

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THEOLOGY

*Understanding Key Stakeholders' Perceptions of Informal
Schools in Kawangware, Nairobi*

BY
DANIEL MUKITI MATHUVA

*A Thesis Submitted To The Graduate School in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Christian Education*

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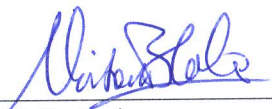
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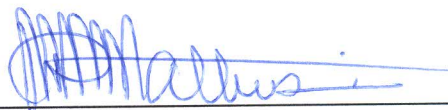
STUDENT'S DECLARATION

**UNDERSTANDING KEY STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
INFORMAL SCHOOLS IN KAWANGWARE, NAIROBI**

**I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to
any other College or University for academic credit**

**The views presented herein are not necessarily those of Nairobi Evangelical
Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners**

(Signed)



Daniel M. Mathuva

July, 2008

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand perceptions on informal schools in Kawangware in Nairobi. Data was collected through open-ended interviews in three different schools in Kawangware. Forty seven respondents were interviewed on different dates. Thereafter, data was analyzed and transcribed.

The findings revealed that poverty in the slum is the governing factor explaining the reason behind the emerging of informal schools. Due to poverty many children fail to go to school. The research revealed that pastors are the key people in starting informal schools. They do so to help the poor children to get affordable education. The factor of poverty taken singly may not always lead to the start of any school but combined with others such as mercy and help for the poor, which gifts are given to Christians, lead to the start of informal schools.

The research concludes that due to poverty informal schools are on the increase in the poor areas, especially slums of Kenya. The conclusion paves the way for a recommendation that appeals for further research into this phenomenon. The findings further reveal that all the stakeholders, namely pastors, administrators, teachers, parents, guardians and pupils have a common perception that informal schools are targeting the poor child and seek to provide affordable education in the poor community. The study also found out that the role played by informal schools was very vital on fighting illiteracy in the slums.

Finally, in view of the various issues and explanations examined in the study, the thesis includes some recommendations to all stakeholders and calls for further study in those areas found to be weak in regard to informal schools.

To

My beloved wife Priscilla Nduku, member of Covenant Presbyterian Church –
Kawangware and all pastors working in the slums of Kenya, who have a heart to help
the poor children to acquire education

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To the only God, be the glory and majesty and power.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Learning is as old as the human race itself. Abreu adds, “Education, since the very earliest times in the history of man, has been of tremendous value to society. It has ensured conformity, stability and continuity of society” (Abreu, E.1982.1). Different methods have been used to acquire and pass on knowledge, but one most important thing and common to all is that the learning must take place in a humble and acceptable learning environment so that the learner can be comfortable as he/she learns. By humble learning environment here we refer to a suitable place for both students and teachers to use. A proper and humble learning environment facilitates good learning. Unfortunately such an environment does not exist in most places in Kenya.

Let us think about learning in traditional African cultures. How did the learning take place? Different cultures had different methods of educating their children of different ages. Traditional education was not the same as formal education, today, which takes place in a classroom. For example, the Akamba people of eastern Kenya taught their children in three main ways.

1. Old men taught boys aged 4-10 years at night at the fireplace, while the old women in the kitchen taught the girls of the same age. Knowledge and understanding were transmitted in the form of story telling, proverbs and sayings.

2. Circumcision time also was an important occasion for teaching and learning. Here both boys and girls met at night to dance and be informed about approaching adulthood.
3. The third instructional platform was marriage preparation, a time when community members were expected to join the ranks of full adulthood and to know how to behave as adults. Traditional education was meant to instil moral values in the life of the learners; it was education for life.

With the coming of formal education, brought by colonial governments, the traditional type of education was abandoned in some several areas. Colonial education was commercial. For children to attend school the parents were to pay fees, which was not the case with the African traditional schools. Many African cultures did not welcome this change because they had no money to pay. After the independence of many African states, only a few people could afford to pay for their children's education.

In Kenya many families were too poor to provide this commercialised type of education for their children. Government efforts to provide free primary education could not be properly achieved because the government itself lacked funds. The result was that many children could not attend school. This worsened during Nyayo era (President Daniel arap Moi's rule in Kenya) when the government introduced cost sharing in its institutions, including educational institutions. Many parents found themselves unable to afford the required money for fees and other development funds, and therefore their children dropped out of school and stayed at home or found jobs.

Parents were willing for their children to be educated but lacked the necessary financial resources. The Government did not provide an educational alternative for the poor. Hence poverty gave birth to most informal schools throughout the slum areas.

Informal schools providing an alternative to the Kenyan educational system among the poor people is the major interest of this study, which aspires to discover and describe stakeholders' (parents, pastors, pupils and administrators) perception of these informal schools in Kawangware slum in Nairobi. To gain a clear understanding, the researcher conducted onsite interviews with the stakeholders in selected schools in the area.

Problem Statement

As Kenya's urban population has increased, many slums have sprung up. These slums house hundreds of informal schools. In response to the perceived demand for education in the slums, numerous informal schools have been opened. Churches, individuals, Community Based Organisation (CBOs), or local initiated Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) have started these schools. They serve the increasing number of children who do not go to school anywhere else. These schools have either rented classrooms with no playground or they put children in one big room and separate them in different classes.

The problem is that while there are government schools in proximity, which are perceived to offer a good education, some parents in this area are not sending their children to these schools. They prefer rather the informal schools. This then merits a question of investigation. It was the interest in this study to find out, from the perspective of the key stakeholders how the informal schools operate in Kawangware.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to discover and describe stakeholders' perception of the informal schools in Kawangware, Nairobi. The study was undertaken

to understand the stakeholders' views of the informal schools in regard to how the schools are established and governed. The guiding question in study was therefore: What are the stakeholders' perceptions of the informal schools? This guiding question helped the researcher get into depth understanding of the perception the stakeholders' (parents, pastors, pupils and administrators) had.

Research Questions (RQs)

The research was guided by the following central question: What are stakeholders' perceptions of the informal schools in Kawangware?

Sub-questions are as follows:

1. Who are the students in these schools?
2. What are they looking for in these informal schools?
3. What motivates someone to start an informal school?
4. How are the schools financed?
5. What are the admission standards for students attending the schools?
6. What is the informal schools' targeted group?
7. What does it cost for the student to be taught in the schools?
8. Which model(s) of education are used in the schools?

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following definitions were used.

1. Stakeholders

For the purpose of this study “stakeholders” refers to those people who have an interest in children’s education in informal schools, namely- parents, pastors, pupils’ school administrators and the children attending the school.

2. **Informal schools:** For the purpose of this study, we define “Informal schools” as those schools not officially recognized by the Ministry of Education in Kenya. They are schools not being in accord with prescribed regulations or forms, they are unofficial.
3. **NGO:** Non-Governmental Organization
4. **CBO:** Community Based Organization
5. **KANU:** Kenya African National Union
6. **Slum:** Densely populated areas in urban centres marked by poverty and deteriorated houses.
7. **Session Papers:** Papers compiled by Commissions appointed and mandated to do so by the Ministry of Education or by the Parliament.
8. **Perception:** an act or result of perceiving something. Insight about or comprehension about something.

Significance Statement

The study sought to provide information to stakeholders in informal schools to better understand and meet their needs and that of the children attending the schools. It helps school administrators identify better ways of running their institutions. It also helps others in a similar situation in the poor or slum areas of Kenya. Finally the findings of this research add to the body of knowledge related to the same area of study, which needs to be adjusted for the benefit of the community in general.

Delimitations

The study is confined to analysing informal schools in Kawangware. The researcher's vision was to discover the stakeholders' perception of informal schools, he therefore explored Kawangware slum, which has many schools of this type. Due to financial constraints this study was carried out in Kawangware only. The researcher also interviewed one inspector of schools in Langata division.

Limitations

The findings of this study might be similar in other places, but generalization cannot be concluded due to the fact that the researcher studied only a small sample that was not necessarily representative of the entire slum or poor areas. The researcher would have liked to draw a large sample from many informal schools for comparative purposes but this was not possible due to lack of resources and time. It was not possible for the researcher to travel outside Nairobi to hold interviews.

Ethical Consideration

“Most authors who discuss qualitative research design address the importance of ethical consideration” (Creswell 2003, 201). The researcher had an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the informants. This being the case only the transcribers, the primary researcher and the secondary researcher (supervisors from NEGST) had access to the taped transcripts of the interviews. To protect confidentiality, the tapes were not available to any person other than the researcher and the supervisors at NEGST. Participants' names did not appear in the transcripts or in any publication based on the study; all potentially identifying information was omitted or changed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Creswell says, “in addition to selecting a quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods approach, the proposal designer also needs to begin reviewing the scholarly literature” (2003, 27). The literature review’s purpose is to “share with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported, it also provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as a benchmark for comparing the results of a study with other findings” (Creswell 2003, 29-30). C.B.Peters identifies some reasons why we should do a literature review. Among these he says that literature review provides the researcher “with needed background information in his/her area of interest” (Peters, 1994, 29).

The role of literature in grounded theory qualitative studies often is exploratory. The researcher used an inductive approach that allowed the participants to tell their stories. Literature in this research approach was differently used. Interaction with relevant literature in grounded theory approach is favoured at the conclusion of the study so that the literature acts as a basis of comparing and contrasting discoveries.

Creswell advices:

There is no need to review all the literature in the field beforehand, as is frequently done by analysis using other research approaches. It is impossible to know prior to the investigation what the salient problems will be or what theoretical concepts will emerge. Also, the researcher does not want to be so steeped in the literature that he/she is constrained and even stifled by it. (Creswell 1998,49)

Substantive Literature Review

In this section the researcher looked into general trends in education. A brief history of education in the Bible and in Kenya was addressed. In addition to these, the type of education being offered in slums and the factors influencing the choice of schools was considered. A general description of informal schools, which was the interest of the study, was offered.

Education in the Old Testament

Pazimino (1988, 17) says, “Scripture is the essential source for understanding Christian distinctives in education.” It is therefore necessary for us to seek biblical guidance able to provide an essential standard for judging whatever education system we will be dealing with. It is the belief of the researcher that several models of education are provided in the Old and New Testament. These models provide guidance for us as we deal with established schools in the Church or society and help in correcting the past, present and future mistakes.

Deuteronomy 6: 4-9, “You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up... write them on the doorframes of your house and on your gates” (NIV). God commands through Moses that education was to be provided for all children who belonged to the covenant community of Israel. In these verses we find “the goals, the teacher, the student, the content, and the setting of education in the Biblical times” (Pazimino 1988, 18). Teaching during these times was meant for life. It was to be incisive in changing the learner to a total life response to God.

Pazimino (1988, 20) advises that effective education always “entails conscious planning, implementing and evaluating of educational experiences.” Teachers in the

Old Testament times were the parents and the centre of learning was the home, but this was extended during and after exile to include Scribes as teachers and synagogues as centres of learning.

Education in the New Testament

Matthew records the words of Jesus commanding His disciples to teach as they go on making disciples. The disciples to be taught include adults and children (Matthew 28:19-20). In all the gospels we find Jesus teaching on different occasions and in different places. For Him the learning centre was defined by the needs of the students. Pazimino (1988, 30) identifies five sections of Jesus' teaching according to Matthew's Gospel.

The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:1-7:27): This type of teaching was in an informal setting.

The sending of the Twelve (Matt 10: 1-42): This was a practical assignment for the disciples and was meant to give learning experiences to the learner.

The parables (Matt 13:1-52): Jesus taught by stories, which shows the varied methods He used as per the needs of the learners.

Discipline on the learners or the disciples (Matt 18:1-35): Jesus in this section shows His disciples that discipline is necessary as they continue learning.

Teaching on eschatology (Matt 23:1-25:4) Jesus intends to show His learners that teaching has a goal and this goal is the culmination of the age.

Education and the Greek and Roman Culture

Greek culture was a culture of education. Several Greek philosophers dealt with the education of youth in the society. Among these were Plato, Socrates, and

Aristotle. Plato believed that “education was a means to an end, on the other hand Cicero who lived in 106- 43 BC mentioned the importance of teachers and said that it is the duty of professors who train pupils to be careful to observe the direction which each seems to be specially carried by his own nature”(Olander, 2006). Education should therefore be student centred rather than teacher.

Education in Kenya

“There is very little doubt that the foundations for a formal schooling system were laid by Christian Missionaries. This was to evangelise and ‘civilize’ Africa, hence the start of formal education as we know it today, but the concept of education in the wide sense was not something new in Kenya” (Abreu 1992, 1).

The Kenya education commission report (December, 1964) defines primary education as the “stage of acquiring the basic equipment for living.” Primary education is seen as the “basis for training in many of the skills of organized life and for further education” Ibid. This definition shows that the primary goal of elementary or primary education is to provide the necessary basis for children to advance in life. It helps the person acquire skills like reading and writing and so he/she can be of service to the community around him/her. The commission noted that there are “deficiencies in Kenya education to give adequate training” (KECR, 1964). Another aspect of primary education, as recommended by the commission, was “an opportunity for training in living together” (KECR, 1964). The commission noted the different general uses of the term “primary education” Ibid. These differences come about due to the location of the schools. Some are in rural areas and slums while others are in an urban setting with good infrastructure. In the report (page 64) the churches were permitted to act as sponsors and provide spiritual Christian teaching.

To offer free primary education has been and is the dream of the Kenyan government since independence. It was KANU's election manifesto in 1963 stating, "KANU intends that every child in Kenya shall have a minimum of seven years' free education" (KECR, 66). However this dream is far from realized. As of today the principal barriers to this dream have been the high cost of primary education and the growing number of children seeking primary education. Inadequate educational facilities also have contributed to this problem. The commission closes its report by indicating "the rate of growth of primary education offered between 1964 and 1970 in the Development Plan is 4% per annum. This is slightly higher than the rate of population growth (3.1 %) Ibid., 67. With the present rate of population growth it is certain sure that adequate space cannot be provided for elementary schooling for all. Alternative funding for facilities and personnel is imperative before KANU's intention could be realized.

In 1976 a presidential committee noted another principal barrier to achieving the dream of free primary education. "It must be remembered that even if fees are removed from all seven years of primary education there are still a number of non-fees costs which parents cannot always anticipate and which some find difficult to pay. These costs include uniforms, building funds, equipment levy and activity fee" (Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies, December 1976, 33). Despite all these barriers the committee supported the goal of bringing education to all. Therefore it has become necessary to integrate education into community life. "For the goal of education is to meet the needs of the stakeholders, be it children, parents or administrators" Ibid., 67. Education was still seen as the only key to open the door to employment. If this is true, as certainly it is in most parts of the world,

marginalized slum children have no alternative left for them except to turn to the informal schools, which their parents can afford.

Education in Traditional African Society in Kenya

“Kenya had an education system before the coming of the Europeans. This was traditional African education, the main goal of which was to train individuals to fit into their societies as useful members” (Eshiwani, 1993, 15). This type of education provided knowledge and values relevant to a given society. Eshiwani argues, “this type of education played the role of socialising individuals to fit and participate adequately in the development of society” Ibid., Learning took place through ceremonies. For example life in an Akamba village of the past was full of rites and ceremonies, feasts and festivals, which often were performed to the accompaniment of melodious music and dancing. The ceremonies were connected to the clan taboos and constituted a very important aspect of the social environment of the growing Akamba child. I do clearly remember during my childhood and before the school age, our society was full of the tribal taboos of “Dos and Don’ts”. Most learning took place during night dance as well as through hunting during the day.

The Kamba were more expert at hunting than most of their neighbouring tribes. Hunting was largely organized on a communal basis and usually followed a definite seasonal sequence especially during dry periods. Not all forms of learning within the Akamba indigenous culture were achieved through play, games, hobbies, hunting and social ceremonies. Learning also was achieved through apprenticeships. For example parents, who wanted their children to acquire some occupational training, normally sent their children to work with craftsmen. Education in the African past, especially in the Kamba community sought to train the child to contribute to his/her community, where the child remained all his/her life. Education was for society’s benefit, as the

individual was not separated from the society. In a nutshell, parents sought to bring up their children within a community where each person attended to the well-being and welfare of the group. It is this type of education, which the Europeans found when they first arrived in Kenya.

Introduction of Modern Education by the Church in Kenya

The Church Missionary Society (CMS) at Rabai near Mombasa established the first mission school in Kenya in 1846. This type of education “was linked to Christianity and at first its major aim was to produce African ‘priests’ to spread the word of God” (Eshiwani 1993, 15). The school was not therefore meant to educate African children but to train adult Africans to read the Bible. So the idea of schools in Kenya was not brought about by the government but by the church that continued to “control education up to 1911 when the colonial government stepped in” (Eshiwani, 1993, 15). The introduction of schooling and its mounting influence posed problems for the Africans, “some of which remain unsolved today” Ibid., The reason behind all this is that neither the church nor the colonial government had Africans in their plans. In general, all they wanted was to provide education that would serve their purposes.

Government and Church Schools

Due to the system of education that was offered by the church schools many Africans started moving from rural areas to the new urban world, where they could benefit by getting jobs. For the first time in 1911, the colonial government started concerning itself with the country’s education and a “department of education was created by the colonial administration. This was the beginning of the first government schools for Africans though they were few in number” (Eshiwani 1993, 16). Once again the government agenda for these schools was different from that of the local

people, as the government “wanted an educated labour force to help develop the colony’s economy and to provide chiefs and headmen capable of participation in indirect rule” (Eshiwani 1993, 16). Many Africans questioned the segregative and exploitive nature of the colonial government’s educational system. The colonial government was only concerned about developing and educating certain areas while Africans wanted a system of education which “could help them develop socially, economically and politically” (Eshiwani 1993, 17). Colonial segregation started in the 1900s, and still is being practiced today many years after independence. The government continues to neglect the slums among other areas. To make sure that Africans benefited from formal education Africans established their own independent schools, which were for Africans and run by Africans.

The Legal Framework of Kenya’s Education

Eshiwani (1993, 18) notes, “The colonial legacy consisted of a racial system of education, education for exploitation of African labour and resources and education which lacked comprehensive and integrated programmes to serve the nation as a whole.” After independence in 1963 the Kenyan government had to take quick action to rectify the colonial system of education and to develop a new educational policy and strategy so as to satisfy the educational needs of Africans not met by the colonial government. The ruling party KANU (Kenya African National Union) had earlier promised in their election manifesto preceding independence that they would offer to Kenyans a better system of education. Eshiwani (1993,19) quotes the KANU manifesto, “it remains KANU’s commitment that education shall be geared to prepare our youths for their role in building of independent, self-reliant and truly African Nation.” Sessional Paper No 10 of 1965 followed the KANU manifesto on “African Socialism and its Application in Kenya.” In this paper, education was seen as “much

more of an economic than a social service” (Eshiwani 1993, 16). A trend that is evident even today. The Sessional Paper No 10 was followed by the publication of the “Education (Ominde) Commission Report of 1964/5, defining what education was and had to be before and after independence” (Eshiwani 1993,16). The Ominde Commission was a “masterpiece in that it was the only one that catered for utilitarian, social, cultural and personal goals of education” (Eshiwani 1993, 27). By 1965 education in Kenya had moved completely from the hands of the colonial government and became a Kenyan affair in the hands of the Minister of Education. In the 1980s an education commission chaired by James Kamunge placed in the hands of Kenyans the responsibility for initiating educational projects leading to the development of educational centres not run by the government. This paved the way for the informal settlement dwellers (commonly referred to as slums) to start their own schools, which were independent of government supervision. The informal settlements are largely in Kibera, Kawangware, Mathare and many smaller slums in Nairobi city. This study only deals with Kawangware, which is situated in the western parts of Nairobi city and about 12 km from the city centre.

Informal Schools in the Slums

Before we talk of informal schools, which are the interests of this research, it is good to mention that the development of informal schools is coupled with informal settlement. A habitat paper referred to informal settlement as “dense settlement comprising communities housed in self constructed shelters under conditions of informal or traditional and tenure” (*U.N Habitat Agenda web page* n.d).

Informal settlement is also called slum; and is a common features of developing countries. Slums are typically the product of an urgent need for shelter by the urban poor. Informal settlements (slum) are characterized by a “dense proliferation

of small makeshift shelters built from diverse materials, degradation of the local ecosystem and by severe social problems” (*U.N Habitat Agenda web page* n.d).

Informal settlement occurs when the government fails to address the need for land in given urban areas. The areas are characterized by rapid, unstructured and unplanned development. Informal settlements are a significant problem especially in third world cities. Among the countries in the third world with large informal settlements are South Africa and Kenya. Poverty in these informal settlements is great and many children who live there have no access to formal education. This therefore creates room for informal schools.

Generally we expect learning or education to be formal but in cases where this is not possible we will find informal schooling. Informal schooling is not a phenomenon of just the third world but places like Britain have informal schools. The formal schools follow a “prescribed curriculum and group children homogeneously” (*U.N Habitat Agenda web page* n.d).

Informal schools conduct classes in makeshift structures built from diverse materials. In most cases there is no separation of classes as is the case in formal schools. Classrooms are small rooms or one big room probably a church hall where children meet, separated and grouped according to years or classes.

A report by Oxfam, a NGO working in Kenya, shows that despite the Kenyan government declaration of free primary education (FPE) policy, over 1.7 million children still remain out of school, the majority of whom are street children, living in slums” (Oxfam n.d). In this case informal schools, while viewed as “second-rate education” are still the alternative for such poor children.

Many of the informal schools in the slums or marginalized areas, even though in makeshift classrooms, are doing a good job of helping poor children realize their

educational dreams. An example of this is a child who went to an informal school in Kayole, got registered in a public primary school for K.C.P.E and became third best student in the whole country in 2005. Due to the untiring efforts of the stakeholders some informal schools have started receiving grants from the NGOs, like Oxfam, to sponsor the upgrading of the makeshift structures.

Here I quote

We support education centres e.g. constructing classrooms, administration offices, providing basic learning materials, teachers' developments and salaries and strengthening the management of school committees. We are currently working to enlist government support for a new school under construction on the outskirts of Kibera which will target mainly poorer children from the slum areas. Informal education in slum. (Oxfam n.d)

Another example of informal schools is found in Korogocho in Nairobi. This is a work organized by Altawoon and the Great Hope project. These two partners have organized youth and in so doing have started an informal school in the slum. They use volunteers as teachers. Altawoon means unity and it began in 1992 as a study group. By the time this research was being conducted the network had four projects, two of which are educational. The educational projects have 200 children. The study on Korogocho slum found out that even though one of the priorities of the current Kenyan government is to ensure that all children have the right to an education, this is not the case. In practice, slums are excluded from receiving most government social services including access to education. A reason why informal schools exist and are there to stay is that the government schools are limited and not all the children have the ability to go to those schools. Another reason for the existence of informal schools is that they are created by the community to empower the people to cope with poverty in the area. Like any other community project, some informal school fall on the local community's shoulders. This happens because the government has failed to provide the necessary amenities of life in the poor areas (Oxfam n.d).

Finally it should be noted that while the Kenyan Government wants free primary education (F.P.E) this is far from the truth. There are essential needs that are left untouched for example, uniforms, learning materials, school infrastructure, teaching staff and especially students' lunches. Unlike government schools, which require a child to wear a uniform, informal schools do not. Michael Moginda in his Abstract- Coping with the Education Crisis in Urban Slums- found out that "informal schools are very effective in fighting illiteracy and could be used as vehicles to achieve education for all (E.F.A) objectives if they are streamlined by the government"

(Moginda, Michel n.d).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The study is a qualitative design in the grounded theory tradition because the researcher's goal was to understand a problem and discover theory rather than to test hypotheses. Further, qualitative research helped to explore broadly the interviewees' perceptions. Thus the goal of using grounded theory in this study was to discover the "core variable as it resolves the main concern" (Glaser 1998, 115).

"Methodology in this study referred to a way of going about studying social reality while methods referred to a set of procedures and techniques for gathering and analysing data" (Strauss and Corbin 1998). This chapter focuses on procedure and techniques, describing the research methods and procedures utilised in this study. Research in this study is qualitative rather than quantitative. Strauss and Corbin defined qualitative research, "as any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other quantification. It can refer to research about persons' lives, lived experiences, behaviours, emotions and feelings as well as about organizational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomenon and interactions between nations" (Strauss and Corbin 1998,11-12).

The research is a grounded theory study. Grounded theory refers to a tradition within qualitative research that is characterized by different knowledge claims, strategies of inquiry and methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2003). Starcher (2003, 57) defines grounded theory as "the language that allows us to move from observation to observation and make sense of similarities and differences". This

theory is called grounded because it emerges from the data of an in-depth interview. The purpose of this grounded study was to discover and describe key stakeholders' perceptions of the informal schools in Kawangware, Nairobi. The qualitative research design required the researcher to be the primary instrument in collecting and analysing data. Creswell (2003, 185-188) lists some characteristics of a qualitative research that were very helpful to me and here I am indebted to him.

Qualitative research took place in the natural setting. As the researcher, I often went to the schools of the respondents to conduct the research. This was important for it helped me to develop a level of detail about the individual or the place and to be highly involved in actual experiences of the participants. I also arranged on how to meet with the parents and guardians who do not work or study in the schools.

I used multiple methods that were interactive and humanistic. I looked for involvement of the participants in data collection and sought to build rapport and credibility with the individuals in the study.

The research is fundamentally interpretive. This means that I made an interpretation of the data. I viewed social phenomena holistically and systematically reflected on who I was in the inquiry as well as being sensitive to my personal biography and how it shaped the study.

In doing the research I used complex reasoning that was multifaceted, iterative, and simultaneous. The reasoning was largely inductive but both inductive and deductive processes were at work.

To collect the data concerning informal schools, I conducted qualitative interviews with key stakeholders (parents, pastors, administrators of informal schools and the pupils) in Kawangware, Nairobi. All participants were involved in running the informal schools in the area or had some knowledge on the schools. The informants

were determined by their involvement in dealing with the informal schools in the area and their experience in the field.

Concerning data collection through interviews, Weiss found that “the most significant events of people’s lives could become known through interviews because they are internal events of thought and feeling” (Weiss 1994, 66). The stakeholders’ perception of informal schools was known through interaction with the researcher. Therefore the study considered stakeholders’ perceptions by allowing them to share their stories.

The Researcher’s Role

As mentioned earlier in the list of characteristics, “qualitative research is interpretative research, with the inquirer typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with the participants. The purpose of this is to introduce into the research a range of strategic, ethical and personal issues. The researcher had a role in identifying the biases, values and personal interests in his topic, more than this he had a role to gaining entry to the research site and the ethical issues that might arise during the inquiry” (Creswell, 1984). In this research, the researcher was the principal instrument of data collection. He gathered, analyzed them inductively, focused on the meaning of the participants and described a process that was expressive and persuasive in language. Therefore, I here engaged fully in data collection by being physically present to conduct the interviews.

Permission for the Study

Before carrying out this study I approached key stakeholders of the informal schools (parents, pastors, pupils and administrators of informal schools) in Kawangware and explained my desire to carry out a site interview with them. After

the request was granted I took the necessary measures to assure the confidentiality of the interviewees.

Target Population

The target group was key stakeholders of the informal schools in Kawangware, Nairobi. While there were many informal schools in Kawangware, the researcher conducted interviews in only three schools and with one inspector of schools. The researcher interviewed forty seven participants in three schools. Stakeholders included Managers, Pastors, Pupils, Parents and Guardians of the children attending the school. The researcher recruited the stakeholders to be interviewed by making a friendly approach, explaining the need to carry out this research in their school.

Data Collection Strategy and Procedure

The strategy used in data collection was through face-to-face, on site interviews with the key stakeholders of the said schools. The interviews were audio-recorded for subsequent transcription. Interview questions were open-ended, which was expected to yield a variety of responses. These types of questions were meant to probe the depth of understanding that the respondents had of the informal schools in the area. The work of identifying the schools visited rested entirely on me. The identified schools were: Riverside school, Hidden Talent started by Dagoretti Corner Rehabilitation Centre (DCRC) and Bethel school, all in Kawangware.

As mentioned above the data collection steps included setting boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured observations, face-to-face interviews, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information. As the researcher I identified purposefully selected sites or individuals that helped me to understand the problem of the study. This being the case the interviewee was visited in

the working place, which is the school or arranged place comfortable to him/her for those who do not work or study. This helped me to carefully observe the environment and what is taking place in the school compound.

During the interview I collected multiple forms of data and spent a considerable amount of time in the natural setting gathering information. Three basic procedures were followed: On the format followed I here give credit to Creswell for following his method (Creswell 2003,185).

1. Observations: Here I took field notes. Being the primary researcher, I visited the informants and observed as they gave information as to what their perception was concerning the informal schools in which they were working in. During the session I took notes, which were later analysed.
2. Interviews: I conducted face-to-face interviews with the participants. This format created friendship between the researcher and the informant. The researcher was free to go back for any clarification.
3. Audio materials: In this research I used tape recorder to collect data. The taped messages were used for review when writing down the notes. I notified the participants of my desire to make audio recordings and requested their permission. All taped messages are available for review.

Data Analysis

Grounded theory analysis involves immersing one's self in the data received from the interviews. The qualitative data analysis was done through the process of noting what is interesting, labelling it and putting it into appropriate files which is referred to as 'classifying' or "coding" data (Seidman 1998,107). The labelling was made tentative making sure that categories are not made too early to avoid dead ends, and that care was taken not to develop excerpts, categories and themes from researcher's mind rather than letting them develop from the experience of the participant as represented in the interview. The researcher spent time talking to participants to find out what their experiences are and the meaning they make of it.

The researcher in data analysis followed the following method. I here want to give credit to Starcher for following his method.

- 1) Data collection and analysis process. Concepts discovered in the research process were considered provisional until they “earn” their way into the theory through repeated manifestation.
- 2) Concepts as basics units of analysis. Discoveries perceived as potential indicators of phenomenon were given conceptual labels.
- 3) Categories were developed and related. In this stage categories were grouped into categories. These categories become the “cornerstone” of a developing theory. They provided the means by which a theory was integrated.
- 4) Sampling proceeds on theoretical grounds. The goal of this grounded theory study was not to generalize to a broader population per se as the case in a quantitative approach. Rather by means of theoretical or purposeful sampling the researcher sought to discover indications of common themes in and throughout the totality of observation.
- 5) Analysis made use of constant comparisons. Here an incident noted was compared against other incidents for similarities and differences. The researcher did comparisons of incidents for similarities and sought to find out the differences.
- 6) Patterns and variations were accounted for. The data was examined for regularity and for an understanding of where that regularity is not apparent.
- 7) Hypotheses about relationships among categories was developed and verified as much as possible during the research process. (Starcher 2003, 64-65)

Creswell was also helpful in describing data analysis in qualitative research. He asserts, “The process of data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data. It involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data” (Creswell 2003,190). In data analysis I tried by all means to make sense out of the text and image data. It was an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions and writing memos throughout the study. It involved using open-ended data, for the most part, which included general questions and developing an analysis from the information supplied by the participants. Several steps especially in this grounded theory were followed as advised by Creswell (Creswell 2003, 190). Among these steps

are: “generating categories (open coding), selecting one of the categories and positioning it within a theoretical model (axial coding) and then explicating a story from the interconnection of these categories (selective coding) (Creswell 2003, 190,191). In doing data analysis in this grounded theory study I followed the following steps which were taken from Creswell (Creswell 2003, 190-191).

Step 1: Organize and prepare the data for analysis. This involved transcribing interviews, typing up field notes or sorting and arranging the data into different types depending on the sources of information.

Step 2: Read through all the data. General sense of the information and reflecting upon data was obtained by reading through all the data.

Step 3: Begin detailed analysis with a coding process. This involved the process of organizing the material in “chunks.” A further step included taking text data into categories and labelling those categories with a term based in actual language of the participants. In this step collected stories were put together and comparison done.

Step 4: Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis. Themes were generated here from the collected stories and similar words or phrases put together.

Step 5: The final data analysis. This involved an interpretation or making meaning of the data e.g. what were the lessons learned that capture the essence of this idea? In the interpretation I brought into the study my experience, understanding, culture, and history. This meant that I was not passive but made my contribution to the study. My interpretation also was shaped by the meaning derived from different literature related to the field of study.

Validation and Verification

Creswell notes the importance of validating the accuracy of findings. In qualitative research “validity does not carry the same connotations as it does in quantitative research, nor is it a companion of reliability or generalizability” (Creswell 2003, 195). As a qualitative researcher, I sought to determine whether the findings were accurate from my standpoint. Creswell (2003, 196) identifies and discusses some procedural perspectives to check the accuracy of findings which I followed in validating the data and findings.

Triangulated different data sources of information collected from the interview. This was done by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes.

Used member checking to determine the accuracy of the findings through taking the developed themes back to participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate. Twice I went back to participants and re-interviewed them.

Clarify the bias the researcher brought to the study, for example, that informal schools are individual business for profit making.

Spent prolonged time in the field. This was to develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and convey details about the site and the people that lend credibility to the narrative account.

Used an external auditor to review the entire project. Here friends knowledgeable were requested to read over the material from the field notes. . Among them was Dr Robert Carr of World Harvest.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter highlights the results, interpretations and discussions of this study. The research question of the study is: “What are stakeholders’ perceptions of informal schools in Kawangware?”

The first section of this chapter presents the results of the qualitative data generated through structured open interviews with pastors, parents, school administrators and pupils. The interviews were all done in Kawangware except one person who was an inspector of schools in Langata division of Nairobi, who was interviewed to ascertain the validity of information gathered from the interviews.

The description begins with responses from forty seven respondents, that is sixteen teachers, three pastors, five parents, one administrative secretary, twenty two pupils and an inspector of schools. The data are obtained from those who participated in open interviews. The second section of this study presents interpretations and discussions of the results of the study population.

Study Population

Information in this section contains an examination of the study population from the forty seven respondents who participated in the qualitative interviews. Out of the total number of forty seven participants, only three are pastors and one is an inspector of schools. This was intentional as it was thought that these stakeholders would be more objective in their assessment of the schools than the proprietors of their

own schools. This meant that the question on what motivated the start of the schools was only addressed to those who participated in the start of the schools and not to parents, guardians and students.

The researcher chose to interview those students who were between 12 to 20 years. All the teachers interviewed in primary schools were above form four and had gone for teachers' training to qualify to teach primary school. The teachers in secondary schools were either graduates or had diplomas in the teaching career. Pastors from the three schools had all gone to Bible training and had graduated with a diploma or certificate in Theology.

Mr. Kingara, the only person interviewed from the Ministry of Education holds Master of Arts in Education and is an Inspector of early childhood schools. The researcher did not collect information about the education level of the parents interviewed neither did he collect information about age from pastors, teachers and parents. This was intentional for it might have probably limited the information supplied by the respondents in giving false information about their age or education level.

The researcher did not limit himself to denominations during the research for this would have given biased information towards certain denomination. The researcher was open to all people for his intention was to understand the perception they have on informal schools. In-depth interviews were carried out with Pastor Hudson Kuyanda of Riverside Baptist who founded Swanland schools, Pastor Enos of DCRC who founded Hidden Talents School and Pastor Stephen Opuya of Bethel schools. The researcher also held interviews with teachers in all the three schools, parents, guardians and pupils. He held interview with Mr. Kingara who was of much help in providing validation of the information gathered from participants.

In summary this section has provided an overview of some key characteristics of six groups of respondents – pastors, teachers, parents, guardians, pupils, administrators and an inspector of schools. The next section presents other key results of the study beginning with respondents’ perception of informal schools.

Perception Regarding Informal Schools

This section focuses on the knowledge of the respondents regarding informal schools. It is important from the onset that the researcher establishes the respondents’ perception over the issue. He sought information about the informal schools of which the respondents were stakeholders. All the respondents were well versed with the operations of the informal school even though they did not use the term “informal school” as the research did.

To measure the perception, the researcher asked the stakeholders questions such as:

Who are the students attending your school?

What motivated you to start the school? This question was meant for those who started the schools or had an idea as to what motivated the founder of the school.

What are the challenges facing the school?

How is the school financed?

Stories Gathered from Stakeholders

Here in this section the researcher gives stories of only 3 participants to serve as an example of stories collected. The perception of other participants is within the data analysis and interpretation. It was impossible to put every story in this thesis.

Stephen was a pastor with Bethany church. He felt God calling him to work in the slum of Kawangware. He describes Kawangware as a place with a lot of poor people who have a lot of struggles in life. After working in this area for some time he found so many children were not attending schools. When he did his investigation he found that most of them were from poor homes who could not afford uniform for their children.

In my interview with him I wanted to know what motivated him to start the school. In his perception several factors motivated him, among them were:

1. He wanted to reach the people who are affected by poverty and have no access to education in private or public schools.
2. He wanted to empower the poor children with education so that in the future they can conquer poverty and diseases.
3. He wanted to encourage the poor children as well as their families, giving them a sense of humanity.
4. He was responding to the plight of the poor and disadvantaged communities.
5. He denied money was the motivating factor in starting the school.

When I asked, who the target group of the school was, he answered that they targeted poor children, and orphans children.

Stephen told me that to keep the school running they charge very little money. Each child pays Kshs.200/= per month. The teachers are mostly volunteers who are paid as little as Kshs.3, 000/= per month. The school depends on well wishers to provide lunches. They do not send children out of school because of not wearing uniforms.

Asked to mention some of the challenges they face. He said “there are too many challenges”. Some of these are:

The school is not registered with the Ministry of Education. This tells you why we do not receive any support or help from the Government. There is also the issue of finances to sustain the school. Students need lunches, books and educational materials but there is no money. There is the challenge of children not coming to school regularly, they go to the market to sell some items or carry things to be paid to get food. Due to poverty many children are involved in illegal brews and early pregnancies, as they engage in prostitution.

Stephen told me that they receive a lot of harassment from government authorities. He calls on the Government to accept what they are doing and offer support to them. The children that are in these schools are Kenyans and need support from the Government. Stephen became involved in informal school because he believed in supporting the poor and disadvantaged communities. Therefore, he started a school where the poor children can be empowered through education.

Philip is the deputy head teacher in Bethany school and orphanage. He is a P1 (primary teacher grade one) teacher and qualified to teach in most primary school in Kenya. He joined Bethany school since it started and had worked there for more than 6 years. He felt motivated to serve the poor people. He says:

I feel motivated to work with the poor communities. The motivating factor was not money or how much I would earn but loved to help the poor children in the slum. Though I had a chance to go to a well paying school, I felt satisfied in helping children from needy families. I wanted to sacrifice myself in serving these poor children. Poverty bites the poor and so they need someone to come to their help. These children have no access to the public schools, they cannot afford uniforms and other levies charged in these schools. I am here to help and serve the poor in the slum.

Although Philip was a P1 teacher, he counted what was valuable to him as garbage for the sake of serving the poor children. He wanted to use his gift of help and service for God’s glory. This reminds us of Paul who even though highly learned and had all privileges left them to serve others for the glory of Christ (Philippians 3:7-8).

Philip's word reminds us the use of God's gifts bestowed in the church. Different Christians have been differently gifted. As Christians we should be reminded here that serving God is not restricted to Sunday or pulpit only. There are many areas in which we can use our gifts.

Philip saw the advantage of informal schools as being able to pull resources together without bureaucracy. They are easily governed. Children who could not afford education in government schools have access to education in informal schools. The less privileged get education at a minimal cost and those who have almost nothing are never sent away from school.

Philip in his capacity as a teacher saw discrimination as the greatest barrier facing informal schools. He said:

Informal school faces discrimination from the Ministry of Education. There is lack of government support, therefore are stigmatized by the same government officials. Those children, who have gone through informal schools, even though they do well in examination more than those in public schools, they do not get any recognition. It is like they went to a wrong school. They rarely get admission in public schools. The government should realize that people in the slums are only poor because there is lack of proper distribution of the national cake, therefore making these people marginalized. They share in tax paying yet they are not reached at the grassroots.

According to Philip, informal schools impact positively the poor community but the government is failing them due to lack of support. He values what the informal schools are doing in the slums. They are supporting the government efforts to attain millennial goal of universal primary education (UPE). They are supplementing government's efforts. Informal schools have absorbed many children who would be at home for lack of places to study. For informal schools to improve they need recognition from the government and the communities they operate within. There is no difference in the content of learning between them and public schools. Therefore,

since most of these schools are Church of Faith Based, they should be considered as part of the church's efforts to reach the poor and offer them affordable education.

Jennifer also narrated her story about informal schools. She has worked for 7 years in Swanland schools as a teacher and now administrative secretary. She loves the school and finds it as a centre for peace and learning. She first offered to me the vision of her school which states:

Swanland school vision is to be an education centre for bright children who could not normally have access to education, providing their physical, spiritual and emotional needs so that they can reach their potential.

From this vision we note several things. First is the intention for the school growth. The founder intends the school to grow to be an excellent centre for education. Second, the target group: The target group is the bright poor children, who would not normally have access to education. The poor children are vulnerable and have no access to education. There are several barriers, among them poverty. Third: the school meets physical, spiritual and emotional needs of the students, so that in future they can be able to stand on their own. This is in line with the goal of education as noted in chapter two, which states: the primary goal of elementary or primary education is to provide the necessary basis for the children to advance in life. It helps the person acquire skills such as reading and writing and so he/she can be of service to the community around him/her. Thus the researcher was able to find out that informal schools are not wastage but are fulfilling the goal of education.

As Jennifer continues to narrate her story she finds informal schools to be schools that reach out to the poor and marginalized communities. She states:

The primary motive to start this school was not to acquire wealth or money. We were responding to the plight of the poor in our community. We started as a feeding centre for those children who could hardly get a meal a day. This has remained our driving force up to today. Whatever fees paid does not matter but

the main question remains, are the children's needs met? The school up to today provides lunches for all children.

Jennifer sees the informal schools as of great advantage to the communities around them especially the Faith Based Organization (FBO) schools. Among these advantages are:

1. They minister to the community without distinction.
2. The parents, guardians and children are given a smile as they access education which they would not have.
3. They provide personal growth through service to the poor and disadvantaged communities. This is through the use of spiritual gifts and talents. The Bible supports the idea of personal growth as we use our spiritual gifts. Paul in Ephesians notes that spiritual gifts "are to prepare God's people for work of service" (Ephesians 4:11-12. NIV).

The schools become catchments for the Gospel and many are easily won to the Christian faith. In this case informal schools follow the same system missionaries adopted in Kenya. The missionaries were the first to start schools in Kenya and not the colonial government. Learning during this period was meant to help those won to the Christian faith to be able to read the Bible. Tignor notes, "the missionaries in Kenya, as elsewhere in Africa, were the chief purveyors of Western education. Their interest sprang naturally from a desire to convert Africans and to train enquirers and catechumens to read and understand the Bible" (Tignor 1976, 111).

As education became more familiar to Africans and more in demand the missionaries recognized that their control of education gave them a large impact to win converts. In this regard informal schools are not an exception. The founders of such schools have, to a large extent, a desire to win converts from the communities they

work in. The findings of this research include the realization that you cannot separate education and Christian faith. As the researcher concluded his interview with Jennifer she mentioned several challenges faced by informal schools. Among these were:

Discrimination

Informal schools are discriminated by the Ministry of Education, other Government offices, as well as the private sector. This discrimination starts after primary school, where candidates from these schools are not easily admitted in public secondary schools even though they might have passed their examination. They are not given equal opportunity during Form one selection. The same is found after Form four. Students from informal schools do not get admission to public universities and other colleges of high learning and if they do, it is a very small percentage. Here discrimination becomes the greatest challenge.

Recognition by government authorities

The fact that these schools are not registered with the Ministry of Education and that they are built of make-shift does not go well with some Government and local council authorities. They are harassed and told to close down.

Jennifer notes that instead of this harassment the Government needs to note the good work informal schools are doing and give them a helping hand. They should provide text books and give bursaries to children in these schools.

Basic needs not met

It is commonly known that there are three basic needs of human beings. These are: food, shelter and clothing. For one to help the child to go to school all the three must be somehow met. For instance, if an organization gives clothes and food

excepting shelter the child will not be able to go to school because of place to stay. On the other hand if you provide shelter and clothing, leaving food the child cannot go to school. Jennifer mentions the basic needs of children in the slums as another great challenge. Many children disappear from school as they lack food in their homes.

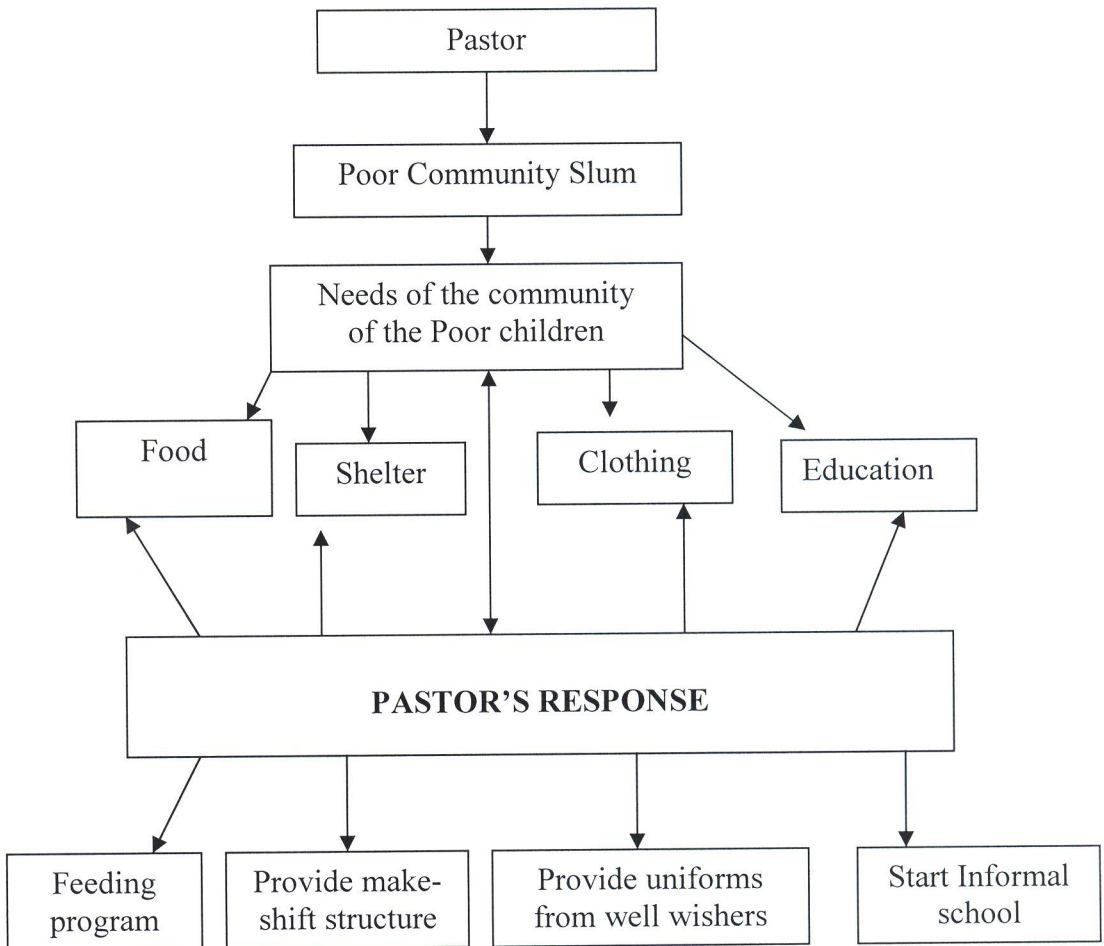


Figure 1: The pastor's perspective of a poor slum and his response to its needs.

NB: This figure explains the perception of the pastor working in a slum, he finds the community with many needs, among them educational needs. He responds by providing an informal school and introducing feeding program in the slum. The arrows pointing downwards show the pastor as the key person working in a certain slum. The pastor responds in two dimensions. He identifies the needs and responds by meeting the needs. While there are many needs, the focus of this study is the informal school.

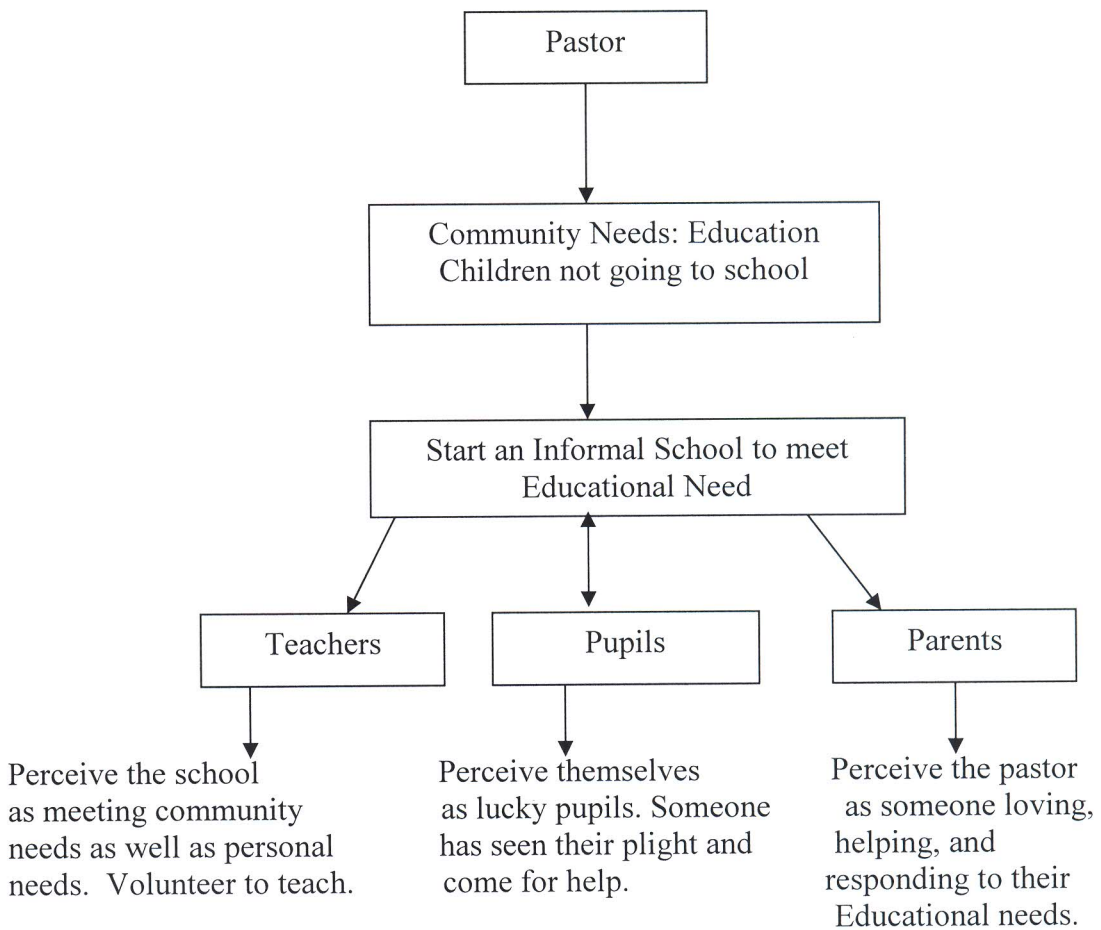


Figure 2: Stakeholders' perception of informal schools

NB: The figure explains how the stakeholders view an informal school in their community and how the school benefits the community by meeting educational needs of the children. According to this figure the stakeholders have a common perception of the school. They all perceive the school as meeting the educational needs of the poor community.

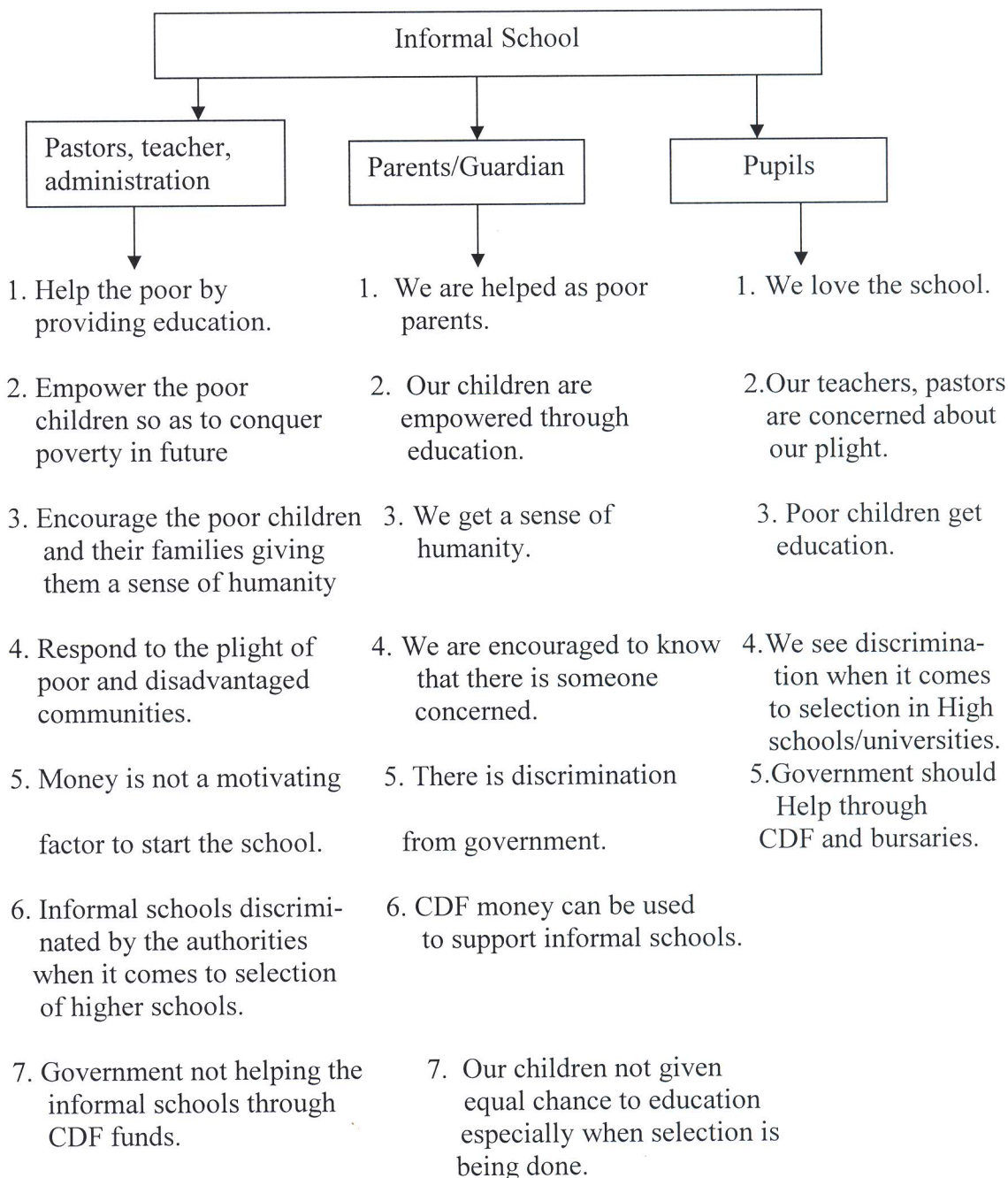


Figure 3: Stakeholders' Common Perception.

NB:

This figure explains the common perception of the stakeholders in the informal schools. These are exact words drawn from the interviews done. From this figure we find that there is a common perspective among the stakeholders even though expressed in different words.

Motivating Factors Leading to Start of Informal Schools

From the interviews the researcher found out that most of the informal schools are faith based. They are founded by churches and pastors. This accounts for about 98% of all informal schools. If there are any informal schools within a given area, chances are that the school was founded by a pastor or a Faith Based organization. What then motivates these people to start the schools? Out of the 47 informants, only one person linked the birth of the school to financial gains. All others saw the need to support, help and serve the poor and disadvantaged children as the determining factor. In most cases the schools emerged from a feeding program and grew to be a school. They started as a mercy ministry centre. The founders of these schools have a heart to help. Phillip of Bethany asserts: “The motivating factor is love to help the disadvantaged children or families”. Stephen from the same school echoed Phillip

I wanted to reach the poor children with education so that in the future they can conquer poverty and disease. We want the poor to conquer poverty and disease. We want them to know there is someone who loves them.

From this we find that financial gain is not the motivating factor. This factor of helping the poor people leads to the Biblical truth about helping them. Helping poor, disadvantaged, aliens and orphans is a biblical core value. This is the very reason why God gave gifts of help and mercy to Christians.

The gift of mercy is that “special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to feel genuine empathy and compassion for individuals both Christian and non-Christians, who suffer distressing physical, mental or emotional problems and to translate that compassion into cheerfully done needs that reflect Christ’s love and alleviate the suffering” (Wagner 2005, 2008). From this definition we realize that, the founders of informal schools are responding through the exercise of

their gift to the needs of the poor in their community. The gift motivates them to give a helping hand to the suffering people in the slum by providing education.

Jesus in His earthly ministry told his disciples that the care and concern for the poor people is paramount. He sees it as the essence of being a Christian. The motive behind the support to the poor must be to show compassion and love of God through Christ. Kelly asserts:

Only the ministry of the church of Jesus Christ ...can attack the roots of social problems. Only the church can minister to the whole person ... only Christians armed with the Word and Spirit, planning and working to spread the kingdom and righteousness of Christ, can transform a nation as well as a neighbour's broken heart. (Kelly 1997, 26)

The researcher here sees the need to help and support the poor through education as a paramount motive behind the birth of informal schools in any given area.

The Church and Schooling

Christianity is a religion of learning. One cannot separate the church and learning. Both Old and New Testaments instructed believers whether of Jewish or Gentile origin to teach their followers.

In the Old Testament we find that the “family was the chief education institution of the society. Children learned through informal participation in family life and parental example” (Anthony 2001, 17). Chapter two of this study has a section showing God's command to teach children. The author quotes Deuteronomy 6:4-9 to show that education was God's mandate for His Old Testament people. In this type of teaching there were no formal schools but the home was the basic place of teaching.

The New Testament adopts the same method found in the Old Testament. In the early days of the church we see the church developing “catechumenal or cathedral schools” (Antony 2001, 19). The catechetical schools later developed into formal

schools where not only theology was taught but philosophy and other formal teachings.

In effect, then, education, whether Christian or secular, is the work of the church, the Christian home, the Christian school and all Christians in whatever societal setting they find themselves. With this in mind the missionaries who brought the Gospel to Kenya started schools to teach the new converts and freed slaves.

The church was fulfilling its role as the teacher in the community. From the interviews it is therefore evident that informal schools are part of what the church is doing in its educational role in the society. The pastors or founders of these schools are fulfilling both the Old and New Testament command to teach.

Education and Human Growth

Those interested in studying developmental psychology recognize the importance of seeing the development from the life span perspective. Ellery Pullman in her contribution to education understood development as “the study of change in behaviour over the whole life span from birth until death” (Anthony, 2001, 63).

Developmental theory is divided into several categories.

- Psychodynamic Theory – concerns primarily personality and emotional development.
- Cognitive Theory – concerns with mental growth.
- Intellectual – ethical theory – concerns the growth of students.
- Social Learning Theory - concerns behaviour and social learning.

Informal schools are centres of learning and this learning affects the stakeholder (pupils) either positively or negatively. From the participants’ view we conclude, the four areas of developmental psychology is applied in these schools.

Students find growth in these schools in areas of personality and emotional development, their mental growth (cognitively) intellectual and social learning. Informal schools build the personality of the students. It is very clear from the interviews that the stakeholders, that is the pastors and teachers, have a very clear goal of wanting to transform the lives of students and empower them to be useful personalities in the society. This is evident based on the respondents' claims about how the school helps them.

Challenges Facing Informal Schools

Throughout the interview participants mentioned some challenges they face. The challenges differ from participants to participants but here the researcher only majored on the common ones. Major challenges were repeatedly mentioned by all stakeholders.

Discrimination

While informal schools are doing a commendable job, they face a barrier of discrimination. The discrimination rages from education, employment and social life. In education many of the students from informal schools are not given equal opportunity with other students in public schools. Even if they pass examination they find it difficult to be admitted in national and provincial schools. After their primary education they only find themselves in district and location schools. If it happens that the informal school has primary and secondary school, those from secondary might score very good grades but they faces difficulties being admitted in the Universities. In employment their Curriculum Vitae (CV) shows where they went to school. The agents of employment want to know if they went to the High rank school and if not

they are told that there is no work. Those who succeed in getting employment either bribe or get the lowest jobs as clerks and office attendants.

Financial challenge

Informal schools are not high cost schools; they only charge very little money for upkeep. The funds they collect are hardly enough to support the school. These schools drum support from well wishers. Jennifer felt that since from the word go the starting factor is not money, the school must find out well wishers to support them. The church therefore becomes the main donor for the school. The management also goes out to raise support from N.G.Os and external donors.

The Government does not in most cases support informal schools. From its perspective informal schools are individual or church business. Due to failure to differentiate them from private schools, the Government does not provide much support. It is the view of many participants that the government should support informal schools through Constituency Development Fund (CDF) money, bursaries and textbooks. The participants argue that these schools are non-profit schools. They are founded to support the poor. Many participants saw financial challenge as the greatest of all challenges they face. This leads the schools to build make-shift structures. It is also the main reason as to why many children run away from the school to look for food and other human necessities.

Summary of Stakeholders' Perception

As we conclude our findings, what can we say in summary is the stakeholders' perceptions about the informal schools?

The perception can be summarized as follows.

Pastors, Teachers and Administrators

These perceive the school as a ministry to help the poor child by providing education, empowering them to conquer poverty in future, encourage them and their families by giving a sense of humanity.

The schools are a ministry to respond to the plight of the poor community and therefore the issue of money becoming a motivating factor for starting them does not arise.

Since the informal schools are reaching the poor they need not to be discriminated in any sense either in selection for children attending high schools, universities or any college of higher learning. Therefore the schools need to be considered for government funding in form of bursaries to students and constituency development fund (CDF).

Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians of children in informal schools do benefit by sending their children to get education. They perceive the schools as beneficial for their children. It is an empowering tool for children. Parents get a sense of humanity by knowing that someone is concerned with their plight. The schools, being institution supporting poor people in the slums, are viewed by parents/guardians as worthy of Government support through CDF funds.

Pupils

Students are stakeholders in any given institution of learning but they are ignored in most cases. Without them there is no school. During the interview with them I found that they too have their perception about the schools. They see these schools as havens of love for them, their pastors and teachers as concerned people who

help the poor children. The institutions are viewed as places that offer education which they (children) could not get otherwise. Even though they are proud of the schools, they face the problem of discrimination when it comes to selection for secondary schools and colleges of higher learning. The pupils viewing the schools as good, felt that the Government needs to give them bursaries and improve schools through CDF. They concluded, the schools are of help and have given hope for the future.

On the whole, all participants have a positive perception of informal schools. They see them as of great benefit to them as individuals and the community. Several have admitted that if it was not for these schools they would not have gone to school. Many viewed themselves as beneficiaries of these schools.

Other stakeholders, in this case teachers, viewed informal schools as a place of personal growth through service to the needy and were ready to continue to offer the teaching services despite the little wages they get. One teacher explicitly remarked, “I feel satisfied when I offer my teaching services to the poor and disadvantaged children”.

Research Questions Vs Research Findings

This section seeks to find out whether all the research questions were addressed in the findings. Qualitative research, and especially grounded theory, is an interesting study. One does not approach the interview with a presumption in his/her mind. It is an open interview and you expect to get all manner of answers from the questions you raise to the interviewees. In this case the researcher must be in control and therefore, select only that which answers your questions. Sometimes what the researcher expects becomes a weak point. This is found in each case whenever the respondents fail to

answer or address certain areas. In this study the following areas were inadequately addressed, reason being that all the respondents failed to or gave very little information on the area of study.

To respond to the research question on who are the students in the informal schools, most respondents noted that since informal schools are founded to assist the poor children, then, most children in these schools are from poor background in the slums. An example of this is found in Swanland vision stated in chapter four of this study. It states: “Swanland school vision is to be an education centre for bright children who could not normally have access to education ...these are bright but poor children who have no financial ability”. This also came out when interviewing Philip of Bethany School. Philip was clear on this and stated as follows: “I feel motivated to work with the poor communities... I love to help the poor children in the slums”. These assertions are clear indications that informal schools serve poor children. The findings are therefore clear that most of the students in informal school are poor children.

The other research question inadequately addressed was question no. 2 which sought to understand what students are looking for in informal schools. This question was not clear to most respondents. Most of the students interviewed said that they were looking for quality education. Minority said that they were looking for help.

The research question no 4 on how the schools are financed was not liked by many respondents especially pastors, teachers, and administrators. Many thought that the research was trying to probe their financial sources and how they spent the funds collected from students' fees or funds raised from well-wishers and donors. All the respondents said that money was not their target of starting the schools.

The responses to the research questions nos. 5, 7 and 8 on admission criteria of students, the school fees and education system failed to yield comprehensive answers to the areas the study sought to address. The fact that most respondents were defensive on the issue of finances makes one to conclude that money might be among the factors leading to the birth of informal schools. Most of the respondents did not know what admission standards for the students were. Out of the 47 respondents only one person was free to tell me that the students pay Kshs.200 per month as fees. The issue of the model of education was assumed by all respondents except parents and guardians who were ignorant on this issue. Most of the respondents argued that since the Government through Ministry of Education regulates education then curricula in all schools in Kenya is one.

Statement of the Emerging Theory

As I studied the experiences of the Stakeholders' perceptions of the informal schools, I could see that the key success or failure was the function played by the pastor or the founder of the school and the management with the understanding that the community will support their vision.

Out of this the following Theory emerged: If a pastor or a church leader finds an educational need in a given poor community, then to fulfil it he would start an informal school. On the contrary if the Pastor or the church leader did not start any school in the poor community, the other stakeholders (that is parents, teachers and pupils) are not able to do so.

The discussions confirm the emerging theory from the stakeholders' experiences; and conclude that all stakeholders support informal schools as they are key to helping the government to meet its goal for education. They all view education

for the poor child as the only solution to poverty. If the children are empowered through education, it follows therefore, that they will conquer poverty.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought out to understand stakeholders' perceptions of informal schools. The study participants were 47 respondents drawn out from three schools in Kawangware. During the interview a number of interrelated themes emerged from individual respondents, namely support for the poor children through education as the leading factor to the birth of informal schools, the use of spiritual gift of mercy and service, the necessity of educational continuity by the church in obedience to biblical command to teach, and discrimination as the greatest barrier to the continuity of the schools. The findings revealed the need to support the poor children as the governing factor leading to the birth of informal schools. However, some combination of all the factors (except the barrier of discrimination) leads to the birth of the schools. Taken singly none of the factors may have wholly resulted in the birth of the schools but together all led to the reason why the pastors start the schools. In light of these findings, I make the following recommendations.

Recommendations to the Stakeholders

Pastors

Fundamentally, the pastors and Bishops are the spiritual leaders in any given society. God charged them with the responsibility of feeding the flock of God which is drawn from the society. Without spiritual leaders the society will be like sheep

without the shepherd. God has gifted the church leaders so as to equip people in the society. My findings revealed that pastors as stakeholders of informal schools need training so as to have necessary skills in providing leadership to the schools. Yes, they have a vision but integration is needed to help them have the right leadership skills. Therefore, Pastors are not only to get theological training but are to seek training on leadership and management of schools if they intend to start informal schools.

The findings also revealed that other stakeholders have great confidence in what they are doing and are ready to support them for continuity of the schools. I therefore recommend the continuity of these informal schools. They are supporting the government efforts to attain education for all in the society. Therefore, the church must be in the forefront in establishing schools in the society they work in.

Teachers

Considering that education is a life-long process, teachers are very important people in any given society, whether in the modern or informal African education system. Without this important talent the society will be ignorant of many things. This research revealed that teachers play a key role in the informal schools. Without them the other stakeholders would have very little to do. In the informal schools they serve as volunteers and if any wages are given they can not sustain them. The findings also revealed that teachers in the informal schools are not just people who have nothing to do in the society. Most of them have good grades and are graduates of colleges of high learning. They are useful people in the society.

The research also found out that other stakeholders have a positive perception towards what they are doing. It is therefore, recommended that the Government

through the Ministry of Education supports informal schools by employing their teachers and seconding them to these schools.

Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians of pupils in the informal schools serve a great role. Without them bringing the children there is no school. They might be poor or marginalized but they have dignity.

The findings revealed that parents and guardians of the children attending informal schools are appreciative of the support they are receiving. They have a positive attitude towards the schools and view them as an alternative towards the goal of attaining education in this country. It is therefore recommended that parents and guardians of the children attending informal schools help to combat the running away of children from school. They should also stop the habit of involving children in small business which keeps them away from schools.

The researcher also recommends that parents and guardians know that they are leaders in their families and therefore are the first teachers who model the life of the children. God instituted the family and commands that the home becomes the first school in any given society. Parents have a God's given responsibility which they cannot run away from; they are to teach their children. The final result will be a strong family which is the basis of a strong nation and the church. Narramore, a child psychologist asserts, "It is in the home that children's self-perceptions and evaluations take place, and it is here that children first learn" (Narramore 1980, 103). I strongly agree with Narramore because the art of living which is the goal of education is first learnt at home. Therefore, parents are to care for their children and assist them to acquire education for life.

Students

Students are vital stakeholders in any given institution of learning. Without them other stakeholders have no business in the learning institution. Pastors, teachers and parents can be there but without students there is no school. Students in the informal schools are important and can not be ignored by the other stakeholders. For students to benefit in all areas of learning the research recommends that there is need to obey the parents, pastors and teachers in these schools. It is God's command that children should obey their parents (Exodus 20:12 cf Ephesian 6:1). This will help them to reap the benefits of the education offered to them.

Government

While the Government was not listed as a stakeholder of informal schools from the beginning of this research, the findings have revealed that it is one of the key stakeholders in education. It has an interest in what happens to the Kenyan child. This is proven by the fact that it is the sole provider of all Curriculum studied in schools. This is done through the Ministry of Education which has a mandate to produce, supervise the curricula and sets all examinations.

The researcher therefore, recommends that the Government, through the Ministry of Education, recognizes the good work being done by informal schools in the poor and marginalized slums. It should seriously look into the issue of discrimination in the educational system for this came out from all respondents. All children are to be given equal educational opportunity. The Government should also avail bursaries to children in informal schools as well as funding the schools with CDF. The Ministry of Education can also second trained teachers to the schools.

Finally, the Government should seek to empower all stakeholders to alleviate poverty in the slums and marginalized areas in the country. This will bring development, be it of people or infrastructure for the benefit of all.

Recommendation for Further Studies

More awareness needs to be created around the subject of informal schools and its growth in the slums of Kenya. In this case it makes people realize the scope and seriousness of the problem of poverty and its devastating consequences. Therefore, I make the following recommendation for further research:

- 1) This inquiry only focused on Kawangware in Nairobi. It remains unclear whether the findings would be applicable to other parts of the country. There is need, therefore, to research in the other slums and poor and marginalized areas in Kenya.
- 2) Further, more research is needed in area of the students attending the schools, how the schools are financed, admission standards and the model of education used in the schools.

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APPENDIX

Letter of informed consent

To -----

I have read the description of the research that is to be undertaken by Daniel Mukiti Mathuva as part of the requirement for the Master of Arts Degree (Christian Education) at Nairobi Graduate School of Theology (NEGST) and agree to be a participant in the interview he is required to conduct, knowing that I can withdraw my consent at any time.

Date -----

Signature -----

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH FOR PONTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

My research is on stakeholders’ perception of the informal schools in Kawangware, Nairobi. I intend to interview a number of Stakeholders (School Head teachers, administrators, pastors and parents) of Kawangware area.

I am interested in studying the role of informal schools and the contribution they make towards the enhancement of education in their context and in the broad sense within Kenya.

I believe that several benefits will result from the research. First of all the research findings will benefit the stakeholders of informal schools in Kawangware in the following ways. 1) I will assist the respective stakeholders in clarifying their own ideas

about the purpose of the schools study programs. 2) I will help the stakeholders to recognize their role in being the final facilitators of the school programs. This will give them confidence as they make greater decisions. 3) The study will also be of help to others wanting to start or set-up any informal school in their area of service in Kenya and Africa at large. Finally the researcher will himself benefit by acquiring a deeper understanding of the program and benefits/non-benefits of the informal schools.

I hope you will be able to give me helpful information and any other assistance in the process of this research.

Thanking you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Daniel Mukiti Mathuva