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STUDENTS, SCHOOLS, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE:

Education as a Factor of Social and  
Economic Change in Rural Kenya

by

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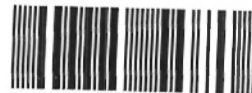
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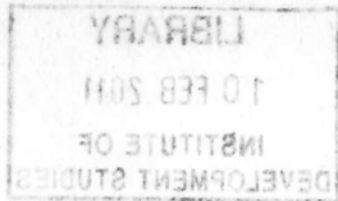
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents preliminary results of an ethnographic study of the Kuria of Kenya. The analysis highlights the factors and processes of socio-economic differentiation and seeks to demonstrate how key institutions, ideologies, and cultural typifications reproduce unequal situations. The paper begins with a history of formal education in South Nyanza District and in the two locations under study. The second section examines patterns of school attendance; the third section explores the quality of education; and the fourth looks at the relationship of educational attainment to employment and income.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper represents part of an ethnographic study of the Kuria of Kenya, which seeks 1) to highlight the factors and processes of socioeconomic differentiation and 2) to demonstrate how unequal situations are reproduced and legitimated through key institutions, ideologies, and cultural typifications that provide the framework by which people explain and understand their situations and the events of their lives<sup>1</sup>.

The current paper focuses on the role of education and its relationship to economic and demographic variables in the process of socioeconomic differentiation. The first section examines the historical development of formal education in South Nyanza District, and then more specifically within two locations in Bwirege-- Kehancha Division, South Nyanza District.

The second section addresses the issue of who goes to school and how the demography of school populations has changed over time. Then, the quality of education is explored in reference to C.P.E./K.C.P.E. results, and career paths chosen by a cohort of primary school leavers. The final section, based on survey data gathered from more than one third of the population of Bwirege West location, examines the relationship of educational attainment to employment and income.

## HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH NYANZA DISTRICT

Formal education was introduced to South Nyanza District by missionary organizations, primarily the Mill Hill (Roman Catholic) and Seventh Day Adventist societies. In the initial years, these organizations confined their efforts to evangelical instruction.<sup>2</sup> Although education was left in the hands of missionaries, following World War I local demand for education increased, and colonial administrators became increasingly aware of and vocal

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<sup>1</sup> This research is funded by an International Doctoral Research Fellowship for Africa of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council. Additional funding was provided by the Yale Center for International and Area Studies and by the National Science Foundation.

<sup>2</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/2. Annual Report for the Year Ending 31st March, 1913.

about the need for more schools, and for government involvement in education.<sup>3</sup>

The District Commissioner described the situation in 1925 in the following terms:

There are no Government Schools in the District and the two Mission Societies do what they can under this head. It is a matter of some interest to consider how long it will be before the Kavirondo [Luo] take educational matters into their own hands and make demands in no uncertain way that something in the line of Government Schools be started in the Reserves. I believe that Government will sooner or later be placed in a position of some embarrassment if the policy of laissez faire at present adopted be persisted in. That a District populated by 274,133 and paying, willingly, a sum of Shs. 1,158,168/- should not possess one Government School is to my mind a staggering situation deserving of everything unfavourable which can be said or thought. It is probably useless to re-iterate the fact that as year after year passes the youth of the country who are given no chance by Government to better themselves will scarcely be loyal and efficient citizens prepared to assist Government but they can only grow up to be a discontented, disloyal and dangerous mob.<sup>4</sup>

With the establishment of Local Native Councils (L.N.C.) in the mid-1920s, and their empowerment to levy taxes and allocate funds, the demand for educational facilities began to translate into the allocation of funds for this purpose. The Kisii-Bakoria L.N.C. voted Shs. 25,000/- for this purpose in 1927.<sup>5</sup> By 1929 the two L.N.Cs. had earmarked a sum of Shs. 100,000/- for the purpose of building and equipping a Government Central School when sufficient funds had been accumulated.<sup>6</sup> While continuing to collect funds for the building and equipping of a government school, the L.N.Cs. also provided cash grants to assist mission schools.

<sup>3</sup> The conflicting interests of missions, the administration, and the public played a central role in the development of education in Kenya, and are well documented in the literature. See, for example, Rosalind Mutua (1975), Terence Ranger (1965), Elsa Abreu (1982), John Anderson (1970), and D.N. Sivuna (1980).

<sup>4</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/3. "Annual Report for the Year Ending 31st December, 1925".

<sup>5</sup> South Nyanza District had two Local Native Councils, one of the Kisii and Abakuria, one of the Luo and Abasuba. National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/3. "Annual Report for the Year Ending 31st December 1927".

<sup>6</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/3. "Annual Report for the Year Ending 31st December, 1929".

Though the work of the missions in education was appreciated by local leaders, as the L.N.C. financial support indicates, the schools posed problems in the communities where they were located. Not merely centers for religious and secular instructions, they were also centers around which adherents gathered, built houses, dug shambas and herded cattle. "The object in congregating in this way is due partly no doubt to a desire to live in a Christian community, but also equally without doubt to endeavour to get away from tribal authority..... This is illustrated by the pretensions of some of the Missions' adherents that Government Orders conveyed through Official Headmen, etc. should be conveyed to them personally through their teachers."<sup>7</sup> A further difficulty with mission villages was that, as they expanded, they encroached on the land and rights of others.

In 1934 permission was given to construct the Government African School in Kisii, with funding provided largely by the Local Native Councils. It was completed and opened in the beginning of 1935. It was intended as a primary school with classes beginning from Standard III, but following the entrance examinations, the standards were lowered to elementary school level. The entrance results had indicated that the preparation of students from Kisii and Kuria had received up to that point was insufficient to gain them entrance into primary school and the pupils would have been exclusively Luo had the higher standards been upheld.<sup>8</sup>

In 1938, government became responsible for the entire cost of primary education in the district, and so released the entire Local Native Council educational grant for use in elementary education. The District Commissioner reflected on the state of education in South Nyanza in the following terms:

... this district is far behind others in its standard of education, not because the inhabitants are fools, but because of its comparative geographical isolation from the rest of the Colony.... This isolation inevitably leads to lack of comparison with other places and consequent readiness to be more easily satisfied with lower standards... an indication of the poor education here is given by the fact that, though both S.D.A. and Roman Catholics have primary schools of considerable size, not a single pupil from South Kavirondo [South Nyanza] qualified to proceed to a secondary school during the year.... The Government African School... bids fair to becoming the brightest star in our

<sup>7</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/3. "Annual Report for the Year Ending 31st December, 1928".

<sup>8</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/4. "Annual Report - 1935".

educational firmament. Hitherto it has had to carry on as an Elementary school owing to lack of Primary pupils, but now many of the pupils have reached the Primary stage. There are great numbers of boys who are only too anxious to be entered there, and it does not appear that there will be any lack of support forthcoming.<sup>9</sup>

During World War II the number of students and schools continued to grow. In 1944, 206 students sat for the Common Entrance Examination as against 92 and 65 for the previous two years respectively.<sup>10</sup> The bulk of education was still borne by missionaries, though the Local Native Council and non-missionary members of the District Education Board were in favour of non-denominational schools and had voted money for two Local Native Council Schools in 1945. Demand for education and for schools under government or L.N.C. control and entirely disassociated from the missions, continued to grow.

In 1949 there were 100 primary level schools in the District supported by or receiving grants-in-aid from public funds, and some 150 more were registered as approved.

It might be safe to say that one third of this latter figure would be an accurate estimate of the number of unaided schools actually functioning as schools. Almost all of these institutions catered for both boys and girls. There were no vocational training schools functioning, other than teacher training establishments. The vociferous demand for more and higher grade schools has continued to grow, and with it there has been an increasing call for trade and technical training locally.<sup>11</sup>

The primary schools in the District comprised four distinct categories: 1) 14 L.N.C. schools, maintained by Councils directly; 2) 63 aided schools, receiving grants from Councils but managed by Missions; 3) Unaided schools, maintained by communities, in all cases under mission supervision; 4) Unrecognized schools, catechumenates, and religious teaching centres, not liable to inspection by the Education Department and not recognized by the

<sup>9</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/4. "Annual Report - 1938".

<sup>10</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/6. "Annual Report - South Kavirondo, 1944".

<sup>11</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/11. "Annual Report - 1949".

director of education as areas.<sup>12</sup> There were three secondary schools in the District.

The increase in numbers of educated children, and the greater number of opportunities for education made available yearly brought to the forefront a concern that the pursuit of education had taken on an importance that could lead to an unbalanced prioritization of needs at the communal level. This was voiced by D.W. Hall, District Commissioner in 1952:

At... barazas it is clear that most people have an idea that education is the open sesame to success and that a boy merely has to obtain a certificate and all will be well for the rest of his life. There is an undesirable view that common work is an out-moded occupation and the aim should be to enter a profession. Pupils simply try every dodge to avoid leaving school at the end of the Primary Course and there have been cases where boys forge testimonials from other districts saying they have passed examinations which in fact they have not. In many cases there is a genuine desire among the parents to see their boys going on into a higher stage, and this is creditable but something should be done to encourage the worker and to make the dignity of daily labour more understood.<sup>13</sup>

Education facilities and the number of students in school continued to grow. (see Appendix I for documentation.) From 1952 to 1953 the number of primary schools in South Nyanza District almost tripled, and by the end of the decade the schools had grown from 134 to 539.<sup>14</sup> In 1956 the Seventh Day Adventist Missions withdrew from the grant-in-aid system and the majority of their aided schools were transferred to District Education Board management in 1957.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, the bulk of primary education remained in the hands of missions with 145 grant-aided primary schools run by missions and 82 by the District Education Board.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/11. "Annual Report - 1949".

<sup>13</sup> National Archives of Kenya. "South Nyanza District Annual Report - 1952".

<sup>14</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/15. "Annual Report - South Nyanza District 1953" and DC/KSI/1/14. "Annual Report - South Nyanza District 1952". National Archives of Kenya. DC/HB/1/2. "Annual Report - South Nyanza District 1960". Appendix "K".

<sup>15</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/18. "South Nyanza District Annual Report - 1956".

<sup>16</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/19. "South Nyanza District Annual Report - 1957".



The decade of the 1950s saw several major improvements on the educational front, including 1) greater emphasis on the education of girls, which lead to higher enrollments, 2) more emphasis on teaching practical subjects, and 3) the beginning of mass literacy campaigns aimed at adults.

At independence, the educational system was characterized by inequalities in the provision of schooling both among races and among geographic areas. Three dominant factors influenced the distribution of educational opportunities during the colonial period: racial discrimination, missionary evangelism, and differential geographic responses of and to the colonial system. The government sought immediately to reduce these disparities, but the task was complex and remains to be fully completed.

Since independence the government has worked to expand educational opportunities. It has attempted both to increase the scale of the educational system and to eliminate racial and regional inequalities. It has been very successful in accomplishing the first objective, rapidly expanding the system and providing greater numbers of children with places at all levels of the system. The task of eliminating inequalities is on-going. Racial segregation in education was quickly done away with following independence. Yet to some extent the regional disparities in distribution and quality of education remain today. The disadvantages that developed in the colonial era have had a tendency to carry through two and a half decades later.

With enrollment ratios lower than 39%, that is, fewer than 39 out of 100 children of school age enrolled in schools, South Nyanza district in 1973 fell within Kenya's lowest quartile in terms of educational development.<sup>17</sup> This category includes districts such as Marsabit, Garissa, Wajir and Turkana, which are inhabited mainly by pastoralists, where the development of education has traditionally been hindered by the transhumant lifestyle of the population.<sup>18</sup> In 1969, 22% of the adults in South Nyanza district had four or more years of schooling.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Republic of Kenya. Central Bureau of Statistics. Ministry of Economic Planning and Community Affairs. Educational Trends 1973-77. Nairobi: UNICEF, p.6.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.25.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.27.

With the abolition of school fees in 1974, school enrollment in South Nyanza increased tremendously. Over the period 1973-77, enrollment in Standard I increased by 187%, and enrollment ratios grew concomitantly to a 0.81 ratio in 1974. But as on the national level, this increase in enrollments in Standard I in 1974 was not repeated in subsequent years.<sup>20</sup>

One of the core issues pursued in this paper is that past history of educational development influences school attendance within a district because districts with high adult educational attainment are more likely to have schools and because educated parents are more motivated to seek education for their children than those without schooling.<sup>21</sup> Analyses of educational trends strongly suggest that this was especially important prior to the achievement of universal primary education.

Although the early post-independence objective of meeting the nation's manpower requirements was accomplished, the challenges facing government and educational planners and implementers remain great, as objectives are redefined to meet the changing needs of the country. Currently the objective is to prepare youth to face the future without guaranteed employment and so the task of education has been redefined to promote practical knowledge and skills since the white-collar sector of the economy cannot expand sufficiently to absorb all the newly qualified candidates leaving universities and secondary schools.

#### EDUCATION IN BWIREGE

As late as 1955, government officials reported that "...only in the two southern locations of Butende and Sukuma was interest in education still luke-warm."<sup>22</sup> This statement is belied by references appearing much earlier in the archival record, which explicitly show that as many as thirty years earlier, a demand for education was already being voiced. For example, in September 1927, an officer on safari through these southern locations reports that the elders at Bwirege asked that the Roman Catholic Mission at Nyabururu

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.9-10.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p.7.

<sup>22</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/17. "South Nyanza District Annual Report - 1955".

send a teacher to them since there were none in their territory.<sup>23</sup> Just a few days later, elders in Nyabasi requested that a school be built in their area.

Educational facilities came late to Bukuria, (the area that now comprises Kehancha Division of South Nyanza District), but not for interest on the part of the people. The archival record shows that the colonial administration was not willing to invest a great deal in the development of the area and perceived the Kuria as very troublesome people, given to crossing over the interterritorial border at will. Officials therefore reasoned that any efforts on the part of the administration, whether in the direction of improved agriculture or education, would be wasted.

South Nyanza, always a large and populous region, was chronically understaffed by administrative officers of all capacities. Kehancha Division was the most removed from the administrative headquarters at Kisii, and frequently, especially in the early colonial decades, years would go by without an administrative officer venturing into that region. The Kuria thus tended to be isolated from developments taking place in other parts of the district and the colony as a whole.

The building of the first school in Bukuria was begun in 1935 by the Mill Hill Mission. Eager to begin the development, the L.N.C. bestowed a building grant of Shs. 2000/- to the school.<sup>24</sup> From then on, the number of schools continued to grow, though at a slow pace and with uneven distribution. Most of the educational facilities were located within the two locations closest to Kisii (Bugumbe and Bukira) which were the most accessible by the scant road network. Nyabasi and Bwirege did not see formal educational facilities until the 1950s, though missionaries had made some inroads into the two locations by the 1940s, opening up some catechumenical institutions.

The first school opened in Bwirege Location in 1953, the second in 1956, and the third in 1958. They were all only lower primary schools. Students completing standard IV and wishing to continue education were forced to go to the nearest upper primary school at Isebania, some 60 kilometers away. At the end of the 1960s there were still only four primary schools in the whole

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<sup>23</sup> National Archives of Kenya. FC/NZA/3/26/2. "Station Diary for August 1927. District Commissioner's Office. 3. Kavirondo".

<sup>24</sup> National Archives of Kenya. DC/KSI/1/4. "Annual Report - 1935".

location. This number doubled in the 1970s. The greatest growth has occurred in the 1980s, when the number of schools increased from 8 to 15. The growing need for schools reflects not only increased desire for education but also the rapidly expanding population, which grew at approximately 3.9% per annum in the 1980s.<sup>25</sup>

Available statistics do not provide a clear picture of the growth of school enrollments. Though figures are available from all the schools, the information is rarely complete. In many cases, particularly early years, records have been lost. With frequent changeover of headmasters in recent years, information is often not passed on. In some cases records have been destroyed by rats or lost through theft. Thus only in a few of the youngest schools is the enrollment record complete.

The figures presented in Table 1 represent the sums of all available information. The fraction following the enrollment figure shows the number of schools providing information out of the total schools open in a given year. The estimated total is derived by calculating average enrollment at schools reporting data and multiplying by the total number of schools.

Table 1. Enrollment in Bwinge Primary Schools<sup>26</sup>  
(in five year intervals)

Year	Enrollment	Estimated Total
1959	27 (1/2)	54
1964	77 (1/3)	231
1969	324 (3/4)	432
1974	843 (4/5)	1054
1979	1758 (5/7)	2461
1984	2175 (11/14)	2768
1989	3912 (15/15)	3912

The growth in enrollments continued at a gradual rate until 1973. From 1973 to 1974 the number of schools did not change, but total enrollment

<sup>25</sup> Elias H.O. Ayiamba, ed., 1984, p.105.

<sup>26</sup> These figures have been obtained from a number of sources. Primarily they are from the Monthly Returns filed by each school with the Assistant Primary School Inspector. In cases where some of these were missing in the school, I sought to get the information from the A.P.S.I.'s returns filed with the Divisional Education Officer. For the early years, where official returns were missing, I went through the attendance records, where available, to obtain figures for enrollments.

doubled in response to the abolishment of direct payment of school fees from Standard I to IV. On the national level, the elimination of school fees caused an increase in primary school enrollment in 1974 of 51% over the previous year. The influx occurred mainly in Standard I, but also in the enrollments for other classes which reflected the return of students who had previously dropped out of schools.<sup>27</sup>

A similar sharp increase occurred from 1978 to 1979, when the government terminated both fees for the higher primary standards and indirect fees, such as building funds, activity costs, equipment levys, etc. At this time the state introduced the primary school milk program. Voluntary community fundraising through Harambee collections became a supplementary source of school financing.<sup>28</sup>

#### DEMOGRAPHY OF THE SCHOOL POPULATION

This section analyzes primary school enrollment and composition of the school population in Bwirege for 1989. It also compares 1989 enrollments with those of previous years.<sup>29</sup>

In 1989, Bwirege had 15 primary schools, of which 12 provided classes up to Standard VIII, 2 up to Standard VII, and 1 up to Standard II. Total enrollment at these schools was 3912 pupils, of whom 57% were boys and 43% were girls. These figures represent the narrowest gap between the sexes in the history of educational enrollment in the Bwirege locations. Ten years ago, in 1979, boys represented 63% of the enrollment in primary schools and in 1969, 87%. The national emphasis on the need to educate girls as well as boys appears to be taking hold in these locations. Closer breakdown of data

<sup>27</sup> Op.cit., Republic of Kenya, Educational Trends 1973-77, p.7-9.

<sup>28</sup> Though systematic data collection was not conducted in this area of inquiry, evidence suggests that the combined contributions of cash, materials, and labour of community members to schools may in fact be quite in excess of the value of school fees paid previously. Also, whereas previously school fees were the responsibility of parents, the current arrangement of Harambee contributions calls upon all adult members of the community to shoulder the burden of financing education.

<sup>29</sup> Special thanks to the A.E.O. Kehancha Division, the A.P.S.I. Ntimaru Zone, and all the headmasters of primary schools in Bwirege East and West, whose assistance and cooperation enabled the collection of the data pertaining to schools and pupils.

belies the apparent evenness of the educational opportunity and attainment for the two sexes. In Standard I girls represent 47% of the pupils, in Standard VIII only 25%. Some of the reasons for this disparity are discussed below.

With the initial rapid increase in enrollments in 1974, the ratio of male to female students declined. Yet the correlation between high total enrollment ratios and low male to female enrollment ratios has become weaker rather than stronger over time. There is not a direct correspondence on either a national or district level between the rise in enrollments and the declines in male to female enrollment ratios. The abolition of school fees, while benefitting females, does not seem to have had as significant an impact on female school attendance as on total enrollments.<sup>30</sup>

The dropout rate is high for both sexes, but particularly so for girls. Enrollments in Standard I represent 20% of all children in school while Standard VIII has only 6% of total enrollment. For girls, 72% of those in school are in Standards I to IV, for boys 60% are in those same standards. The vast majority of children who enrol do not complete the primary school course, and most girls do not even make it halfway through. Part of the reason for this is the relatively late age (often 10 years) at which children begin school. As a result, by the time girls are halfway through the primary course they are old enough to be married and are usually pressured to do so, at the expense of formal learning.

Nationwide, enrollment ratios decline in the higher standards. Both a high drop-out rate and high rate of repetition, the latter particularly in Standard I, play a significant role. A major drop of 30-40% takes place between Standard IV and V.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Op.cit., Republic of Kenya, Educational Trends 1973-77, p.16.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

Table 2. Comparison of Bwirege and National Primary School Statistics in 1985.

As Percentage of Class:									
Standard	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Overall-1-8
Bwirege:									
Boys	50	55	58	59	62	74	74	75	59
Girls	50	45	42	41	38	26	26	25	41
Kenya:									
Boys	51	52	52	50	51	51	50	56	52
Girls	49	48	48	50	49	49	47	44	48
As Percentage of Total Enrollment:									
Bwirege:									
Boys	21	14	18	14	12	8	8	7	
Girls	30	17	19	14	10	4	3	3	
Total	26	15	19	14	11	6	5	5	
Kenya:									
Boys	18	15	14	13	12	11	10	8	
Girls	18	15	14	14	12	11	9	7	
Total	18	15	14	13	12	11	10	8	

Source: Republic of Kenya. Central Bureau of Statistics. Economic Survey 1986, p. 179 and "Monthly Returns" of primary schools in Ntitaru Zone.

Table 2 displays the demographic breakdown of primary school students in Bwirege, as compared with the same on the national level. Boys represent a larger percentage of girls in every standard (except for Standard I in Bwirege). However, local-level data show the 1:1 ratio of boys to girls in Standard I rising to 3:1 in Standard VIII. There is no such drastic change in the national-level data, where the widest gap in sex enrollments does not exceed 12%. Similarly, when looking at the percentage of total enrollment boys and girls at each level represent, the national level statistics present a much more even picture than the local level data. In Bwirege, 80% of the girls and 67% of the boys in primary school are in Standards I-IV. In Kenya as a whole, 61% of the girls and 60% of the boys are in Standard I-IV. Apparently, both the percentage of students at each level by sex, and the percentage of total enrollment at each level by sex are much more even nationally than locally, leading to the conclusion that in Bwirege, the problem of drop-out by girls is more pervasive than the national average.

Another way to show the dropout rate taking place over the years of primary education is to follow one set of students through their primary school career. Table 3 documents the movement of students in Bwirege who started in 1974, the year of the first large boom in primary school enrollment.<sup>32</sup> There were five primary schools operating that year.

Table 3. Drop-out Rate of 1974 Cohort Group in Primary School

Students	Year/Standard						
	1974/I	1975/II	1976/III	1977/IV	1978/V	1979/VI	1980/VII
Boys	308	277	127	180	123	110	73
Girls	107	78	34	53	26	18	13
Total	415	355	161	233	149	128	86

Source: Monthly Returns filed by primary schools with area A.P.S.I.

These figures clearly demonstrate the rate of attrition one standard to the next, showing that only 21% of those who began education in 1974 completed it in 1980. Broken down by sex, 24% of the boys in this cohort group completed Standard VII, and only 12% of the girls. By the midway point in the school cycle, Standard IV, 45% of the pupils have dropped out. Data are available for comparison with the district level, where we see that the drop-out rate for cohort group starting in Standard I in 1974 was 64% by Standard 4 in 1977.<sup>33</sup>

Headmasters of the schools in Bwirege see many reasons for the high dropout rate in the area. Children start attending school late, because parents like to keep them at home to provide labour, in looking after cattle, and taking care of younger siblings. Many students repeat the same class several times, and thereby become physically mature before advancing very far within the educational system. On attaining physical maturity, girls often leave school to be married and boys begin looking for employment. Virtually all the headmasters agree that the fundamental problem lies in "a lack of vision of the future" and a lack of encouragement on the part of parents.

<sup>32</sup> This year was also selected because complete information is available for all the primary schools in Bwirege.

<sup>33</sup> Op.cit., Republic of Kenya, *Educational Trends 1973-77*, p.19 & 44.



Most parents of children currently in schools are uneducated, they do not see the importance of education and want their children to act and live in the same way that they have acted and lived. Therefore, parents are not willing to pay for uniforms and other education-related expenses. They see attendance at school as a way to pass time unproductively. Formal sector role models for children cannot often envision their future use of education.

Moreover, daughters represent a source of wealth to be obtained through marriage. Parents see no reason to encourage them to stay in school. Though bridewealth (dowry) for educated girls is higher than for uneducated ones, most parents do not see this as a sufficient incentive to continue their daughters' education. One of the reasons for this may be the pressure exerted by brothers who need the bridewealth of their sisters in order to marry.

Though the headquarters tend to stress the reasons that they receive to result from "traditional" attitudes, there is no doubt that in Bukuria, as in many other areas of Kenya, there are many structural causes that especially for females weigh heavily against continuing through the entire primary course of education. A number of studies have dealt with the structural constraints within the educational system in Kenya.<sup>34</sup>

#### EXPERIENCES AND EXPECTATIONS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL LEAVERS.

During the eighth and last year of primary education a nationwide test, the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (K.C.P.E.), is administered to all students who register, and the results have a significant bearing on the future of the individual student. The test determines whether a student continues on to secondary school, and the quality of the school in which one can enroll and has a bearing on employment chances and vocational training. Prior to the introduction of the 8-4-4 system, the Certificate of Primary Education (C.P.E.) was similarly administered during the seventh and last year of primary education.

In examining data on the final primary school exam, a number of trends become evident.

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<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Kabiru Kinyanjui (1978), Audrey Smock Chapman (1981), Joyce L. Mook (1974), D.N. Sifuna (1980), Margaret Ngau (1988).

1. The number of candidates in Bwirege sitting for the exam each year has grown steadily. From 1965 to 1988, the number of candidates tripled from 54 to 161. The ratio of boys to girls remains relatively even, with girls accounting for, on the average, approximately 5-15% of the total candidates.

2. The age of candidates at the time of the exam has been steadily increasing. The modal age has risen from 14 in the early post-independence years to 18 in 1987. The abolition of school fees in 1974 attracted many older pupils into the schooling system. In South Nyanza, pupils aged 13 and older represented 13-15% of total enrollment in 1975, 1976, and 1977.<sup>35</sup> But as Mook points out, the age of primary school leavers is often higher than the students and their headmasters report on the K.C.P.E. registration forms.<sup>36</sup> It is not uncommon for male students to be married with children and still be attending primary school.

3. The quality of performance on the exams remains uneven. In the 23 years for which results are available, students who passed the exam have outnumbered the failing students in only ten of those 23 years. This has happened only once in the 1980s, leaving the impression that while many more people attend school, the quality of education received has decreased.

The year 1985, the first year of the new 8-4-4 system, is a case study. In Bwirege, six schools administered the K.C.P.E. for which 130 students registered, and 129 sat for the exam. Of these, 99 were boys and 31 were girls, a 3:1 ratio. Forty-six students (35%) passed the exam, 83 (65%) failed. It must be taken into account that, since this was the first year of testing in the new system, which requires more subjects and sets out a new curriculum, the students who sat for the exam had spent most of their educational life in the old system, and were therefore not fully ready to deal with the K.C.P.E. This was a widely voiced concern, even though the exam was written to take this into account. The results from subsequent years are not encouraging. In 1986 only 32% of the candidates in Bwirege passed, in 1987 23% and in 1988 31%.

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<sup>35</sup> Op.cit., Republic of Kenya, Educational Trends 1973-77, p.42.

<sup>36</sup> Joyce L. Mook, 1974, p. 115.

To mitigate this very negative picture, other data suggest that K.C.P.E. results are not as strictly deterministic of a student's educational future as is commonly held.<sup>37</sup> The following data were collected in a tracer study of primary school leavers in order to determine what they were doing three years following the K.C.P.E. Table 4 summarizes the findings.

Of the candidates who passed the K.C.P.E. exam in 1985, 61% are in secondary school. Of those who failed the same year, 37% are in secondary school. Failure on the primary school exam does not apparently constitute the end of formal education, although those with passes get admitted to better schools, and thereby increase their chances for success at the higher level exams. It is interesting that even three years after the first attempt at the exam, there are three students still repeating Standard VIII for another chance at it.

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<sup>37</sup> For a discussion of the role of C.P.E./K.C.P.E. within the educational system see Kenneth King (1974) and D.N. Sifuna (1980).

Table 4: Follow-up of 1985 K.C.P.E. Candidates After Three Years.

	Number of Candidates			
	Passed		Failed	
	Number	%	Number	%
Occupation:				
In Secondary	31	67	31	37
Form I	1		3	
Form II	3		5	
Form III	27		23	
Repeating in Primary			3	4
At Home	5	13	35	42
In National Youth Service			2	2
In Business	2	4	5	7
Employed	6	13	3	4
Bar Worker			1	
Matatu Conductor	1			
Prison Warden			1	
Teacher (untrained)	2			
Tea Picker	1		1	
Watchman	1			
Soldier	1			
In Prison			2	2
No Information	1	2	1	1

Source: Field tracer study.

Thirteen percent of those who passed the exam are employed, a much higher proportion than the four percent of those who did not pass. Forty-two percent of those who did not pass are at home, meaning that they are pursuing the activities and traditional roles assigned within their culture: farming, looking after cattle and homestead chores. Only 13% of those who passed the exam are in the same situation.

Moock's tracer project of primary school leavers in Kakamega District show some similarities in findings with the current study.<sup>36</sup> In looking at post-C.P.E. activities, she found that 55% of those who passed continued on to secondary school, and 15% of those who failed did so. Of those who passed,

<sup>36</sup> Op.cit., Moock (1974). p. 117.

14% were at home in the year following the exam, and of those who failed, a 22%. The greatest difference between the studies is in the category of repeaters, where Mook found 56% of those who failed and 26% of those who passed. The difference in this area between studies is no doubt partly due to the fact that whereas she recorded the activities of the school leavers in the year following their C.P.E., the current study records the activities three years after the taking of the K.C.P.E. It is likely that, if the same amount of elapsed time was the basis in both studies, the categorical breakdown would be closer, as many of the repeaters would have moved on to other activities, whether schooling, employment, or home.

These data indicate a difference in the opportunities available to those who passed the primary school exam and those who did not. This issue will be explored in greater depth in the rest of this paper. First however, an exploration of primary school students' ideas about the importance of education, its value, and the role it has in shaping their future.

In November 1988, a few weeks prior to the annual K.C.P.E. exam, an opinion poll was administered to all Standard VIII students in Bwirege.<sup>30</sup> One hundred six boys and 26 girls participated, representing 84% of the total number of youth enrolled in Standard VIII (82% of boys, 90% of girls). The average for boys in the sample was 16 years and 9 months, with a mode and median of 16. The average age for girls was 15 years and 5 months, with a mode and median of 15. The questionnaire was designed to elicit information on a range of topics, education being just one of them. (see relevant questions and answers in the opinion poll in Appendix II).

The vast majority of students perceived the importance of secondary education, as displayed by their choice of money for secondary school fees as the thing they would most like to be given upon finishing primary school. The majority of girls chose going to secondary school as the best way to get ahead in life, whereas boys perceive getting employment as a better way than going

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<sup>30</sup> The questionnaire given was composed of 7 multiple-choice questions, 11 yes/no questions, 2 sentence completions, and one composition, asking the student to describe the ways in which his/her life differs from that of his/her grandfather/grandmother. The questionnaires were given to the students by their English teacher and were completed during one period, in class. They were administered on the same day in all the schools in the two locations.

to secondary school. Interestingly, both sexes gave very low rating to growing cash crops as a way of getting ahead.

Both sexes were interested in having a spouse with the same amount of education as they have, though as a second choice boys preferred a wife with less education, and girls a husband with more education. An uneducated spouse was not entirely undesirable to either sex. Whereas almost half the boys thought it more important to educate males than females, 92% of the girls did not agree. In her study of women's education in Tanzania, Mbilinyi suggests that there is a large measure of auto-elimination from the school system by the girls themselves in the belief that their education is of less consequence than that of their brothers.<sup>40</sup> A survey of opinions of girls who have made it through the educational system is unlikely to show that they share the same opinion. All students thought it the responsibility of the parents to educate their children.

When asked which school subject they perceive as the most useful, the majority answer for both sexes was English. "It is ironic that a bunch of African children living in a farming community think that what will be the most useful in their future is English," stated one of the Kuria teachers administering the opinion poll. What this signifies, however, is the hope of the children, through their education, to break out of the farming lifestyle of their natal communities. As Mutua points out, English language has, for many decades, represented the key to opening doors to a new way of life.<sup>41</sup> Kiswahili, the national language, received a much lower ranking of its usefulness. Home science and science were chosen as the second most useful subjects by girls and boys respectively. This may be a reflection of the greater emphasis of the educational system on the teaching of practical subjects.

There were very few surprises when students choose what they would like to be after finishing their education. The role models available to them in their home communities are very limited and these careers were the ones most frequently selected--doctor, nurse, teacher. All other responses received less than 7% interest. Virtually all professions chosen were white collar, only 2% were skilled labour. Only 4% of the boys and none of the girls chose

<sup>40</sup> Cited in Rosalind Mutua (1972), p. 163.

<sup>41</sup> Rosalind Mutua (1980), p. 83

farming as the occupation they would like to pursue. Clearly, the perception is that education should be the outlet away from agriculture as an occupation.

In 1966 David Koff conducted a study to gauge some of the salient aspects of primary pupils' outlook on the world.<sup>42</sup> One of the areas explored was job preference. In comparing those findings with the current ones, some significant differences emerge. In 1966, the job of a clerk or secretary was the most frequently chosen by rural students, being the choice of 21% of the pupils. In the current study, it was the choice of only 2% of the boys. None of the girls selected it. The top choice in 1989 for boys was doctor (31%), and for girls nurse (62%). Doctor was the seventh choice in 1966 with 5% of the total choices, and nurse was sixth, with 6% of the choices. In 1966 the second choice of occupation was teacher, selected by 18% of the pupils. That is also the second choice now, being preferred by 17% of the boys and 27% of the girls. Agricultural Officer, the third highest choice in 1966 with 8% selection was not chosen by any of the current pupils. Farmer was selected by 6% of the pupils in 1966, by 4% of the boys in 1989, and none of the girls in 1988.<sup>43</sup>

#### ECONOMIC RETURNS OF EDUCATION

##### The Community

A survey of 163 homesteads (sing. *umugi*; pl. *imigi*) was carried out in 1988 in eight communities of one administrative sublocation.<sup>44</sup> A 99% response rate was accomplished. The total number of people living in those homesteads is 2,164. Table 5 presents the demographic profile of the surveyed sample.

For the purpose of this paper, the first three categories of people--namely homestead heads (sing. *umuene*; pl. *abiene*), their wives, and offspring are of particular significance. In the following pages I will examine the educational attainment of these members of the community, the relationship of

<sup>42</sup> David R. Koff (1967), p.390-412.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p.403.

<sup>44</sup> Ntimaru Sublocation, Bwirage West. Survey data was gathered with the assistance of Mr. James Sabai Chacha and Mr. Tobias Maroa Macheru, enumerators.

attainment to employment and income, and long-term role of attainment as an agent of differentiation.

Table 5. Demographic Profile of Survey Community

Relationship to Homestead Head	Total	Type of Residence	
		At Home	Away
Homestead	212	154	58
Wives	329	263	66
Children	1727	1096	631
Grand Children		370	
Grand Children		144	
Daughters-in-law		13	
Siblings		39	
Other affines		63	
Non-relatives		21	

Source: Field Survey.

#### Educational Attainment

For the sake of simplification, I have divided the spectrum of educational attainment into four categories: those with no education, those with some years of primary school, but not completing; those with complete primary education; and those with higher than primary, including some or all secondary schooling, teacher training, or university education. Table 6 summarizes educational attainment for homestead heads and their wives.

Fifty eight percent of the homestead heads and 80% of their wives have received no formal education. Of the 42% of the homestead heads who are educated 58% have completed less than primary education, 26% the whole primary course and 17% more than primary. Of the educated wives, 74% have completed only some years of primary school, 17% the whole primary school course, and 9% more than primary. In the light of the recent arrival of formal education Bukuria, it is not surprising that these elder members of the community do not have a high rate of educational attainment.



Table 6. Educational attainment of Abiene and their Wives

Level of Education	Homestead Heads		Wives	
	Number	%	Number	%
None	122	58	264	80
Under Primary	52	25	40	12
Primary	23	11	9	3
Over Primary	15	7	5	2
No Information	-	-	11	-
Total	212	101	329	100

Source: Field Survey

The homestead heads and their wives have 1,727 offspring. Of these 1,096 live within the communities surveyed, and the remainder have migrated to live elsewhere. Table 7 represents the educational attainment of all the offspring:

Table 7. Educational Attainment of Offspring

Educational Attainment*	Boys	Girls	Total
Uneducated	68	229	297
Education Completed	235	119	354
In Primary	314	243	557
In Secondary	20	11	31
In University or Other	3	1	4
Under School Age			385
No Information			99
Total			1727

\* The first two rows of this chart represent older offspring who have completed their education. Rows 3, 4, and 5 represent offspring who are still pursuing their education. Row 6 represents offspring who have not yet begun.

Source: field survey

What is the relationship between the educational attainment of the father and that of the offspring? Since the history of formal education in the study area is so brief, a look at the demographics of the community is necessary first. Homestead heads have been divided according to the stage attained in the development cycle by their households. Four stages are distinguished for analytical purposes: A) a unit composed of a man, his wife or wives, and children. There is only one generation of married adults present and children are young, still enrolled in schools. B) The homestead remains one-generational, but daughters are being married off, and thus some of the offspring have ended their education. C) Sons are marrying, daughters-in-law are coming into the homestead, and some of both sons and daughters have completed their education. D) Married sons split off with their families to establish their own homesteads, most offspring of the homestead head have reached adulthood and finished their education.

Table 8. Percentage of Homestead Heads by Educational Attainment and Development Cycle Stage

Development Cycle Stage	Homestead Heads	
	Educated	Uneducated
A	73%	20%
B	13%	18%
C	8%	31%
D	6%	30%
Total	100%	99%

Source: Field Survey

The households of 73% of all the educated abiene are still within the first stage of the development cycle, and therefore it is difficult to assess to what extent their educational attainment influences that of their children. Their children are still young, at most pursuing the earliest steps in the educational process, and thus no judgement can be made regarding whether they will be more educated than the children of others with less education. Just over one quarter of the total educated abiene have children who have completed their education, and for them, the relationship is described. But first,

Table 9 presents the relationship between level of education of homestead heads and household development cycle.

Of the homestead heads with education higher than primary level, 80% are in development cycle stage A, 7% in B, 13% in C, and none in D. Of those who completed only a primary education, 83% are in development cycle stage A, and 17% in B. None of the homestead heads whose households have reached development cycle stages C and D completed and ended at primary education. Of the homestead heads who had attended only some years of primary education, 67% have their households at development cycle stage A, 13% at B, and 10% each at C and D.

Table 9. Relationship between Education of Homestead Heads and Household Development Cycle Stage

Education	Development Cycle Stage									
	A		B		C		D		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Post-Primary	12	80	1	7	2	13	0	0	15	100
Primary Completed	19	83	4	17	0	0	0	0	23	100
Some Primary	35	67	7	13	5	10	5	10	52	100

Source: Field Survey

In the subsequent discussion of the relationship between educational attainment of the father and his offspring, all stage A homesteads are excluded, since the children have not yet completed their education. Included in the analysis are only stages B, C, and D offspring who have finished their education. Table 10A and 10B summarize the findings. Of the offspring of educated homestead heads, only 17% have received no education, 50% have received some years of primary education only, 13% have completed the entire primary course, and 20% have completed more than primary education. For the offspring of uneducated homestead heads, the situation is different. Fifty-three percent have received no education at all, 24% completed some years of

primary school, 15% completed the entire primary course and 3% have education higher than primary.

Table 10A. Offspring of Educated Fathers:

Level Reached	Males	Female	Total	
			No	%
None	5	11	16	17
Some Primary	16	31	47	50
Primary Completed	4	8	12	13
Post-Primary	19	0	19	20
Total	44	50	94	100

Table 10B. Offspring of Uneducated Fathers:

Level Reached	Males	Female	Total	
			No	%
None	67	213	280	53
Some Primary	80	49	129	24
Primary Completed	67	12	79	15
Post-Primary	36	4	40	8
Total	250	278	528	100

Source: Field Survey

Though clearly offspring from educated homestead heads are more likely to be educated than those of uneducated ablene, and their educational attainment tends to be higher than that of the latter, it is difficult to draw hard and fast conclusions. This process of educational differentiation has taken place over a short time period in the region. Offspring from homesteads in the final stages of the developmental cycle are significantly older than the offspring from homesteads in development cycle stage B, which represents a time span from when there were no schools in the location at all to the present full complement of 15 primary and 1 secondary school. As the tables show, there are a number of offspring whose fathers were not educated who themselves have gone through secondary schooling. The relationship between

the education of fathers and their offspring is not a simple one. Further analysis, taking into account, for example, the age of both parties would be useful, but is beyond the scope of this paper.

#### Educational Attainment, Employment and Income

There is a strong correlation between educational attainment and employment. Of the educated homestead heads, 33% are employed and 26% have a business. Only 12% of the uneducated abiene are employed, and 3% have a business. The difference between the two categories of homestead heads is heightened when the average income from employment and business is taken into account. The average employment income of an educated umuene is Shs. 12,573 per year, from business Shs. 14,754.<sup>45</sup> (See Table 11 for sample sizes.) For uneducated abiene, the average income from employment is Shs. 6,003, and from business Shs. 3,378 per year. In other words, an educated homestead head earns on the average double the salary of an uneducated one, and in business more than four times the income. Table 11 breaks down the relationship between educational attainment and income for homestead heads. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of cases.

Table 11. Average Income For Homestead Heads

Educational Attainment:	Average Income (in Kenya Shillings)			
	Employment	Business	Farming	Total
Uneducated	6,003 (14)	3,378 (4)	7,462 (116)	11,903 (119)
Educated	12,165 (30)	14,754 (21)	6,639 (83)	16,671 (90)
Post Primary	25,165 (11)	15,000 (1)	7,350 (12)	33,440 (15)
Primary Completed	7,520 (6)	18,216 (9)	5,177 (23)	16,965 (23)
Some Primary	4,303 (12)	9,490 (10)	6,434 (48)	10,532 (52)
Total Sample	10,482 (44)	12,934 (25)	7,128 (199)	12,682 (230)

Source: Field Survey

As far as employment income and total income are concerned, the higher the educational level of the individual, the higher the income (see Table 11).

<sup>45</sup>

From mid-1987 to mid-1989, the value of the Kenyan Shilling declined from Shs. 16 per U.S. dollar to Shs. 21 U.S. dollar.

The only exception to this appears to be the category encompassing those who have completed only a few years of education, without finishing primary school. For them employment, farming and total income is actually lower than for those who have no education at all. But since the actual difference in incomes is very small, it may not be statistically significant. The situation is different when it comes to business. Business incomes are the highest for those homestead heads who have only completed primary education.

Incomes from farming are quite similar for all the categories of homestead heads. Variables other than education may be very relevant to this figure. These include the developmental cycle of the homestead. Whereas most of the highly educated homestead heads are in the first stage of development of their domestic group, the uneducated (older) abiene are in the third stage have a much larger labour force for working in agriculture, and therefore their output may be greater.<sup>46</sup>

We saw earlier that homestead heads are educated in much larger proportion than their wives. The discrepancy in incomes is also large, as Table 12 illustrates, though the small number of women employed and in business means some comparisons could be misleading. For example, the one woman with primary school education works in a clinic owned by her husband, who personally trained her for the work and pays her salary. By and large, the trend seen in the income levels of the homestead heads holds true for their wives. The higher the educational attainment the higher the income from employment.

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For a more in-depth discussion of the relationship between development cycles of homesteads and the economy, see Prazak (1989).

Table 12. Average Income for Wives

Educational Attainment:	Average Income in Kenya Shillings			
	Work		Business	
Uneducated	2,420	(6)	2,722	(20)
Educated	9,160	(3)	5,360	(2)
Post Primary	7,800	(2)	0	(0)
Primary Completed	11,880	(1)	8,600	(2)
Some Primary	0	(0)	0	(0)
Total Sample	4,667	(9)	3,257	(22)

Source: Field Survey

The data presented above suggest that the people with the highest education are the ones most likely to be employed, and to earn high wages in white collar and skilled jobs such as teaching, preaching, health care, or government service. Bigsten's findings bear out these conclusions.<sup>47</sup> In his econometric study of the impact of education on incomes in rural Kenya, he concludes that education strongly influences the distribution of access to employment opportunities and thus has a significant effect on the incomes from regular employment.

Those with less education, when employed, tend to have jobs that are less remunerative; the least educated often find employment as farm labourers. Business appears to be a very profitable direction for people with only primary education. They tend not to be qualified for higher paying jobs, and if they have the capital necessary to start a business, they tend to do very well.

Within the survey community, the last category I wish to focus on here are the dependents. This category contains all the offspring of the homestead heads who remain in their natal homesteads and are already past the age of education. These include both those who are educated and those who are not. They total 165 people, of whom 151 are sons and 14 are daughters. One hundred forty, or 85% of them are educated. The breakdown of their educational attainment follows:

<sup>47</sup> Arne Bigsten (1984).

Table 13. Educational Attainment of Offspring Who have Completed Education and live in Natal Homesteads.

Educational Attainment:	Male	Female	Total
Uneducated	20	5	25
Educated:	131	9	140
Post Primary	40	2	42
Primary Completed	44	2	46
Some Primary	47	5	52

Source: Field Survey

As a group, adult offspring residing at home have the highest frequency of education, and also proportionally have the most even distribution among the three categories of educational attainment. The most striking disparity in educational attainment is between the sexes. Whereas only 13% of the males are uneducated, 36% of the females have received no formal education.

What was shown to be the case for homestead heads and their wives also holds true for their dependents living at home. Those with the highest education have the highest income, both from employment and from business. However, for them business endeavours are the most lucrative pursuit, having returns more than double the value of employment. The uneducated among them earn the lowest average salary, and none are involved in business. Table 14 displays employment/business income figures by level of educational attainment for adult offspring living at home.

Table 14. Average Income of Adult Offspring Living in Natal Homestead

Educational Attainment:	Average Income in Kenya Shillings	
	Work	Business
Uneducated	1,320 (3)	0 (0)
Educated	8,539 (25)	14,477 (13)
Post Primary	11,499 (14)	25,584 (5)
Primary Completed	5,314 (7)	8,098 (5)
Some Primary	4,980 (4)	6,640 (3)
Total	7,766 (28)	14,487 (13)

Source: Field Survey



For offspring not living at home, there is no information regarding income. There are 631 offspring living away from home; of these 209 are sons, 401 daughters, and 21 for whom gender information is not available. Of the total offspring, 237 are educated, 295 are not and information regarding educational attainment is lacking for 99 of the total sample. The following is a breakdown of the educational attainment of independent offspring:

Table 15. Educational Attainment of Offspring Living Away from Home

Educational Attainment:	Males	Female	Total	
			No	%
Uneducated	60	235	295	47
Educated:	113	124	237	37
Post Primary	31	17	48	20
Primary Completed	25	14	40	17
Some Primary	56	3	149	53
No Information			99	16

Source: Field Survey

Forty-seven percent of all offspring living away from home have no education, whereas 38% are educated. Of the educated, 63% have completed only some years of primary education, 17% have completed primary, and 20% have completed at least some secondary schooling, if not more. As with dependent offspring, female offspring living away from home are more likely to be uneducated than their brothers. Whereas 29% of sons living away from home are uneducated, 69% of daughters in the same category have not completed any formal education.

Of the uneducated offspring who live away from home, only 6% have a source of off-farm income, whether business or employment. Twenty-seven percent of the educated offspring living away from home have a source of off-farm income. It is more than four times as likely for an educated person to have a business or employment than for an uneducated one, though the majority of these adults do not have access to either. Table 16 shows a breakdown of data relating to the relationship between educational attainment and employment for independent offspring.

**Table 16. Educational Attainment and Off-farm Income for Offspring Living Away from Natal Homestead.**

Educational Attainment:	Male	Female	Total
Uneducated	14	4	18
Educated:	56	7	63
Over Primary			19
Primary			18
Underprimary			26

Source: Field Survey

With the independent offspring no distinction was made between employment (salaried and wage) and business.

A summary of the relationship between educational attainment and sources of off-farm income for three categories of individuals living in the community -- namely, homestead heads, their wives, and their children living at home who have already completed their education -- is presented in Table 17, which displays the percentage of each category of persons at given levels of education involved in off-farm employment and business enterprises.

Most of the people employed have education higher than primary. We see that 73% of all the homestead heads within that category are employed, 60% of the wives and 36% of their offspring living at home. This set of figures shows that at the post-primary level of education, the greatest percentage of those employed are homestead heads, followed by their wives. Their dependents are much less likely to be employed. At the time the homestead heads and their senior wives completed their education, a scarcity of suitable manpower in the country as a whole assured their employment. Their dependents, who have by and large completed their education within the last decade tend not to have this advantage.

Table 17. Educational Attainment, Sources of Off-farm Income for Homestead Heads, Their wives and Off-spring Living at Home

EMPLOYED						
Educational Attainment	Heads		Wives		Dependents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Uneducated	13	16	2	6	12	3
Educated	33	50	7	4	19	26
Post Primary	73	11	50	3	25	15
Primary Completed	25	5	11	1	15	7
Some Primary	25	13	0	0	9	4
IN BUSINESS						
Educational Attainment	Head		Wives		Dependents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Uneducated	3	4	12	31	0	0
Educated	25	23	4	2	11	15
Post Primary	15	2	0	0	12	5
Primary Completed	43	10	22	3	11	5
Some Primary	21	11	0	0	11	5

\* Employment, here as throughout the paper encompasses all income earning activities, aside from farming, which include non-salaried and wage labour.

Source: Field Survey

Employment opportunities for educated but untrained youth have shrunk, and no longer is the secondary school leavers' certificate sufficient for obtaining employment. Whereas the number of people with this level of educational attainment continues to grow, the opportunities available to them do not. These findings fully support Kinyanjui's suggestion that employment opportunities for secondary school leavers were likely to diminish, and there would be need to change the shape of the educational pyramid.<sup>46</sup>

Less than a quarter of the people with only primary education are employed. Once again, the ratio is the highest for homestead heads. Also,

<sup>46</sup> Kabiru Kinyanjui (1974).

the homestead heads who have completed their primary education are very active in business, representing almost a half of that category.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This paper has given some preliminary data on the relationship between educational attainment, employment and income in one small area of rural Kenya. The history of development of formal education in South Nyanza district follows a path of tremendous growth in facilities, from 134 primary schools in 1952 to 1052 in 1984. Most of the increase has taken place since independence. The number of children attending school has also grown tremendously, from 63,727 in 1959 to 249,390 in 1984. The growth in enrollments stems from several factors, including the greater number of facilities available, the high rate of population growth, the abolition of school fees, and an ever-growing awareness of the importance of education as preparation for a future involving off-farm activities.

The demographic makeup of the school-going population in Bwirege shows an almost even ratio between boys and girls in the lowest standard, with the proportion of girls declining rapidly thereafter. Repetition of a standard is common, particularly in the earliest and then the final year. Dropout rates are high at all levels of primary school, with only about 20% of the boys and 10% of the girls completing the entire primary course. About half of the students drop out by the midpoint. A number of reasons for the high attrition rate have been suggested, the main ones being the late age at which children start attending school, lack of encouragement on the part of parents for their children to continue, pressure, particularly on girls, to be married before completing schooling, and the desire on the part of young men to begin generating an off-farm income through business as soon as feasible, regardless of the educational level they have reached.

A high rate of failure on the K.C.P.E. points to problems in the educational system that have been partially brought about by a high rate of growth of facilities. Though more students go through the system, the system is not necessarily better. With the initial surge in enrollments in 1974, concern for the quality of student education came to the forefront, as there was an insufficient number of qualified teachers to maintain the previous standard of education. The problems of educational quality today are related to the lack of sufficient numbers of qualified teachers and adequate

facilities such as labs, workshops, and materials. The relevance of the curriculum has also, until very recently, been questioned, particularly in reference to rural children who are expected to remain in their home areas following the completion of their schooling.

The minority of students who continue to the final stage of primary education and take the K.C.P.E. place utmost importance on being able to continue to secondary school as further preparation for employment. The career paths they chose are almost completely white collar jobs, especially in health care and teaching.

The relationship between educational attainment, employment, and income for the various relevant categories of people residing in the rural area of Ewirege shows a predictable strong relationship between the three variables, but suggests that over time, the relationship is weakening. This is primarily because the pool of educated school leavers is increasing tremendously, yet employment opportunities are not. Thus, the younger generations of educated people rely on business as a source of off-farm income, in place of their fathers' reliance on employment. In view of this development, the shift in emphasis of the 8-4-4 system to the teaching of less academic and more practical subjects is timely.

## APPENDIX I

Primary Schools in South Nyanza by Type:				
Year	Maintained	Aided	Unaided	Total
1984	1024	21	11	1056
1979	612	32	2	646
1975	492	0	0	492
1970	-	-	-	394
1966	-	-	-	406
1960	-	-	-	539
1955	-	444	95	413
1953	-	208	205	393
1952	-	173	220	134

Source: Republic of Kenya. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

Annual Report 1984, p. 31; Republic of Kenya. Ministry of Education.

Annual Report 1979, p. 28; Republic of Kenya. Ministry of Education

Annual Report 1975, p. 5; Republic of Kenya. Ministry of Education

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## South Nyanza Enrollment in Primary Schools by Standard and Sex

Year	Std. 1		Std. 2		Std. 3		Std. 4		Std. 5	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1984	35318	3611	23466	19519	19616	17941	16703	15376	15059	12060
1979	42053	36409	19580	15319	15309	12125	14085	10817	12767	9216
1975	22864	17057	25051	18420	12203	8236	9580	5861	7061	3903
1969	4954	2755	4514	2448	4685	2474	4322	2218	3266	1513
1959										

Year	Std. 6		Std. 7		Total		Grado
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
1984	13422	9401	13982	7612	136416	1129	249800
1979	12271	7635	9715	1221	124710	95754	220464
1975	6513	3359	2576	3132	91849	60032	151881
1969	3903	1531	5509	1486	31152	14405	45637
1959					50574	13153	63727

Source: Republic of Kenya. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

Annual Report 1984. P.33. Republic of Kenya. Ministry of Education

Annual Report 1979. P.20. Republic of Kenya. Ministry of Education

Annual Report 1975. P.8. Republic of Kenya. Ministry of Education

Annual Report 1969. P.39. National Archives of Kenya.  
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## APPENDIX II

1. When I finish primary school, I would like most to be given
- Money for secondary fees
  - Shs. 5000 cash
  - a job
  - a sewing machine (girls only)
  - marriage dowry (boys only)

Response:

Boys	92% = a	Girls:	92% = a
	7% = c		8% = c
	1% = b		

2. The best way to get ahead in life is to
- start a business
  - go to secondary school
  - get a job
  - get married (girls only)
  - grow cash crops

Response:

Boys:	55% = c	Girls:	54% = b
	35% = b		38% = c
	7% = a		4% = e
	3% = e		4% = d

3. I would like my spouse to have
- the same amount of education as I have
  - more education than I have
  - less education than I have
  - no education

Response:

Boys:	55% = a	Girls:	54% = a
	36% = c		20% = b
	4% = b		6% = c
	2% = d		1% = d

4. It is more important to educate boys than girls

Response:

Boys:	57% = no	Girls:	92% = no
	43% = Yes		8% = yes

5. I would like to marry as soon after primary school as possible.

Response:

Boys:	95% = no	Girls:	96% = no
	5% = Yes		4% = no answer



6. It is the responsibility of parents to educate their children.

Response:

Boys: 99% = no                      Girls: 100% = no  
       1% = no answer

7. After finishing my education I would like to be

Response:

Boys:	Girls:
31% = Doctor	52% = Nurse
17% = teacher	27% = teacher
6% = engineer	4% = matron
4% = farmer, police, P.C.	4% = lawyer
	4% = job (unspecified)
3% each = Pilot, M.P., soldier, manager	
2% each = businessman, mechanic, president, clerk, headmaster	
1% each = carpenter, scientist, D.C., archaeologist, driver, D.O., Accountant, C.I.D., pastor, attorney general, veterinarian, minister of health, politician, secretary.	

8. The most useful subjects I learned in school is

Response:

Boys:	Girls:
28% = English	29% = English
25% = Science	25% = Home science
16% = Maths	19% = Maths
7% = Agriculture	17% = Science
7% = Kiswahili	4% = Arts & crafts
7% = GHC (Geography History & Civics)	4% = Kiswahili
3% = CRE (Christian Religious Education)	4% = Language (unspecified)
2% = History	
1% = Home science	

NB: In the questionnaire given to the students, questions 1-3 were multiple choice, question 4-5 were yes/no, and questions 7-8 were open-ended.

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