous Indicators*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Public M (SD)</th>
<th>Private M (SD)</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considerations for school choice</td>
<td>1.95 (0.49)</td>
<td>1.83 (0.43)</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of school</td>
<td>3.17 (0.36)</td>
<td>3.21 (0.52)</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support networks</td>
<td>2.37 (0.65)</td>
<td>2.28 (0.60)</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood problems</td>
<td>1.48 (0.40)</td>
<td>1.49 (0.44)</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of visits</td>
<td>2.60 (3.99)</td>
<td>2.34 (2.88)</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust and safety</td>
<td>1.80 (0.67)</td>
<td>1.84 (0.71)</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic engagement</td>
<td>1.71 (0.30)</td>
<td>1.72 (0.30)</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nine categorical indicators were considered for community social capital, of which two were significant as presented in Table 25. The first construct was help received from group membership. More families with children in LFP schools reported that they received help from group membership compared to families with children in public schools. 65.1% of households with children in the public school report that they have no help compared with only 42% for those with children in LFP schools ($\chi^2=11.64$, $p \leq 0.01$).

The second construct that was significant was school choice processes. Families were asked in deciding where to send their child to school if they engaged in a number of decision-making process steps such as visiting the school, talking to the teachers or other parents. More families with children in LFP schools (67%) appear to engage in at least four or more steps in their decision-making process compared to families with children in the public school (49.5%). Households were asked if they only visited the specific school, if they talked to the head teacher/proprietor, if they visited several schools in the area to compare schools, if they talked to
other parents who had children enrolled in the school, if they asked the child for his/her preference and if they asked to see the school’s performance records. There was a statistically significant difference between the two groups of households ($\chi^2 = 10.90, p \leq 0.01$).

**Table 25**

*Comparison of Public and Low-Fee Private Households on Community Capital Categorical Indicators*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Public % by category</th>
<th>Private % by category</th>
<th>chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of close friends</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>6.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood as a place to raise children</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality across group membership</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support networks for advice on selecting schools</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>8.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who made final choice</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support networks for advice on child</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group membership</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help received from group membership</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>14.26**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School choice process</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>10.90*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe places for children to play</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p $\leq 0.05$; **p $\leq 0.01$

**Multivariate Analysis**

Of the 62 variables that were subjected to bivariate analyses, twenty-four of these correlates were found to be significant in their relationship to the dependent variable of school
choice. These twenty-four variables were then further examined for consideration for inclusion in the multivariate regression analysis. The purpose of this multivariate analysis was to determine if we could correctly predict the household decision making structures of families based on their human capital, family capital, community capital, financial capital as well as spiritual capital variables. For this multivariate analysis, I selected binary logistical regression as it appeared to be the best fit to answer the research questions I posed given that the dependent/outcome variable (choice of either public or LFP School) was binary and the independent social capital variables were a combination of categorical and continuous predictors.

In this logistic regression analysis, the proposed model tries to correctly classify households into those with children in public school, and those with children in LFP schools. For this analysis, I used the Enter method rather than the sequential or stepwise. Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) recommend that the Enter method is preferred when there are no specific hypotheses about the order or importance of the predictor variables. The questions this logistic regression analysis will answer are: (a) Do these social capital variables predict which of the two categories on the dependent variable a household falls into?; (b) Are all of the independent variables predicting the outcome or only some of them.; and (c) Which of the independent social capital variables are most useful for predicting the outcome?

Although there were 23 variables that were significant, not all of them were subjected to the multiple regressions. The variable “Number of year’s father is living with child” was one of the variables deleted as there were a large number of missing responses for this question. The remaining 22 variables were screened for high levels of collinearity. Multicollinearity is a problem where two or more of the independent variables are highly correlated. One way to determine collinearity is to examine the tolerance statistic and the variance inflation factor (VIF).
When tolerance statistics are close to zero, the variable is considered to be highly correlated with another variable or other variables in the analysis (Stevens, 2002). On the other hand, the larger the VIF statistic, the more likely there is multicollinearity. A VIF statistic is considered problematic if it is larger than 10 (Stevens, 2002). In the preliminary screening for multicollinearity all tolerance statistics were above the desired value of 0.1 except for economic hardship and financial worry. Similarly all variables had VIF values below 10 indicating multicollinearity was not present, except for the two variables of economic hardship and financial worry. Since both these variables were highly intercorrelated, the variable financial worry was dropped as the variable economic hardship captured a broader number of similar response items.

Thus, the final logistic regression model included 20 variables related to the five dimensions of social capital examined in this study. The total sample size was 209, of which, all of the cases were included in the analysis. A logistic regression analysis was then conducted to predict household decision-making structures using school choice as a predictor. A test of the full model against a constant only model was statistically significant, indicating that the social capital predictors as a set reliably distinguished between households with children in public school and those with children in LFP schools. The model accurately classified 81.3% of the cases. Table 26 provides a summary of the logistic regression analysis. The table also presents the regression coefficients for all the variables included in the logistic model.
Table 26

Summary of Logistic Regression Analysis Predicting Household Decision Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Wald Statistic</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic hardship</td>
<td>-0.632</td>
<td>0.282</td>
<td>0.532</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.306, 0.924)</td>
<td>5.027</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help if lose job</td>
<td>-1.431</td>
<td>0.611</td>
<td>0.239</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.072, 0.791)</td>
<td>5.491</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total school expenses for all children</td>
<td>0.363</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>1.437</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1.033, 2.059)</td>
<td>3.906</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total school expenses per child</td>
<td>0.283</td>
<td>0.257</td>
<td>1.328</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.802, 2.198)</td>
<td>1.214</td>
<td>.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help if trouble paying bills</td>
<td>-0.178</td>
<td>0.547</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.287, 2.443)</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>.744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years living in Kibera (5 years or less)</td>
<td>2.034</td>
<td>0.815</td>
<td>7.653</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1.547, 37.754)</td>
<td>6.227</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years living in Kibera (6 to 11 years)</td>
<td>1.787</td>
<td>0.745</td>
<td>5.972</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1.386, 25.731)</td>
<td>5.750</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of shared activities</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>1.025</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.805, 1.304)</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>.843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of verbal encouragement</td>
<td>-0.269</td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>0.764</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.546, 1.070)</td>
<td>2.454</td>
<td>.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s place of work (at home)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.523</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.359, 2.786)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s place of work (full-time outside home)</td>
<td>1.579</td>
<td>0.860</td>
<td>4.850</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.899, 26.154)</td>
<td>3.373</td>
<td>.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s place of work (part-time outside home)</td>
<td>1.049</td>
<td>0.749</td>
<td>2.856</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.657, 12.407)</td>
<td>1.960</td>
<td>.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary caregiver relationship to child</td>
<td>-0.623</td>
<td>0.655</td>
<td>0.536</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.148, 1.935)</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>.341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years primary caregiver has been living with child</td>
<td>-0.386</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td>0.679</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.132, 3.507)</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>.644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (Nubian)</td>
<td>-2.595</td>
<td>1.298</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.006, 0.951)</td>
<td>3.995</td>
<td>.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting status</td>
<td>-0.994</td>
<td>0.477</td>
<td>0.370</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.145, 0.942)</td>
<td>4.345</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of knowing who child is with</td>
<td>-0.537</td>
<td>0.434</td>
<td>0.584</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.250, 1.368)</td>
<td>1.533</td>
<td>.216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of knowing what child is doing</td>
<td>0.525</td>
<td>0.392</td>
<td>1.690</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.784, 3.641)</td>
<td>1.795</td>
<td>.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s educational level</td>
<td>-0.255</td>
<td>0.234</td>
<td>0.775</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.490, 1.226)</td>
<td>1.185</td>
<td>.276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child in correct class for age group</td>
<td>-1.030</td>
<td>0.481</td>
<td>0.357</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.139, 0.917)</td>
<td>4.582</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help received from group membership</td>
<td>0.860</td>
<td>0.434</td>
<td>2.364</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1.010, 5.532)</td>
<td>3.935</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictor</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Odds Ratio</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
<td>Wald Statistic</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of steps taken in school selection</td>
<td>0.365</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>1.441</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1.013, 2.049)</td>
<td>4.128</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. CI = confidence interval for odds ratio (OR).*
Nagelkerke’s R of .587 indicated a strong relationship between prediction and grouping. Prediction success overall was 81 % for public and 81 % for LFP. The Wald statistics demonstrated that the following ten variables made a significant contribution to the prediction, controlling for the influences of the other predictors in the model.

The trouble a family has paying bills is a significant predictor (Wald = 5.027, p= 0.025). EXP (B) value of 0.632 indicates that when the amount of trouble a family has paying bills is raised by one unit; households are 1.88 times less likely to enroll in a LFP school.

The number of help networks the family can draw upon if they were to lose their jobs is a significant predictor (Wald = 5.491, p = 0.019). When the number of networks a family can call upon increases by one unit, the Exp (B) value of 1.431 indicates that they are then 4.18 times less likely to be categorized as having children in LFP schools.

The total school expenses for all children is also a significant predictor (Wald 3.906, p= 0.048). As the total school expenses for all the children in the family increases by one unit, the odds ratio of 1.437 signifies that they are 0.69 times more likely to be classified as having a child in LFP School.

The number of years a family has lived in Kibera is also a significant predictor. When the analysis was run with households living in Kibera for 21 years and above as a reference category, households who have been living in Kibera for five years or less (Wald = 6.227, p= 0.013), and households who have been living there between six and eleven years (Wald = 5.750, p=0.016) were found to be 0.13 (Exp (B) =7.643) and 0.17 (Exp (B) = 5.972) times more likely to enroll in LFP school. In other words, newer migrants were more likely to be classified as having children in the LFP schools.
The number of steps the family takes in school choice processes is a significant predictor (Wald, 4.128, p= 0.042). As the number of steps a household engages in increases in choosing a school, the odds ratio of 1.441 signifies that they are 0.70 times more likely to be classified as having a child in LFP schools.

The variable help from group membership is another significant predictor. The number of community groups that a household receives help from was a significant predictor of household decision making in the multivariate analysis (Wald = 3.935, p = 0.047). The odds ratio was 2.364 signifying that as the amount of help a household receives from community groups increases by one unit, households are 0.42 times more likely to be categorized as having children in LFP schools.

The likelihood of a child being in the correct class for his/her age group is also a significant predictor (Wald, 4.345, p= 0.037). As the likelihood of the child being in the correct class for his/her age increases by one unit, the odds ratio of 0.370 signifies that they are 2.70 times less likely to be classified as being in LFP schools.

Whether or not a household has dual parents is a significant predictor (Wald 4.345, p= 0.037). Dual parent households (Exp (B) = 0.370) are 2.70 times less likely to be classified as having a child in LFP schools.

Finally, ethnicity is a significant predictor (Wald = 3.995, p = 0.046). Nubian households are 13.3 times less likely to have a child enrolled in LFP schools compared to the other ethnic groups (Exp (B) =0.075).
Interrogating Capital, Habitus and Household Decision-Making

The purpose of the logistic regression analysis was to identify which households in this study were more likely to have children enrolled in public and children enrolled in the low fee private schools. The dependent variable was type of school (public and low fee private) and the independent variables were social capital variables that were significant in comparing the decision-making of the two types of households. The analysis shows that households are more inclined to have children enrolled in the low-fee private schools if they had higher total school expenses for all school-going children; were newer migrants to Kibera (less than five years and between six and eleven years); engaged in more steps in selecting a school and received help from group membership. Each of these factors is explored in detail below and mapped onto emergent themes from the qualitative data.

“I cannot afford the fees at the public school”.

The analysis of the logistic regression data from this study shows that households with children in low-fee private schools were more likely to be households that had higher total school expenses for all school-going children. While this finding suggests that households in this study who had children in the low-fee schools bore higher schooling costs than those with children in the public school, qualitative data from this study also points to a delineation of households based on differing motivations or habitus and capital.

Firstly, for many households in low-fee schools total schooling costs were indeed higher. As one parent noted “School fees and other expenses are higher in NFS” (Parent 19). There was also clear evidence of some households making huge sacrifices, and stretching their meagre income to enable their children to be enrolled in these low-fee private schools. The following transcripts highlight some of these sacrifices that households make even forgoing basic essentials.
such as food, especially when they have difficulty paying fees. Additionally the following comments also illustrate how pupils may be losing significant instruction and learning at school if they are continually being sent home till they are able to raise the required fees:

No one is helping me bring up these children. I am struggling alone by taking up casual jobs to support them through school. This affects them a lot. When for instance a child is chased away from school for non-payment of school fees that day’s lesson in lost. When they are chased away they have to stay at home sometimes for up to a week as I look for money to take them back to school. (Parent 6)

My husband is a casual worker at a factory in Industrial area. I am not employed so we have to share the little income that my husband gets with Malik. It is not easy for us but my brother sometimes helps with Malik’s school expenses. (Parent 12)

None of my children are sponsored. This means that I have to work extra hard and save as much as I can to take my children through school, by for example taking them to a cheap school I can afford. (Parent 14)

Given our low-income this means that when the child is sent home for fees I have to borrow from other people or have the child stay home until I am able to raise the fees. If the child was sponsored the fees would not be a problem and the little money that we get would be used for food. (Parent 11)

However, the qualitative data also points to a small number of households for whom the cost of the public school was higher than that of the low-fee private school. For example when asked why she did not enrol her child in the public school, one parent said, “I cannot afford the fees at the public school” (Parent 14). Qualitative data from this study paints a similar picture of some poorer households finding public schools even with FPE still financially inaccessible because of non-tuition, indirect costs as well as supply issues in urban informal settlements, as the following comments from parents exemplify:

First choice was public schools but there were too many school expenses, so could not afford it. (Parent, Survey #194)
Moved from public to private because the fee was quite high in the public and I had no other means to get the money. I had to send her to a private school. (Parent, survey #306)

First choice was public school, but it was too expensive. (Parent, Survey #93)

Sawamura and Sifuna (2008) in their Kenyan study attest to how these auxiliary costs (uniforms, desks, exam fees etc) in the public schools can be prohibitive for many slum households. However, given the heterogeneity of the low-fee school sector, it is possible that a child enrolled in a low-fee school that charges the lowest fee, offers fee concessions or is sponsored may effectively be in a school that is more affordable than the public school. The following single mother in this study whose child is enrolled in a low-fee school says, “I have no school related expenses as my child is sponsored” (Parent, survey #87). Further, this finding is perhaps less surprising when comparing it to a study by Ngware et al., (2009) in two urban poor settlements in Kenya comparing how different household characteristics impact school decisions. The data from their study shows that “better off” households were more likely to have children in the public school; whereas poorer households tended to send their children to low-fee private schools.

While it may seem counter-intuitive that despite higher total school expenses for all school-going children, some households are more inclined to enrol in low-fee schools, this pattern also suggests that these households may be wealthier households for whom school expenses were less of an impediment. For example, a research study examining household decisions around low-fee private schools in Punjab found households with higher income were more likely to educate their children irrespective of cost (Iram Hussain, Anwar & Akram, 2008). In this study less poor households may be choosing low-fee schools over public schools for quality reasons as suggested by the following response from a parent who had moved his
children between two different low-fee schools, “We always try to look for performing schools around the area” (Parent, Survey #163). Similarly, another parent said, “We moved from the public school to this private school- school is in the neighbourhood with good teachers and the fee is affordable” (Parent, Survey #303). Further, in this study, households with children in low-fee schools reported having more children that those in the public school In this light, it is perhaps more plausible why low-fee school households would report as having more total school expenses.

“I was a former pupil there”.

Logistic regression data shows that households who are newer migrants to Kibera are more likely to have children enrolled in low-fee schools. Figure 7 shows that longer term residents overwhelmingly seem to choose public schools, with more recent migrants choosing low-fee private schools. As the years a household has been in Kibera increases, we find that the number of households in the public school increases and the numbers for those in the low-fee school decreases. For example, for newer migrants or residents who have been living in Kibera for less or equal to 5 years, only 11% of the households have children in public school, compared to 25% with children in the low-fee private schools. For households who have been living in Kibera between 6 and 11 years, 20.2% are in the public school and 36% are in the low-fee schools. However for those longest term residents of 21 years and above, 33.9% were in the public school with only 11.0% in the low-fee schools.

Evidence from the qualitative data further confirms that there are distinct patterns of distribution of school type based on migrant category. This finding shares some similarities, though not entirely the same to that of other research on urban poor and educational decisions. In Cameron’s study for example, he found in two urban slum communities that there were more
recently arrived migrants in Dhaka, Bangladesh who were enrolled in NGO schools compared to government public schools (Cameron, 2010, 2012). Figure 7 captures this trend, showing how the groups vary in distribution by school type. Data from this study shows that longer time residents have a preference for public schools compared to newer migrants who are largely enrolled in low-fee schools. This disposition (habitus) may reflect several factor including previous educational experiences, reputation and a sense of familiarity with what they know or “taken for granted assumptions” (Bourdieu, 1994) of what “real” schools are. One parent for example said, “We chose this school because it has experienced and qualified teachers” (Parent, survey #201). For this parent his habitus affirmed the importance of a school as having qualified and experienced teachers, more than the quality of instruction this may translate into. Similarly, another parent said of the public school, “In the public school my children are performing well since they are taught by qualified teachers” (Parent, Survey #162).

**Figure 7.** Migrant category and school type.
Fieldwork data.
Another possibility for this trend is that longer term residents may have the social and cultural capital needed to navigate the system to access public schools, unlike the newer immigrants to Kibera. In a UNICEF study examining schooling patterns with slum residents in Bangladesh, Cameron (2012) arrives at a similar conclusion from his findings. He notes, “A lack of social connections and power are often given as arguments for why newly arrived migrants would be disadvantaged in education” (p. 12). In his study, he found that the poorest, the least educated and newly arrived migrants tended to send their children to NGO schools compared to state public or private schools (Cameron, 2010). While this contention suggests that newer migrants such as the Luo and Luhya may lack the required cultural, economic and social capital to access the public school, correspondingly it also suggests then that the low-fee schools may be the default option for some households. On the other hand, longer term residents also may have an internalizing habitus that public schools are better, as many of them may have gone to the same school themselves. This embodied habitus engenders a sense of loyalty and corresponds with findings from other studies such as Reay et al., (2007) where they find that in choosing schools some parents prioritize certain criteria such as school ethos above academic reputation (as cited in Walker & Clark, 2000), and in Walker and Clark’s (2000) own study with rural parents in England, they found newcomer parents had less commitment to place, unlike longer term residents who had a stronger allegiance to their local school. For this group of newer migrant households then, decision-making is a more strategic, intentional process—of selecting the best school and to these parents “…educational style and reproducing social advantage were more important to these parents than community loyalty” (Walker & Clark, 2000, p. 27). These patterns of loyalty can be explained from a familial habitus perspective which describes “the deeply ingrained system of perspectives, experiences, and predispositions family members
share” (Reay et al., 2005). This deeply ingrained habitus of longer term residents that they want to share with their children is illustrated in comments such as:

*I was an old student of Karuthi Primary so that influenced my choice. (Parent, Survey #009)*

*Chose Karuthi as it is a community-based school that was started by the Nubis and I am one of them so I like it. (Parent, Survey #027)*

*All my children have gone to this school. Both parents went to the same school. (Parent, survey #103)*

“I am the one who looked for this school”.

The logistic regression findings also point to households who engaged in more decision-making steps when selecting a school as being more likely to have children in low-fee schools. This statement suggests that these households in the low-fee schools were more actively engaged in the school decision-making process. These results are not too surprising given that there are fewer public schools in Kibera, and the decision-making process is inevitably more complex for low-fee schools that require more active engagement from households in terms of seeking out and evaluating information. This result was consistent with school choice literature examining household engagement in the choice process (Schneider, Teske & Marschall, 2000). On the other hand, considering that more newer migrants have children in the low-fee schools, the analysis also suggests a difference in the kinds of social networks utilized by newer and longer term residents. Newer migrants, who may not have the bridging and linking social capital to navigate the public school system, utilize looser networks or bonding capital to gain information to access the low-fee schools by seeking information from friends and neighbours. As these households are pushed out of the public school system, they have to access these networks and resources to
gain entry into the low-fee schools. For a number of households, and particularly mothers in the low-fee schools, they articulated this decision-pathway in the following ways:

*I would have wished my daughter to be in the public school but there was no admission.* (Parent, Survey #208)

*I am the one who looked for this school and got admission for the child after talking to the head teacher.* (Parent 14)

*I am the one who looked for this school and then told my husband about it. He did not object.* (Parent 6)

*I am the one who looked for this school, (Parent 7)*

“My church members advised me to bring my child here”.

In this study, help from group memberships was found to be a significant predictor in the logistic regression model. This finding corroborates parental choice literature that suggests informal networks are important (Goldring & Phillips, 2008). To understand group memberships, households were asked in the survey if in the last twelve months they had been an active member of any of the following types of groups: work related groups, community associations, women’s groups, religious groups, merry go rounds and credit/funeral groups (Question 83). Households were also asked if in the last 12 months they had received help from this group. Help received consisted not only of economic help, but also emotional help, as well as information and assistance in doing things. The importance of social capital in terms of membership in social networks and other social structures is highlighted here. As Goldring and Phillips (2008) suggest “The more parents have access to social capital through informal networks, the more likely they are to consider private schools” (p. 228). The data from this study shows that households with children enrolled in low-fee schools were clearly using their social networks to access resources
and gather information to gain admission into low-fee schools. Several parents alluded to these informal networks as sources of information in their decision-making when asked about how they selected the school:

*I was told about the good performance of the school by my neighbors living in this community.* (Parent 5)

*I chose Uhuru as was told by other parents that the school performs well.* (Parent survey #58)

*My neighbors whose children are in the school are the ones who told me about it and encouraged me to take the child to the school.* (Parent 12)

Coleman (1988) considers these information channels a form of social capital. Bellamy (1994), for example found parents, and in particular mothers acted as ‘information brokers” in selecting post-secondary education schools for their children by actively navigating the process, of seeking information and sifting through it. This pattern is also demonstrated in this study as the survey data points to how it was overwhelmingly mothers who were the primary decision-makers.

Additionally, households also demonstrated that how they relied on or used spiritual capital to activate some information channels. A number of households spoke of these ties.

*My church members advised me to bring my child here.* (Parent 14)

*I consulted the imam for advice on school choice.* (Parent, Survey data)

*I always go to church with the children and come back home with them. I want them to grow up in the church. Here in this school there are children from different religions. My son has not told me anything unusual or different as far as religion that is done there.* (Parent 7)
Nonetheless, Bellamy notes that “The volume and quality of social capital as information channels, however, was contingent upon the level of cultural capital, in the form of educational qualifications possessed by the parent” (Bellamy, 1994, p. 124). Several findings noted above are consistent with previous research.

**Ethnicity**

Because the multivariate analysis suggested ethnicity was a significant predictor in the logistic regression analysis, I ran further crosstab analysis to determine if ethnicity was significantly correlated with five specific categorical variables: mother’s education level, number of years living in Kibera, religion, choice of school, and school type (public or LFPS). Households in this study were identified as belonging to one of the following seven ethnic groups: Kamba, Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Nubian, Kisii and Others. Table 27 provides an analysis of the chi-square tests.

**Table 27**

*Ethnicity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators Correlating with Ethnicity</th>
<th>chi-square</th>
<th>p - value</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s Education Level</td>
<td>20.927</td>
<td>.283</td>
<td>Mother’s education level categorized as no education/primary incomplete, primary complete, Secondary incomplete and secondary complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years living in Kibera</td>
<td>74.192</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>Years living in Kibera categorized in years as less or equal to 5, Between 6 and 11, Between 12 and 20, 21 and above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>159.707</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>Religion categorized as Catholic, Christian Protestant, Muslim, Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Choice (Which of the 5 schools)</td>
<td>40.067</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>School Choice categorized as Karuthi Public School, Three Bells LFPS, St.Augustus LFPS, Watoto Centre LFPS, Uhuru Educational Centre LFPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Type (public or LFPS)</td>
<td>28.861</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>School type categorized as Public or LFPS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the five indicators examined, four were found to be statistically significant. Only mother’s education level was not significantly correlated with ethnicity (see Table 28). For years living in Kibera, Nubians seem to be the longest residents with 75% having lived in Kibera 21 or more years, followed by Kikuyu (44.4%) and Kisii (22.2%). As for newcomers to Kibera, 33.3% in the “Other ethnicities” category report to have lived there for less or equal to 5 years, followed by Luhya (26.5%) and Kikuyu (22.2%).
Table 28

Migrant Category and Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Less or equal to 5 years (%)</th>
<th>Between 6 and 11 years (%)</th>
<th>Between 12 and 20 years (%)</th>
<th>21 years and above (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kamba</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luhya</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nubian</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisii</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for religion, Kamba’s are predominantly Christian protestant (54.2%), Kikuyu’s are predominantly Catholic (44.4%), Luhya’s are overwhelmingly Christian protestant (79.6%), and Luo’s are equally distributed between Catholics (47.4%) and Protestants (47.4%). Nubians are primarily Muslim (96.4%) and Kisii’s are largely Protestant (66.7%). The fact that Nubians are primarily Muslim, and in this sample of households were predominantly enrolled in the public school would provide evidence as to why there were more Muslim children in the public school compared to the low-fee schools.

In terms of school choice, there emerges a pattern of distribution across the five schools based on ethnicity as well. The public school seems to attract residents of Kibera who are primarily Nubian (82.1%) and Kikuyu (100%), Three Bells LFPS has a population that is primarily Luhya (4.1%), whereas Uhuru Centre has a predominantly Luo (20.5%) population. St. Augustus is primarily preferred by “Other Ethnicities” (25%), while Watoto Centre is primarily Kisii (33.3%) and “Other Ethnicities” (33.3%).
Finally in comparing school type and ethnicity, the data suggests that there is pattern of choice closely tied to ethnicity. In comparing enrollment in public and LFPS, the percentage of enrollment for Luhya (57.1%), Luo (57.7%), Kisii (55.6%) and Others (75%) tend to be higher in LFPS than in the public school, whereas for Nubians (82.1%), Kikuyu (100%) and Kamba (66.7%) the numbers are higher in the public school than in the LFPS (see Figures 8 and 9).

*Figure 8. Distribution of households in public school in the study by ethnicity. Fieldwork data.*
Figure 9. Distribution of households in low-fee private schools in the study by ethnicity. Fieldwork data.

The patterns emerging from the analysis of the correlation between ethnicity and these five categorical variables appear to suggest that school choice decision-making among the households in this study living in Kibera is tied to notions of ethnicity, and should be further explored. This centrality of ethnicity within the discourse of education and development in Kenya is not surprising, as many other researchers have suggested that inequalities in Kenya can be explained by examining patterns of ethnicity in other administrative areas (Kimalu et. al., 2002; Noyoo, 2000). This pattern also corresponds with research findings offered in several other studies looking specifically at educational inequalities, particularly in the Kenyan context. Alwy and Schech (2004) for example report strong ethnic inequalities in education in Kenya, and
suggest that ethnicity should be given more dominance in analyzing education policies in the country.

What the data also suggests is the emergence of a more nuanced pattern of decision-making amongst households. Choice of school for some households follows a less strategic decision-making pathway as in the case of Nubians and longer-term residents who may choose for loyalty, as opposed to primarily quality reasons. Where there is loyalty, exit from the organization, or in this case the public school is reduced for these households (Hirschman, 1970). Table 29 also suggests that school decisions may be ethnically motivated with the sorting of certain ethnic groups into particular schools. For example in this study Luo’s (57.1%) tend to be drawn to Uhuru Educational Centre. On the other hand, there is a higher percentage of Nubians (21.1%) enrolled in Karuthi Public School, relative to the other schools in the study. These patterns confirm previous research which claims that decision-making is mediated by gender, class and ethnic differences (Reay, 1988), and confirms yet other research that has demonstrated that school choice increases the risk of stratification by race and class (Elacqua, 2006; Henig, 1994).
Table 29
*Ethnicity, Migrant Category and Schools*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity (%)</th>
<th>Karuthi Primary School, Public School</th>
<th>Three Bells, LFPS</th>
<th>Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS</th>
<th>St. Augustus, LFPS</th>
<th>Watoto Centre, LFPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kamba</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luhya</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nubian</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisii</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migrant Category (%)</th>
<th>Karuthi Primary School, Public School</th>
<th>Three Bells, LFPS</th>
<th>Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS</th>
<th>St. Augustus, LFPS</th>
<th>Watoto Centre, LFPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less or equal to 5 years</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 6 and 11 years</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 12 and 20 years</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years and above</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary and Conclusion**

In this chapter I have answered the question of which households send their children to low-fee private schools by comparing the demographic data for those with children in public school, and those with children in low-fee private schools. I have also shown what financial, human, family, spiritual and community level social capital predictor variables have differentiated between these two groups of families. Using logistic regression analysis, I also created a model to categorize these two types of households into households likely to be in the public schools, and households likely to be in the low-fee private schools.
Several important findings emerge from the analysis of the data in this chapter. Firstly, households in public and low-fee schools differed in their stock of capital in very specific ways. Households in low-fee schools were more likely to have higher religious community attendance. There were more Muslim households in the public school in this study compared to the low-fee schools. As for human capital, the education level of mothers in low-fee schools in this study was found to be lower than those in the public school. Further, in the low-fee schools it was found that there were more pupils who were classified as being in the incorrect class for their age, compared to the pupils in the public school. Households also differed in their financial capital with more households in the public school reporting that they had more financial worry and financial trouble. On the other hand, households in the low-fee schools reported that they had fewer networks to draw upon for help to pay bills and help with expenses if they were to lose their jobs. Families with children in the low-fee schools also reported having more total school expenditure compared to families in the public school. Of the family capital indicators, it appeared that longer term residents of Kibera were more likely to choose the public school and newer migrants were more likely to be in low-fee schools. There were also significant differences in terms of ethnicity and selection of school, with there being a significant number of Nubian households in the public school. Finally, in terms of community capital, there were more families with children in low-fee schools who reported receiving help from group memberships as well as engaging in more steps in selecting a school compared to households in the public school.

The logistic regression analysis shows that households are more inclined to have children enrolled in the low-fee private schools if they had higher total school expenses for all school-
going children, were newer migrants to Kibera (less than five years and between six and eleven years), engaged in more steps in selecting a school and received help from group membership.

Data from the qualitative analysis further confirms and supports this quantitative data by showing that households differed in their level of engagement and motivation in selecting a school. For some households in the low-fee schools, the cost of the public school was higher because of auxiliary costs associated with schooling. Households in the low-fee schools who were newer migrants also appeared to draw upon informal social ties, and social capital to make decisions around schools. These information channels differed from those that were activated by longer term residents and pointed to differing notions of capital and habitus between the two types of households. In the next chapter I will answer the questions of how households make decisions around schools, and more importantly explore reasons for why households choose low-fee schools over public schools.
Chapter Eight
Unravelling the Complexities of Household Decision-making

The decision to send a child to school and to a particular type of school is complex due to the complexity of the range of considerations to be accounted for (Kitaev, 1999).

Introduction

In the previous chapter I described some of the patterns that emerged in examining the profiles of households in the survey conducted for this study who are enrolled in either the public schools or the low-fee private schools. In this chapter I focus especially on the household perspectives on decision-making and examine how this decision-making is a result of their familial habitus or “the complicated compilation of values, attitudes and knowledge base the households possess” (Reay et al., 2005, p. 62). In particular, I examine some of the reasons for decision-making and explore how these decisions are made.

This chapter aims to answer the following two questions:

a) How do households navigate and decide between different schools?
b) Why are households using low-fee private schools instead of the public schools?

The chapter begins with an analysis of how households navigate between schools. Then I examine household narratives of choice to try and understand why households choose, as well as their level of satisfaction with their school. I do this in particular by comparing households with children in the public schools to those with children in low-fee schools. Next, I construct profiles of two types of decision-makers, and show a mapping of their different decision-making pathways. The chapter concludes by drawing upon the data to formulate some implications for household decision-making.
Navigating the Decision-Making Process

To better understand the process of how households surveyed in this study made school decisions, I asked them several specific questions on the survey and in in-depth interviews which were intended to elicit responses to the following questions: (a) the number of steps they took in deciding on a school, (b) whom they consulted in making a selection, and (c) who made the final decision. This next section examines the responses to each of these questions in more detail.

Steps taken.

In comparing the number of steps taken by public and LFP parents in making a school choice decision, the bivariate analysis (from the previous chapter) revealed that this difference was statistically significant. LFP parents clearly seemed to engage in a greater number of steps in making a choice than their counterparts in the public school. In Table 30 below I examine each of the steps separately to describe them. Parents were asked in deciding where to send their child to school, if they had engaged in the following specific steps.

What is clear from examining the separate steps is that LFP parents tended to be more active in their choice process, perhaps because of the broader number of LFP schools from which they could choose. As there are fewer public schools in the area, and consequently limited choice options, perhaps it is not surprising that it is the LFP parents who tended to visit more schools, talk to more parents, and ask their children for input around decision-making.
Table 30

Steps Taken in Choosing a School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps Taken</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>LFP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visit the specific school</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to the head teacher/proprietor</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit several schools</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to other parents they knew who had children in the school</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask their child for his/her preference</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask to see/consider the school’s performance records</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.**

a Total and percentage more than hundred as respondents selected all applicable categories.

**Hot knowledge.**

In understanding household decision-making, I wanted to know who was consulted in the decision-making process. Parents were asked to indicate who was consulted in all the mentioned categories in Table 31. Not only did this provide a good indication of which social networks were used in the decision-making process, but also it provided a count of the number of people who were consulted to indicate density of connections. Social networks continue to be a source of information in making school decisions. This analysis is similar to Ball and Vincent (1998) who report on the importance of “grapevine knowledge,” or ‘hot knowledge’ in parental decision-making.
Table 31

Who Did You Turn to For Advice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Public Frequency</th>
<th>Public %</th>
<th>LFP Frequency</th>
<th>LFP %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend/neighbour</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/head teacher</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other relative</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of child’s grandparents</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor/Priest</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent of child’s friend</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s other parent if not living the same home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.

*Total and percentage more than hundred as respondents selected all applicable categories.

The final word.

In both public and LFP schools, the data shows that it is overwhelmingly the mother who made the final school choice decision. There is a marked difference in terms of both parents making the decision, with 28% in the public school and only 10% in the LFP. The remaining categories including friends/neighbors, teachers and parents of the child’s friends all had comparable responses (Table 32). Once again this finding is similar to what is largely reported in literature that it is mothers who are primary school decision-makers (Chege & Sifuna, 2006; Delhi, 1999; Kiluva-Ndunda, 2001; Leach, 2000; Reay, 1998). Greater salience needs to be assigned to the gendered dimensions of decision-making.
### Table 32

**Who Made the Final Decision?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>LFP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife/mother</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend/neighbor</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other relative</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of child’s grandparents</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/head teacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent of child’s friend</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>113</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.**

Total and percentage more than hundred as respondents selected all applicable categories.

Qualitative data from surveys and interviews offer further insight into how households in the public and low-fee schools navigate the decision process. This data confirms the findings from the quantitative data that ‘grapevine’ or ‘hot knowledge’ figured prominently in the decision-making process for both types of households. Typical comments offered by households include the following:

*I was told about the good performance of the school by my neighbors living in this community. (Parent 5, interview data, LFPS)*

*My friends whose children are in the school are the ones who told me about it and encouraged me to take the child to the school. (Parent 12, interview data, Karuthi Public School)*

*My children like this school since most of their friends in the neighbourhood go to the same school. (Parent, survey#197)*
Public school was first choice but heard from other parents how well Uhuru was performing so opted for it. (Parent, survey #132)

Another parent also spoke of the element of competitiveness in her decision-making. She said:

The community around me values education and people are always competing to have their children perform well. So I decided to take my child to a good school that would ensure good academic performance. (Parent13, Interview data, Karuthi Public School)

What these comments suggest is that many households in this study rely on social networks to make school decisions. In this regard more low-fee households seem to rely on these networks (26%) compared to 11.9% in the public school households (Table 33) Lee, Croninger and Smith (1996) in their research on choice similarly contend that “Families rely on anecdotal information or seemingly superficial assessments of school quality because to do otherwise requires gathering substantial amounts of information, much of which is not easily obtained from schools” (p. 72). As demonstrated from the previous chapter, there are more new migrants with children enrolled in low-fee schools. These households may not have the experience and engagement with the schools in the community that would help them make informed decisions about schools; hence these networks become important sources of information in navigating the decision-making process. These informal networks also confirm the importance of social capital in household decision-making (Goldring & Phillips, 2008). What this also implies is that there may be ethnic implications to these decisions leading to schools being segregated by ethnicity and social capital.
Analyzing Decision Pathways

The next sets of questions were intended to answer the question, “How did households actually go about making decisions regarding schools?” Here what was of particular interest was not only how they chose among public and private schools, and what steps they took in navigating the choice process, but also what considerations of school quality were most important to them and how satisfied were they with their school.

Beggars can’t be choosers.

The first set of three questions was intended to understand the movement between schools that was taking place in this study sample. I was firstly interested to know if some households used both school systems i.e., public and LFP. Table 33 shows that a very small number of households from both school systems have children in both school types, with 7.3% from the public school and 6% from the LFP school sector. Overall most households are still only using either public or LFP.

Table 33

Do You Have Some Children in Public and Some in LFP School?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Public Frequency</th>
<th>Public %</th>
<th>LFPS Frequency</th>
<th>LFPS %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second question was intended to find out what type of movement of households there had been between the two school systems since the introduction of FPE in 2003. I asked if they had moved their children from either public to LFP or from LFP to public in the past 4 years. From the responses in Table 34, slightly more households in public (28.4%) appear to have moved their children between the two school systems, compared to 20% in the LFP school
sector. Of the 51 households (24.4%) that were in this category, a follow-up question revealed that there was a higher movement from the private to the public school system. Thirty-two households moved their children from the private to the public school system, and the remaining 19 moved their children to the private school system from a public school.

Table 34

*In the Past 4 Years Have You Moved Your Children Between Public and LFP Schools, or Between LFP and Public Schools?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Public to LFPS</th>
<th>LFPS to Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having determined that almost 30% of households with children in public school had moved their children between public and private, and similarly 20% of households with children in LFP had also moved their children between public and private schools, the next question was to understand the reasons for the movement. Table 35 presents some of the responses that the parents provided.
Table 35

*Why Have You Moved Your Children Between Public and LFP Schools, or Between LFP and Public Schools?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Public to LFPS</th>
<th></th>
<th>LFPS to Public</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School fees</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal migration</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Primary Education</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline problem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School refused admission</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy with the school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External migration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Reason</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While motivations for moving between schools vary for households with children in public and the LFP schools, both groups cite school fees as one of the main reasons for moving between the public and low-fee schools. This finding is similar to that of Oketch, Mutisya and Sagwe (2012).

While 35.3% of households in the public school moved to low-fee schools, and 27.2 % of households moved from the low-fee school to the public school, this finding also points to how households in the slum are differentially positioned financially and further confirms findings from the previous chapter that for some households the public school is still too expensive even with FPE, and similarly for some households the costs in the low-fee school is a burden to them financially. Focus group and interview data from this study suggest that many households in the
slum moved from NFS to the public schools when FPE was introduced. However, when the numbers in the classrooms swelled, many became disillusioned with what they perceived to be a dilution in the quality of education as the teacher was overwhelmed with the number of pupils in the class, which was up to 100 pupils. As a result households started moving back to the low-fee private schools. Several research studies document this pupil mobility after FPE (Heyneman & Stern, 2013; Ngaware et al., 2008; Oketch et al., 2010, Tooley et al., 2013). This group of parents typically moved for quality reasons. Some illustrative comments are provided as follows:

*Moved from NFS to public. Children are taught well in non-formal schools because there are not many in one class (Parent, survey #201, Karuthi Public)*

*Moved children from public school because it was overcrowded. (Parent, Survey #46, Three Bells, LFPS)*

A final question to gather information about movement was to understand if there had also been movement between LFP schools. I asked parents if they had moved their children between different LFP schools within the same four year period. Eighteen percent of parents using LFP schools report having moved between different LFP schools, and a very small number (6%) in the public school also had moved their children between different LFP schools before choosing the current public school (Table 36).

**Table 36**

*In the Past 4 Years Have You Moved Your Children Between Different LFP Schools?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Public Frequency</th>
<th>Public %</th>
<th>LFP Frequency</th>
<th>LFP %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A further follow-up question was also posed to find out why there was movement between different LFP schools. Parent responses are tabulated in Table 37. While the relative importance of the main three vary across the two groups of households, it appears that the reasons themselves are the same for both groups. These are affordability, quality of education and internal migration, or in other words moving from a rural to urban context. The one other common reason for movement between LFP schools for the two groups was the issue of sponsorship.
Table 37

Why Have You Moved Your Children between Different LFP schools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th></th>
<th>LFP</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordability</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal migration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy with the management of the school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No class beyond Class 5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems in previous school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What this data suggests is that pupil mobility is higher in low-fee schools (18%) compared to public schools (6%). Qualitative data supports these reasons for mobility. For example, parents noted quality considerations for their move.

*Moved from St. Joseph’s to Silver Bells because the educational standard was low.* (Parent, survey #302)

Parents also offered reasons that showed some instability in low-fee schools. For example, the following parent explained the reason why they changed schools,

*Moved from Tuami to Luna because there was a fight over the ownership of the plot where the school was located.* (Parent, Survey #304)

**Choosers and losers.**

It is unclear in the case of school choice options by low-income families if it is the families who are exercising agency in their selection of schools for their children, or if it is the schools who are selecting families by perhaps turning families away. In this next section I
explore the set of questions that were intended to examine whether or not the current school was the family’s first choice, and if it wasn’t what was and what were some impediments or obstacles for admission. Finally I also asked families why they chose their current school.

When asked if the current school was their first choice, roughly comparable numbers from both groups of parents emerged. 24.8% of parents in public school said it was not their first choice, and 24% of parents in LFP schools similarly said that the current school was not their first choice (see Table 38). I then asked a follow-up question to find out what their first choice was, if the current school wasn’t. Table 39 shows that 22% of families in the public school cited their preference for another public school in the area. For these households Karuthi was a second or default option as evidence from qualitative responses also demonstrates. Their preference was for Aioli school which was a high performing public school in the area. This school would have been inaccessible to many of these households prior to FPE. as one parent said:

*Public schools are hard to find. Most of their head teachers are also corrupt. Some public schools were also too expensive previously and even now. Previously Aioli primary head teacher used to ask KSh10,000 and this was difficult to raise for most of us. (Parent interview, Karuthi Public School)*

Paradoxically, even with FPE, Aioli remains inaccessible to many slum households who found themselves being turned away by the school’s organizational habitus. Gewirtz, Ball and Bowe (1995) argue that “Choice is directly and powerfully related to social class differences” (p. 55). In this case, these households that did not have the cultural capital that was valued by the school were disadvantaged by the school. As another parent noted:

*Aioli was first choice but could not get in because procedures were too many and hard for the parent. Head teacher was never there and needed to be bribed which the parents says she could not afford. (Parent, Survey #001)*
The head teacher did not want to associate with poor parents and so turned us away. (Parent, Survey)

Aioli was first choice but could not get in as the headmistress was not very happy with the large number of pupils coming in as a result of FPE and she refused to take some pupils claiming the school was already full. (Parent, Survey)

Table 38

Was This Current School Your First Choice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Public Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>LFP Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 39

If This Current School Was Not Your First Choice, What Was?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public School (for those in LFP school)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>LFP Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public School (for those in LFP school)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another LFP school in the area</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another Public school in the area</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand for household in low-fee schools, 18% indicated that their first choice was a public school. For these households, Free Primary Education has not made public schools more affordable. Repeatedly, parents voiced that the cost of the school made it unaffordable.

Illustrative comments are as follows:

First choice was public school, but school too expensive. (Parent Survey #093, #094)

In public school you have to buy desks, full uniform before admission. It was too expensive. (Parent, Survey #172)
Another related point about these households is that their decision patterns reveal a cultural capital and habitus differentiation. Households in the public school who were unable to access their first choice were aspiring to a better-performing school, while the households in the low-fee schools on the other hand were pushed out of a less desired public school into low-fee schools that were the cheapest. This differentiation also alludes to stratification by social class.

A further question that was asked was, “Why could you not get into your first choice?” Both groups of parents cited cost as the main inhibiting factor, followed by the school being too full. Table 40 presents the other reasons given for not being able to get into the school of their first choice.

**Table 40**

*Why Could You Not Get Into Your First Choice?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Public School Households</th>
<th>LFP School Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School refused</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School too expensive</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School too full</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School had high entrance standards</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission process complex and head teacher wanted to be bribed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings in this school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using Bourdieu’s theoretical framework to analyze these results, it is apparent that the study showed that parents’ habitus did not resonate with institutional expectations. These households did not have the necessary cultural capital to help them navigate their children’s schooling in their choice school. These parent responses show how they are being pushed out of
the public system either through costs, complex admission processes or by other subtle exclusionary practices such as needing to pay a bribe in order to be admitted to the school.

**Narratives of choice**

Yet another question I asked parents to try and understand how they navigate the school landscape was, "In deciding where to send your child to school, please tell me how you would rate the following considerations?" Parents were read 10 statements to which they had to rate each one as either most important, important, not very important, or least important. In describing these considerations for choice in Table 41, I have combined the categories most important and least important, and the categories not very important and least important.

For public school households the three most important considerations were the school being safe, the school having good academic performance, and the school having flexible fee collection practices. On the other hand, for households in the low-fee schools these considerations were as follows: the academic performance of the school, the school being safe, flexible fee collection practices and a feeding program. What is observed is that both types of households shared common considerations for choice except for the feeding program which was not a key consideration for households in the public school.

When comparing household considerations for choice with actual stated reasons for choice (Table 41), the data shows that financial and practical considerations ranked higher than quality considerations. This distribution calls into question how households assess schools and what counts as quality indicators, but also confirms other research that households may not always choose for quality considerations. This data also brings into question the market ideology that choice drives competition, which in turn improves quality.
Table 41

Considerations in School Choice

|                                                                 | Most important and | Not very important and |
|                                                               | Important          | Least Important       |
|                                                               | Public Frequency   | Public % | LFP Frequency | LFP % | Public Frequency | Public % | LFP Frequency | LFP % |
| The school offers fee concessions                              | 89 81.6            | 90 90    | 20 18.4       | 10 10 |
| The school has a flexible fee collection practice              | 95 87.2            | 92 92    | 14 12.9       | 8 8   |
| The school is close to my home                                 | 94 86.2            | 71 71    | 15 13.8       | 29 29 |
| The school offers a feeding program                            | 76 69.7            | 92 92    | 33 30.2       | 8 8   |
| The school is run by a head teacher/proprietor I know         | 50 45.9            | 64 64.6  | 59 54.1       | 35 35.3 |
| The school has other children from my neighborhood             | 78 71.6            | 67 67    | 31 28.4       | 33 33 |
| The school is run in a way that corresponds to my faith        | 54 49.6            | 50 50    | 55 50.5       | 50 50 |
| The school has a clean environment                             | 85 78.7            | 76 76    | 23 21.3       | 24 24 |
| The school has good academic performance                       | 97 89              | 94 96.9  | 12 11.1       | 3 3.1 |
| The school is safe                                             | 104 96.3           | 91 92.8  | 4 3.7         | 9 7.1 |
Research shows that households may not always select a school based on what they state as important considerations for choice. To compare household responses, in this study households were also asked why they chose their current school. This was an open-ended survey question, and as I read through the responses provided, I coded the responses and then grouped the responses into related categories. Parent responses were grouped into six main categories: Practical considerations, access, school quality, financial considerations, community social capital, and peripheral reasons. The items in each category were then further summed to reflect the total response for that grouping. Table 42 presents the categories and the frequency of responses by school type. As these responses were open ended responses on the survey questionnaire, I report on frequencies and do not make any statistical significance claims about the data.
### Table 42

**Why Did You Choose This School?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for choice</th>
<th>Public (n= 109) %</th>
<th>LFP (n=100) %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Practical considerations (total)</strong></td>
<td>(40.9)</td>
<td>(25.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Safe</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Proximity</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Feeding program</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Other siblings in the school</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Access (total)</strong></td>
<td>(20.4)</td>
<td>(17.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Availability of space</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Easier admission</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. School quality (total)</strong></td>
<td>(20.4)</td>
<td>(46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Good discipline</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Good teaching</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Higher academic standards</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Good performance record</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Smaller class sizes</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. Financial considerations (total)</strong></td>
<td>(65.6)</td>
<td>(59.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Fee concessions</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Affordability</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Child sponsorship</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Flexible fee payment</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) FPE</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) School offered assistance</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V. Community Social Capital (total)</strong></td>
<td>(13.0)</td>
<td>(31.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Parent former pupil</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Other people recommended</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Attend community group here</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Teacher/Staff is a friend</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) School is community-based</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) School supportive of HIV/AIDS parents</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii) Neighbour’s child enrolled here</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(viii) Teacher/staff understanding</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VI. Peripheral Reasons (total)</strong></td>
<td>(4.2)</td>
<td>(6.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Child selected</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) No particular reason</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When comparing considerations for choice with the narratives of choice, several discrepancies emerge in terms of order of importance assigned to the given reasons by households. Both types of households had indicated when asked about their considerations for choice, that flexible fee collection at the school was third ranked in terms of importance for them. However when comparing this to their narratives of choice, financial considerations (65.6% for public school households and 59.0% for low-fee school households) emerged as the most important reason why they chose the current school. Next, for low-fee school households, school quality (46%) was the next important reason for selecting the current school. This had been their primary stated consideration for choice. For public school households 40.9% stated practical considerations (which included items such as safety, proximity, feeding program and other siblings in the school) as the second most important reason for selecting their current school. The school being safe had been the most important consideration for choice given by public school households. Finally, for low-fee school household’s, community social capital factors including recommendation by people in their social networks was the third important reason for selecting the current school (31%). None of the items in this category had been ranked as important when asked about their considerations for choice. For public school households school quality and access (20.4% respectively) emerged as the third important reason for selecting the current school. Public school households had ranked a school’s good academic performance as the second most important consideration for them.

In comparing the ranking of these categories among the two groups of parents is the level of consensus between the groups with financial consideration being the most important motivation for school choice for both groups of families. While the overall percentage is higher for the public school because of FPE, LFP school households demonstrate more focused
considerations for this category with school affordability being the main consideration. Figure 10 provides a comparison of reasons for selection of current school between households in the public school and households in the private schools.

**Figure 10. Reasons for choosing current school.**

*Fieldwork data.*

For low-fee households, practical considerations of choice which included safety, proximity, feeding programs and the convenience of having all children in the same school ranked highly as well. Quality of school and community social capital are two other categories that are more significant considerations for households in LFP school than in public school. However, for public school households, issues of access and the practical considerations for choice are more important than for households with children in LFP schools.
Interestingly for LFP households, school quality is a more important consideration than for those in the public school. Another significant difference is the relative importance given to community social capital for LFP households. As LFP households also tend to be households who are newer to Kibera, perhaps reliance on community networks is a more important source of information. Research that has examined the experiences of immigrant parents (e.g. Zhou & Bankston, 1998) has found that they access forms of capital rooted in their ethnic community.

Qualitative data from interviews and survey questions further support these reasons for choice of school. For households who were able to exercise choice, quality, cost and proximity were key considerations. As the following parent noted:

*The school performs really well and I would recommend it to other parents. The school fee is also not high in this school. The school is also near our home and I like it for this reason.* (Parent, Interview. Watoto Centre, LFPS)

Similarly, a mother said; when asked why she moved her child from the public to the low-fee school:

*This school is near my home and the fee here is affordable to me. The former school was far from home and it was not cheap too. It was a bit expensive for me.* (Parent interview, St.Augustus, LFPS)

The fact that proximity is an important consideration was also echoed several times by other respondents. One CSO noted:

*The distance of public schools too far. Small children and issue of security becomes a factor. Instead of a child travelling so far, better for a child to go to a NFS within Kibera, charging little money and offering quality education.* (Interview, CSO1)
When I asked another CSO what they thought parents looked for in a school, the response further corroborated what the survey data showed in terms of the importance of cost and proximity, but also quality considerations. They said:

*Distance from home to school, fees, does school have feeding program, does the school require a uniform. Some you can go with home clothes. Parents also look for performance of schools. They also look for a school that cares particularly for the smallest children. This slum is the biggest in Africa. There are so many orphans who are HIV positive. We also have so many widows. A woman who has a small business wants to know her child is safe and nearby when at school near the home. This encourages many parents to bring their children where there is security. Here we are surrounded by railway lines and have no roads to take the children to go beyond to those government schools. It is very risky to send a small child alone to go to school and come back. Security matters.* (Interview, CSO 2)

I also separately analyzed households’ reasons for choosing their current school by migrant category (Table 43) and ethnicity (Table 44) to see if there were any noteworthy correlations. From this analysis several points are worth highlighting. When comparing reasons for choice by migrant categories, school proximity and affordability appear to be inversely related. For newer migrants, affordability (47%) was more important than proximity of school (26.5%). For longer term migrants, sense of place was more important (33.3%) compared to affordability (21.4%). These findings further corroborate and confirm findings presented in the previous chapter that longer term migrants exhibited a stronger sense of loyalty to the local school. For newer migrants who did not have this sense of place as part of their habitus, affordability became the important utility consideration.
### Table 43

**Reasons for Choice by Migrant Category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Choosing School</th>
<th>Less or equal to 5 years</th>
<th>Between 6 and 11 years</th>
<th>Between 12 and 20 years</th>
<th>21 years and above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easier Admission</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-based</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to home</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordability</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of space</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent former pupil</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher academic standards</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other people recommended</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor’s children enrolled here</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child selected</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School offered assistance</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPE</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School offers feeding program</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good discipline</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School supportive of HIV parents</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience of having all children in same school</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School has good performance record</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School offers flexible fee payment</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher compassionate</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers and staff understanding</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good teaching</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School safe</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend community group here</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller class sizes</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reason</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/staff is a friend</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child sponsored at school</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 44

**Reasons for Choice by Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Choosing School</th>
<th>Kamba</th>
<th>Kikuyu</th>
<th>Luhya</th>
<th>Luo</th>
<th>Nubian</th>
<th>Kisii</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easier Admission</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-based</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to home</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordability</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of space</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent former pupil</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher academic standards</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other people recommended</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor’s children enrolled here</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child selected</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School offered assistance</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPE</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School offers feeding program</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good discipline</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School supportive of HIV parents</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience of having all children in same school</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School has good performance record</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School offers flexible fee payment</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher compassionate</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers and staff understanding</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good teaching</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School safe</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend community group here</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller class sizes</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reason</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/staff is a friend</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child sponsored at school</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is noteworthy on the other hand, in comparing affordability and proximity, for Kambas, 47% indicated affordability was the main reason they selected the current school; whereas, for Nubians only 13% indicated affordability as a prime reason. However, when comparing proximity, only 5.9% of Kambas noted this as important, compared to 34.8% for Nubians. What this suggests is that for Kambas, cost was more important than proximity, whereas the reverse seems true for Nubians. This finding corresponds with the finding above as Nubians are one of longest term migrants, and so once again this points to the salience of habitus of place.

**Out of the mouth of pupils.**

In focus groups with pupils in both the public and low-fee school they were asked why their parents or caregivers chose the school they were currently attending. Pupil responses were once again grouped into public and LFP schools to compare and contrast responses. Pupil responses to both questions suggest converging perspectives with that of what the parents and caregivers offered in the survey data, as well as the interview data.

What is worth highlighting here in Table 45 and Table 46 is how pupil responses of “The school was cheaper than other public schools” confirm previous findings that in the slums there is evidence of a bifurcated system of public schools and some households may not have been able to gain access into these better public schools because of their lack of certain capital. Additionally, pupil responses that “The school was good before FPE” also allude to what has been documented in research (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007; Sawamura & Sifuna, 2008) and confirm parent responses that there has been some kind of qualitative change in quality after FPE. Pupils also astutely observed that “Teachers do not mark all our books as they used to” and
“Some of the pupils are undisciplined.” In response to what they noticed as the significant impact of FPE at their school.

**Table 45**

**Pupil Responses to Why Parents/Caregivers Chose the Current School**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupils in the Public School</th>
<th>Pupils in the Low-Fee Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Free primary Education in the school.</td>
<td>• Their choice school was too expensive that is the fee being charged was high.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This school was cheaper than other public schools</td>
<td>• There was no space available for them to join as the school was full.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The school was near their home.</td>
<td>• They could not afford the required uniform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The school was very good before FPE.</td>
<td>• There was sponsorship in the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The school was near their home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other teachers in other schools declined them a space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There was food available for lunch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The teachers know their mother’s problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The teachers teach well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Focus group discussion with pupils*

**Table 46**

**Pupil Responses to the Impact of FPE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupils in the Public School</th>
<th>Pupils in the Low-Fee Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Children are many at school. Many children transferred to this school from other schools.</td>
<td>• They cannot afford full school uniform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The number of pupils per classroom has gone up we are now over 80.</td>
<td>• Poor performance so they are not able to go to secondary schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Our parents are not paying fees for us anymore.</td>
<td>• Better performance in NFS and poor performance in public schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The school’s performance has gone down-it dropped in KCPE last year.</td>
<td>• Too many pupils in the class with little space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers do not mark all our books as they used to.</td>
<td>• FPE has not benefitted all children in the neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some of the pupils are undisciplined.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Focus group discussion with pupils*
In the low-fee schools, several of the responses confirm households being “pushed out” of their first choice: “Their choice school was too expensive that is the fee being charged was high”, “There was no space available for them to join as the school was full”, “Other teachers in other schools declined them a space.” Pupils also point to how for some households the public school requirements pose a barrier and make it less affordable, for example, “They could not afford the required uniform”. Additionally, pupil responses also confirm the organizational habitus of ethic of care in the low-fee schools. “The teachers know their mother’s problems.” Finally, pupils in low-fee schools also commented that they felt “FPE has not benefitted all children in the neighborhood”. Coming from the pupils in the low-fee schools it is interesting that they were able to discern the equity differential between them and those who had benefitted from FPE.

**School satisfaction.**

Research on parental choice confirms that when parents actively choose their school, they are more satisfied with the school than non-choosers (Bosetti, 1998; Gewirtz, Ball & Bowe, 1995). In order to assess how satisfied parents were with their school, I asked them to rate different aspects of the school from how it was run, to how well they thought the teachers were teaching, as well as how well the school invites parental participation and provide feedback. Parent responses are tabulated in Table 47. I have combined the categories poor and not very good, and good and very good.

The data distribution while statistically not significant nonetheless reveals some interesting descriptive patterns. On four variables the parents with children in LFP schools expressed greater satisfaction than parents with children in the public school. These were the
care demonstrated by the teachers, schools ability to maintain discipline and order, the provision of quality education, and the schools’ ability to provide social connections. On the remaining six variables, parents in LFP schools rated their school lower than parents in public schools. It is perhaps interesting that while parents in LFP schools rated the teacher skills in LFP schools as lower than that of parents in the public school, they nonetheless rated their school’s ability to provide quality education higher than their counterparts in the public school.
Table 47

*How Well Does Your School Do the Following?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor and not very good</th>
<th>Good and very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>LFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much the teachers care about the students</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How effective the head teacher is as the leader of the school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How skilled the teachers are</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How safe the school is</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letting parents know how their children are doing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing parents to participate in decisions about the school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping students learn the difference between right and wrong</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining order and discipline</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing quality education</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping students make connections to succeed in life</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exploring Narratives of Decision-Making and Familial Habitus

FPE is commonly touted as a success in the expansion of educational access, particularly for households previously unable to avail themselves of state provision of basic education. However, evidence suggests that this has not been the case (Oketch et al., 2010) and this is also borne out by the observations and findings from this study. At the household level, the impact of FPE can be classified into four areas that influence how households make decisions around schools: cost, quality, access and preferences.

“Free isn’t free”.

Households continue to be financially challenged by the fact that despite the proclamation of FPE, there are still hidden costs associated with public schooling. Elimu Yetu Coalition, the national EFA coalition group in Kenya estimates that the gap between FPE provision and the private costs that still need to be borne by parents, including costs for items such as uniforms, exam fees, textbooks and others is about 5000 KSh per child (EYC, 2004). Interview data consistently shows how households struggle with costs in the public school:

*As much as there is FPE in public schools, there are still some charges in the public school like exam fee and tuition money. (Teacher, Watoto Centre, LFPS)*

*You know they say schools are free, but they are not. For example at Ayani, which is a public school, I should pay tuition fees of KSh 200 per month. This got me thinking that if I added 100 to this, then I would be able to pay the required fees at Uhuru Educational Centre, and if I worked hard then this is something I could afford. (Parent 7, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)*

In fact, many households indicate these auxiliary costs associated with public schools have essentially made public schools inaccessible for them. Typical comments made by parents include:
As a single parent I found it too expensive to keep my child in the public school. (Parent, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)

First choice was public school but I found the schools too expensive like uniform, admission fee...I could not afford these costs. (Parent, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)

What emerged from parent interviews was also an indication that there were differently tiered public schools even within Kibera, based on quality and cost considerations. Many parents voiced that they could not get into the public school which was their first choice as indirect costs such as uniforms, shoes, desks, exam fees, fees for firewood and a cook all made it more expensive, and so they had to settle for the public school which was one of the schools in this study. For example, one mother told me, “I enrolled my daughter in Aioli public school but the school was too expensive, despite being a public school so I transferred her to Karuthi Primary School, Public School.” Another parent made a similar observation, “My first choice was the public school but I could not get in because the many requirements made it too expensive.” Similarly another parent attested to this two-tier public system even within the urban poor settlement in the following way:

I could not get into my first school choice (public) because the harambee was too expensive. (Parent, Karuthi Primary School, Public School)

By contrast, the following parent comment regarding the same school suggests that there are also social class issues at play on the part of the school in their admission process.

Or as another parent said:

I could not get into the public school that was my first choice as the headmistress did not want to associate with poor parents and so turned us away. (Parent, Karuthi Primary School, Public School)
Interview data from this study also suggests that the public schools were turning some families away, as illustrated by the following comment:

*Aioli primary was my first choice but I could not get in as the head teacher was not very happy with the large number of pupils coming in as a result of FPE and she refused to take some pupils claiming the school was already full. (Parent, Karuthi Primary School, Public School)*

In addition, incidents of bribery and corruption compound the challenges that poor households have in accessing the public schools. As one parent told me, “The head teacher was never there and needed to be bribed which I could not afford” (Parent, Karuthi Primary School, Public School). Along similar lines another parent commented on the same school, “My first choice was Aioli Primary but I could not get in as the admission process was complex and the head teacher wanted to be bribed.”

What these comments suggest is that despite FPE, public schools are still inaccessible to many low-income households because of the costs, or the household’s inability to meet the complex requirements imposed by the school. Public schools still charge admission fees and turn pupils away if they are not attired in the proper school uniform. Most schools in fact require that pupils have two sets of uniforms and students have to also provide their own desks. Additionally, it appears that schools are also in fact choosing households based on social capital criteria as only households with the required economic and cultural capital would be able to meet the requirements of the school for admission.

*“Good enough for now”.*

One interesting observation from the interview data was that households expressed preference for LFPS for the lower grades rather than the higher grades. A similar observation was found in research by Ngware et al., (2009) in the slums of Korogocho and Viwandani who
conclude that “The households are more likely to choose a public school as the child becomes older perhaps to take advantage of the fact that public schools are usually used as national exam centres” (p. 607).

However, in the study the reasons I found expressed for this preference for the public school for the higher grades was more for quality considerations. In fact the intent from a number of parents I talked to was to enroll their child in a low-fee school for the early years and then transfer them to the public school later on to complete their primary school cycle. The reasoning for this was that LFPS schools had smaller classes and so they would be able to cater to individual needs of students in helping them acquire the basics. “Parents choose private schools first because of the good and quality education to lay good foundation in the lives of their children. When they grow up they are transferred to public schools” (Parent on SMC, Watoto Centre, LFPS). Along the same lines, another parent I talked to said he looked at the numbers in the public school and given the ratio thinks that the teachers will not be able to give the children the attention they need. So he said, “I think it is best to send them to a NFS for KSh 15/month for the foundational years and then by Class 4, I can move them back to the public school. I want to move them to a ‘proper school’ with a proven track record in KCPE” (Field Notes, 2). When I asked a LFPS proprietor about why he thought kids were not learning the basics in the public school, he offered the following observation which corroborated what the parents were saying:

_In government primary schools, in one class there are many students. A child who goes there must know how to read and write already. If he or she does not know they do not learn it in the government school because the teacher just writes on the board and goes. All nursery schools are NFS and after *preunit* they go to government. Some students left after FPE. After the parents noticing that in_

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*Preunit in the Kenyan context refers to nursery and kindergarten classes which are not part of the public school system.*
Standard 3 the child cannot read the parents bring the child here to learn the basics and after that they take the child back to the government school.
(Proprietor, Three Bells, LFPS)

These comments suggest as Tooley (2007) does that the introduction of FPE with its resulting inevitable overcrowding of classrooms especially in the early grades has served to push more kids into the LFPS sector. However, Tooley’s analysis of the situation is incomplete as it does not account for the calculated reasoning parents employ in exercising preference for private schools for the lower grades only and still desiring “proper” schools, i.e., public schools for the higher classes.

“Pushed out”.

FPE did not increase the number of public schools in the country. On the contrary, the insufficient supply of public schools, particularly in underserved areas such as urban slum settlements was further exacerbated with increased demand for schooling from children who were previously out of school or enrolled in private schools when FPE was introduced.

Public schools under FPE are required to admit all pupils who come, as the assistant head teacher of the public school in this study noted:

Anyone who comes we take because everyone is supposed to be admitted, that is a policy of the government. We used to interview pupils but now we just take. But yes, now the classes are too big. Right now we have classes of 85. 80-85 is the average number we have. When it was first started [FPE] there was that influx especially in schools bordering the slums but with time they are realizing the classes are too big at least for one teacher and so some are choosing to send their children to private schools. They have to pay money for the private schools.
(Assistant head teacher, Karuthi Primary School, Public School)

However when asked if she thought there were enough public schools serving the slum, she conceded, “No, it is not enough going by the population. That is why we experience this
condition. That is why NFS are coming up. But they do assist, had they not been there, there would be more children on the streets.”

However even with the “admit all who come policy” households are pushed out of public schools in many ways. I have already shown how cost plays a pivotal role in accessibility. In some cases, public schools despite the directive still turn pupils away. Parents voiced this in the following ways:

*I would have wished my daughter to be in public school but there was no admission.* (Parent, St.Augustus, LFPS)

*This was the only school I could get a place in as the other public schools were already full and the admission process was long.* (Parent, Karuthi Primary School, Public School)

*My first choice was the public school, but it was full.* (Parent, Three Bells, LFPS)

*It was hard to find admission in public school so my son had to be in this NFS.* (Parent, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)

For some pupils, the inconducive classroom environment itself serves as a deterrent that pushes them out. As the assistant head teacher of the public school pointed out, they don’t turn students away; it is students themselves who choose to leave. This form of self-exclusion according to Lamont and Lareau (1988) is based on a habitus or disposition that participation is ‘not for me ‘and in this study passively serves to push out some households from the public school. The assistant head teacher’s comment clearly illustrates this:

*Sometimes you find the class is full and there is no place for even an extra desk. Sometimes a child stretches his feet like this and he steps on the teacher. So lack of space might be the reason. We don’t really turn them away because in such a case we can admit but the child would have to sit on the floor. But they choose. A child attends for a week or two and goes home and reports that I don’t have a*
desk in the classroom. And there is no room to accommodate another desk. The parent then has to choose to decide what to do.

Reay et al., (2001) point out in their research that different institutions have different institutional habitus and that in some this habitus may be in conflict with the familial habitus that students bring with them. In the case of this study, the data suggests that some households have been made aware of the ‘sense of one’s place’ and the ‘sense of the place of others’ (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 113).

“Preferences”.

The overcrowding as a result of the FPE policy, with the influx of students into the public school system, particularly in public schools in the slums, has created a secondary host of attendant challenges. One of these challenges is that of pupil discipline. The Assistant Head Teacher of the public school in this study notes, “Even general discipline because they influence one another, even those who are highly disciplined are influenced by those new comers. They pick up wrong habits and discipline can be bad.”, and also pupils who have been out of school who may be coming to school for the first time may have less of the ability to acclimatize to a structured learning environment. She adds, “Yes even those who are overage. So you even find some have come from the streets, some are under the influence of drugs but we talk to them and counsel them and the good ones end up quitting their habit.” With class sizes of 80-100, it is understandable how many students may fall through the cracks, particularly if they are also dealing with addiction issues.

Households in the study thus consider the discipline of the class and school an important consideration in deciding if they want to retain their children in the school or move them elsewhere. Households in this study who are able to exercise choice often indicated that would
choose to move their children to smaller classes in LFP schools, whereas those without the ability to choose are forced to contend with possible negative influences that their children or guardians may be encounter. One parent said:

*The quality of education at NFS is better than that in PS. If I was financially stable I would never take my children to a PS. Pupils in PS are approximately 90 – 100 in a class. Some of the pupils are too playful to get most of the lessons. Teachers in PS are very few too and they have too much work therefore they do not have time for the kids, especially those that are not naturally bright academically.* (Parent, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)

“Duped”.

In fact, with regards to LFPS, even some CSOs who were familiar with the LFP schools seem to concur that there may in fact be a number of schools that may be exploiting the desperation and ignorance of households in the slums. He noted:

*Not all NFS are good. 75% doing a good job. Some hiding. No learning taking place in some multi-grade classrooms (partitioning classrooms in churches etc.).* (CSO 2)

While these comments about the dubious quality offering and questionable ethical motivations of some LFPS may imply that many households using the LFPS may be passive victims of purely-profit motivated edupreneurs operating schools in the slums, I found that several parents’ comments seem to suggest otherwise. Parents were discerning and demanding in their accountability of the schools and were very pointed about what they needed from their schools. The following set of parent comments indicate that parents wanted to be kept informed of school finances and how the money is spent. These parent comments would also suggest that parents are aware that some NFS are not very transparent and forthright in their dealings and there is indication of a level of mistrust in the management and handling of finances from external sources.
NFS should be transparent to parents concerning projects in school and funds received. The school should inform me and other parents of all the activities that are running in the school including funds received from well wishers and other school projects. (Parent, Watoto Centre, LFPS)

NFS should be encouraged to be more open to ensure accountability and therefore trust between the parents, government, teachers and the school administration. (Parent 8)

NFS should be transparent to parents concerning projects in school and funds received from well-wishers. (Parent 10)

Probably when the government supports them they should be very open. Now most of them belong to individuals and organizations and since it is their business they do not have to be open to us, but when the government comes in, they must be very open about the funds given by the government. (Parent 14)

Government should intervene and investigate operations especially donor funded to make them more transparent. They shouldn’t take over NFS. NFS should be motivated to be more open to ensure they don’t go overboard in various things. (Parent 5)

Particularly in schools receiving external donor funding or sponsorship money, this issue of external accountability becomes more of a concern. Currently there is no clear reporting mechanism. Schools are supported directly by sponsors and donors and it is difficult to track the flow of funds. To overcome this, KISA has been advocating for donor and sponsorship money to channel through them rather than directly to individual schools with 1% of the all donor monies to be given to them for administrative purposes so they can play that oversight role and provide accounting reports to donors and sponsors. Not all schools in this study were keen on pursuing this option.
Were They Pushed or Did They Jump?\textsuperscript{10}  

Based on the research findings, I suggest that decision-making pathways of households in this study can be classified into one of two categories: \textit{default} or \textit{strategic}. I use these two types of behaviours as descriptive categories rather than as neat binaries. A few households no doubt do not fit neatly into either one of these constructed categories, but by and large households could be grouped into one or the other category. Figure 11 provides a description of these two decision-pathways.

Based on this categorization of households, using what Gambetta (1996) terms ‘decision mechanisms; it would appear that the default choosers are households who were perhaps “pushed out” of the public system into choosing private schools; whereas, strategic choosers are households who “jumped from” the public system, or in other words households who actively pursued alternatives to the state system. Importantly, this default and strategic decision-making is evidenced in the behaviour of both public and low-fee private households. There are households in the public school and low-fee schools who have been “pushed out” of their first choice, and similarly there are households in the public school and low-fee schools who are strategic in their decision to either stay in the public school, or find alternative schools.

\textsuperscript{10} I borrow this from the title of Gambetta’s (1996) book from the same title.
Figure 11. Household decision-making pathways.

Fieldwork data.
The default decision-maker.

The default decision-maker is typically one who has been pushed out of the public school or low-fee school system. Their current school is not their first choice and they have been pushed into a decision because they have been unable to get into the school of their preference. In this study, evidence of this type of decision-making is present in both the low-fee private and public school sector. In the low-fee private school, default decision-makers are households who were not able to gain access to the public school in the study. Consequently they had to by default use an alternative low-fee school, even though their first preference was for the public school. Some of the reasons offered for not being able to get into the public school include issues of cost, access and a lack of capital to navigate the admission process. As one parent commented:

*I would have wished my daughter to be in public school, but there was no admission. (Parent, Survey data, St. Augustus, LFPS)*

Other parents’ comments are not dissimilar to this:

*I could not find a chance at a public school. It is too expensive and I could not afford the many requirements. (Parent, Survey data, Three Bells, LFPS)*

*My first choice was the public school but I could not get in because the many requirements made it too expensive. (Parent, Survey data)*

*We could not get into public school because the headmistress did not want to associate with poor parents and so turned us away. (Parent, Survey #035)*

What these comments share is that these households have been pushed out of the public system and denied access. Even with FPE indirect costs for uniforms, desks, and other auxiliary costs make public schools a more expensive option for some households. Additionally, households may also be excluded from public schools, marginalized by the intersection of their social class, ethnicity and habitus that is in discord with the organizational habitus. Teacher focus
groups respondents from Watoto centre observed that “NFS take care of children who have not found a place in public schools and also those who can’t fit in the public school”. This process of fitting in suggests a stigmatization of certain households in the public school who may not ‘fit in’ and consequently may be pushed out by the school’s organizational habitus. For these default decision makers, they may be relegated to low-fee schools that are of poorer quality as these schools are only marginally cheaper than the public school.

Comparatively, there are also households who have not been able to get into low-fee schools of their choice. This group of default decision makers may have the ability to select low-fee schools that are better in terms of facilities as these schools also usually have higher fees. Several low-fee private schools in this study reported that they were turning pupils away once they have reached their desired numbers. One such example is Uhuru Educational Centre, a low-fee private school in this study. The head teacher said the following:

*So when it comes to NFS we have a maximum number in a class because they have to pay. When it reaches that number, we don’t take any more. So we have to have a limit. Yes we turn kids away when there is a number we want. We recommend that they go to neighboring schools. Parents do complain when turned away but circumstances force us. That is why we are different from public. We have limits. We have NFS that are the same as public schools like community schools that cannot turn kids away. Initially this was a community school; it is a private school now.*

Similarly, the proprietor from Three Bell, low-fee private school reported having to turn pupils away as a result of capacity. He commented:

*Right now we had to turn them away especially for standard 2 is too large, so we advised them to go elsewhere. The NFS we also have our network. We recommend the school the child should go to. If they need a recommendation letter, we provide the letters etc.*
Watoto Centre, another low-fee school similarly maintains a waitlist. The head teacher commented that:

*We have a wait list because we can only take the capacity that the donor feeds. She said this year recruit 30, so we only took 30. She tells us how many she can feed. When orphans come, we put them on a wait list and tell them we will ask the donor and get back to them.*

What these comments share is evidence of the ‘direct exclusion “process (Lamont and Lareau, 1988) practiced by the schools. Research has indicated that when schools select pupils, the bias is towards the ‘cream’ or the more affluent households (Gewirtz, Ball & Bowe, 1995) and one might also extend this to possible ethnic affinity (Miguel, 2004; Wells, 1996).

Comparatively, the faith-based school in this study reported that they did not turn pupils away. The proprietor offered the following explanation:

*No we accept everyone who comes. I have not turned parents away. In slums the admission continues. If the room is not there obviously you have to limit. We have not reached that stage.* (Proprietor, St. Augustus, LFPS)

On the other hand, households in this study who are in the public school also demonstrate default decision-making behaviour. Many parents expressed that the public school in the study, Karuthi Public School was not their first choice, but they could not get into the other public school(s) such as Silanga and Aioli, which were both known to be better performing schools in Kibera. In essence then, Karuthi Public School was their default option. Typical comments include the following:

*Aioli was my first choice, but I could not get in because the procedures were too many and too hard. The head teacher was never there and needed to be bribed.* (Parent, Survey data)

*Aioli was first choice but school too full so had to pick this school.* (Parent, Survey data)
When the grandmother passed away I brought the child to Nairobi and enrolled her at Aioli but the school was expensive, despite being a public school, so I transferred her to this school. (Parent, Survey data)

I wanted to get into Silanga [another public school] but the school was too full. (Parent, Survey data)

Could not get into Silanga, I tried but could not get space. (Parent, Survey data)

Aioli was first choice but the school was full and also the items being required were too expensive. (Parent, Survey data)

First choice was Aioli but could not get in as the admission process was complex and the head teacher wanted to be bribed. (Parent, Survey data)

Aioli was first choice but could not get in as the headmistress was not very happy with the large number of pupils coming in as a result of FPE and she refused to take some pupils claiming the school was already full. (Parent, Survey data)

Similar to households who are in low-fee private schools, these households who are in the public school are being excluded from the public school of their choice citing reasons of cost and access even though the schools are required to admit all of the students who come. These comments then bear evidence to the existence of a two-tier public school system even in the slum, where households with more capital are able to access these better schools and those without are socially excluded and stratified into lower performing public schools. The exit of these financially better households from lower performing public schools and to some extent low-performing, low-fee schools has the potential to result in a ghettoization of these schools.

The strategic decision-maker.

On the other hand, the strategic decision-maker is typically one who is pulled by the public or low-fee school system by differentiated demand. Strategic decision-makers who have been pulled by the low-fee private schools can be broadly placed into three categories: those who
are ‘quality focussed’, for whom the perception of quality of education in the low-fee private schools is far better than what is being offered in the public school and in particular the public school in this study; those who are ‘ideology focussed’, for whom the motivation to align themselves to low-fee schools or a particular low-fee school is based on their faith beliefs, ethnicity or other non-quality reasons; and finally, those who are ‘instrumental focussed’ for whom pragmatic considerations are the motivation for decision-making, for e.g., what is important in a school is its ability to offer sponsorship, food or some other material and non-material benefit other than education. The following parent, who attends Watoto Centre, is a good example of a strategic decision-maker who is ‘instrumental focussed’ and whose information is drawn from his ‘grapevine knowledge’ (Ball & Vincent, 1998):

*I heard from my neighbour they have free food for the children. (Parent, Survey data)*

Similarly, another parent who attends the same school said:

*I decided I wanted my child here because the school is cheap, my income is low and the school is very supportive of parents who are HIV +ve. (Parent, interview data, Watoto Centre)*

Here the issue of cost plays a mediating role in addition to the support the school offers to HIV parents. For ‘instrumental focussed’ decision-makers the quality of instruction and the school appears less important than what benefits can accrue to them from being at the school. As one school proprietor commented:

*We only provide education -- mattress, shoes, clothes we don’t have. So the parents/guardians move the children to other schools because they are getting blankets, mattress etc. But we don’t get annoyed because we want to help the child. We don’t get jealous. (School proprietor, Three Bells, LFPS)*
This observation is supported by a community-based organization working in Kibera commenting that parental motivation for choosing LFPS was because of the feeding programs offered to households. They note:

*Enrollment in our schools has been growing because of one factor, the feeding program. Most of the children do not get enough food at home. If a child is in an empty stomach, they cannot learn. Because of feeding programs, the enrollment has really increased. Many then come to school for food and when we have difficulty they either withdraw or go to other centres.* (CSO 1, Interview)

A low-fee school proprietor similarly noted:

*When I started this school, there was no feeding program even in public schools. I think that is one of the reasons [why parents choose this school] Most of the parents here have small businesses and if a child is somewhere being given lunch and is in school all day; the parent feels the burden is removed from him/her. So because the child is there eating and safe they do not have to worry.* (Head, St.Augustus LFPS)

For parents, part of the school’s institutional habitus that mattered to them was the opportunities for connections that the school fostered. This connection for the parents was a way of establishing social capital ties that they hoped would enable their children to be sponsored especially for secondary education. Parents point to these external connections as being part of the motivations for choosing a specific school. For example, one of the parents said:

This position was shared by another parent:

*I left School X because the person sponsoring my children died. I was not able to continue paying the school fees I could not afford. I chose (Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS) where two children are sponsored.* (Parent 15, LFPS 5)

Data from this study suggests that pupils in LFPS are more likely to be sponsored than those in public schools. Of the schools in this study, Uhuru Educational Centre and Watoto Centre reported having higher numbers of sponsored pupils. Many parents with children in LFPS
rely on sponsorship or the possibility of being sponsored to be able to afford school fees. At interviews, parents repeatedly asked if I could sponsor their children or connect them with an organization, church or individuals in Canada who would be able to sponsor their children. One parent in a LFPS expressed this hope that was tied to sponsorship in this way:

*None of my children are sponsored, but if he gets one in Form 1, it will be good for me and the family. It is a bit hard for us now financially, but we are managing.* (Parent 9, LFPS)

As noted in previous chapters, this parent comment also indicates that many households who are in the LFPS sector are indeed struggling to pay fees and have to make huge sacrifices in order to be able to sustain their child’s enrollment there. Consequently it is easy to see why sponsorship is valued as a lifeline for these households. However, sponsorship is hugely problematic. As this sponsorship is unregulated it is open to possibilities of misuse at the school. At the School Management Committee (SMC) focus group at the public primary school, the chairman expressed his discontent with NFS and sponsorship of these schools in the slums in the following way. He said:

*Parents are choosing NFS for sponsorship. NFSs cheat to get sponsors. When they come to a school like this one, it is hard for them to get sponsorship...In the slum many people live below 1 dollar/day. Parents are choosing NFS as there is a highly likelihood of being sponsored.*

*And*

*NFS will not tell you what they are making or paying their teachers. The sponsorship money mostly goes to those who are managing the schools. They leave just a small amount of the money with the school and rest of it goes to their account.*

Parents, nonetheless continue to gravitate towards schools whose institutional habitus includes social capital in the form of sponsorship or donors. Likewise pupils and teachers both
express positive associations from the connections forged at the LFPS. Representative comments include the following:

*We have friends from America - we get them through the school.* (Pupil, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS)

*In this school we make connections with sponsors that can help us succeed in the future.* (Pupil, Watoto Centre, LFPS)

*Yes, we make connections that can help us in future especially with visitors who visit the schools. They can help us when we are in need and can give us money to pay fees.* (Pupil, Watoto Centre, LFPS)

*Yes, they are able to get some connections with people who can help them in the future. These include sponsors who frequently visit the schools.* (Teacher, St. Augustus, LFPS)

In contrast, the following parents represent strategic decision-makers in the ‘quality focussed’ category. Their decision to exit the public system is indicative of reasoned decisions based on quality considerations and is contrary to what some scholars have articulated about poor parents’ inability to choose well. For e.g. some researchers posit that:

>[P]oor parents lack the essential resources, such as time, energy, know-how, and education to make a wise choice of schools. Consequently, they will make decisions based on factors other than quality of education. (Van Heemest, 2004, p. 172)

Data from this study points to the contrary conclusion with households’ evidence of active decision-making illustrated below:

*I transferred my child in search of quality education.* (Parent, Interview data, Uhuru Centre, LFPS)
No, I don’t think public schools would offer quality education. My son was there and he performed poorly. Now public schools are performing even worse with FPE so I don’t think I would ever consider moving my child to a public school. (Parent, interview data, St. Augustus, LFPS)

Public school was first choice but heard from other parents how well Uhuru was performing so opted for this school. (Parent, Survey data)

First choice was St. Matthews but moved because parents were withdrawing their children because of performance. (Parent, Survey data)

I don’t mind paying school fees as long as there is quality education in a certain school. (Parent 19, Interview data, Uhuru Educational Centre)

Quantitative data from this study similarly points to a category of parents choosing for quality reasons in LFPS as 46% compared to 20.4% in the public school. This search for quality education was also raised in several other interviews at the school and state level. The following comments provide some insight into the decision-pathways taken by these strategic decision-makers, particularly with the perception of quality being higher in NFS as the class sizes are smaller.

*Quality of education in public schools diluted. NFS are performing better.* (CSO 1, Interview)

*Public schools are crowded. Parents compare between schools. They want what is better.* (CSO 2)

*Some public schools are overcrowded. There are fewer children in NFS so parents think there is better learning with smaller classes.* (CSO 3)

The final category of ‘ideology focused’ decision-makers is an example of the following parent whose motivation for decision-making was faith-based. A parent said:
Faith issues were a major consideration for me. When I found out that the head teacher was saved and an active member of the church and that most of the teachers were also saved, I was very happy. My children will get both secular and religious education and grow up in salvation. (Parent, St. Augustus, Interview)

Another finding that is important to highlight here in terms of ‘ideology focussed’ decision makers is that social networks and connections mattered to these households. Considerations were focussed on to what extent the school comprised of households from the same neighbourhood or of people they knew, suggesting ethnicity links.

Most of the friends at school are neighbours. (Pupil, Watoto Centre, LFPS)

Yes, most parents come from the same neighbourhood. They are influenced mainly by the number of people they know who have their children already in this school. (Three Bells, Teacher Focus group)

Nevertheless the downside to this connection is that it can breed an insular community that is rich in bonding networks but not necessarily bridging networks. For example, in FGDs pupils expressed that they felt they are not exposed to external connections at this school and only get to interact with pupils from backgrounds similar to theirs who are unlikely to help them in the future as they themselves are struggling.

Woolcock (1998) for example explains this bonding-bridging distinction by contrasting intra-community ties which he terms bonding or integration, with extra-community networks which he terms bridging or linkage. Bridging or linking social capital is more tenuous and difficult to form, however it also yields capital with more transformative potential. Similarly, Granovetter (1985) calls these weak and strong ties. Weak ties notes Granovetter (as cited in Halpern, 2005) were “extremely useful to people in terms of getting information, opportunities and jobs” (p. 20). On the other hand, strong ties such as with family and close friends “provided
a more intense, multi-stranded form of support, and as such …plays a greater role in emotional well-being” (Halpern, 2005, p. 20).

It was clear that households in this study relied on strong ties in choosing schools. Repeatedly, households commented on how community networks influenced their decision-making, and what was important was for them to have children from the same neighborhoods in the school. Some typical comments are as follows:

*In this area we have low-incomes and cannot afford expensive schools or expensive school-related expenses. I introduced 8 of my neighbors to Watoto Centre, LFPS and they took their children to the school. (Parent 6)*

*I was told about the good performance of the school by my neighbours living in this community. (Parent 15)*

On the other hand, strategic decision makers in the public school system in this study are households who chose to stay at the public school less for quality considerations, and more for loyalty motivations. A tentative hypothesis that can be drawn based on these findings is that households in the public schools tend to primarily be longer term residents of Kibera, particularly the Nubians and the Kikuyus. Interview data from this study from both the survey and parent interviews support this hypothesis, as well; it also suggests a sense of loyalty from these groups to the public schools. Using Hirschman’s (1980) original conceptualization of exit, voice and loyalty, Fennell (2012) describes loyalty as “…a feature that would lessen exit by increasing the affinity an individual felt for a particular school, thus inducing a greater propensity to political action and personal motivation for demanding improvements from within” (p. 250). There was little evidence in the data to demonstrate the use of this political voice to demand change in the public school. In this study, household choice of the public school demonstrates the influence of this sense of loyalty as is evident from statements such as-
I chose this public school as it is a community-based school that was started by the Nubis and I am one of them. (Parent, survey data, Karuthi public school)

I was an old pupil and I wanted my child to go here to. (Parent, Survey data, Karuthi public school)

I found the entrance fee was lower here than at other schools, also we went there and liked it. (Parent, survey data, Karuthi public school)

Grandparents came to Kibera as Nubian soldiers. Parents were born in Kibera and they all went to Kibera Primary. (Parent, survey data, Karuthi public school)

I was a former pupil and so I prefer my children to go here as well. (Parent, survey data, Karuthi public school)

We didn’t move schools because we want public schools. (Parent, Survey #157, Karuthi public school)

Kibera. This is the only place I know so it is okay. Since I came to Nairobi this is the only place I have known and lived. (Parent, Survey #031)

As these comments from the parents suggest, and are supported by the survey data longer term migrants with a longer history of living in Kibera, were themselves born in Kibera and attended Karuthi Primary School, which was established in 1954 by the colonial government. Having attended this school, there is a sense of attachment and loyalty to the public school which informs their habitus in terms of what is known and translates to wanting their own children attend the same school. As Hirschman’s (1970) framework suggests this loyalty then diminishes exit tendencies. Other research using the exit/voice framework similarly argues that when there is a greater degree of investment in a community, exit becomes a less attractive option (Lyons & Lowery, 1989). Evidence from both the bivariate analysis and logistic regression analysis provide further evidence of this loyalty. Years a family has been living in Kibera is a highly
significant marker of comparison in the type of school selected ($\chi^2 = 23.30, p \leq 0.001$). Only 11% of families with children in public school have been living there for 5 years or less, with most families living there for a longer period. There were more newcomer families compared to 25% of families with children in LFP schools for a similar period. The longer a family has lived in Kibera the less likely they are to be enrolled in a LFPS. One observation made by a teacher may offer further rationale for this behaviour, “Easy to be admitted to NFS when one has just come from rural areas” (Teacher focus group, St. Augustus LFPS. Perhaps also similar to Fennel’s (2013) contention, these newer households may lack the ‘baseline experience’ to make informed quality decisions.

On the other hand, it can be hypothesized that newcomers to Kibera who are less invested in the community are quicker to vote with their feet and to utilize the exit strategy in the face of perceived deteriorating quality standards in the public school, and thus strategic decision makers are more likely to choose LFPS. However the data also points to the fact that newer migrants to Kibera are not homogenous. There are households of newer migrants for whom exit is not a strategy but a necessity as they were unable to gain access to the public schools. There are also households for whom exit is a form of self-exclusion, especially where there is a lack of fit between their habitus and cultural capital and that of the schools.

This categorization of households into default and strategic decision-making behaviour supports Oketch et al.’s (2010) idea of there being “excess demand” as an explanation for why poor parents in the slums are choosing low-fee private schools. They claim that in the slums “those who utilize the private sector are those who have been involuntarily excluded from the state system” (p. 9) because as a result of “low public expenditure in education in the slums”, “the poorest of the poor are crowded out by the wealthier segments in the public system and
pushed into using ‘private schools for the poor’ (Oketch et al., 2010, p. 9). While it is correct that low public expenditure on public services in the slums has resulted in a situation where demand for public schools has outpaced supply, this is only part of the puzzle.

Findings from this study however depart from Oketch et al.,’s (2010) contention that it is only non-slum households that are choosing the private alternative for quality reasons or demonstrating ‘differentiated demand’. Unlike their finding that “for the slum residents, public schools and private schools are perfect substitutes.”, there was clear evidence of ‘differentiated demand’ from slum households in this study, of slum households choosing low-fee schools for quality as well as non-quality reasons. However there was little to no evidence of households exercising Hirschman’s ‘voice’ strategy in response to the perceived decline in quality in the public and low-fee schools. Both Srivastava (2006) and Fennell (2010) from their research with low-fee households report similar observations of a lack of voice mechanism on the part of poor households in demanding quality improvement in public schools. Fennel (2013) from her study in Pakistan notes that the reason for this lack of political response on the part of the parents was due in part because they lacked the baseline experience to make quality judgments about low-fee schools.

According to Ball et al., (2002) “Choice is heavily imbued with meaning-giving perceptions” (p. 69). Concomitantly, poor households in the study who have been pushed out of the public system have been excluded not just because of a lack of supply as Oketch et al., (2010) claims, but this exclusion also demonstrates a complex interplay of social class, capital and habitus. According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) these households are displaying a form of self-exclusion. Further it is debatable if the emergence of a low-fee schooling market does offer improved quality and accountability to households as some exponents claim. Tooley (2001)
for example, claims, “If we want to help some of the most disadvantaged peoples in the world, then encouraging deeper private sector involvement is likely to be the best way forward” (p. 169). The assertion of this empowerment through privatization logic seems flawed in this study because some households who are pushed out of state school system are not exercising choice nor do they have agency in their selection of low-fee schools. Others who are default decision-makers are only able to afford the cheapest low-fee schools which offer education of questionable quality or at best find themselves in low-fee schools that are only marginally better than the state schools.

**What do Households (really) want?**

There has been the prevailing idea that illiterate parents, disadvantaged parents do not care much about their children’s education. Similarly some researchers have speculated as that economically disadvantaged parents do not make good school choices (Ascher et al., 1996). However, the data from this study points to the opposite conclusion, as have several other studies (Dreze & Sen, 2002; Härmä, 2010; Srivastava, 2008). Not only are slum parents concerned about their children’s education, they also make very active decisions around school choice processes. What the data from this study suggests instead is that there are distinct choice patterns that are differentiated by the social and cultural capital households have. I have identified and described the two types of decision-makers in this study as detailed in the previous section: the default decision-maker and the strategic decision-maker.

Consistent with findings from other studies (Härmä 2010; Wildish, 2011), data from this study seems to suggest that for many default and strategic decision-making households their preference is for well-functioning public schools. What was clear from the findings was that households did not display strong commitments to the neoliberal notions of choice or
privatization, instead what they simply wanted were schools that were affordable, located close to their homes and that provided quality education. As one parent told me, “I wanted my child to attend a school that offers quality education, where the teachers are serious with their work and the school performs well. I also wanted a school that would be cheaper in terms of school fees.” (Parent, Watoto Centre, LFPS).

When asked about their first preference, some typical responses from parents were:

Yes, if public schools were better run with teachers being serious with their work and discipline was high, Juliet would have remained in the public school. (Parent 10, Watoto Centre, LFPS)

No I would not choose NFS if there was quality education and few pupils in Public School. (Parent 2, Watoto Centre, LFPS)

Other parents made similar observations. “If the public school offered quality education, I could take them to public school” (Parent 1). Even several teachers in the LFPS confirmed similar patterns of household choice. One teacher during the FGD commented, “Most parents’ first choice of school is public school. This is because they are free and they get free supplies from the government. They later changed to NFS because of poor performance in the public schools” (Teacher, FGD, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS). Bourdieu’s concepts of field and habitus offer a useful framework to understand and explain why households may alter their habitus or act outside their normal dispositions. In this case households for whom their first choice was the public school later changed to LFPS because of changes in the field of schooling, one of which was the state policy of FPE which contributed to several deteriorating quality indicators in the public school for them. For these households, the institutional habitus shaped and helped alter their habitus.
On the other hand as Reay (1998) cautions, households interact and respond differently to institutional habitus. Illustrative of this difference are the following two responses of particularly strategic decision-making households in this study. For some households the perception of quality in LFPS has always been higher and they voiced it in the following way:

Yes, private schools are believed to be offering better education than public schools. Government should support children who are poor. No the NFS should operate the way they are because they have high quality of education. (Parent 19, Uhuru Educational Centre, LFPS).

NFS performance has always been better than Public School. Teachers in Public school too busy doing other things, not teaching. (Parent 4, Watoto Centre, LFPS)

The standard of education is higher in NFS. The children are engaged in learning activities unlike in public schools where the children just play throughout. (Parent 19)

I chose NFS because teachers are more serious with their work here than they are in the public school. (Parent 10)

For these households the state policy did not alter their habitus but rather confirmed it. These households were then also able to use their cultural and financial capital to navigate and negotiate the low-fee school market and make decisions around schools. These households represent strategic decision-makers described in the previous section who utilized the exit mechanism in active search of schools that offered better perceived quality of education. Moreover, these households also demonstrated a differential access to resources that they were able to invest in their search for ‘better’ schools.

Conversely, data from the study also reveals that there are households for whom the perception of quality in the public school has been higher than in the low-fee schools. For these households their habitus reinforced an understanding of the comparative advantage of the public
school system, because of its qualified teachers and state support which conferred it a status that equalled the quality, permanence and recognition they desired. These households most resembled the strategic decision-making households, particularly those who were longer term residents of Kibera. We can see this qualitative difference in habitus in the following parents’ words:

*The quality of education at Public school is better than at NFS and this is why I chose to take him to Karuthi. Pupils do not perform well at NFS. Someone close to my family told us that Karuthi pupils do well in the national examination. (Parent 12)*

*I like the public school because it is run by the City Council. We have a special process of paying for tuition unlike non-formal children that are sent home at any time. (Parent, Survey #194)*

*I chose this school because the school has experienced and qualified teachers. (Parent, Survey# 208)*

*My husband insisted our child goes to Karuthi as he was a former pupil there and so preferred his child’s education to be at Karuthi too. (Parent, Survey #300)*

Finally, when asked what role the government should be playing in NFS a number of households with children in the low-fee schools expressed their desire of wanting the government to support the schools financially citing reasons that aligned with what they saw as an undermining of their rights as Kenyans. As the following parent remarks exemplify:

*The government should support these schools especially financially because the children attending the schools are Kenyan children too. (Parent 11)*

*The government should help these NFS to strengthen their operation since many of them rely on donors who keep on pulling in and out and affecting the continuing of children’s education, (Parent 20)*

*The government should recognise the role these schools play in the community. Our children should get free primary education, like all other primary school pupils. (Parent 18)*
The government should fund these schools so that we stop paying school fees like the public schools. (Parent 6)

Paradoxically, many of the households while wanting the government to finance and support the low-fee schools did not want the government to take over the running of these schools for fear that these schools may deteriorate in quality and will resemble the public schools. Further, inherent in these parent quotations was also the expressed need for more accountability and transparency from the NFS themselves:

The government should improve the facilities in the schools. It should build classes for the children. It should not take over the running of these schools as the standards will go down, as is the case with the public school currently. (Parent 9)

I don’t think the government should take over NFS. They should be allowed to run independently. NFS should be encouraged to be open and involve parents in the running of the schools. They should tell parents about their programs and involve them in running them too. (Parent 6)

The government should fund NFS and supply these schools with books and other teaching and learning materials like they do with public schools. The Government should not take over NFS because they will decline in their studies as public schools have done over the recent past. NFS should be transparent to parents concerning projects in the school and funds received. (Parent 10)

Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to address the following two questions: how do households navigate and negotiate the low-fee market, and why are some households sending their children to low-fee schools?

In considering how households navigate the decision-making process, the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data showed that households with children in the low-fee schools engaged in a more active choice-making process, reporting that they undertook more steps in the deciding on a school. Both types of households also relied extensively on social
networks, or information channels for information about schools, and these social capital ties exerted strong influence as to where a household decided to enroll their children. Finally, as supported by the literature (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Kiluva-Ndunda, 2001; Stambach & David, 2005) data from this study similarly showed a gendered dimension to decision-making with mothers overwhelmingly being the primary school decision-makers.

Next, in analyzing the decision pathways of the households once again both the quantitative and qualitative data show that there has been significant pupil mobility in both the public, and low-fee schools with both types of households moving between the types of schools. The primary reason given was cost and issues of affordability. What emerged from the data was also evidence of some households being pushed out of the public school system because of a lack of fit between the capital and habitus the households’ posses and that which the schools. Value and validate. In some cases, households have also been indirectly and passively excluded through self-exclusion because of their habitus of “not for me”. In this way, some schools are in fact choosing some households and rejecting others resulting in a stratified school system. According to Reay et al., (1995) “Perceptions, expectations and choice all relate to and play their part in reproducing social structures” (p. 44). For households in this study, particularly the poorer of the poor, their lack of capital restricted their choices and pushed them into decisions they did not choose, and consequently reproduced inequities.

Further in considering reasons for choosing a particular school, reasons cited were grouped into the following categories: Practical considerations, access, school quality, financial considerations, community social capital and peripheral reasons. These decisions intersected and were impacted by issues of ethnicity and length of stay in Kibera. Households in this study who were primarily longer term residents expressed a stronger preference for public schools,
displaying a habitus and disposition that reflected a strong sense of attachment to place. On the other hand, newer migrants relied largely on looser social capital networks to make decisions around schools and had children who were primarily enrolled in low-fee schools.

Finally, I propose that households in the study can be classified into two groups based on their decision-making pathways: strategic and default. Evidence of this decision-making can be identified with households in the public as well as low-fee schools. Default decision-makers are typically households that have been pushed out the public system or low-fee system because of issues of cost and access. On the other hand, strategic decision-makers are typically households that have been pulled by either the public or private system for quality, instrumental as well as for ideological reasons.

In the next and final chapter I conclude with a summary of the major findings from the study, revisit the conceptual framework proposed for the study and provide some directions for considering issues of equity and access for low-fee schools in the slum of Kibera in Kenya.
Chapter Nine
Conclusion

Low-cost private education is an important, complementary element of education in developing countries and should be seen as an active partner with governments looking to ensure all children have access to a high quality education. We are convinced that affordable schools, operated on a for-profit basis, can make a big difference. Sir Michael Barber, Pearson’s Chief Education Advisor.11

Introduction

Given the proliferation of low-fee private schools in the Kenyan context the purpose of this thesis was to investigate the educational decision-making pathways of slum households living in the informal settlement of Kibera, Kenya. Specifically, I asked which slum households were using low-fee private schools (LFPS), why, and to what extent notions of field, capital and habitus impacted on how households navigated and negotiated this emerging educational market. In this final chapter I conclude the thesis by revisiting the research questions posed in this study and I offer a summary of the major findings. I also reconsider the theoretical and conceptual framework used in this study and reflect on its usefulness. Finally, I discuss some policy implications for the broader debates around private provision of public education, and I address some of the limitations of this study, and I offer some thoughts about directions for future research.

Revisiting the Research Questions and Summary of Major Findings

The main research question posed in this study was addressed at three interrelated analytical levels: State (Macro), School (Meso), and Household (Micro). At each of these levels I

11 www.affordable-learning.com Pearson has become one of the main financial providers supporting the growth of low-fee private schools in a number of developing countries.
was interested in how household decision-making may be impacted by the corresponding intersection of habitus and capital.

**Macro institutional habitus and household decision–making.**

In Chapter 5 I answered the question, “To what extent does institutional habitus shape, constrain and inform school decision-making for slum households in this study?” by examining how state policies and practices have impacted decision-making for households in this study. Findings from this study point to how state policies, in particular the introduction of FPE and a lack of supply of public schools in Kibera have pushed some households into using the low-fee sector. The introduction of FPE has been problematic in urban settlements because even before FPE these settlements already faced an acute shortage of schools. The massive influx of students as a result of FPE has only exacerbated the situation and has resulted in severe congestion in the existing state schools and placed huge demands on resources and teachers. Coupled with existing inadequacies within the system, for many households this has led to a perception of declining quality in the public schools. While households who have the economic or cultural capital are able to exit the public system, many others who lack such capital may be forced to remain within the public system resulting in a ghettoization of schools. Bangay and Latham (2013) warn that in such cases, it is the poorest who suffer most as they may be relegated to lower-quality government schooling. This stratified system of public schooling is contributing to the persistence and reproduction of class inequalities.

Moreover, there exists a policy paradox where the government is providing funding for some low-fee schools and yet at the same time is wary of the low-fee sector encroaching on the domain of the state in the provision of education in the slums.
The findings from this chapter also suggest that some households in Kibera are disadvantaged in their access to the free provision of schooling in public schools because their habitus or sociocultural environment may not provide the types of cultural capital or habitus required to successfully access the public schools.

**Meso organizational habitus and household decision-making.**

In Chapter 6 I examined the idea of organizational habitus, or in other words, “the school effect”, of how schools reproduce social inequalities. The main question addressed here was “To what extent does organizational habitus shape, constrain and inform school decision-making for slum households in this study?”

In particular the chapter presented findings that showed how the school’s organizational practices, status and order play a role in impacting households and their choice-making. Several key findings emerged. Firstly the values and practices of the institutions embodied as part of an institution’s habitus communicates to households a sense of acceptance and social inclusion. Households who were stigmatized or excluded from public schools identified with the caring ethos espoused by the low-fee schools. Secondly, how low-fee schools position themselves to households is a large part of their institutional habitus. For some schools this brought into question the tensions between the caring ethos they promoted, in particular by way of fee concessions, flexible fee payments and fee deferrals as an extension of care to the low-income households and what was used merely as a marketing strategy utilized for their viability. Within this murky matrix then, the way households perceive these schools and navigate the organizational habitus becomes increasingly complex. Thirdly, the relationship between teachers, households and pupils shaped and informed household decision-making. Teacher accountability to the households as well as to the school proprietors was an important consideration that formed
an organization’s habitus and was communicated to the households. Households valued this accountability and some considered it an impetus to improved quality compared to the state school. Additionally, several enabling teacher habituses were evident in the qualities the participants highlighted when discussing teacher characteristics that shaped their positive experiences in school and in the classroom. These included among others the teachers’ sense of care, teaching quality and concern. Finally, households were drawn towards LFPS whose institutional habitus extended to fostering sponsorship networks and connections. As households themselves increasingly relied on social networks to make decisions around schools, there was evidence that class and ethnicity were drivers of choice-making as household social networks in low-fee schools were largely composed of other households with similar backgrounds.

**Micro familial habitus and household decision-making.**

Finally in Chapters 7 and 8, I turn to examine familial habitus, or how a family’s habitus and capital impacted or constrained their decision-making. In Chapter 7, two sub-questions are answered. The first was, “How do households with children in the public school and households with children in low-fee private schools in this study differ in terms of their habitus and social capital?. The second question was “To what extent does familial habitus shape, constrain and inform school decision-making for slum households in this study?”

Data from this study showed that households in the public and low-fee schools in this study differed in their stock of economic, cultural and social capital in very specific ways. Households in low-fee schools reported having higher religious community attendance and participation compared to households in the public school. There were also more Muslim households in the public school in this study compared to the low-fee schools. This can be
attributed to there being more Nubian households, who are longer term residents of Kibera in the public school and they are predominantly Muslim.

As for human capital, the education level of mothers in low-fee schools in this study was found to be lower than those in the public school. While this is contrary to some literature around school choice and household characteristics, the results are less surprising from a Bourdieuan lens. Mothers with lower levels of education may possibly self-exclude themselves from the public school given the stigmatization of poorer households in the slum within the public system. Further there were more pupils who were classified as being in the incorrect class for their age compared to the pupils in the public school. This attests to the flexibility of low-fee schools and also points to a larger number of students perhaps enrolling later or repeating grades.

Households also differed in their financial capital with more households in the public school reporting they had more financial worry and financial trouble. On the other hand, households in the low-fee schools reported that they had fewer networks to draw upon for help to pay bills if they were to lose their jobs and need help with expenses. Since there are more households in the low-fee schools who are newer migrants, perhaps this helps to explain why these households may have fewer networks in the community to draw upon for financial help. Correspondingly, more households in the public school reported that they would have more networks to draw upon to help them financially. Since these households in the public school are typically longer term residents who have more established social ties, they may then understandably also have a larger or denser social network upon which to draw from. However, it is also important to consider that households with children in low-fee schools and who are newer migrants to Kibera may also have a large social network. Halpern (2005) points out that some social networks can consist of strong or weak ties which are utilized for different
purposes. It is likely newer migrants to Kibera may have both weak and strong ties. Their strong ties may be linked to spiritual and community capital and their weaker ties may be linked to financial capital.

Furthermore families with children in the low-fee schools also reported having more total school expenditure compared to families in the public school. Given that low-fee households have more primary-school going children than those households in the public school this is not too surprising.

Of the family capital indicators, it appeared that longer term residents of Kibera were more likely to choose the public school, and newer migrants were more likely to be in low-fee schools. For some households in the low-fee schools, the cost of the public school was higher because of auxiliary costs associated with schooling such as uniforms, desks, exam fees, etc. Households in the low-fee schools who were newer migrants also appeared to draw more upon informal social ties and social capital networks to make decisions around schools. These information channels differed from those that were activated by longer term residents and pointed to differing notions of capital and habitus between the two types of households.

There were also significant differences in terms of ethnicity and selection of school, with there being a significant number of Nubian and Kikuyu households in the public school, and Luo and Luhya households in the low-fee schools. This pattern of distribution corresponds with the migration pattern of households with there being more migrants who are new to Kibera accessing low-fee schools, and longer-term residents accessing the public school. One speculation is that newer migrants may lack the cultural, economic, and social capital necessary to access established organizations such as the public schools. As a result of this lack of capital, newer migrants may find the informality of the low-fee schools less daunting and consequently more
accessible. Such perceptions of ease of access may also correspond with their dispositions that the public school is “not for me” and may cause them to self-exclude from the public school. Finally, in terms of community capital; there were more families in low-fee schools who reported receiving help from group memberships as well as engaging in more steps in selecting a school compared to households in the public school. Group membership was broadly categorised to include many types of groups: work, religious, women’s, funeral, merry-go-rounds etc. Help received as well was broadly categorized to include financial, emotional as well as help in the form of information and assistance to complete a task.

The logistic regression analysis shows that households are more inclined to have children enrolled in the low-fee private schools if they had higher total school expenses for all school-going children, were newer migrants to Kibera (less than five years and between six and eleven years), engaged in more steps in selecting a school and received help from group membership. Newer migrants to Kibera were drawing upon their social networks to make decisions around where to send their children to school as evidenced by the interview data. For many, these social networks were qualitatively different from those that were utilized by households in the public school, and were equally important information channels. The data also suggests that for newer migrants these social networks were more bound by class and ethnicity. It is important to note that while households in the low-fee schools reported that they had fewer networks to draw upon for help to pay bills if they were to lose their jobs and need help with expenses, the regression analysis seems to point to what appears to be a contradictory finding. Logistic regression analysis seems to indicate that households with children in low-fee schools were more likely to have received help from group membership. However when we consider that households can belong to different social networks for different purposes, this finding is less confounding.
Further, group membership in this study is varied in its definition and includes groups that are work related, community associations, women’s groups, religious groups, merry go round groups, and credit/funeral group. Similarly a broad definition of help from the group membership is included ranging from emotional help, economic help, and to assistance in knowing or doing things. Considering this definition of group membership, it is likely that a new migrant household could belong to a number of groups and receive assistance in many intangible ways, yet not have strong ties that translate into financial assistance. Edward and Foley (as cited in Halpern, 2005, p.23) point out that in addition to considering the size and density of a person’s network, it is important to also examine the resources that network connects the individuals to pointing to classed differences.

In Chapter 8, I then returned to the main question posed in this study of who uses low-fee schools, why and how do households navigate and negotiate this low-fee market. The answer to the conundrum of why are poor parents paying to send their children to LFP schools when there is a free state provided alternative is neither straightforward nor simple. What emerges instead from the analysis presented in this thesis is a nuanced, complex picture of choice, decision-making and constraints. This categorization brings into focus and questions the very notion that households, particularly those in urban poor settlements are able to exercise choice, when in fact it is very few households that are able to fully engage in the choice process. While FPE has widened access, it has also served to push many households into LFPS who are unhappy with the overcrowding and the resulting deterioration of instructional quality in the public schools. Perception of better quality in LFPs with their smaller class sizes is a key impetus to moving children from public to private schools. LFPS are clearly meeting a need particularly in urban poor settlements where there is an inadequate supply of schools. However, LFPS are not
homogenous and while there are some good LFPS which were built primarily in response to the needs of the community, and are offering an acceptable alternative offering to the public system, the quality offering in some others is questionable, as is the motivation of their proprietors. However, while the current national policy recognizes that all children, youth and adults are entitled to a basic quality education as a right, the exclusion of many children from the free provision of education raises some serious equity considerations.

Based on the findings, I propose a categorization of households based on their decision-making pathways into two groups: default decision-makers and strategic decision-makers. Both types of decision-makers were evident in the public and low-fee schools. Default decision-makers are households who may not have the necessary capital and habitus to access the public or low-fee private school of their choice. Their school decision then becomes one of default. The findings from this study show that these households were either pushed out of the public system through a denial of access and other subtle exclusionary practices, or the households self-excluded themselves because of a perceived lack of fit between their cultural capital and habitus and that of the public school. Strategic decision-makers, on the other hand are households who have the capital to exit the public school system for quality, as well as pragmatic considerations. Conversely, in the public school system certain strategic decision-makers exhibit loyalty tendencies, particularly amongst long term Kibera residents. For these households their habitus reproduces ‘social structures in the head’ (Bourdieu as cited in Reay et al., 2005, p. 160) which are tied more to a sense of place and establishment than to quality and other imperatives. In this analysis one of the most powerful and surprising issues to emerge is that of the relationship between ethnicity, migrant category, and school type. What this suggests is that low-fee schools in this study are being stratified along social class and ethnicity lines further confirming the
centrality of ethnicity in Kenyan society (Miguel, 2000). Additionally, the finding from this study that low-fee schools are largely utilized by newer migrants to Kibera may speak to how some households may be constrained by their lack of capitals or inability to activate capitals. This further supports Bourdieu’s contention that the transmission of “economic, cultural and symbolic privilege” (Bourdieu, 1996, p.23) takes places when families engage with schools.

**Refining the Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework used in this study draws on Hirschman’s (1970) notions of ‘exit’, ‘voice’ and ‘loyalty,’ as well as Bourdieu’s notions of capital, habitus and field. I conceptualized household decision-making as being at the nexus or centre of the intersection of macro or state level institutional habitus, meso or school level organizational habitus, and micro or household level familial habitus. I elected to represent these three interrelated levels as three concentric circles (as given in Figure 4, Chapter 3). This study examined how these different spheres or levels worked to either push or pull households into choosing the public or low-fee private schools.

McDonough (1997) asserts that an individual student’s outcome is affected by the mutually influencing processes exerted by their family and their school. In a similar way, I extend this idea to household decision-making and find in this study that household decision-making was influenced not only by a family’s stock of capital, but also by the state’s policies which were part of its institutional habitus, and the school’s organizational habitus. Households with more cultural capital were better able to navigate institutional habitus to their advantage (Lareau, 1989) either by way of securing sponsorship for their children, or by asking for fee concessions from the school proprietor. There was also evidence that households in this study looked for schools that matched their habitus, either by way of the ethos of care demonstrated by
the school proprietors and teachers, or by way of the school’s values and priorities being consistent with their own.

Additionally, I found the relationship between capital and habitus on Bourdieu’s four different forms of exclusion: self-elimination, overselection, relegation and direct elimination, and provided for in Bellamy’s (1994) summary to be a particularly useful conceptual way to understand and explain how certain households had been excluded from the public school system (Table 11, Chapter 3). This exclusion was either through a lack of fit between their habitus and that of the school, or a lack of economic capital in terms of their inability to pay fees or afford fees. While there were a few instances of direct elimination in terms of households being denied access into the public school because they lacked the economic capital to pay the bribe required for admission, or because students were being chased away from school because their parents could not pay fees, there were far more instances of subtle or passive exclusionary practices. Households in the low-fee schools voiced how they felt they did not fit in in the public school articulating and internalizing a “not for the likes of me” disposition (Bourdieu, 1996) because of the way they felt disrespected by the teachers, or how their children lacked cultural capital objectified through the wearing of the required uniforms. These forms of exclusion also demonstrated “class-based patterns of aspirations” (McDonough, 1997, p. 152) which are influenced by both the school and the family.

Hirschman’s notions of exit, voice and loyalty were similarly useful in understanding how some households were able to use their economic and cultural capital to exit the state school system, which they perceived as inferior to the low-fee schools. This exit mechanism was a way for these households to express their dissatisfaction. In contrast, certain households, particularly longer term residents of Kibera preferred instead to exercise loyalty by choosing the public
school to which they themselves had attended. For these households their habitus had not been altered by the institutional policies of FPE. However, Hirschman’s notion of exit without voice also helps to explain why a household’s exit alone from the public system without exerting voice does not improve the quality of the organization, and in this study this was confirmed by the lack of indication of improvement at the public school in the study and the other low-fee schools where there had been migration of students. The exit of households who possess a greater volume of capital may inevitably result in a stratified school system where lower performing schools are populated by households who choose not to exercise voice which in turn results in further deterioration of quality.

**Implications for Policy and Equity**

The proliferation of low-fee private schools or “private schools for the poor” continues to spark a highly polarized and ideologically charged debate. In many ways conventional ideas of state provided provision of public education are being tested with the introduction of funding to the low-cost education sector by the World Bank’s IFC, and more recently in several countries by DFID. Paradoxically, DFID’s Guidance Note (DFID, 2012) cautions that:

> There is still a lack of data and comparative analysis on education outcomes to be able to assess value for money from the government perspective and for prospective students and their families to distinguish between high-quality and low-quality public and private providers. (Guidance Note p. 3)

Yet, despite this lack of robust data, in the push towards improving access to education for marginalized groups, low-fee schools continue to gain prominence and are being seen by
some as credible partners who are “filling in the gap” for the state’s shortcomings in the provision of education.

On the one hand some view this partnering as a positive engagement, particularly through the promotion of public private partnerships as articulated in the following statement:

Increasing the private sector’s role in education through PPPs can have several benefits over traditional public delivery of education including greater efficiency, increased choice, and wider access to government services, particularly for people who are poorly served by traditional schools. (Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio & Guaqueta, 2009, p. 64)

Others, on the other hand are more cautious about the implications of promoting a sector that is mired within a murky policy and regulatory context. Still others are optimistic that a ‘middle-ground’ can be satisfactorily negotiated. For example, Bangay and Latham (2013) in a recent review of the Gyan Shala Program in the slums of Gujarat and Bihar in India contend that:

The tendency to consider schooling as either private or public is counterproductive. This can lead to ignoring the dynamic between the two sub-sectors and the influence they can have on each other. Moreover, a ‘polarized’ approach could result in opportunities for collaborative service provision and economies of scale, mutual learning and ‘cross fertilization’ being missed. (Bangay & Latham, 2013, p. 244)

Too often, though, discussions and debates around the role of low-fee private schools become mired in ideology. Perhaps, given that the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) data shows that nearly 68 million children are still not in school worldwide, more than half of whom are girls (2011), there is a greater urgency to consider what role, if any these low-fee schools can or should be playing in the provision of education. I believe that the debate should move beyond
the constraints of ideology. In a recent compilation, Srivastava (2013) poses an important question, asking if low-fee schools are “aggravating equity or mitigating disadvantage”. Data from this study suggests that low-fee schools may be doing both.

While it is problematic to offer policy formulations involving low-fee private schools largely because of their heterogeneity, to not do so merely perpetuates the ambiguity and hostility surrounding low-fee schools that currently exists in some contexts. It is crucial to acknowledge that there is a clear difference in motivation and focus between not-for-profit low-fee schools and for-profit low-fee schools. Some schools in this study, particularly faith-based schools were clearly meeting a need. They were transparent in their dealings with the households they served, and were strongly motivated by their faith, and there was little or no evidence of conflict between philanthropy and profit in their agenda. Others, however, were more dubious. To adopt a free market ideology assumes all low-fee schools are alike and that households choose purely from a rational choice perspective. The danger of such an undifferentiated position is that it potentially creates a highly stratified low-fee private school sector that in turn exacerbates inequalities.

First as data from this study shows, not all households in this study had equal access to opportunity and choice, and this raises some serious equity concerns and a persistence and reproduction of inequities and the status quo. Many households are default decision-makers pushed into a decision either for reasons of cost, or for lack of access. For these households who have been excluded from the state system, the low-fee schools they are able to access or are pushed into are only marginally better than the public school. Far fewer households are able to exercise genuine choice in accessing low-fee schools that have better facilities, resources and more trained teachers. Second, households who do exercise choice may be doing so for non-
utilitarian motivations. Their nuanced reasons for decision-making, as was evident in this study with some default decision-makers and strategic decision-makers can be premised on questionable perceptions of quality. Data shows that households rely on social networks, ethnicity, and habitus and social capital considerations in making a decision, and do not necessarily drive improvement in the public school. What they do instead is create a sorting of households into low-fee schools based on ethnicity and social class.

Clearly the complexities and difficulties inherent in understanding low-income household decision-making around schools require innovative ways of engaging in the public-private debate that moves beyond a “counterproductive debate on state and non-state provision” (Bangay & Latham, 2013), as well as a purely narrow focus on issues of widening access. What is important is to tighten the regulatory framework so that issues such as perceptions of quality and the consistency of quality indicators, and issues of equity can be better addressed. That way, susceptible households are not duped or swayed by a school’s organizational habitus that masks its marketing strategies. For the low-fee schools themselves, when there is less insecurity in their relationship with the state within the institutional context, they can better focus on the business of schooling. This move in itself may not make household decision-making more rational as many households will likely still continue choosing for non-rational reasons, but this move may mitigate some of the inconsistencies within the sector.

Kenya’s policy changes in the Non-formal Education Sector are steps in the right direction, although there remain gaps to be addressed. To date only some low-fee schools have qualified for textbook funding from the Ministry. Further, this Instructional Material (IM) funding to low-fee schools by the Ministry of Education raises equity concerns. As well there is a disparity in the amounts received by the public schools, and between some low-fee schools.
Funding issues continue to be sharply debated. For all Kenyan children to benefit from FPE, those particularly in urban poor settlements should not be marginalized or penalized by inequitable funding to low-fee schools.

Further, in the Kenyan context perhaps special attention needs to be paid to default decision-making households. As data from this study has shown, these are households who have been pushed out of the public system, or excluded because they lacked the capital to negotiate the public school system. For some households this has included reasons such as not being able to pay the bribe asked for by the public school for admission, or being stigmatized for lacking uniforms or desks. Auxiliary costs in the public school, despite FPE continue to make it inaccessible for many households. The state school system could reconsider relaxing regulations that may be financial impediments to many poor households such as the strict requirement for uniforms. Moreover admission into public schools should also be made a more transparent and accountable process to thwart unethical practices. For households who have been denied access to the public system an equitable solution needs to be found vis-à-vis the public or low-fee school sector, if necessary. To abandon the pursuit of education by these households to the forces of a marketized school arena is unacceptable.

Finally, tightening the regulatory framework will also make monitoring the sector a less haphazard process. As urbanization rates continue to remain high in Kenya and in other urban poor settlements, demands for schooling will likely continue to escalate and outpace government provision. Within this paradigm low-fee schools clearly can no longer be ignored. They are here to stay and will continue to flourish. Some will continue to meet needs that the government school system cannot yet adequately address in these slums. Others will continue to meet differentiated demand from better-off slum households. Still others will continue to circumvent
state regulations to their advantage. Given the evidence from this study, this push towards greater involvement of the low-cost private sector in the provision of education must be undertaken cautiously as the data suggests not all households are equally served by these low-cost schools. There are some low-fee schools that are genuinely “mitigating disadvantage” by providing for the needs of the families least served by the State system. These schools are motivated by the ethic of care and are clearly meeting a need. However the offering and motivation of some others remains at best questionable, and in fact the data suggests that some of these schools may be reinforcing inequalities, exploiting the vulnerabilities of the poor, and eroding social cohesion.

**Contributions and Limitations of the Study**

This thesis has contributed to the broader debate around household educational decision-making, particularly in terms of understanding parental aspirations and decision making in schooling choices for low-income families choosing low-fee private schools. To date, very little has been written about how notions of capital, field and habitus constrain and shape the way households make decisions around low-fee schools. A Bourdieusian exploration of this decision-making pathway through an exploration of institutional, organizational and familial habitus has also enabled a deeper understanding of the complexity of the decision-making processes of slum households, and how some choices may exacerbate equity and promote exclusion. Finally, this thesis has added to the broader ongoing discussion on the role of low-fee schools and the private provision of basic education.

This study had several limitations. First, there may have been some issues with translation. Interviews with parents and FGDs were conducted in Kiswahili and translated. In these interviews I had to rely on my interpreter to interpret not only what was said but also the subtle non-verbal nuances. I may not have picked up all of these subtleties.
While I was able to verify school enrollment data, other information such as free and concessionary places offered as well as funding from sponsors was more difficult to verify. In these instances, I had to rely on the information provided by the school proprietors who may have been underreporting or over-reporting some figures.

Similarly, households may have over-reported some expenses and under-reported some income in anticipation that they may be able to qualify for some form of sponsorship or funding. As a result, while I had collected data on income and expenses, I did not use this data in the analysis and interpretation of results as I was not confident of its robustness and credibility. Instead I used the financial capital proxies of economic hardship, trouble paying bills, and help if job was lost as measures of wealth and economic stability. While these proxies provided some valuable data on financial capital, the analysis is limited. This limitation may have been addressed in part if I had collected data for household wealth using asset based indicators. This data would have allowed for a more detailed analysis of the relationship between decision-making and economic indicators.

Suggestions for Further Research

Future research should not only address some of the limitations stated above, but should also explore how perceptions of quality and school satisfaction may vary across different ethnic and migrant groups and how this may contribute to the process of decision-making. Clearly, better proxies for indicators of quality need to constructed and assessed. These indicators need to go beyond just randomized test scores and should capture quality in a more holistic way, such that it also includes an evaluation of classroom pedagogy in low-fee schools.

Future research might also investigate household decision-making using a larger sample data set of public and low-fee schools and employ multi-level modeling such as Hierarchical
Linear Modeling (HLM) to better parse out institutional, organizational and household variables that impact decision-making.

Additionally, further research might also investigate whether or not the two categories of decision-makers introduced in this study: default and strategic can be appropriately applied to other slum contexts in considering decision-making pathways around low-fee private schools.
Epilogue

As the day draws to an end in Kibera, the slum never really goes to sleep. Kerosene lamps dot the night, people move quickly and purposively tending to business, petty traders continue to hawk their wares, and shanty movie kiosks offer entertainment to a weary crowd of young people starved for alternatives. There is an air of cautious trepidation that blankets the darkening sky over the slum at this late hour. Darkness brings with it new dangers for the vulnerable and personal safety becomes a heightened concern.

Schools are done for the day. In some, night watchmen watch over the premises fending off petty thieves who may want to steal whatever they can to sell for a few shillings. In other schools that cannot afford a night watchman, proprietors leave for the night unsure of what losses the morning may reveal. Tomorrow, private schools will open their doors again for the many, many children of Kibera who are either unable to get into the public schools or have chosen to come to these schools. The resilience of slum dwellers living in Kibera is manifested in the tenacity shown by parents in vigilantly seeking out an education for their children. Undeterred by costs and undaunted by hardships, some slum parents willingly and unselfishly sacrifice basic necessities to buy what should have been theirs by right.

As residents from rural enclaves continue to be drawn into its belly, Kibera tantalizes them with the promise of better prospects, and a better life. Entrepreneurs in the spirit of “Jua Kali” 12 eking out a living, provide hope to parents seeking quality education for their children. Low-fee schools continue to thrive as they feed of the desires of poor households nurturing aspirations for a better life for their children, and a determination to break the cycle of poverty.

12 Jua Kali is a Swahili term literally translated meaning under the sun or hot sun. This term is widely used to refer to the informal or non-formal sector of the economy in Kenya.
The promise of schooling fuels these hopes and dreams. Some schools enable these ambitions, while many others also exploit them. Inevitably, in the drama of supply and demand, some poor parents become pawns in the game of choice. The market serves the needs of some but not all. Choice continues to elude many poor households.
References


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Appendix A
Survey Questionnaire

Interviewer code:  Edited Date:   Data verified Date:

Date of interview: Keyed Date:   Remarks:
Interview start time:                     
Interview end time:                     

Screening questions

1. Do you have a child in class 6 or 7?
   1 Yes  2 No (Terminate survey)

2. What is the gender of child?
   1 Male  2 Female

3. Where does your child go to school? (Name of school)
   ___________________________________________ (confirm that school is one of 5
   sample schools)
   1 Public school
   2 Non-formal school

4. Do you have some primary school-going children in public school and some in Non-
   formal school?
   1 Yes  If yes, how many male ___ and female _____ in public school, how many male__
      and female in NFS_____?
   2 No

5. In the past 4 years have you moved your primary school-going children between public
   and non-formal schools, or between non-formal and public schools?
   1 Yes
   2 No
   Why? ________________________________________________

6. In the past 4 years have you moved your primary school-going children between different
   Non-formal schools?
   1 Yes  If yes, from ____________________ to _________________________
   2 No
7. Why did you choose this school?

INTRODUCTION

1. How many years have you lived in this house?
   0  Less than one year
   ___ Enter exact number (round to the nearest number)
   888  Don’t know
   999  Refused

2. How many years have you lived in this community?
   0  Less than one year
   ___ Enter exact number (round to the nearest number)
   888  Don’t know
   999  Refused

3. How many times have you moved during the past 3 years?
   0  Have not moved
   ___ Enter exact number
   888  Don’t know
   999  Refused

4. Why did you move to this particular community and not another one?
   i. Seek job 1 Yes 2 No
   ii. Got a job 1 Yes 2 No
   iii. To join family 1 Yes 2 No
   iv. Got married 1 Yes 2 No
   v. Rent is cheap 1 Yes 2 No
   vi. Community is safe 1 Yes 2 No
   vii. Born and raised here 1 Yes 2 No
   viii. No option 1 Yes 2 No
   ix. Other ________________
       9  Refused

5. How many children do you have?
   ___ Enter exact number
   99  Refused

6. How many children under the age of 18 currently live in this household (whether biological children or not)?
   00  None
   ___ Enter exact number
7. How many children living in this household still attend school?
   ____ Enter exact number
   99 Refused

8. How many in primary schools?
   ____ Enter exact number
   99 Refused

9. How many extended family members (ages 18 or older) currently live in this household?
   00 None
   ____ Enter exact number
   88 Don’t know
   99 Refused

10. ASK ONLY IF FAMILY HAS EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS LIVING IN THE
    HOUSEHOLD, OTHERWISE SKIP TO QUESTION # 11) About how many times per
    month does (index child) do any kind of activity with these extended family members
    residing in the household?
    00 None
    ____ Enter exact number of times per month
    88 Don’t know
    99 Refused

11. What is your ethnic group/tribe?
    1 Kamba
    2 Kikuyu
    3 Luhya
    4 Luo
    5 Other___________
    9 Refused

12. Which year were you born? (to calculate age)
    1 15-19
    2 20-24
    3 25-29
    4 30-34
    5 35-39
    6 40-44
    7 45-49
    8 >50
    9 Refused
13. What is your marital status now? Are you married, widowed, divorced, separated or never been married?
   1 Married (go to question #14), otherwise skip to question #15
   2 Widowed
   3 Divorced
   4 Separated
   5 Single (never married)
   9 Refused

14. If married, do you live with your partner?
   1 Yes
   2 No
   9 Refused

15. What is the highest level of education you completed?
   1 No education
   2 Primary incomplete
   3 Primary complete
   4 Secondary incomplete
   5 Secondary complete
   6 Higher
   9 Don’t know
   10 Refused

16. (If there is no partner, skip to question #17 if there is a partner, ask). What is the highest level of education that your partner completed?
   1 No education
   2 Primary incomplete
   3 Primary complete
   4 Secondary incomplete
   5 Secondary complete
   6 Higher
   8 Don’t know
   9 Refused

17. What is your religion?
   1 Catholic
   2 Protestant/other Christian Skip to question #18
   3 Muslim
   4 No religion
   5 Other _______________________
   8 Don’t know
   9 Refused

18. What denomination is that, if any?
1  Baptist
2  Methodist
3  Seventh day Adventist
4  Anglican
5  Pentecostal
6  Non-denominational
7  Other___________
8  Don’t know
9  Refused

19. Do you attend a local church or other religious or spiritual community?
   1  Yes Go to question #20, otherwise skip to question #21
   2  No Skip question # 20 , go to question #21
   8  Don’t know
   9  Refused

20. Are you a member of this local church or other religious or spiritual community?
   1  Yes
   2  No
   8  Don’t know
   9  Refused

21. Not including wedding and funerals, how often do you attend religious services? (probe with categories).
   1  Every week (or more often)
   2  Almost every week
   3  Once or twice a month
   4  A few times per year
   8  Don’t know
   9  Refused

22. In the past 12 months, have you taken part in any sort of activity with people at your church or place of worship other than attending services? This might include leading a discussion, serving on a committee, attending choir/music practice, or other things.
   1  Yes
   2  No
   8  Don’t know
   9  Refused

23. What is the birth order of the (index child)?
   1  First born
   2  Subsequent
   9  Refused

24. How old is the (index child)?
Enter exact age in years
88   Don’t know
99   Refused

25. What is the month and year in which (index child) was born?
   Month: 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12

26. What position did index child get in school last term on his/her final report card?
   Enter position (be sure to indicate x out of how many (ie. Total))
   111   Not applicable
   112   School does not issue report cards
   888   Don’t know
   999   Refused

27. What is your relationship to the index child?
   1   Natural mother
   2   Step-mother
   3   Adoptive mother
   4   Guardian, grandparent
   5   Guardian, other relative
   6   Guardian, non-relative
   7   Natural father
   8   Don’t know
   9   Refused

28. How long have you lived with (index child)?
   00   Less than one year
   ___   Number of years (please round to the nearest whole year)
   77   All of his/her life
   88   Don’t know
   99   Refused

29. (Question 29-30) Ask only if there is a male parent in the household, otherwise skip to question #30)
I understand that (index child) also has a father or other male guardian that lives in this household. What is his relationship to index child?
   1   Natural father
   2   Stepfather
   3   Adoptive father
   4   Guardian, grandparent
   5   Guardian, other relative
   6   Guardian, non-relative
   7   Natural Mother
   8   Don’t know
30. How long has he lived with (index child)?

- 00  Less than one year
- 77  All his life
- 88  Don’t know
- 99  Refused
- 111 Not applicable

31. (Ask only if single mother, otherwise skip to question #31). For how many years have you had the sole responsibility of raising your children?

- 00  Less than one year
- 88  Don’t know
- 99  Refused
- 111 Not applicable

32. How many times per week do you or your partner help index child with his/her homework?

- 00  None
- 88  Don’t know
- 99  Refused

33. How often would you say you or your partner verbally encourage and/or congratulate (index child) in his/her activities (in school, in play, in chores, etc)?

- 0  Never
- 1  Sometimes
- 2  Often
- 3  Every day
- 4  Always
- 8  Don’t know
- 9  Refused

34. Now let’s talk about the things that you or your partner and (index child) do together. As I read a list of activities, tell me how often do you do these things with (index child) in a given month: 888- Don’t know’; 999- Refused

- a. go to regular /Sunday religious services ___(enter exact number of times per month)
- b. attend other religious activities together ___(enter exact number of times per month)
- c. attend a family gathering together ___(enter exact number of times per month)
- d. play a game or sport together ___(enter exact number of times per month)
- e. read or tell a story ___(enter exact number of times per month)
f. go into town together for shopping  ____ (enter exact number of times per month)
g. go to a park or playground  ____ (enter exact number of times per month)

35. In the past term, please tell me how many times you or your partner have done the following things for (index child)? [ 111 - not applicable; 888 - don’t know; 999 - Refused]
a. Talked to a teacher about your child’s progress in school  ____ (enter exact number of times )
b. Talked to (index child) about a problem he/she was having at school  ____ (enter exact number of times )
c. Attended a play, concert, sporting event or other activity at school  ____ (enter exact number of times )
d. helped out with special projects or activities in his/her school  ____ (enter exact number of times)

36. Looking ahead, how far would you like (Index child) to go in school? (READ ALL CHOICES)
0  Mother not interested
1  Graduate from primary (KCPE)
2  Graduate from secondary (KCSE)
3  Get some college or other training
4  Graduate from university
5  What? (Specify____________________________)
8  Don’t know
9  Refused

37. And how far do you think he/she will really go? (REPEAT CATEGORIES IF NECESSARY)
0  Mother not interested
1  Graduate from primary (KCPE)
2  Graduate from secondary (KCSE)
3  Get some college or other training
4  Graduate from university
5  What? (Specify____________________________)
8  Don’t know
9  Refused

38. In deciding where to send your index child to school, who did you turn to for advice? (DO NOT READ. RECORD ALL MENTIONS. PROBE FOR “ANY OTHERS?”)
00  No one
01  Husband/partner
02  One of child’s grandparents
03  Other relative
04  Friend or neighbor
05  Teacher or head teacher
06  Social worker
39. Who made the final school choice decision? (DO NOT READ. RECORD ALL MENTIONS. PROBE FOR “ANY OTHERS?”)

- 01 Wife
- 02 Husband
- 03 One of child’s grandparents
- 04 Other relative
- 05 Friend or neighbor
- 06 Teacher or head teacher
- 07 Social worker
- 08 Pastor or priest or imam
- 09 Doctor, nurse or other health care professional
- 10 Child’s other parent if not living in the household
- 11 Parents of child’s friends
- 12 Child himself/herself
- 13 Both Parents
- 14 Other persons (Specify____________________________)
- 88 Don’t know
- 99 Refused

40. In deciding where to send your index child to school, please tell me if you did the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Did you only visit the specific school?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Did you talk to the head teacher/Proprietor at the school?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. Did you visit several schools in the area to compare? 1 2 8

d. Did you talk to other parents you knew who had children there? 1 2 8

e. Did you ask your index child for his/her choice? 1 2 8

f. Did you ask to see school’s performance records? 1 2 8

41. Was this current school your first choice?
   1 Yes skip to question # 44
   2 No Go to # 42, and #43
   8 Don’t know
   9 Refused

42. If this school was not first choice, what was?
   1 Public school
   2 Another non-formal school
   3 Another public school
   8 Don’t know
   9 Refused

43. Why could you not get your first choice?
   1 School refused
   2 School too expensive
   3 School too full
   4 Other________
   8 Don’t know
   9 Refused

44. In deciding where to send your index child to school, please tell me how you would rate the following considerations as most important, important, not very important, or least important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Most Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not Very Important</th>
<th>Least Important</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The school offers fee concessions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b. The school has a flexible fee collection practices

c. The school is close to my home.

d. The school offers a feeding program

e. The school is run by a head teacher/prop I know

f. The school has other children from my neighbourhood

g. The school is run in a way that corresponds to my faith.

h. The school has a clean environment

i. The school has good academic performance

j. School is safe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

45. Think now about how things are going in general in (index child’s) life. Please rate each of the following parts of your child’s life either as poor, fair, good or excellent. First,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. His health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. His relationships with friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. His relationship with you</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. His relationship with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
your partner (if applicable)  1  2  3  4  8

e. His feelings about himself  1  2  3  4  8

f. His relationship with brothers
sisters or other children he lives
with.

46. During the past year, how many school meetings (PTA etc.) have you or your partner
attended for (index child)?
00  None
___  Enter exact number
88  Don’t know
99  Refused
111 Not applicable

47. About how many close friends does (index child) have? By close friends I mean friends
that he spends a lot of free time with?
0  None SKIP TO QUESTION # 49
___  Enter exact number of friends
888  Don’t know (Prompt response “don’t know: too many to count”)
999  Refused

48. About how many of these close friends do you know by sight?
0  None
___  Enter exact number of friends
888  Don’t know (Prompt response “don’t know: too many to count”)
999  Refused
111 Not applicable

49. About how many of the parents of (index child’s) friends do you know by sight?
0  None
___  Enter exact number of friends
888  Don’t know (Prompt response “don’t know: too many to count”)
999  Refused
111 Not applicable

50. About how often do you know who (index child) is with when he’s not at home? Would
you say you know who he’s with…. (READ)
1  Only rarely
2 Some of the time
3 Most of the time, or
4 All of the time?
8 Don’t know
9 Refused

51. About how often do you know what (index child) is doing when he is not at home? Would you say you know what he is doing…? (READ)
1 Only rarely
2 Some of the time
3 Most of the time, or
4 All of the time?
111 Not applicable
8 Don’t know
9 Refused

52. Now I would like to ask you how much trouble you have paying for particular kind of expenses. Do you have a lot of trouble, some trouble, just a little trouble, or no trouble at all paying for ….(READ)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>No such expense</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Food for your family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Clothes for your family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Your rent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Utilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Doctor’s bills, healthcare and other medical expense</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. School fees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Other school expenses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

53. How often, if ever, do you worry that your total family income won’t be enough to meet your family’s expenses and bills? Would you say you have worries like this…? (READ)
1 All the time
2 Most of the time
3 Some of the time
4 Just now and then, or
5 Never?
8 Don’t know
9 Refused
54. IF NO TROUBLE TO ALL PARTS OF QUESTION 52, SKIP TO QUESTION 55, OTHERWISE CONTINUE. When you have trouble paying your family’s bills, who do you feel you can turn to for help? (DO NOT READ, RECORD ALL MENTIONS. PROBE: Anyone else?)

- 0 no one
- 1 Government agency or welfare program
- 2 Local community or neighborhood association
- 3 Church, or religious social service agency
- 4 Family member
- 5 Friend or neighbour
- 6 Teacher or principal at the school
- 7 Women’s group
- 8 Other (specify ______________________)
- 88 Don’t know
- 9 Refused
- 111 Not applicable

55. During the past twelve months, have you and your family received any assistance from the government?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don’t know
- 9 Refused

56. How much money do you receive from other members of your household per month? (excluding partner)

- 0 None
- Enter amount in KSh
- 8 Don’t know
- 9 Refused

56a. Aside from this money do you receive any type of non-monetary assistance (clothing or food) from them?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don’t know
- 9 Refused
- 111 Not applicable

56b. If so, how much would you say what they give is equivalent to in Ksh?

- 0 None
- Enter exact amount in Ksh
57. How much money do you receive from other family members who do not live in your home per month?
   0   None
   ___ Enter amount in KSH
   8   Don’t know
   9   Refused
   111 Not applicable

57a. Aside from this money do you receive any type of non-monetary assistance (clothing or food) from them?
   1   Yes
   2   No
   8   Don’t know
   9   Refused
   111 Not applicable

57b. If so, how much would you say what they give is equivalent to in Ksh?
   0   None
   ___ Enter exact amount in Ksh
   8   Don’t know
   9   Refused
   111 Not applicable

58. Are you presently employed full time, part time, self-employed or not employed?
   0   Not employed
   1   Employed full-time
   2   Employed part-time
   3   Self-employed
   8   Don’t know
   9   Refused

59. (IF MOTHER IS WORKING, ASK) Do you work in the home or outside of the home?
   0   In the home
   1   Outside the home
   111 Not applicable

60. How many hours a week do you usually work, at all your jobs?
   ___ Enter exact number of hours
   111 Not applicable
   888 Don’t know
   999 Refused
61. How much do you make per month, in all your jobs, including overtime?

Enter actual amount

8 Don’t know
9 Refused
111 Not applicable

62. Ask only if living with partner, otherwise skip to question Is your partner employed full-time, part-time self-employed or not employed?

0 Not employed
1 Employed full-time
2 Employed part-time
3 Self-employed
8 Don’t know
9 Refused

63. IF PARTNER IS WORKING ASK. Does your partner work in the home or outside of the home?

0 In the home
1 Outside the home
111 Not applicable

64. How many hours a week does he/she usually work, at all his/her jobs?

Enter exact number of hours

111 Not applicable
888 Don’t know
999 Refused

65. How much does he/she make per month, in all his/her jobs, including overtime?

Enter actual amount

8 Don’t know
9 Refused
111 Not applicable

66. If you and/or your partner were to lose your jobs, who do you feel you could turn to for help? (DO NOT READ, RECORD ALL MENTIONS. PROBE: Anyone else?)

0 no one
1 Government agency or welfare program
2 Local community or neighborhood association
3 Church, or religious social service agency
4 Family member
5 Friend or neighbor
6 Teacher or principal at the school
7 Women’s group
8 Sponsor
67. How much do you pay per month for school fees for (index child)?

___ Enter exact amount
8 Don’t know
9 Refused
111 Not applicable

68. How much do you pay per month for school fees for all your primary school-going children?

___ Enter exact amount
8 Don’t know
9 Refused
111 Not applicable

69. How much do you pay per year for school related expenses (not including fees) for (index child)?

___ Enter exact amount
8 Don’t know
9 Refused
111 Not applicable

70. How much do you pay per year for school related expenses (not including fees) for all your primary school-going children?

___ Enter exact amount
8 Don’t know
9 Refused
111 Not applicable

71. Now I’d like you to grade the school your child attends according to how well you think the school does its job. For each thing I read, tell me whether you would give the school a grade poor, not very good, good, or very good.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Not very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. how much the teachers care about the students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. how effective the head teacher is as the leader of the school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. the skill of the teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
d. how safe the school is for the students who attend 1 2 3 4 8

e. Letting parents know how their children are doing 1 2 3 4 8

f. allowing parents to participate in decisions about how the school is run 1 2 3 4 8

g. helping students learn the difference between right and wrong 1 2 3 4 8

h. maintaining order and discipline 1 2 3 4 8

i. providing quality education 1 2 3 4 8

k. helping students make connections to succeed in life 1 2 3 4 8

72. How would you rate your neighborhood as a place to raise children? Would you say it is poor, fair, good, very good or excellent?

1   poor
2   fair
3   good
4   very good
5   excellent
8   don’t know
9   refused

73. Does this neighborhood have any safe places for children to gather, other than their own homes—places where they can play?

1   yes
2   No
8   Don’t know
9   Refused

74. When your family has a problem, can you count on your friends and/or neighbours to help out?

1   No, never
2   Sometimes
3   Most of the time
4   All of the time
8   Don’t know
75. If you were caring for a child and needed to go out for a while, would you ask a neighbour for help?
1 No, never
2 Maybe
3 Very likely
4 yes, without a doubt
8 Don’t know
9 Refused

76. I am going to read you a list of problems that neighborhoods sometimes have. For each one, please tell me if it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Big problem</th>
<th>Somewhat of a problem</th>
<th>Not a problem</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. People don’t have enough respect for rules and laws</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Crime and violence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Abandoned or run-down bldgs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Not enough police protection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Not enough public transportation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Too many parents who don’t supervise their children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. People keep to themselves and don’t care what goes on in the neighborhood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Lots of people who can’t find jobs.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Litter, trash in the streets</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Some people drinking in public</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Some people using or selling drugs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. teenagers or adults hanging out in the neighborhood causing trouble</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
m. gangs in the neighborhood 1 2 3 8
n. Lack of basic public services 1 2 3 8
o. lack of recreational areas for children 1 2 3 8
p. lack of public schools 1 2 3 8

77. If you needed advice about a problem you were having with (Index child) because you were concerned about how he was feeling or behaving, who do you feel you could turn to for help? (DO NOT READ. RECORD ALL MENTIONS. PROBE FOR “ANY OTHERS”)

___ 00 No one
___ 01 Husband/partner
___ 02 One of child’s grandparents
___ 03 Other relative
___ 04 Friend or neighbor
___ 05 Teacher or head teacher
___ 06 Social worker
___ 07 Pastor or priest or imam
___ 08 Doctor, nurse or other health care professional
___ 09 Child’s other parent if not living in the household
___ 10 Parents of child’s friends
___ 11 Other persons (Specify____________________________)
___ 88 Don’t know
___ 99 Refused

78. How many close friends would you say you have living in this neighborhood?

___ 00 None
___ Enter exact number
___ 88 Don’t know
___ 99 Refused

79. How many times in a given week would you say you visit with one or some of these close friends that you have in the neighborhood?

___ 00 None
___ Enter exact number
___ 88 Don’t know
___ 99 Refused

80. When you go shopping in your local area, are you likely to run into friends and acquaintances?
81. Have you visited a neighbor in the past week?
1 No, never
2 Yes, once
3 Yes, a few times
4 Yes, frequently
8 Don’t know
9 Refused

82. In the past 6 months, have you done a favor for a sick neighbor?
1 No, never
2 Yes, once
3 Yes, a few times
4 Yes, frequently
8 Don’t know
9 Refused

83. In the last 12 months, have you been an active member of any of the following types of groups in your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Code</th>
<th>Member? 1 = Yes, 2 = No</th>
<th>In the last 12 months, did you receive from the group any Emotional help, economic help or Assistance in helping you know or Do things? 1= Yes, 2 = No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Work related</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Community association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Women’s groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Religious group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Merry go round</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Credit/funeral group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

84. Thinking of the members of the most important group to you, are most of them of the same
a. religion 1 yes 2 no 8dk
b. gender 1 yes 2 no 8dk
c. ethnic group 1 yes 2 no 8dk
d. occupation 1 yes 2 no 8 dk
e. education background or level 1 yes 2 no 8dk
85. Now I am going to read you some questions about how you feel about your community and the people living here. For each question, please tell me whether the answer is never, sometimes, most of the time or all the time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>No, never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Yes, all the time</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Do you feel safe walking down your street after dark?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Do you agree that most people in your community can be trusted?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Does your community have a reputation for being a safe place</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Does your local community feel like home to you?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

86. Sometimes, people in a neighborhood do things to take care of a local problem or to make the neighborhood a better place to live. Please tell me if you have been involved in the following activities since you have lived in this neighborhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Have you spoken with a local politician or a community leader about a neighborhood problem?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Have you talked to a person or group causing a problem in the neighbourhood?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Have you attended a community meeting about a neighbourhood problem or about improving the neighbourhood?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Have you talked to a local religious leader or pastor to help with a neighbourhood problem or with neighbourhood improvement?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Do you presently belong to a local group in the community?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Have you gotten together with neighbours to do something about a neighbourhood problem or to organize neighbourhood activities?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
improvement 1 2 8

g. Have you attended a community event or meeting in the last 6 months? 1 2 8
Appendix B
Translated Survey

1. Uko na mtoto katika darasa la saba?
   1 Ndio 2 Hapana

2. Mtoto wako ni mvulana ama msichana?
   1 Mvulana 2 Msichana

3. Mtoto wako huenda shule gain? Taja jina la shule……..
   1 Shule ya serikali 2 Shule isio ya serikali

4. Je, una watoto wa shule ya msingi, wanaosomea shule ya serikali na wengine katika shule isio ya serikali?
   1 Ndio. Kama ndio, wavulana na wasichana katika shule za serikali na wavulana na wasichana katika shule ambazo sio za serikali?
   2 Hapana

5. Katika miaka minne iliyopita umaehamisha watoto wako kutoka shule ya serikali kwenda kwa shule isio ya serikali ama kuwaata katika shule isio ya serikali na kuwapeleka shule ya serikali?
   1 Ndio 2 Hapana

Kwa nini?

6. Katika mda wa miaka minne iliyopita umaehamisha watoto kutoka shule moja isio ya serikali hadi nyingine isio ya serikali.
   1 Ndio Kama ndio, kwenda
   2 Hapana

Kwa nini?

7. Ni kwa sababu gani ulichagua shule hii?

QUESTIONNAIRE
1. Umeishi kwa nyumba hii miaka ngapi?
   0 Chini ya mwaka mmoja
   ___ Andika miaka
   888 Sijui
   999 Amekataa

2. Umeishi katika eneo hili kwa miaka ngapi?
   0 Chini ya mwaka mmoja
   ___ Andika miaka
3. Umehama mara ngapi kwa muda wa miaka mitatu iliyopita?
0 Chini ya mwaka mmoja __ Andika miaka
888 Sijui
999 Amekataa

4. Kwa nini ukahamia eneo hili na sio lingine?
1 Kutafuta kazi 1 Ndio 2 La
2 Nilipata kazi 1 Ndio 2 La
3 Kujiunga na familia 1 Ndio 2 La
4 Niliolewa 1 Ndio 2 La
5 Kodi ya myumba si ghali 1 Ndio 2 La
6 Eneo hili ni salama 1 Ndio 2 La
7 Nyingine __________
999 Amekataa

5. Una watoto wangapi?
__ Andika idadi
999 Amekataa

00 Hakuna __ Andika idadi
88 Sijui
999 Amekataa

7. Ni watoto wangapi wanaoishi katika nyumba hii bado wanaenda shule?
__ Andika idadi
999 Amekataa

8. Ni wangapi wako shule ya msingi?
__ Andika idadi
999 Amekataa

9. Ni watu wangapi wa boma yenu (miaka 18 na zaidi) wanaishi kwa nyumba hii kwa sasa?
00 Hakuna __ Andika idadi
88 Sijui
999 Amekataa

10. Ni kama mara ngapi katika mwezi (*****) anafanya jambo lolote pamoja na jamaa hawa wa boma yenu wanaoishi katika nyumba hii?
11. Kabila lako ni gani?
1   Kamba
2   Kikuyu
3   Luhya
4   Luo
5   Nyengine___________
9   Amekataa

12. Una miaka ngapi? Ulizaliwa mwaka gain?
1   15 – 19
2   20 – 24
3   25 – 29
4   30 – 34
5   35 – 39
6   40 – 44
7   45 – 49
9   Amekataa

13. Umeolwea, kufiliwa, kutalakiwa ama kuachwa?
1   Kuolewa
2   Kufiliwa
3   Kutalakiwa
4   Kuachwa
5   Sijawahi kuolewa
9   Amekataa

14. Kama umeolwea, unaishi na mmeo?
1   Ndio
2   Hapana
9   Amekataa

15. Ulisoma hadi kiwango gain cha elimu?
1   Sikusoma
2   Nilimaliza shule ya msingi
3   Sikumaliza shule ya msingi
4   Nilimaliza shule ya sekondari
5   Sikumaliza shule ya sekondari
6   Masomo ya juu
8   Sijui
9   Amekataa
16. **(Kama hana bwana, ruka mpaka swali # 17. Kama ana bwana, uliza).** Bwana yako alisoma mpaka kiwango gani cha elimu?

1. Hakusoma
2. Alimaliza shule ya msingi
3. Hakumaliza shule ya msingi
4. Alimaliza shule ya sekondari
5. Hakumaliza shule ya sekondari
6. Masomo ya juu
7. Sijui
8. Amekataa

17. Dini lako ni gani?

1. Catholic
2. Protestant
3. Muslim
4. Sishiriki dini lolote
5. Nyengine ________
6. Hajui
7. Amekataa

18. Wewe ni wa dhehebu gani, kama unashiriki?

1. Baptist
2. Methodist
3. Seventh Day Adventist
4. Anglican
5. Pentecostal
6. Non-denominational
7. Nyengine ______
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa

19. Je, wewe hushiriki kanisa la mtaa ama kikundi chochote cha kiroho ama jumuia ya kiroho?

1. Ndio
2. Hapana
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa

20. Je, wewe ni mshirika wa kanisa hili la mtaa ama kikundi hiki cha kiroho ama jumuia hili la kiroho?

1. Ndio
2. Hapana
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa

21. Mbali na harusi au matanga, unahudhuria ibada mara ngapi?

1. Kila wiki (ama zaidi)
2. Karibu kila wiki
3. Mara moja ama mbili kwa mwezi
4. Mara chache kwa mwaka
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa

22. Katika miezi 12 iliopita, umewahi kuhusika na jambo lolote na watu katika kanisa lenu ama mahala pa ibada mbali na kuhudhiria ibada? Hii inaweza kuhusisha kuongoza mazungumzo, kutumika katika kamati, kuhudhiria choir/ mazoezi ya muziki, ama mambo mengine?
1. Ndio
2. Hapana
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa

23. (*****): ni mto wako wa ngapi?
1. Kifungua mamba
2. Mtoto wa ziada
9. Amekataa

24. (*****): ana umri gani?
__ Andika umri
88. Sijui
99. Amekataa

25. (*****): alizaliwa mwaka na mwezi gani?
Mwezi 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12

26. (*****): alikuwa namba ngapi shuleni muhula uliopita?
__ Andika nambari
111 N/A
112 Shule haipatiani fomu za kuonyesha maendeleo ya motto
888 Sijui
999 Amekataa

27. Una uhusiano gani na (*****)?
1. Mamake mzazi
2. Mama wa kambo
3. Mama wa kumlea
4. Mlinzi, nyanyake ama babu yake
5. Mlinzi, mtu mwingine wa familia
6. Mlinzi, mtu mwingine asiye wa familia
7. Mwingine ___________
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa
28. Umeishi na (******) kwa mda gani?
00 Chini ya mwaka mmoja
__ Andika idadi ya miaka
77 Maisha yake yote
88 Sijui
99 Amekataa

29. Nafahamu kwamba (******) ana baba ama mlinzi mwingine wa kiume ambaye anaishi katika nyumba hii. Ana uhusiano gani na (******)
1 Babake mzazi
2 Babake wa kambo
3 Babake wa kumlea
4 Mlinzi, nyanyake ama babu yake
5 Mlinzi, mtu mwingine wa familia
6 Mlinzi, mtu mwingine asiye wa familia
7 Mwingine _____________
8 Sijui
9 Amekataa
111 N/A

30. Ameishi na (******)kwa mda gani?
00 Chini ya mwaka mmoja
__ Idadi ya miaka
77 Maisha yake yote
88 Sijui
99 Amekataa
111 N/A

31. Umemlea huyu mtoto peke yako kwa miaka mingapi?
00 Chini ya mwaka mmoja
__ Idadi ya miaka
88 Sijui
99 Amekataa
111 N/A

32. Ni mara ngapi kwa wiki wewe ama mwenzako mnamsaidia (******) na kazi yake ya shule kwa wiki?
00 Hakuna
__ Andika idadi
88 Sijui
99 Amekataa

33. Ni mara ngapi wewe au mwenzako mna mhimiza au kumpongeza (****) kwa kazi yake ya shule, michezo, kazi ya nyumbani?
0 Hakuna
34. Sasa nataka tuoonge kuhusu mambo ambayo wewe ama mwe nzako na (***) hufanya pamoja. Nikisoma baadhi ya mambo niambie ni mara ngapi kwa mwezi mnaafanya haya mambo na (****) 888 – sijui; 999 – Amekataa
   a) Kwenda kanisa ama kufanya mambo ya kanisa pamoja ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)
   b) Kutembelea jamii ama kuenda kwa mikutano ya jamii ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)
   c) Cheza michezo pamoja ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)
   d) Soma ama kuambiana hadhithi pamoja ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)
   e) Kuemnda town pamoja kununua vitu ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)
   f) Enda kutembea kwa Uhuru park ama pahali pa watoto kuchezea/ uwanja w kucheza. ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)

35. Katika muhula uliopita tafadhali nieleze ni mara ngapi wewe ama mwenzako mumemfanyia (***** ) mambo haya?
   a) Kuongea na mwalimu wake kuhusu jinsi anavyoendelea shuleni ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)
   b) Kuongea na mtoto kuhusu shida anayopata shuleni ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)
   c) Kuenda kuona michezo ya kuigiza, michezo ama kutemblea miradi ya shule ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)
   d) Kumsaidia na katika miradi maalum ___(andika idadi kwa mwezi)

36. Katika siku zijazo ungependa mtoto wako afike wapi na masomo?
   0  Mama hashughuliki na masomo ya mtoto
   1  Amalize primary. (KCPE)
   2  Amaliza secondary. (KCSE)
   3  Amalize college ama shule ya mafunzo.
   4  Amalize University.
   5  Nyingine (taja_______)
   8  Sijui
   9  Amekataa

37. Unafikiria atafikisha kwango gani katika masomo yake?
   0  Mama hashughuliki na masomo ya mtoto
   1  Amalize primary. (KCPE)
   2  Amaliza secondary. (KCSE)
   3  Amalize college ama shule ya mafunzo.
   4  Amalize University.
   5  Nyingine (taja_______)
   8  Sijui
   9  Amekataa
38. Ukiifikiria juu ya mambo yanavyoenda kwa maisha ya (*****). Tafadhali nieleze vile sehemu hizi nitayotaja zinaendelea katika maisha ya (*****)?
1. Afya yake.
2. Uhusiano wake na marafiki.
3. Uhusiano wake na wewe.
4. Uhusiano wake na mwenzako.
5. Vile anajifikiria.
6. Uhusiano wake na mandugu wake.

39. Katika kuamua utakapompeleka motto wako shule, ulishauriana na nani?

   00. Hakuna mtu
   01. Mume/ Mwenazangu
   02. Nyanya au babu ya motto
   03. Mtu mwengine wa nyumba yetu
   04. Rafiki ama jirani
   05. Mwalimu ama mwalimu mkuu
   06. Mhudumu wa jamii
   07. Kasisi ama mhubiri
   08. Daktari/muuguzi ama mhudumu mwengine wa afya
   09. Mzazi mwengine wa mtoto ambaye haishi katika numba hii
   10. Wazazi wa marafiki wa mtoto
   11. Watu wengine (taja_____)
   88. Sijui
   99. Amekataa

40. Ni nani alifanya uamuzi wa mwisho wa shule?

   01. Bibi
   02. Mume/ Mwenazangu
   02. Nyanya au babu ya motto
   04. Mtu mwengine wa nyumba yetu
   04. Rafiki ama jirani
   06. Mwalimu ama mwalimu mkuu
   07. Mhudumu wa jamii
   08. Kasisi ama mhubiri
   09. Daktari/muuguzi ama mhudumu mwengine wa afya
   10. Mzazi mwengine wa mtoto ambaye haishi katika numba hii
   11. Wazazi wa marafiki wa mtoto
   12. Mtoto mwenyewe
   13. Watu wengine (taja_____)
   88. Sijui
   99. Amekataa

41. Katika kuamua kumpeleka mtoto shule, tafadhali niambie kama ulifanya mambo haya?

   Ndio
   Hapana
   Sijui
a) Uliitembelea shule hiyo paka yake?  
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Ulizungumza na mwalimu mkuu wa shule hiyo.  
|   |   |   |
| 1 | 2 | 8 |

c) Ulitembelea shule mbalimbali katika eneo hili ili kulinganisha  
|   |   |   |
| 1 | 2 | 8 |

d) Ulizungumza na wazazi wengine ambao wana watoto katika shule hii  
|   |   |   |
| 1 | 2 | 8 |

e) Ulimuuliza mtoto chaguo lake  
|   |   |   |
| 1 | 2 | 8 |

g) Uliuliza kuona stakabadhi za matokeo ya shule hii.  
|   |   |   |
| 1 | 2 | 8 |

42. Shule hii ilikuwa chaguo lako la kwanza?  
1 Ndio  
2 Hapana  
8 Sijui  
9 Amekataa

43. Kama shule hii haikuwa lako la kwanza, ni shule gani ilikuwa chaguo lako la kwanza?  
1 Shule ya serikali  
2 Shule nyingine isiylo ya serikali  
3 Nyingine_____  
8 Sijui  
9 Amekataa

44. Mbona haukuweza kupata chaguo lako la kwanza?  
1 Shule ilikataa  
2 Shule ilikuwa na gharama ya juu  
3 Shule ilikuwa imejaa sana  
4 Nyingine_____  
8 Sijui  
9 Amekataa

45. Katika kuamua shule utakayompeleka mtoto, tafadhali nieleze kama mambo yafuatayo yalikuwa ya muhimi, muhimu sana ama hayakuwa ya muhimu kwako.  

a) Shule haitoizi karo.  
b) Shule inarahisisha mpango wa kulipa karo.  
c) Shule iko karibu na nyumba yangu.  
d) Shule ina mpango wa chakula wa watoto.  
e) Shule inaongozwa na mwalimu mkuu ninayemjua.  
f) Shule ina watoto wengine kutoka katika mtwa wangu.  
g) Shule inaendeshwa katika njia ambayo inaambatana na imani yangu.  
h) Shule ina maeneo masafi.  
i) Shule ina matokeo bora ya mtihan..  
46. Ukifikiria kuhusu mambo yanayoendelea katika maisha ya motto wako, tafadhali kisia jinsi mambo yafuatayo yanaendelea katika maisha ya motto wako kama mbaya, sio mbaya, nzuri na nzuri sana.  

a) Afya yake
b) Uhusiano wake na marafiki wake
c) Uhusiano wake na wewe
d) Uhusiano wake na mwenzako (kama unaye)
e) Anavyojihisi au kujisikia juu yake
f) Uhusiano wake na ndugu zake ama watoto anaoishi nao

47. Katika mwaka ulipitia, ni mara ngapi wewe au mwenzako mumehudhuria mikutano wa PTA ya (****)?
   00  Hakuna
   _  Andika idadi
   88  Sijui
   99  Amekataa
   111 N/A

48. (****) ana marafiki wangapi wa karibu, nikisema marafiki wa karibu ninamaanisha marafiki wale anashirikiana sana nao?
   00  Hakuna
   _  Andika idadi
   888  Sijui
   999  Amekata

49. Ni marafiki wangapi wake unaweza kuwatambua ukiwaona?
   00  Hakuna
   _  Andika idadi
   888  Sijui
   999  Amekata
   111 N/A

50. Ni wazazi wangapi unaowajua wa marafiki wa (****)?
   00  Hakuna
   _  Andika idadi
   888  Sijui
   999  Amekata

51. Ni mara ngapi unajua (****) akonanani wakati hayuko nyumbani na ako na nani?
   1  Mara chache
   2  Wakati mwingine
   3  Wakati mwingi
   4  Wakati wote
   7  Sijui
   8  Amekata

52. Ni mara ngapi unajua vile (***), anafanya akiwa nje ya nyumab? Na unajua vile anavyofanya?
   1  Mara chache
   2  Wakati mwingine
   3  Wakati mwingi
53. Ningependa kuuliza ni shida gani unayopata kulipia matumizi haya?
   a) Chakula cha familia yako
   b) Nguo au mavazi. Ya familia yako
   c) Kodi ya nyumba
   d) Matumishi kama sitima, taa, simu.
   e) Malipo ya Hospitali.
   f) Karo ya shule.
   g) Malipo mengine ya shule.

54. Ni mara ngapi, (ukiwa unayafanya) kufikiria juu ya mapato ya nyumba hayata fikia matumishi yako? Haya maneno yanakusumbua?
   i) Kila mara
   ii) Sana
   iii) Kidogo
   iv) Saa nyingine, nyingine

55. Ukiwa una shida ya kulipa matumizi, ni nani unaweza kumuendea kwa usaidizi?
   - 0   Hakuna
   - 1   Serikali
   - 2   Watu wa kijiji, ama shirika la mtaa.
   - 3   Kanisa.
   - 4   Watu wa familia.
   - 5   Rafiki ama jirani
   - 6   Mwalimu ama mwalimu mkuu
   - 7   Kikundi cha wanawake
   - 8   Mahali pengine (Taja__)
   - 88  Sijui
   - 9   Amekataa
   - 111 N/A

56. Katika mwaka uliopita, wewe na jamii yako wamepata usahidizi wowote kutoka serikali?
   0   Ndio
   1   Hapana
   8   Sijui
   9   Amekataa

57. Ni pesa ngapi umeshapata kutoka watu wa nyumbani? (mbali na mwenzako)
   0   Hakuna
   __  Andika idadi
   8   Sijui
   9   Amekataa
58. a) Mbali na hizi pesa, unapokea usaidizi mwengine kama nguo ama chakula kutoka kwao?
0 Ndio
1 Hapana
8 Sijui
9 Amekataa
111 N/A

58. b) Ikiwa unapata unaweza kuliangamisah ile upatacho kifedha kama pesa ngapi hivi?
0 Hakuna
__ Andika idadi
8 Sijui
9 Amekataa

59. Unapata pesa ngapi kutoka watu wengine wa jamii yako ambao hawaishi kwa nyumba yako?
0 Hakuna
__ Andika idadi
8 Sijui
9 Amekataa

60. a) Mbali na pesa hizi, unapata msaada gani kutoka kwao (nguo ama chakula)
0 Ndio
1 Hapana
8 Sijui
9 Amekataa
111 N/A

60. b) Kama ndio, unaweza kusema usaidizi huu unalingana na pesa ngapi?
0 Hakuna
__ Andika idadi
8 Sijui
9 Amekataa

61. Kwa wakati huu, umeajiriwa kikamilifu, unafanya kazi kwa muda, umejiajiri ama haujaajiriwa?
0 Sijaajiriwa
1 Umeajiriwa kikamilifu
2 Umeajiriwa kwa muda
3 Nimejiajiri
8 Sijui
9 Amekataa

62. (Kama mama anafanya kazi, uliza) Unafanyia kazi nyumbani ama nje ya nyumba?
0 Nyumbani
1 Nje ya nyumba
111 N/A
63. Unafanya kazi masaa mangapi kwa wiki katika kazi zako zote?

Andika idadi ya masaa

111 N/A
888 Sijui
999 Amekataa

64. Unapata pesa ngapi kwa mwezi kutoka kwa kazi zako zote pamoja na saa za ziada?

Andika idadi ya pesa

8 Sijui
9 Amekataa
111 N/A

65. Mwenzio amejiririwa kikamilifu, kwa muda, amejiriri ama hajaajiriwa?

Hajaajiriwa
1 Ameajiriwa kikamilifu
2 Ameajiriwa kwa muda
3 Ameajiriri
8 Sijui
9 Amekataa

66. Mwenzako anafanya kazi karibu na nyumba ama nje na nyumba?

Karibu na nyumba
1 Nje ya nyumba
111 N/A

67. Kwa kawaida, mwenzako anafanya kazi masaa mangapi kwa wiki?

Andika idadi ya masaa

111 N/A
888 Sijui
999 Amekataa

68. Anapata pesa ngapi kwa mwezi kutoka kwa kazi zake aote pamoja na masaa ya ziada?

Andika idadi ya pesa

8 Sijui
9 Amekataa
111 N/A

69. Kama wewe ama mwenzako mngepoteza kazi zenu, unadhani unaweza kupata usaidizi kutoka kwa nani?

Hakuna
1 Serikali ama shirika la msaada
2 Shirika la majirani ama la eneo
3 Kanisa ama shirika la kidini
4 Mtu wa familia
5 Rafiki ama jirani
6. Mwalimu ama mwalimu mkuu wa shule
7. Mwingine (Taja____)
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa
111 N/A

70. Unalipia (mtoto) pesa ngapi za karo kwa mwezi?
   Andika idadi ya pesa
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa
111 N/A

71. Unalipa pesa ngapi za karo kila mwezi kwa watoto wako wote walio katika shule za msingi?
   Andika idadi ya pesa
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa
111 N/A

72. Unalipa kiasi gani cha pesa kila mwaka kwa mahitaji ya shule mbali na karo ya (mtoto)?
   Andika idadi ya pesa
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa
111 N/A

73. Unalipa pesa ngapi kwa matumizi mengine yanayohusika na shule mbali na karo ya watoto wako wote wa shule za msingi?
   Andika idadi ya pesa
8. Sijui
9. Amekataa
111 N/A

74. Ukiulizwa jinsi mambo yafuatayo ayanafanywa katika shuke hiyo, unaweza kusema ni vizuri, vizuri sana, vibaya ama vibaya sana?
   a) Kiasi walimu wanawaojali wanafunzi.
   b) Vile mwalimu mkuu anavyoongoza shule vizuri.
   c) Utaalamu wa walimu.
   d) Vile wanafunzi wana usalama shuleni.
   e) Vile wazazi wanajulishwa maendeleo ya watoto wao.
   f) Kuruhusu wazazi kuhusika na mipangilio ya shule.
   g) Kusaidia wanafunzi kutofautisha mabaya na mazuri.
   h) Kuchunga adabu.
   i) Kupeana elimu ya juu.
   j) Kusaidia wanafunzi namna ya kufaulu maishani.

75. Unaweza kusema nini juu ya mtaa unapoishi kama mahali pa kulelea watoto? Unaweza kusema ni pabaya, sio pabaya, pazuri ama sio pazuri sana?
1. Pabay
2. Sio pabay sana
3. Pazuri
4. Pazuri sana
5. Pazuri kabisa
6. Sijui
7. Amekataa

76. Mtaa huu una mahali pa salama pa watoto kukusanyikia, mbali na nyumba zao, mahali ambapo wanaweza kuchezea?
   1. Ndio
   2. Hapana
   3. Sijui
   4. Amekataa

77. Familia yako ikiwa na shida, unaweza tegemea marafiki na/au majirani kukusaidia?
   1. Hapana, Siwezi
   2. Wakati mwingine
   3. Wakati mwingi
   4. Wakati wote
   5. Sijui
   6. Amekataa

78. Kama ungekuwa unamtunza mtoto na ulikuwa na haja ya kwenda mahali kidogo, unaweza kuuliza jirani usaidizi na mtoto?
   1. Hapana siwezi
   2. Labda
   3. Naweza
   4. Ndio, bila hofu yoyote
   5. Sijui
   6. Amekataa

79. Sasa nitakusomea orodha ya mashida hapa mtaani. Kwa kila moja, tafadhali niambie kama ni shida kubwa, shida isiyo kubwa sa na, ama sio shida.

   Shida kubwa  Shida kidogo  Sio shida  Sijui
   a) Watu hawaheshimu sheria
   b) Uhalifu
   c) Nyumba zilizoachwa ama zinazobomoka ama zina bomoka au hazitunzwi
   d) Ulinzi duni wa polisi
   e) Shida za magari ya abiria ya umma
   f) Wazazi wengi wasio wachunga watoto wao
   g) Watu wanao kaa kivyao, wasio
jail kinachoendelea kwa mtaa wao
h) Watu wengi bila kazi
i) Takataka kwa njia
ej) Watu kulewa hadharani
k) Watu wengine kutumia namba za
kulewa ama kuziuza
l) Vijana au watu wazima kuleta fujo
mtaanii mwao
m) Ngege wa mtaa.
n) Ukosefu wa huduma za umma
o) Shida za mahali pa kujifurahisha pa
watoto
p) Shida za shule za umma

80. Kama ungelikuwa unahitaji maarifa kuhusu shida uliokuwa nayo na (mtoto) kwa sababu
uliokuwa unjali kuhusu mienendo yake, unadhani ungemwendea nani akusaidie?

00 Hakuna
01 Mume wangu/Mwenzangu
02 Babu au nyanyake motto
03 Mtu mwingine wa Jamii
04 Rafiki ama Jirani
05 Mwalimu ama Mwalimu Mkuu
06 Mhudumu wa Jamii
07 Kasisi au mhubiri
08 Daktari, muuguzi au mhudumu mwingine wa afya
09 Mzazi mwengine wa motto asiyeshi katika nyumba hii
10 Wazazi wa marafiki wa motto
11 Watu wengine (Taja____)
88 Sijui
99 Amekataa

81. Je, Una marafiki wangapi wa karibu wanaoishi mtaa huu?
00 Hakuna
88 Sijui
99 Amekataa

82. Je, Unaweza sema ni mara ngapi kwa wiki wew hutembelea baadhi ya marafiki wako
wanaoishi katika eneo hili?
00 Hakuna
88 Sijui
99 Amekataa

83. Ukienda sokoni aukununua vitu katika eneo hili, kuna uwezekano wa kukutana na marafiki
hawa wako?
84. Je, umentembelea jirani yako katika wiki hii iliyopita?
   1 Hapana, sijawahi
   2 Ndio, mara moja
   3 Ndio, mara chache
   4 Ndio, mara kadhaa
   5 Sijui
   6 Amekataa

85. Katika miezi sita iliyopita, umemsaidia jirani mgonjwa?
   1 Hapana, sijawahi
   2 Ndio, mara moja
   3 Ndio, mara chache
   4 Ndio, mara kadhaa
   5 Sijui
   6 Amekataa

86. Katika miezi kumi na miwili iliyopita, umeshiriki katika mojawapo ya vyama vifuatavyo katika eneo hili lenu?
   Kodi ya kikundi Mshiriki?  1 Ndio  2 La
   01 Kikundi kinachohusiana na kazi
   02 Kikundi cha eneo
   03 Kikundi cha akina mama
   04 Kikundi cha kidini
   05 Kikundi cha kutoleana kwa zamu
   06 Kikundi cha kukopa pesa ama cha mazishi
   Katika miezi kumi na miwili iliyopita, ulipata kutoka kwa kikundi hiki usaidizi wa kifedha, wa kimawazo ama kusaidiwa kufanya mambo?  1 Ndio  2 La

87. Ukifikiria kuhusu watu wanaishi hapa. Kwa kila swali, tafadhali naimbie kama jibu ni……sijawahi, saa zingine, mara kwa mara.
   a) Dini sawa  1 Ndio  2 La  8 dk
   b) Jinsia sawa  1 Ndio  2 La  8 dk
   c) Wanafanya kazi sawa?  1 Ndio  2 La  8 dk
   d) Kabila sawa  1 Ndio  2 La  8 dk
   e) Wana kiwango sawa cha elimu.  1 Ndio  2 La  8 dk

88. Sasa nitakusomea maswali kuhusu eneo lako na wale watu wanaishi hapa. Kwa kila swali, tafadhali naimbie kama jibu ni……sijawahi, saa zingine, mara kwa mara.

Never Sometimes Most of All the Dk
the time time time
01 Unajihisi kuwa na usalama
     ukitembea mtaani jioni?
02 Unakubali kwamba watu wengi
     Mtaani kwenu ni wa kuaminika
03 Mtaa wenu unajulikana kuwa salama
04 Unajihisi kuwa nyumbani katika mtaa
     huu

89. Saa zingine, watu wa mtaa moja husaidiana kutatua mtaa uwe mahali pema pa kuishi.
     Tafadhali niambie kama umehusika kwa vifuatavyo tangu uishi mtaa huu.
     Ndio       Hapana       Sijui
     a) Umeongea na mjumbe yeyote wa eneo hiliama
         kiongozi kuhusu shida ya mtaa huu.
     b) Umeongea na mtu ama kikundi kinachoa sababisha
         shida mtaani.
     c) Umehudhuria mkutano wa umma kuhusu shida ya
         mtaa huu ama kiongozi kuimarisha mtaa.
     d) Umeongea na mchungaji au kiongozi wa dini
         kuimarisha shida mtaani au kuimarisha mtaa
     e) Wewe ni mshiriki wa kikundi hapa mtaani.
     f) Umejiunga pamoja na majirani kufanya jambo
         lolote kiongozi kuimarisha shida za mtaani au kupanga
         kuimarika kwa mtaa.
     g) Umehudhuria mkutano mtaani huu katika miezi
         sita iliyopita.
Appendix C

Parent/Caregiver Interview Questions

Questions for parents/guardians

Respondent:
Name of school
Name of child: Gender: Class:

1. (If child is in NFS) Why did you choose a NFS when there is Free Primary Education (FPE) in public schools?
2. (If child is in PS) Why did you choose a PS over NFS?
3. (If child is in NFS) If public schools offered good quality education, and were less over crowded, would you still choose NFS? Why or Why not?
4. (If child is in NFS) What role should the government play in NFS? Should the government take over NFS or should NFS be allowed/encouraged to operate as they are presently? Why? Should more NFS be encouraged to be open? Why?
5. (If child is in NFS) How are NFS different from PS? Are NFS better than public schools? Why? Or Why not?
6. (If child is in PS) How are PS different from NFS? Are PS better than NFS? Why? Or Why not?
7. Do you attend PTA meetings? To what extent do you feel you are able to have an impact on your child’s education through these meetings?
8. What role did you have/play in making school choice decisions? What role do you have/play in ongoing decisions about your child’s education? Who made the final decision?
9. How well does your child’s current school prepare your child for the future (i.e., work, social connections)? How?
10. To what extent do you feel your child’s school is accountable to you?
11. To what extent does faith play in your choice of your child’s school?
12. How does paying school fees impact the kind of education your child receives? How is this different from when education is free? Explain.
14. Are there noticeable gender differences in public and NFS choice? Which is a better choice for girls/boys? Why?
15. IF A OR B: What were your reasons for leaving?
16. IF C: What are the reasons for having some children in public and some in NFS? Do you notice any differences in performance or behaviour between the children? What do you think contributes to the difference?
17. What are your reasons for staying in the current school? Would you recommend this school? Why?
18. How has the community you live in impacted/influenced your school choice decisions?
19. How has your family (both living with you and those not living with you) impacted/influenced your school choice decisions?
20. Are any of your children sponsored? Describe/explain what that means and how it impacts your child/family?
Appendix D
School Proprietor Interview Questions

Interview Guide for School Head Teacher

1. School background
   • Name
   • When started
   • How, by whom and why?
   • Who are you registered with?
   • What Grades do you offer?
   • How would you describe your school (on the typology of NFS, ie Individual, FBO, CBO, INGO)?
   • What is the mission/vision of the school?
   • Do you have a feeding program? Funded by? Frequency?

2. Funding
   • What is your (main) source of funding?
   • Have you received any funding from the government?
   • Do parents pay fees? How much per term?
   • What is the level of community involvement and support?
   • Are any of the children sponsored? If yes, by whom, how many, gender?
   • How are the non-sponsored children affected by the sponsorship? (Probe for if the money is redistributed)
   • Are there parents who cannot afford to pay fees? What number? How do you deal with that situation? What criteria are used?
   • Have you received any CDF money? (Probe: How was the selection made, did you meet with MP)

3. Teachers
   • How many teachers do you have?
   • Who are they trained by? Paid by?
   • Are they from the community? What number?
   • How are they recruited? What criteria? Who hires?

4. Students
   • Total enrollment? Gender? Pupil teacher ratio?
   • What are your criteria for enrollment?
   • Are you able to admit all the students/parents who apply? How do you decide?
   • What is background of the students? SES, Do they all live in the community?

5. Governance Structures
   What is the school governance structure in your school? SMC? PTA? Others?
   • Who are the members?
• How are they voted? What term for office?
• How often do they meet in a year?
• How involved are they in the following issues: financial planning, enrollment and dropout issues, issues affecting students/teachers, curriculum issues/other school management issues?
• What are the challenges?
• Is there a quota for women on these governance committees? If so how many?
• What is the level and quality of participation of women in these committee meetings?

6. Academics
• What has been your school’s performance in the KCPE? Last year?
• What is your registration process for your KCPE candidates?
• What is the transition rate to secondary school? How many have been offered places? How many have been able to take up places?
• What is your completion rate?
• What kind of monitoring of teaching/curriculum etc is there? By whom?
• Are there any success stories you can tell me about?

7. Free Primary Education
• What has been the impact of FPE on your enrollment?
• Has there been any transfer of students from public to non-formal? What numbers? Why do you think that happens?
• How do you position yourself in the provision of basic education? What role do you see your school playing in the context of FPE? (Probe: complementary, competition etc).

8. Future Direction
• How do parents view the status of NFS compared to Government school?
• What are your expectations of the Government with ref to NFS?
• Why do you think parents choose NFS over public schools, even with FPE? How do they choose between schools? Does faith play a role in their school choice?
• What do you think should be the direction for NFS? (Probe: Should government take over? Should they continue to exist as is etc?)
Appendix E
Teacher Focus Group Questions

Focus Group Discussion Guide: Teachers

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Qualifications/Training</th>
<th>No of years at present school</th>
<th>No of years of teaching experience</th>
<th>Class taught /subject</th>
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**Issue 1: What is your experience of teaching in this school?**

_Probe for teaching experience and challenges._ What do you like about teaching in this school? What do you not like about teaching in this school? What are some of the challenges you face in teaching in this school? What motivates you to continue? Are you living in this community? Do you know many of the parents of the children who attend your school?

**Issue 2: What have you observed of family school choice and decision-making structures?**

_Probe for material and non-material motivations for school choice. Are parents choosing externally funded schools for a reason:_ Who usually makes the final decision? (father, mother, caregiver, other family member, others etc). Is this decision gender influenced? How do parents make these school decisions (i.e., what process do they engage in?), What factors influence their choice? Why do parents choose to stay? Why do parents choose to leave? Do parents in this school mostly know each other/come from the same neighbourhood? Are parents’ choices influenced by the number of people they know in the school? Why do you think parents chose this school? For those of you who have children, where do you send your children? How do you make that choice?

**Issue 3: What do you think is the difference between public and non-formal schools?**

_Probe for perception and status of public and NFS:_ How are PS different from NFS in what they offer? Why do some parents/caregivers still choose NFS over PS even when there is FPE? What role are these NFS playing? Do you think parents first choice is public or NFS, why? Are some NFS better than others, if so what factors make it better or more attractive to parents? What position should the Ministry of Education (MOE) take with NFS? Should the
MOE take over these schools? Should the MOE fund these schools? How has FPE impacted the public and NFS?

**Issue 4: How has FPE impacted you and your teaching?**

**Probe for FPE and its differential impact on public and NFS:** What do you understand about FPE? What have been some of the changes you have noticed in your school and classroom? What are some of the problems/challenges? Do you think FPE has benefited all the children in your neighbourhood/community? Why?

**Issue 5: What are your aspirations for the children you teach and your perceptions of livelihood opportunities?**

**Probe for teacher aspirations and if it differs in public and NFS?:** How far would you like the students you teach to go in school? How far do you think they will really go in school? Why? How far do your parents/caregivers think/expect the children to go in this school? Why? What livelihood opportunities do you think the school prepares students for? Do you think students make connections in this school that will help them succeed in life/the future? Explain What are some of your suggestions for improving public and NFS in the future?
Appendix F
Pupil Focus Group Questions

Focus Group Discussion Guide: Pupils

Personal data for FGD respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Location of home</th>
<th>Moved from ps to nfs or nfs to ps in the past 4 years?</th>
<th>Moved between different nfs in the past four years? (ask only for nfs)</th>
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Issue 1: What is your current school experience?
Probe for pupils learning and school experience and to understand if it is different in public and NFS?: What do you like about this school? What do you not like about this school? Do you enjoy coming to school? Why? Do you have a lot of friends here? Do they all live in the same neighbourhood as you? Are you happy with the facilities in this school? Are you happy with the teachers in this school? Are you happy with your present class size and classroom? What are some of the problems/challenges encountered in your current school experience?

Issue 2: What are your family school choice and decision-making structures?
Probe for material and non-material motivations for school choice. Are parents choosing externally funded schools for a reason: Who made the final decision to send you to this school? (father, mother, caregiver, other family member, others etc). Why did they choose this school? Was this school their first choice? If not, what was and why could you not get into your first choice? How did your parents/caregivers make the decision to send you to this school? For example, what did they do in deciding on this school? (talk to neighbours who had children here, visit school etc)? Did they ask you for your preference? If you have moved schools (i.e., public to nfs, nfs to public or between different nfs) why did you move? How long does it take you to travel to school one way? If a long ways, ask- Why did you not go to a school closer to your home? In choosing a school, what are some of the considerations that are important to you? How are these considerations different or similar to what is important to your parents/caregivers? Why do you think your parents/caregivers chose this school?
Issue 3: What do you think is the difference between public and non-formal schools?
Probe for perception and status of public and NFS: (if pupil is in PS) Do you have any friends who attend NFS? Would you want to go to a NFS? Why?
(if pupil is in NFS) Do you have any friends who attend PS? Would you want to go to a PS? Why?
If you had to choose between attending PS and NFS, what would you pick and why? Why do you think some choose NFS over PS, even when there is free primary education in PS?

Issue 4: How has FPE impacted you and your learning?
Probe for FPE and its differential impact on public and NFS: What do you understand about FPE? What have been some of the changes you have noticed in your school and classroom? What are some of the problems?
Do you think FPE has benefited all the children in your neighbourhood/community? Why?

Issue 5: What are your aspirations and that of your parents/caregivers and perceptions of livelihood opportunities?
Probe for student and parent aspirations and if it differs in public and NFS?: How far would you like to go in school? How far do you think you will really go in school? Why?
How far do your parents/caregivers think/expect you to go in school? Why? What livelihood opportunities do you think the school prepares you for? Do you think you are making connections in this school that will help you succeed in life/the future? Explain If you were president of Kenya, what changes would you make to the education system?